



## House Church Kit FAQs

Well, this is something new, isn't it? Yes, and no. The church has been through plagues and wars and great divisions before. By the Grace of God the church – our congregation, and the whole Christian church – will minister faithfully and thrive during this crisis.

Nearly 500 years ago Martin Luther addressed how Christians should respond during a time of infectious disease - in this case, the plague. He wrote:

*I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance inflict and pollute others and so cause their death as a result of my negligence. If God should wish to take me, he will surely find me and I have done what he has expected of me and so I am not responsible for either my own death or the death of others. If my neighbor needs me however I shall not avoid place or person but will go freely as stated above. See this is such a God-fearing faith because it is neither brash nor foolhardy and does not tempt God.*

Luther's Works Volume 43, pg 132, "Whether one may flee from a Deadly Plague," a letter written to The Rev. Dr. John Hess

Knowing that the church will indeed be faithful and thrive during this challenge, this House Church Kit is one way that we're seeking to support the life of the church while we're dispersed.

### **What's in the House Church Kit?**

These kits contain worship bulletins for the next two weeks, reserve communion elements, and an order for daily prayer.

### **What are reserve communion elements?**

Reserve communion elements are bread and wine/juice from a communion celebration at church and set aside for distribution to people who cannot come to church. In this unique circumstance, pretty much every member of New Joy falls into that category.

### **So, these are the body and blood of Jesus?**

Yes. Lutherans teach that Jesus' words of promise are true – "This is my body, given for you. This is my blood, shed for you." We take seriously our Lord's promise that he comes to us in the elements of Holy Communion. And, we take seriously that communion is a shared experience with Christ and his people whom he gathers as his body in this world.

### **How do we handle these elements?**

Set the kit somewhere you will be able to find it on Sunday morning.

Prior to watching a livestream Sunday service, set enough communion hosts (wafers) on a small plate. Pour a little bit of wine/juice into a small cup, candy dish, or small cup you may use for measured spices as you cook. Prepare the wine so that you can receive it either by drinking or by intinction (dipping the wafer into the cup). You may then take a cloth or

paper napkin and drape it over the communion elements, setting this aside until it is time for our sacramental meal.

We've provided what we think should be enough communion for your household for two weeks. We'll do another delivery – with palm branches and more supplies – before Palm Sunday.

#### **Livestream? How do I access that?**

The livestream of New Joy's worship services can be found at [www.NewJoy.org/livestream](http://www.NewJoy.org/livestream). It is a YouTube channel to which you can subscribe and view directly off of YouTube, or via our church website. If you wish to type/comment/respond during the service, you'll need to be viewing the stream from YouTube and not from New Joy's website.

#### **When should we use or receive these elements?**

Tune into the livestream on Sundays at 9:30am. If that is not possible, tune in later that day to the archived recording.

If you are unable to access the livestream, use the enclosed *Order for Home Distribution of Communion During Social Distancing*. You may also call a fellow church member, or Pastor Chris, to lead these prayers with you over the phone.

#### **What if we run out, spill the wine, or the dog eats the wafers?**

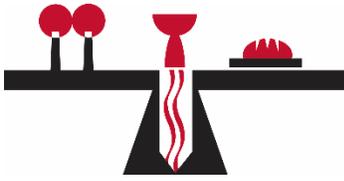
While certainly not ideal, it's not a crisis of faith! We treat these elements devotionally but not superstitiously, somewhat akin to how we might care for a Bible or a prayer book. Through these blessed elements our Lord promises to come to us in a special way. But if a spill or some other accident should happen, simply clean it up and drive on.

While the idea is that we share bread and wine that were first part of a communion celebration at church (hence why we delivered these sacramental elements to each home) if you run out or spill or have some other issue with the elements delivered to your house, *do not go without communion*. In the spirit of our shared gathering and because the extraordinary circumstances of this moment, take some other bread and wine or juice and along with the livestream or with the attached notes, share communion in your home. We will also gladly bring more communion elements to you for use in your home. Just give us a call.

These are certainly not ordinary times. These House Church Kits are an attempt to adapt to these extraordinary circumstances and to provide the comfort of worship and communion with you while we are separated.

Please call the church office if you have any questions. Thank you for being the Body of Christ dispersed in a social distanced world.

## ORDER FOR HOME DISTRIBUTION OF HOLY COMMUNION DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING



*This order extends the congregation's service of Holy Communion by sending bread and drink from the communion table to those who are unable to be present in public worship.*

***If you are unable to join in the livestream service – live on Sundays at 9:30am, or an archived recording of the service at a later time – use this order of prayer together with the Sunday bulletin.***

*If more than one person is sharing in this time of prayer and worship, designate one person to serve as leader, or take turns leading the service.*

### GATHERING

-  *Using the bulletin, sing or say the words of the opening song as you begin your time of worship and prayer together.*
-  *Offer an opening prayer, asking God to bless this time of worship, and to bless all in our congregation who are far from each other at this time.*
-  *Continue with saying the confession and singing or saying the Kyrie.*

### WORD

-  *Read the psalm (responsively), speak the Prayer of the Day, and read the Scripture passages.*
-  *Where the sermon usually takes place, pause to reflect on the readings, highlighting what you hear God speaking to you and to our world in these verses.*
-  *Sing or speak the words of the Song of the Day.*
-  *Say the church's mission statement – we are the church even scattered! – and lift up your prayers to God, for the church, the world, and all those in need, and in particular for the sick, medical personnel, and our elected and public health leaders.*
-  *Speak a word of God's peace to one another, and receive the comfort of God's peace for yourself.*
-  *Pause to make an act of offering – setting aside a gift for the church and/or for the sick and poor, writing a check, or making an online gift. Lift up a prayer thanking God for the opportunity to give, and asking God's blessings on all who are moved by faith to give in the midst of this virus outbreak.*

### MEAL

-  *If you're not following along with the livestream, use the following instructions for Holy Communion.*

*The leader addresses the participant/s.*

- L: Gathered at the Lord's table, our congregation remembered with thanksgiving that "in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

L: This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ. This same bread and cup, shared in our community of faith, are here given for you.

*All join in the Lord's Prayer. The leader may introduce the prayer with these or similar words.*

L: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**C: Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
forever and ever. Amen.**

*The leader may say:*

L: These are the gifts of God, for us the people of God, and for that we say,

**C: Thanks be to God.**

*The leader then gives the bread and wine, saying:*

L: The body of Christ, given for you.

L: The blood of Christ, shed for you.

*The communicant may respond, "Amen." Silence for reflection may follow.*

*The following or a similar prayer after communion may be said.*

Let us pray.

L: Almighty God, you provide the true bread from heaven, your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Grant that we who have received the sacrament of his body and blood may abide in him and he in us, that we may be filled with the power of his endless life, now and forever.

**C: Amen.**

## SENDING

 *Returning to the bulletin say the blessing, sing or say the words of the sending song, and declare the dismissal.*

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