

What Lutherans Believe

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
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The Lord's Supper – LEADER'S GUIDE

Read:

- Matthew 26:17-28
- Mark 14:22-24
- Luke 22:15-20
- 1 Corinthians 10:16–22
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-30



The Elements:

- Transubstantiation
- Consubstantiation
- Symbolic
- “Real Presence”



Lutheran practice:

- “Open” Communion
- “Closed” Communion
- “Close” Communion

How does our belief/practice affect "Altar and Pulpit" fellowship with other Christian Churches?

- **Acts 20:28-31**
- **Romans 16:17**
Does this apply here? If so, how?

Readings on the Lord's Supper

Matthew 26:17-28:

Now on the first day of Unleavened Bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Where will you have us prepare for you to eat the Passover?" He said, "Go into the city to a certain man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, My time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" And the disciples did as Jesus had directed them, and they prepared the Passover.

When it was evening, he reclined at table with the twelve. And as they were eating, he said, "Truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me." And they were very sorrowful and began to say to him one after another, "Is it I, Lord?" He answered, "He who has dipped his hand in the dish with me will betray me. The Son of Man goes as it is written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed! It would have been better for that man if he had not been born." Judas, who would betray him, answered, "Is it I, Rabbi?" He said to him, "You have said so."

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Mark 14:22-24

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. "I tell you the truth, I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God."

Luke 22:15-20

And he said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God." After taking the cup, he gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among you. For I tell you I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes." And he took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.

1 Corinthians 10:16–22

Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in 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.... You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons too; you cannot have a part in both the Lord's table and the table of demons.

1 Corinthians 11:23-30

When you come together, it is not the Lord's Supper you eat, for as you eat, each of you goes ahead without waiting for anybody else. One remains hungry, another gets drunk. Don't you have homes to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you for this? Certainly not! For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.

Acts 20:27-31 (New American Standard Bible)

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things to draw away the disciples after them. Therefore, be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

Romans 16:17

Now I urge you, brothers and sisters, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

Institution of the Lord's Supper: Mt 26:17–28; Mk 14:22–24; Lk 22:19–20; 1 Co 11:23–25. These accounts agree in all essentials, but supplement each other in details. All quote Christ's words: “This is My body.” With regard to the cup, Mt and Mk emphasize the blood of the NT, given with the cup; Lk and Paul stress the blessing given with the cup, the forgiveness of the new covenant, procured by the blood of Christ, which is offered to the communicant in the Sacrament.

Real Presence. The words of institution, “Take, eat; this is My body,” clearly state: “With this bread I give you My body.” So these words are explained 1 Co 10:16. There is no transubstantiation* of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, nor any consubstantiation* or impanation.* In, with, and under the bread and wine a communicant, also an unbelieving communicant (1 Co 11:27–29), receives Christ's true body, given into death, and His true blood, shed for sins. This is the point of controversy bet. Luths. and Ref. The question is not whether Christ is present acc. to His divine nature in the Sacrament, or whether the soul by faith is united with Christ (spiritual eating and drinking), or whether the believing communicant receives the merits of Christ's shed blood by faith (all of which is acknowledged as true by both Luths. and Ref.). In Luth. terminology the eating and drinking of Christ's body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine is called sacramental* eating and drinking. The Ref. deny that the words of instit. should be taken in a literal sense, or that in, with, and under the bread and wine the true body and blood of Christ are really present (Real Presence, a mystery). The Ref. teach instead the real absence of Christ's body and blood in the Sacrament by resorting to a figurative, or symbolical, interpretation. Karlstadt* sought the figure in “this,” H. Zwingli* in “is” (making “is” mean “represents”), J. Calvin* and others in “body” (making “body” mean “the sign of My body”), and others (e.g., W. Bucanus,* B. Keckermann,* and H. Zanchi*) in the entire statement. The multifarious attempts to pervert the proper sense of the words are but so many evidences of the persistent refusal of the words to yield to perversion. See also Altar Fellowship; Lutheran Confessions, A 2 (b); Sacramental Union.

Elements in the Sacrament. The heavenly elements in the Sacrament are the true body and the true blood of Christ; the earthly elements are true bread and true wine, for which no substitutes should be used, since the use of any substitute makes void, or at least renders uncertain, the Sacrament (Mt 26:29; Mk 14:25; Lk 22:18; 1 Co 11:21). Jesus used not unfermented grape juice but wine, used in the OT on festive occasions (Gn 14:18; Jb 1:13; Is 5:12). Bread and wine are received in a natural manner; the body and blood of Christ, though received orally, are received in an incomprehensible, supernatural manner (no Capernaitic* eating; FC SD VII 64). The Sacrament should be received by all communicants sub utraque specie (“under both kinds”), acc. to Christ's instit. In RC practice the celebrating priest receives the bread and wine, other communicants usually only bread (sub una specie, “under 1 kind”).

Purpose of the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is essentially an application of the Gospel, with all its spiritual blessings, in a sacred act. It offers, conveys, and seals to the communicant forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation; strengthens faith; promotes sanctification through strengthening of faith; increases love toward God and the neighbor; affords patience in tribulation; confirms hope of eternal life; and deepens union with Christ and His mystical body, the ch. (1 Co 10:17). It also serves a confessional purpose (Acts 2:42; 1 Co 10:20–21; 11:26). All these blessings are mediated through the Gospel-promise in the Sacrament (“Given and shed for you for the remission of sins”) and are apprehended by faith in the divine promise. The words “This do in remembrance of Me” do not mean merely that the communicant is to remember the absent Christ, who atoned for his sins; they invite the communicant to accept the forgiveness offered in the Sacrament (“Do this in remembrance of Me” means: remember Christ's blessings and accept them by faith; cf. Ap XXIV 72). The Lord's Supper differs from the preaching of the Gospel, which is addressed to all hearers, believers and unbelievers, and from Absolution,* which is individually addressed to believers, to the believers as a penitent group, in that the Sacrament offers forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation individually to each communicant under pledge of Christ's body and blood, received with the bread and wine. Since the Sacrament may be received unto damnation (or judgment; 1 Co 11:29), close* Communion should be observed, the pastor as the steward of the mysteries of God (1 Co 4:1) admitting only such as are able to examine themselves (1 Co 11:28).