

GUIDANCE NOTES

On the Restoration of the 'Common Cup' (the shared chalice) at the Eucharist



The Church of England has asked us to restore the 'Common Cup', ie to return to the practice of receiving the consecrated wine at the Eucharist from a shared chalice. The Common Cup is important in the celebration of the Eucharist because it is a sign of our unity, both with each other and with Christ. The Liturgical Commission has expressed the theological ideas behind this as follows.

*Drinking from a common cup is a strong symbol of unity, and of a Christian's belonging to, and responsibility towards, others and, not least, Christ. Before the crucifixion, Christ prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet not what I want but what you want' (Matthew 26:39b). The cup from which the communicant drinks is not their own, but Christ's cup of self-sacrificial love.*¹

We shall be returning to the use of a shared chalice from the first Sunday in August (7th). A few points of detail are set out below:

1. There is absolutely NO OBLIGATION to receive the wine at Communion. We entirely understand that some people may feel anxious about this. If you do not wish to receive the wine, then simply leave the altar rail after you have received the bread (wafer).
2. Intinction by communicants (ie dipping the wafer in the wine in the chalice) is not permitted.
3. We will return to our former practice of receiving Communion from the altar rail.
4. Please go up to Communion, in single file, on the left-hand side (north side) of the nave as you face the altar, as directed by the Sidesmen.
5. Line up at the altar rail from left to right, filling in spaces as they come free. (There is no need to kneel unless you wish to do so.)
6. Return to your seats in single file down the right-hand (south side) of the nave.
7. The practice of everyone returning to their seat via the south aisle will be discontinued.

Please do speak to me if you have any queries.

Every blessing

Rachel

The Revd RACHEL HAWES (Associate Rector)

¹ *Holy Communion: Distribution of the Elements* – The Liturgical Commission, at para 4.