

APPROACHING THE ALTAR FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER

It is the practice of St. John's Lutheran Church to give the Lord's Supper in the way that it was given to Christ's Church on earth. That is, according to the institution and mandate of Christ, given in His Word (Matt. 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; and 1 Corinthians 11:23-25). For it is not we who give this precious gift, but Christ Himself.

Scripture teaches that one must rightly examine oneself before partaking of Christ's body and blood (1 Corinthians 11:27- 29). God's word also teaches that by receiving the Sacrament one is also binding him or herself to all that is taught and confessed by the body of believers (1 Corinthians 10:17). **Therefore, out of Christian love and charity, it is the practice of St. John's Lutheran Church to distribute the Lord's Supper only to those who are repentant and confess the faith of Holy Scripture in accord with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.**

To be asked not to commune is not a self-righteous judgment by the pastor or congregants of St. John's Lutheran Church. Rather, it is prompted by love and a heartfelt conviction, on the basis of Scripture alone, that we must follow Christ's command. As St. Paul says, "Let all that you do be done in love" (1 Corinthians 16:14). If you do desire the Sacrament (and we pray that you do), please speak with the Pastor or the elders before you partake of the Lord's Supper.

If you desire further discussion concerning the beliefs and practices of St. John's Lutheran Church, please contact the Pastor as he is the overseer and shepherd of the flock here at St. John's Lutheran Church, and has been commanded by the Word of God to pay careful attention to the flock of which he is overseer and to care for the Church of God (Acts 20:28). He would be overjoyed to share with you the gifts of Christ Jesus, our Lord.

PRAYER BEFORE RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

"Dear Savior, upon Your gracious invitation I come to Your altar. Let me find favor in Your eyes that I may approach Your table in the true faith and receive the Sacrament to the salvation of my soul. Amen."

RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

In preparation for communion, you may use these questions or those found on page 329-30 of the Lutheran Service Book.

- Do I confess my sin and trust in Jesus as my Savior? *John 3:16*
- Do I believe Jesus' promise of forgiveness through His true body and blood given to me in this sacrament? *Matthew 26:26-29*
- Do I plan with the help of the Holy Spirit to resist temptations and to serve the Lord with my life? *Ephesians 4:22-24*

PRAYER AFTER RECEPTION OF HOLY COMMUNION

"O blessed Savior, Jesus Christ, I thank You for the gift of forgiveness for all my sins. Let Your body and blood also strengthen my faith in You and my service to You. Let Your love in me overflow into love for all my brothers and sisters in Your family and to all people. Amen."