



## Communion at Saffron Walden Community Church

This leaflet outlines this church's attitude to Communion and provides some guidance as to who it is for. The church's statement of faith includes the following statement – *“We believe in: Communion and baptising believers as two acts of prime importance in the Church because they were expressly commanded by Jesus*

In this church we place great value on Communion.

- Communion, the breaking of bread and sharing of wine, has been the most important way of meeting with God and sharing in fellowship with other Christians from the time of the book of Acts.
- When we receive the bread and wine with faith, we are also equipped and empowered to live out our Christian life.
- In Communion we reflect upon Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension, and return.
- Communion is rich in symbolism, but it is more than just a symbol or a memory jogger. When someone receives Communion sincerely, they are renewing their allegiance to Jesus. Eating the bread and drinking the wine is benefiting from Jesus' body and blood which he gave for us (1 Cor. 10:16). However, we do not believe the substance of the bread and wine is changed into flesh and blood (transubstantiation). We do not regard it as a sacrifice performed by a priest, and various members of the congregation can lead communion or offer prayers of thanks for the bread and the wine.



## Who is Communion for?

- Communion is only for Christian believers. To benefit from Jesus' body and blood, we have to understand the meaning of Communion and to be followers of Jesus who have made a commitment of ourselves to him. We are warned of judgement if we take communion without recognising the body of Jesus. (1 Cor. 11:27-30)
- It is not easy to fix a minimum age, but a person does need to be old enough to profess sincerely their faith in Jesus and to understand what they are engaging in.
- For adults, the decision to take Communion is one for the individual to make (you should examine yourself 1 Cor. 11:28).
- For children the decision is also for their parents. But bearing in mind the criteria given above careful consideration before permitting children of primary school age or below to take communion.
- Normally the bread and wine is passed round from person to person. But, if on occasion, the church leader offers communion to each person, they may decline to offer it to children of primary school age or below.