

## **FUMC Guidelines: Homebound Communion**

On communion Sundays (usually the first Sunday of each month), FUMC's Stephen Ministers take communion to homebound members and also hold a communion service at Canterfield of Oak Ridge (a retirement–assisted living community). Below are guidelines for Stephen Ministers to conduct the communion visitations, including logistics and general considerations.

### **Logistics:**

- A request for volunteers to serve homebound communion usually occurs during the business portion of the second SM supervision meeting of each month (third Tuesday).
- Call your assigned homebound member 1-2 days prior to communion Sunday to confirm that they are available for communion and to schedule a time. Note: Communion is not restricted to Sunday, so you are free to consider alternatives if Sunday will not work for the member.
- On communion Sunday, pick up the elements after one of the worship services. These should be available in the Sacristy (small kitchen adjacent to the Chapel). Prior to the Covid pandemic, elements consisted of traditional wafers located in a box or tray on the counter and grape juice contained in small bottles marked with a cross on the lid and located in the refrigerator. During the pandemic, we have been using self-contained elements that are located in a basket on the counter. These can also be taken from the basket of elements on the altar after each worship service.
- Plan to arrive at the member's home at the designated time.
- Wear your SM name badge.
- After the communion visit, return any unused elements (wafer and juice) to the ground.

### **General Considerations:**

- When you call the member to confirm a time, you may want to ask if others will be present such as family members or health care providers. Even if they say no, it is a good idea to bring additional elements in case there are others present. If there are, you should ask them if they would like to participate in communion.
- In addition to the elements, you should plan to bring a program of the communion service. This can be the church worship program (traditional service) or can be a simplified version focused on the communion liturgy. An example of this is given below. It is recommended that you produce the program in larger type style (>14 pt) since many homebound members have difficulty reading.
- In addition to providing communion to the homebound member, you are offering an important outreach from the church. Allow a reasonable amount of time for both the communion service and a general visitation discussion.

- When you are ready to leave, you may want to ask if they would like a prayer. If so, ask them if there is anything specific they would like you to lift up in prayer. Also, ask if they have any special need or anything they would want the church to know.

### **Example Communion Service:**

Opening Prayer

Centering Worship (Psalm 23)

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He makes me to lie down in green pastures;

He leads me beside the still waters. He restores my soul

He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yes, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemy;

You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we have often fallen short of loving you and also loving our neighbor. For this we ask your forgiveness and seek your strength. Give us clear minds and open hearts so we may be who You would have us to be and to free us for joyful obedience, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Word of Grace and Assurance

Offering of the Elements

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us.

Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves to others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.