

# **Lord's Supper: Form 1**

**RCNZ**

## Lord's Supper: form 1

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, on the night in which he was delivered up to be crucified, the Lord Jesus instituted the sacrament of holy communion, saying, "Do this in remembrance of me."<sup>1</sup> In obedience to that command we now celebrate this memorial feast. We therefore invite all who have confessed Christ as their Lord, and who have truly examined themselves according to the admonition of the Apostle Paul, to come in contriteness of heart and assurance of faith to commune with Christ by partaking of this holy supper.

As we now draw near, let us consider the purposes for which the Lord has instituted his supper, namely, that we should keep it in remembrance of him, and that through this sacrament he should nourish and refresh us to eternal life.

To observe this holy supper in remembrance of him is to proclaim our Lord's death until he comes again. As we partake of this supper, therefore, we remember that our Lord Jesus Christ is the saviour promised in the Old Testament; that he is the eternal and only begotten Son of God; that he assumed our human nature, in which he fulfilled for us all obedience and the righteousness of God's law; and that he bore for us the wrath of God under which we should have perished everlastingly. We remember that he was bound that we might be loosed from our sins; that he was innocently condemned to death that we might be acquitted at the judgment seat of God; that he became a curse for us to fill us with his blessing; and that he humbled himself on the cross to hell's deep agony, which wrung from him the cry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"<sup>2</sup> that God might never forsake us. We remember also that he was raised for our justification, that he is exalted at God's right hand, and that he shall come again to judge the living and the dead. And we remember that the shedding of his blood has confirmed for us the new and eternal covenant of grace.

As we commemorate the death of Jesus Christ, we are assured that he truly nourishes and refreshes us with his crucified body and shed blood to everlasting life. This he promises in the institution of the supper, saying of the bread, “This is my body”<sup>3</sup> and of the wine, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”<sup>4</sup> With these words our Lord directs our faith to his perfect sacrifice, once offered on the cross, as the only basis of our salvation. He also assures us that by his death he has taken away our sin, the cause of our eternal death, and has obtained for us the life-giving Spirit. By this Spirit, who dwells in Christ as in the head and in us as his members, Christ brings us into true communion with himself and makes us share in all his riches, eternal life, righteousness and glory. By this same Spirit he unites us with all true believers in one body in true brotherly love, as the holy apostle says: “Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.”<sup>5</sup>

And since it is said to us, “Whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes,”<sup>6</sup> we are assured by this holy supper that our Lord Jesus will come again to receive us to himself and that we shall sit down with him and drink the fruit of the vine with him in the newness of our Father’s kingdom.<sup>7</sup>

## **Prayer**

That we may now obtain these blessings, let us ask God for his grace.

Merciful God and Father, your grace abounds beyond all our sins. In this supper, in which we commemorate the death of your dear Son, please work in our hearts so that we may yield ourselves ever more fully to Jesus Christ. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, nourish and refresh us with the body and blood of Jesus Christ, that we may no longer live in our sins, but he in us, and we in him.

Confirm us in the covenant of grace, that we may be assured that you will forever be our gracious Father, forgiving our sins and abundantly

providing us with all things necessary for body and soul, as your dear children and heirs.

Grant us your grace that we may cheerfully take up our cross, deny ourselves, confess our Saviour, and stand firm in all temptations and trials. Increase our longing for the return of our Lord Jesus Christ from heaven.

Answer us, O God and merciful Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, belong all praise and adoration, now and evermore. Amen.

*While the table is being prepared an appropriate psalm or hymn may be sung.*

## **The Apostles' Creed**

As we now come to the table of the Lord, let us confess our Christian faith together using the words of the Apostles' Creed:

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, dead, and buried;  
he descended into hell<sup>8</sup>  
the third day he rose again from the dead;  
he ascended into heaven,  
and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from there he shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit.

I believe a holy catholic<sup>9</sup> church, the communion of saints;  
the forgiveness of sins;  
the resurrection of the body;  
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

*At this point the minister should indicate who may partake of the sacrament according to synodical regulations and local practice.*

That we may be nourished with Christ, the true bread from heaven, let us lift up our hearts to Christ Jesus, our Advocate, at the right hand of his heavenly Father. Let us firmly believe all his promises, trusting that God will, through the working of the Holy Spirit, nourish and refresh us with Christ's body and blood, as surely as we receive the bread and wine in remembrance of him.

*In breaking and serving the bread, the minister shall say:*

The bread which we break is a communion of the body of Christ. Take, eat, remember and believe that the body of our Lord Jesus Christ was given for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

*In serving the cup the minister shall say:*

The cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks is a communion of the blood of Christ. Take, drink, remember and believe that the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ was poured out for the complete forgiveness of all our sins.

*While the elements are being distributed, the minister may read fitting passages from Scripture, or a hymn may be sung.*

*After the communion the minister shall say:*

Brothers and sisters, since the Lord has now nourished our souls at his table, let us jointly praise his holy name with thanksgiving, and let everyone say in his heart:

Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.

Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits—  
who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,  
who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion.

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

He will not always accuse, nor will he harbour his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

Praise the Lord, you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, who obey his word.

Praise the Lord, all his heavenly hosts, you his servants who do his will.

Praise the Lord, all his works everywhere in his dominion.

Praise the Lord, O my soul.<sup>10</sup>

To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!<sup>11</sup>

Amen.

## **Thanksgiving**

Let us pray.

Merciful God and Father, we thank you with all our hearts that in your boundless grace you have given us your only begotten Son.

We thank you that by true faith we share in Christ's benefits. And since you have through your Son Jesus Christ ordained the holy supper to strengthen our faith, we pray that through your Holy Spirit this remembrance of our Lord and proclamation of his death may truly increase our faith and enrich our fellowship with Christ. Also bring

others into this blessed fellowship, so that all your children may be gathered in to share with us the joy of your salvation.

Hear us, heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Luke 22:19.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 27:46.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 26:26.

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 26:28.

<sup>5</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:17.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:26.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 26:29.

<sup>8</sup> That is, on the cross Jesus suffered the agony of hell which our sins deserved (cf. Heidelberg Catechism Q. 44).

<sup>9</sup> That is, God's people through all times and places (cf. Heidelberg Catechism Q. 54).

<sup>10</sup> Psalm 103:1–4, 8–13, 20–22.

<sup>11</sup> Revelation 5:13.