

Procedures for Conducting Lord's Supper Services

General

1. The annual Lord's Supper service is the paramount ordinance practiced by the Church of God 7th Day. Most people in the congregation are not aware of the amount of effort and preparation needed to conduct such a service. This procedural guideline is written to inform and guide the reader in executing the Lord's Supper in the event the Pastor, Pastor Emeritus or other principal is not available to provide guidance.

Date and Time

2. The service is to be conducted at the beginning of the 14th day of Abib/Nisan. The date of the service is determined from the Hebrew calendar. Typical service start time would be 7:00 p.m.

Preparing before the Service

3. There are a number of preparatory activities that need to be taken care in order to ensure a well-conducted and edifying service. These include:

1. Preparation of the hearts.
2. Preparation of the facilities.
3. General preparation for the service.
4. Preparation for foot washing ceremony.
5. Preparation for communion.

4. Preparation of the Hearts – Although not mandatory, typically we remind the congregation through sermon, teaching or exhortation about the significance of the Lord's Supper and the need for us as believers to not take of the emblems unworthily. This is usually done some time during the month and weeks preceding the service. Also, the opportunity may be given for the brethren to further consecrate themselves by having a week of prayer, nightly prayer service the week preceding the communion service.

5. Preparation of the facilities is taken care of by the Levites and includes the following:

- Cleaning and vacuuming the Sanctuary as would be expected following our usual services held in the Sanctuary.
- Cleaning and mopping of the Fellowship Hall.

6. General preparation for the service is usually taken care of by the Pastor and Administrative Team and includes the following:

- Announcing of date and time of the service regularly in advance of the service by announcement, written in the bulletin or by telephone broadcast.
- Formatting of the service. In addition to prayer, the service bulletins from the most recent services should be reviewed to help ascertain the desired order of the service, which songs and Scriptures have been used in the recent past, the officiants, etc.
- Ensuring that musicians are available.
- Selection and placement of music, choir, special renditions

- Purchase of unleavened bread and kosher grape juice.
- Printing of bulletins for the service.

7. Preparation for the foot washing ceremony is typically done by the “deaconesses” and includes the following:

- Setting up the Fellowship Hall for the ceremony, putting up the room dividers and door window coverings for privacy, and arranging chairs.
- Securing, sanitizing and setting up basins for foot washing.
- Securing and setting up towels.
- Procedures for collecting towels and basins, and cleaning and storage after the service.

8. Preparation for the communion ceremony is typically done by the Pastor and includes the following:

- Setting up of communion table, which includes:
 - Positioning the communion table in the Sanctuary.
 - Retrieving and ensuring the bread plates are clean.
 - Preparation of the unleavened bread – breaking sufficient bread for the expected participants.
 - Retrieving and ensuring the juice dispenser is clean.
 - Retrieving and ensuring the cup trays are clean.
 - Ensuring an adequate number of cups is in stock.
 - Ensuring sufficient fruit of the vine is poured.
 - Positioning of bread plates and fruit of the vine dispenser on the communion table.
 - Retrieving communion tablecloths.
 - Retrieving washbasin, towels and positioning of pedestal.

Note: The bread plates, juice dispenser, cups, cup trays and communion tablecloths are stored in the credenza in the Conference Room.

Conducting the Service

9. When preparing the order of service, the following should be kept in mind.

- The service should start on time.
- Official start may be preceded by prelude music.
- The order of the service should include a Scripture reading and congregational singing.
- The foot washing ceremony precedes the communion ceremony.
- The placement of special renditions, exhortations, testimonies, etc. is flexible.
- Although the ordained elders and ministers are typically called upon first to participate in the various sections of the services, e.g., Scripture reading, and exhortation from the Word, serving the bread, serving the fruit of the vine, any brother or sister may be called upon to assist.

10. Sufficient time should be allotted for testimony and praise with adequate microphones available for congregational participants. From start to finish, a typical service may be expected to last 2.5-3.5 hours.

After the Service

11. Post service clean up includes:
 - Washing, drying and storing of the foot washing basins and towels.
 - Washing, drying and storing of the dispensers, cup trays, washbowl, bread plates and tablecloths.
 - Clearing and mopping the Fellowship Hall.
 - Repositioning the communion table.

Other Considerations

12. Receiving Lord's Supper at Residence. Depending on time constraints and availability of the ministry team, individuals who are shut in may receive Lord's Supper the same night at their residence. A portable communion is available to service 2-4 people. Of course, the service would much shorter and adapted to suit the environment.

13. "Make-Up Service." According to Scripture, individuals who missed the Passover on the 1st month of the year were allowed to participate in a "make-up" ceremony on the 14th day of the 2nd month. Accordingly, we allow for the make-up Lord's Supper at the beginning of the 14th day of the 2nd month. The date would also be determined based on the Hebrew calendar. There would be a central service at the church (most likely in the Chapel), complete with foot washing and communion, with the possibility of additional services in various locations to accommodate the shut-in congregants, whether in nursing homes or private residence.