

Music: [00:06](#) [inaudible].

Josh Mangelson: [00:17](#) Welcome to the Project Zion podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.

Linda Booth: [00:33](#) Welcome to the fifth episode of Coffee Buzz. My name is Linda Booth. I'm a retired Community of Christ apostle and director of communications having served nearly 22 years now. I enjoy living out my discipleship as a volunteer with one of my roles being podcast host. So welcome Coffee Buzz podcast listeners to another conversation with a member of Community of Christ's First Presidency. Today I'm talking with president Scott Murphy, one of two counselors to the prophet president Steve Veazey. Welcome my dear friend to this cold day in Independence, Missouri. I know you grew up in Washington, was the weather is bad there and is cold there as it is here?

Scott Murphy: [01:24](#) Well, it does get cold, but it does not get as cold on the coast as I have experienced in a Kansas City, Independence area..

Linda Booth: [01:34](#) Did you ever get snow?

Scott Murphy: [01:36](#) You know, we did periodically. Usually maybe once, twice a year you would get a little snow, but it would just dissipate as quickly as it came. So it doesn't linger like it does here.

Linda Booth: [01:44](#) So does linger, well I think one time in the world church leadership council during a worship, when we were talking about things we liked to do and I mentioned that I like to shovel snow and I remember the looks of people around the table. So as well as, I mean Washington's a beautiful place but I really like snow so it's good. I live here, right?

Scott Murphy: [02:06](#) It's fits for you.

Linda Booth: [02:07](#) It does fit. So in January, leaders who serve on the world church leadership council gather for a week of meetings as well. Then the council of 12 also meets for an additional week of meetings. So you'll remember like colleagues, like our apostle Carlos from Honduras and apostle Mareva from French Polynesia, they find the weather, they're difficult. And so they wear these heavy coats or multiple layers when they sit around the table with the world church leadership council to discuss important and often difficult church issues with their colleagues. So I have a question for you since I think this podcast will be released around the time of those January meetings for world church leadership

council. Can you preview some of the issues that they might be discussing during that session?

Scott Murphy:

[03:01](#)

Well, in this January session, the presidency after a lot of conversation has made a decision that we are going to, as a full council, enter into a more intentional, um, discernment experience. I mean, discernment is, is always a part of what we do. You, you know, you as you remember, I mean, we engage in worship at the start of every meeting and, and prayer and all of that. But there are practices that are designed to attempt to take you deeper. And as podcast listeners may be fully aware in the life of the church, things are changing in the context of, of the U S and other nations in places around the world. So as we've wrestled with this, we know that there, there's extreme giftedness across and on the council, but it's not just about coming together out of our own intelligence and decision making.

Scott Murphy:

[04:14](#)

It's really about coming together and as, as faithful leaders, how do we listen to where God is calling us in calling the church into the future? And so we've approached, um, Katie Harmon McLaughlin as the spiritual formation coordinator and uh, we are inviting retired apostle and presiding evangelists, David Brock, they are coming and serving as what we call his discernment Tarion's. They will be facilitating a process with the leadership council not only in January, but when we meet again in may and when we meet again in September. So we are truly intentional about going deeper, listening deeper, seeking to discern where God is calling community of Christ to go into the future and, and who we're called to be. So that's the focus.

Linda Booth:

[05:08](#)

Excellent. Well, I encourage the podcast listeners to pray for the world church leaders as they gather in January for that discernment and encourage your congregations to join in that purple support as well. That would be greatly appreciated in the past few years. And during many leadership meetings, apostles and will church leadership members have talked about issues surrounding the sacrament of the Lord's Supper or often called communion. As a result of those discussions and input from the theology formation team and standing high council, the first presence, he recently released an eight page document that that's entitled guidelines for serving the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And one topic addressed in those guidelines is about online participation in the Lord's supper. And I know that the first presidency and the church leaders have spent a lot of time prayerfully considering and discussing online congregations that are emerging in the life of the church. So what are some of the implications or issues or considerations that the first presidency

identified, uh, concerning the celebrating the Lord's supper on an in an online environment?

Scott Murphy:

[06:32](#)

You know, so first as you reference the, the eight page guidelines, that document ultimately was intended not only to be informational, but to also help the church in a formational aspect to understand the significance of the sacraments in the life of the church. And especially then the sacrament of the Lord's supper. So when we were wrestling with this about the online participation, we've had this on our table for at least two to three years. As you remember, Linda, because it is a growing phenomenon in the life of the church, what we call this kind of virtual world and network that is occurring out there. And so as we were wrestling with that, part of it occurred as a result of challenging and pressing on us in our, our personal understandings about the nature of sacraments and our lack of really understanding the, the dynamics and significance of the virtual communities that were forming.

Linda Booth:

[07:53](#)

What's important is that the sacrament in all sacraments are a communal experience. When you, when you stop to think about it, there is no sacrament that occurs with just one. There is always at least two or more. So the sacraments are formed around the experience of community. And so we found ourself really wrestling with that. What's it mean to experience the sacraments in a, in a virtual world when you're looking at each other through screens rather than as you and I right now are looking at each other face to face. That took some time for us to journey with an understand and to develop a deeper awareness and sensitivity to other generations and, and other individuals who were finding the, the value of sacred community in a virtual way than it was in a face to face, um, human life to human life. And so that, that was probably one of the biggest issues that we had to, we had to work through and to wrestle with the, uh, the aspect of what that would mean in terms of how the sacrament could get lived out and that experience.

Scott Murphy:

[09:20](#)

You know, the other thing is, is that sacraments involve tangible symbols in the, in the sacrament of the Lord's supper, there is the, the bread and the juice or the wine. Um, there's the prayers and so touch and that tangible opportunity to experience is really important. We know that in other sacraments, the laying on of hands and other symbols like that are important. So we had to also understand how, how they could experience those tangible symbols in a virtual way. So as we wrestled through that, as we, as we tried to step back and challenge our own assumptions and our own experiences, we, yeah, we began, as we listened in with the world church

leadership council and other cultures, we began to discover that there was a way for this to occur. One or the other things that we had to address was World Conference Resolution 401, uh, which was passed back in 1895, but it was still in what we call it, forced in effect, meaning we still recognized it because World Conference Resolution 401 impacted and gave guidance to how the serving of the communion to the different members and who was to do that.

- Scott Murphy: [10:53](#) That was there. And also in doctrine covenant section 17. So we had to wrestle with that because in a virtual way, if you had people in one location where there was no priest or milk Hassidic minister, what would that mean? Could a person serve themselves? So there were traditions in the life of the church that we had to start stretching and trying to understand. And so those were some of the really, probably the more prominent implications of, uh, the online consideration that we had to deal with.
- Linda Booth: [11:28](#) Because people who were in these online communities wanted to have the experience of sharing in the sacrament of the Lord's supper.
- Scott Murphy: [11:37](#) Absolutely.
- Linda Booth: [11:38](#) So they were pressing for leaders to give consideration to that request. That's right. And that happens frequently where it's, it's what's happening out in the life of the church that begins to challenge the presidency, to have to think about in, in different ways, in different questions. And this was clearly one of those.
- Linda Booth: [12:04](#) And also those communities are very close knit even though they might not ever see themselves face to face at world conference. I had the opportunity to go to a dinner of people that gather online in community. And as I sat listening to their conversations, they were intimate conversations. I mean, they knew about each other's families and they knew about issues of health. And I was amazed that from the old tradition where we meet in the congregation how meeting online was so valuable to people who in some cases would never have the opportunity to be in a congregation because of the long distances they would take to travel to a congregation. And yet they had this wonderful congregation to support.
- Scott Murphy: [12:51](#) Right. And, and that is, you know, I, I guess to be honest and transparent here, that was one of the issues that I had to challenge and stretch myself on because that was not part of my personal experience. I hadn't spent time in those kinds of

communities. So I found myself really wrestling with how does that really form the, this close-knit faithful experience and so it wasn't until I began to place myself in those situations and began to experience some of those. It was through that, that I began to recognize, ah, this can happen and I needed to just as a personal disciple, but in my role in the presidency, I needed to open my mind and be aware of the different ways that the spirit brings informs community.

Linda Booth: [13:53](#)

Yes. And so in these guidelines, it provides principles that should be observed when planning and providing online participation in the Lord's supper. Could you share a little bit about those principles and guidelines and planning and participating in?

Scott Murphy: [14:08](#)

So I think as, as we stated in the, the guidelines document itself, probably the number one principle that we wanted to uphold is that the experience needed to happen in real time. Now I want to qualify that understanding that real time when you're talking in a virtual sense that there's always a slight delay that occurs. But in the sense that we are all together, we're seeing each other in and being together at that common time versus me just watching a recording of a sacrament service. So that sense of us being together, engaging together, hearing, seeing, uh, together was an important aspect of seeing this is how in the, in the sacredness of community that we want to experience a sacrament. So that was probably number one. The second was that we wanted to say that the sacraments, the emblems itself needed to be physically present. So it wasn't that individuals could participate in the sacrament by watching others do it. The sacrament, the emblems needed to be present and available to each person.

Scott Murphy: [15:33](#)

That is a part of that online community. And then that the, the ministry of the priest or melchisedec in the life of Community of Christ needed to be a part of that experience. Priesthood ministry that brings blessing, brings guidance, brings that support into the community, needed to be there. And while there may not be a priest or Melchizedek ministry at every minister at every site where somebody is joining from, if there was somebody at priesthood, a priesthood member that was online, then they were presiding over that, that whole community. And so their responsibility in terms of offering the prayers on the emblems, on behalf of the community was an important piece. And that there would be priesthood members that if they were present were available to serve the sacrament. Again, under our current practices, a priest or melchisedec priesthood member would be able to serve the sacrament. But

where there was not a priesthood member, we still wanted individuals to be able to participate. And so they could have the emblems that had been blessed by the priesthood member, they could have the implements to partic. And so those were, those were the four basic principles that we indicated were important in, in having a common experience, not only virtually, but with, with other congregations in this, in this sacrament.

Linda Booth: [17:15](#)

I'm sure that's very helpful for those who have been yearning for that experience to share together online. And I just thought for those who have not participated on an online experience with a group of people, a community, I want to share what it looks like. And so many of them use what's called Zoom, which is a platform. We're on the screen of your computer. You can see the faces and actually the chair or the table where the people are seated and all across the screen, maybe eight different places and more, you can actually see people. So it's not like you're just sitting there and you're hearing voices or you might see one. In many cases you're actually seeing the people who are participating in, in that service or that community. So I wanted people to have a visual of, it's not, it's, you don't feel so isolated because you can actually see each other.

Scott Murphy: [18:12](#)

Yeah. It's important to understand that, that that's a different experience than, than a congregation. Web streaming their service. One way out that people watch these kinds of communities. People are interacting together.

Linda Booth: [18:26](#)

Yes, they are. And oftentimes people, uh, when they want to speak, they're their, they're a box turns a different color or whatever and they speak, they share prayers. And so it really is a worshipful experience. And I found it amazing because I remember the discussion that we had in real church leadership council in the guidelines for serving the Lord's supper. It mentioned mentioned sacramental universals and then it gives Community of Christ particulars that are required and then particular practice in some congregations but not required. So that's really helpful in there. But I want you to explain the importance to differentiate between universals and particulars and then why some particulars are required and others are not required.

Scott Murphy: [19:25](#)

Yeah. So this was, this was a further expansion of the presidency, not only wanting to provide administrative guidelines on the administration of the sacrament, but to help the church live more fully in to inspired counsel that has come to the church over the years. Again, section 158 section 162 section 163 all speaks specifically about the significance of the

place of sacraments in, in enriching the life of the community. So part of that is how do we help, how do we help the church and disciples go deeper in the hat and understanding the elements of the sacrament are important. So yeah, universals. So universals are really the principals or the, the internal truths that, that the sacrament attempt to uphold like the love and grace of God. That is a universal that has lived throughout the generations of time. So when you begin to understand those universals like the God's desire to bless and bring wholeness, that would be a universal that we believe that the sacraments uphold that in the sacrament we've, we discovered God's self revelation and God's desire to interact and be with humanity. So those kind of principles and understandings form us deeper when we engage in the sacrament rather than just going through the motions. When you actually think about what, what's the sacrament really saying to me in my discipleship, in my relationship with God universals clearly transition, transcend time, history, cultures, languages, and while wording may change in how they get expressed, the underlying principle of those universals continue to be the same. And we grow in our understanding of what they mean for us in a given time and context of our life.

Scott Murphy:

[21:54](#)

The particular's actually began to be the tangible symbols that help us make sense of the unit of the universals. So the particulars are the symbols, the words, the actions that that really point back to the universals. So when we talk about the depth of God's love and grace, the particulars of the sacramental Lord supper in, in the bread and the wine we understand in reading of the gospels of Jesus says, this is my body, remember me. So those, when we partake of those, it helps us draw us back into that realization of the profound love that God has for us. That every time we do that, we, we experience that grace that comes to us. So symbols help awaken us and help give tangible expression to, to what the universals are trying to show the words that we use. That's why the prayers are so important and why in the life of the church we have the prayers that we have on the sacraments, especially the sacrament of the Lord's supper is the closest thing to liturgy that we have in the life of the church.

Scott Murphy:

[23:21](#)

But we do it over and over again. So those words don't just become roped, but they become deeper and deeper within us as we hear those words and we begin to stretch and ponder more what those words mean to us at any moment in our life, depending on where we're at in our journey. And then the actions of how we live that out, how we, how we engage in the sacrament, how we serve the sacrament. Those are all symbols

that if we pay attention, help awaken us to the universals that contain the deep elements of God's love for us.

Linda Booth: [24:10](#) So could you give an example of a particular that's required and then a particular that's not required? So it can help understand? Because traveling, if you travel internationally in particular, people do things differently. In other countries, like in Africa, I have never had grape juice. I've always had like Fanta orange juice. And in and in French Polynesia we have coconut milk and, and so, you know, that's different. And so what are the particulars and that are required and those that are, are based on, on situations, et cetera.

Scott Murphy: [24:56](#) So one of the particulars then would be, as you were just speaking, the sacrament of the Lord's supper needs to contain a bread like element and a liquid element that represents, again, the bread or the, the solid substance represents the body that Jesus talked about and the liquid reflects the, the blood of Christ. So, but a particular that is not required is that it doesn't have to be whole wheat bread and grape juice. Those are traditions that had been incorporated in places in the Western world and other cultures just began to take them on until they learned that it wasn't required. Another one would be, and this was interesting because when we were going through this, you may remember when we started talking about particulars that were required but not required. It really confused some, even some of the leadership council because just out of their own traditions from different countries, one of the particulars that's required is if the, if the emblems are covered, then they need to be, we ask that they be uncovered, um, before the blessing is offered on them.

Scott Murphy: [26:24](#) But it is not a requirement to cover the emblems. And that I just loved the expressions when one, you know, you see the, um, those faces that like, Whoa, that's how we've always done it. Like we just treated it. It's always been one of the universals. So that's, that's a another distinction there. Um, if we, one of the other particular centers required, again, understanding the nature of priesthood ministry, servant ministry that a priest or melchisedec, a priesthood member would offer the, the prayers on that and that the people kneel. But we also have to be sensitive to that. Some people can't kneel because of, of physical conditions. And so it, it's not so required. We kneel out of a sense of honor and respect and humbleness. But if you're not physically able to kneel, it doesn't diminish the experience and

Linda Booth: [27:27](#) You're still humbly accepting.



- Scott Murphy: [27:28](#) Exactly. Yeah. So those are some things I, some of the other particulars, let me just name these, some of the other particulars that are not required is like using a white tablecloth. I was even in a congregation once where I observed a, uh, a new priesthood member helping set up a, a communion table and, and put the, the white tablecloth upside down and a, a senior member of the priesthood there scolded the new priesthood member about putting it up, you know, upright. And it's one of those moments you think, so does that really make a difference in our sacramental experience? But those are, you know, things like that. Here's one that gets people at times that it, it is not required that priesthood members prepare the emblems, but in some cultures and traditions, that is a very sacred thing to have non priests took preparing the emblems that just would not be considered at all.
- Scott Murphy: [28:46](#) And yet at the same time, it is not required through our Doctrine and Covenants or world conference resolution. So there's really important things there that I think are, are helpful because it, it forces us to step back and say what is really important when we experience the sacraments and are we doing things that aren't necessary in terms of what needs to be encountered? And so we, yeah, we try to be open to those new learnings.
- Linda Booth: [29:20](#) So the sacredness, we're really focusing on what's sacred and what's tradition.
- Scott Murphy: [29:26](#) Yeah. And, and I think that, and again, understanding the symbolism that's involved. I think if I, if there was anything that I would encourage our listeners to, to think about is to, to awaken even more to the symbolism of what occurs in the sacraments, in what that really means for us.
- Linda Booth: [29:55](#) Let's talk about that. So what are the, there's primary symbols and the Lord's supper, and you can share with us those primary symbols and how they form intentionally can form disciples and even communities that gather to celebrate the Lord's supper together.
- Scott Murphy: [30:16](#) So again, as I've indicated bread and wine and want to make sure that we're clear here, that in Community of Christ we use unfermented grape juice or water or some other beverage. So that is our tradition and in our current understanding. So having both that, that solid substance and liquid become important because not only do we, do we see it, do we touch it when we reach out and pick it up? But we taste it and feel it in experience, in, in the swallowing, in letting it flow within us. So

those become important symbols of, of, of that loving grace that begins to enter into us. And, and when we are sensitive to that, there's this tremendous moment of connection with divine that I, that I believe can happen. And I think that engaging in the sacrament calls us to understand priesthood ministry. Priesthood ministry needs to be understood first of all, as servant ministry. The priesthood are there to be the servants for the welfare of the community and to care for the welfare of the community.

Scott Murphy:

[31:46](#)

And so when individuals, the priesthood are preparing the sacraments, praying for the sacraments, and then making the sacraments available to the people, that is an opportunity for us in that tangible moment to recognize the gift that God gave us in the life of Christ. Christ's whole life was about servant ministry. And so it calls us to remember that we, our lives make a difference when we offer our life to the welfare of another. It does make a difference. And so when the priesthood are functioning in that role, we need to be mindful of what that means in our own life and what it calls from our own life. And then the realization that the sacrament, again calls us into community. It is never a private experience. It is always something shared in relationship with another. And in that relationship with another, we're reminded that we share in a relationship with the divine.

Scott Murphy:

[33:04](#)

So those kinds of symbols, again, are important aspect. But even when we think about the serving of the way that things are served, so one form is that the priesthood are served first and then they serve the community. That's a symbolism that says as priesthood, we have a responsibility to care for the sacredness and spiritualness of our own life. If we are not fed, it's difficult to go out and feed others. And so that models the importance of our need to be working in and giving time to our spiritual lives. But I also love the model of serving where priesthood will prepare the emblems and then they will go serve the people first. And then after the people have been served, they are served. When that's done, that models for us the significant role of servant leadership in ministry, that sometimes it's not just about us, it's about giving of ourself.

Scott Murphy:

[34:13](#)

And in return we receive and are fed. And so those kinds of experiences when, when we're invited to get out of our pews or chairs and to come to the front to replace where the sacraments are at and priesthood are standing there in their presence. It's a reminder of our action in our response and discipleship to go and to receive that God waits. God doesn't force God's self on us, but God invites us to the table and are

getting up and walking and going is a symbol of our covenant response to that love and invitation. So even as we serve the communion, there's symbols that can awaken us to a deeper understanding of what the sacraments 10 and seek to offer.

- Linda Booth: [35:12](#) And I'm trying to remember in which section of the doctrine covenants, but one of my favorite images of what the Lord supper is all about is that it has the power to spiritually form. Uh, the community into the true and living expression of Jesus Christ. And for me, when I take communion, I think of that power of what can happen in the Lord's supper. F we all are intentional in going deeper as you're saying and connecting with the divine because it forms us into the true and living expression of Jesus Christ. Not just for the congregation sake but for the communities and neighborhoods in which we go are set out into.
- Scott Murphy: [35:58](#) Yeah, exactly. That's ultimately what it's about. If it just stays within the sanctuary or wherever we're located, I think we've missed the value. Yeah.
- Linda Booth: [36:11](#) And so the Lord supper is, is very important to Christ mission. The first presidency is also gives in this document, additional guidance that addresses specific questions that I'm assuming that you've heard from members and from leaders throughout the church. And there are actually nine points in this additional guidance and it's, I found it fascinating to read it again, the guidance. Would you share several of those points that are shared in, in the guidance from the first presidency?
- Scott Murphy: [36:48](#) Sure. So one again that I have highlighted when we are talking about particulars, but unordained members of the congregation are eligible to help prepare the sacraments. Um, so it doesn't require priesthood to prepare the sacraments out of our own discipleship offering ourself in that kind of servant ministries important. So that was one of the responses and questions that kept coming that we wanted to be clear about. Unordained are eligible to participate in preparing and setting up the communion table. But from there then the priesthood take that one. Did the other parts or elements that we wanted to address is that it is our observation that at times and maybe um, more frequently the sacraments are either just kind of added onto a worship service or that during a scheduled sacrament service, we try to put additional things into that. It would be the presidency's hope and in our, our counseling guidance in this document to be able to say, honor the sacrament, make room for it.

Scott Murphy:

[38:16](#)

Don't try to force it into something else or don't try to add a bunch of other stuff into the service. Let the sacrament be the central focus of the experience for the people because it is the experience as you've talked about, that that brings to life and forms us in the life of Christ to go out and live that life. And so when we try to add too many things into a worship service or we just try to take the sacrament and plug it into something else and we somehow feel good that we've now done it, I think misses the point. The other thing is is that another element that we would uphold is that when you begin to add too many different sacraments into a service, it, it begins to get too much for people. So people go through the experiences. What we don't want is we don't want people just to be passive observers. We want them to be actively engaged mentally, spiritually, physically. And so when there's too many of the elements put into a service, we, you make it difficult for people to fully go in depth into what the sacrament is. So that would be one of the other elements that we upheld in kind of questions that come,

Scott Murphy:

[39:48](#)

We frequently receive questions about statements that would be made before the sacrament was to be um, taken. And so we shared with the church that there were two elements of a statement that we felt was really important. One is grounding the congregation and the experience in the scriptures that remind us that the sacrament that we share in is not just something in the moment for us, but when we partake of that and participate, we are participating in a long history of disciples over the centuries and generations that have been a part of the formational experience that sacraments bring. So when we are grounded again in the scripture story of those in the first century church engaging in the sacrament, we share with them in memory and we are a part of the history of them and their dedication and discipleship that made it possible for what we have today. So sharing a statement grounded in scripture that focuses on the internal meaning of the scripture focused on the life of Christ. The second element was the invitation to the communion.

Scott Murphy:

[41:13](#)

That it is an invitation and we want every member and every person that sits in that gathering. If it's online, if it's in a congregation, wherever people are found sharing together that we want them to feel welcome at the Lord's table and whatever condition we come, it is always an invitation to come and to experience new life. And so we have developed statements to be shared. Um, each Sunday they are now printed in the, the worship helps so the listeners can find it there. And it, it really has is I have been in my own local congregation as I've traveled around. I value being able to hear that statement that says you

are welcome. And for new members or new individuals who are out there in whatever condition, to be able to hear that invitation that they are welcome is a really powerful thing. I think the, the other aspect is to, to understand that there is a need for generously sharing the invitation.

Scott Murphy:

[42:25](#)

And so that's one of the other aspects that we uphold in this, not only in the invitation statement, but the priesthood are not there to make a decision if somebody is worthy or unworthy to take communion. The priesthood are there to represent the life of Christ and to extend that. And it's each person's responsibility to decide if they take or don't take. And so we want to be clear that priesthood are not to be withholding from their decision if they think somebody should receive it or not. It's left to the person's responsibility to decide if they feel like they're eligible or not. And that is done without judgment, that we honor them, we respect them, and if they don't receive it, we love them. Still the same. So those are some of the elements that have been added in that we wanted to respond to the kind of questions that come.

Linda Booth:

[43:31](#)

Yes, in particular, I want to point out the last point in that guidance section, and I quote from that. So the Holy spirit instructs in unique situations where guidelines may not, those who preside over congregations and worship services are called to do so in accordance with the leadings of the spirit. And that's in reference to doctrine and Covenants, section 17, paragraph nine, their pastoral judgment should be respected in situations where further interpretation may be required. End of quote, while the guidelines provide great clarity and unifying information, ultimately the Holy spirit leads the church and church leaders in congregations throughout the world. Please comment on the spiritual nature of the Lord supper and how it forms disciples and communities of disciples. And I know you've done that in many. Is there anything else want to add about that formation and about how that Holy spirit moves in the midst of, of the communion if we are all paying attention?

Scott Murphy:

[44:32](#)

Yeah, I, you know, like you Linda, I mean, we can point to our own experiences over our journey when we have been in those situations that you, you cannot deny the presence of the spirit that comes, we never know fully when we gather in a community what's going on in each person's life. But God does. And that's the blessing is, is that in in God's time, not through the spirit that response comes. So I think it's this, this provision here is, is an acknowledgement that while we have principles, why we have guidelines that are important to follow, that come from world conference resolutions and that the spirit has

provided through the church, through inspired counsel that we have in the doctrine and covenants, we can never create a document that contains guidelines for every situation that could occur and any attempt to do that, you would automatically be missing something.

Scott Murphy: [46:03](#)

So what you have just expressed is really a principle that we have to uphold, that there is wisdom that has to be used by the presiding officer, the pastor of the congregation at times in situations that may require a consideration that that may not be clearly outlined in the guidelines that we have produced and that we have to trust that there is good wisdom that is used, that um, addressing issues that come up that becomes part of the importance of forming that sacred community and that formational experience for each individual. So that that is an opportunity to say we in the formation of a community coming together, there is the pastor or the presider needs to be sensitive to the dynamics occurring. But wisdom must always be utilized. This statement that is provided, this principle is not an open policy to say, well, I feel like doing this today, so let's do it this way.

Scott Murphy: [47:27](#)

That's not what this is about. Any situation that occurs where a presider must make some decisions has to be weighed with the needs of the situation and the impact on the whole community. And when I talk about the whole community, it's not only just the congregation, but in today's world with social media and all of that, things that happen in one congregation get out throughout the church. So that has to be weighed intention and, and again, the guidelines are there to provide structure and consistency for not to be rigid, but to help the body to be able to share together in a common way. And when we start to go away from that, that can become harmful and disruptive to the body. So a presider always has to be sensitive to that. And yet same time we have to leave room for some flexibility for situations that we could not imagine.

Linda Booth: [48:34](#)

Yes, yes. So the First Presidency, as you've talked, it's obvious that you've listened to members and you've listened to leaders and the Holy spirit and after all the hours spent in prayer and reflection and discussion by so many leaders and teams and councils, the church now has guidelines to enrich their celebration of the Lord's supper will the first presidency and leaders look at other sacraments and provide guidelines to the worldwide church?

Scott Murphy: [49:08](#)

Well be assured that priesthood are already pressing us on that. That might be the case. And the president see knew once we

opened the door for experiencing the sacrament, the Lord's supper, virtually other sacraments would be raised like marriage, the sacrament of the evangelists blessing, so there are, yes. So questions are being raised? Yes. The presidency is in a process of considering those. We have actually President of Veazey and his relationship with, with Jane Gardner, the presiding evangelist, Jane is developing other templates on the sacraments in the same way that we've created a template for the sacrament, Lord's supper with universals particulars scriptures and all of that symbols in that. So we're going to be developing those templates for all of the other sacraments to have as a teaching tool, as a resource for priesthood to be able to have for teaching priesthood and, and helping the congregations really think about those. But it will challenge us to think about when we understand the particulars of the universals and the of sacraments being a communal experience. Are there some of those that can be experienced in a virtual way but others can't? So we're, we are searching that out trying to understand that. Um, and yes, we, we expect that there will be further guidance to the church on those aspects.

Linda Booth:

[50:49](#)

Okay. Thank you. One of my favorite scriptures is one of the spiritual references provided in the guidelines and it comes from doctrine covenant section one 63 to be in it. And I quote, generously share the invitation ministries and sacraments through which people can encounter the living Christ who heals and reconciles through redemptive relationships in sacred community. As so succinctly said during our conversation, sacraments are important in the life of the church and profoundly link us to God and one another and it's important that we share them as well our invitation to others and our ministries with others so that they too can encounter the living Christ. Well thanks Scott for taking the time to talk with me and thanks to all of you for listening to this episode of Coffee Buzz. If you haven't read the new guidelines for serving the Lord supper, check them out on the Community of Christ website or ask your mission center president and watch for next month's coffee bus episode. I'll be talking with Community of Christ prophet, president Steve Veazey. Thanks again my friend.

Scott Murphy:

[52:06](#)

You're welcome.

Music:

[52:13](#)

[inaudible]

Josh Mangelson:

[52:15](#)

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Speaker 1:

[53:11](#)

[inaudible].