

What is the significance of the Common Cup?

We are the body of Christ and the Common Cup signifies our unity.

It must be stressed that the present use of the Common Cup and the exchange of the Peace do not pose a significant health hazard.

Common sense and basic hygiene are our best defence.

After supper, Jesus took the cup of wine, said the blessing, gave it to his friends, and said, "Drink this, all of you: this is the cup of my blood."

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What can I do to avoid spreading an infection?

If you have a cold, please touch the base of the chalice as the Eucharistic Assistant offers it to you, and say 'Amen.' The 'Amen' is an acknowledgement that the chalice contains the blood of Christ. Remain at the altar rail until you are offered the chalice.

Am I missing out if I do not drink from the chalice?

No. Either part of the Sacrament (the body or blood of Christ) contains a complete fullness of grace. This is the doctrine of **concomitance** and means that if a person is only able to receive the wine or the bread, they are receiving the complete sacrament. Sometimes, a patient in hospital is not able to take solid food and so receives the wine only.



WE ARE A PEOPLE OF THE "COMMON CUP"



**Anglican Church
of Canada**

Why do we use a Common Cup?

The sacrament of the Eucharist was introduced by Jesus at the Last Supper. Jesus used one cup and gave clear instructions to his disciples.

Then Jesus took a cup, and after giving thanks Jesus gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you."

(Matthew 26: 27)

In the words of John Baycroft, retired Anglican Bishop of Ottawa, *"Jesus did not merely pour wine into the disciples' individual cups and tell them to take a drink. There is a powerful challenge in this one. We are reminded of the agonizing decision that faced Jesus when he was praying before the crucifixion: 'My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.'* (Matthew 26:39)

We are also reminded by the one cup that we cannot drink it alone. We drink from a common cup as a strong symbol of unity and our willingness to accept each other. We share our love and lives as we share the cup."

Is it safe to drink from the Common Cup?

Yes. It would seem that the risk of drinking from the common cup is probably less than the risk of air-borne infection in using a common building or in sharing the peace.

The use of the common cup is normal for Anglican churches around the world. Were there any significant risk to the eucharistic practices of the Anglican church for so many centuries it would seem likely that the evidence would reflect an increased risk for Anglican priests, who have been performing the ablutions for centuries. In fact the opposite is true. Nor do priests appear to have been regularly stricken with any communicable disease that could be traced to the chalice in all that time. Additionally, no episode of disease attributable to the common cup has ever been reported.

Our Rector drinks from the common cup in hospitals and at homes for the aged and has not become sick from this practice.

In the hospital, ill people always drink from the chalice first.

What about dipping the wafer into the chalice (called "Intinction")?

Intinction is discouraged, as it is believed that germs on one's hands may contaminate the wine.

How are the chalices cleaned?

After communion, chalices are washed with soap and water, and carefully rinsed with hot water.

Eucharistic Assistants use hand sanitizers and are trained to wipe the chalice both inside and out, and to turn it before offering it to the next person.

