



# St Cross Newsletter July 2024

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And likewise, I firmly believe that we should continue to sanitise hands before receiving, especially when chalices are being passed around. Unlike any other church I have visited, we continue to have hand sanitiser available at St. Cross.

As mentioned on the notice sheets the Parochial Church Council (PCC) will meet on July 17th to make a final decision on the administration of Holy Communion. Please can you write to Liz Foy on liz2.foy@gmail.com or leave a note in the secretary pigeonhole if you have any comments about this.

Yours, in Christ  
*Paul*



### The Vicar writes...

Time seems to fly, particularly as we get older. It seems hard to imagine that it was over four years ago that our lives were impacted by the advent of Coronavirus. There were the lockdowns and restrictions that became part of our everyday lives. One of the positive effects of this was to modify the way we work and many clergy became competent in adopting technological ways of sharing the good news of Christ in order to keep church congregations together. Online meetings via platforms such as Zoom continue even now.

The celebration of the Eucharist at the heart of our regular worship was also affected with many measures introduced at the time to ensure that everyone remained safe when our church was reopened. Initially, this meant that at the distribution only the Celebrant of the Communion would receive the wine, on behalf of the people. Then permission was given for intinction (the dipping of the wafer into the wine) to be offered, but that the Celebrant of the Communion would be the only person to dip the communicant's wafer. The norm of the Church of England over the years has been to offer the wine, symbolic of the blood of Christ, by the means of one chalice, with provision for more than one chalice to be used at larger services.

### Occasional Offices

- Baptism**  
2nd June      **Finn James Deakin**
- Funeral**  
5th June      **David Millson**  
21st June     **Gill Mayor**



Life is back to 'normal' now. We have even begun to share the Peace with a little more contact, though as I have made clear, I do not favour returning to the way it used be. In this world of 'normality' I have recently discussed the means of distribution with members of the ministry team, the PCC, and my colleagues in the Knutsford Deanery, and I have concluded that it is time for us to seriously consider returning to the use of the common cup at our Eucharistic services. If we do not do so now, I find it hard to envisage a time when we ever will.

The time of the Covid crisis is over, and in line with the past, the Church of England has restored the use of the common cup when the time of emergency was past. By doing so, the Church has thus not undermined the important Anglican tradition of the laity receiving the chalice as the norm.

What is the general situation in the Church of England now? In the Knutsford Deanery, which includes Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and our surrounding areas, most parishes are offering the common cup, albeit with some variation of the method adopted. When I have worshipped away from our parish, at various cathedrals and parish churches, the consistent method of distribution has been one of offering the sacrament in both kinds in the form of bread and the wine. All communicants have the option to receive in one kind if they do not wish to take the chalice. The practice of intinction has not been offered wherever I have been.

I think we should consider why the Church offers a common cup: this, of course, goes back to scripture. We can read in Mark's gospel that Jesus shared the broken bread to represent his body and then he took the cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to all the disciples to drink from it (Mark 14.22-23).

We may recall too, that later that evening, when Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, he asked his Father to remove the cup of suffering from him. After Jesus' resurrection the Church came into existence, and that early Church was a community that regularly shared meals together, a community of people from all backgrounds. They would have celebrated the Communion with a shared cup (1 Corinthians 10.16) - a convention that has continued in certain church traditions and has become part of the Anglican tradition.

I believe that the sharing of one cup (or a small number in larger congregations) carries a deep theological significance. It keeps us closer to the reality and intimacy of Jesus' last meal. The sharing of the cup also reveals the unity which the Christian family shares in Christ. We are drawn deeper into the mystery of this celebration as members of Christ's body in the Church in our shared life together as Christians, irrespective of background, wealth, identity, gender, sexuality or culture.

The Eucharist draws us deeper into this mystery, which is Christ's Body, the Church. It is not just about our personal communion with Christ, but one of community too. As Jesus shared with his disciples, so too the celebrant, who is representing Christ, is sharing the cup with those who love Jesus.

One might think in all of this that we are living in the 21st century, not in Palestine two thousand years ago. But I believe the practice of using a silver chalice in combination with a sip of alcohol is an effective way to share in this sacrament together. I would never use a porcelain chalice. I should add that from a health perspective, and as a matter of neighbourliness and morality, there may be times when it is not appropriate for someone to receive the chalice.