

Practical approaches to the celebration of Holy Communion

United Reformed Church

2. Our service is called a Communion Service and is celebrated on the 1st & 3rd Sundays in the month, on Easter Day and at the Church Anniversary.

Being a United Church, practices from earlier days tend to continue so there is variety within the URC concerning the frequency of Communion. Some celebrate weekly, some twice a month, some monthly, some quarterly. Each local congregation makes its own decision. The Church Meeting is the key decision making body within the URC.

3. Who leads the worship, or presides, at the celebration of communion? Who assists them? How are they authorised to do this?

Worship which includes Communion is led by a President who is either an ordained minister or a lay person specifically authorised by the Leicestershire District URC. The servers are authorised by the Elders of Oadby URC. In many UR Churches only elders are invited to act as servers.

4. In what forms are the bread and wine (e.g. wafers, loaf, alcoholic, non-alcoholic, one cup, many cups etc.)

A loaf, or rolls, that can be broken; non-alcoholic wine in individual cups, with a flagon and chalice for symbolic pouring of the wine. Some URC's use a common cup.

5. Who is allowed or encouraged to receive communion?

All who think of themselves as Christians. A regular invitation would include words such as 'This is our Lord's table. All those who love Jesus Christ are invited to partake of this feast'.

6. How does the church respond to children or visitors at communion?

Children are able to partake with permission from their parents.

Visitors are included in the invitation as mentioned in 5 above.

7. What happens to any remaining consecrated elements? (Is it consumed, disposed of, reserved, used in Benediction or Home Communion etc?)

They are usually disposed of by the servers who also prepare the communion.

8. Is there anything else that you want to say?

Whilst individual communion presidents decide on the actual words to be used at any service, the URC hymnbook provides prayers and responses which can be used. The loose-leaf manual 'Worship from the United Reformed Church' contains 4 suggested orders of service for communion.

It is usual to combine Word and Sacrament within a service.