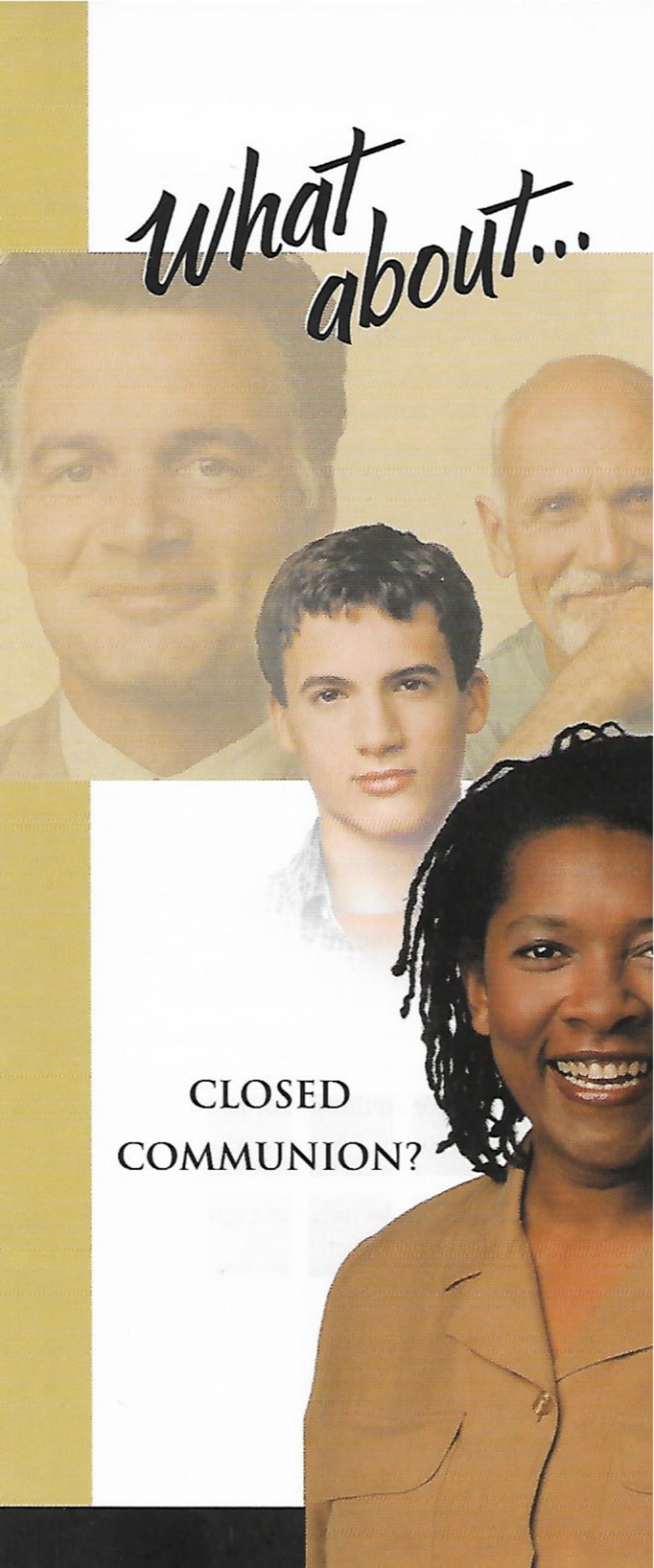


*what
about...*



**CLOSED
COMMUNION?**

What About...Closed Communion?

The Lord's Supper. What a miracle! What power! By God's great power, the Lord's body and blood are there with the bread and wine. It's there "for you," Jesus said, that is, for all believers. In all kinds of situations, God gives strength and comfort to believers when they receive the Sacrament.

In the Lord's Supper, believers make a wonderful connection with Jesus who shed his blood and gave his body for them. It's such a special meal that the apostle Paul instructed Christians to examine themselves before receiving it (1 Corinthians 11:28). Christians are careful not to receive the Lord's Supper carelessly or thoughtlessly. They consider their sins, their faith, and the meaning of the Sacrament before they come.

So as faithful Christians, we close the Sacrament to those who do not know Jesus and his work and are not spiritually prepared to receive it. We do this out of love because Paul went on to say, "Anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment upon himself" (1 Corinthians 11:29).

But there is more. Communion is first about our relationship with Jesus, but it is also about our relationship with our fellow believers. When we come to receive the Lord's Supper with others, we share that special moment together. We are united in Jesus and tied to one another. God reminds us, "Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation on the blood of Christ; and is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf" (1 Corinthians 10:16,17).

One body, united in faith, believing the same things. Communing together is a confession that we are united in faith. So, in our churches, we close the Sacrament to those who do not believe the things we believe and are members of other denominations. We believe that receiving Holy Communion together is our confession of unity and a confession of our faith.

We are happy to share what we believe with anyone who is not a member of our church. When God leads them to confess their unity of faith with us, we will eagerly and happily express our unity by coming to the Lord's Supper together.

"One body, united in faith, believing the same things"

