

# WEEK 17: LITURGY - HOLY COMMUNION, THANKSGIVING, DISMISSAL

PRE-K - KINDERGARTEN

## GOALS

Why is Holy Communion so important?  
What is another term for Holy Communion?

## LESSON

Refer to pages 82 - 94 in *Christ Amongst Us* for this lesson

Optional: Show students the pictures from this section of *Christ Amongst Us*

Optional: Use fabric learning set for Preparing the Gifts -

<https://orthodoxpebbles.com/orthodox-basics/preparing-the-gifts/>

### HOLY COMMUNION:

We've talked quite a lot about Holy Communion this year. Let's see how much you remember.

Some of your parents or grandparents might make a special kind of bread that they bring to church. Do you remember what it is called? (Prosphoro /pros-fo-ro/) There are people who also bring wine to church as well.

God provides us with plenty of food to choose from for our daily nourishment. What are some foods that God has made for us? (Bananas, broccoli, etc.) We take some of these gifts from God and transform them into something different. Then we offer back to God what we made from his gifts to us. What plant did God give us that allows us to make bread? (Wheat) What plant did God give us that allows us to make wine? (Grapes) God loves us so much that he takes our gifts of bread and wine and transforms them into Holy Communion, which is the Body and Blood of Christ.

Each time we attend a Divine Liturgy, we are provided with the opportunity to receive Holy Communion. Why is Holy Communion so important?

It is important because we are receiving the Body and Blood of Christ.

*Read from Orthodox Children's Bible Reader: "The Bread of life" pg. 214 and show picture on pg. 215*

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During the Last Supper (or Mystical Supper), Jesus celebrated the very first Holy Communion. Jesus told his disciples that they should continue to celebrate Holy Communion in the way in which He showed them - and we still do it the same way today too!

*Read from the Orthodox Children's Bible Reader: "The mystical supper" pg. 240 and show picture on pgs. 240-241*

There is another name for Holy Communion as well. It is also called the Holy Eucharist. Eucharist means, "Thanksgiving." We are always thankful that God provides us with the Eucharist and we give thanks to Him during the Divine Liturgy with our prayers and the songs we sing.

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#### THANKSGIVING AND DISMISSAL:

After we receive Holy Communion, the Divine Liturgy is almost done. We offer a final prayer thanking God, just like Jesus did at the Last Supper.

"The Lord gave thanks before He gave His Holy Body and Blood to the Disciples, so we give thanks as well. And after the offering He gave thanks again, and so we do the same." (*Christ Amongst Us*, pg. 93)

It is important to remember, as we leave the church, that we have received Holy Communion and are all called to shine the Light of Christ to everyone we see. What does this mean? It means that we share what we have received by how we act towards others. Are we using nice words? Are we sharing with our brothers, sisters, cousins, and friends? Are we following directions? Do we want to be first or do we let others go before us?

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#### REVIEW:

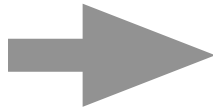
- What is Holy Communion? (The Body and Blood of Christ)
- What is another name for Holy Communion? (The Holy Eucharist)
- When we offer up a gift to God, what does God do in return? (He transforms our gift and offers it back to us - for example, he transforms our gifts of bread and wine and offers them back to us as Holy Communion.)

# GIFTS TO GOD

"We offer to You these Gifts from Your own gifts in all and for all."



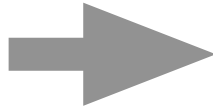
WHEAT



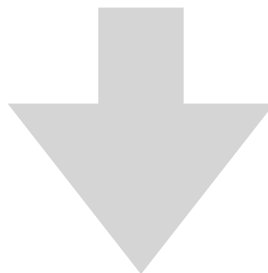
BREAD (PROSPHORO)



GRAPES



WINE



## GIFTS TO GOD

“We offer to You these Gifts from Your own gifts in all and for all.”

In God’s abundant love for us, he transforms our gifts to Him and offers us the bread of everlasting life, Holy Communion.



# WEEK 17: LITURGY - HOLY COMMUNION, THANKSGIVING, DISMISSAL

1ST - 2ND GRADE

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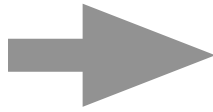
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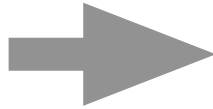
WHEAT



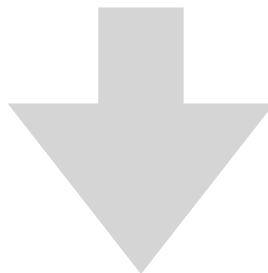
BREAD (PROSPHORO)



GRAPES



WINE



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In God’s abundant love for us, he transforms our gifts to Him and offers us the bread of everlasting life, Holy Communion.





# WEEK 17: LITURGY - HOLY COMMUNION, THANKSGIVING, DISMISSAL

3RD - 5TH GRADES

## GOALS

Why is Holy Communion so important?  
What is another term for Holy Communion?

## LESSON

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Optional: Show students the pictures from this section of *Christ Amongst Us*

Optional: Show icon of the Last Supper as a visual aid - <https://sep.yimg.com/ay/yhst-47912705652979/last-supper-byzantine-greek-orthodox-icon-33.jpg>

### HOLY COMMUNION:

What does communion mean? It means to share the same beliefs and to be united with one another.

When we prepare and receive Holy Communion, we are united with God as well as with every single person who also receives Holy Communion. We become the body of Christ - the Church.

At each Divine Liturgy, there are people from our parish who transform wheat (flour) into bread (Prosphoro /pros-fo-ro/) and will provide wine that was transformed from grapes. God provided us with the wheat and grapes for our nourishment. We, in turn, thank God for the bountiful gifts He has given to us by offering our own gifts back to him in thanksgiving. God loves us dearly. He takes our gifts and offers them back to us as Holy Communion - the Body and Blood of Christ.

*Read from the Orthodox Children's Bible Reader: "The mystical supper" pg. 240 and show picture on pgs. 240-241*

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We also use another term for Holy Communion as well - the Holy Eucharist. Eucharist means, "Thanksgiving." All of us are thankful to God for many things, but in this respect, we are thankful for the opportunity to receive Christ, who offers Himself for our benefit and for life everlasting.

Holy Communion is also one of the sacraments of the Church. All of our sacraments were established by Christ for our benefit and salvation. As we receive Holy Communion, our priest or deacon will say, "The servant of God (name) receives the precious Body and Blood of Christ, for the remission of sins and life everlasting." It's important for us to properly prepare ourselves before receiving Holy Communion because we are seeking to be healed from our ailments by receiving the One who provides everlasting life. We will be learning more about how to prepare ourselves for Holy Communion in one of our upcoming lessons this year.

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#### THANKSGIVING AND DISMISSAL:

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"The Lord gave thanks before He gave His Holy Body and Blood to the Disciples, so we give thanks as well. And after the offering He gave thanks again, and so we do the same." (*Christ Amongst Us*, pg. 93)

As we leave our church, those of us who have received Holy Communion have received Christ within us. We have seen the true Light, as we sung at the end of the service, and return to the world around us as Christ-bearers. We are all called to shine this light and offer the fruits that we generously received during the Divine Liturgy to everyone around us. We do this by everything we think, say, and do. We *live* our Orthodox Christian faith!

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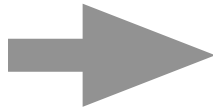
- What is Holy Communion? (The Body and Blood of Christ)
- What is another name for Holy Communion? (The Holy Eucharist)
- Why do you think it's so important for us to prepare ourselves and receive Holy Communion? (Because Christ is the bread that gives eternal life; Christ dwells within us; to be in communion with God and one another)
- When was the first time Holy Communion was celebrated? (The Last Supper or Mystical Supper)
- By who? (Jesus Christ)

# GIFTS TO GOD

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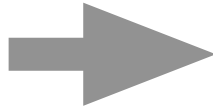
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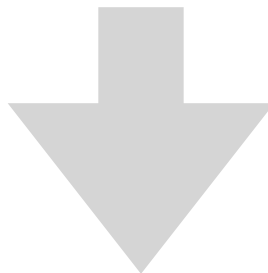
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# WEEK 17: LITURGY - HOLY COMMUNION, THANKSGIVING, DISMISSAL

MIDDLE SCHOOL

## GOALS

Why is Holy Communion so important?  
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## LESSON

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Optional: Show icon of the Last Supper as a visual aid - <https://sep.yimg.com/ay/yhst-47912705652979/last-supper-byzantine-greek-orthodox-icon-33.jpg>

### HOLY COMMUNION:

What does communion mean? It means to share the same beliefs and to be united with one another.

When we prepare and receive Holy Communion, we are united with God as well as with every single person who also receives Holy Communion. We become the body of Christ - the Church.

*Read John 6 : 51 - 59*

“I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”

The Jews therefore quarreled among themselves, saying, “How can this Man give us *His* flesh to eat?”

Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and

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I live because of the Father, so he who feeds on Me will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down from heaven - not as your fathers ate the manna, and are dead. He who eats this bread will live forever.”

These things He said in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum.

We will all eventually die and there isn't any amount of earthly bread that can prevent us from this death. But - we can have eternal life with God through Christ, who is the bread of life.

*Then read Mark 14: 22 - 26*

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”

Then He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them, and they all drank from it.

And He said to them, “This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. Assuredly, I say to you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God.”

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

During the Mystical Supper, Holy Communion was celebrated for the very first time by Christ. The disciples in turn celebrated Holy Communion in the same way as they were taught and this was taught to each generation thereafter.

Holy Communion is also one of the sacraments of the Church. All of our sacraments were established by Christ for our benefit and salvation. As we receive Holy Communion, our priest or deacon will say, “The servant of God (Baptismal Name, the name we took when we were received in the Church) receives the precious Body and Blood of Christ, for the remission of sins and life everlasting.” It's important for us to properly prepare ourselves before receiving Holy Communion because we are seeking to be healed from our ailments by receiving the One who provides everlasting life. We will be learning more about how to prepare ourselves for Holy Communion in one of our upcoming lessons this year.

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#### REVIEW:

- What is Holy Communion? (The Body and Blood of Christ)
  - What is another name for Holy Communion? (The Holy Eucharist)
  - Why do you think it's so important for us to prepare ourselves and receive Holy Communion? (Because Christ is the bread that gives eternal life; Christ dwells within us; to be in communion with God and one another)
  - When was the first time Holy Communion was celebrated? (The Last Supper or Mystical Supper)
  - By who? (Jesus Christ)
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# WEEK 17: LITURGY - HOLY COMMUNION, THANKSGIVING, DISMISSAL

HIGH SCHOOL

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During the Mystical Supper, Holy Communion was celebrated for the very first time by Christ. The disciples in turn celebrated Holy Communion in the same way as they were taught and this was taught to each generation thereafter.

“The celebrant now invites us to draw near in order to receive Christ into ourselves. This is the most sacred moment of our lives, and we take care that our spiritual and physical attitude should be appropriate to the event that we are experiencing.” (Hieromonk Gregorios, *The Divine Liturgy*, pg. 290)

“When a person feels his heart overflowing with love for Christ, he feels the necessity of communing and being united with Love. The moment when a person receives the Lord into himself is the movement of divine love which is offered and of human love which draws near to receive the offering. Christ's holy Body and Blood are eternal love... The holy Fathers urge us to respond to this divine love: ‘Dedicate yourself entirely to God by

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means of this Mystery, receiving with love that beloved Jesus, who out of His exceeding love ordained such a beloved sacrament, that a heavenly and covetable union should take place between God who loves and you who are love.’ “ (Hieromonk Gregorios, *The Divine Liturgy*, pgs. 293-294)

As we receive Holy Communion, our priest or deacon will say, ‘The servant of God (Baptismal Name, the name we took when we were received in the Church) receives the precious Body and Blood of Christ, for the remission of sins and life everlasting.’ The priest or deacon will call each of us by our baptismal name as we receive Holy Communion. This is a moment which marks our personal encounter with the Lord. Through the lips of the priest or deacon, Christ calls us each by our own personal baptismal name. (“He calls his sheep by name” John 10:3)

*(Optional: Show students the pictures on pages 88 and 90 of Christ Amongst Us)*

St. John Chrysostom tells us, “When you see the priest giving you the Holy Mysteries, do not think that it is the priest doing this; believe rather that the hand stretched out is that of Christ.” (*On Matthew*)

We also use another term for Holy Communion as well - the Holy Eucharist. Eucharist means, “Thanksgiving.” All of us are thankful to God for many things, but in this respect, we are thankful for the opportunity to receive Christ, who offers Himself for our benefit and for life everlasting.

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