

Preparing for Holy Communion

Session 1 - 27th April – Gathering as God's family

Any questions about the service we just had?

Jesus talks a lot about family and belonging.

What is special about belonging to your family?

How does it feel to belong at St Mary's Church?

Church: body of Christ – 1 Cor12.12-31

Paul Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body, and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say,

Foot: "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,"

Paul it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

And if the ear should say,

Ear "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,"

Paul it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand,

Eye "I don't need you!"

Paul And the head cannot say to the feet,

Head "I don't need you!"

Paul Actually, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are really important, and the parts that we think aren't as lovely we treat with special honour. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

What do you think of Paul's idea: the Church as the body of Christ?

Do you feel that some jobs are more important in church than others? And how can we make everyone feel special and that they belong?

When we come into church, we come as we are, and God welcomes us. How do we welcome others to church and to God's family?

Preparing for Holy Communion

Session 2 – 4th May – ‘Sorry’ and forgiveness

The Story of Two Sons (Luke 15.11-end)

Jesus said, There was a man who had two sons. The younger son said to his father, ‘Give me now the part of your property that I am supposed to receive someday.’ So the father divided everything he had between his two sons.

A few days later the younger son gathered up all that he had and left. He travelled far away to another country, and there he wasted his money living like a fool. After he spent everything he had, there was a terrible famine throughout the country. He was hungry and needed money. So he went and got a job with one of the people who lived there. The man sent him into the fields to feed pigs. He was so hungry that he wanted to eat the food the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything.

He realized that he had been very foolish. He thought, ‘All my father’s servants have plenty of food. But here I am, starving. I will leave and go to my father. I will say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and have done wrong to you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. But let me be like one of your servants.’ So he left and went to his father.

While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him coming and felt sorry for him. So he ran to him and hugged and kissed him. The son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against God and have done wrong to you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Hurry! Bring the best clothes and put them on him. Also, put a ring on his finger and good sandals on his feet. And bring our best calf and cook it so that we can celebrate. My son was dead, but now he is alive again! He was lost, but now he is found!’ So they began to have a party.

The older son had been out in the field. When he came near the house, he heard the sound of music and dancing. So he called to one of the servant boys and asked, ‘What does all this mean?’ The boy said, ‘Your brother has come back, and your father is happy because he has his son back safe and sound.’

The older son was angry and would not go in to the party. So his father went out and begged him to come in. But he said to his father, ‘Look, for all these years I have worked for you. I have always done what you told me to do, and you never gave me anything for a party with my friends. But then this son of yours comes home after wasting your money on prostitutes, and you kill the best calf for him!’

His father said to him, ‘Oh, my son, you are always with me, and everything I have is yours. But this was a day to be happy and celebrate. Your brother was dead, but now he is alive. He was lost, but now he is found.’

How many times do we forgive? (Matthew 18.21-22)

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, when someone^[a] won’t stop doing wrong to me, how many times must I forgive them? Seven times?” Jesus answered, “I tell you, you must forgive them more than seven times. You must continue to forgive them even if they do wrong to you seventy-seven times.

What’s the hardest thing you’ve ever had to say sorry for?

What’s the hardest thing you’ve ever had to forgive?

Jesus said, ‘I am the light of the world.’ What helps us see clearly when we have done something wrong?

Why do we say sorry in church? What happens when we do?

What happens when we share the peace with one another?

Preparing for Holy Communion

Session 3 – 11th May – Readings, Creed & Prayers

What is your favourite Bible story? Why do you like it?

What do we hear about in the Old Testament?

What do we hear about in the New Testament Epistles (letters)?

What do we hear about in the gospels?

What do you think is the most important bit of Good News in the Bible?

Look at the creed (affirmation of faith).

Why is it important that we say it together in church?

Praying together

What sorts of things do we usually include when we pray in church?

Do you find praying difficult or easy in church? What helps you?

Do you find praying difficult or easy at home? What helps you?

There are lots of things we can do in prayer. Some people use the word ACTS to remember things to include:

A – adoration (tell God you love him)

C – confession (say sorry and ask for forgiveness)

T – thanksgiving (say thank you for something good)

S – supplication (that means asking for things – for yourself or others)

Or you can use your hand:

Thumb – make a ‘thumbs up’ sign to say thank you for something good.

Index finger – point, to ask God to help you with a difficult choice

Middle finger – pray for people who are strong or in authority

Ring finger – pray for the people you love

Little finger – pray for people who aren’t powerful – or who are suffering

Or you could try hugging a cushion, lighting a candle, holding a pebble....

Preparing for Holy Communion

Session 4 – 26th May – Bread & wine, body & blood

Some people have precious things that remind them of a special time or event in their life. Do you have any? How do you treat precious things?

Jesus and Holy Communion (Mark 14.22-25)

Narrator During the meal Jesus took some bread in his hands. He blessed the bread and broke it. Then he gave it to his disciples.

Jesus Take this. It is my body.

Narrator Jesus picked up a cup of wine and gave thanks to God. He gave it to his disciples, and they all drank some.

Jesus This is my blood, which is poured out for many people, and with it God makes his promise. From now on I will not drink any wine, until I drink new wine in God's kingdom.

What did Jesus mean about the bread and wine as his body and blood?

Why do we keep repeating 'the thing with the bread and wine'?

What makes it special?

Holy Communion is one of the special things that the church calls a **Sacrament: “An outward, visible sign or an inward, spiritual grace.”**

What are the ‘outward’ aspects of Holy Communion?

What do you think the ‘inward spiritual’ aspect might be?

Baptism is also a sacrament.

In baptism, what are the outward aspects?

And what are the inward, spiritual aspects?

People say that Jesus is the best sacrament. What does this mean?

Is the church a sacrament? Are you a sacrament?

How do we recognise Jesus at other times, not just in church?

Preparing for Holy Communion

Session 5 – 11th June – ‘Go in peace.....’

Holy Communion is like food for a journey. At the end of the service we are sent out to do the real work of God, in the world. It’s the most important bit of the service.

Look at the order of service together. For each bit, think about:

What does this look like in church?

How does this relate to the rest of life – at school, at home...?

Being part of God’s family in church

...and outside church?

“Sorry” and being forgiven in church

...and outside church?

Reading the Bible in church

...and outside church?

Standing up for your faith in church

...and outside church?

Praying in church

...and outside church?

Being part of God's family in church

...and outside church?

Praising God in church

...and outside church?

Offering God things in church

...and outside church?

Jesus being with you in church

...and outside church?

God blessing you in church

...and outside church?