

Communion

By [Diane Roth](#)

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I held two small first communion classes for a few students from the church. It had been a while since I organized a class like this, so I felt a little rusty. The book that I used to use (and that I loved) had gone out of print. I cobbled together some resources and we talked about baptism and sacraments and words along with things that you can touch. We drew pictures and watched a scene from the movie *Holes*, and read a couple of stories about meals in the Bible. We talked a little bit about the Passover, and we ended up talking about trusting God, that God comes to us in this meal.

It was not everything, but it was something.

Holy Communion is a meal with many names, I said. There is more than one meaning to it. It is life and forgiveness, communion with God, bread for the journey, and even more. Someday you will know.

We made tiny individual cups at a place called the Potter's Wheel. We did not bake bread. I made note to include bread-making the next time I have a first communion class.

And then one Sunday at church two of the three young people were invited to put out their hands and eat the bread and drink the wine.

A few days later, I sat down with two women from my congregation and we talked about taking communion to shut-ins and people in the hospital. We want to put together a workshop so that a few people from the church can engage in this ministry along with me. One of the two women talked about how it was important to know who can receive and who can't receive communion. Her words brought back a memory.

I came with communion to a woman in hospice care. Her daughter and her daughter's best friend were there. So were other members of her family. Her husband was there too. He had been pretty open with me about his questions about

the Christian faith and about his exploration of other spiritual traditions. So, when we all gathered around in a circle to begin the communion service, I did not know what he would do.

I was surprised when he joined the circle and decided to have communion with us.

A long while later, I found out two things: he was getting remarried, and he was re-committing to the Christian faith. He was becoming Catholic, in fact.

What was it that drew him back?

It was the mass. Holy Communion. That's what he said. There was something about taking communion. What was it? Was it life or forgiveness? Was it bread for the journey? Communion with God? Or even more than that? A foretaste of the feast to come—all of us sitting in a circle, hands outstretched, the borders between life and death erased?

Someday you will know.

In the meantime, take and eat.

It is Holy Communion.

It is everything, in your hand.

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