

## **PUBLIC WORSHIP WITH COMMUNION BY EXTENSION**

### **What is it?**

Communion by Extension allows for bread and wine, consecrated at a service in one church to be taken to another church (usually in the same, or a neighbouring benefice, and on the same day) where an authorised service called 'Public Worship with Communion by Extension' is celebrated.

This service is led by a lay minister authorised by the Diocesan Bishop, during which the consecrated elements are shared, as an 'extension' of that prior celebration.

Communion by Extension offers an opportunity for a congregation to receive Communion in the context of a service of worship

It is an alternative to Holy Communion and not a substitute for it.

For this reason, the circumstances in which it should be used are limited and clearly defined.

### **Who can authorise it?**

Across the Church of England, use of Communion by Extension is limited to occasions when the express permission of the bishop has been obtained.

### **What are the circumstances when Communion by extension is permitted?**

The following five criteria need to be met:

- (1) it must only be occasional
- (2) the circumstances must be genuinely exceptional
- (3) the person leading the service must be licensed or authorised, having received appropriate instruction.
- (4) the Bishop must give explicit permission in advance
- (5) the authorised form of service must be used

### **What does 'genuinely exceptional' mean?**

The following examples would be considered 'exceptional':

- if, during a vacancy or a period of leave, it is not possible to find cover to provide a Eucharist within a benefice on a particular Sunday e.g Easter

In situations such as these, Communion by Extension may be permitted by the Bishop, provided a suitably trained, licensed and authorised person leads the service.

Communion by Extension must not be used as a regular part of a parish's programme of worship. E.g., It is not permitted for Communion by Extension to become the service that takes place on the second and fourth Sunday of every month

A vacancy should not be considered exceptional in the life of a church, so it is not permitted that during a vacancy a parish uses Communion by Extension to cover all of its Eucharistic worship. In very exceptional pastoral circumstances, the Bishops may choose to vary this guidance, at their discretion.

### **What is the process for requesting communion by extension?**

The incumbent or priest-in-charge (or during a vacancy, the church wardens) must make a written request to their Bishop by completing the attached form. *(This can be done by email.)*

Any such request should have the full support of the PCC.

### **Reverence for the Elements**

Communion by Extension will require that the consecrated elements are treated in a seemly and dignified manner.

Those responsible for a service should ensure that the consecrated elements are adequate to meet the needs of the congregation, and that any consecrated bread and wine which is not required for the purposes of communion is consumed either during or immediately after the service.

### **Form of Service**

The only form of service which is permitted to be used for services of Communion by Extension is the service of "Common Worship: Public Worship with Communion by Extension", which can be found here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/Public%20Worship%20with%20Communion%20by%20Extension.pdf>

### **Guidelines issued by the House of Bishops:**

<https://d3hgrlq6yacptf.cloudfront.net/5f209069c4808/content/pages/documents/1582500830.pdf>