

November 20, 2024 // The Rev. Ben Robertson

### *Communion Changes*

Celebrating the Holy Eucharist, whether we receive the bread and wine, only the bread, or a blessing, is our central act as a community. According to the Prayer Book, the Eucharist is a foretaste of the heavenly banquet and a strengthening of our union with Christ and one another. And, at the holy table, we are united with the saints who have gone before us, and those who will follow. Therefore, something so profound should be properly distributed.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we altered our methods of distributing communion in keeping with the bishop's instructions and guidance from public health authorities. Now, while viruses will always be with us, I believe receiving communion is as safe as it ever was. There are also additional challenges for our distribution, including increased attendance (a good problem to have!), accessibility, and comprehensibility, especially for visitors. So, with all of this in mind, I have developed, in consultation with our corps of Lay Eucharistic Ministers (LEMs) and the Vestry, a few tweaks to the ways we distribute communion.

#### Beginning 1 Advent (1 December):

- 8:00 a.m. Chapel Service: No change. We will continue to offer separate drinking and intinction chalices at the rail.
- 10:30 a.m. Service:
  - We will return to using a single chalice for either sipping or intinction, as was our practice before COVID, at the rail.
  - A communion station will be available on the floor, by the pulpit, with an intinction-only chalice.
  - The station will also serve those who prefer not to climb the stairs or choose to remain in their pew.
  - Regular and gluten-free wafers will be available at both the rail and the pulpit station.
  - I will offer some instructions during the announcements on 1 December on this distribution plan as well as how to best intinct.

I hope this will increase the simplicity, efficiency, and accessibility of communion. We will use this method during Advent and Christmas and evaluate after the Epiphany (in January). Please ask if you have any comments, concerns, questions, etc.. I want to hear from you. As I said above, the Eucharist is important, but I also want you and your family to feel safe when you receive. As the Prayer Book prays, may "the grace of this Holy Communion make us one body, one spirit in Christ, that we may worthily serve the world in his name." AMEN.

Keep the Faith,

Ben+