

Invitation & Instructions for Online Worshipers to Participate in Holy Communion

Dear brothers & sisters, In light of current circumstances preventing some from being able to physically attend worship services and acknowledging that we are joined together in Jesus Christ through the Spirit, the Session has approved participation in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper (Holy Communion) for those attending online worship services. Please read the instructions below for celebrating Holy Communion. Our next celebration of the sacrament during worship will be on **August 2, 2020**.

Origin and Significance: Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper on the last night prior to his crucifixion (see 1 Corinthians 11:23-26). By faith we experience Christ and all the benefits of Calvary in Holy Communion. First, the sacrament proclaims what Jesus Christ accomplished at Calvary and calls us to remember him and his work of redemption. Second, Christ continues to nourish and sustain us in faith through the sacrament and the promises of life eternal. By the sacrament, he draws us closer to himself and works repentance from sin in our hearts. Third, Christ prepares the church and grants her joy with the promises of the final marriage supper. "Those who receive the Lord's Supper spiritually feed upon Christ as the true bread, remembering and, by God's grace, renewing the covenantal benefits of Christ death on their behalf" (Book of Order, W. 3-3 D.).

Participation: The sacraments are signs and seals of the gracious work of God, using physical elements to signify inward, spiritual realities. The Lord's Supper reminds and renews us in the gracious work of God at Calvary and is taken by faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. All true believers that have been baptized in a Christian Church are welcomed to the table to experience the blessings of Holy Communion.

Preparation:

- a) *Spiritual-* Christian believers are to purposefully prepare themselves to receive and partake of the elements. Everyone should take time to examine their spiritual life, reflect on their relationship with Jesus Christ, repent of sins, and draw near to God. Paul says that those that "eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves" (1 Corinthians 11:28, 29).
- b) *Elements-* The physical elements of the Lord's Supper (bread and juice) represent spiritual realities of Jesus Christ's body and blood given for redemption. We ask that you prepare for Holy Communion by having a piece of bread (or gluten free cracker or bread) and small cup of juice ready prior to the worship service.

Partaking: Our partaking in Holy Communion "Is a bond and pledge of the communion of believers with Jesus Christ and with each other as parts of the church." (Book of Order, W. 3-3) We ask that you partake with the gathered believers during the service after:

- 1) The words of institution from 1 Corinthians 11 are said aloud in the service.
- 2) The Elder prays for God's blessing upon the elements, setting them apart for his divine purposes.
- 3) Invitation is given for everyone to partake of the bread and juice together.

In Christ,

Pastor Patrick

Pastor Patrick