



The Episcopal Diocese of Hawai‘i

The Right Reverend Robert L. Fitzpatrick
Bishop

Diocesan Guidelines on Receiving Holy Communion (August 3, 2018)

In the Episcopal Church, all baptized Christians are invited to receive Holy Communion.

In our tradition, communion is offered in two kinds: the bread and the wine. The bread (either as a wafer host or as a small piece of loaf bread) is offered first and is typically placed in one's open palm and is administered with the words "The Body of Christ, the Bread of Heaven" or "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life". The sacrament is then immediately consumed. The chalice with wine is then offered with the words "The Blood of Christ, the Cup of Salvation" or "The Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ keep you in everlasting life". The sacrament is then consumed taking a small sip of wine from the chalice. In the Episcopal Church, this is the most typical and generally preferred means of taking the sacrament of Holy Communion.

Because of personal piety, a few people prefer to receive the host directly on the tongue. Though less common in the Episcopal Church, the practice is part of the Church's tradition. It is preferable to receive in this manner when a wafer host is used rather than "loaf" bread. One should extend the tongue when receiving in this manner so the Minister does not have to place the host deep into or touch the inside of the mouth.

Likewise, a person may choose to receive by intinction. This is particularly true when one is sick and chooses not to take the host alone. Please note that it is preferable to receive in this manner when a wafer host is used rather than loaf bread to prevent crumbs from accumulating in the bottom of the chalice. There are two practices of intinction: (A) In some congregations, intinction is when one dips a small corner of the host in the wine and then placing the slightly moistened host into one's own mouth. Please note that if this is practiced, the person needs to be careful not to put fingers into the wine or touch the inside of the chalice, and to only dip a very small portion of the host in the wine. One should avoid placing the whole host into the wine or allowing the wine to soak the host. (B) It should be noted that some congregations practice a form of intinction in which the communicant holds the host in the palm of the hand and the Eucharistic Minister takes the host, dips it slightly in the wine and then places it on the person's tongue. Either (A) or (B) is acceptable in this Diocese and should be determined by the congregation's priest with appropriate direction and teaching. When young children (under the age of five) receive by intinction, they should have the assistance of an adult and form (B) is often preferable. For the Bishop and many in the Episcopal Church, intinction is considered to be an exceptional practice and not normative.

While the normative practice in the Episcopal Church is to consume the bread and then to share the wine from a common cup, a person may receive the sacrament in one kind (just the bread or, more rarely, just the wine) when necessary for reasons of personal health or wellbeing, or because of personal piety and practice. Typically, this is practiced by taking the bread alone and then crossing one's arms over the chest when the wine is offered.

Those who are not baptized, or who though baptized decide not to receive the sacrament for personal or spiritual reasons, are invited and encouraged to come for a blessing, indicated by placing crossed hands over the chest.