

Practical approaches to the celebration of Holy Communion

These questions may seem very practical and you may be wondering why we begin here. But practice reveals theology and is a useful place to begin our discussion. Just record what you do, even if you don't fully understand the reasons why.

1. Which local church in Oadby are you describing?

Trinity Methodist, Oadby

2. What do you call the service at which communion is shared and how often is it celebrated?

Holy Communion (generally). Celebrated, on average, one morning a month and one (other) evening a month.

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

Always served by an ordained minister. *Probationer* ministers need the permission of The Methodist Conference which issues a dispensation IF it is 'proved' that without the probationer's help the people would not get it regularly. Ministers are assisted by lay members of the local congregation. Sole authority to preside is given by the Conference.

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

Real bread and none-alcoholic wine is used. Often gluten-free wafers are also available. The wine is served in individual (tiny) glasses.

5. Who is allowed or encouraged to receive communion?

All are welcome, including children of any age. (However, most churches make it clear to any children present that they should have their "parent's" permission to receive).

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

An open invitation is made at all services with something like: "The Lord Jesus welcomes all of you to his table. So come, for all is now ready. Come." (But see above for the special word regarding children).

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

The elements are consecrated, but, should any more be required, these are not consecrated. Any wine left is replaced in the bottle. The bread is disposed reverently.

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

Usually the liturgy is taken from the Methodist Worship Book. Occasionally, a printed sheet with an 'alternative liturgy is used (at the discretion of the minister).