



First Lutheran Church of Spirit Lake, Idaho

6th and Jefferson
P.O. Box 100
Spirit Lake, ID 83869



Services

First Lutheran practices traditional and historic worship services as described on the attached document, which was issued in 2016 to clarify our position on such matters. We celebrate Confession and Holy Communion at every service. And, as good Lutherans, we enjoy treats after every Sunday service while we enjoy the fellowship of our congregation and we welcome all visitors!

Please click on the links on our home page for more information regarding our weekly schedule of services and a message from our Pastor.

Solo Christo:
"Christ alone"



Sola Gratia:
"Grace alone"

Sola Fide:
"Faith alone"

Sola Scriptura:
"Scripture alone"

Traditional and Historic Liturgical Worship at First Lutheran Church in Spirit Lake, Idaho

We would like to carefully and respectfully explain why First Lutheran Church in Spirit Lake, Idaho chooses to observe the Lord's Supper in the context of the traditional/historic liturgy.

Jesus said at the first Lord's Supper, "...this is My Body..." (Mt 26:26), and "...this is My Blood..." (Mt 26:28). The Apostle Paul later affirms that, in the Lord's Supper, we are, "...sharing in the Blood of Christ..." and we are "...sharing in the Body of Christ..." (I Cor 10:16). As Christians who affirm the authority of Scripture in the life of the Church, as well as the Real Presence of our Lord's Body and Blood in the Lord's Supper, under the forms of bread and wine, we agree that during the celebration of Holy Communion there is something going on that is totally different, and more special, than anything that happens anywhere else in the universe, that we know of.

We believe, and affirm, that in Holy Communion, eternity is entering time. The eternal Body and Blood of the eternal Son of God is actually coming into our presence for us to eat and to drink. We believe that Holy Communion is not something we do to merely symbolize the sacrifice of our Lord's Body and Blood on the cross, as is the view of some sincere Christians. With the Christians of the early church, and from the words of the New Testament, we believe that Holy Communion is something that God does to serve us the same Body and Blood that He offered on the cross, as full payment for the forgiveness of our sins.

Since during the celebration of Holy Communion something unique and profound is happening that occurs nowhere else in creation, that is: eternity is physically entering time and space. We believe the way in which we call attention to and extol what God is doing – the "frame" around this priceless and exquisite one-of-a-kind "picture" – needs to look different than anything else in the universe. We believe Holy Communion ought not look like a rock concert, it ought not look like a night-club act. In other words, it ought not resemble, what some people might figuratively call, "the marketplace." This is why the leadership of First Lutheran Church, together with many other Lutheran congregations, believe it is most appropriate for Holy Communion to be celebrated using the traditional and historic liturgy, with traditional and appropriate, music.

Many Christian organizations that have been led to believe that the Lord's Supper is merely something we do to symbolize our Lord's sacrifice on the cross, have also tended, in recent decades, to "jazz up" their worship services with contemporary Christian rock music. They evidently consider the worship environment to be something that they create to make their personal experience of God *feel more meaningful to themselves, and more attractive to others*. I suppose you might say that many church bodies with the symbolic persuasion, regarding the elements of the Lord's Supper, would also tend to consider human emotions to be a Means of Grace. Perhaps, from their point of view, if you are in a situation where you are feeling good about God, then God must feel good about you.

One of the Elders at First Lutheran has a respected friend who is a pastor in an evangelical Christian church which has a symbolic view of the Lord's Supper, and who also employs contemporary Christian music during his worship service. He explained once that if Christians can get excited about their favorite football team, how much more excited should Christians be, in worship, about the God who is our Creator and Redeemer. Therefore, this pastor's worship music seems to be chosen for its ability to promote and facilitate a positive emotional response.

On the other hand, the Elder's evangelical pastor friend said, someday when he finds himself in the actual presence of God, when He is taken home to be with the Lord, or at the Second Coming, he will not be yelling excited phrases like, "Yea, God!" and jumping up and down, as if he were at a football game. The first thing this pastor said he would do, in the actual presence of God, is a "face plant" on the ground in front of God's Throne. He would throw himself face down on the ground, in silent and fearful reverence, before God. "After all," the friend said, "I'll be in the actual presence of God, Himself!"

Think about what the evangelical pastor said, about the sacredness of the presence of God, and be sure to remind yourself that we are always in God's presence, as David writes, "...where can I flee from Your presence?" (Ps 139:7) It could be said that we are no less in God's presence now than we will be in eternity. It's just that today's world offers countless attractive, persistent, and unavoidable distractions that easily mask the fact of God's omnipresence.


We don't mean to suggest that, since we are always in God's presence, or while we are receiving Holy Communion, we need to be nothing but somber, and have our face planted in the ground. What we do mean is that we believe there is a place for appropriate and consistent, reverence in Christian worship. The Scripture tells us to, "...come before Him with joyful **singing**." (Psalm 100:2) But, the Scripture also says, "... the Lord is in His holy temple. Let all the earth be **silent** before Him." (Hab 2:20) and, "Be **silent** before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is near, For the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests." (Zeph 1:7) The writer of the Book of Hebrews says, "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with **reverence** and **awe**." (Heb 12:28 NIV)

We, at First Lutheran, believe there is definitely a place in the Christian life for positive emotions, and excitement, about God. But, we find that intense positive emotions often result as a by-product of liturgical worship. Unlike a football game, they are not necessarily the main reason for attending public worship.

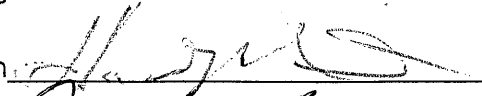
We are aware that other beloved Lutheran congregations offer Holy Communion in the context of what is called "contemporary worship." We believe the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus proves that God meets us where we are, in our own individual walk with Him. God has not chosen to make us all alike, but He has given us the challenge and responsibility of thoughtful discernment.

If First Lutheran Church would choose to sponsor a contemporary Christian rock concert in Spirit Lake, Idaho, by all means, let's have a Christian rock concert. We could employ it as part of an evangelistic outreach program. But we believe it is most appropriate, and we are committed, to celebrating Holy Communion, as is our regular practice, in the presence of the traditional and historic liturgy, and with traditional, appropriate, and reverent hymn settings.

Pastor Pace ^{REV.} 

Elder Ed Reaves 

Elder Duane Gross 

Deacon Hans Neuman 

Elder Doug Harms 

Organist Todd Pendleton 