



## CELEBRATING COMMUNION IN GROUP

Communion doesn't just have to happen during a Weekend Service at Emmanuel. Within the context of spiritual community is also a great place to celebrate Jesus' sacrifice.

### WHAT DO I NEED?

- A loaf of unsliced bread
- Grape juice
- Enough glasses for your group members
- A group willing to experience taking communion together

### WHAT DO I DO?

1. Provide your group with some context. This can be done by listening to worship music, watching a video, or by reading passages of Scripture about Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. Here are some great options, if you choose to read Scripture:
  - a. Psalm 22
  - b. Isaiah 53
  - c. Mark 15:21-29
  - d. John 19
  - e. 1 Corinthians 15:1-8
  - f. Galatians 2:16-21
  - g. Ephesians 2:1-10
  - h. Philippians 2:1-11
2. When Jesus' followers first celebrated communion, they probably shared a meal and told stories about the things Jesus had done while he was with them and the things he had done since his ascension. This would be a good time to open the floor for group members to share the things Jesus has done or is doing in their lives.
3. Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
4. Pass the bread around and ask each member to tear off a small piece to eat.
5. Pass out glasses of grape juice to drink.
6. Encourage each group member to spend a few minutes in prayer and reflection, then take communion.

### GROUP LEADER FAQ

Talk with your group about celebrating communion at least a week before you do so. They'll probably have some questions. On the next page are some helpful guidelines for navigating the three most common questions about communion. If any issues arise that aren't covered here, your Group Director can assist you. Never hesitate to engage them.

## **What is communion?**

Communion is an opportunity for followers of Jesus to remember and celebrate what he has done for them through his death and resurrection. The communion bread and wine (or juice) represent Jesus' broken body and shed blood. They're reminders that we are forgiven through his sacrifice. 1 Corinthians 11:17–32 says that believers should approach communion thoughtfully, examining themselves before eating the bread and drinking the juice.

## **Who should celebrate communion?**

Opinions among Christians vary on the question of whether nonbelievers can participate in communion. Some believe that communion should be available only for those who follow Jesus. Others believe that Jesus invites all to his table. Allow your group members to decide for themselves whether they'll celebrate communion. Nonbelievers may or may not want to participate. Either way, communion may be an opportunity to share with them what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus.

You may also have believers from traditional church backgrounds who aren't comfortable celebrating communion in a group environment. That's okay.

When discussing this with your group, be sensitive to those who don't want to do it. You could ask if they would be comfortable observing a moment of silence while the others in your group celebrate communion.

## **Where should communion be celebrated?**

While some of the more formal Christian denominations believe that communion should ideally be celebrated in a church and only administered by a priest, minister, or pastor, we believe it's entirely appropriate to celebrate it in homes and other places. In fact, we believe God invites us to celebrate it anywhere we want and as often as we want.

We also believe that you don't have to be an ordained pastor to serve communion. As a group leader, you are in an excellent position to serve communion because it demonstrates servant leadership.

If members of your group disagree, that's okay. Remember, you are not responsible for convincing them to celebrate communion if they don't want to.