

St Clair Church @ Home Gathering Guide // Oct 12, 2025

LEADERS/FACILITATORS

Please be sure to read through the suggested activities prior to Sunday and invite attendees to share in prayer/discussion as well as meal preparation.

1. EAT TOGETHER/COMMUNION

See notes for leaders at the bottom of this document.

2. OPEN IN PRAYER

After you finish eating together, have one of the group read this scripture aloud. You may choose to pause in silence for a few moments before singing together.

Eph 5:15-20 NLT

¹⁵ So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. ¹⁶ Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. ¹⁷ Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. ¹⁸ Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, ¹⁹ singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. ²⁰ And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. PRAISE

Any musicians present can lead in a song or two as they feel led. Alternatively, feel free to use this song video to sing along or just listen to together: [Worthy of It All](#) (David Brymer and Ryan Hall, CCLI #6280644)

4. SCRIPTURE

Read the above verses aloud and discuss the questions as you have time.
[optional children's questions included further below]

- One possible summary of these verses would be:
Live wisely→redeem these evil days→discern God's will→be filled with the Spirit→have praise in your heart and on your lips→give God thanks for everything through Jesus
- What word, phrase, or concept stands out to you from today's scripture reading? Why might it be resonating with you in your current circumstances?
- Is there a connection or progression to the things Paul tells the Ephesian church to do? (note the imperative verbs - each idea contains a "command" like "be careful" "Make the most..." "don't be drunk" "give thanks") How are these ideas related?
- (Today is Thanksgiving Sunday!) How is the thankfulness "for everything" in v. 20 related to the previous verses? Are you able to be thankful for everything in your life circumstances right now? Why or why not?
- Any other questions or discussion arising from the scripture reading?

St Clair Church @ Home Gathering Guide // Oct 12, 2025

5. PRAYER

[This is a great time to include the children, letting them offer prayers at their level of understanding. These are just suggestions, feel free to allow the prayer to go where the Spirit leads.]

- How can we pray for each other and our church in light of Paul's instructions to the Ephesian Christians (the above scripture reading)?
- In what area do you most need the Holy Spirit's empowering grace to live in the new way Paul describes?
- What is God calling you to express thankfulness for in prayer today? Say a simple prayer of thanks to God: "God I thank you for..."
- Any other prayers arising from the lives of those gathered

6. CLOSING PRAYER

One or more readers can read this sonnet aloud as a blessing and reminder of the gift of human community, especially healthy Christian community.

3 Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving starts with thanks for mere survival,
Just to have made it through another year
With everyone still breathing. But we share
So much beyond the outer roads we travel;
Our interweavings on a deeper level,
The modes of life embodied souls can share,
The unguessed blessings of our being here,
Threads of connection no one can unravel.
So I give thanks for our deep coinherence¹,
Inwoven in the web of God's own grace,
Pulling us through the grave and gate of death.
I thank him for the truth behind appearance,
I thank him for his light in every face,
I thank him for us all, with every breath.

Malcolm Guite, *Sounding the Seasons*

¹ A theological idea that humans are interconnected in a way that reflects the unity within the Trinity. It was a major theme in the writings of Charles Williams, close friend of C.S. Lewis.

St Clair Church @ Home Gathering Guide // Oct 12, 2025

CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Children of all ages can benefit from doing items 1-3 and 5-6 together with the adults. When you get to the scripture reading (use a children's Bible or easy-to-read translation if you wish) and discussion (item 4), feel free to have the children listen to the story/passage. Some questions geared to the children are included below:

In our scripture reading today, the Apostle Paul (one of the first Christian missionaries to take Jesus' message to new places) is writing to his friends about following Jesus.

- What does it mean to be wise? [in simple terms, "the right action at the right time;" knowing how to respond well in different situations]
- Do you know anyone who is wise? How can you tell? [fruit of their actions - do they make life better by how they live?]
- Are there some songs about Jesus that you like to sing? How does it make you feel when you sing them? Do you ever sing them somewhere other than at church?
- Paul tells his Christian friends to give thanks to God "for everything." What is it easy to be thankful for? What is it hard to be thankful for?
 - Can you turn even the hard things into a prayer of thankfulness? [try modelling such a prayer with the group]

[Children can be invited back to pray with you (#5-6 above) after the adult discussion]

St Clair Church @ Home Gathering Guide // Oct 12, 2025

COMMUNION GUIDE

Background to Communion/The Lord's Supper/The Eucharist

[for the leader, does not need to be read or shared during Church@Home]

Communion is commanded by Jesus for his disciples to remember him until he returns. The first recorded instance is what we call the Last Supper (see Mt 26, Mk 14, Lk 2, also Jn 14-17) where Jesus prepared his disciples for his impending crucifixion by giving the wine and bread of their meal spiritual significance. It is a celebration of God's saving acts in Jesus and the creation of a new people (the Church) who are participating in the Kingdom life Jesus promised. The church is also awaiting Jesus' return to bring the fullness of the Kingdom to the whole Earth. In this way, communion points us back to salvation history in remembering Jesus' death and the empty tomb. It also points us forward to the "marriage supper of the Lamb" (Re 19:7-10) which is the culmination of the Church's mission and God's redemption of all things in Jesus (Re 21:5). It replaces the festivals of the OT calendar which God gave Israel to remember his saving acts (e.g. Passover remembers God's power in rescuing Israel from slavery in Egypt). Communion is arguably the central act of the worship life of the Christian.

The first Christians gathered in homes to remember Jesus, pray, hear the scriptures and share a meal. This was the context of the celebration of communion in the New Testament church. The meal you share together today, whatever food and drink it may contain, can be the meal at which you remember Jesus' death, burial and resurrection. It is through Jesus that we are united with God *and* with one another (Bonhoeffer).

Below is some suggested wording to help attendees understand how we're approaching communion for Church@Home.

Introduction

- we are sharing a meal today in a home, just like the first Christians did
- when they gathered they would take time to remember how Jesus had brought them together into God's family
- we believe that Jesus was God's self-sacrifice for his creation to restore right relationship with us and between us
- that is, we know God through Jesus, and we also can know each other through Jesus
- we do not celebrate alone (as individuals) but rather this celebration is a meal – it is communal, it is all of us together "re-mem-bering" (i.e. putting the pieces together): how Jesus fits in God's plan for the world, and how we're invited into that plan as his new spiritual family (1 Pe 2:9)
- to eat this meal together points to
 - Jesus and his love for us
 - the creation of a new kind of spiritual family (gathered around the table)
 - the work Jesus did in his body to restore us to right relationship with God (*shalom*) by dying on a cross and rising again ("suffering servant" of Isaiah; also Ph 2:7 – "emptied himself")
 - his return when we will one day eat with him face to face, in the new heaven and earth

St Clair Church @ Home Gathering Guide // Oct 12, 2025

Words of Institution

- Jesus began this practice when he was with his disciples before he was arrested and crucified
- the Apostle Paul wrote to the church in Corinth with instructions on how to celebrate together:

1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (NLT)

²³ For I pass on to you what I received from the Lord himself. On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took some bread ²⁴ and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it into pieces and said, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵ In the same way, he took the cup of wine after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood. Do this in remembrance of me as often as you drink it." ²⁶ For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again.

Reminder

- today as we share this meal at [host's name]'s home, we are united to God and to each other through Jesus and what he's done for us
- eat and drink with joy, knowing we will one day eat with Jesus face to face in his coming Kingdom