

Making Sunday Services International Student Friendly

When international students come into church services they commonly find it all a bit overwhelming. Here are a few suggestions that may prove useful in making Sunday services “international student friendly”.

Welcome

- If you know a student is coming, arrange to meet them outside the meeting and go in together
- Have key people on the look-out for new internationals at church
- Have a simple welcome sheet ready to give them when they come in. Include a welcome message and basic details about the service in relevant languages.
- Use a multi-language welcome screen before service begins

Bibles

- Provide Bibles in different languages
- Include a note in the welcome sheet in relevant languages: 'If you would like a Bible in [language A] or [language B] please ask one of the welcome team'.
- Place clearly labelled foreign language Bibles around the church for welcome team members to give to those who ask or congregation members to take for themselves/a friend.

Involvement

- Give international students a role. This encourages them, raises the profile of international students to other members of the church, and will be noticed by new international students who will feel more at home

Leading

- Train worship and other leaders so that they are aware of internationals in congregation and don't say things like “this is a passage we are all familiar with” etc.
- When looking up scriptures if there are pew Bibles give out the page number of the reading so that they can find it easily.
- Where appropriate invite international students to give Bible readings, prayers, or play in the band
- Explain clearly what's going on, particularly before any form of interaction like the offering

Sermon

- Outline of sermon given out so that they can follow easily and make notes
- Offer to meet international students before or after a service to discuss the content of the passage/sermon

Communion

- Explaining what is happening at a communion service is the biggest challenge!
- Provide explanation of Communion in different languages – for example, a small card in Spanish, Mandarin, Korean and Japanese
- Use the attached explanations of communion in English and Mandarin

COMMUNION SERVICE – A SHORT EXPLANATION

During our service today we will be celebrating “Communion” or “the Lord’s Supper”.

You may wonder what this means!

A little while before Jesus was killed by crucifixion on the cross, he met for a final time with his close friends and followers called the disciples. In this meeting Jesus and his twelve disciples ate a meal together. In the Bible we read,

“At that time Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’

Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. ...’

(Matthew’s Gospel Chapter 26, verses 26-28)

This event came to be known as “the Lord’s Supper”.

Jesus had said to his followers,

“Do this in remembrance of me...For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”

(1 Corinthians 11 23-26)

So, in churches all over the world Christians regularly include a celebration of “the Lord’s supper” in their meetings.

What actually happens?

- i) Some bread is prepared on plates or in baskets. The bread is a SYMBOL of the body of Jesus, sacrificed when he died an agonizing death on the cross.
- ii) Red wine/juice is prepared in cups/glasses. The wine is also a SYMBOL of the blood of Jesus poured out as he was crucified by nails being driven through his hands and feet when he was hung on the cross.
- iii) One or two people will lead prayers of thanksgiving to God for the life, death and resurrection (coming back to life) of Jesus Christ. These prayers will include confession of wrong, selfish attitudes in our hearts, thoughts and behaviour which have offended God and hurt other people. We will remember that it is only because of the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross that there is any basis for coming to God to ask for His forgiveness and cleansing.
- iv) The plates or baskets of bread will then be passed to everyone in the church. Each person will take a small piece and eat this remembering the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross and thanking God for His forgiveness and goodness.
However, if you are not yet a Christian, please don’t worry about just passing the bread along the row to the next person. No one will mind about this and it is better not to eat this bread until you really know that you are following Jesus Christ.
- v) Similarly the wine/juice will be passed along to each person. Again, if you are not yet a Christian, please just pass the wine/juice to the next person.

圣餐的简介

今天在我们主日崇拜的过程中，我们会分享“圣餐”或者“主的晚餐”。

也许你会感到疑惑：这是什么意思！

在耶稣被钉死在十字架上之前，他与他最亲近的朋友和跟随者（门徒）最后一次相聚。当时，耶稣和他十二个门徒共进晚餐，在圣经中记载：

这时，耶稣拿起饼来，祝福，就擘开递给门徒，说：“你们拿着吃，这是我的身体。”

又拿起杯来，祝谢了，递给他们，说：“你们都喝这个，因为这是我立约的血，为多人流出来，使罪得赦。……”（马太福音第26章，第26-28节，中文和合本翻译）

后来这被称为“主的晚餐”。

耶稣曾对他的跟随者说过：“……你们应当如此行，为的是纪念我。……你们每逢吃这饼，喝这杯，是表明主的死，直等到他来。”（哥林多前书第11章，第23-26节）

所以，在全世界的教会里，基督徒们都会定期在他们聚会时分享“主的晚餐”。

这是怎样进行的呢？

1. 我们会在餐盘或篮子中准备一些面包，这面包象征着，当耶稣痛苦地死在十字架上时，他所舍弃了的身体。
2. 我们还会预备红酒/红果汁。这酒象征着，当耶稣在十字架上受刑时，他的手和脚被铁钉刺穿所流出来的鲜血。
3. 有一到两个人会带领大家一起祷告，来感谢神让耶稣基督降生、受死和复活。这些祷告包含着为自己的那些得罪神并且伤害他人的错误、自私的想法和行为而忏悔。我们会牢记：正是耶稣在十字架上为我们所做的牺牲，成为我们能够来到神的面前请求他的宽恕和洁净的基础。
4. 盛有面包的盘子或篮子会在教堂里的人中间传递，每人会拿一小块吃，为了纪念耶稣在十字架上的牺牲并感谢神的宽恕和美善。然而，如果你现在还不是一个基督徒，不用担心，请把面包传给同排的下一位。没有人会因此而介意，甚至希望等您对跟随耶稣基督有真正的认识了以后再吃这个面包。
5. 同样的，酒/果汁会在每个人手中传递，再一次，如果您还不是基督徒，请把酒杯传给下一位。