

# Lord's Supper Policy

September 11, 2018

## I Definition

- 1) The Lord's Supper is a worship ceremony created and commanded by the Lord Jesus for His Church.<sup>1</sup>
- 2) It proclaims through the physical signs of bread and wine the divine promise of forgiveness through the good news of Jesus Christ. It graciously provides spiritual nourishment and is a sign of continuance in the visible church.<sup>2</sup>
- 3) The Lord's Supper is also called the "Breaking of Bread", "Love (*agape*) Feast", "Eucharist" ("thanksgiving") and "Communion."<sup>3</sup>
- 4) The Old Testament ceremony of Passover foreshadows the covenant relationship found in the Lord's Supper.<sup>4</sup>

## II Description

- 1) The Lord's Supper, when coupled with the Word (i.e. the verbal proclamation of the Gospel), represents . . .<sup>5</sup>
  - a) The promise of the Gospel and the benefits of belonging to the new covenant in Christ through the signs of bread and wine.
  - b) Christ's sacrificial death and the salvation it brings.
  - c) Spiritual nourishment and continuance in the visible universal church, by which our faith is strengthened in the Gospel of Christ.
  - d) The authority and guarantee of God's promises.
  - e) A public statement of our faith in Christ, proclaiming His cross and awaiting His return.
- 2) By partaking in the Lord's Supper, by faith alone, Christians . . .<sup>6</sup>
  - a) Are reminded of what Christ has done for them and are strengthened in their faith.
  - b) Publicly proclaim and submit to Christ as their Lord, Savior and God.
  - c) Are reminded of their service to God and their neighbor.
- 3) The Lord's Supper is not . . .<sup>7</sup>
  - a) Magical. The elements (bread and wine) are not changed into the body & blood of Christ, nor is Christ re-sacrificed during the Lord's Supper. The Lord Jesus died but once and now bodily reigns in heaven. Any benefit in partaking in the Supper is received by grace alone, through faith alone, on account of Christ alone.
  - b) Required for salvation, though it is a sin to neglect it.
- 4) The act of participating in the Lord's Supper by itself offers no certainty of salvation, though it points to the certainty of the promises we have in Christ through faith alone.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gen 14:18 (Heb 6:20); Matt 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-26; Luke 22:14-20; 1Cor 11:23-27; Rev 19:7-9.

<sup>2</sup> Luke 22:20; John 6:31-58; 1Cor 10:3-4,16-17; 11:25; Eph 5:29-30; Heb 10:10; 1Pet 1:18-19.

<sup>3</sup> Luke 24:30,35; John 21:20; Acts 2:42,46; 20:7; 1Cor 5:7-8; 10:16; 11:20,25; Jude 12; Rev 19:9.

<sup>4</sup> Ex 12:1-51; Matt 26:17-26; Mark 14:12; John 1:29,36; 1Cor 5:7; 10:1-4; 1Pet 1:18-19.

<sup>5</sup> 2Kgs 18:32; Is 36:17; Ezra 6:19-22; Matt 26:27-28; Luke 7:33-35; 22:20; John 6:31-58; 1Cor 10:3-4,16-17; 11:25; 12:13; Eph 5:26,29,32; Heb 10:10; 1Pet 1:19.

<sup>6</sup> Judg 19:19; 1Sam 10:3; 25:18; Neh 5:15; 1Cor 10:16-17; 11:17-34.

<sup>7</sup> Luke 23:43; 1Cor 1:17; 1Pet 3:21.

<sup>8</sup> Rom 3:20-21,28; Eph 2:8-9; Heb 7:23-28; 10:11-18; 1Pet 1:5.

### **III Administration**

- 1) The outward elements to be used in the Lord's Supper are bread and "wine."<sup>9</sup>
  - a) Because Christ's sacrifice is perfect either leavened or unleavened bread can be used.
  - b) In order to be sensitive to those who wrestle with alcoholism grape juice is favored over wine.
- 2) Because Christians constantly need to be fed and encouraged by the good news of Jesus Christ, the Lord's Supper should be regularly administered by the church.<sup>10</sup>
- 3) The Lord's Supper shall only be administered by those appointed by the church.<sup>11</sup>
- 4) The Lord's Supper will be administered, at least, on the following occasions:<sup>12</sup>
  - a) First Sunday of every month during the regular worship service.
  - b) On special services as deemed appropriate by the pastor and/or Diaconate, such as Maundy Thursday and Easter services.
  - c) The pastor(s) and deacons should make sure that those who cannot attend Sunday services for good reasons shall receive the Supper if they desire.
  - d) Private communion given by the pastor upon his discretion.
- 5) This church practices open Communion.<sup>13</sup>
  - a) All those who confess the Triune God of the Bible and look to Christ alone for their salvation are welcome at the Lord's Table.
  - b) Before giving the elements, the pastor shall proclaim the Gospel and warn the recipients of the Supper that faith and repentance in Jesus Christ is required.
  - c) Those removed from the fellowship of either this church, or another biblically based church, for disciplinary reasons, shall not be allowed to partake in the Supper until there is evidence of repentance and reinstatement by the Diaconate.
- 6) The church encourages that one be baptized before receiving the Lord's Supper.<sup>14</sup>
- 7) Children are welcome to take the Lord's Supper in this church.<sup>15</sup>
  - a) Since the only requirement to take the Lord's Supper is faith in Christ, this church suggests that when a parent detects in their children conviction of sin, knowledge of the Gospel and trust in Christ alone for their salvation, that they bring their children to the pastor for instruction about the Lord's Supper before receiving it.
  - b) During 4<sup>th</sup> grade the church's children will be instructed in the meaning of the Lord's Supper and be given the opportunity to partake in the Supper.

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<sup>9</sup> Matt 26:26,29; Mark 14:22,25; Rom 14:20-21; 1Cor 10:16-17; Eph 5:29-30.

<sup>10</sup> Acts 2:42,46; 20:7; 1Cor 11:25-26.

<sup>11</sup> Matt 7:6; 28:16,19; 1Cor 4:1 (Eph 5:26,29,32); 5:6-13; 10:21; 11:20-23; 2Cor 6:14-17; 2Thes 3:6,14-15; Heb 5:1-4.

<sup>12</sup> Josh 5:10-11; 2Kgs 23:21-23; 2Chr 30:1-2,5; 2Chr 35:1; Ezra 6:19-21; Acts 2:42,46; 20:7; 1Cor 11:25-26.

<sup>13</sup> Matt 11:28-30; 18:17-20; 1Cor 5:11; 11:27-29; 2Thes 3:6.

<sup>14</sup> Ex 12:48; Num 9:14; Col 2:11-12.

<sup>15</sup> Ex 12:25-27; 13:6-8; Matt 19:14; 1Pet 2:2-3.