



Diocese of Bristol

Communion *before* Confirmation



Guidelines for churches exploring Communion with children

Originally Written for the Diocese of Bristol by:

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The following materials have been used:

- Original material from the Diocese of Bristol document
- The admission of the Baptised to Holy Communion before Confirmation Policy and Documented Implementation System
- considerable material from "We Welcome You" used with the kind permission of the Diocese of Oxford
- Guidelines and sample letters produced by General Synod - 2006

Further copies available from:

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Communion before Confirmation

Guidelines for churches

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Preparing a Parish...

for the Admission of Children to Communion before Confirmation

This pack is designed to help those parishes wishing to consider admitting children to communion before confirmation. It is an exciting change within the Church of England and is an issue that involves the whole congregation. It is therefore important that the subject is discussed widely and at a number of levels, theologically, historically, pastorally and educationally.

This process takes the following form:

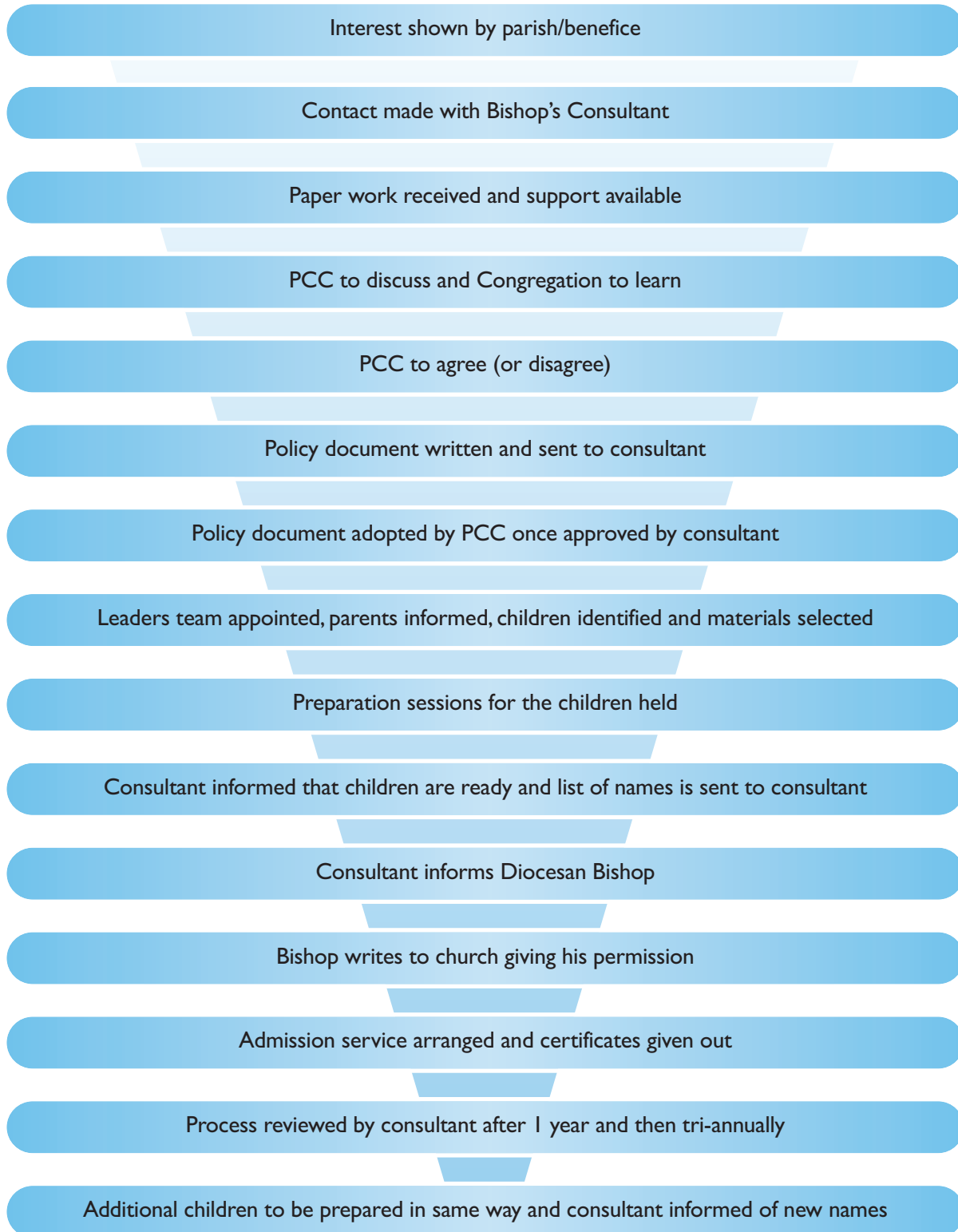
- Interest shown
 - Initial discussions within the PCC
 - Preparation and consultation with congregation -Education
 - Letter to Bishop's consultant expressing interest
 - PCC/DCC discuss in detail and vote -Developing a policy
 - Policy to be sent to Bishop's consultant and then to Bishop Mike for his consent
 - Parental preparation
 - Children's preparation
 - Children admitted to communion
 - Ongoing monitoring & review
- >>> more details given elsewhere in this booklet >>>

Whilst it is the PCC's responsibility to own the overall policy, this should be done in consultation with the Bishop's consultant and with reference to this booklet. A specially appointed working group may be set up to manage and implement the scheme on the PCC's behalf. In all instances the Bishop's consultant must be involved and the Diocesan Bishop's permission must be given.

The decision to admit children to communion is a challenging but exciting step. The PCC will need to consider the nurture and the care of all its members. Issues of faith development and implications for rites of passage as well as patterns of worship will need to be considered. It is therefore not a decision which should be taken lightly. Considerable time and commitment will be needed for its proper implementation, but it is well worth the effort and help is available from the Bishop's consultant to this diocese.

It is hoped that this pack will help you to begin to explore this issue with a step by step guide through the Diocesan procedures, as well as information and details of further resources.

Flow chart to plot progress



Setting the scene....

An Ecumenical Dimension

Other churches have also been examining their approaches and have produced various reports that encourage and enable change:

- The United Reformed Church discussed their diverse practice in 1970 in Children and Communion
- The 1987 Methodist Conference approved the report Children at Communion
- The Church of Scotland discussed their situation in the 1982 essays Children at the Table
- The Roman Catholic Church prepares children to receive their first communion around the age of seven years and they are then confirmed at a later date around the age of twelve.

In 1997 we were given a set of guidelines from the House of Bishops which opened up the way for Parishes in England to explore for themselves this important issue. These have recently been updated by the General Synod. This process has happened slowly and gradually in some Dioceses. Now it is possible in this Diocese ; some have waited a long time to reach this stage.

From General Synod (Regulations 2006)

Admission of baptised children to Holy Communion

The General Synod hereby makes the following Regulations under paragraph 1(c) of Canon B15A

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Admission of Baptised children to holy communion Regulations 2006 and shall come into force on such day as the Archbishops of Canterbury and York may jointly appoint.
2. Children who have been baptised but who have not yet been confirmed and who are not yet ready and desirous to be confirmed as required by paragraph 1(a) of Canon B15A may be admitted to Holy Communion provided that the conditions set out in these Regulations are satisfied.
3. Every diocesan bishop may at any time make a direction to the effect that applications from parishes under these Regulations may be made in his diocese. The bishop's discretion in this respect shall be absolute, and he may at any time revoke such a direction (without prejudice to the validity of any permission already granted thereunder).
4. Where a direction under paragraph 3 is in force in a diocese, an incumbent may apply to the bishop for permission that children falling within the definition in paragraph 2 may be admitted to Holy Communion in one or more of the parishes in the incumbent's charge. Such application must be made in writing and must be accompanied by a copy of a resolution in support of the application passed by the parochial church council of each parish in respect of which the application is made.
5. Before granting any permission under paragraph 4, the bishop must first satisfy himself (a) that the parish concerned has made adequate provision for preparation and continuing nurture in the Christian life and will encourage any child admitted to Holy Communion under these Regulations to be confirmed at the appropriate time and (b) where the parish concerned is within the area of a local ecumenical project established under Canon B 44, that the other participating Churches have been consulted.
6. The bishop's decision in relation to any application under paragraph 4 shall be final, but a refusal shall not prevent a further application being made on behalf of the parish concerned, provided that at least one year has elapsed since the most recent previous application was refused.
7. Any permission granted under paragraph 4 shall remain in force unless and until revoked by the bishop. The bishop must revoke such permission upon receipt of an application for the purpose made by the incumbent. Such application must be made in writing and accompanied by a copy of a resolution in support of the application passed by the parochial church council of each parish in respect of which the application is made. Otherwise, the bishop may only revoke a permission granted under paragraph 4 if he considers that the conditions specified in paragraph 5 are no longer being satisfactorily discharged. Before revoking any permission on these grounds, the bishop shall first notify the incumbent of his concerns in writing shall afford the incumbent a reasonable time to respond and, where appropriate, to take remedial action.
8. Where a permission granted under paragraph 4 is in force, the incumbent shall not admit any child to Holy Communion unless he or she is satisfied that (a) the child has been baptised and (b) a person having parental responsibility for the child is content that the child should be so admitted. Otherwise, subject to any direction of the bishop, it is within the incumbent's absolute discretion to any direction of the bishop, it is within the incumbent's absolute discretion to decide whether, and if so when, any child should first be admitted to Holy Communion.

9. The incumbent shall maintain a register of all the children admitted to Holy Communion under these Regulations, and where practicable will record on the child's baptismal certificate the date and place of the child's first admission. If the baptismal certificate is not available, the incumbent shall present the child with a separate certificate recording the same details.
10. A child who presents evidence in the form stipulated in paragraph 9 that he or she has been admitted to Holy Communion under these Regulations shall be so admitted at any service of Holy Communion conducted according to the rites of the Church of England in any place, regardless of whether or not any permission under paragraph 4 is in force in that place until revoked.
11. These Regulations shall apply to a cathedral as if it were a parish, with the modifications that:
- (a) any application under paragraphs 3 or 7 must be made by the dean of the cathedral concerned, accompanied by a copy of a resolution in support of the application passed by the chapter of the cathedral concerned.
 - (b) the obligations imposed on the incumbent under paragraphs 8 and 9 shall be imposed on the dean of the cathedral concerned.
12. A diocesan bishop may delegate any of his functions under these Regulations (except his functions under paragraph 3) to a person appointed by him for the purpose, being a suffragan or an assistant bishop or archdeacon of the diocese.
13. In these Regulations:
- (a) 'incumbent', in relation to a parish, includes:
 - (i) in a case where the benefice concerned is vacant (and paragraph (ii) below does not apply), the rural dean;
 - (ii) in a case where a suspension period (within the meaning of the Pastoral Measure 1983) applies to the benefice concerned, the priest-in-charge;
 - (iii) in a case where a special cure of souls in respect of the parish has been assigned to a vicar in a team ministry by a Scheme under the Pastoral Measure 1983 or by license from the bishop, that the vicar.
 - (b) references to paragraph numbers are to the relevant paragraph or paragraphs in these Regulations.

Admitting children to...

Holy Communion before Confirmation

The Process - step by step discussions questions

1. Education

The Incumbent must ensure that there has been adequate opportunity for teaching and open discussions about this matter with the whole congregation.

Some possible ways of doing this are:

- *Introductory Sermons*
- *Articles in the parish magazine or pew sheet*
- *Agenda item at the next Annual General Meeting*
- *Evening Teach -in and discussion*

Raising Awareness

Imagine a group of people of all ages going for a walk together. At times the children and adults will walk along together, talking as they go, sharing stories with first one person and then another, each observing different things and sharing their discoveries. At times the children will lag behind and some of the adults will have to wait for them or urge them on.

Sometimes the smallest children may ask to be carried . At other times, though, the children will dash ahead making new discoveries and may, perhaps, pull the adults along to see what they have found. Some adults may well behave like these children, of course. For all there will be times of progress and times of rest and refreshment,time to admire the view, and times of plodding on, and the eventual satisfaction of arrival at their destination.

[Children in the Way:](#)
[A Report of The General Synod Board of Education, The National Society and Church House Publishing 1988 \(page 17\)](#)

Additional discussion questions:

1. How closely does this image describe the situation in your church?
2. How would the question of allowing children to receive communion before confirmation affect and change that situation?
3. In what ways can the whole congregation be involved in exploring the issue of Communion before Confirmation?

2. Developing a policy

The PCC/DCC/UBC must discuss the issue fully, looking at all the implications and there must be a two-thirds majority in favour. A formal resolution must be carried and recorded in the minutes. Under normal circumstances such a policy would only be approved where there was unanimity across the Team / Benefice. This process will include:

- PCC reviews provision of nurture and care across the ages but especially with children.
- PCC draws up principles and guidelines of provision for nurture and care of children and young people and begins to make appropriate plans for implementation to a sub-group.

- PCC looks at implications for worship; how much of the liturgy communicate children will attend; their involvement and participation in worship, how frequently they will take Communion
- PCC needs to discuss the place of confirmation as an opportunity for a more mature and reflective confession of faith in perhaps the later teen years.
- A presentation of the policy and procedures should be submitted to the congregation for their information and prayerful reflection.
- PCC needs to set up the procedure for the implementation of the policy and its workings.
- PCC submits the policy and procedures to the Diocesan Bishop's approval. This is done through the Bishop's consultant, who will then advise the Bishop as to whether the parish has implemented the necessary support and ongoing nurture for the children.

You are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptised into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Jesus Christ (Galatians 3: 26-28)

Additional discussion questions:

1. Does the Church have a strategy of nurture and care from birth to the grave?
How is it expressed?
2. Is the worship of the church accessible to all its members?
3. How might the children be meaningfully included in the Eucharist?

3. Implementing the policy

- Meeting with parents of the children eligible to receive communion before confirmation to discuss the issues and look at the teaching material.
- Children must be baptised and a minimum of six years of age
- The child should be declaring an interest in receiving communion
- Ideally at least one parent should attend church regularly and be a communicant member. Where this is not possible a suitable sponsor may be appointed. In these cases the parents' permission must be given
- Appropriate teaching and preparation material should be used with the children.
The preparation material should include:
 - *Basic teaching of faith and prayer*
 - *Knowledge of the story of Jesus*
 - *The place and symbolism of the Eucharist in the Jesus story and in church tradition*
- Where possible a workshop should be run for children and parents together.
- A record should be kept of those children admitted to communion and a certificate given (or an endorsement of their Baptismal certificate)
- The children must receive on going nurture and support. This may be through the regular Sunday or the usual midweek children's teaching programme. This should, at the appropriate time, lead to confirmation.

- Once a child has received communion in one Parish, he/she must be allowed to receive communion when visiting other churches or when moving to another parish.

They brought children for him to touch. The disciples rebuked them, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant, and said to them, "let the children come to me and do not stop them; for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these (Mark 10: 13 -16)

Additional discussion questions:

1. What would be the most appropriate format for preparing the children to receive communion?
2. How will parents be included in the preparation?
3. In what ways, if any, will the church mark the occasion when the children are admitted to communion?

N.B. Parents must understand that the children need to show a real desire to receive Holy Communion for themselves. Children should not be admitted on the basis of parental aspiration alone.

4. Review

The Bishop's Consultant to Communion before Confirmation on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop will review the scheme at the end of the first year following children being allowed to receive, and tri-annually thereafter.

Whoever welcomes in my name one of these children welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not only me but also the one who sent me (Mark 9: 37)

Additional discussion questions:

1. How will the church monitor the admission of children to communion?
2. What ongoing nurture and support will be offered to the children and their families?
3. How is the admission of children to communion contributing to the overall experience of worship in the church?

The House of Bishops and General synod have determined that no children admitted to communion should be deprived of admission if they move to another parish not normally admitting children before confirmation.

Summary of the Procedures...

for a Parish wishing to consider inviting children to receive Communion before Confirmation

At the meeting of General Synod in November 1996, the church of England approved the admission of Baptised children to communion before confirmation subject to certain conditions. Churches will need to satisfy the Bishop's Consultant that the guidelines approved within the diocese have been formally adopted by the incumbent, the PCC and are supported by the congregation. Churches seeking this permission will also need to demonstrate that there is a suitable programme of ongoing care and development in place for the children.

The decision to admit children to communion is a challenging but exciting step for the Anglican church to make, and it will require the education and involvement of not just the PCC and the children but of the whole congregation. The PCC will need to consider the nurture and care of all its members, issues of faith development, and implications for rites of passage as well as the implications for patterns of worship. It is therefore not a decision which should be taken lightly. Considerable time and commitment will be needed for its proper implementation.

A parish looking to begin this process should send for a copy of the information pack and must consult the Bishop's consultant at the earliest opportunity. She will be able to help the parish with advice, and further resources, as well as acting as the link between the parish and the Diocesan Bishop.

Requirements for a Parish Considering...

the Admission of Children to Communion before Confirmation

1. Education

The Incumbent must ensure that there has been adequate opportunity for teaching and open discussion about this matter with the whole congregation. Some possible ways of doing this are:

- Introductory sermons and family service talks
- Articles in parish magazine or pew sheet
- Agenda item at the next Annual General Meeting or arrange a special meeting to discuss the topic
- Circulation of paper on theological principles

2. Developing a policy

The PCC/DCC/UBC must discuss the issue fully, looking at all the implications (theological, structural, cultural) and there must be two - thirds majority in favour. A formal resolution must be carried and recorded in the minutes. Under normal circumstances such a policy would only be approved where there was unanimity across the Team / Benefice. This process will include:

- PCC reviews provision of nurture and care across the ages but especially with children
- PCC draws up principles and guidelines of provision for nurture and care of children and young people and begins to make appropriate plans for implementing of these principles. It may delegate the implementation to a sub-group.
- PCC looks at implications for worship; how much of the liturgy communicant children will attend; their involvement and participation in worship, how frequently they will take communion.
- PCC needs to discuss the place of confirmation as an opportunity for more mature and reflective confession of faith in perhaps the later teen years.
- A presentation of policy and procedures should be submitted to the congregation for their information and prayerful reflection.
- PCC needs to set up the procedure for the implementation of the policy and its outworking.
- PCC submits the policy & procedures to the Bishop's Consultant for approval. They will advise the Diocesan Bishop as to whether the parish has implemented the necessary support and nurture.

3. Implementing the policy

- Meeting with parents of eligible children to discuss the issues and look at teaching material.
- Children must be baptised and a minimum of six years of age.
- The child should be declaring an interest in receiving communion
- Ideally at least one parent should attend church regularly and be a communicant member. Where this is not possible a suitable sponsor may be appointed. In these cases parents' permission must be given.
- Appropriate teaching and preparation material should be used. The material should include: basic teaching of faith and prayer; knowledge of the story of Jesus; the place and symbolism of the Eucharist in the Jesus story and in the church tradition.
- Where possible run a workshop for children and parents together.
- A record should be kept of children receiving communion and certificate given (or an endorsement of their Baptismal certificate)
- The children must receive on ongoing nurture and support. This may be through the regular Sunday or the midweek children's teaching programme and should at the appropriate time lead to confirmation.
- Once a child has received communion in one Parish, he/she must be allowed to receive communion when visiting other churches.

4. Review

The Bishop's consultant on behalf of the Diocesan Bishop will review the scheme at the end of the first year following children being allowed to receive, and tri-annually thereafter.

Suggested outline for a first Open Church Meeting:

To consider the question of children being admitted to Communion before Confirmation

Aim of session:

To give an opportunity for as many members from the church/churches as possible to hear about and discuss the issues related to the admission of Children to Communion before Confirmation. Rural churches will be likely to be working in partnership with others within a multi parish benefice for this meeting and to put mixed church representatives in each group. NB: This is not a decision making meeting.

Coffee on arrival

Bible reading - (Matthew 18: 1-14 or Matthew 21: 12-17)

Prayer:

Welcome & introduction - to outline the reasons for the meeting and the format:

Divide into groups of about 5 or 6 people and give everyone a copy of the General Synod guidelines. Where members are attending from a number of churches it might be helpful to work in mixed church groups. Give each group 2 large sheets of paper and invite them to consider quickly together what their initial reactions are to the guidelines. Record all reactions on large sheet of paper. After 10 minutes give each group a copy of the "Issues to consider" sheet and invite them to discuss what issues will need to be considered by the parish in the light of the guidelines. The questions could be written on an overhead projector or flipchart (OHP copy on page 17 for photocopying).

Issues to Consider:

Having looked at the guidelines what issues do they raise for our church/benefice, in relation to:

- Our Eucharistic worship
- Our ongoing nurture of the children
- Our present strategy for Baptism and Confirmation
- Our work with families

Record the key issues and feedback to plenary on one of the key issues from your group.

Open plenary

Each group leader to feed back one issue to the plenary (not for discussion at this point). If time permits, further issues may be raised and /or discussed. Both large sheets of responses should be handed in by each group at the end of the plenary session, so that all reactions can be registered and collated at a later date, either by the PCC or the working group.

Ending - where do you go from here?

An opportunity to explain to the meeting the purposed next steps in the process. Explain how feedback from the PCC, on the findings of the open meeting, will be communicated from the PCC or Benefice council to the rest of the church.

Closing Prayer & Grace

God of our pilgrimage,

You have led us to the living water. Refresh and sustain us as we go forward on our journey, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Preparing the Way...

Some thoughts on the preparation of children to receive Communion

Each parish is different and the nurture of the children will vary from Sunday to midweek groups to participation in the weekly services. It is therefore important that how the children are prepared to receive communion fits into the church's pattern. Some may want preparation to take place over a series of weeks maybe as part of the ongoing programme. Other churches may wish to prepare the children to be admitted to communion at another time during the week. Some parishes prepare the children to receive their first communion in the week leading up to the Sunday through a series of evening meetings so that the whole week becomes the preparation and planning for the event.

Parental Involvement

Where possible it is important for the children's parents to be involved in the preparation, either by being shown the preparation material beforehand, or being included in at least one of the sessions. Also they could be involved in what the children are doing between sessions with take home sheets, questions about their child's Baptism etc.

Preparation in its content

For the children the time of preparation isn't about what they can learn and understand theologically about the communion, but rather its place in the Christian story and the story of the church. Also for them to gain some sense of their belonging to God through the significance of the sacrament.

The sessions may include:

- Belonging - In our homes, the Church family and Jesus' family
- Why we belong to God - Baptism, Jesus' love for us
- How we belong - prayer, sharing, symbols of the church
- Celebration - sharing meals, special times, remembering, The Last Supper
- The Church - the people, who does what, the service
- My communion - sharing thoughts after receiving communion, expressing feelings and looking at the way ahead

>>> Turn to page 17 for suggested resources to help you explore communion with children >>>

Using Active Methods of Learning

In the last thirty years the American educationalists James Fowler and John Westerhoff have done a lot of work on how faith develops. Faith they say is above all else to be exercised. It is an active verb more than a noun. John Westerhoff underlines the implicit learning and life formation that takes place in young children through symbol and ritual as well as story telling of the church. Being there and being involved are dually important.

Any preparation that is done with the children must therefore be participative and active. Inviting the children to do their own research, express their own feelings, talk to other members of the congregation. Being present at the Eucharist as part of the preparation will all help the children to feel a greater sense of belonging and significance of the communion. It may also prove to be a learning process for others in the congregation. In some instances during the preparation of the children, someone, not usually the celebrant, might prepare a series of comments on the liturgy of the service and at five or six points through the proceedings pause to say a little about what is happening at this point and why.

Time and again local churches have discovered that preparing and bringing children to communion has given adults fresh eyes to see themselves as adult Christians and adult communicants. The occasion in one church when some of the children describe their thoughts as they walk up through the chancel to the altar rail will live in the memory for some time: It is a bit like going with Jesus, taking his cross towards the crucifixion. And after receiving communion, walking back down the church is like coming back from the empty tomb after discovering the resurrection."

- To share in the body of Christ article by Diana Murrie

Children & Communion

What are some of the arguments and issues?

Noted below are some of the arguments that might be presented for and against the admission of children to Holy communion before Confirmation. It can be seen that this is not just about of church tradition but also about doctrine, theology and emotion too.

1. People should only receive Holy Communion when they understand what it is all about!

A strong argument for delay until adulthood. Yet who can really say they 'understand'. Faith is about learning grace and it is not without reason that Confirmation has been said to be the 'best leaving service the church has ever devised'. And what about those adults who have chronologically reached 'maturity' but whose mental ability is less?

2. The ritual is inappropriate for children and the Eucharist should be rated 15.

Surprisingly, the more ritualistic celebration of the Anglo - Catholic tradition is perhaps more appropriate for children. The one time Bishop of Reading teasingly said 'All children are naturally Anglo Catholics because they love colour, and movement and ritual.' He also said they make good Evangelists because 'children love stories.' One can see why he was made a Bishop!

3. Holy Communion is an adult thing and I didn't receive before I was confirmed!

At the heart of this is one's view of children and childhood. The argument 'it didn't hurt me to wait' carries no bearing beyond 'why should someone get something earlier than I did' and the old 'children should be seen and not heard' argument.

4) What do we understand the Eucharist to be?

Jesus said 'do this in remembrance of me'. He didn't say: 'And oh, by the way you have to be confirmed and at least eleven years old.' In fact the opposite was the case, and Jesus rebuked the disciples who tried to prevent children approaching him telling them that unless they understood like children then they would not know the Kingdom of God.

5) It's not about understanding so much as a public commitment to the faith.

This is a strong argument for confirmation in a church that practices infant baptism. The teaching of the catholic and apostolic church is that it is baptism that confers membership of the body of Christ, not Confirmation. The rite of Confirmation is a public declaration of the faith that was made on one's behalf when a child by one's parents and Godparents.

Further thoughts for discussion and prayer.

- How do we view children who attend our church? Are they 'full members' of the body of Christ despite their age or are they in some way lesser members?
- Is the Eucharist something reserved only for adults, a holy mystery into which only the initiated may partake?
- What values does this view transmit about belonging to adults who have been baptised but not yet confirmed?
- Are all truly welcome at the Lord's table? Imagine a family meal at which some sit and eat and others are present but excluded. What does that say about our theology when we speak of 'family values'.

(used by courtesy of: Rev. Canon Andrew Evans, Rector of Hullavington, Norton and Stanton & St Quinton)

The Admission service

It might be helpful to choose an appropriate time of the year for the special service at which candidates are to be admitted to Holy Communion. The same time might then be reserved on an annual basis, if appropriate. Suitable times might be: Easter Day, All Saintside, Advent Sunday, the church patronal Festival. While the service needs to be a little special, it should not differ too much from the normal Communion liturgy to which the candidates are accustomed.

The Children and their Parents together with the Leadership Team could:

- a) design an appropriate liturgy for the service. This may well include: input from the candidates themselves and from their preparation times: the distribution of Certificates of Admission.
- b) arrange for any after - service catering etc.
- c) encourage the candidates to invite Godparents and wider family to the Admission Service .
- d) choose suitable cards / gifts from the church to mark the occasion. Then they should formally record those admitted to Communion in a parish register set aside for the purpose and send the same information to the information to the Bishop's Consultant.

Recommended resources

Children and Communion

Mission-shaped Children: moving towards a child-centred church - by Margaret Withers
(Church House Publishing / ISBN: 9780715140819)

Let the Children Come to Communion - by Stephen Lake (SPCK / ISBN: 9780281057955)

Through the Eyes of a Child: new insights from children doing theology edited Anne Richards
(CHP / ISBN: 9780715140888)

Infant Communion: The New Testament to the Reformation (Grove Books / ISBN: 1851745491)

On the Way: towards an integrated approach to Christian initiation (CHP / ISBN: 9780715137611)

Preparation Materials for Children

Children & Holy Communion by Diane Murrie (Kevin Mayhew / ISBN: 9781844171514)

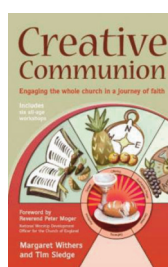
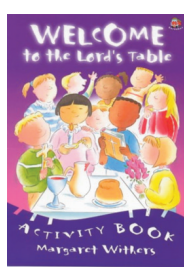
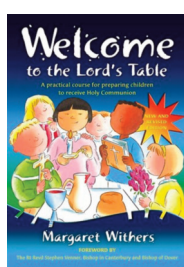
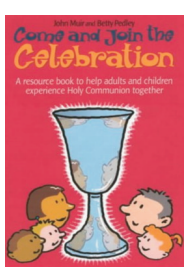
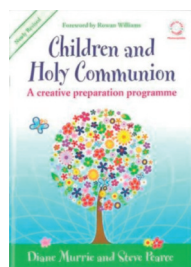
Come and Join the Celebration by John Muir & Betty Pedley (CHP/ ISBN: 9780715149478)

Welcome to The Lord's Table by Margaret Withers (Barnabas BRF / ISBN: 9781841015040)

Welcome to The Lord's Table activity book (Barnabas BRF / ISBN: 9781841010441)

Creative Communion by Margaret Withers & Tim Sledge (Barnabas BRF / ISBN: 9781841015330)

My Communion Book by Kathleen Crawford & Diane Murrie (CHP / ISBN: 9780715149461)



Issues to consider

Having looked at the guidelines what issues do they raise for us in this church in relation to:

- Our Eucharistic worship?
- Our ongoing nurture of the children?
- Our present strategy for Baptism & Confirmation
- Our work with families?

Questions to consider..

- What experience of faith and worship do you think a child has in your church?
- Given that communion is a central aspect to church life, how and when should we admit people to this - at Baptism or confirmation?

Record the key issues and report back to the rest of the group one of the key issues/discussions raised by your group



Parish Application Form

Admission of baptised persons to Holy Communion before confirmation

Parish:

Deanery: Incumbent:

Consultation:

Has the PCC discussed this subject in the light of the regulations? YES / NO

What was the outcome?

.....

How has the wider congregation been involved in the discussion?
(Including LEP established under Canon B44, or other participating churches)

.....

What was the outcome?

.....

What other guidance or advice has been sought (if any)?

.....

Preparation:

How will the preparation of the children for Holy Communion be organised?

.....

.....

.....

Who will lead the preparation, and what training will they be given?

.....

What teaching materials will be used?

.....

How will you nurture the children towards confirmation continue after they are admitted?

.....

.....

.....

Pastoral matters:

How will parents/guardians be involved in the preparation of their children for Holy Communion?

.....
.....

What strategy do you have for families who do not wish for their children to be admitted?

.....
.....

What strategy do you have for children who come to church without their parents/guardians?

.....
.....

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

.....
.....

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

- within the Eucharist?
- in non-Eucharistic worship
- in social events?

.....
.....
.....

Practical arrangements:

Please give information about...

- How will you give out the Certificate of Admission to the individual?
- How will you keep record of children who have been admitted?

.....
.....
.....

Signed: (Incumbent) Date:

Please return this form to the Bishop's Consultant for Communion before Confirmation:
Daniel Jones, Youth & Children's Adviser, All Saints Centre, 1 All Saints Court, Bristol BS1 1JN

I confirm that the parish of
may admit baptised persons to Holy Communion before confirmation.

Signed: Date:
Bishop's Consultant for Communion before Confirmation

Parental Support & Consent Form

Insert Church name and details here

Admission to Holy Communion before Confirmation

**I/we understand that our child/children
would like to be prepared to receive Holy Communion. We support this and understand that candidates must:**

- be baptised
- be a regular worshippers in this church/parish
- be willing to attend all the preparation sessions involved

I/we also understand that it is helpful for parents to attend the first and last preparation sessions.

Name of Child:

Date of birth:

Date of baptism:

Place of baptism:

Signature of parent(s)/Guardians(s):

.....
Date:

Please return to: (Clergy/Nominated person)

by: (insert date)



Invitation to informal meeting

Insert Church letterhead/name, details etc

Admission to Holy Communion before Confirmation

Dear parents/guardians,

Our church has been given permission by the Bishop of Bristol to admit those who have been baptised to Holy Communion before Confirmation. The Diocese sets some guidelines for this, the main features of which are:

Those seeking admission must...

- be baptised
- themselves be keen to receive Holy Communion
- be regular at worship
- attend a preparation course before admission

It is proposed to begin our preparation course on (insert date), with a view to candidates taking their first communion at the Admission Service on (date).

Your child/children (names) would, I believe satisfy the requirements set out above. We are holding a preliminary informal meeting for parents and guardians who would like more information on Communion before Confirmation on date) at (venue) to which you are invited.

Please could you complete the accompanying return slip and return it to me as soon as possible and at the latest by (date).

Yours sincerely,

..... (signature)

Incumbent/Curate/Nominated person



Parents/guardians response form

Insert Church letterhead/name, details etc

Parents/guardians meeting: Admitting the baptised to Communion

Date, time, place etc

Name of child/children:

Date of parents/guardians:

Address:

.....

Post code:

Email address:

Telephone / mobile number: /

Please delete as appropriate:

I am / we are interested in the possibility of our child / children being admitted to Holy Communion before Communion.

I am / we are not interested in the possibility of our child/children being admitted to Holy Communion before Communion.

I / we shall be attending the parents' meeting on:
(insert details of meeting).

I / we shall be not be attending the parents' meeting but would like to be informed of further developments.

I / we have the following questions/comments at this stage:

.....
.....
.....



Diocese of Bristol

Certificate

of Admission to Holy Communion

This is to certify that

.....

has successfully completed a preparation course
and is admitted to receive Holy Communion on:

.....

in the parish of:

Signed:

Incumbent / Churchwarden

Date: