

# *Invited*

A LARGE GROUP/SMALL GROUP (K-5)  
SESSION ON THE LORD'S SUPPER



We are grateful to Rev. Bonny Mulder-Behnia, family ministries pastor at Rosewood Christian Reformed Church in Bellflower, California, for her work in developing *Invited*.

Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations in this publication are from The Holy Bible, New International Version® NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

*Invited: A Large Group/Small Group (K-5) Session on the Lord's Supper* © 2015 Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407.

All rights reserved. With the exception of brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this curriculum may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission from the publisher. For information or questions about use of copyrighted material please contact Permissions, Faith Alive Christian Resources, 1700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49508-1407; phone: 1-800-333-8300; fax: 616-726-1164; e-mail: [permissions@faithaliveresources.org](mailto:permissions@faithaliveresources.org).

We welcome your comments. Call us at 1-800-333-8300, or email us at [editors@faithaliveresources.org](mailto:editors@faithaliveresources.org).



# CONTENTS

Session Focus and Goals 4

Biblical Reflection for Leaders 5

Large Group Steps 6

Small Group (K-2) Steps 9

Small Group (3-5) Steps 13

Reproducible Pages 17

# INVITED

## A Large Group/Small Group (K-5) Session on the Lord's Supper

### SCRIPTURE

Matthew 26:17-30








### FOCUS

The risen Jesus invites us to his table to let us know that he loves us and forgives us.

### FAITH NURTURE GOALS

- Children will know that the bread and wine (or juice) show us that Jesus forgives us. Now we celebrate the supper in a new way.
- Children will feel that they are part of God's forgiven family that is invited to the Lord's Supper.
- Children will look forward to joining God's people at the Lord's Supper and feel eager to participate in the supper.

### A NOTE ABOUT LEARNING STYLES

Next to each activity you'll find one or more of the following descriptions: **Aa** Word Smart,  People Smart,  Music Smart,  Number Smart,  Earth Smart,  Self Smart,  Body Smart, and  Picture Smart—with an icon beside each one. Those descriptions and icons refer to “multiple intelligences,” a term that developed by Dr. Howard Gardiner to describe the different ways in which people learn. We use them here to indicate to you which learning style(s) each step/activity taps into the most. For example, some people are visual learners; others are musical; some learn best when they are physically engaged; some are a combination of several “smarts”; and so on. For more information on each of the learning styles, along with a fun quiz you can give your students (and one you can take yourself!), visit <http://dwell.faithaliveresources.org/downloads>, click on ‘Topics for Leaders’ and open the ‘Learning Styles Quiz’.

## BIBLICAL REFLECTION FOR LEADERS

The Lord's Supper serves as a sign of remembrance and a promise of things to come. In this passage Christ invites his disciples to prepare for and celebrate the Passover. Through this Passover feast, and the Feast of Unleavened Bread celebrated alongside it, Christ shapes a new celebration. Using these two festivals that recall God's provision for God's people, Christ demonstrates that continued provision, but in a spectacular new way.

### Forgiveness

In the midst of sin, betrayal, and disobedience, Christ offers grace and calls his people to obedience. Christ invites all who find their hope in him to examine themselves at the table. United with Christ and with one another, we can find the courage to face our brokenness and find forgiveness as part of the body of Christ.

Participation in the Lord's Supper does not require our perfection, but our repentance. While we go to the Lord's table with hearts heavy from all the ways we fall short, we leave with the joy of our salvation. The Lord's Supper represents a new exodus, one where Christ leads us out of the futility of our sin and into the freedom of the salvation we find in him.

This is the grace of the Lord's Supper. Nestled in God's call to obedience is God's provision for our disobedience. While the pervasive nature of our sin separates us from God and from each other, it is through our communion with Christ that we find communion with one another.

The Lord's Supper is not only about the elements—the bread and the wine or juice that we share—but also about our partaking in those elements together. Through the Lord's Supper, Christ offers us an opportunity to participate in our salvation. Though Christ does the work, we are given the opportunity to surrender to his will by practicing repentance and professing our faith.

### Promise

Partaking in the Lord's Supper is ultimately an act of hope. At the Lord's table, God's promises come to the forefront. It is not about what we promise God, but about choosing to find hope in God's promises to us.

When we partake of the Lord's Supper, Christ is present among us. Christ does not come down, but lifts us up. In being lifted up, we see our salvation in Christ alone and are equipped to live out that salvation in our lives. The order is important here. God's grace always comes first, and our obedience is the necessary response.

Jesus is at the center, a very real presence at the table, offering grace and forgiveness, inviting us to obedience, and giving hope. Just as Jesus reclined at the table, we are beckoned to find our rest in him. We can leave the table with a song in our hearts—a song of forgiveness, redemption, and hope.

## TEACHING TIP

Children have a hard time understanding complexity and nuance. They have a tendency to see things as good or bad, right or wrong. That is why it is so critical that adults provide an introduction to complex concepts like the mystery of the Lord's Supper. The key is to keep it simple. Focus on one or two simple themes, like forgiveness and promise. Children understand cause and effect, so it is important to frame the Lord's Supper in a way that shows how God's grace results in our hope. This doesn't mean that children won't be confused. It is all too easy for children to think that their obedience leads to their salvation. That is why it is important to focus on the grace of God shown us in Jesus Christ and the hope of our salvation through him. Our invitation to repentance is not a requirement, but a gift from God—an invitation to be in right relationship with God as we seek communion with God and with one another.

—Rev. Shannon Jammal-Hollemans

# LARGE GROUP (K-5)

## Step 1 Who's Invited?

### TIME

7-10 minutes, longer if you include singing (see Song Suggestions at the end of this step)

### Aa Word Smart



### Number Smart



### Music Smart

### SUPPLIES

- ☐ Invitation, reproducible page 17
- ☐ Marker

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

- ☐ Fold the printed invitation along the fold line so that the wording is on the inside. Use a marker to print "You're Invited" on the front of the invitation.

Gather the children together and welcome them to this session. Then ask how many of them would like to be invited to a party (ask them to touch their nose if the answer is yes.) Explain that you have received a special invitation for everyone from a VERY important person. Ask them to listen closely as you read it.

Read the invitation you have prepared and follow the instructions to determine who can attend.

When finished, say, **Wow! Only nine-toed, one-eared, toothless folks whose names start with "J" are invited! It looks like none of us can go. That doesn't seem fair, does it?**

**Thankfully, the story we're going to hear from the Bible today is about someone who is even more important than the richest, most famous, and most popular person in the world. And the someone in today's story has an invitation that isn't meant to keep people out, but to welcome people in. You don't have to be "just right" to accept this invitation; you can come as you are.**

### SONG SUGGESTIONS

If you'd like to sing with your group, this would be a great time to do so. In addition to any songs that you normally sing together, you might also like to select a song from the suggestions below which are found in *Sing With Me* and/or *Lift Up Your Hearts* and available for purchase at [www.faithaliveresources.org](http://www.faithaliveresources.org).

"You Are My All in All" (*Sing With Me*)


"Father, We Love You" (*Sing With Me*)

"This Is the Day" (*Sing With Me*)

"There Is a Redeemer" (*Sing With Me, Lift Up Your Hearts*)

"Lift Up Your Hearts" (*Sing With Me, Lift Up Your Hearts*)

## Step 2 Last Supper, First Communion

<b>TIME</b> 10 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>People Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Adult or teen helper to act out the role of Jesus</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> 2 chairs</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paper on which you have printed in large letters: Judas</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tape or sticky tack</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Bible, bookmarked to Matthew 26:17-30</li> </ul>
<b>BEFORE YOU BEGIN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> A week in advance, give your actor a copy of the story script found in this step. Run through the script together once prior to presenting the story to the group.</li> </ul> <p><b>TIP:</b> If you read through the story once a day in the week prior to telling it, you'll be able to tell it from the heart more than from the page.</p>	

Open your Bible to Matthew 26:17-30. Hold the Bible up to show everyone where today's story is found and announce that you'll need their help to tell it.

Explain to the children that they are going to pretend to be the disciples—Jesus' special helpers. When you give them the signal in the story, one at a time each person should say, "Is it me?" Give the signal and practice this once together. Explain that they will also be pretending to eat and to drink during the story, so they should watch carefully for the right time to do that.

Place two chairs in front of the group. Attach the paper that says "Judas" to one chair as you explain that it stands for Judas, who was one of Jesus' disciples. Introduce the person who will be playing Jesus and invite that person to sit in the other chair.

### *The story follows:*

**Leader:** Many years ago, on the night before Jesus died, Jesus and his disciples gathered at a house to celebrate Passover by eating a special meal. It was during that special meal that Jesus gave his disciples an important invitation. The invitation was about remembering.

**Jesus:** Greetings, my beloved followers. I'm thankful we can be together tonight, because my appointed time is near. I will not be with you much longer.

**Leader:** Jesus knew that soon it would be time for him to die. He also knew that one of his disciples had done something awful. That disciple was going to sell Jesus to the people who wanted to hurt him. Jesus looked at the disciples and said,

**Jesus:** One of you has done something very wrong. One of you is about to betray me.

**Leader:** Each disciple said, "Is it me?" (*Signal for the group to begin.*)

**Each disciple** (*one by one*): "Is it me?"

**Leader:** Jesus said that the one who was sitting closest to him, who dipped his hand in the bowl with him, was the one who had betrayed him. Even though Judas pretended it wasn't him and said, "It's not me, is it?" like the others, Jesus knew the truth. (*Pause*) While they were eating, Jesus stood up.

**Jesus:** (*Stands up and pantomimes the actions as the Leader describes them below.*)

**Leader** (*speaking slowly*): He picked up the bread, gave thanks to God, broke the bread, and gave each of his disciples a piece of it. Then he said,

**Jesus:** I invite you to take this bread, which stands for my body, and eat it. (*Motion to the group to pretend to eat the bread. Be ready to pantomime the next set of actions.*)

**Leader:** Then Jesus picked up a big cup of wine, gave thanks to God, and passed it around to each of his disciples. Jesus said,

**Jesus:** I invite you to drink the wine in this cup, which stands for my blood. When you drink it, remember that my blood is poured out so that the sins of my people are forgiven. (*Motion to the group to pretend to drink from the cup.*)

**Narrator:** The disciples accepted Jesus' invitation to eat the bread and drink the wine, although they still didn't understand why he wanted them to remember his body and his blood in that way. Then they sang a song together and left the house. It was the last supper the disciples had with Jesus before he died.

### ***End of story.***

Thank "Jesus" and the kids for helping you tell the story. Say, **The story of Jesus' last supper is also a story of the first communion. It's a special story to us because Jesus invites each of us to eat the bread and drink the wine or juice as a way to remember what Jesus did for us too. Today in your small groups you'll learn more about that invitation.**

Close in prayer using words such as the following:

**Dear Jesus,**



**Thank you for inviting all of us to remember and believe in you. Help us as we listen and learn more about that invitation during our small group time. And help us tell others about that invitation too! Amen.**

Invite children to go to their small groups.

# SMALL GROUP (K-2)

For Small Group plans for grades 3-5, see pages 13-16.

## Step 3 We're Invited

<b>TIME</b> 7-10 minutes, longer if you include singing (see Song Suggestions at the end of this step)	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Number Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Story pictures, reproducible pages 18-20 <input type="checkbox"/> Scissors
<b>BEFORE YOU BEGIN</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Print one set of the story pictures and stack them together out of order.	

Gather your group around you in a circle on the floor or seat them around a table. Welcome each one with a big smile and let them know how happy you are to see them today. Children this age love to tell you things, so begin your time together by reviewing the story in a way that gives each child the opportunity to speak and to connect what they heard to their own experiences. You might start your conversation this way:




**We were talking about invitations during Large Group time today. Can you tell me about some of the things you've been invited to do or the places you've been invited to go?** (Aside from birthday parties, the kids in your group have likely been invited on play dates with their friends, to go play at the park, to go see a movie or watch a sporting event, and more. Prompt them with those ideas if necessary.)

**During Large Group we also heard how Jesus gave his disciples an invitation to do something special. Let's see what we can remember from that story.** Take out the story pictures and invite kids to help you put them in order. As you do so, invite the kids to tell you about what happened in each picture and use wondering questions such as the following to guide your conversation:

- I wonder what Jesus wanted the disciples to remember when they ate the bread.
- I wonder what Jesus wanted the disciples to remember when they drank the wine.
- I wonder why Jesus would invite the disciples to remember him in that way.
- I wonder what the disciples thought when Jesus told them to remember him.
- We celebrate the Lord's Supper with bread and wine or juice in our church too. Is there anything else in this story that reminds you of how we celebrate the Lord's Supper in our church?

**The story of the Last Supper with the disciples is a special story for us because Jesus is also inviting you and me to remember this important thing: when he died he gave his body and blood so that our sins could be forgiven. One way to remember that is by eating the bread and drinking the wine or juice during the Lord's Supper.**

## Step 4 Show and Share Pictures

<b>TIME</b> 20 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Self Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>  <b>Body Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Internet images of art depicting the Last Supper</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Internet images of the various ways communion is served today</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Tablet or cell phone or other device from which to show the images you've found and saved</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Colored cardstock or construction paper, one per child</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Option A: markers or crayons</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Option B: bread and chalice pattern (reproducible page 21), pencils or markers, glue sticks, colored paper scraps</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> "Dear Family" letter (reproducible page 23), print or email one per household</li> </ul>
<b>BEFORE YOU BEGIN</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Search online for images and save them to your device.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Option B: print bread and chalice patterns onto cardstock (one set for every two children) and cut them out.</li> </ul>	

### TIP

Depending on your church policy and/or the churches the children in your group have attended, the children in your group may or may not have fully participated in the Lord's Supper already. As you share stories, be sensitive to the variety of experiences represented in your group. And do be sure to share a story of your personal experience participating in the Lord's Supper; perhaps telling the kids about your memories of the first time you participated in communion, what you remember when you celebrate the Lord's Supper now, and how you feel as you do so.

Show your group some artists' depictions of Jesus at the Last Supper/first communion. Point out that the first communion doesn't look exactly the same as the communion celebration in our church today, but it means the same thing.

Show some pictures of communion served in churches today, and ask which one matches most closely the way they have seen the Lord's Supper celebrated.

Assist the children in making their own Lord's Supper pictures as follows:

### Option A

Invite kids to draw a picture of the Lord's Supper being served at your church. (Refresh their memory if necessary as to what this looks like in your congregation.) Suggest that the picture include the bread and the wine or juice, the pastor, those who come forward to serve the bread and the cup, and themselves.

Once they have completed their pictures, ask those who are comfortable to hold them up and tell you and the others about their picture. Where are they in the picture?

Ask children what title they would like to give their Lord's Supper pictures, and add that to the page. Alternatively you could add a caption to each such as "I'm Invited" or "Remember."

### Option B

Give each child a piece of colored paper for their background. Give each pair of children a bread pattern and a chalice pattern to share. Demonstrate how to trace around each pattern, making outlines of each on their background paper. Then invite the children to tear the colored paper scraps into small pieces and glue them onto the bread and cup shapes to make a mosaic picture. Add a caption such as "Remember" to each one.

**Remember the invitation that \_\_\_\_\_ read to us during our large group time? The one that left all of us out? Jesus’ invitation is for everyone. Jesus invites everyone to believe in him. It doesn’t matter how old you are or what you look like! If you believe that Jesus died for YOU and forgives YOUR sins, then—when the time is right—you are invited to come to the table and eat the bread and drink the juice at the Lord’s Supper. You are invited to say yes to Jesus’ invitation.**

Encourage the children to have conversations at home about what they learned today by telling them that the pictures they just made have a special name. They are called “Show and Share” pictures because they are for showing to someone at home and for sharing what we’ve learned about Jesus’ invitation.

End the session with prayer, inviting the children to echo the words back to you.

**Dear Jesus  
Thank you for loving me.  
Thank you for dying on the cross for me.  
Thank you for inviting me to your special supper.  
Thank you for forgiving me of all my sins.  
I love you.  
Amen.**

Distribute (or email) a “Dear Family” letter to each household represented in your group as a way to continue today’s conversation at home.

### TIP

If your congregation has a particular process to follow when children come to the table for the first time—for example, if the children are to speak with their parents prior to their first communion, attend a course, or notify the pastor—you might describe that process during your closing time.

# EASY EXTRAS (K-2)

## 1. A Closer Look

This activity could be substituted for all or part of Step 4.




<b>TIME</b> 10 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Body Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Communion ware

Visit the sanctuary for a closer look at the communion ware (and the elements, if possible). Tip: Ask the pastor to meet you there to talk with the children about the Lord’s Supper and to answer any questions they might have.

Find out what the children are thinking, and encourage discussion by inviting them to tell what they think about or remember when they see the bread and cup (or, depending upon the communion practices of your congregation and your small group, what they remember when they participate in the Lord’s Supper.) Be sure to share what you think about during the Lord’s Supper too!

If it’s not possible to visit the sanctuary, arrange in advance for someone to bring the communion ware to your class so that the kids can see it up close and touch it.

## 2. Story Strips


<b>TIME</b> 10-15 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Self Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>  <b>Number Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Story pictures (reproducible pages 18-20), one set per child</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Scissors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Glue sticks</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Markers</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Colored cardstock, two sheets per child</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Clear tape</li> </ul>
<b>BEFORE YOU BEGIN</b> Make a foldable booklet for each child in the following way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cut each sheet of cardstock in half vertically, making four 8 ½" by 5 ½" (21.5 cm by 14 cm) strips per child</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Use clear tape to attach the four strips together lengthwise, making one 34" by 5 ½" (86 by 14 cm) strip per child.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fold each of these long strips accordion-style so that each strip has eight equal sections.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Print "We're Invited!" on the front section of each strip. (This will be the cover of the booklet.)</li> </ul>	

After reading the cover together, invite the children to cut apart their story pictures, color them, and glue them in order onto the "pages" of their story strip. Practice telling the story together and encourage the kids to show and share the story with someone at home today.

# SMALL GROUP (3-5)

For Small Group plans for Grades K-2, see pages 9-12.

## Step 3 The Invitation

<b>TIME</b> 20 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Self Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Bibles, one per child or pair of children <input type="checkbox"/> Cardstock or construction paper, one per child <input type="checkbox"/> Coloring pencils or markers <input type="checkbox"/> Stickers, stamps, or other decorative items (optional) <input type="checkbox"/> Basket

Begin by spending some time in the story together as you read it from Scripture. Pass out Bibles and help everyone locate Matthew 26:17-30. Tell the kids that when you get to verse 22, you want them to read the words that the disciples said.

After reading the passage, spend some time talking about it together, using some or all of the following wondering questions to guide your discussion.

- What do you wonder about when you hear that story?
- Does anything in that story surprise you?
- What did Jesus want the disciples to remember when they ate the bread and drank the wine?
- During Large Group time \_\_\_\_\_ said that although this was the Last Supper Jesus had with his disciples, it is also the first communion. Why?
- What in the story reminds you of how we celebrate the Lord's Supper in our church?
- I wonder why Jesus wants us to remember that he gave his life for us when he died on the cross.

Affirm their responses to the last question (or provide them with a clue to the answer), by helping everyone locate John 3:16 in their Bibles and reading that verse together.

Invite kids to put their finger on the word "whoever" (or "anyone," or whichever word your translation uses) as you remind them of the invitation that was read during Large Group. Recall how only certain people were invited to that party—and no one in your group qualified. Ask, **What does this verse tell us about who Jesus invites to believe in him?** (*everyone*). **What does it tell you about who he invites to remember and to believe how he died to forgive our sins?** (*everyone*). That includes you!

As a way to think more deeply about what the Lord's Supper is and what it means for each of you, spend some time making personal invitations from Jesus together. Distribute a piece of cardstock or construction paper to each child. Ask them to fold it in half so that it is a top-fold card that now measures 8 ½" (21.5 cm) across the top and 5 ½" (14 cm) along the side.

### TIP

Depending on your church policy and/or the churches the children in your group have attended, the kids in your group may or may not have fully participated in the Lord's Supper already. As you talk about the invitation from Jesus, be sensitive to the variety of experiences represented in your group. And do be sure to share a story of your personal experience participating in the Lord's Supper; perhaps telling about why you have said "Yes!" to Jesus' invitation to the Lord's Supper, and/or memories of the first time you participated in communion.

On the front of the card, ask children to write a headline in large, neat letters: YOU ARE INVITED or COME TO JESUS. They should leave room to draw a picture later underneath this headline.

On the inside, they will write in big letters along the left side, with about an inch (3 cm) of space after each to fill in the blanks:

WHAT:

WHO:

WHY:

COST:

As a group, you will work on the invitation together, using the questions and comments provided below as you discuss together each category inside the invitation card:

### 1. The WHAT

This is an invitation to the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion (*They may write one or both.*)

### 2. The WHO

Who may come to the Lord's Supper? Do you have to be a certain gender? (*No, male and female are welcome.*) Do you have to be from a certain ethnic group? (*No, Jesus invites people from every tribe and nation.*) Do you have to be sinless or perfect? (*No, if that were true then only Jesus could participate.*) Do you have to be a certain age? (*What is the policy/process in your congregation?*)

Let's look again at John 3:16 for an answer. What does it say? (*Whoever believes in him. . .*) Sinners are welcome at the Lord's Supper. But what should we do about our sins? (*We should be sorry, repent.*)

Based on your discussion, invite the kids to write—in their own words—who is invited to the Lord's Supper. (*Anyone who believes in Jesus and is sorry for their sins.*)

### 3. The WHY

Why do we celebrate the Lord's Supper? (*To remember with other believers God's promise and gift to us—that our sins are forgiven because Jesus died and rose again, and that we'll live forever with God after we die.*)




### 4. The COST

What does it cost to come to the Lord's Supper? For us? (*It's free; we just need to say yes to Jesus.*) For Jesus? (*It cost his life.*)

After everyone has finished filling in the details, ask them to write their own name somewhere on the invitation and to sign Jesus' name on the bottom of the invitation. If you have extra time, the children can decorate the invitations and/or draw a picture on the front. This could be a picture of the bread and cup, or the cross, or a heart, or anything that reminds them of the Lord's Supper.

When they are finished, have them put the completed invitations in a basket or box.

## Step 4 A Holy Moment

<b>TIME</b> 10 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Self Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>  <b>People Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Basket with invitations from previous step <input type="checkbox"/> Large wine glass or chalice <input type="checkbox"/> Bread (could use a loaf, roll, pita, naan) <input type="checkbox"/> Tablecloth <input type="checkbox"/> Communion song and music, optional <input type="checkbox"/> "Dear Family" letter (reproducible page 23), print or email one per household

Ask the children to come together quietly for a "holy moment," by gathering in a circle on the floor or by arranging their chairs in a circle. If you've brought music, play it quietly in the background.

Sit down with them, and invite them to imagine that you are representing Jesus right now. Take the basket of invitations, and hand them out to each person by name, saying, "[Name], you are invited."

Place the cloth on the floor in front of you, arrange the cup/chalice and bread on top, and ask the children to focus on it. Ask them to think about how Jesus invites each one of us to receive his love and to accept his invitation to eat the bread and drink the cup as a way of having communion with him and being reminded again that Jesus forgives us when we are sorry for our sins.

Hold up the bread and tell them: **Jesus says "This is my body, given for you. When you eat it, be reminded that I have completely forgiven all of your sins."**

*Pause.*

Hold up the cup/chalice and tell them: **Jesus says, "This is my blood, shed for you. When you drink it, be reminded that I have completely forgiven all of your sins."**

**Jesus invites us all to say "YES" to his invitation to remember what he has done for us.**

Close your time together with the following prayer, inviting everyone to respond after each sentence you say with the words, "Thank you, Jesus."

**Dear Jesus,**

**We love you because you first loved us.**

*Thank you, Jesus.*

**You came down to earth to teach us, love us, show us God's power, and die for us.**

*Thank you, Jesus.*

**By the free gift of your grace, we are forgiven by your blood when we say we are sorry.**

*Thank you, Jesus.*

**We have heard your invitation to come to your table to share a holy meal with you.**

*Thank you, Jesus.*

**You offer the gift of eternal life to those who will believe in you and say yes.**

*Thank you, Jesus.*

**Please move in our hearts so that we can come RUNNING to you when the time is right.**

**Amen.**

Distribute (or email) a "Dear Family" letter to each household represented in your group as a way to keep the conversation you had to today at church continuing at home.

# EASY EXTRAS (3-5)

## 1. A Closer Look

This activity could be substituted for all or part of Step 4.

<b>TIME</b> 10 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Body Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Communion ware

Visit the sanctuary for a closer look at the communion ware (and the elements, if possible.) Tip: Ask the pastor to meet you there to talk with the children about the Lord's Supper and to answer any questions they might have.

Find out what the children are thinking and encourage discussion by inviting them to tell what they think about or remember when they see the bread and cup (or, depending upon the communion practices of your congregation and your small group, when they participate in the Lord's Supper.) Be sure to share what you think about during the Lord's Supper too!

If it's not possible to visit the sanctuary, arrange in advance for someone to bring the communion ware to your class so that the kids can see it up close and touch it.

## 2. Cross Graffiti

<b>TIME</b> 10 minutes	
<b>Aa Word Smart</b>  <b>Picture Smart</b>	<b>SUPPLIES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Cross outlines (reproducible page 22), one per child and one for yourself <input type="checkbox"/> Scissors <input type="checkbox"/> Colored pencils

Give each child a cross outline to cut out. Invite them to use their favorite color to add their name to the cross because Jesus died for them and Jesus invites them to remember him at his special supper. (Encourage them to write small because they'll need plenty of room for the next part of the activity.) Tell the children to fill in the cross with the names of everyone else that Jesus invites to believe and to remember that he gave his body and blood for the complete forgiveness of all their sins. Hang the crosses on the walls at church for all to enjoy, or encourage your kids to hang their cross in their room at home as a reminder of Jesus' great gift and invitation.

Greetings, honored guest! The world famous, extremely popular, and very rich Donna Trumpster invites YOU to attend a special gathering that will include an all-you-can-eat buffet of candy, ice cream, and milkshakes, PLUS fabulous prizes like a big-screen TV, your own gumball machine and an endless supply of gumballs, a new car, an all-expense-paid vacation to any place in the world, and \$10,000 in spending money!

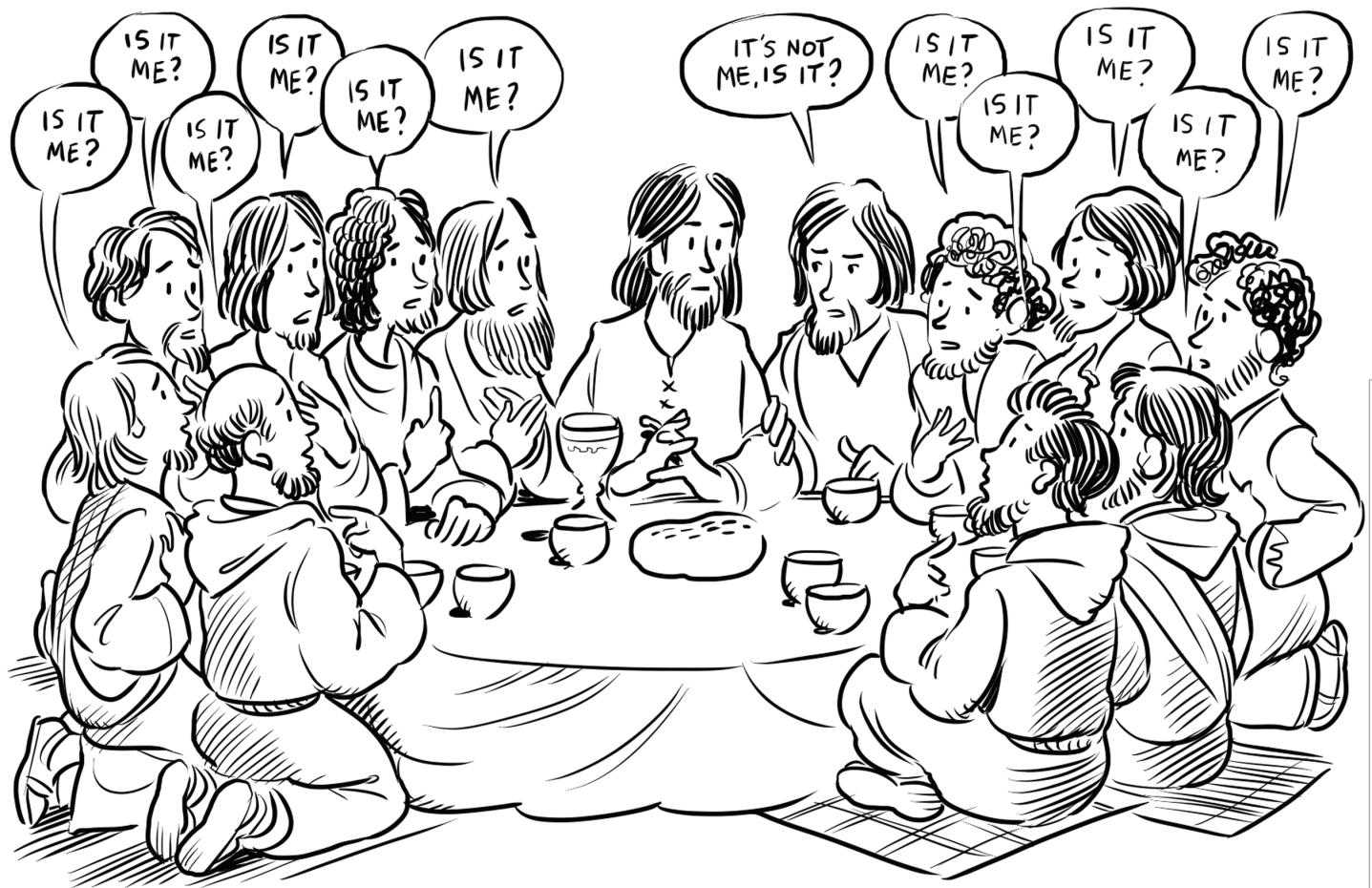
*(Wow! That sounds amazing!)*

Everyone is invited, but only those who meet the following conditions can come to the party. Stand up to see if you are the kind of person who may come to the party.

*(Invite kids to stand.)*

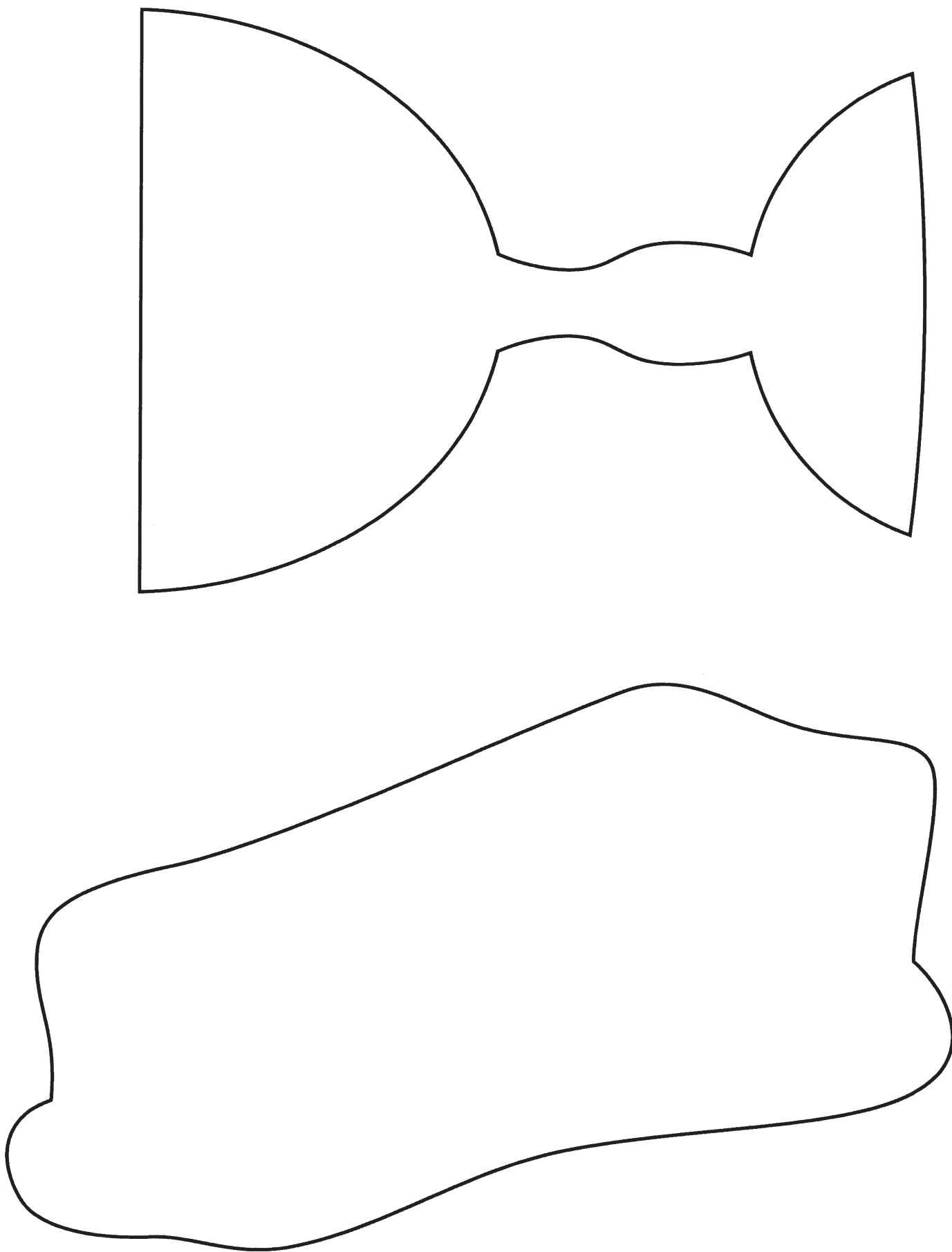
Stay standing if these things are true for you. Sit down if we get to one that is not true for you.

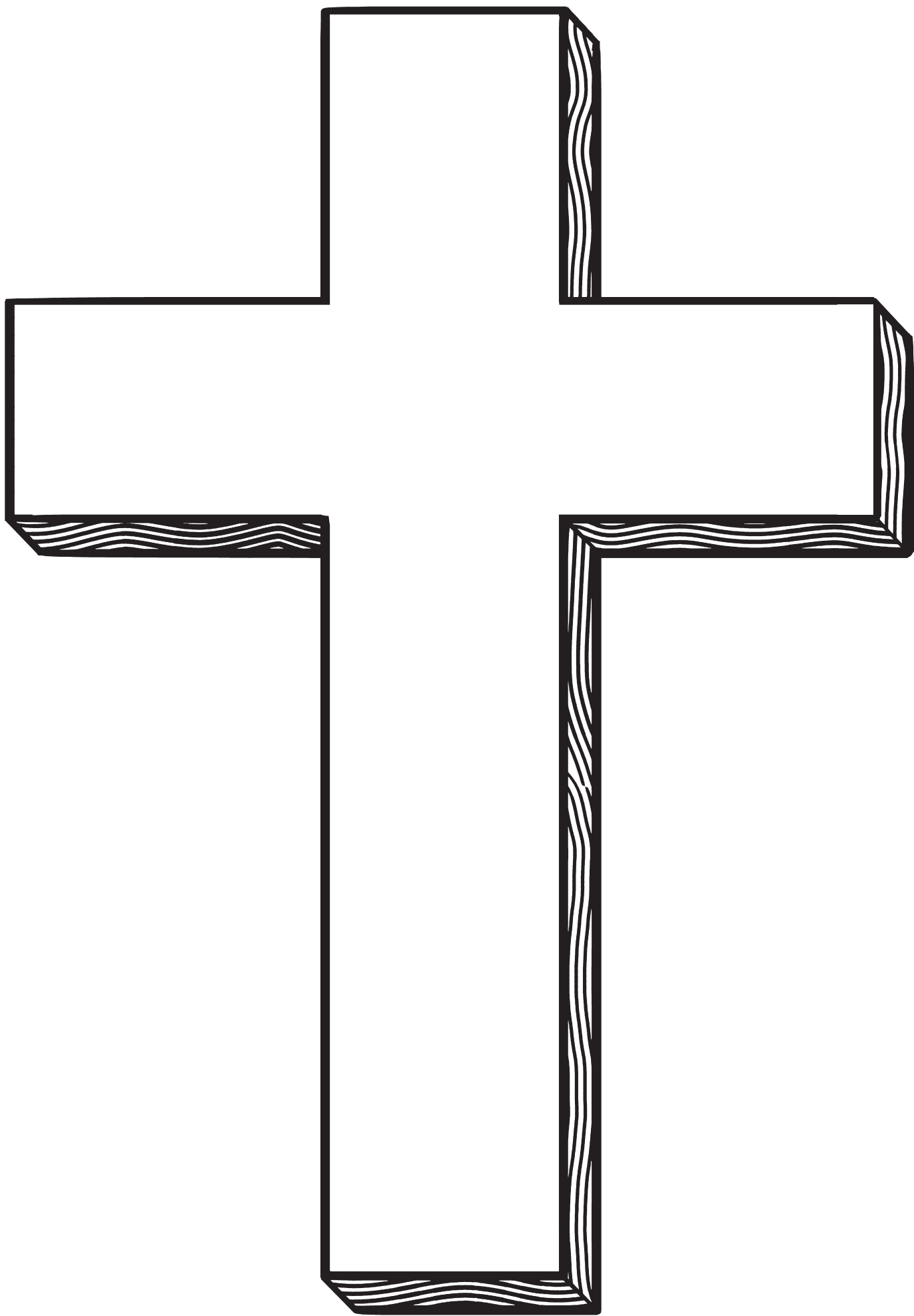
- You are a person.
- You are younger than 50 years old.
- You are wearing blue.
- Your first name starts with “J.”
- Your hair is as long as you are.
- You have only one ear.
- You have no teeth.
- You have never told a lie.











Dear Family,

Today your child learned about Jesus' invitation to the Lord's Supper and how that invitation helps us remember that Jesus gave up his life so that we might be saved. Together we heard the story of the Last Supper—and the First Communion!—from Matthew 26:17-30 and considered how Jesus also invites us to remember and believe all that he has done for us.

We encourage you to read that passage at home and to talk about Jesus' invitation together. Ask your child or children what they wonder about when they hear this story or when they observe or participate in communion. Don't worry about having the "right" answers to their questions. It's okay to say, "I wonder about that too" and/or, "That's a mystery of our faith. We won't always know all the answers, and that's okay. That's what faith is all about—believing without having all the answers."

Be sure to tell your child(ren) what participating in the Lord's Supper means to you. Perhaps you also have a story to tell about your first communion or a time when participating in the Lord's Supper was especially meaningful for you.

For more helpful ideas on talking about the Lord's Supper as a family, visit the Family Resources tab or the Welcoming Children to the Lord's Supper toolkit at [crcna.org/faithformation](http://crcna.org/faithformation).

Sincerely,

Dear Family,

Today your child learned about Jesus' invitation to the Lord's Supper and how that invitation helps us remember that Jesus gave up his life so that we might be saved. Together we heard the story of the Last Supper—and the First Communion!—from Matthew 26:17-30 and considered how Jesus also invites us to remember and believe all that he has done for us.

We encourage you to read that passage at home and to talk about Jesus' invitation together. Ask your child or children what they wonder about when they hear this story or when they observe or participate in communion. Don't worry about having the "right" answers to their questions. It's okay to say, "I wonder about that too" and/or, "That's a mystery of our faith. We won't always know all the answers, and that's okay. That's what faith is all about—believing without having all the answers."

Be sure to tell your child(ren) what participating in the Lord's Supper means to you. Perhaps you also have a story to tell about your first communion or a time when participating in the Lord's Supper was especially meaningful for you.

For more helpful ideas on talking about the Lord's Supper as a family, visit the Family Resources tab or the Welcoming Children to the Lord's Supper toolkit at [crcna.org/faithformation](http://crcna.org/faithformation).

Sincerely,

