

Prepare for the Feast



Getting Ready With My Family



Family Leadership Network
NEXT GENERATION LEADERSHIP INITIATIVE

Prepare For the Feast is a resource for families with elementary aged children to explore some ways they can be ready to meet Jesus at the Table each week through inward preparation as well as in service to others. It takes about 30 minutes, and an additional 30 minutes if you choose to make communion bread together.

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Permission to print for local church ministry is granted.

Icon by Natalie Fares

A Note to Parents

"Is it just my imagination, or are there more lost shoes, discouraging arguments, serious fashion failures, lost keys, and reluctant children on Sunday mornings than on any other day of the week?"

My oldest child was just an infant when I began to notice that she seemed to need an emergency change of clothes most often on Sundays, not more than two minutes before it was time to be out the door. Sunday mornings only got more challenging as subsequent children arrived and the possibilities for delays or frictions between people multiplied.

Being ready for Communion does mean we need to get there, but does arriving on time with both shoes and everyone's hair brushed mean we or our children are ready on the inside to receive what God holds out to us week by week at his Table? The two are not unrelated.

There are "outside" things we can do to get better at avoiding whatever contributes to arriving to worship God unprepared on the inside. We also do well to be mindful of the fact that "still our ancient Foe doth seek to work us woe" and acknowledge that it's *not* just our imagination: we may very well experience opposition to coming at all, let alone arriving "in love and charity with our neighbor".

On the days we do arrive in a less than put-together state despite our best efforts, we remember that God is pleased we have come. We can breathe and be glad in his Presence.

Next, we can remember the great strength of our liturgical tradition, fall into step with our brothers and sisters gathered (and all the Communion of Saints), and let the liturgy carry us. The *liturgy* prepares us through Worship and Word; Creed and Confession; Prayers and *yes, The Peace*, to come to the Lord's Table.

Choose a suitable time to gather those in your household, and enjoy exploring ways to *Prepare for the Feast!*

Lesson Outline

Connect - 5 minutes

Ready for What? Brainstorm

Explore - 10 minutes

Ready on the outside: Mark 14:12-16

Ready on the inside: 1 Corinthians 11:17-34

Apply - 5 minutes

Ready or Not: Is it that Simple?

One to Get Ready: What Can I Do?

Continue - 5 minutes

Imagine If...

Ready to Help Others: What Could We Do?

Communion Bread - 30 minutes

Connect - 5 minutes

Brainstorm: Ready for What?

Go around your circle and each answer the question:

What are some things in my everyday life that I have to prepare for?

What difference would it make if I didn't get ready? (*miss the bus, embarrass myself, let other people down, miss out on what others got to do, inconvenience others, fail a test, keep people waiting...etc.*)

Tell about a time you were really ready for something.

What happened?

What did that feel like?

Explore - 10 minutes

Ready on the outside: Mark 14:12-16

I'm thinking about a story in the Bible about people who were getting ready. They were getting ready for a special meal called a Passover. It's a story about a last time. It was the last time that Jesus would have supper with his disciples before he died.

It is also a story about a first time. For the first time, Jesus would show his disciples the special way he wanted them to share a new kind of meal so that they, and all Jesus' followers after them, would remember what he had done for them and be close to him until he returned.

Let's listen to the first part of that story:

Read Mark 14:12-16

I wonder what kinds of things the disciples did to get ready for the meal.

How could you tell if things were ready?

Ready on the inside: 1 Corinthians 1:17-34

I'm thinking of another story in the Bible. It comes from a time after Jesus had died and risen. It's about people who weren't ready for that special meal we call The Lord's Supper that Jesus started before he died .

Paul wrote to people at a church in Corinth about it in a letter he sent them. He said something like this* to those people:

**See Appendix 1*

In what way were they not ready?
Were they late for the meal?
Were they wearing the wrong clothes?
Could you tell by looking at them that they were not ready?

(Help the children to see that they were not ready on the inside because of their arguments, by not caring about each other and forgetting that the Lord's Supper was for being with Jesus and remembering what He had done for them.)

Apply - 5 minutes

Ready or Not: Is it that Simple?

Read out the scenarios in Appendix 2 one at a time. Have children sort them into one of the three categories below. Alternately, if children need to move, have them run to one of three designated places in the room instead!

Ready on the outside.

Ready on the inside.

Not ready.

There may be some valuable discussion about where a scenario belongs!

One to Get Ready: What Can I Do?

Help each person in your family choose one outside thing and one inside thing they could do for the next four weeks on Saturday evening or Sunday morning to help get ready to go to Communion. Write these things down and help each other to keep them.

After four weeks are over, find out what difference doing those things made. Is there something else you could choose to do going forward?

Write down your ideas here:

Continue - 5 minutes

Have some fun now imagining what would happen if some of the people who serve at your church were not ready. The idea is to think about how getting ready can be more than just for ourselves. Give kids a chance to think of some funny examples of their own.

Imagine if...

- ❖ Ashley was supposed to pick up the bread, but when her alarm went off at 6:00 am, she rolled over saying, "I'm too tired."
- ❖ There were no bulletins today. Carrie said it's about time everyone had the service memorized.
- ❖ Ms. Emily told the kids, "Today we are just going to practice holding our breath. Is that okay?"
- ❖ Derek didn't feel like practicing the music ahead of time, so he kept stopping and saying, "Wait. Let me try that again."
- ❖ Fr. Rick looked confused. "What. Was I supposed to preach today?"

Before you make your bread, thank Jesus for his sacrifice for you. Ask him to help you find the best ways to be ready to remember him, receive his forgiveness, be at peace with others and find the help you need to follow him with your whole heart.

Close by blessing your children with these baptismal prayers or some other blessing!

May Father, Son and Spirit:

Deliver you from the way of sin and death

Open your heart to his grace and truth

Fill you with his Holy and life-giving Spirit

Keep you in the faith and communion of his Holy Church

Teach you to love others in the power of the Spirit

Send you into the world in witness to his love

Bring you to the fullness of his peace and glory.

Amen

Appendix 1

Paul's message to the Corinthians

I'm afraid I don't have good things to say to you about the way you gather for the Lord's Supper. You are doing more harm than good! To start with, you have disagreements that you don't try to work out. For another thing, you don't seem to understand what the Lord's Supper is supposed to be! You have turned it into a party where some people have all they want, and others have nothing. Do you think this is what the Lord's Supper should be like? I think you need to be reminded. So let me tell you:

The night Jesus was betrayed, he took the bread and broke it and said,

"This is my body, broken for you.

Do this to remember me."

After supper, he took the cup and said,

"This cup is my blood of the new covenant with you.

Each time you drink it, remember me."

So each of you should get ready before you come to the Lord's Supper by examining your life. It is a serious thing not to! When you gather, you should eat together like a family who loves one another. If you have something against someone else, you should try your best to make it right before you come.

Appendix 2

I didn't like what we had for breakfast and I didn't get to sit in the spot I wanted. Things are not very good around here.

Sometimes I have a hard time making up my mind, so I decided the night before what to wear and set it out.

I am thankful for the friends I have. That's what I'm going to say when my Leader asks us what we give God thanks and praise for.

My little brother took one of my cars this morning, but I let him have it so we wouldn't fight.

Wow, does my hair look good. It took me a long time to get it just the way I want. My mom says we are going to be late now. Whatever.

I told my sister I was sorry for something I said to her that wasn't very nice.

I hate that kid at school who called me a bad name.

I said, "okay" when my mom said it was time to get in the car.

I did everything my parents asked me to this morning. At least I am better than my brother who wouldn't get off the computer when it was time to go.

I don't understand all the words at communion but I really feel God loves me when I am there. I'm looking forward to being there.

We prayed for our pastor this morning.

I did something I know I shouldn't have and it's making me sad. I think church is the best place for me to go to sort out what to do.

Everything went wrong this morning. I guess it was mostly my fault. Jesus helped me to say sorry when I didn't really feel like it.

I'm glad to be God's child.

Appendix 3

Communion Bread



Sift dry ingredients (important!) **together three times:**

2 c whole wheat flour

1 c white flour

1 & 1/4 tsp baking powder

1 & 1/4 tsp salt

Stir in 4 tsp oil. Set aside.

Mix wet ingredients together until dissolved:

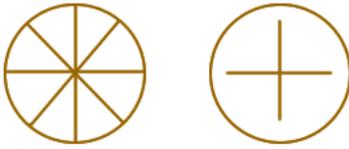
3/4 cup + 2 Tbsp very hot water (minimum of 180 degrees F)

3 Tbsp honey

3 Tbsp molasses

Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and mix well. Dough should be slightly sticky. Do not knead.

Divide into four balls and flatten each into a 1/4 inch thick disk.



With a knife, score the top of each loaf into eight pie-shaped sections, so that the sections can be more easily broken off while serving. Alternatively, you could score a cross onto the loaf.

Lay the loaves on a baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and brush the tops of the loaves with oil. Bake an additional 5-8 minutes. Let cool.

Yield: four 8 oz. loaves. Each loaf serves 60-70 people, depending upon the size of the piece given. The loaves freeze well.

Luther Seminary Communion Bread:
inside.luthersem.edu/community-care/chapel/

Prepare for the Feast

Getting Ready with My Family

is a companion resource to

Share the Feast

Communion Preparation for the Children of God

