

Weekday Communion Service

(Viikkomessu)

This order for a weekday communion service contains the key elements of worship, including the celebration of the Eucharist (Lord's Supper). This flexible structure gives room for silence, meditation, and prayer in one's own words. An opportunity for private counseling and confession for worshippers should be arranged either before or after the service.

This order for a communion service is meant to be used primarily on weekdays (at any hour, possibly with a specific theme). It can be used with the whole congregation or in special circumstances, such as youth services or worship in educational institutions, or the armed forces.

In a weekday communion service, the entire liturgy may be spoken.

I Gathering

1. Opening hymn

Instead of a hymn, a psalm, choir music, or an instrumental prelude may be used.

During the music those assisting in the service may enter as a procession, for which the assembly stands.

2. Invocation and greeting

The invocation and greeting may be sung or said.

Invocation

P In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A Amen.

Greeting

P The Lord be with you

A and also with you.¹

3. Introductory words

Introductory words may be freely formulated, taking into account special features of the day and the service.

These introductory words may be shaped so as to lead directly to the confession.

Generalized examples may be found in SUPPLEMENT ONE.

¹ Literally, the Finnish wording of the response means "So also with your spirit."

4. Confession and forgiveness

Confession and forgiveness may occur after the sermon (# 7).

Confession of sins

The confession may be read in unison. Kneeling is a possibility. The confession may be divided into parts with interpolated sentences, sung verses of prayer, or with periods of silence. The confession may include silent personal prayer preceded by an exhortative or introductory phrase, such as "Hear my silent confession."

Suitable stanzas of a hymn may also be used as the confession of sins.

Examples for confession of sins are in SUPPLEMENT TWO.

Declaration of forgiveness (Absolution)

The "Amen" following the declaration of forgiveness may be sung or spoken.

Some alternative declarations of forgiveness are in SUPPLEMENT THREE.

– the declaration

A Amen.

5. Hymn

This hymn may be replaced with other music or a moment of silent meditation.

6. Prayer of the day

Any part of this prayer (the call to prayer, the prayer itself or the amen) may be sung or spoken. The call to prayer may be followed by a time for silent prayer.

P Let us pray.

– the prayer

A Amen.

II God's Word

7. Scripture reading and a sermon

In addition to a gospel lesson or instead of it, a passage from the Old or New Testament may be read. A response (a psalm, hymn, song, instrumental music or silent meditation) may follow the reading. A meditative text may be read in place of the sermon.

If the sermon is followed by confession and forgiveness (see # 4 above), the creed is said after the declaration of forgiveness. In this case, a hymn or some other music leading to penitence may precede the confession of sins.

*8. Creed

The creed is said in unison. Other accepted English wordings of the creed may be used instead.
A hymn paraphrase of the creed may also be used. In that case, the following hymn (# 9) is omitted.

Apostles' Creed

A I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

9. Hymn

This hymn may be replaced with other music or a moment of silent meditation.

10. Prayer of intercession

If the alternative including intercession is used after communion (# 17), prayer is omitted here.

It is recommended that the prayer of intercession be prepared together with members of the congregation. Important topics include prayer for the church and the local congregation, and the spreading of the gospel, prayer for public authorities and for peace, prayer for those in various kinds of trouble, and prayer about current matters. There should also be time for silent prayer.

It is possible to divide the prayer into parts with interpolated sentences, with sung verses of prayer, or with moments of silence.

Examples for the prayer of intercession are in SUPPLEMENT FOUR.

The call to prayer and the amen may be sung or spoken.

P Let us pray.

– the prayer

A Amen.

III The Lord's Supper

11. Preparation of the Lord's table

A hymn is usually sung as an offertory while the pastor (possibly with assistants) prepares the Lord's table. Offerings of money are collected during the hymn. The beneficiary of the offering is announced before the hymn, and the offering may be blessed after the collection is completed. The hymn may be replaced by silence, a song or instrumental music.

12. Eucharistic prayer

Opening dialogue of the prayer

P The Lord be with you
A and also with you.
P Lift up your hearts.
A We lift them to the Lord.
P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
A It is right to give thanks and praise.

Preface

The preface may be sung or spoken.

Beginning of the preface

P Truly it is right and salutary
to give thanks to you at all times and in all places,
holy Lord, almighty Father, eternal God,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ending of the preface

Some seasonal alternatives are in SUPPLEMENT FIVE:

He has suffered and died for us
and opened for us the way to eternal life.
We thank you for this gift from heaven,
and with all your angels and saints we sing our praise to you:

or

You have given him to die and raised him from the dead
that we would be saved from the power of sin and death
and receive eternal life.
We thank you for this gift from heaven,
and with all your angels and saints we sing our praise to you:

*Sanctus

After the Sanctus, the assembly may remain standing until the Agnus Dei.

A Holy, holy, holy Lord Sabaoth!
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

Prayer and the words of institution

If the opening dialogue, preface and Sanctus are omitted, the eucharistic prayer begins with the exhortation: "Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God."

This prayer and the words of institution may be spoken or sung.

Alternatives to this prayer can be found in the long order for a communion service (alternatives 1, 2 and 3 in # 20 of that agenda).

Heavenly Father, Creator of all,
with gratitude we recall what you have done for us:
You sent your Son to save the world.
He became a human, was one of us, but without sin.
He fulfilled your will in every way
and accepted suffering and death
to redeem us from bondage.

*Our Lord Jesus Christ,
on the night when he was betrayed,
took bread, blessed (✙), broke the bread
and gave it to his disciples, saying,
"Take, eat; this is my body
which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me."*

*In the same way he took the cup, thanked (✙) and said,
"Drink from it, all of you.
This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
which is shed for you
for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink from it,
in remembrance of me."*

Gracious Father,
we now fulfill this command
to celebrate the holy supper in remembrance of your Son
and so proclaim his death until he comes.

[A We proclaim his death.
We witness his resurrection.
We wait for his coming in glory.]

We pray:
Send us your Holy Spirit,
that we may trust the promise of forgiveness
and receive in faith the body and blood of your Son for our salvation
until we meet him in your kingdom.

Through him, with him, and in him,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honor and glory belong to you, almighty Father,
always and forever.

A Amen.

13. Lord's Prayer

The Lord's Prayer is spoken or sung in unison.

A Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

14. Greeting of peace

After this greeting, participants in the service may be invited to greet one another with words of peace, such as "The peace of Christ be with you."

P The peace of the Lord be with you

A and also with you.

*15. Agnus Dei (Lamb of God)

The Agnus Dei may be sung during the distribution of the bread and wine.
The pastor may choose to break the bread during the Agnus Dei.

A Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;
grant us peace.

16. Communion

Invitation to communion

P Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.
Come; for everything is ready now.

or

P Jesus says, “Come to me,
all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens,
and I will give you rest.”

or

P Come, receive the body of Christ.
Come, drink from the fountain of immortality.

Distribution

Singing of hymns or presentation of other music may take place during the distribution.

The one who gives bread says:

The body of [our Lord Jesus] Christ, given for you.

The communicant may answer: Amen.

The one who bears the cup says:

The blood of [our Lord Jesus] Christ, shed for you.

The communicant may answer: Amen.

Words to conclude the meal

After these words, the vessels used for communion are covered (and removed to an auxiliary table).

The words may be followed by a time of silence.

P We have received the Lord Jesus Christ.
May he protect and keep us until eternal life.

A Amen.

or

P May the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ
preserve our spirit, soul and body
[, the entire being of each of us,]
until eternal life.

A Amen.

17. Prayer of thanksgiving

A suitable hymn may be used as a prayer of thanksgiving. If that is done, the Benedicamus (# 18) is omitted.

P Let us pray.

Three alternative prayers are given here. The third alternative is used if the prayer of intercession has been omitted earlier in the service (# 10).

P Lord, Almighty God,
you let us partake of the holy supper.
We thank you for this gift and pray:
Allow us together with all your saints
to partake of the feast of heaven as well.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord,
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit
always and forever.

A Amen.

or

P Heavenly Father, we thank you for what you give us at communion
to strengthen our faith in you.
Join us to one another in love
and preserve the hope of eternal life in us.
Hear our prayer for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ.

A Amen.

or

P Jesus Christ,
we praise you for the bread of life
that you give to nourish us.
Send each one of us out to serve
in the task that you have given.
We praise you for the cup of salvation,
your holy blood,

in which we have forgiveness.
Let it renew us.
Help us to look for satisfaction in things that endure,
not only in those that vanish away.
O source of our existence,
protect us from wasting our life
and destroying it!
We praise you for your grace;
let it heal broken relationships among us.
We thank you for your forgiveness;
let it drive our hatred and bitterness away.
We praise you for reviving power
that lifts from depression to courage
and from death to life.
Inspire us to give support
to those exhausted by worry
and scared of the future.
Give us eyes to see your face
in all people.
We praise you for bringing peace to this world.
Grant your peace to those
who are restless inside.
Grant your peace to those
who hide anxiety behind a false front.
Bring your peace into our everyday life
so that we might have strength
to follow in your footsteps.
We praise you, Jesus Christ,
victor over death,
giver of new life.

A Amen.

IV Conclusion

***18. Praise (Benedicamus)**

If a hymn has been sung as a prayer of thanksgiving (# 17), this is omitted.

The Benedicamus is omitted on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Quiet Saturday (Easter eve).

P Let us praise the Lord!

A Thanks be to God! Alleluia!

or (during Lent from Ash Wednesday to the Wednesday of the Passion Week):

P Let us praise the Lord!

A Thanks be to God! Amen.

***19. Benediction**

The benediction may be sung.

P The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.
In the name of the Father, and of the ✝ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A Amen.

Dismissal

The dismissal is said just before the people leave.

P/R Go in peace and serve the Lord with gladness.

or

P/R Go in peace.
Have courage,
hold on to what is good,
[do not repay evil for evil.
encourage the faint-hearted,
help the weak,
lift burdens of the oppressed,]
treat all people with respect.
Love and serve the Lord with gladness
in the power of the Holy Spirit.

20. Concluding music

A hymn, choir music, or an instrumental postlude is suitable here.

During the music a cross can be carried to the door. The assembly follows the cross and exits in procession.