

## Communion Procedures

### **Pew Communion – bread and wine are distributed to individuals in the pew.**

Number of Communion Assistants: Normally 4 to 5 (with the fifth person to start distribution with the choir), could be up to 6 for larger festivals/larger attendance

Procedure:

1. The communion assistants meet in narthex as communion section of the service begins and decide who will cover which section. The number of assistants should match the number of trays prepared. Normally four to five trays are prepared, although up to six could be prepared for larger attended services. Sometimes a tray contains fewer glasses, which is intended for the choir.
2. After the Invitation to Communion, the assistants walk to the front of the church and step up immediately beyond the altar rail (in the area of the piano) to receive the trays of bread.
3. The Pastor distributes the trays of bread to the assistants.
4. The assistants distribute the bread to the individuals sitting in the pews.
  - a. For 4 assistants, each assistant takes one quarter section of the church, and begins distributing the bread from the front of the church towards the back. The assistant on the east side of the church (choir side), distributes bread to the choir first, and then continues with the east side section.
  - b. For 5-6 assistants, four assistants each take one quarter section of the church. Another assistant (or pastor) distribute bread to the choir. One assistant may walk downstairs to include members either seated downstairs, or preparing for an after-service lunch or event. Alternatively, the fifth and/or sixth assistant could start at the rear of the church and begin moving forward in any section, usually with the most populated area.
  - c. Ensure that individuals seated on the Balcony or downstairs for security have received bread.
5. When all assistants have returned to the narthex after distributing the bread, they walk in together to the front of the church.
6. The Pastor collects the trays and distributes bread to the assistants.
7. The Pastor leads the entire congregation in communing with the bread together.
8. The Pastor distributes the wine trays to the assistants and the assistants distribute the wine to the individuals sitting in the pews in a similar fashion to the bread.
9. When all assistants have returned to the narthex after distributing the wine, they walk in together to the front of the church.
10. The Pastor collects the trays and distributes wine to the assistants.
11. The Pastor leads the entire congregation in drinking the wine together.
12. The assistants walk back out to the narthex.

## **Altar Communion: bread and wine are distributed to individuals at the altar rail**

Number of Communion Assistants: 5

Communion Assistant Roles:

- A. Distribute the Wine – Distribute the wine to the individuals at the altar
- B. Collect the Glasses – Collect the wine glasses at the altar rail and dismiss the section
- C. Facilitator – Facilitates the filling/reorganizing of the trays and supplies new trays to Pastor and other assistants.
- D. Pew Ushers (2) – Dismiss individuals from the pew to go to the altar rail. Note individuals not able to go to the altar rail, and communicate that info to Pastor.

Procedure:

1. The communion assistants meet in narthex as communion section of the service begins and decide/confirm who will perform which role.
2. After the Invitation to Communion, the assistants walk to the front of the church and step up immediately beyond the altar rail (in the area of the piano), and create a small line (table).
3. The Pastor gives communion (first bread and then wine) to the communion assistants. After being dismissed (Depart in Peace) by the Pastor, the assistants begin doing their assigned role.
4. The Pastor then waits for the assistants to begin, and for individuals to come up to the altar rail. The Pastor should always begin on the west side (by the fire door exit) to provide communion to each table as they come forward at the direction of the ushers.
5. The assistants helping in the front of the church have the following duties:
  - a. The individual distributing the wine takes a tray of filled wine glasses and follows the Pastor, who is distributing the bread. As the wine is distributed, the assistant states: “The blood of Christ shed for you.” Good practice is to stay approximately five-six individuals behind the Pastor to allow the individuals to prayerfully eat the bread. Obtain a new tray of wine from the facilitator in between sections when (1) the tray does not contain enough glasses for the next section, (2) the tray does not contain both options (wine and grape juice).
  - b. The individual collecting the glasses begins with an empty tray and follows the wine tray distribution. Good practice is to stay approximately five-six individuals behind the wine distribution to allow the individuals to drink the wine and commune in peace. Obtain a new empty tray from the facilitator when the tray becomes filled.
  - c. The facilitator maintains the flow of communion by providing filled trays of bread and wine to the Pastor and assistant. At times, the facilitator may be moving glasses from almost empty trays to maintain the flow, and to create empty trays for collection.
6. The Ushers have the role of managing the flow of individuals to the altar rail for communion.
  - a. Each of the two ushers is assigned to one half of the church (East side – Maxatawny side, West side – Kutztown side). The idea is that the two sections work in parallel to give individuals time for communing with little delay between sections.

- b. Typically, the senior choir is invited to commune first. The East side usher invites the choir to the altar immediately following the communion by the assistants.
  - c. The West side usher begins in the center aisle. After the choir is dismissed, the West side usher invites individuals seated in the center, west section to go to the altar (the first individual will walk forward and end up standing close to the fire exit door in the front of the church). The usher allows about 13 individuals to go forward at one time.
  - d. The East side usher begins on the outside aisle. After the choir returns to its seat, the East side usher invites individuals seated on the outside, east section to go to the altar (the first individual will walk forward and end up standing in the middle of the church, close to the last person from the West section).
  - e. After the table is dismissed, the West side usher invites individuals (again, approximately 13) from the outside aisle to go to the altar. And, the East side usher invites individuals from the center aisle to go to the altar.
  - f. The ushers continue to go back and forth between the center and outer aisles, working in individuals from the balcony or security or other as able, or at the end of a section.
  - g. The ushers also have the responsibility to take notice of individuals who chooses not to go forward but would rather have communion brought to them in the pew. Please ask them quietly as some people may simply wish not to commune. Ensure that the Pastor or facilitator is aware of any individuals that would like communion in the pews.
7. After everyone has communed, all of the trays are returned to the altar.
  8. One of the assistants gives communion to the Pastor.