

Admission of Baptised Children to Holy Communion before Confirmation



A Step by Step Guide

April 2024

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Introduction

Admission to Communion before Confirmation gives an opportunity to enable children to fully participate in worship as they grow in faith.

Their preparation, ongoing nurture and discipleship are key to them continuing to mature in faith as part of a wider Christian community of love, worship and service. Communion before Confirmation should be embraced with the clear intention that such children are brought to Confirmation when they are ready to make a public declaration of their faith and commitment to the body of Christ, the Church.

I commend this guide to help you in your considerations, preparation and nurture of children.

The Rt. Revd Nicholas Baines
Bishop of Leeds

The Children, Young People and Families Team are pleased to offer this guide to support you as your parish considers Admitting Baptised Children to Communion before Confirmation.

If you would like any further help, or information, or would like to register an interest in a Preparatory Workshop, please contact childrenyouth@leeds.anglican.org

We look forward to hearing from you.

Liz Morton

Children, Young People and Families Team Leader

Step by Step

The Parish Priest must:

1. Consult the PCC, parents/carers, leaders/helpers of children's groups and congregation, and ensure enough time is set aside to make consultation meaningful.
2. Ensure that the PCC vote on a formal resolution and returns a majority vote.
3. Apply to the Area Bishop for permission (be aware that the Diocesan Bishop has to give final formal consent).
4. Communicate the decision to the congregation.
5. Obtain the written consent of parents/carers.
6. Ensure the training and preparation of children and young people takes place.
7. Plan a service of admission.
8. Keep an up to date register of young people admitted to communion and issue each with a certificate.
9. Provide continuing nurture and preparation for confirmation.
10. Review annually the parish procedures and the preparation provided.

The decision to admit children to Holy Communion before Confirmation is an exciting step. It is one that should involve not just the PCC but children, parents/carers, and indeed the whole congregation.

There is no age limit for Admission to Communion, however it is important to involve parents in the process and to take seriously the preparation and ongoing nurture of children, enabling them to be Confirmed at an appropriate time in their faith journey.

Consultation Guidance

Open the discussion with the PCC, the findings of the [Rooted in the Church](#) research may be a good place to begin.

If it's helpful, one of the Children, Young People and Families team could help to facilitate a conversation with the PCC/parish.

Give opportunity for the leaders of children and young peoples' work in the parish to discuss the issue.

Consult with the congregation and encourage discussion. It is important that the congregation are involved in the process in a way which works in your context.

Communicate the decision to the congregation.

Preparatory Work

Some things to consider:

- How will children be prepared for admission to Holy Communion? This is a very important part of the process and some ways of doing this include:

One-to-one meetings with families, followed by a six session course with similarly aged children.

The whole family might be involved in a preparation course together.

There are some sample resources overleaf...

Ready to Share One Bread



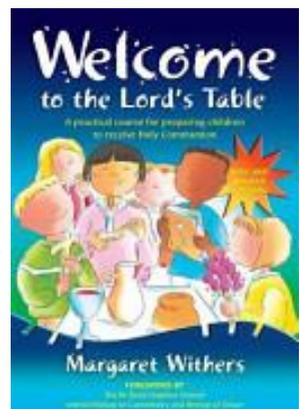
By Nick Harding and Sandra Millar
Published by SPCK, 2015

Ready to Share One Bread is a comprehensive 'one-stop shop' for all those who would like to explore this issue with their church. It also includes an easy to run, two session preparation programme for all the family.

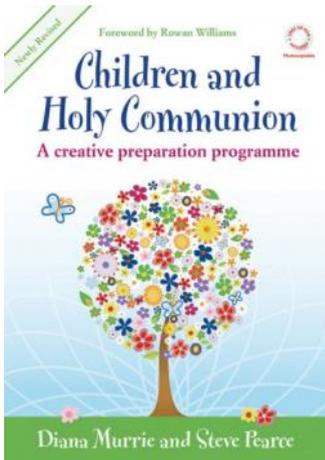
Welcome to the Lord's Table – Preparing children for Holy Communion

By Margaret Withers
Published by BRF, 2017

The introductory chapters explore the background to the question of preparing young children for Holy Communion and gives guidance on preparing the congregation, training leaders and involving the family. It comprises ten flexible teaching units plus four punctuation points to mark the journey. There is an activity book also available.



Children and Holy Communion – Preparing to welcome children at Holy Communion



By Diana Murrie and Steve Pearce
Published by Kevin Mayhew, 2007

This book is divided into two parts. Part one contains useful information for parishes considering whether to admit children to Communion. It includes material on the historical background and various questions and anxieties members of the congregation may have.

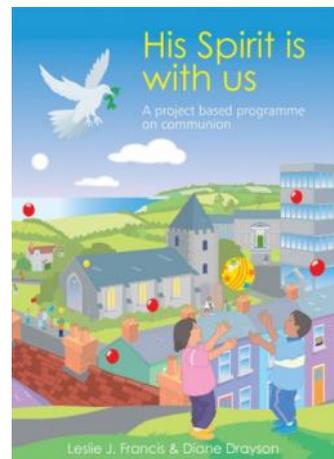
Part two is a six week preparation course for children, which includes material which can be photocopied.

His Spirit is with us – A project-based programme on Communion

By Leslie J. Francis and Diane Drayson
Published by Kevin Mayhew, 2003

This is an innovative programme of education based on the communion service and designed to support the illustrated communion book *The Lord is Here!* It is ideal for churches wanting to nurture adults and children within the richness of the liturgy.

Thirty-one Eucharistic themes are developed with ideas for: children's workshops, Sunday schools and church schools all-age projects and intergenerational learning, all ages celebrating Eucharist together.



Preparatory work cont.

- Who will lead the preparation, what resources will they use and what training might they need?

The Children, Young People and Families Team provide an Admitting Children to Communion before Confirmation workshop to help with this. For details, contact childrenyouth@leeds.anglican.org

- How will the children's support and nurture continue? How will their understanding of communion be developed as they mature? How will they be encouraged towards Confirmation after they have been admitted to Holy Communion?
 - ⇒ Consider how the children will be involved in Communion services, how might they participate; reading, welcoming, intercessions etc.
 - ⇒ What discipleship opportunities do you have for children and young people?
 - E.g. regular bible study, discipleship groups
 - ⇒ Reflect on what happens during services - if children are in groups some of the time, how do these include worship and discipleship?
 - ⇒ Are after-school opportunities an option?
 - ⇒ How will Confirmation be encouraged and prepared for?

Where is Confirmation discussed in your plans?

How is Confirmation included in your small groups for children and young people?

⇒ What might need to change/evolve to enable children and young people to grow as disciples?

Will new groups need to be started?

Might you run a Parenting for Faith Course to help parents support themselves and their children in discipleship?

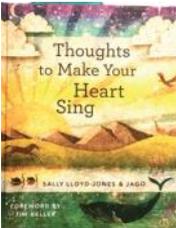
<https://www.parentingforfaith.brf.org.uk/course/>



Some discipleship resources which may be helpful include

**parenting
for faith®**

<https://www.parentingforfaith.brf.org.uk/>
Resources for churches and parents/carers.



Thoughts to Make Your Heart Sing by Sally Lloyd-Jones
A beautifully illustrated collection of 101 devotions about God's great love for you for ages 6 to 10.



Bear Grylls' Soul Fuel for Young Explorers aims to help children grow in courage and faith.

Some Pastoral Considerations

How might parents/carers be involved in the process of deciding whether and when individual children are ready to receive communion?

One-to-one discussions with families or something else?

How might parents/carers be involved in the preparation of their children for Holy Communion?

What might you do for families who do not wish for their children to be admitted to Holy Communion?

What might you do for children who come to church without their parents? See [Safer Environment and Activities](#) for guidance.

What provision will be made for the nurture of children with learning difficulties who wish to receive Holy Communion?

How will children be involved, nurtured and affirmed as members of the Christian community:

- ⇒ within the service of Holy Communion?
- ⇒ in non-Eucharistic worship?
- ⇒ in other ways?

Once a child has been admitted to communion in one parish, they must be allowed to receive communion when visiting other churches.

A Final Thought

This process can give the opportunity to bless not just the children but the whole congregation when children are welcomed to communion, and can be part of an encouraging and hopeful journey to grow together as a church family.



For Further Help

Contact: childrenyouth@leeds.anglican.org

