

Baptism and Communion

Ordinances

Baptism and communion are ordinances appropriate only for believers in Christ. An ordinance is a practice that demonstrates a person's faith in Christ. A believer is a person who has decided to follow Christ and believes the following:

- God loves us. [John 3:16](#)
- We have all sinned and deserve death. [Romans 3:23](#)
- Jesus Christ died in our place. [1 Corinthians 15:3](#)
- Jesus Christ rose from the dead to live again forever. [1 Corinthians 15:4,22](#)
- By faith, we can live forever with Him! [Ephesians 2:6-9](#); [Colossians 3:1-4](#)

Baptism

What does baptism mean?

The word "baptize" means "to dip under water."

Baptism symbolically tells the story of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. [1 Corinthians 15:3-4](#)

Baptism tells a story about us, as well:

OUR PAST: We have chosen to follow Christ, and our old self has been buried with Him. [Romans 6:1-4](#)

OUR PRESENT: We have a new self that has been raised to life in Him through His Spirit. [2 Corinthians 5:17](#)

OUR FUTURE: We will share life forever with Him in glory. [John 3:16](#); [Romans 8:18-25](#); [1 Peter 1:3-4](#)

Who should be baptized?

Every person who has decided to follow Christ can and should be baptized. [Acts 2:41](#)

The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ! Because an infant does not make a choice to follow Christ, Fellowship does not practice infant baptism.

Why should believers be baptized?

To follow Christ's example. [Matthew 3:13-17](#)

To obey Christ's command. [Matthew 28:19-20](#); [Acts 18:8](#); [1 John 2:3](#)

To identify publicly as a follower of Christ. [Acts 8:12-13](#), [36-38](#), [16:29-33](#)

Is baptism a requirement for membership at Fellowship?

Baptism is an important sign of belief, but not a Biblical requirement for membership in the universal church, the Body of Christ, made up of all who truly believe. [1 Corinthians 12:13](#)

The local church is a regional expression of the universal church. The only requirement for membership in both the local and universal churches is genuine faith in Christ alone. It takes place at the moment of conversion. (For further study, compare [1 Corinthians 1:2](#) with [Acts 26:15-18](#) and [Acts 16:31](#).)

The Thief on the Cross is one example of an individual who was never baptized who now is with Jesus in paradise. [Luke 23:39-43](#)

How can I get baptized at Fellowship?

Adults can contact any pastor from your congregation. If you have a child wanting to be baptized, contact the Family Ministry Team from your congregation.

For contact information visit: www.fellowshipnwa.org/baptism

Communion

What is communion?

Communion, also called the Lord's Supper or the Eucharist, is a special meal that believers share as a way of remembering Jesus' death on the cross, His resurrection, and His promise to return in glory. [1 Corinthians 11:23-26](#)

Communion is our continuation of the meal Jesus Himself served the first disciples at the Last Supper. [Matthew 26:26-28](#); [Luke 22:14-20](#)

Communion has two parts: bread and wine.

- The believer eats the bread to remember Jesus' body, broken for the forgiveness of sins. [Isaiah 53:5-6](#)
- The believer drinks the wine or juice to remember Jesus' blood, spilled for the forgiveness of sins. [Ephesians 1:7](#)
- Whereas baptism occurs once in a believer's life, the Bible does not specify how often to take communion. It simply says that we are to celebrate communion to remember Jesus.

Who can take communion?

Every person who has decided to follow Christ can and should take communion.

Why should believers take communion?

To follow Christ's example. [Matthew 26:26-28](#)

To obey Christ's command. [Luke 22:19](#)

To remember that we are participants in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. [1 Corinthians 10:16](#)

How do believers prepare for communion?

The Apostle Paul warns against participating in communion "in an unworthy manner." Before taking communion, believers should examine themselves honestly and confess their sins to God. If needed, believers should reconcile with one another before participating in communion. [1 Corinthians 11:27-28](#); [1 John 1:9](#)

Can a family or small group take communion?

Communion can be a special time of worship and celebration with your family or small group. Here are some suggestions for sharing communion at home:

- Spend some time in worship together. Sing a song, read a Bible verse, pray together, etc.
- Take the communion elements and pray over them. Ask the Lord to bless them and bless your time of celebration.
- Now, serve communion to each other! Give the bread to each person, and say, "The body of Christ, broken for you, (person's name)." Then, serve the juice to each person and say, "The blood of Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins, (person's name)."