

Service of Corporate Confession and Absolution

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

Invocation

P In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

Exhortation

P I will go to the altar of God,

C **to God my exceeding joy.**

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

Sit

Confessional Address

P During this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that prevents us from trusting in God and loving each other. Since it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ on this night when He instituted this blessed meal for our salvation, it is proper that we complete our Lenten discipline by diligently examining ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do. This holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God's wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.

So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you." It is as if He said, "I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat."

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." Again, it is as if He said, "I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink."

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. As our Lord on this night exemplified this love by washing His disciples' feet, so we by our words and actions serve one another in love. For we are all one bread and one body, even as we are all partakers of this one bread and drink from the one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with the wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word, but in deed and in truth.

May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.

C Amen.

P Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins, imploring God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

Confession of Sins

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

P God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

C Amen.

P Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

C Yes.

P Let it be done for you as you believe.

Absolution

P In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Blessing

P Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go in T peace.

C Amen.

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a remembrance of Your passion. Grant that we may so receive the sacred mystery of Your body and blood that the fruits of Your redemption may continually be manifest in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Service of the Word

Old Testament Reading

Exodus 12:1–14

¹The LORD said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, ²“This month shall be for you the beginning of months. It shall be the first month of the year for you. ³Tell all the congregation of Israel that on the tenth day of this month every man shall take a lamb according to their fathers’ houses, a lamb for a household. ⁴And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his nearest neighbor shall take according to the number of persons; according to what each can eat you shall make your count for the lamb. ⁵Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male a year old. You may take it from the sheep or from the goats, ⁶and you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month, when the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill their lambs at twilight.

⁷“Then they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. ⁸They shall eat the flesh that night, roasted on the fire; with unleavened bread and bitter herbs they shall eat it.

⁹Do not eat any of it raw or boiled in water, but roasted, its head with its legs and its inner parts. ¹⁰And you shall let

none of it remain until the morning; anything that remains until the morning you shall burn. ¹¹In this manner you shall eat it: with your belt fastened, your sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand. And you shall eat it in haste. It is the LORD's Passover. ¹²For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the LORD. ¹³The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.

¹⁴"This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast."

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Gradual

Psalm 111:4-5

He has caused his wondrous works to be re- | membered;*
the LORD is gracious and | merciful.
He provides food for those who | fear him;*
he remembers his covenant for- | ever.

Epistle

1 Corinthians 11:23-32

²³For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, ²⁴and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." ²⁵In 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." ²⁶For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

²⁷Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of profaning the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. ³¹But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. ³²But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Verse

Psalm 111:4-5; John 6:55-56

He has caused his wondrous works to be re- | membered;*
the LORD is gracious and | merciful.
He provides food for those who | fear him;*
he remembers his covenant for- | ever.
My flesh is true food, and my blood is | true drink.*
Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and | I in him.

Holy Gospel

John 13:1-15

P The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the thirteenth chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward

you will understand.”⁸ Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.”⁹ Simon Peter said to him, “Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!”¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.”¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you?”¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to You, O Christ.

Sit

617 O Lord, We Praise Thee



1 O Lord, we praise Thee, bless Thee, and a - dore Thee,
 2 Thy ho - ly bod - y in - to death was giv - en,
 3 May God be - stow on us His grace and fa - vor

In thanks - giv - ing bow be - fore Thee. Thou with Thy
 Life to win for us in heav - en. No great - er
 That we fol - low Christ our Sav - ior And live to -

bod - y and Thy blood didst nour - ish Our weak souls that
 love than this to Thee could bind us; May this feast there -
 geth - er here in love and u - nion Nor de - spise this

they may flour - ish: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 of re - mind us! O Lord, have mer - cy!
 blest Com - mu - nion! O Lord, have mer - cy!

May Thy bod - y, Lord, born of Mar - y, That our
 Lord, Thy kind - ness did so con - strain Thee That Thy
 Let not Thy good Spir - it for - sake us; Grant that

sins and sor - rows did car - ry, And Thy blood for us plead
 blood should bless and sus - tain me. All our debt Thou hast paid;
 heav'n - ly - mind - ed He make us; Give Thy Church, Lord, to see

In all tri - al, fear, and need: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 Peace with God once more is made: O Lord, have mer - cy!
 Days of peace and u - ni - ty: O Lord, have mer - cy!

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Sermon

"The Art of Living by Faith
1 Cor 10:16-17

The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

+INI+

We are creatures. God communicates with us through physical things like eyes, ears, mouth, brain etc. This physical interaction is the center of the Lord's Supper. It is the heart of our God interacts with us.

Yet there are many of us who reject this. Different religious objects. Different philosophical ones. They reject the presence of the body and blood of Christ. Here are some of the arguments:

The first argument. God, as we know, is spirit and immaterial. If God is spirit then God doesn't have a body. And nothing in creation — much less a physical body — can contain God. This means that we can only deal with God in the spiritual and immaterial world. But here's the good news that they argue. We are soul and spirit. We exist on two planes. Our bodies are physical and connect us to the earth. The spirit in us draws us up and connects us to God.

This means that our spirits, our consciousness, awareness, however you define it, but rise above our bodies and leave this plane of physical reality to be where God is spiritually. How does this take place? Some argue meditation or contemplative prayer by which the mind becomes detached from body. How do we then know that we've reached this state of enlightenment?

Do you notice the action though? It's about us finding a way or rising up and transcending our bodies and this physical creation in order to meet God where He is — up there somewhere in heaven.

The second objection is not the material world though, it's a misuse of it that impedes a truly spiritual life. The Bible describes things differently though. Our bodies and this physical creation do not impede our life with God. They are the vehicles for God's presence and activity here. The universe cannot contain God, yet God is present in the petals of the smallest flower.

Scripture paints God, and Christ, differently though. God is a down-to-earth God. He gets His hands dirty in the work of daily life. To see this we only need to ask who the actor is? Who comes to whom? It's fair to say that the direction of movement in the Bible is where God comes down from heaven to us, He meets us where we are. He comes here to earth where we can apprehend Him in our physical, spirit-enlivened bodies, bodies given life by the very breath of God. He meets us in and through His creation.

On the sixth day God came down from earth and walked in the Garden of Eden. He met Adam and Eve in the "cool of the day." (Gen 3:8). It's perhaps early in the morning or late in the afternoon or even early evening. God came down to them on earth. He came to them to spend time with them in the garden.

That's not the only time God does this though. He comes down to Moses in the burning bush. He comes down to Mt Sinai. He comes down as a pillar of cloud and fire. God comes down in the most visible flesh and blood body of Jesus Christ. God is this man Jesus. This man Jesus is God.

After the ascension the Spirit comes down up the disciples and into our hearts. On the last day Jesus will come down and to rule earth forever.

As you can see the story of the Bible is not one of ascent, where it's up to us to rise up above our bodies and physical world to some spiritual and ethereal plane to look for God there. Instead, the Bible tells us that we encounter God here on earth in our physical bodies. He comes to us in our mouths in the Lord's Supper.

It is worth pointing out here that in the resurrection our bodies are also raised so that we might see Jesus face to face. We get to hear His voice. We get to touch His wounds like Thomas and join him in proclaiming, "My Lord and My God!" We confess with Job, "I know that My redeemer lives . . . and with my eyes I shall see him."

Tonight is the night before Jesus does upon the cross. He's leaving His disciples, but He will not leave them alone. He institutes His Supper as a last will and testament. And this is something unlike anything else. Here Jesus gifts to the disciples the entire history of Israel. He gives them a covenant and promise which is sealed in the blood of countless sacrifices. This covenant is NEW. It is sealed by the blood of the Son of God not sacrificial animals. And the best part is, this covenant doesn't have to be renewed with repeated sacrifice. It is sealed one and for all in the blood of the Lamb of God.

This covenant unites us with the very body of Jesus. As we partake of the body and blood of Jesus we are united with each other as well. This Supper not only unites us with Jesus and to all of His blessings, but it binds us together into one body. This is why we call it communion, koinonia, fellowship. We share in common the body and the blood of Jesus.

It's interesting that people have no problem thinking that our spirits can somehow be disconnected from our bodies and rise above them to meet God in heaven. Yet they can't accept that Jesus, the Son of God, not only comes to us in a human body, but also now comes to us in His body and blood! This shows a lack of confidence in the Word of God . . . for Word of God can accomplish what He says it will. The words are the main thing in the sacrament.

In the Formula of Concord, the authors ask, who speaks these words? Jesus Christ the almighty and powerful Creator and Lord! He who speaks the words is the same one who uttered a word and entire galaxies with hundreds of millions of stars came into existence! This same word created you and now He brings the body and blood of Jesus to us, in , with and under the bread and wine. God Word does what it says! These words first spoken in an upper room are still effective today when Jesus invites us to His feast.

In conclusion, when a person writes a last will and testament they specify which goods and treasures are to be gifted to those who are left behind. In the sixteenth century they did this as well. However, they also included with their physical possessions, spiritual possessions. They do so by means of a creed or confession of faith, "this is the faith that I will bequeath to my loved ones, my family and friends!" That's what happened there in the upper room in the first century. Here in the Lord's Supper, Jesus bequeaths to us all that He has to give us, namely, His body and blood!

This very body and blood guarantee us a place at the table of a banquet of all banquets, in the new creation. A feast of fellowship and merriment that God is now preparing for us.

Amen.

Stand

Prayer of the Church

P Friends in Christ, I urge you all to lift up your hearts to God and pray with me as Christ our Lord has taught us and freely promised to hear us.

God, our Father in heaven, look with mercy on us, Your needy children on earth, and grant us grace that Your holy name be hallowed by us and all the world through the pure and true teaching of Your Word and the fervent love shown forth in our lives. Graciously turn from us all false doctrine and evil living whereby Your precious name is blasphemed and profaned. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P May Your kingdom come to us and expand. Bring all transgressors and those who are blinded and bound in the devil's kingdom to know Jesus Christ, Your Son, by faith that the number of Christians may be increased. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Strengthen us by Your Spirit according to Your will, both in life and in death, in the midst of both good and evil things, that our own wills may be crucified daily and sacrificed to Your good and gracious will. Into Your merciful hands we commend [*name(s)*] and all who are in need, praying for them at all times: Thy will be done. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Grant us our daily bread, preserve us from greed and selfish cares, and help us trust in You to provide for all our needs. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Forgive us our sins as we also forgive those who sin against us so that our hearts may be at peace and may rejoice in a good conscience before You, and that no sin may ever frighten or alarm us. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P Lead us not into temptation, O Lord, but help us by Your Spirit to subdue our flesh, to turn from the world and its ways, and to overcome the devil with all his wiles. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P And lastly, O heavenly Father, deliver us from all evil of both body and soul, now and forever. Lord, in Your mercy,

C hear our prayer.

P We trust, O Lord, in Your great mercy to hear and answer us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C Amen.

Lord's Prayer

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.
Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark,
learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold
fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.
C Amen.

All leave the church in silence.

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