

Statement about On-Line Holy Communion – Bishop Peggy A. Johnson

The practice of Holy Communion in the United Methodist Church is best done in the physical presence of the people. However, during this unusual and difficult time in the life of our world, I believe that it is allowable to offer Holy Communion during an on-line service. This is a comfort and a reminder of the presence of Christ may be important to the on-line gathered body at this time. If Holy Communion is offered, one should invite congregants to have their own elements prepared ahead of time. Or they may commune spiritually without elements. Drive-through communion in like manner should involve people bringing elements and not distributing such at the cars. Car windows should remain rolled up.

However, the practice of the Wesley “Love Feast” (the sharing of some kind of bread or sweet roll and a drink of some kind) is also another option if the pastor has a sense that Holy Communion should be reserved for a time when the church gathers in person in the future. There are resources for this kind of service on the conference website.

I leave this decision to the discretion of the authority of the pastor in charge. Pastors know their situation and their people the best and I honor their wisdom on this matter.