

The Early Communion Policy of Christ the King Lutheran Church

We believe that the Sacrament of Holy Communion is Christ's gift to His Church intended for those who believe in His name as Savior.

The age at which a person is prepared to begin receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion is not set in the Scriptures, but is a decision God allows His congregations to make for themselves. At Christ the King Lutheran Church, we have made this decision based on what we believe is best for the young communicant relative to the Scriptural guidelines on receiving Holy Communion.

1. Holy Communion is a gift from God and the blessings it offers are received by faith.
2. Holy Communion is intended for those who are baptized into Christ Jesus.
3. Holy Communion requires that one be sorry for their sins and possess a willingness to change their sinful life.
4. Holy Communion is neither a symbol nor a "magic potion," therefore instruction must precede its reception and the communicant need have the capacity to be reflective and acknowledge their sinful nature.

Two questions guide the decision of the age at which a young person may begin to receive Holy Communion. The first question is general and is asked by CTK. The second question is specific and is asked by the parents.

Question #1

At what age is the faith of a young person such that they are capable of recognizing sin in their lives, being sorry for their sins, and desiring the forgiveness that is offered in Holy Communion?

Christ The King believes the answer to this question is ten years old. This occurs during the fifth grade year. No child under the age of 10 may begin Early Communion class. CTK offers an early communion class in the fall and spring of each year.

The Early Communion Class is comprised of five sessions in which is presented the basic teachings of Holy Communion. The first session is for parents only and the subsequent sessions are intended for parents and students.

Question #2

Is *my* child ready to receive Holy Communion?

CTK cannot answer this question. Only a parent can. It is the responsibility of the parent to ascertain the maturity of their child and his/her ability to recognize sin and be sorry for their sins.

We believe that the responsibility to determine the readiness of a child to begin receiving Holy Communion belongs to the parents *alone*. The responsibility is God-ordained in the Fourth Commandment and is part of God's plan as the Creator of the family structure.

This decision should not be the responsibility of someone else. Parents are expected to be committed as their children begin to receive Holy Communion. Thus we have set the following prerequisites to enrolling in the Early Communion Class.

1. Parents must be communicant and confirmed members of Christ the King Lutheran Church. Parents must be modeling what their children are going to be taught.
2. To be eligible to enroll in an Early Communion Class, the worship and Bible Class/Sunday School attendance of the Parents and children for the six months previous to the class must be 75%.
3. The child who is enrolled must be accompanied by their parents/parent to each class. In cases of divorce, the accompanying parent should be the custodial parent. While it is good for the child to have other Christian role models such as grandparents, relatives and baptismal sponsors, the responsibility to help in the preparation to receive Holy Communion is a parental responsibility. Therefore, the parents of the child are to attend the session with the child.

While these requirements are stringent, we must emphasize that the Early Communion program of Christ the King *is not the exclusive way* for young people to prepare to receive the Sacrament. If these requirements prevent someone from receiving communion at the earlier age, we would hope that they would look forward to receiving the Sacrament upon completion of the 7th & 8th Grade Confirmation Program.

If you have any questions, please contact the Early Communion Coordinator, Sharon Sutton (734) 284-6170.