

Our Beliefs and Practices Regarding the Lord's Supper

Holy Communion is a wonderful gift given by God to His church. Jesus began this sacred act and also commanded that His followers observe it regularly (1 Corinthians 11:23-25). In this supper, Jesus gives His true body and blood as we eat simple bread and drink simple wine. As He does this, He offers the forgiveness of our sins and the strengthening of our faith in Him (Matthew 26:28, 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:27). These gifts are received through faith in Jesus Christ and are not given as the result of our actions. Rather they come by the promise of God. Holy Communion is a work of God.

The celebration of Holy Communion is also a testimony to the unity that exists in a congregation of fellow believers (1 Corinthians 10:17). As we receive communion, we are also making a public statement that we believe, teach, and confess the same things that are taught from the altar at which we commune while at the same time acknowledging the responsibility that we have to care for one another in Christian love.

Like any gift, Holy Communion can be misused and actually cause harm to those who misuse it (1 Corinthians 11:27-29). God's Word teaches us that we are to examine ourselves before we receive communion. Among the questions that we should ask ourselves are: do I believe that Jesus is my savior (John 3:16-18), that He is truly present bodily in this sacrament, and am I in unity with the teachings of this altar and with those who commune here? If not and we receive the Lord's Supper anyway, we may receive the Lord's discipline (1 Corinthians 11:29ff). Under these circumstances, it would be better to wait to receive Holy Communion until such issues can be resolved.

A helpful list of additional questions for use in examining ourselves prior to receiving the Lord's Supper was prepared by Rev. Dr. Martin Luther. We commend it to your use. It can be found on pages 329-330 of the hymnal.

It is not possible to properly and fully address such a wonderful gift as Holy Communion in one simple card. So, if you have questions, are unsure about how to use this precious sacrament, or have not been instructed in the faith of the Lutheran Church as summarized in Luther's Small Catechism, please speak with our Pastor or an elder before communing.

How We Celebrate The Lord's Supper

When is the Lord's Supper Celebrated?

The 1st and 3rd weekends each month at the 5:30 PM Saturday and 8:00 AM Sunday services. On the 2nd and 4th weekends each month at the 9:30 and 10:45 AM Sunday services. Holy Communion is not celebrated during the 5th weekends of any month.

How is the Lord's Supper celebrated during the 8:00 and 10:45 AM worship services?

An usher will direct you to the side aisle. From the side aisle the first person in the line will be directed to the altar rail. At the rail, the communion assistant will show reverence to God by bowing. Please show respect to God by bowing also. Then the assistant will motion for you to kneel.

If you are receiving the Lord's Supper, extend your hand for the wafer as the assistant comes to you. If you are not receiving Communion, place your hands below the rail. If you desire wine from the chalice, please hold your palm open. If you prefer individual cups, rest your hands on the altar rail. Hold onto the individual cup after receiving it.

The group is dismissed at the same time. After hearing the dismissal, stand and reverence God one more time. As you leave, walk down the center aisle. If you received the individual cup, place it in the basket in the center aisle as you leave.

How is the Lord's Supper celebrated during the 9:30 AM worship services?

An usher will direct you to the center aisle. After waiting at the first pew, you will be invited to receive the sacrament. Bow to show respect to God before receiving the wafer. Then step toward the side aisle, receiving either the chalice or individual cups. If you so desire, stop to kneel and pray at the rail. If you received an individual cup, place it in the basket as you return to your seat.

What wines are used in the Lord's Supper?

The red wine, in the chalice and individual cups, has 11 percent alcohol by volume. The white wine, in the center of the individual cup tray, has less than 0.5 percent alcohol by volume.