

Distribution of Holy Communion by Lay Worship Leaders

Allegheny Synod, October 2025

For the Congregation:

1. Use altar hosts (wafers) instead of “real” bread—whether leavened or unleavened in a loaf, pita, or flatbread form. Forms of “real” bread are not easy to store and keep fresh.
2. Wine should be provided in an appropriate vessel—flagon or cruet—that can be sealed airtight.
3. It would be appropriate to provide different communion vessels to hold pre-consecrated bread and wine than are usually used. This helps everyone involved to be assured which elements are already pre-consecrated and which are not.
4. Pre-consecrated bread and wine should NOT be brought forward from an offertory table (often in the rear) but placed more in proximity to the altar table. If the congregation does not have a tabernacle in which to store any pre-consecrated elements, they may be placed on a credence table or on the altar table prior to worship.
5. Any leftover elements that have been pre-consecrated should then be used at the next service following, before distributing any newly consecrated elements.

For the Bulletin:

1. The order of worship is as follows:
 - Offering prayer (to include: “the table is now set with communion elements that were consecrated at last Sunday’s service for our reception today.” OR if the elements were provided from a neighboring congregation: “the table is now set with communion elements that were consecrated at a service at _____ Lutheran Church for our reception today.”)
 - Provided words to be spoken in place of words of institution (see below)
 - The Lord’s Prayer
 - Lamb of God
 - Communion distribution
 - Post communion blessing and prayer

For the Lay Worship Leader:

1. After the Offering Prayer, place the pre-consecrated bread and wine on the altar table, if they are not already there.
2. Standing either to the side of the altar table or behind it, announce the statement provided by the Bishop’s office (see below)
3. Uncover the bread and pour wine into the chalice
4. Lead the congregation in The Lord’s Prayer
5. Help to distribute the pre-consecrated elements by the custom of the congregation. An invitation may also be spoken.
6. After the distribution, recover the bread and chalice. You may help to consume the wine in the chalice before it is covered, if you desire.
7. Continue with the Post Communion blessing and prayer.

To be spoken in place of the Words of Institution:

If the elements came from the congregation in which you are serving:

When our congregation gathered for worship last evening, we heard again the story of God’s mighty acts and of the love shown to us in Jesus’ life, death, resurrection, and ascension, and they shared in the holy meal of the Lord’s Supper. Now, I bring to you

this same word of life, and this same bread and cup of blessing, so that we may share in these gifts and be strengthened in communion with all the people of God.

Gathered at the Lord's Table, we celebrated with thanksgiving that "in the night in which Jesus was betrayed, he took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying: Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me." This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this meal is shared with the assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of the Holy Spirit. This bread and cup, shared in the gathering of our faith, are now given here for you.

If the elements came from a different congregation:

When our brothers and sisters at ____ (Congregation name) ____ Lutheran Church in ____ (location/town) ____ gathered in worship on ____ (day) ____, they heard again the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown to us in Jesus' life, death, resurrection, and ascension, and they shared in the holy meal of the Lord's Supper. Now, I bring to you this same word of life, and this same bread and cup of blessing, so that you may share in these gifts and be strengthened in communion with all the people of God.

Gathered at the Lord's Table, our brothers and sisters in Christ celebrated with thanksgiving that "in the night in which Jesus was betrayed, he took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying: Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me." This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ, and this meal is shared with the assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of the Holy Spirit. This bread and cup, shared in the gathering of our faith, are now given here for you.

An announcement either to be spoken or printed in the bulletin (or both) on the day the Lay Worship Leader is distributing elements:

This morning, ____ (name) ____, an authorized lay worship leader in the Allegheny Synod, ELCA, will distribute the gifts of bread and wine set apart at the gathering of our brothers and sisters from ____ (congregation name) ____ Lutheran Church in ____ (location/town) ____ on ____ (day) ____ . Because an ordained pastor is not available to preside at our worship today, and with the blessing of the Office of the Bishop, this form of distribution under special circumstances is being used **only** during this time of our congregational transition.

If the pastor is on vacation, then edit the announcement accordingly.