

For parents:

Children and Communion

Following Church of England guidelines, St Peter's Church allows children to be admitted to receive Communion before they are Confirmed. As usual, on Easter Day this year, we will be admitting children to Communion using a special liturgy during the main 10 o'clock family service, provided they have undertaken the Children's Communion Classes beforehand.

To begin to prepare for this, there will be a meeting for all parents whose children are keen to be admitted to Communion - this will be at 11.30am (after church) on Sunday 7th February, to explain the preparation classes, and to answer any questions.

Together with many churches in the Anglican Communion worldwide, and in other Christian denominations who follow this practice, we have discovered the joy of sharing Communion with our children at the altar - and we have found that including children at Communion has enhanced children's sense of truly belonging to the church family and being fully valued as a part of the church.

Communion

If you are interested in exploring in detail the theological and pastoral rationale for allowing children to receive Communion, do take a look at the information about this on our church website. In a nutshell, Holy Communion, the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, is the church's "meal of fellowship" and "food for the journey" for the whole Christian family. Since Baptism (Christening) is our full and unequivocal entry into that Christian family, by admitting baptised children to Communion, we make a prophetic statement to them – that "we really do see you as a valued and full member of the church into which you have been baptised": if a baptised child or adult wants to grow in their faith, there is no rationale for denying them this food, the "foretaste of heaven".

What about Confirmation?

Confirmation is a public commitment and affirmation of mature discipleship. It is not (and originally never was) intended as a gateway to Communion, but rather is an affirming of faith before a bishop, the representative of the wider church. In a Confirmation service, God (not a bishop) 'confirms' us and says "I love you – now trust in my Holy Spirit to help you on life's journey".

St Peter's continues to encourage everyone to be Confirmed. As a rough guide, we will expect children who have been admitted to Communion to be confirmed once at secondary school, as their sense of and involvement in the life of the church grows. The responsibility rests on adults in the congregation to ensure that children are engaged in a process of continuing nurture through involving young people in all aspects of the church's liturgy and life. Confirmation Courses for adults and teenagers will continue to take place each summer at St Peter's, and the Bishop will be leading our Confirmation Service as usual in July this year.



Children and Communion at St Peter's Church



Application form for Children wanting to receive Communion

Name of child	
Date of Birth	
Date of Baptism	
Place of Baptism	
Name of Parents/ Guardians	
Telephone number	
Address	
Any allergies/ medical details (including gluten/wheat free)	

Parents' meeting - **6th March, 11.30am** after church.
 Please return form by: **1st April** to:
 The Vicarage, 4 Church Green, CO6 1UD. Or, for an e-mail
 version please email - hannah@cpywt.org.uk

Children & Communion at St Peter's Coggeshall

The Church of England has decided that children can now be allowed to receive Communion without being Confirmed first, if their family are happy for this to happen.

So, if you are over the age of 7, have been baptised, you are a Christian, and would like to receive the bread and wine at Communion, then keep reading.

Having your parents' support is really important, so they are the first people you need to talk this through with. There is a parents' information section on the back of this leaflet.

This will not to replace Confirmation (we hope you will choose to be Confirmed when you are older) but it means you can share in Holy Communion now.

For this to happen you will need to come to a meeting and 3 preparation classes. These will take place on:

Sun 6th March	11.30	Parents meeting
Sat 9th April	9.30 - 12.00	Communion Class 1
Fri 15th April	9.30 - 12.00	Communion Class 2
Sat 23rd April	9.30 -12.00	Communion Class 3

Then you can make your first Communion
on **Easter Day, 24th April !**