

**Aberdeen St Mark's Church
Communion Duties
Elders officiating at Communion**

Left side (Theatre) East

Elder in Charge	ECL
Area bread	BLC
Aisle bread	BLS
Area wine	WLC
Aisle wine	WLS
Wine 2	WL2

Right side (Library) West

Elder in charge	ECR
Area bread	BRC
Aisle bread	BRS
Area wine 1	WRC
Aisle Wine	WRS
Wine 2	WR2

Procedure

This procedure has been further revised now that we are in vacancy. The Session Clerk will seek to establish how the particular minister officiating wishes the Elements to be distributed. The important points to note are (1) that the bread and wine are served to the Elders by the ECL/ECR who then distribute the Elements to the congregation and (2) the timing of the serving of the elements to the minister will be at his/her discretion.

Elders in Charge ECL & ECR uncover the Elements and join the Minister at the Communion table during the last verse of the pre-Communion hymn. After receiving bread & wine from the Minister ECL and ECR serve the Elders with bread & wine from the plates and trays (L&R) located at the front of the Communion Table. Thereafter ECL and ECR distribute the Elements to the duty Elders who serve the congregation. It may be necessary for ECL/ECR to serve the minister before the Elders are served.

BLC & BRC Receive 2 plates of bread from ECL/ECR. BLC puts his/her 2 plates into the first two occupied pews and they are passed all the way along to far right. BRC puts his/her 2 plates into the next two occupied pews. Same procedure follows until all are served. BLC & BRC then wait in vestibule for other Elders. Common sense will prevail during the distribution of the elements regarding partially occupied pews.

BLS & BRS Receive 2 plates of bread each immediately after centre area Elders and serve the relevant sides. BRS to start at Choir pews.

BLC, BRC, BLS & BRS When all have received bread, the Elders gather in vestibule and await completion of the wine distribution. During serving of the bread Elders should be attentive to pews which are not fully occupied to ensure that the plates are passed fully across.

**WLC & WRC
WL2 & WR2** WLC and WRC each receive appropriate number of trays of wine. WLC puts his/hers into the first number of rows of the occupied pews and they are passed all the way along to far right. WRC puts his/hers into the next number of rows of occupied pews. Additional trays will be provided by WL2 and WR2 by way of backup.

**WL2 & WR2
(Backup)** Each receives appropriate numbers trays of wine and gives them to WLC & WRC respectively and then they collect the empty trays from the first distribution and go to the vestibule to wait completion of the distribution. Be aware that where there are partially occupied pews the trays may not be at the correct sides.

WLS & WRS

WLS & WRS both receive appropriate numbers trays of wine after WL2 and WR2 have received the backup trays for the centre area and proceed to distribute the wine row by row and as required. Generally speaking there is no need for WLS & WRS to be provided with back-up. In the event of such requirement ECL & ECR will take the necessary action. WRS will start by serving the choir then other pews.

All Elders

When all of the congregation are served proceed to vestibule to gather, then all return to Communion Table and retake seats in Chancel Area after remaining Elements have been returned to their position on table by ECL and ECR. During the serving of the wine Elders should be attentive to pews which are not fully occupied to ensure that the trays are passed fully across.

ECL & ECR

After Elements returned to position and all serving Elders seated, it may be necessary for ECL to serve the minister with bread from the small plate and ECR to serve wine from the goblet, depending on the minister's instructions as to distribution of the Elements. This will be clarified at the pre-service Session meeting. After prayer or during closing hymn ECL & ECR return to their seats at the front of the Chancel Area.

Afternoon Communion in the Hall

ECL & ECR
Duty Elders

Elders join the Minister at the Table at the start of the service with ECL & ECR immediately adjacent to the minister. During the Communion the Minister will serve all four Elders with bread and wine from the goblet. At this stage it may be necessary for ECL/ECR to serve the minister depending on his/her preference and instructions. All then proceed to distribute the bread to the congregation by table (allocation of tables to be agreed prior to the service). When all have received bread and the plates returned to the Communion Table the four Elders will proceed to distribute the wine also by table as previously arranged. After all members have received wine the trays are returned to the Communion Table when ECL will serve the minister with bread and ECR with wine, this depending on the minister's instructions prior to the service. Elders will remain in place throughout the service.

At all times

With the distribution of the Elements discretion/common sense should be used as to how the elements are best served especially when pews are only partially occupied. Left side Elders always lead. Right side Elders should take their cue from them.

A Final Word

The procedures described above may vary on the basis of the preferences of the minister.

It will be the responsibility of the Session Clerks (whom failing the ECL) to liaise with any visiting minister as to procedure at Communion. This will be relayed to serving Elders at the Kirk Session meeting immediately prior to Communion. All duty Elders should ensure therefore that they attend this meeting.

Ian Lord
Session Clerk
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