

How do I prepare myself for communion?

The Apostle Paul explains that before anyone comes to the communion table they must 'examine themselves'. This means that we need to examine our hearts and repent of any sin we are aware of, before we come to communion. The Bible is very clear that anyone who takes communion carelessly or without addressing their sin, invites the judgement of God on himself or herself (1 Corinthians 11: 27-32). If we are aware of any breakdown in personal relationships with other Christians we should seek restoration before taking part in communion (Matthew 5: 23-24; 18:35).

Being aware of our own sinfulness shouldn't stop us coming to communion but should encourage us to repent, then to come.

What should I be thinking about during communion?

We can't cover all the possibilities, but here are some suggestions:

- Reflect on the enormity of God's love for you and for the other believers sitting around you.
- Consider the extent of His sacrifice on the cross for you. Think about how little you

deserve it and how amazing and different His love is from all other loves.

- Let your mind be filled with gladness at the cleansing and assurance which are yours, because of His gift of love.
- Consider too, that He is alive, waiting to hear your expressions of love to Him.

Communion is a time where we offer our lives afresh, renewing our commitment to the God who has given His life for us. It is an opportunity to look ahead to a time when we will be seated with Him in heaven at the ultimate banquet of the ages.

How often should I take communion?

It's clear that the church of the New Testament shared communion often. The book of Acts suggests the early Christians celebrated it daily in the beginning and probably on a weekly basis later on (Acts 20:7).

At Dumfries Baptist Church we celebrate communion weekly and encourage people to come as often as they are able (1 Corinthians 11).

Dumfries Baptist Church

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Communion

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What is Communion?

Jesus ate His last meal on earth with His disciples in an upper room. While they were eating, Jesus thanked God for the bread and the wine and gave it to the disciples. He told them that the bread represented His body which would be crucified and the wine His blood which would be shed on the cross. The meal symbolised Jesus' death on the cross to pay the penalty for our sin. The apostle Paul explained that Christians were to re-enact this simple meal to remember what Jesus had done for them.

(1 Corinthians 11:23-25)

Why is communion important?

In a communion service we sing songs of worship, we pray, we pass round the bread and wine and share it with each other. It's a very simple service but it is full of meaning and importance:

1 Communion invites us to celebrate the past as we remember how much our salvation cost. It helps us to understand how dreadful our sin is as we are reminded, each time we share communion, that God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ to suffer the wrath of God and to die as our substitute.

2 As we prepare for and share in the communion service, we are reminded of our forgiveness, cleansing and freedom from the condemnation we deserve.

3 Every time we celebrate communion, we are reminded again of God's amazing grace to sinful and rebellious people. It is a celebration of the present and we respond with profound gratitude and praise.

4 Communion helps keep our focus on God and gives opportunity for us to examine our own lives. We realign our priorities with God's, and acknowledge our commitment to Him as Lord and Saviour.

5 In participating in communion we are obeying Jesus' command: "Do this in remembrance of me" (Luke 22:19). Being obedient to Jesus' command shows our devotion to Him and deepens our relationship with Him.

6 Communion is a celebration of the future. As we share in the communion service we are reminded of Jesus' resurrection and the promise

of His return, when our salvation will be complete and our fellowship with God and each other celebrated in eternal perfection.

Who should participate in communion?

Everyone who has experienced the new life which Jesus gives to those who trust in Him by faith as their personal Lord and Saviour, is welcomed to participate in the communion service.

Being a regular attender at Dumfries Baptist Church is not a requirement. Believers do not need to be baptised before taking communion.

What about younger children?

Children become Christians and develop in their understanding of Christian truths and practices at different ages. If they wish to participate in communion, we believe this decision should be left to the discretion of their parents.

Any child who wishes to take the bread and wine must be sitting with their parents during the communion service.