

Quiz Results: The Sacraments

Members and friends of St. Paul's were invited to take this quiz, which is given each year to the students enrolled in Confirmation Class. Please read below for answers and context provided by Rev. Snell.

Baptism

1. **In the UMC, which form of baptism is acceptable?**
 - a. **Immersion**
 - b. **Sprinkling or Pouring**
 - c. **All of the above**

70% of you correctly answered "c. All of the above." For a church that has not seen many immersions, good job! Immersion, meaning being submerged completely under water, is also a valid means of baptism. Some of our sister United Methodist churches in coastal areas occasionally baptize people in the ocean.

2. **What is the best kind of water to use for baptism?**
 - a. **water from the Jordan River, where Jesus was baptized**
 - b. **pure distilled water that has been blessed by a bishop in the UMC**
 - c. **tap water**

Good for you. The confirmation class missed this one. 49% of you, a plurality, correctly answered "c. tap water." This one is tricky, but relates to the nature of the God's grace as found in the sacrament. In the sacrament the action is on God's part. God does something for us, we do not do something for God. This is why we don't need special water in order for God's grace to be maximally effective. In fact, it's best if we use ordinary water to recognize that God can do extraordinary things with ordinary water (and with ordinary people).

3. **What is the minimum amount of water necessary for baptism?**
 - a. **one fluid ounce**
 - b. **three drops**
 - c. **1 drop**

Very good. 49% of you answered "b. three drops." One drop for each of the three names in which people are baptized: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Brian Paul Schwartz of the confirmation class answered this correctly, too, because he remembered his baptism. Even though he was only four years old, he remembered water landing on his head three times. One drop each time would have been enough, but he remembered his hair being much damper than that.

4. **Who is eligible for baptism in the UMC?**
 - a. **anyone of any age**
 - b. **infants less than one year old**
 - c. **adults greater than 12 years old**

100% of you answered “a. anyone of any age.” Well done!

5. **When should you be baptized?**
 - a. **once in your life**
 - b. **if you change denominations**
 - c. **as often as you need it**

68% of you correctly answered, “a. once in your life.” Nearly all the Christian traditions now recognize baptism in the triune name of God as valid across all denominational boundaries. This is a recognition that the grace God provides in baptism is completely sufficient, once and for all, and need not be repeated. To be re-baptized is to implicitly state that what God did the first time wasn’t good enough.

Communion

1. **Members of the UMC are encouraged to take communion . . .**
 - a. **at least 4 times per year**
 - b. **every month**
 - c. **weekly**

Both the confirmation class and the congregation missed this one. 74% of you said “every month,” but the best answer here is “c. weekly.” John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, believed the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper was a “grand channel” of God’s grace and encouraged all Methodists to receive it as frequently as possible. Wesley himself received it every week for nearly all his life, and daily for the 12 days after Christmas and the eight days after Easter Sunday. Within the past couple of generations more and more United Methodist churches are offering Holy Communion weekly at one or more of their worship services.

2. **Methodists use grape juice instead of wine because . . .**
 - a. **some people can’t drink wine**
 - b. **wine is too expensive**
 - c. **Mr. Welch, who figured out how to pasteurize grape juice, was a Methodist**

Yes, Thomas Welch figured out how to pasteurize grape juice in 1869, and he was a faithful Methodist. But the reason why we don’t serve wine is because of Methodism’s long history of encouraging abstinence from alcohol as a faithful Christian witness. There

are many people who struggle to resist the temptation to drink alcohol; for these brothers and sisters, even a drop of alcohol may be a stumbling block. This is why we serve grape juice instead of wine. 82% of you correctly answered “a. some people can’t drink wine.”

- 3. In the UMC, who can receive the sacrament of communion?**
 - a. members of the church**
 - b. any member of any United Methodist church, anywhere**
 - c. anyone who is baptized or desires to become baptized**

Yes, the correct answer is “c.” 93% of you got this one right. As we verbally proclaim each time we celebrate the sacrament of Holy Communion, the United Methodist table is an “open table.” All are welcome to fully receive God’s offered grace through the bread and the cup. It is expected that those so moved to receive such grace will likewise move to take the steps necessary for baptism and reception into the fellowship of the Christian life.

- 4. The bread we use in communion**
 - a. can be bought in any store**
 - b. should be purchased from Cokesbury, the Methodist supply house in Nashville, Tennessee**
 - c. must be made by hand**

This one was tricky because the bread we use in Holy Communion is often lovingly and willingly made by hand by one or more church members. However, it doesn’t have to be. Remember, in the sacrament it is God doing the action, not us. God can use ordinary bread, bread that “a. can be bought in any store,” and make it become for us the body and blood of Christ. 62% of you got this right. Bravo!

- 5. In normal situations, only Elders and other persons designated by the Bishop can consecrate the communion elements (say the words, break the bread, etc.) Who, however, can serve the consecrated elements (pass them out to others in the congregation)?**
 - a. pastors and deacons**
 - b. anyone wearing a robe**
 - c. anyone**

94% of you answered this correctly. Yes, anyone can serve. In fact, on many Sundays we often need to pull someone out of the congregation to help distribute the bread and the cup. Last Sunday Will Simpson, one of our confirmands, was sitting with his family in worship at the 10:30 service. I needed someone to help me serve the folks in the back of the Sanctuary, and Will jumped up right away when asked. He was dressed just fine and didn’t need to put on a robe.