



**Bethlehem
Lutheran Church**

June 2, 2020

Dear friends in Christ at Bethlehem Lutheran Church –

During this time when we have not been gathering physically for worship, we have not had Holy Communion together. While we continue to be connected to each other as Christ's Body in the Word and prayer, I know that many of you desire to return to sharing in the Lord's Table.

On Sunday, June 14, our Sunday worship that is broadcast via the radio (KBRF 1250) and is livestreamed online on our Facebook page at 8:30 a.m. will include the opportunity for you to share in the Lord's Table at home. As your pastor, I will lead you through the words that speak Christ's promise and direct you when to distribute the bread and water.

To prepare for communion at home, please do the following:

- **A leader.** Designate someone in your household to speak Christ's word of promise and to serve the bread and wine.
- **Bread.** You can prepare your own bread or you can use purchased bread. Any type of bread is acceptable – for example, a larger loaf, a smaller pita loaf, a biscuit, or even an ordinary cracker.
- **Wine.** Jesus used wine and I encourage you to do so as well. However, you may also use a non-alcoholic alternative that is made from "the fruit of the vine," such as grape juice.

I encourage you to place the bread and wine on a table that is cleared of any clutter and to use ordinary dishes rather than disposable plates or cups. A lighted candle on the table can remind you that Jesus Christ, the light of the world, is present for you in the Lord's Table.

After the sermon and prayers, I will lead you in the words we use from the Scriptures to proclaim the promise of Christ's death and resurrection in this holy meal – the Words of Institution. I will prompt you phrase by phrase and allow time for you to repeat each phrase after me (see the reprinted Word of Institution included with this mailing). After speaking these Words of Institution, we will pray the Lord's Prayer. Then the leader you designate can serve the bread and wine using these words: "The body of Christ, given for you" and "The blood of Christ, shed for you."

Please do not worry about making mistakes. In the almost 40 years I have been leading and assisting at the Lord's Table, I've made them all. After all, Jesus gave us this sacrament for our forgiveness, not to keep track of mistakes and wrongs.

If you have questions or concerns, please feel welcome to contact me by email (pastortom@prtcl.com) or phone (218-770-9759). I look forward to sharing the Lord's Table with you once again on Sunday, June 14. For there we plan to celebrate Holy Communion in the same fashion of June 28, July 12 and July 26.

Yours in Christ, Pastor Tom Peterson

Communion Bread Recipe

From Luther Seminary to your table

(This recipe yields 4 loaves. The bread freezes well.)

Sift dry ingredients together **three times**: (important!)

2 c whole wheat flour

1 c white flour

1 & 1/4 tsp baking powder

1 & 1/4 tsp salt

Stir in 4 tsp oil. Set aside.

Mix wet ingredients together until dissolved:

3/4 cup + 2 Tbsp very hot water (minimum of 180 degrees F)

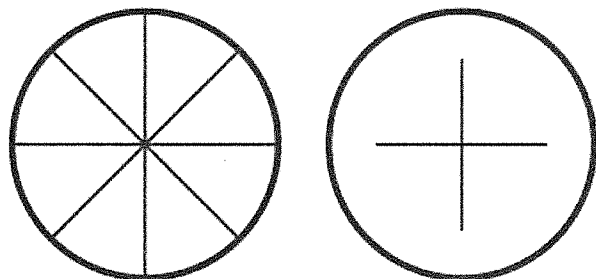
3 Tbsp honey

3 Tbsp molasses

Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and mix well. Dough should be slightly sticky. Do not knead.

Divide into four balls and flatten each into a 1/4 inch thick disk.

With a knife, score the top of each loaf into eight pie-shaped sections, so that the sections can be more easily broken off while serving. Alternatively, you could score a cross onto the loaf.

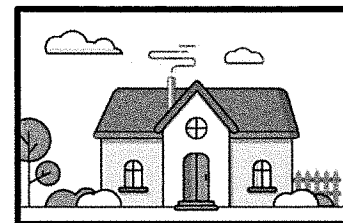


Lay the loaves on a baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Remove from oven and brush the tops of the loaves with oil. Bake an additional 5-8 minutes. Let cool.

Explanation & Liturgy adapted from:

Rev. Lisa Lewton, St. John Lutheran Church, Dickinson, ND

Holy Home Communion



The church is anywhere people gather in Jesus' name. Even though we may not physically gather in a church building, we continue to gather as the Christian church. When you gather in Jesus' name, your home is church, too.

Holy Communion is a special meal we celebrate when we worship. The bread and wine are mysteriously the *real presence* of Jesus Christ. Because mysteries are, well, mysterious, we trust that Jesus is really with us in this meal.

When we cannot gather physically for worship due to an emergency such as COVID-19, it is acceptable to fast from Holy Communion until we can worship together once again or use the liturgy below which can be led by the head of household to celebrate Holy Communion in the home. We believe the meal is celebrated after God's Word is heard, so you might read a passage of scripture together and discuss how God is speaking to you in the biblical story, listen to a recorded sermon or tune into a livestream or radio service, before leading this liturgy. You can find a list of online worship services and other resources at:

[NWMN ELCA Online Worship/Bible Studies](#)

Setting the Table

Prepare a space for the meal of Holy Communion. Just as we do at church, consider setting out your best dishes because this is the most special meal we share. Churches often use unleavened bread to recall the Israelites hurried exodus from Egypt, however any bread will do. You may set out a small cup of wine or grape juice. Light a candle or two, and you have an altar.

Holy Communion Liturgy

Head of Household: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you.

And also with you.

When our congregation gathered for Holy Communion with all the saints from every time and place, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and the love shown us in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The holy meal of the Lord's supper was shared.

Even though we gather separately, for now, we share this bread of life and cup of blessing - gifts that unite and strengthen the Christian community.

Let us confess our sins, all that we have done to hurt each other and ourselves, in the presence of God and of one another.

(Pause for a moment of reflection.)

Most merciful God, We confess that we have messed up. With our words and our hands, we have not been kind to others or to our own selves. We are hopeless without your love. We are afraid of running out of things, so we take more than we need. We are afraid of what could happen, so we forget that you are with us all the time to give us peace. We spend the night with worry instead of prayer. Forgive us again and fill us up with your abundant mercy.

God is rich in mercy and love. No matter how much you mess up every day, God's love never runs out. Just as God's love is for you, so is the meal set before us. You are forgiven and ready to feast at the table, in the name of the one who died to set you free from the power of your sin, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

Words of Institution

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying:

This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

For as often as we eat of this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Or...

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Communion Distribution

Share the bread with each person, saying,
"The body of Christ, given for you."

Then share the wine or grape juice with each person, saying,
"The blood of Christ, shed for you."

Prayer After Communion

Life-giving God, in the mystery of Christ's resurrection you send light to conquer darkness, water to give new life, and the bread of life to nourish your people and free us from fear. Send us forth as witnesses to your Son's resurrection, that we may show your glory to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**