

The information below appears in our weekly bulletin regarding the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Afterward are frequent questions about the subject.

Christ's Words of Institution, from 1 Corinthians 11:23-29

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when 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 also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself.

The Lord's Supper is a sacrament, that is, a covenant sign. It serves to confirm God's promise and strengthen faith, and is appointed by God as a means of grace, one of the principle God-ordained ways or tools or instruments whereby a Christian grows. In the Lord's Supper we feed on Christ by faith. Thus, the Lord's table is for those who are trusting in Jesus Christ.

We invite to this table, the Lord's table, all who trust in Jesus Christ alone for their salvation as He is offered in the gospel, and who have joined themselves to the body of Christ, His church. If you are not a believer in Christ who has identified yourself with His church, don't come to the Lord's table. Rather, wait, think, pray, repent, and believe in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Parents, if you have children who have not yet made membership vows, they should refrain from coming to the table until such time as the Elders have examined them as to their profession of Christ, their ability to discern the body, and their capability of self-examination in accordance with 1 Corinthians 11:28-29.

Questions:

Why do we partake of the Lord's Supper?

Christ instituted the Lord's Supper as a New Testament sacrament which replaces the annual Old Testament Passover meal. Baptism is the other New Testament sacrament, replacing circumcision.

Why do we celebrate it weekly?

The Lord's Supper is one of the "means of grace," which strengthens our faith. It helps us grow spiritually, so we do it as often as possible.

Is it necessary for salvation?

No – nobody is saved through either sacrament, but we perform them in obedience to Christ's command.

Is Christ present in the elements?

Yes—Christ is present *spiritually*, and we commune with Him *by faith*. The bread, wine, and juice do not contain His physical body—He is physically seated at the right hand of the Father. Therefore, our communion with Him does not come by mere eating, but comes as we receive the elements *by faith*.

Do you use wine or grape juice?

We believe the New Testament sacrament used real wine, so we offer it during communion. We realize that people have convictions against alcohol, so we also provide grape juice. Wine is in the outer rings in pink cups, grape juice is in the inner rings in clear cups.

How does the Lord's Supper compare with the Word of God?

There are no blessings that are communicated through the Lord's Supper that are not already communicated through God's Word. Through the Lord's Supper we see the same gospel message in a different, tangible way. The Word of God is the primary means of grace, while the Lord's Supper is a secondary means of grace. That is to say, the Word of God stands alone and does not need the sacraments to be effective. Through the Holy Spirit, God uses the Word to save sinners. The Lord's Supper is different, in that it cannot stand alone, and is a *sign* and *seal* of the gospel promises: a *sign*, in that it is a picture of God's covenant faithfulness, and a *seal*, in that it authenticates or confirms that the promises of God come from the King Himself.

What are your views on paedocommunion?

Paedocommunion is the practice of allowing baptized infants to partake in the Lord's Supper before they make a profession of faith or take membership vows. We disagree with this practice because discernment and self-evaluation are required by the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:28-29. We ask that children refrain from the Lord's table until they are able to meet with Elders and give a credible profession of faith. Since we feed on Christ through His Word, young children are not "starved spiritually" by waiting until they can participate in the sacrament *by faith*.