

A Child's Communion by Jacques Venter



Often children of all ages feel left out on "Communion Sabbath." Not only is the symbolism above their heads, but the ritual seems strange—even rigid. As adults we are often at a loss to know what to do with the children; will they be welcome at the foot washing? Are they allowed to take part?

Seventh-day Adventists practice open communion where no matter who you are, you are welcome to take part. As church we believe that it is our responsibility to try and help our children to understand why we have communion and what every activity and sacrament symbolise. Our desire is that our willingness to teach our children about communion will give them a greater awareness of Jesus Christ in their lives.

As parents, I believe we can help our children experience, understand, and value communion through a simple follow-up experience in the week. Its design is to evoke reflection and discussion and ultimately as they grow older, understanding. These simple activities will provide an opportunity for you to help your child reflect on the communion that took place the Sabbath before and allow you to put it into action in a creative way.

Sunday - Altar

Items: stones, glue, card paper.

First help your child/ren collect some stones. Read or tell your child/ren the story of the Israelites crossing the Jordan River as found in Joshua 3:1 - 4:9. Help them build an altar on a piece of card paper. Explain that every time the Israelites saw the pile of rocks from the River Jordan, they would remember what God had done. Ask what other things God gives people in the Bible to help them remember what he has done (for instance, the Passover meal). Also use the opportunity to explain communion and why we celebrate it. Ask the children if they can think of any things we see every day that can remind us of something God has done for us.

Monday - Foot Washing

Items: bowl, warm water, towel.

Before picking your child/ren up from school put the kettle on to boil. Place the bowl and towel at the front door. When you arrive back have your child/ren take their shoes off. Take the water in the kettle, pour it into the bowl and wash their feet. Use this opportunity to explain to them that in the Bible times when people walked the dusty roads of Palestine in open sandals their feet quickly became dirty. Before reclining on the couch to eat, people washed both their hands and their feet. A servant often performed this task. The washing of feet still holds great significance in Asia and Africa where people wear open sandals and walk dusty paths. Touching another person's feet is a sign of humility. To wash somebody's feet says that you do not consider yourself better than they. Before Jesus and the disciples had communion He washed their feet. Alternatively you can prepare the same items for when mom or dad is going to arrive after work. Then help your children wash mom or dad's feet and then wash theirs. Or pick a different time in the day to wash your child/ren's feet.

Tuesday - Upper Room

Items: paper, colouring pencils.

Read to your child/ren the story of the upper room as found in Matthew 26:17-30. Help your child/ren draw a picture of the upper room with Jesus in the middle and the twelve disciples around the table. Help them decide where each disciple sat. Take opportunity to help them draw the lamb and bitter sauce and use this opportunity to share with them the meaning of this.



Wednesday - The Communion Scene

Items: raisins, big round or star stickers, coloured card paper, matzos / peanuts, glue.
Help your child cut out a rectangular piece of, coloured card paper and stick it on a white piece of paper. This will form the table. Help them stick twelve stickers around the table for the disciples and a different colour for Jesus in the middle of the table. Help them stick the raisins on the table pretending it was the juice and pieces of matzos / peanuts, pretending it was the bread. Use this opportunity to speak to them about the order in which Christ introduced the first communion service.

Thursday - The Wine



Items: bowl, bag of red grapes, glass.

Make sure your child/ren's hands are clean. Help them squash the grapes so that it will form juice. Drain the juice into a glass and let them drink it. Use this opportunity to explain to them why we use grape juice and not wine during communion. Also use this opportunity to explain to them the meaning of the symbol.

Friday - Unleavened Bread

Items: Unleavened Bread Recipe, Grape Juice.

Take time to help your child make unleavened bread. Here is a recipe:

2 cups whole wheat flour

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

7 tbsp oil (1/2 cup oil less 1 tbsp)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup water



Whip oil and water in blender until mixture turns white. Immediately add mixture to flour and salt and knead for several minutes until dough is elastic and ready for rolling. Roll out a thin ($\frac{3}{16}$ ") even layer directly onto cookie sheet. Score into $\frac{3}{4}$ " squares and prick each square with fork or toothpick. Bake at 350 degrees for 12-15 minutes. Do not over-bake as when it becomes too brown it tastes bitter. (Yield: two cookie sheets full approximately 400-500 pieces.) If communion

bread is frozen, reheat for a few minutes at low temperature before using.

While you make the bread talk to them about communion and what the bread means. Eat it with them while drinking some grape juice. By now you would have explained the meaning of grape juice and what it meant. Ask them if they remember what the grape juice symbolise in communion.