

Communion during Livestream and Radio Broadcast Worship--Augustana, First and Hope Lutheran Churches

Beginning this Sunday, May 24, our livestream and radio broadcast worship experience includes Holy Communion (also sometimes called Eucharist). Given that these are extraordinary times, our Lutheran theology offers the “emergency rubric” to allow us to share in Holy Communion in a way that is safe. This sheet is intended to help you prepare for and participate in Holy Communion during the livestream and radio broadcast worship service.

We realize that not everyone will want to partake in Holy Communion from their tables at home, which is perfectly fine. We will invite you to use the moment in the service as a time to reflect on God’s presence with you in the Word and through the Holy Spirit.

We have never been here before, but God has creatively led God’s people through peril countless times before – sending manna in the wilderness, hope in the midst of exile and resurrection in the face of death. We have no doubt that God will lead us through this season of COVID-19, too.

Getting Ready

Here are a few things to think about and/or prepare before the service:

- **What table will you use?** You can simply pull up a coffee table or gather at your kitchen/dining room table. You may want to prepare your table by placing a white cloth on it or finding a cross or candle in your house to place on it. **We would love to see pictures of your prepared table—you can email them to the church office.**
- **What bread will you use?** Any bread - homemade or store bought - or cracker will work for communion. If you want, there are some bread recipes provided that you can use for your communion bread. Place the bread/crackers on a plate on the table.

Here are two bread recipes if you choose to make your own bread

[No-Yeast, Pantry-Friendly Bread Recipe](#)

[Luther Seminary Communion Bread Recipe](#) (there will be a video of Amber from Augustana preparing this bread posted soon!)

- **What juice/wine will you use?** Red wine or grape juice are ideal. If you have neither on hand, then water can be used as well. You can pour a little in a glass for each person in your house who is participating in communion.

During the Service

At the time of Holy Communion, one of the pastors will stand behind the altar to preside over Holy Communion. They will preside just like they do when we worship together face-to-face. When they lift the bread and cup, it is appropriate for you to lift the elements you have on your table at home. We believe that God who has the power to raise Jesus from the dead has the power - through the Holy Spirit - to join us together in that moment of Holy Communion. Just like when we gather together physically in the sanctuary, the Holy Spirit will come, bringing Christ's presence to be in, with and under the bread and wine/juice. The bread and wine/juice will be the real presence of Jesus Christ, his body and blood. How this will logistically happen, we are leaving up to God, trusting that God is greater than all that limits us during this time. **We invite you to partake of the wine and the bread when we say the words "The body of Christ, given for you" and "The blood of Christ, shed for you."**

After the Service

Traditionally, leftover communion elements - the bread and the wine/juice - are either eaten or returned to the earth. If you do not consume them, take them outside and place them in your garden/lawn.

FAQs

Who is able to receive Holy Communion in this way? When we gather in person for worship, we always offer the invitation, "This is Lord's Table and all are welcome here." That is the same invitation we will offer as we have communion in this form. All are welcome and we really do mean *all*. If you have someone in your household who doesn't receive, it would be appropriate to offer them a blessing if they would like. An example of a blessing would be, "Remember God loves you."

What if I watch the service recorded and not on livestream? With God all things are possible! That said, we are encouraging those who would like to receive communion to be part of the livestream and radio broadcast worship experience. An important part of our understanding of Holy Communion is that it happens in community and nobody is excluded from the table. The livestream and radio broadcast service offers the community piece of Holy Communion as we are joined together by the Holy Spirit in the same moment, even though we are in different physical locations.

Is this the "new normal" for how we can receive Holy Communion? No. This is "Eucharist in Extraordinary Times" because there is no safe way for us to receive Holy Communion face-to-face. When it is safe for us to be physical present together and the times are no longer "extraordinary," then Holy Communion will be something that only happens in the context of worship in the sanctuary or during homebound communion visits with the pastor.