

ALTERNATIVE FORM FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

1 Cor 11: 23-25 Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, attend to the words of the institution of the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ as they are delivered by the apostle Paul: 'For I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you: that the Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me." In the same way, after the supper he took the cup and said, "This cup is God's new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me." This means that every time you eat this bread and drink from this cup you proclaim the Lords death until He comes. It follows that if anyone eats the Lords bread or drinks from his cup in a way that dishonours him, he is guilty of sin against the Lords body and blood. So then, everyone should examine himself first, and then eat the bread and drink from the cup. For if he does not recognise the meaning of the Lords body when he eats the bread and drinks from the cup, he brings judgement on himself as he eats and drinks.

I Cor. II : 27-29 For the proper celebration of the Lords Supper, genuine self-examination is required. The true examination of ourselves consists of these three principle parts: We must consider our sins - sins of attitude, thought, word, deed and neglect, and because of these humble ourselves before God. We must firmly believe that our sins are forgiven only on the ground of the atonement of Jesus Christ. We must earnestly strive, in our whole life, to show thankfulness to the Lord and to live in true love and unity with our neighbour.

We must also consider the meaning of the Lords Supper:

I Cor. I I : 25 Firstly it is a memorial meal. When He instituted His Supper, the Lord said: "Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me." In the Lords Supper we commemorate and proclaim the death of the Lord. At the sight of the bread and wine the congregation calls to mind all of the Passion of Jesus Christ: how He gave His life; how He fell to the ground like a grain of wheat and died; how He drained the cup of bitterness; how He was forsaken of God and called out: "My God, my God, why did you abandon me?" that we might never more be forsaken by Him.

Matt. 27 : 46 But the Lord's Supper is much more yet. Not only does the congregation remember a Lord that died: it lives in the fellowship of the risen Lord. Therefore the Lords Supper is secondly a least of communion with the Living Lord. Paul attests to this in these words: "The cup we use in the Lords Supper and for which we give thanks to God: when we drink from it; we are sharing in the blood of Christ: And the bread we break: when we eat it, we are sharing in the body of Christ:." Through the Holy Spirit the living Christ is truly present with us at the Lords Supper. Besides, by this name Spirit we are also united as members of one body in true brotherly love, as the apostle says: "Because there is the one loaf of bread, all of us, though many, are one body, for we all share the same loaf."

I Cor. 10 : 16 Thirdly, communion with the Lord at His table is also a guarantee. Didn't He say: ". . . this is my body", and . . . this is my blood"? As surely as this bread is broken for everyone to see and handed out and this cup is given them, and we eat and drink thereof; just as surely do we share in Christ; in His death and in His resurrection. In this event our love guarantees the merit of His atonement to us completely, as if we ourselves had stood before God, as if we ourselves had suffered punishment for our sins, as if we ourselves had died for them and had risen again and gained our righteousness before God. The certainty which this assurance gives us is not based on our feelings or moods, but on the signs from the hand of the Lord, yes, on the Lord Himself.

I Cor. 10 : 17 Fourthly, this sacrament is also a proclamation of our future expectation. In the Lords Supper we have the assurance that the Lord Himself is one with us. Yet, the congregation also looks forward to the return of our Lord and in this celebration proclaims the death of the Lord till He comes. Through the Lords Supper we reach out to that day when Christ will appear in glory and bring everything to fulfilment; the day when He will make new the heaven and the earth so that righteousness may dwell therein - and God may be all and in all. At the Lord's Supper the bride of Christ yearns for the bridal feast of the Lamb.

Matt. 26 : 26, 28 Finally, it is clear from all that has been said that the Lords Supper is above all a feast of joy. Even though the tokens speak of the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, of His cross; His blood that was shed and His broken body, the celebration of the Lords Supper is not a sign of mourning and sorrow. The

I Cor. II : 24-25
Gal. 2 : 20
Eph. 2 : 6
Col. 3 : 1
Heid Cat. Sunday 23
I Cor. I I : 26
I Cor. 1 5: 28
Rev. 19 . 9

congregation does celebrate the feast with solemn devotion. Yet it is a feast of joy where the Saviour Himself in a unique manner dispenses to us the fruits of His suffering: His death and resurrection: In this joyful feast the congregation may, already taste of the joys awaiting us at the wedding feast of the Lamb. Come, let us rejoice with the apostle: "Who will accuse God's chosen people? God Himself declares them not guilty! Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right-hand side of God, pleading with him for us!"

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

Confession of faith (without hymn)

I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, died, and buried;

He descended into hell;

the third day He rose again from the dead;

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit.

I believe in a holy catholic church, the communion of saints;

the forgiveness of sins;

the resurrection of the body;

and the life everlasting,

Amen.

Prayer:

Merciful God and Heavenly Father, we thank You for Jesus Christ who with His crucified body and spilled blood nourishes and refreshes us, to eternal life.

Grant that through the work of the Holy Spirit our faith may be strengthened and we be equipped to serve better in Your Kingdom; all to the glory of Your Name.

(A formulary prayer with or without the Lord's Prayer or a spontaneous prayer with or without the Lord's Prayer may be used here.)

The words of institution

In breaking and distributing the bread, the minister shall say:

The bread which we break is the communion with the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was broken unto a complete remission of all our sins:

When the wine has been poured and distributed the minister shall say:

The cup of blessings which we bless is the communion with the blood of Christ.

Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was shed unto a complete remission of all our sins.

Communion Praise:

Praise the Lord, my soul:

All my being, praise His Holy Name!

Praise the Lord; my soul,

and do not forget how kind He is.

He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.

He keeps me from the grave and blesses me with love and mercy.

He fills my life with good things, so that I stay young and strong like an eagle.

He revealed His plans to Moses and let the people of Israel see His mighty deeds.

The Lord is merciful and loving; slow to become angry and full of constant love.

He does not keep on rebuking;

He is not angry for ever.

He does not punish us as we deserve or repay us for our sins and wrongs.

As high as the sky is above the earth, so great is His love for those who honour Him.

As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our sins from us.

As kind as a father is to his children, so kind is the Lord to those who honour Him.

Thanksgiving:

O merciful God and Father, we glorify and praise You. Out of mercy You have given us Your only begotten Son, the Mediator and Sacrifice for our sins. He is our food and drink unto life eternal. Thank You that You give us the faith whereby we may share in these benefits. You have also through Your

Son Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Supper for the strengthening and edification of our faith. Thank You God. We beseech You that through the work of Your Holy Spirit; the remembrance of our Lord Jesus Christ and the proclamation of His death till He comes, may tend to our daily increase in true faith and in the blessed fellowship with Jesus Christ, our Lord. Please establish through Your Holy Spirit Your divine purpose with this Holy Supper. Amen.

(After Ps. 103 or after Ps. 103 and the formulary prayer a spontaneous intercessory prayer may follow.)