

The Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia



Guidelines from the Bishop for the Offering of Holy Communion Post-Covid

Gathering around the table of our Lord is a gift we receive graciously and gratefully. It is a symbol of our united effort to connect with Christ and to be empowered and nourished to offer His way of love to the world. Through the grace and nurture of bread and wine, body and blood, we are empowered to offer acts of charity that speak to the presence of Christ in our world and of God's love for us.

Holy Communion in all our Episcopal parishes and faith communities should be offered through the vessels of one bread, one chalice.

Communion in One Kind

Instruction and education should be given frequently (both verbally and written in the bulletin) that the reception of Communion in one kind is a sufficient and perfect Communion. Communion may be offered as individual hosts or as a common loaf, provided the one distributing the host has completely sanitized hands. ***The bread, the Body of Christ, should be administered by the priest or deacon.*** Churches may use up their supplies of individually sealed containers of bread and wine that were purchased during the pandemic but should not order more.

The Common Chalice

The common chalice should be offered to all, but none should be compelled to consume. The common chalice should be administered by a duly trained and licensed Eucharistic Minister. ***Reminder: according to church canon law, Eucharistic Ministers must be adult confirmed communicants. Children and unconfirmed adults should not administer the chalice.***

Intinction (the dipping of the host into the wine)

Intinction currently is not authorized by individual communicants. Intinction by individual communicants has consistently been shown to be the practice that is the least hygienic and most conducive of bacterial germs. If a communicant desires his/her host to be intincted, only a licensed Eucharistic Minister who has been properly trained may do the intinction. Should the communicant desire this, the communicant should leave the host in his/her hand indicating to the chalice bearer that intinction is desired. The chalice bearer may then pick up the host and intinct it and place it back into the communicant's hand, being careful not to touch the hand. A separate intinction cup may be used for this practice.