

## Guidelines for Leading Communion

Being a guest at the Lord's table is a rich experience: there is a lot being symbolised, declared and experienced (see 'What is Communion' page). To capture this wide range of Biblical truth and experience in one communion service may seem a daunting task! To help make the experience as rich as possible here are a few suggestions for guiding the communion time.

**1. Make it part of the worship time.** On the occasions we take communion we can gain a richer and more meaningful experience of all that it represents by merging the sung worship time, with the taking of bread and wine. This will require the meeting leader and worship leader to work closely together in planning the service. Through music and the words of the songs people can be reminded of the truths that communion represents, and also be given the space and the means to respond.

**2. Help people prepare.** Before sharing the bread and wine it is helpful to offer space for people to prepare themselves for the significant moment of encounter at the Lord's Table. This can be achieved by:

- singing or listening to well-chosen songs which help us 'remember' and affirm the truths signified in the bread and wine that we are about to take
- words of gathering shared from the screen that draw us together around the Lord's Table (see resources).
- a space for reflection and personal confession. This could also include words said together from the screen (see resources).

**3. Distribute the bread and wine.** This could include;

- Reading Scripture (see resources section for suggested readings):
- Prayers of thanks for the bread and wine, either prayed by the meeting leader, shared from words on the screen, or invited spontaneously from the congregation. (see resources section for suggestions).
- Inviting all who have received Jesus as their Lord and Saviour to take part, whether regular at TBC or not.
- When children are present, advising that children who love Jesus in a way appropriate to their age, may take at the discretion of their parents.
- Advising people of the availability of Gluten-free bread.
- Advising people to eat the bread when they have received it.
- It can be helpful to leave silence while the bread is being distributed and eaten to allow for personal reflection. The meeting leader should encourage this.
- Once the bread has been taken, distribute the wine. Advise people to keep hold of their cup so that we can take together as an expression of our one-ness.
- During the distribution of the wine another appropriate song could be sung
- When all have the cup, say some words to initiate the taking of the wine (see resources section for some suggestions). You could invite everyone to stand before drinking together to reinforce the 'one-ness' symbol.

**4. Having Taken**

- It has become our custom, at the communion service to remember any of our family who are unwell or in special need in a moment of prayer, which could be led by the meeting leader, offered silently, use words from the screen (see examples in resources section), use the list from the weekly news-sheet or be opened up for the congregation to pray.
- The time around the Lord's Tables could be drawn together with words from the screen (see examples in resources section) and/or another appropriate song of worship or praise.

## **Arrangement of Table and Room**

All of the above presupposes communion being taken from a central; table, but all of these elements can be easily transposed into, for example, a setting where people visit multiple tables around the hall where they are served bread and wine.

The team setting up communion can be contacted via Mark in the office if you need to give notice of any changes to the normal set-up.

## **Resources**

We have compiled a range of resources that could be used. These are offered as examples, and may be used or adapted at the discretion of the person leading communion. Other materials fulfilling the same purposes can be found - and maybe adapted where necessary - from the internet.

The TBC resources are found on the TBC website, under the 'More' tab.