

Communion by Extension – FAQs

What is it? What is it not?

‘Communion by Extension’ (also commonly known as ‘Extended communion’) is any service of **public worship** including the distribution of communion using pre-consecrated elements¹ - the operative word here being *public*. As such, Communion by Extension can be distinguished from home communions in that home communions are clearly not *public* worship.

A service in a nursing home or care home, which may well involve a number of people who happen to live in the same building or on the same site, will still *not* be public worship unless it has been publicly advertised as event open to the public. If it is not *public* worship, it should be treated as a home communion (albeit one that could be relatively well attended). However, if the service were advertised more widely in the parish it should be treated as Communion by Extension.

What liturgy should be used?

A service of Communion by Extension must use the authorised liturgy for such services and follow the notes and House of Bishops’ guidelines for this. Two versions of the liturgy are available, each corresponding with the shape of *Common Worship* Order 1 and Order 2 respectively. These and the Bishops guidelines are available here:
<https://www.churchofengland.org/sites/default/files/2017-11/public-worship-with-communion-by-extension.pdf>

When can we use this provision for Communion by Extension?

Any service of Communion by Extension must be authorised by the area bishop, either as a one-off or as part of some standing permission (e.g. during a vacancy). Bishops are likely to limit the terms of their permission in order to ensure that the service is not over-used, since Communion by Extension should not be seen in any way as a regular alternative to a normal Holy Communion service.

Who can lead a service with Communion by Extension?

The person leading a service of Communion by Extension must also be specifically authorised by the area bishop to do so. This includes deacons and LLMs, because their licences do not allow them to take these services without further explicit authorisation. There is a diocesan policy concerning the authorisation and training of others who are to have ongoing authorisation to do this (see [Authorised ministry - Diocese of Oxford](#)). In the event of an occasional emergency the bishop will normally wish to give a one-off permission for an appropriately recognised person to lead the service.

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¹ The only exception is if this is part of the Good Friday liturgy.