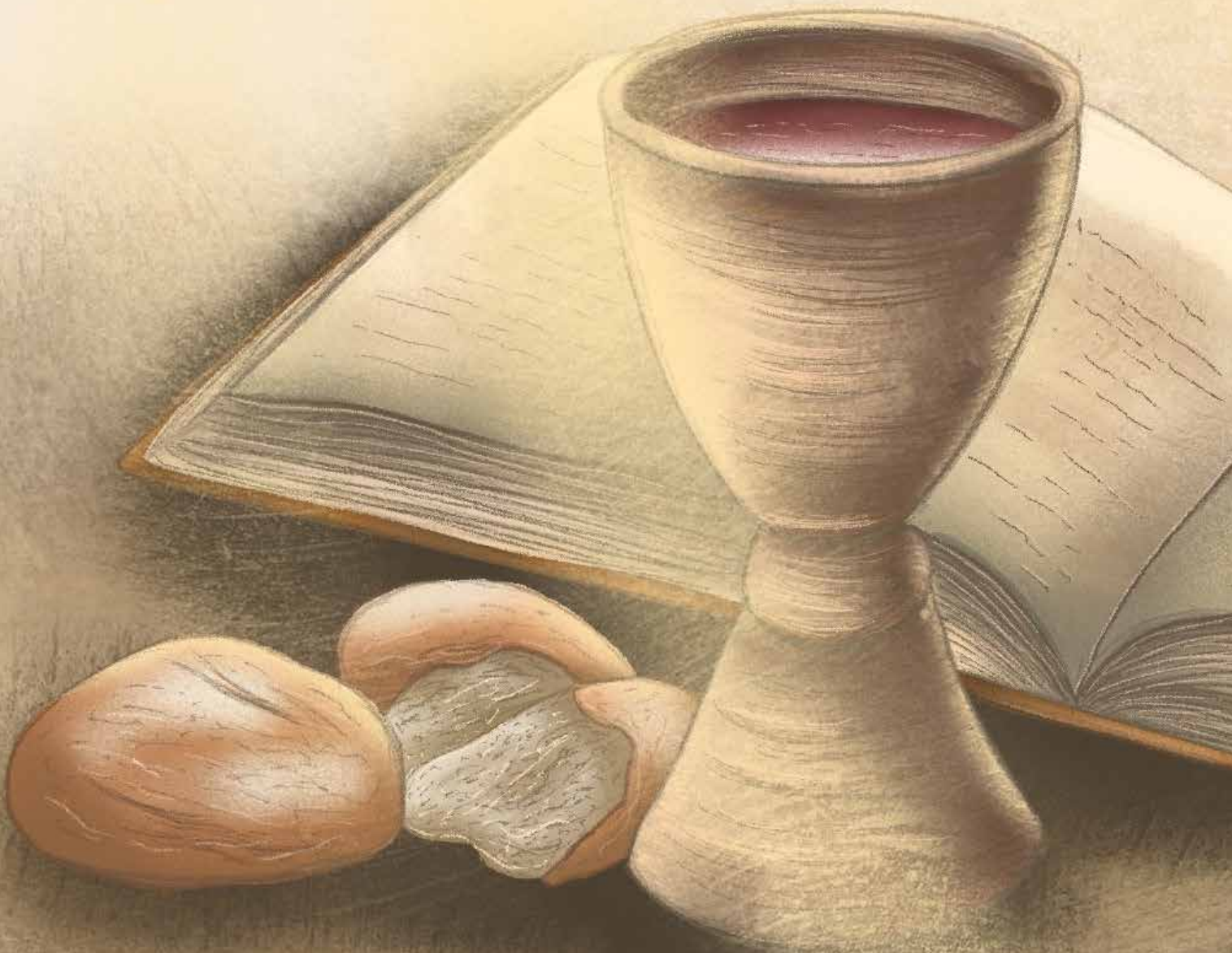


Bread & Wine

An invitation to Intergenerational Communion

Managing Director Melanie Cave introduces Roots Bread & Wine, a regular new feature offering resources designed to work in parallel with engaging regular weekly material, to help you plan and lead our all-age Communion worship.



Over the past 20 years, passing faith on to the next generation has become an urgent priority for the Church. We've seen books, conferences, strategies and restructures, all wrestling with the best way to see children come to faith, included and disciplined in the life of the Church.

It is not a simple matter. Children are not mini-adults. What works for adults may not be appropriate. There are challenges around what children understand conceptually, in terms of language and attention spans, and what they are interested in. And as culture changes, Sunday School is less appealing to families, and there are many activities competing for that Sunday morning time slot.

We know children are innately spiritual, with a passion to worship, pray, learn and serve. Spend much time with children and you will regularly find yourself in an atmosphere of joy, generosity, awe and wondrous curiosity. There is no 'junior Holy Spirit', and children are explicitly welcomed and honoured by Jesus. So, how can we as the Church help children discover and grow in their faith?

Yes, it is important to teach children about God and the Bible, but many children (and adults) learn by doing: by joining in and being involved in the actions and rituals of faith. How can we meaningfully include children in our worship, service, prayers, and relational community? Roots has been at the coalface of this work for 21 years, helping churches lead engaging worship and learning across the generations.

Since Roots serves a breadth of churches, we have not previously offered communion resources, because each denomination and tradition celebrates Holy Communion in slightly different ways, and most churches' rituals and wording around Eucharist did not vary much week-to-week. However, times have changed: all-age services often include communion, and the challenge now is that we need short, succinct yet meaningful prayers that help children (or others who need a simple wording) engage with communion. What can we do?

Roots' authors and editors wrestled with how – while honouring the traditions and denominational differences – we can phrase prayers in ways that will be powerful, engaging and accessible for all ages. (We have a summary of how our resources apply in each denominational context on pages 48-9). Through consultation, trial and review, we have developed two sets of Eucharistic resources for each issue of our Adult and All Age magazine. One may follow themes arising from the weekly material, others will be more seasonal (Lent, Advent, Creation time, etc). Alongside these words and prayers, we aim to provide inspiring case studies of churches exploring different ways to engage in intergenerational communion together. We know every church is different, but we hope these ideas will stimulate your creativity and help you to find the path that is right for your congregation.

As Christians, even if our styles are different, we are united at Christ's table as we share communion (1 Cor. 10:17). We hope you will see these new 'Bread & Wine' resources as an opportunity and a provocation: to let you explore the riches of Christ's table and how you might invite others, including families in your community, to discover God's goodness as they join you in Holy Communion.



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