

Orthodoxy: The Lord's Supper

Question 46: What is the Lord's Supper?

Answer: Christ commanded all Christians to eat bread and to drink from the cup in thankful remembrance of him and his death. The Lord's Supper is a celebration of the presence of God in our midst; bringing us into communion with God and with one another; feeding and nourishing our souls. It also anticipates the day when we will eat and drink with Christ in his Father's kingdom.

"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." (1 Corinthians 11:26).

The sacrament of Communion, like baptism, is a covenant sign and seal. In the sacrament, God both represents and confirms the Gospel promise that he is our God and we are his people. The New City Catechism points to four aspects of the Lord's Supper that we will look at: 1) we partake thankfully and in remembrance of Christ's death, 2) the presence of God accompanies the sacrament, 3) we have communion with God and one another, and 4) we anticipate the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb when we eat in our Father's kingdom.

First, we partake in the Lord's Supper as beneficiaries of Christ's atoning sacrifice. As adopted children of God, we should remember the sacrifice of Christ with gratitude in our hearts when we eat the bread and drink the cup. We come to the table in the shoes of the prodigal son—wastrels who wasted every good gift that God has given us. It is important that we don't partake in this sacrament with a legalistic spirit. When the prodigal son returned to his father, he offered to be a slave in his household—he wanted to earn his way back into the good graces of his father, but the father showed boundless grace and showed him that he was still a son and heir. In the same way, we repent of our sins when we approach our Father's table, but we do not repent as a work to gain enough standing to partake of the sacrament worthily. The only works that make us worthy of God's grace in the sacrament are the works of Christ imputed to us, so we partake by faith in him, not by faith in our own record of righteousness.

Second, Christ is really and truly present in the sacrament of Communion. When Roman Catholics or Episcopalians claim to believe in the "real presence" of Christ in the sacrament, what they really mean is the physical, corporeal presence of Christ. Reformed Christians deny that the physical body of Christ is anywhere other than the right hand of the throne of God, so we reject their doctrine of transubstantiation and the "real presence." However, we do believe, as the Heidelberg Catechism states, that we are "really partakers of His true body and blood" when we eat and drink (Heidelberg Catechism, Q79). Christ is truly present in spiritual form when the words of institution are read and the church partakes of the sacrament, because the Holy Spirit works to make us real partakers of Christ's body and blood. This is different than mere memorialism, in which the bread and wine are only signs, because Christ is present nourishing the souls of his children.

Third, the sacrament brings us into communion with God and one another. We partake of the body and blood of Christ in the same way that we do all things: by faith. By faith, we are united to Christ and enjoy communion with our heavenly Father. We are also united to one another as the body of Christ by faith, and we enjoy communion as a body when we partake in the sacrament (Ephesians 4:13). This means that our participation in the Lord's Supper is not only an individual act of worship, but also corporate, unified worship.

Finally, when we partake in the Lord's Supper, we look forward to that great day when we eat and drink with Christ in his Father's kingdom. The apostles were exhorted to "proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Cor. 11:26). Part of partaking is looking forward to this second coming of Christ in bodily form. When we eat the bread and drink the wine, we are reminded that Christ is God incarnate—he took on human flesh to become the atoning sacrifice for our sin. We are also reminded that he will return again in bodily form to judge the living and the dead on the last day. As those united to Christ by faith, we need not fear the day of judgement, because Christ intercedes on our behalf. We can look forward to that blissful Marriage Supper of the Lamb when we finally see clearly that all of God's promises are yes and amen in Christ.

Praying for Our Missionaries - Chuck and Alisa Donet

- ❖ Relief for the people in our area, who are dealing with misinformation, poverty/unemployment, rising sicknesses, and isolation due to the virus.
- ❖ All of our team, as we take a break in the States, pray and re-tool, and consider the right time to go back to the field (when we are allowed).
- ❖ Chuck and his daily work with digital scripture engagement and outreach.
- ❖ Vince's continued relief work on the field & outreach project with Chuck.
- ❖ Alisha with chronic pain – good treatment, exercise, and patience.
- ❖ Each kid as they work in the summer, and for spiritual growth in grace.
- ❖ Our 'adopted' young adults Johnathan and Matthew, spending most evenings with us – their growth in the Lord, compassion, and their calling.
- ❖ Praise for the many blessings, freedoms, and privileges we have today!

A Replant Update

The Session recently passed a Plan for Re-Planting at Covenant Road. One part of this plan is the change of worship times beginning August 2nd: 9:30 AM at Petersen Hall and 11:00 AM at Barnwell St. While we continue to value our time of worshiping together, we're also valuing our desire to worship together in mission.

We do not want to be a church that simply moves locations when we sell the Barnwell Street property. We want to be our Lord's gathered people who are being sent in a movement of the gospel to do worship, life, and ministry together in the community around Covenant Road. We want to be found hearing and responding to Jesus' words, "As the Father has sent me, I also send you." (John 20:21). He sends us with the gospel message embodied in neighbor loving lives as we worship together.

What Will Worship Look Like on Sunday Mornings?

Beginning August 2nd at 9:30 am there will be a group of 10-15 CCC members worshiping together at Petersen Hall at the Covenant Road property. The rest of CCC members and regular attenders will be worshiping together at 11:00 am at Barnwell Street or online.

The first group of 10-15 to worship at Petersen Hall is being invited by Pastor Jim to gather with him each week and will worship together for one month. This group will be chosen out of the "Peter" Shepherding Group. At the end of August this group will go back to worshiping together at Barnwell Street at 11:00. Pastor Jim will invite another group from another Shepherding Group of 10-15 from among CCC members to join him at Petersen Hall in September.

Therefore, each month the worship at Covenant Road is not open to all members and regular attenders. But it is open to all who will visit from outside our membership and they will join the 10-15 who are asked to participate each month. However the worship at Barnwell Street at 11:00 am is open to all members, regular attenders, and visitors. Also, we will continue to provide an online service at 11:00 am.

We will continue to practice our safe practices as we gather for worship in both locations during the COVID 19 situation. The spaces we worship in will be thoroughly cleaned, we will provide masks, hand sanitizer, encourage social distancing in both gathering and seating. Our order of worship will be the same in both locations. As we come out of the vacation months we hope to see the congregation worshiping together once again. However, we do want to encourage those who have underlying health conditions or those who may be vulnerable to use caution in considering regathering for worship.

Prayer Walks

If you are interested in joining others for prayer walks in the neighborhoods around Covenant Road, please look for dates and times of those walks as they are listed in the weekly email that comes out on Tuesday. If you would like to participate in a prayer walk at another time than those listed please contact Pastor Jim so that he can assist you in that effort.

Join Us Saturday August 1st 8:30am for a Prayer Walk with "Moment of Hope"

If you're interested in joining us please contact Henry Bolin at the church office