

## Feedback Summary – Section 3 DEVOTED TO BREAKING BREAD

In the first century, 'breaking bread' was the general term for sharing a meal together. Acts 2:46 tells us that the early church "broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts". How committed is your church family to practicing this kind of hospitality and intimate, regular sharing of one another's lives?

Average score: **2.4**

As the early church developed, 'breaking bread' also came to mean giving thanks for Jesus' death and resurrection. It became their focal point every time they met in their homes and in the larger gatherings. How passionate and committed is your church family to celebrating Christ's sacrifice?

Average score: **3.2**

Further comments about your church's passion for and commitment to BREAKING BREAD: (In your opinion, what are the challenges and what needs to be done?)

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If we break the bread and drink from the cup we must do so with greater reverence.

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We are hindered in the regular breaking of bread by the lack of an "ordained" minister with our church being pastored for the past decade by an LLM who by definition is not licensed to take Holy Communion.

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Opportunity for more intentional hospitality-based gatherings; again, this has been difficult across the Covid years.

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MY PARISH WAS, ONCE COMMITTED TO THE HOLY EUCHARIST. NOWADAYS WITH THE WAY IT OPERATES I DON'T THINK THE "PARISH MANAGERS" CARE WHETHER OR NOT BREAD IS BROKEN REGULARLY

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The cooperative parish is committed to developing a community life centre which will be built on the very successful project of a food pantry ( since 2009). It will be operational in late July and targeting lonely older people, dysfunctional families, single parents and young people with mental health issues. It will be a fresh expression of church with a mission coordinator that enables members, denominational partners, and community, to actively engage in " being the Gospel" in community, developing and supporting disciples for Christ. The Cooperative Parish has a 1-page current Strategic Plan

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My experience through the Covid pandemic has made gatherings in and outside Church cautious.

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For me this part of church life and indeed life is very important. Again, I find it difficult to say what it means for others. We all have a relationship with God that is both public and private and I would not intrude on someone's private journey with God. I would seek rather to unveil or expose the love of God rather than demand or instruct (apart from sermons etc). If we gauge a passion by people turning up for eucharistic celebration of Christ's sacrifice then yes, there is a strong commitment, but it is so much more than this.

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For some people celebrating the Lord's supper at church is very important, but as for doing that in people's homes, that is virtually unheard of.

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Further comments:

No idea who is hosting others in their homes, or how frequently.

Congregation very keen to have communion. Currently, extended Holy Communion.

Challenges/what can be done:

Get a priest!

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I think a significant percentage of parishioners in the congregations of our Diocese don't have a deep and firmly held conviction in the truth and historicity of Scripture. The evolutionary paradigm that is promoted and widely propagated as the explication for humanity and all we see around us, has cast deep doubt in the public mind that the Biblical account of Creation is true.

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As in previous section many older parishioners are forgotten and these are the ones who have held the church together all their lives until they find it hard to attend or services and are just "forgotten". Just think of the prayer powerhouse this could be for all congregations as these people could participate in this way.

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Breaking bread sharing a meal is an integral part of our rural community

Every community either has or needs a leader to promote and encourage this.

Nothing is difficult about leadership challenges for the right person.

They are often undiscovered in many of the rural community.

Often most church communities just need some simple guidance to set their way.

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The challenge is we only have one layman, and no priest so only happens once a month.

Naturally the numbers are higher on the Sunday and Tuesday that communion served. It's so sad some of these people don't come when we are just having morning prayer.

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Expectation of it being part of the 'normal' service, as opposed to celebrating Christ's sacrifice.

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Many don't see other parishioners from Sunday to Sunday, other than to say hello as we pass in the street. Church is the only thing we have in common.

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greater willingness to trust and exhort one another to sharing/encouragement

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we are committed in our church setting but other than normal friendships we do not engage in home groups or meals necessarily

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I don't think we can get near the NT practice in this while we insist that remembering Christ's sacrifice as we eat must be done in church and can only be led by ordained clergy. Jesus said "Do this as often as you drink it"; he didn't say when you are in a church building and when you have an ordained man with you.

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Breaking Bread (communion) is a focal part of our Sunday worship services. Other forms of service without communion, e.g., Morning Prayer, are not well supported. The people in our fellowship are very caring and supportive of each other, but probably not in the "breaking bread" way of Acts 2. Establishing Homegroups is one way forward.

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Although we are a close bunch and really covet the opportunity to share in Holy Communion, we can do much more in really sharing hospitality and our union in Christ regularly in our homes, during the week etc.

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We meet regularly across the week in homes, cafes and in public. We are a social group who fellowship over food!

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Caring fellowship, including over meals, is evident in various ways; it is more difficult to turn this into intentional mutual reflection on Christ's sacrifice.

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There isn't any encouragement from the clergy for regular fellowship outside of service times. James Daymond has initiated some with afternoon tea following his service. The monthly family service has a BYO lunch open to everyone.

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Our congregation is very active in the community and share many community interests. I'd love to see this energy also directed to Christian hospitality i.e. letting their faith impact their weekly activities and/or setting aside time to intentionally encourage others in their faith.

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Sharing meals, sharing homes, sharing hospitality and fellowship with one another has become a distant memory since COVID restrictions and the fear conjured up through the media.

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The monthly lunches seem v successful. The leaders model hospitality. HC once a month

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In all services we should break bread. With divided services, sometimes it is Traditional service break bread, family service or "morning prayer", don't break bread. It was particularly hard attending Zoom services during Covid lockdowns, and virtually breaking bread, with no sense of sharing or fellowship. In smaller churches in our diocese, some of which have been sold to restore finances and deal with historic abuse, breaking bread depended on a lay minister having consecrated bread and wine to offer. As for aged care homes etc. Maybe the idea of "consecrated" could be reconsidered.

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I think we are working towards having greater hospitality in our congregation.

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This is very difficult to answer for an older congregation many of whom are retired, infirm and regularly have medical issues. Some do invite friends to a meal on occasions or meet at a restaurant or cafe for coffee. Older people do find it difficult to entertain and don't want to go out too often. I am with a group who pray every week for needs as we mow them in the church, we also pray for outreach to non-Christian's contacts we have amongst friends family and neighbours.

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I'm just a girl!... but as an attender at Anglican churches for past 9 years, I've definitely got the impression that what's described here was 'taboo' - I've suggested we have a loaf and share it at bible study as Passover - 'oh no, that's at church need the minister' etc. the previous 20years I worshipped at an evangelical church - where "everyone" was encouraged to see daily thankfulness for Jesus body as 'normal' - e.g., instead of cutting your toast, why not 'rip' it, and remind yourself to pray - thankyou that Jesus body was torn for my serious sin, and God has washed me with the shedding of his blood. Also, communion at church. IS it really only a leader thing??? If not- leaders should model and encourage US to implement it!!!!

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Many of our members are widowed or have spouses who are not believers. I think this inhibits fellowship and hospitality to some extent?

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There is a challenge of unity, so there isn't a common concern for one another, but groups caring for each other. I am not sure how welcoming we are or have been to newcomers.

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Some parts of the congregation do not appear to regularly "break bread" i.e., not regular and weekly receivers of the Eucharist.

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We need to do this more often challenges are people's availability and having a living area to entertain people

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The sacrament in church seems more important to folk then breaking of bread in fellowship

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Again, my answer does mostly refer to the few of us. We do meet fairly regularly in fellowship. However, it's not a Biblically based get together. We used to have a church dinner once a month, but COVID stopped this and we have not resumed. The congregation shares in morning tea following the Sunday service and this is a positive time. We need a fresh perspective, encouragement and evangelism and outreach. I feel this would bring "joy" to us. We need someone in leadership who will look to the future and not dwell on the past or hold grudges.

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I feel most are passionate about Breaking Bread, but with Anglican tradition/rules we are not able to share in Communion unless it's blessed by a priest. A priest is not often available.

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I believe we need more opportunities to 'break bread' together and be able to involve as many as possible in this practice.

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The church has a reputation for food and fellowship in the community

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There are some that are very committed to sharing meals together. There are probably 2 or 3 groups that do it regularly, but then there are others who seem to not be invited to share meals or spend time with others outside of church. There is fellowship after the church service that those who attend seem to enjoy, but again it's not everyone who attends.

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More. But its challenging. Time has created traditions. Traditions created boundaries. Boundaries create division. The opposite begins with forgiveness of difference, I don't know how. God knows.

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I believe that the breaking of bread is an essential part of every service, some don't agree with my point of view, which is fine, other denominations practice communion less often.

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Challenges are both time and venue. Sometimes cost.

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Men's and women's groups i.e., men's breakfast Anglican women's assn. youth groups play groups Sundays school are great out reaches reaching out to young Parents and other family members alike. Men are harder to attract they need to have something outside of work to get them there. Women are more social youngsters need to feel "cool" about being a Christian.

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Again .not all church family views known.

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I actually think this

Question is rather irrelevant in the 21st century society.

Jesus didn't grow believers or early church leaders by breaking bread.

It was a rite of remembrance, identification, recognition of sin, request for and divine forgiveness.

There is plenty of communion celebrated in our church.

Few non-Christians would see much purpose in attending a communion service, even if they were interested in learning more about Jesus.

Jesus drew people because he met and satisfied human need: Need for teaching and wisdom to lead a Godly life: Need to be healed of a multitude of " problems". Need to be feed, need for food.

Human need.

Again and again and again, he met human need.

By meeting human need- He demonstrated his divinity but much more importantly, he showed forth His great, great love for humanity.

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Some people come to church depending on who is preaching.

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In my church there is a commitment to bread the challenge is when an elderly person is unable to continue to attend church how do we continue to minister effectively when our Priest is only one person with a number of church related matters to attend that are also of high priority.

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Transform the time and event of communion from a thing you just do (In fact it would be seen as not being real church without the sacrament) to something that is deeply both personally and corporately meaningful. Teaching and challenge.

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An older age demographic in the church, and many widows does mean that gatherings in homes can be difficult for some to offer hospitality. Lunch activities and carpooling would help and the practice of all bringing a plate of food to share would be a solution.

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Regarding communion: the archaic Anglican rule where a priest is the only person who can lead communion has to go. Also, that the bread and wine has to be blessed by a priest is not biblical. All this stops people celebrating the Lord's supper in their homes. We try to have people in our home for meals regularly. In 7 years, we have been invited into someone else's home for a meal no more than 5 times. 4 of those occasions were the same home.

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I believe there needs to be a great deal of teaching and modelling of hospitality and what communion truly is. Sadly, for many it is a tradition that is entrenched and is more of a superstition than direction from Jesus to share in His love and sacrifice

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Some would see breaking of the bread in Holy Communion as the main thing, not capturing the immensity of Jesus sacrifice and what that should stir us towards - love and good works, taking our faith outside the 4 walls of the building

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We used to have communion every week but now only once a month. There is also no space allowed for anyone to get up and share during our Sunday service. This used to happen and was really encouraging to hear how God was working in people's lives week to week. This wouldn't be allowed to happen now as our current leaders don't seem to understand the working of the holy spirit and being spontaneous

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There does not seem to be much socialising outside of church functions that I am aware of.

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I think our church has been more focused on the process rather than the message

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There seems to be an importance on communion in church but not the fellowship of breaking bread with one another

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I have never been invited into another person's home for a meal and fellowship despite inviting others into my home. It is a sad reflection on the Christian church. With respect to remembering Christ's sacrifice: Our culture is changing to call the place where communion is celebrated from an altar to a holy table. Christ made a sacrifice once for all and asked us to remember that sacrifice. Let us focus on that without the trying to alter the language.

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The age of our congregation, impacts on their mobility and hospitality - inviting others for meals. Communion, however, is important.

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I am quite sure the small group of our 'family' at Holy Trinity are very committed to 'breaking bread'. I guess the biggest problem is there just aren't enough 'feet' on the ground to exercise greater outreach to the wider community.

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Our congregation is fortunate to share holy communion every week, and there is always time after church to gather together. Perhaps more encouragement is needed for people to share their homes with others.

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It is really important that together we celebrate the Eucharist/ Lord's Supper. AAPB is a great resource.

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Not sure what to say... my understanding of strategy is that it's the easiest pathway to maximum success give the resources you have available. So, I think we need to identify our key resources and work with them. For example, do have easy accessibility of the town to us in our various jobs and careers but we also live in a Church (not necessarily God) Phobic town

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Giving thanks for Jesus death and resurrection is a natural devotion when surrounded by Christian family....It becomes more difficult when mixing with non-Christians. There needs to be careful thought and prayer to how to integrate non-Christians into our home and into our church family ...basically evangelising through bringing together people who may be living and speaking in a manner that brings glory to God and being a witness to his goodness in order to encourage others to want to know Jesus...

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People have a desire for weekly communion at church, not necessarily meeting in one another's homes to do this. They like this in a formal sense, not necessarily something they do with each other.

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Again, people must have similar values and interests in order to share a meal in one's home.

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The morning tea and the Gathering are well attended.  
The Gathering is sharing a meal with their "pies and sausage rolls" and being taught the Word of God in their study.

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Regular gatherings and unique opportunities to meet e.g., garden church and lunch which our congregation would love to plan in the spring and warmer weather. We are about to commence a " Bring a Stranger to Morning Tea" at the end of June (Sat 25th at 10am) to try and reach out to strangers and new people in the community who we have never seen in our church.

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The community is very Anglican in this - breaking bread is done in communion. Have only joined others for meals in church wide activities or with the minister.

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Certainly, an area for growth but a challenge in a mostly elderly congregation.

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Morning tea after church?

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Again, there is no pastoral care. The leadership only concern themselves in providing for the young people and ignore the more mature membership.

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New people meet with new people. Long term friends meet with long term friends. Communion weekly is seen as essential by most.

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We did invite people to our homes, but as we aged there is less of this. In times past my wife and I invited newcomers to our home and they testified publicly that it was because of our hospitality that they became parishioners.

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As a member of the Church leadership group I'm involved in less formal opportunities to 'break bread' with others. However, as a leadership group, we are aware this has been difficult for the broader Church family over the last few years - especially with COVID. We have embraced new opportunities but still have room to grow & improve.

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COVID put a stop to that, and it seems those who did do that haven't started again.

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Communion is a driver for attendance and so too is lighting a candle for a departed relative. Usually all attendees take communion, and approximately half light a candle after communion for a relative.

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Again, my service has hospitality every week, and bible studies are a great time for sharing each other's lives. At the other service, there isn't even a morning tea. There have been some invitations to people's homes, which has been nice from that service. Everyone likes communion though.

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Holy Communion is considered the main service of worship.

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When we are able to have a communion service more people seem to come to church. Everyone Sunday we have opportunity to share a meal together and this is steady in numbers. I'm unsure if this extends to their homes.

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I think that COVID has had an impact on "breaking bread" in people's homes. I think it's very important and this has reminded me to plan more opportunities to have people at my place for meals. I think that we get busy with life and forget this important part of encouraging each other.

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Holy Communion is very important to our very elderly traditional congregation.

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We could start by sharing the eucharist during a church lunch. We could encourage people to invite one another home for lunch after church. It might be a bit of work. Social shyness to be overcome. Hard not to make people feel pressured. Would we give people permission: "you can try this at home"??

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Maybe time, and as people grow with good teaching (that we have now in our Parish, and through Mark) this will change. Again, keen to always have the Lords supper, maybe not so keen to gather outside of the building.

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The 8.00am service has weekly communion while the 10.00am has just a monthly service. I can issue with both but I will stay silent on those issues here. We can have the older Catholic view of the communion, or we could have a view which says that it is not very important at all. We could take the position of Northmead some 20 years ago where they had it once a month. They were so afraid of any Catholic influence. I take your position. It is something that we do when we meet together each Sunday.

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Can we have an open worship service focused on the communion once a term? everyone would prepare and pray and be led by the Spirit...

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The church will meet for special birthdays, farewells etc. Individuals are regularly acknowledged and thanked for support or participation. Members are reluctant to meet outside of church because the perception is everyone is busy with their own timetable. Fellowship after church is a catch-up time and when there are visiting ministry. Communion is highly valued.

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COVID has been a problem with communion, no easy solution.

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Again, I wouldn't really know. However, I do know that Holy Communion is celebrated at practically every Service.

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Lack of communion services is a problem

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