

Children's Message  
4.15.07  
1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Easter

The first Sunday in May is Family Communion Sunday and to help us prepare for that Sunday, we are going to spend these three weeks learning more about what exactly communion is- and why it is so important that it is celebrated.

I think we need to start at the beginning. Another word for Communion is the Lord's Supper. And we know that Jesus told us to celebrate the Lord's Supper at the Last Supper- when Jesus was celebrating the Passover meal with his friends in the upper room, the night before He was crucified.

Listen to this from the Bible: Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I tell you that from now on I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And he did the same with the cup after supper, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. (Luke 22:17-20)

So, you see, during the Last Supper, Jesus gave new and special meanings to two of the foods that were already a part of the Passover meal.

First: The Bread. During communion, one of our ministers will hold up a loaf of bread and break it in half. Bread was a very common food during Jesus' time. Let's think about why we call it "breaking" the bread. We know that bread doesn't really break- like a cup or a plate. But we do know that in Jesus' time people didn't cut bread with a knife, they broke it with their hands. The bread represents Jesus' body. We will eat this bread to remember God's love for us. God gave his only son to us, and He died for us. We eat the bread to remember this.

Next: The Cup, or Challis. During communion, there will be a cup or challis, that one of our ministers will fill with grape juice. Grape juice, or wine, was a very common drink during Jesus' time. (Remember that there weren't any refrigerators during Jesus' time, and regular grape juice needs to be kept cool in order to stay fresh. Wine, because it has fermented, does not need to be kept cold- and would have lasted much longer.) The grape juice represents the Blood of Christ. We will remember that Jesus died for us and for sins (or the wrongdoings) of people. The grape juice is something that helps us to remember Jesus' blood. In the Bible it says that Jesus' blood reminds us of God's promise (or covenant) of a new life in Jesus.

We will remember as we share the Lord's Supper that we need more than food to fill our bodies. Food fills our stomach, but God is what fills our spirit. The Lord's Supper is meant to fill our spirits with a reminder of God's love for us.

Reverend Wiley, will you please lead us in a prayer?