



NORDIC AND BALTIC EPISCOPAL AREA

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

BISHOP CHRISTIAN ALSTED

Denmark
Estonia
Finland
Latvia
Lithuania
Norway
Sweden

Offering Communion On-line

Dear pastors

The corona virus pandemic and government issued measures prevents us from having worship in our churches. This urges us to look for other ways to worship and to offer pastoral care. Until we again are able to worship in our churches;

I give permission for pastors to offer communion online. This permission is given with reference to the church's official teaching on communion:

The Communion elements are consecrated and consumed in the context of the gathered congregation. The Table may be extended, in a timely manner, to include those unable to attend because of age, illness, or similar conditions. (p. 22 This Holy Mystery).

As the we are not able to gather around the communion table, the pastor may consecrate the elements in one of our churches and extend the table to those unavoidably absent and watching/listening to the worship service online and extend the table to them.

On-line Communion is an opportunity as part of a live-streamed on-line worship service or devotion. When celebrating Holy Communion online I ask you to observe the following:

- Communion should only be offered during live streamed worship services, where people participate in real-time.
- If recordings of such live streamed worship services are made available for persons to view at a later time, you should note that communion should only be taken when participating in real-time.
- In the announcement of the worship service, you should ask participants, who wish to take part in Holy Communion to have a piece of bread and a glass with juice available.
- You may utilize a short Communion ritual approved for use in the church in your annual conference.

The following is a suggestion for a short online Communion service:

- Welcome – introduction of communion (during the music, participants can find bread and fruit juice)
- Music
- Prayer (optional)



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- Scripture reading (optional)
Suggestion: Luke 24:13-35 (28-32) or John 6:30-35+48-51 or John 21:9-14. Jesus is coming to people in very different situations, and he shares his presence with us by offering bread to us and invites us to receive Him when we eat and drink.
- Short sermon (optional)
- Invitation to share the Lords Supper. Include preparing bread and/or something to drink.
- Confession of sin (from the communion ritual)
- The Apostolic Creed - invite participants to read with you (optional)
- Read a verse or two from one of the best known communion hymns (optional)
- Pray the Holy Spirit to come over people and the bread and wine in people's private homes.
- Sharing of bread and wine. Invite the participants to hold the bread and the wine in their hands when you read the words of institution from 1 Cor 11:23-24 (Invite listeners to eat the bread. Have 10 seconds silence) you read 1 Cor 11:25 (invite listeners to drink. Have 10 seconds silence) you read 1 Cor 11:26.
Our Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread,²⁴ and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body that is for^{al} you. Do this in remembrance of me."²⁵ In the same way he took the cup also, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."²⁶ For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
- Complete with closing texts and/or prayers from the order of Communion.
- Blessing
- Music

Thank you for your good ministry during this extraordinary time.

May Christ bless us all

Christian Alsted

