Children and Communion

[Image of children receiving communion]
What is a sacrament?

- A sacrament

  An outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us, ordained by Christ himself as a means whereby we receive the same and a pledge to assure us thereof

Book of Common Prayer
What is a sacrament?

- A sacrament
  - Incarnational
    - Rooted in earthly things but conveying a heavenly truth
    - The use of physical material to convey the spiritual reality eg water washing us clean, refreshing us
What is a sacrament?

- Baptism
- Holy Communion
The sacrament of Holy Communion

- ‘Do this in remembrance of me’
  - Luke 22.19
- ‘Day by day they broke bread at home...and ate with glad and generous hearts’
  - Acts 2.46
- ‘For I received from the Lord......you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.’
  - 1 Corinthians 11.23-26
- ‘Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup in an unworthy manner.....’
  - 1 Corinthians 11.27
The sacrament of Holy Communion

- Sharing in the body of Christ
- Though we are many, we are one body
- Draw near with faith
- Remembrance
- Thanksgiving
- Feeding/sustenance
- Cleansing

*Images found in the Common Worship Holy Communion service*
The sacrament of Holy Communion

- Sacrifice
- Forgiveness
- Trusting in your manifold and great mercies
- Covenant of grace
- We are not worthy
- Telling the story – that all are children of GOD
- Sending out into the world

*Images found in the Common Worship Holy Communion service*
Signs and Symbols of Holy Communion

- Bread
  - Freedom from slavery
  - Manna in the desert
  - Feeding the 5000
  - Bread of life
  - Broken for us
Signs and Symbols of Holy Communion

- Wine
  - Offerings to God
  - Wedding at Cana
  - The true vine
  - Shed for us
History

- Earliest Christians
  - Households

- Moving through the Centuries
  - Divorce of Communion from Baptism
  - Laying on Hands
  - Confirmation

- Recent Times
  - Parish Communion
History

- Recent Times
  - Parish Communion
Theological issues

- The priority of grace
- Baptism as complete sacramental initiation into Christ
- Children as part of the covenant people of God
- Understanding or faith?
Liturgical issues

- Parish Eucharist means children attending communion but how do they participate?
- Need to make sense of their place in the service *as a whole*
- Eucharistic prayers for use with children present
- Continuing teaching about the Eucharist
Pastoral issues

- Baptism
- Parental support
- Involvement of children’s leaders
- Teaching on the meaning of communion
- Regular parochial opportunities for renewal of baptismal vows
- Parents who have chosen thanksgiving for the birth of their child
Pastoral issues

- An overall culture which enables children to be worshippers
- Children wanting to emulate their peers
- Inter-parochial mobility
- A minimum age?
- The place of confirmation
The next step…..

- Each PCC must resolve what to do
- Consult and feed back to congregation and children’s leaders
- Advice is available from the Diocesan Children’s Officer