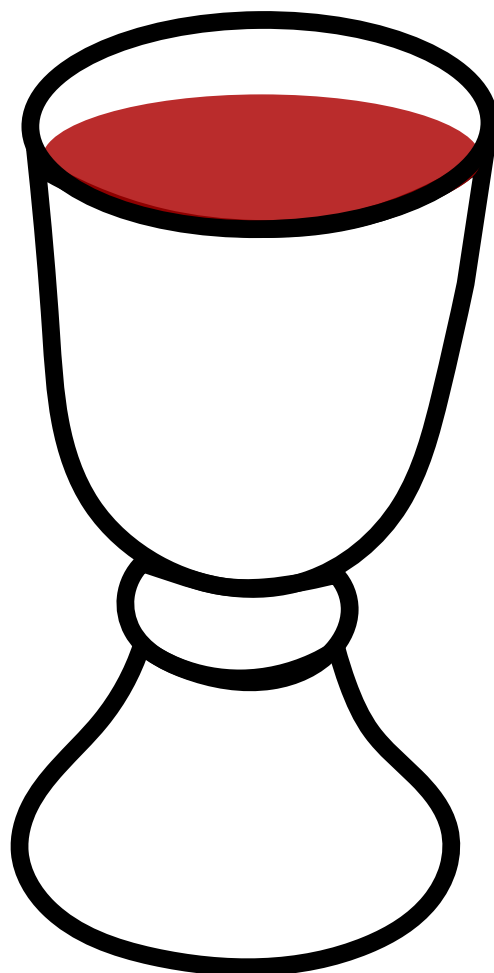
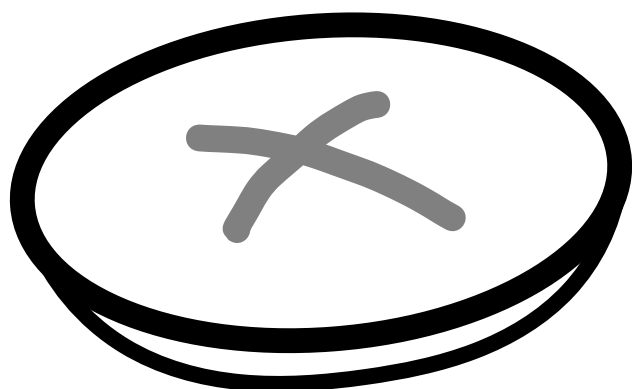


your name goes here ↗

# Bread & Wine &

**A short course on Holy Communion**

You're invited to  
discover the mystery  
of God's presence for  
you in bread & wine.



**Pastor Dan Mueller**

# Preface

← what you read before reading a book

Jesus invites you to a special meal called "Holy Communion."  
This little book tells the story of Jesus' invitation.

It's meant for:

- \* Anyone with questions about Holy Communion.
- \* Anyone desiring to discover and experience more of God's presence.
- \* Young People (or adults!) preparing for First Communion (as a guide, children preparing for their first Communion experience are usually upper primary school aged).
- \* Young people embarking on their Confirmation journey.
- \* Parents, grand-parents, or anyone else wanting to learn more and talk about Holy Communion.



Pastor Dan Mueller

July 2022

[dan.mueller@lca.org.au](mailto:dan.mueller@lca.org.au)

# You're invited!

Getting an invitation to a party or celebration is fun!



What's the best thing you've ever been invited to? Share the experience with your group.



Jesus invites you to a great banquet.

*“Come to the  
wedding banquet”*

(Matthew 22:4)

Let's discover what he means...

The banquet meal has many names:

**“Holy Communion”**

(‘Communio’ is Latin for ‘fellowship’)

**“The Lord’s Supper”**

(Different from the ‘Last Supper’)

**“Holy Supper”**

(‘Holy’ distinguishes from supper, say, at home)

**“Mass”**

(‘Missa’ is Latin for ‘sent,’ the concluding word of the meal)

**“Eucharist”**

(‘Eucharistia’ is Greek for ‘thanksgiving’)

**“Sacrament of the altar”**

(‘Sacrament’ is Latin for ‘sacred promise’)

**“The Lord’s Table”**

**“The breaking of bread”**

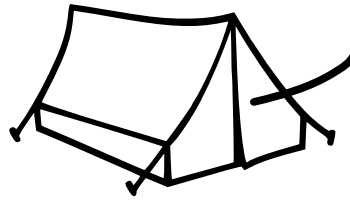


# Meals are important to God

Meals have always been important for God and his people.

## Meals welcome others.

God appeared to Abraham as three men. They shared a meal of bread, meat, curds, and milk.



*"Quick, bake some bread and bring the fattened calf!"*

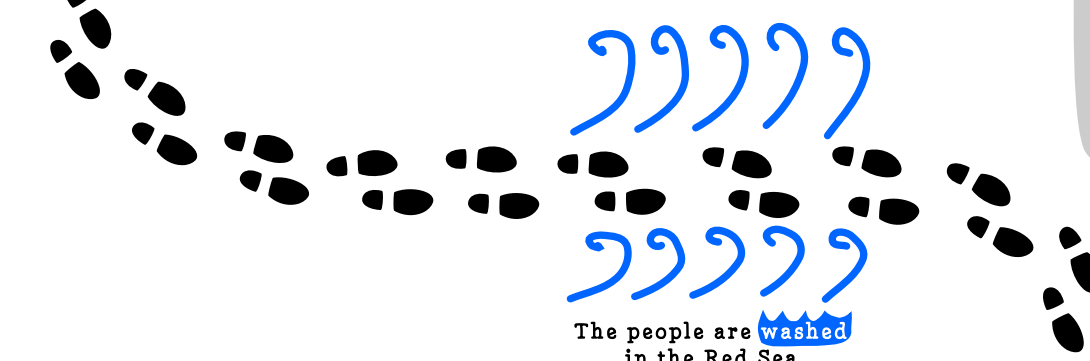
(Genesis 18:1-15)

## Meals give identity.

God's people had become slaves in Egypt. To rescue them he would strike down every firstborn son. But God promised to pass over houses with the **blood** of a lamb painted on the doorframe. This event defined the Israelite people: they were the ones God rescued from Egypt. (Exodus 12, Deuteronomy 6:21-23)



Baptism is not repeated, for it is the crossing of the Red Sea, which only took place once for all. Through baptism a person is delivered from the land of slavery and then begins their journey. The Lord's Supper is repeated, for it is food and drink of the desert journey – it's 'the food of travellers.'  
~ Gustaf Wingren, 1949



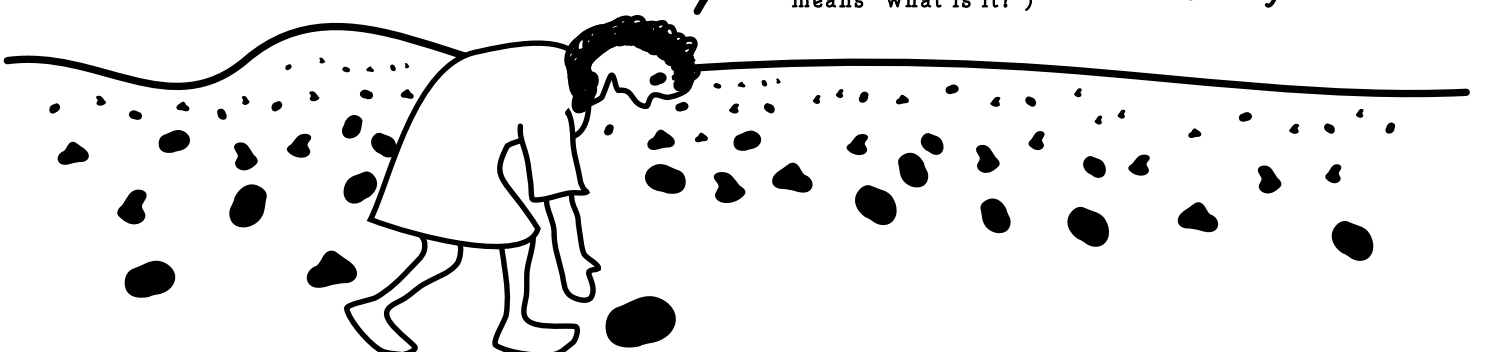
The people are **washed** in the Red Sea

## Meals provide strength.

God provided manna in the wilderness. (Exodus 16)

*"What is it?"*  
(The Hebrew word "manna" means "what is it?")

*"The bread the LORD has given you to eat."*

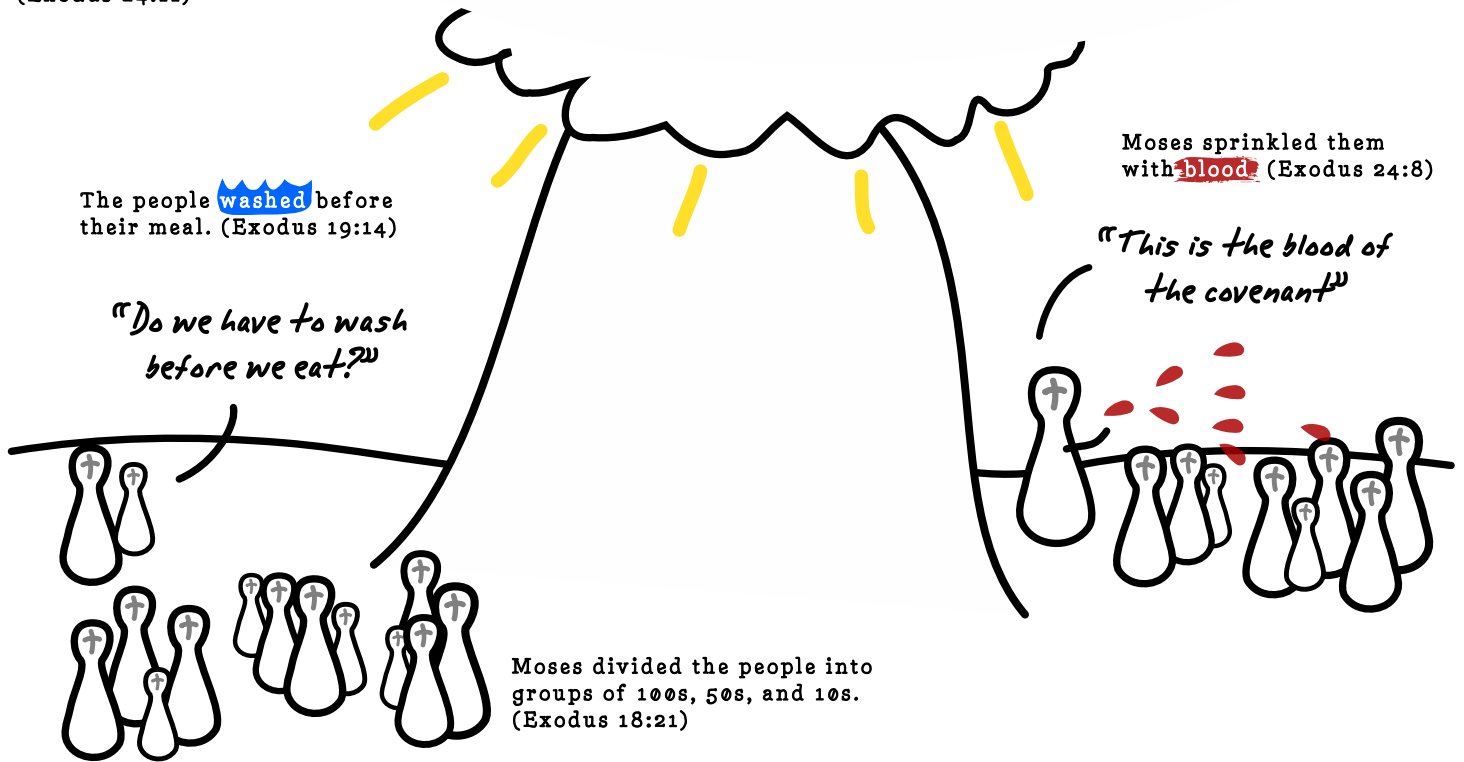


# Meals seal agreements.

God sealed his covenant at Mount Sinai with a meal.

a "covenant" is a legal agreement or promise, like a wedding vow or last will and testament

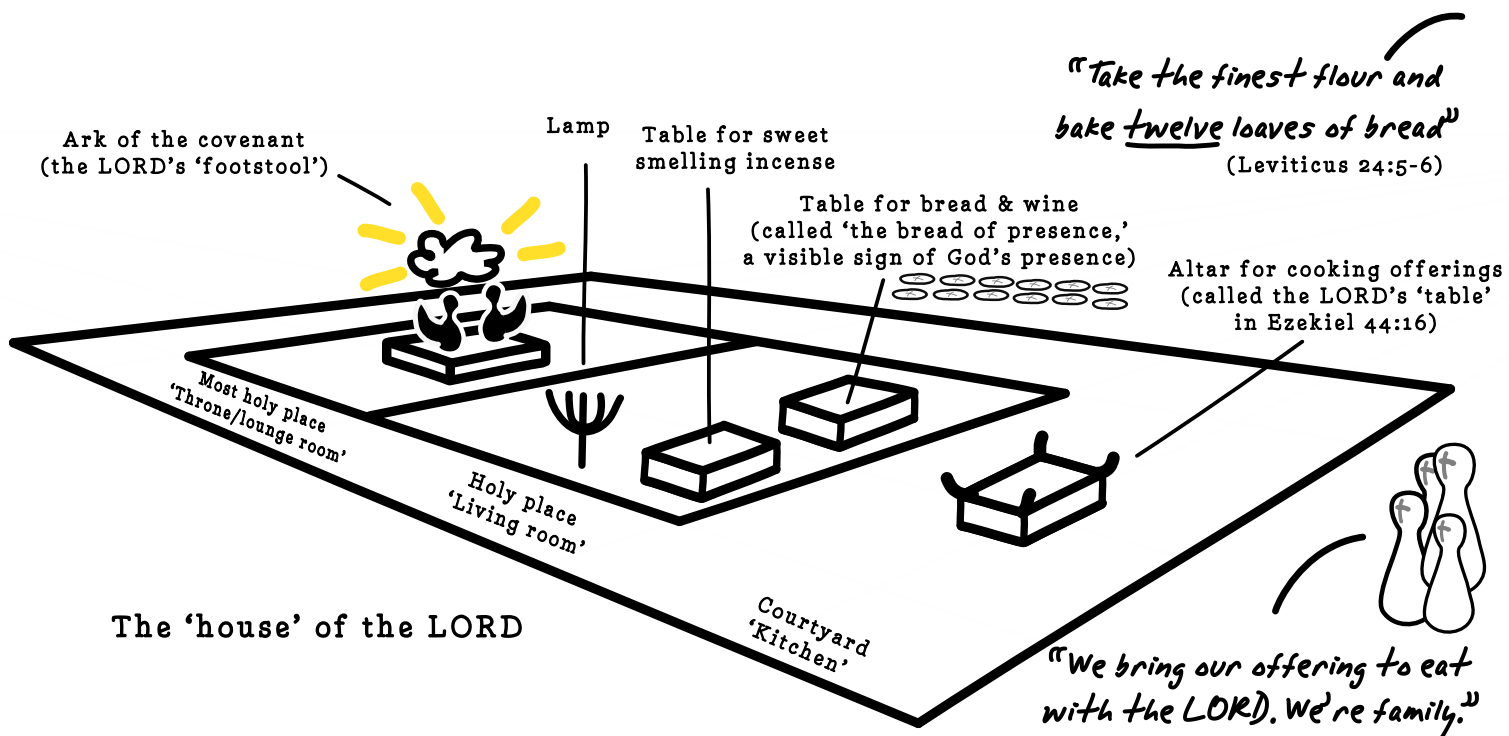
(Exodus 24:11)



Watch "The Book of Exodus (Part 2)" by 'The Bible Project.' Choose 2 words to describe God's presence at this meal. Explain your choice to your group.

# Meals are shared with friends & family at home.

God asked his people to build a tent, then a temple, to share meals with his people. The tent/temple is God's 'house.' (Exodus 25-40)

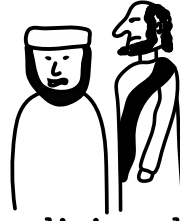


# Meals are important to Jesus

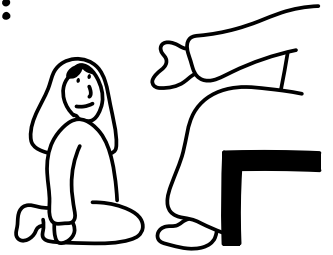
Jesus ate meals with all sorts of different people:



“Sinners,”  
like tax collectors  
(Luke 5:27-32)



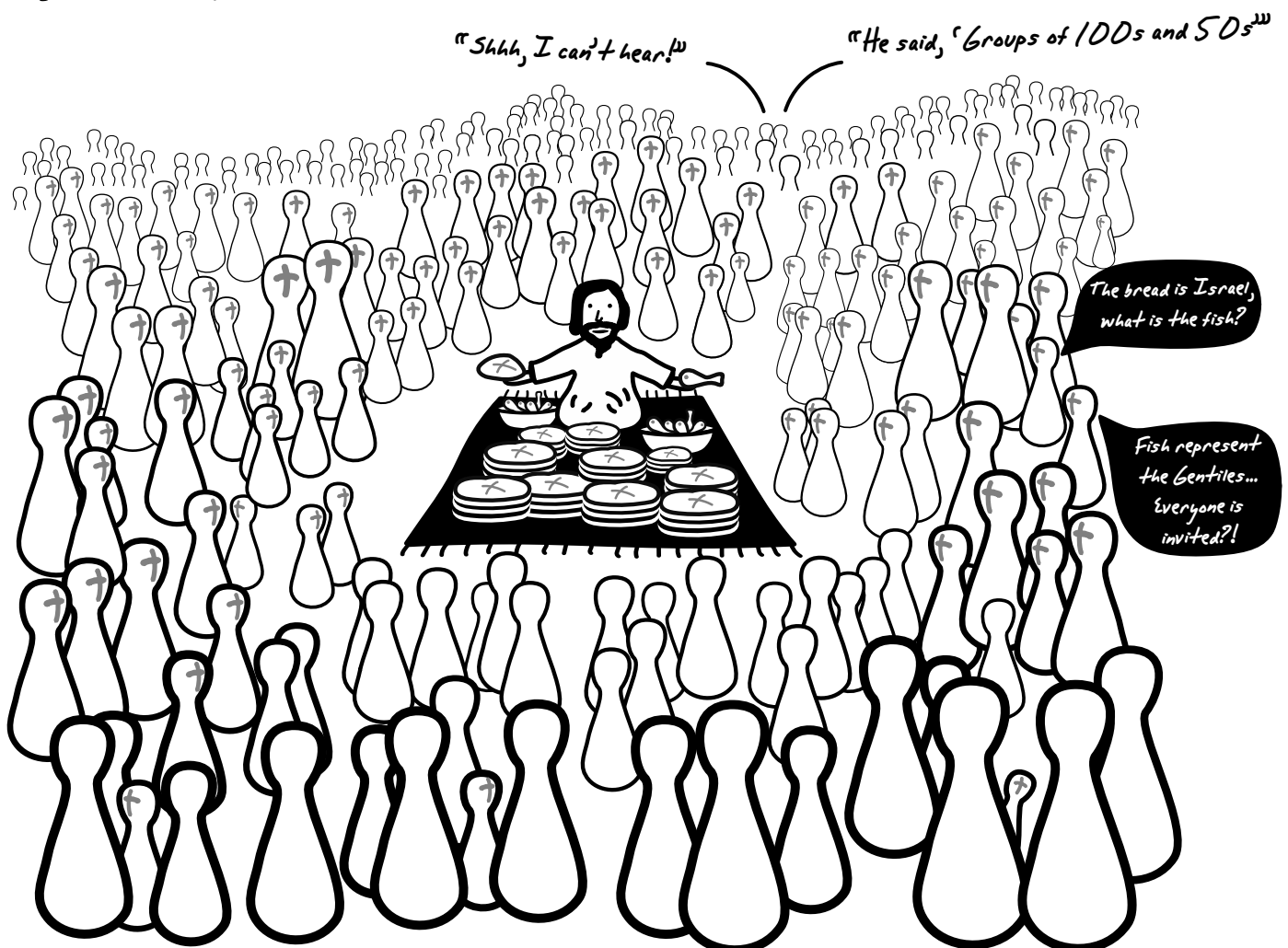
Grumpy religious leaders,  
called “Pharisees”  
(Luke 7:36-50)



His friends  
(Luke 10:38-42)

One day Jesus ate with over 5,000 people! (Luke 9:10-17)

Crowds followed Jesus everywhere, but Jesus always welcomed them. One day everyone was so engrossed in his teaching, they forgot to eat! They were in a remote place and there wasn't enough food: they only had 5 loaves and 2 fish. Jesus had the people sit down in a green grassy field in groups. He took what they had, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to his friends. Amazingly there was enough for everyone!



Choose 2 words to describe God's presence at this meal. Explain your choice to your group.

## Jesus celebrated Passover with his friends.

One night Jesus ate a special Passover meal with his friends. Only he changed it, for good. He began by **washing** the feet of his friends — a job for a servant!

(John 13:1-16)



This was the first time Jesus shared Holy Communion with his friends. If you take communion, do you remember your first time? Share your memories with the group.

*«This cup is the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for you.»*



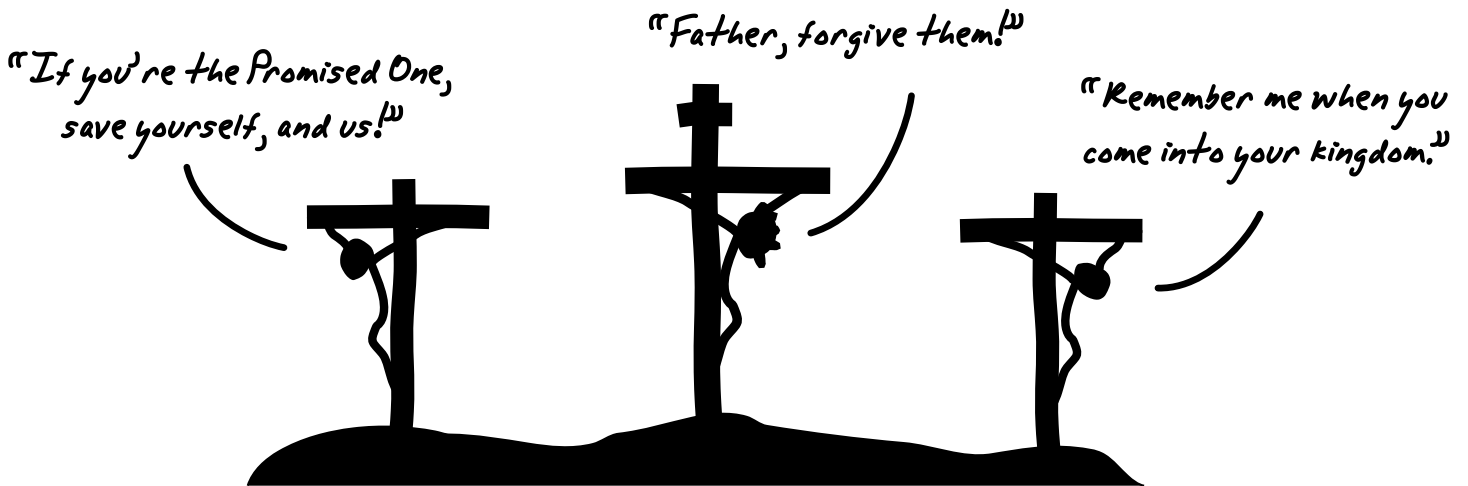
Read the account of the Last Supper in Luke 22:14-23. Choose 2 words to describe God's presence at this meal. Explain your choice to your group.

# Jesus died and was raised

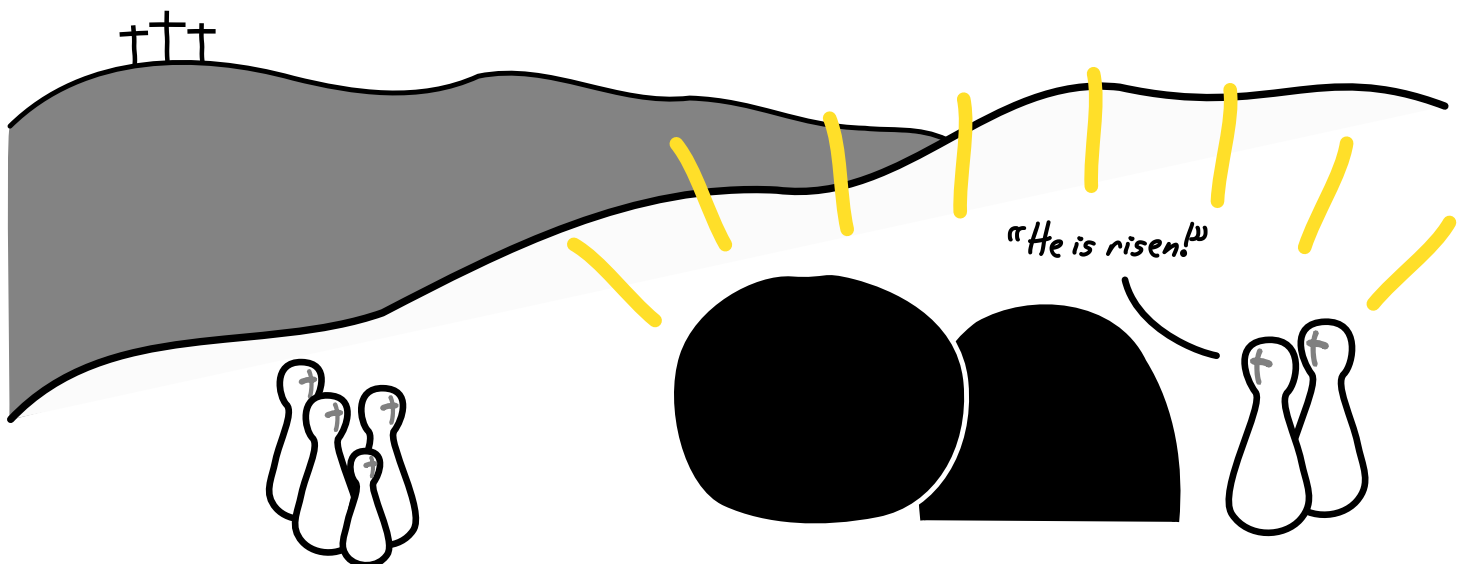
The Last Supper makes sense of Jesus' death & resurrection.

After sharing this meal with his friends, Jesus went out to a garden. While he was praying he was arrested. He was tried and sentenced to death, even though he was innocent! He had committed no crime, other than eating with and welcoming all sorts of people, and claiming he was God. The Roman soldiers crucified him on a Friday. He gave his body, and shed his blood. A friend buried him in his tomb.

(Luke 22-23)



On Sunday morning, some friends of Jesus - who were women - went to his tomb, to finish his burial. But when they got there they found the tomb empty. Two men in shining clothes told them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead. He is not here. He is risen!" The women ran to tell the others, "Jesus is risen!" (Luke 24:1-12)

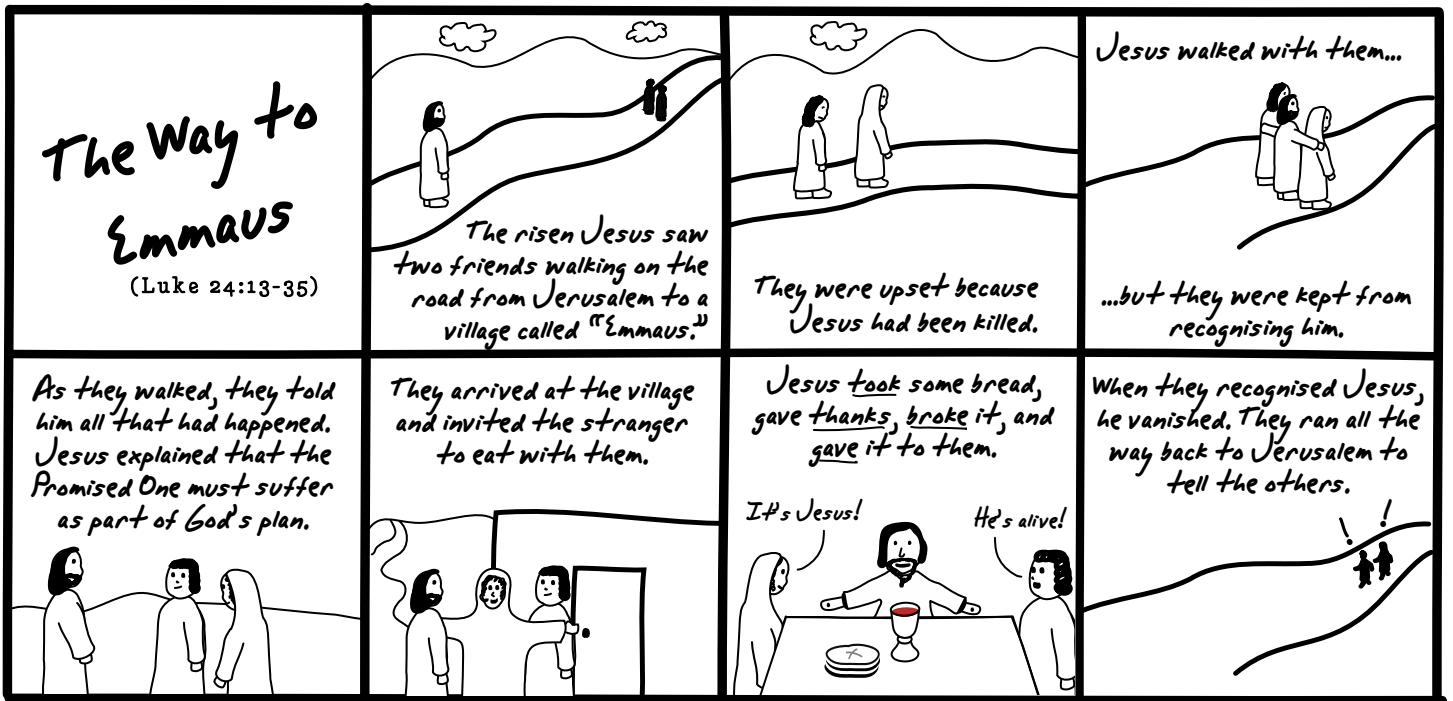




## The risen Jesus ate meals with his friends.

Jesus ate a meal with two friends after walking to the village of Emmaus. (Luke 24:13-35)

He also ate breakfast on the beach. (John 21:1-14)



How do you think the two friends recognised Jesus?  
How do you think we recognise Jesus' presence today?

The Lord's Supper helps us to understand Jesus' death and resurrection. In this meal Jesus gives us his 'testament' or 'promise.' A last will and testament is given when someone dies, and names the heirs of an inheritance.



A testament is a promise made by one about to die, in which he designates his bequest and appoints his heirs. A testament, therefore, involves first, the death of the testator, and second, the promise of an inheritance and the naming of the heir. Christ testifies concerning his death when he says: "This is my body, which is given, this is my blood, which is poured out." He names and designates the bequest when he says "for the forgiveness of sins." But he appoints the heirs when he says, "For you and for many," that is, for those who accept and believe the promise of the testator. For it is faith that makes us heirs. You see, therefore, that what we call the Mass is a promise of the forgiveness of sins made to us by God, and such a promise as has been confirmed by the death of the Son of God.

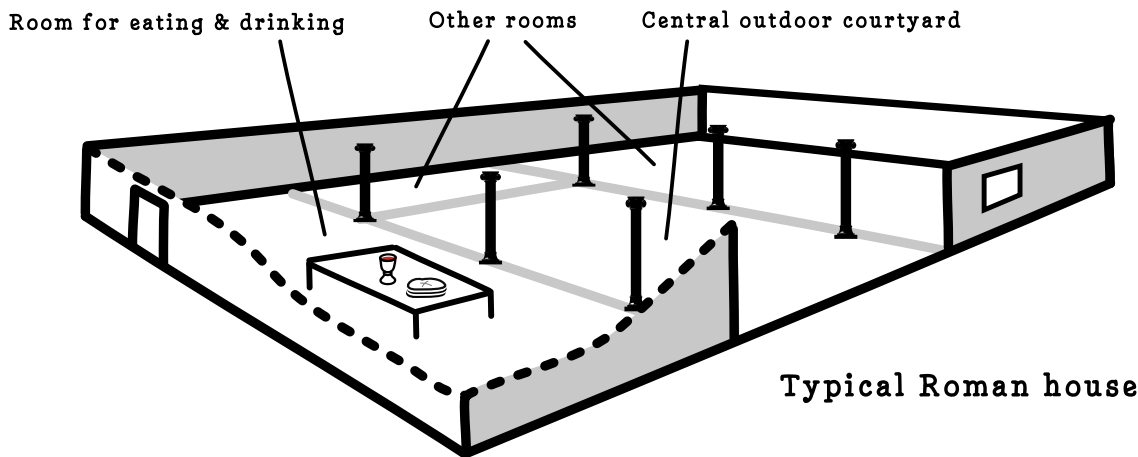
~ Martin Luther, 1520



# Jesus' friends continued to celebrate the meal

Jesus' friends continued sharing the meal in houses.

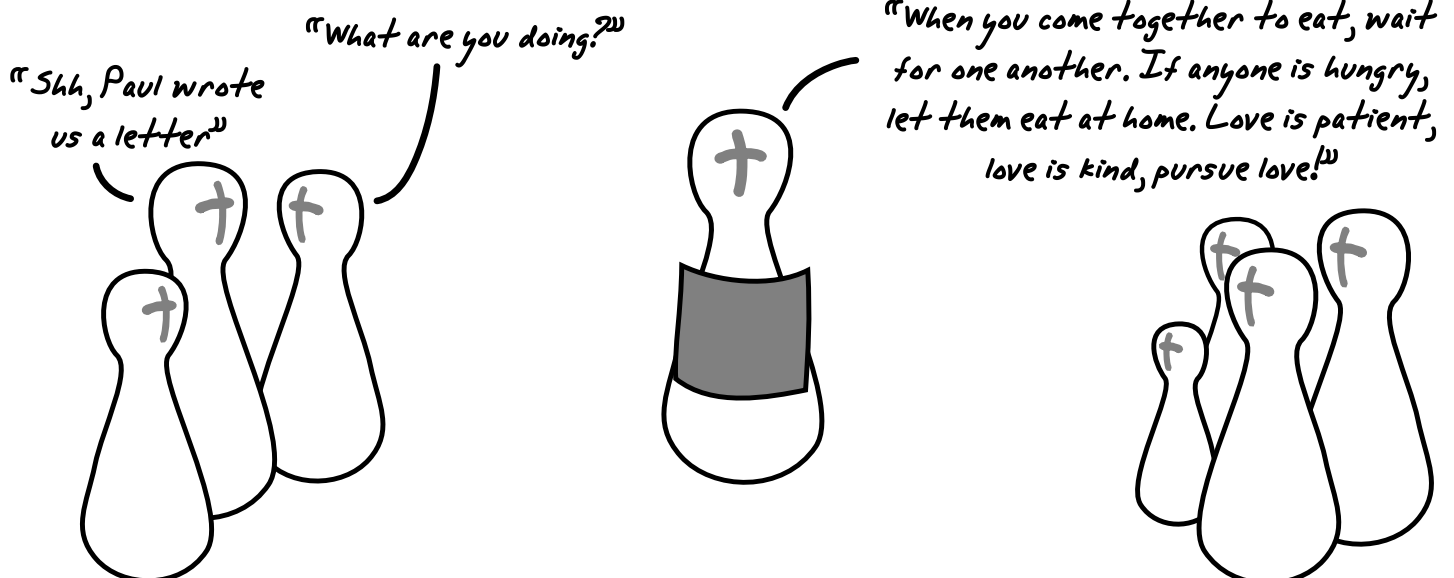
Jesus' friends met often, now mostly on Sundays (the day of week Jesus rose). The Romans had a custom of meeting in a house for a banquet, which included a meal, music and recitals, followed by a drinking party during which the guests talked about important topics (Greek: symposium). Jesus' friends did something similar: they sang songs, told stories about Jesus, spoke poems, prayed, shared greetings of peace, which included reading letters from friends in other towns. Then the leader took bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and gave it to those gathered. They ate and drank. They were happy because Jesus was with them, as he had promised.



Some abused the meal.

📍 Corinth (~55AD)

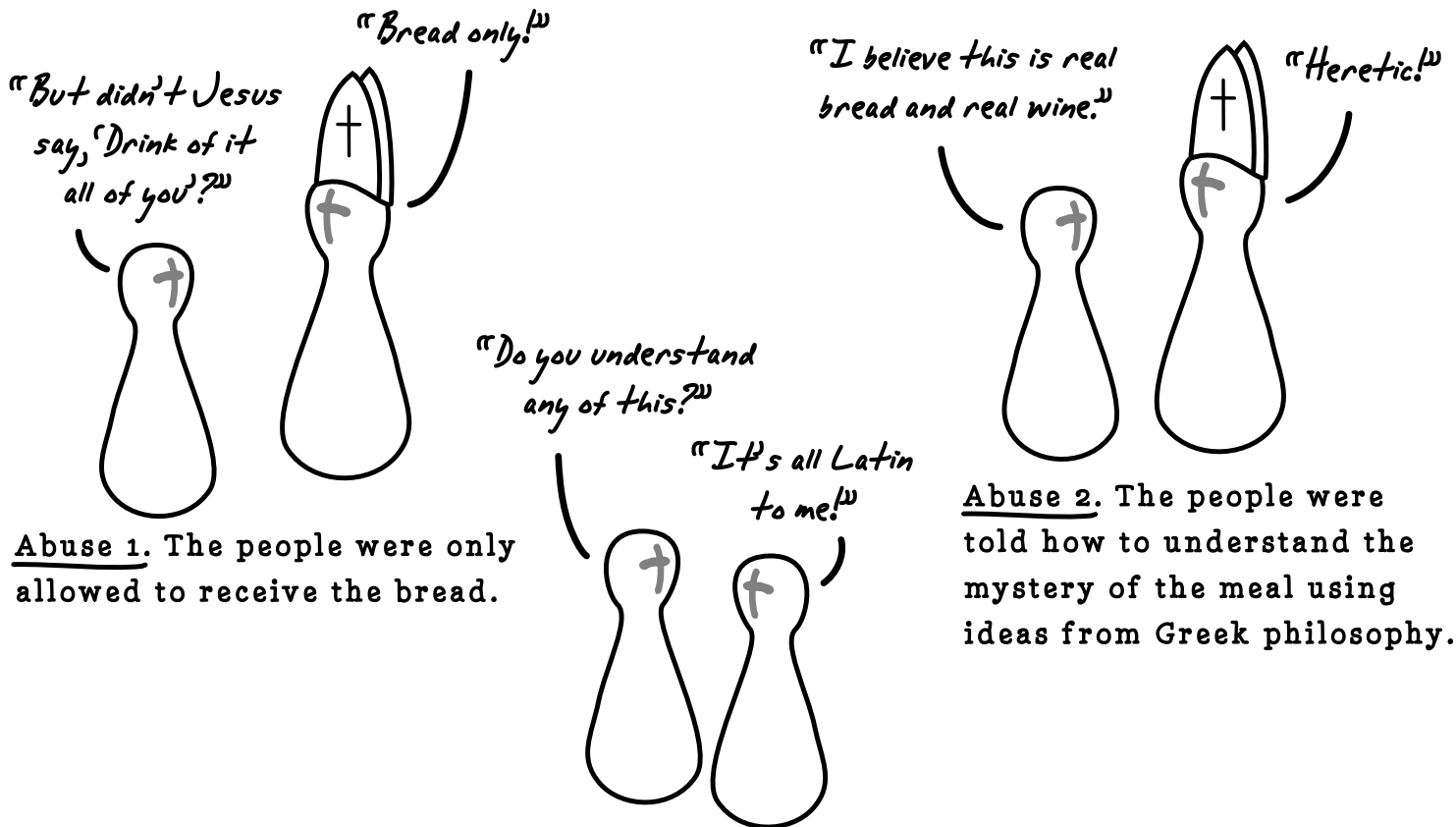
In some places the meal returned to its Roman roots. The rich, who finished work early, would eat all the food before the others arrived. They would even get drunk on the wine, turning the meal back into a Roman drinking party! (1 Corinthians 11:21)



## The meal was abused again.

📍 Rome (~1500AD)

Much later, the leaders taught the meal worked because it was performed, without faith or understanding (Latin: *ex opere operato*). But God's presence depends on His Word, not our actions. Therefore everyone receives the body & blood, but not everyone may receive the benefits that come by trusting the promise in the Word.



Abuse 1. The people were only allowed to receive the bread.

Abuse 2. The people were told how to understand the mystery of the meal using ideas from Greek philosophy.

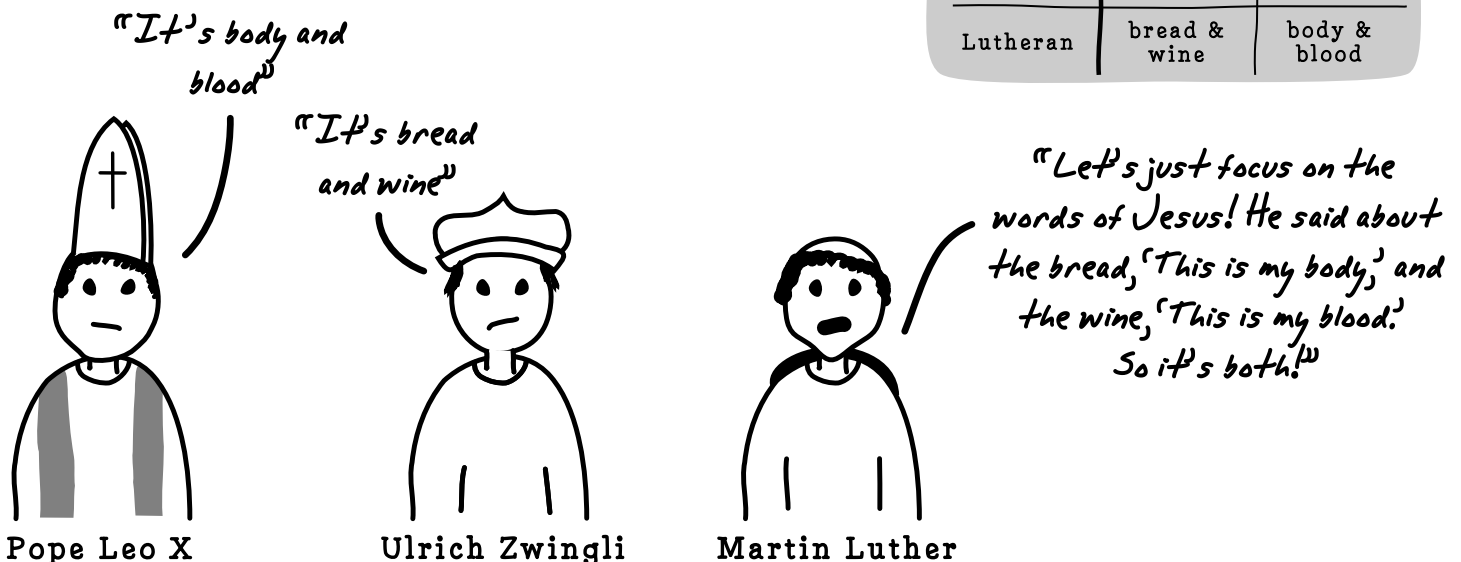
Abuse 3. The people were taught that the meal was effective because it was performed.

## The meal was re-formed.

A monk named Martin Luther recovered the significance of the meal, although not without a heated argument!

📍 Germany (~1530AD)

Catholic		body & blood
Reformed	bread & wine	
Lutheran	bread & wine	body & blood



Pope Leo X

Ulrich Zwingli

Martin Luther

# Luther explains the meal in the Small Catechism

a "catechism" is a bunch of questions with answers - it's always good to ask questions!



Read each part with your group. (You can read the Bible verses at home later). What word or phrase stands out to you? Why?

What?

## What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ under the bread and wine instituted by Christ Himself for us Christians to eat and to drink.

"instituted" means "to start something"

Where?

## Where is this written?

Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and St Paul (1 Cor 11).

Why?

## What is the benefit of this eating and drinking?

These words, "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins," show us that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.

How?

## How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words. These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament.

Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: "forgiveness of sins."

Who?

## Who receives this sacrament worthily?

Fasting and bodily preparation are certainly fine outward training. But that person is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins."

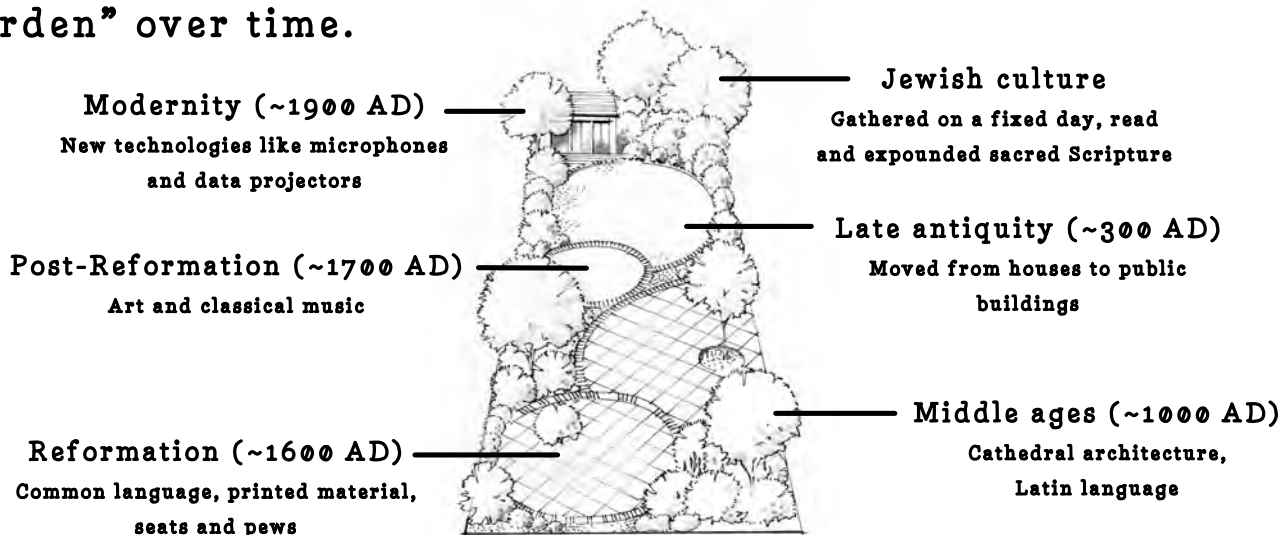
“

Our worthiness for receiving the Sacrament consists of our recognising that we are unworthy.  
~ Robert Kolb, 2000

”

# The meal continues today...

The way we celebrate Holy Communion has changed, like an ancient garden landscaped over time by many different people. The liturgy (or order) detailing how we enjoy the meal has been influenced by nearly all the cultures who have gathered in this “garden” over time.



## Here's how we celebrate the meal today.

Perhaps the oldest and least changed part of the order. First recorded by Hippolytus around 220AD.

A meal of thanks. Remember “Eucharist” means “thanks.”

Latin: Sanctus  
Originated in North Africa/Syria around 300AD. The congregation stands together with the angelic choir and dramatically joins with the song of the angels. We proclaim the LORD's holiness as we welcome Jesus, our victorious king, into our midst.  
(Isaiah 6:1-4; Matthew 21:9; Revelation 4:8-11)

### God prepares to feed us

#### Preface

The Lord be with you. And also with you. ] *Salutation*  
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord. ] *Versicles*

Let us give thanks. For that is fitting and right.

It is indeed fitting and right to give thanks ...

*We turn away from present sufferings in joyful anticipation*

#### Holy, Holy, Holy

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.  
You fill all of heaven and earth; save us, God on high!  
Let us praise the one who comes in the name of God.  
Praise! Praise! Praise! Praise! Praise to you on high!

#### The Lord's Prayer

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 forever. Amen.**

#### Salutation

Brings the “salutary” (beneficial, restorative) grace of God's presence to the people.

(Ruth 2:4; Judges 6:12; Luke 1:28; 2 Thess 3:16; 2 Timothy 4:22)

#### Versicles

Lifts up everything that weighs us down – misery, fear, suffering, trials in the present times – and looks to Jesus our Redeemer who comes with grace and his saving presence.

(Psalm 86:4; Lamentations 3:41)

#### Lord's Prayer

Prayed by all followers of Jesus. A sign of the unity of saints who are about to come to the table as one.

(Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4)

#### Three kinds of unity:

bread & wine + body & blood

Christ + people

People + people

Latin: Verba

A harmony of four Bible texts. This is the recital of a historical event, but also much more. The congregation holds onto and claims the promises held in the words – that Jesus is present today. Jesus himself is present and speaks through the minister!

(Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-25)

Latin: Agnus Dei

Introduced by Pope Sergius I in around 700AD. Used to occupy the time required by ceremonies performed by the minister at the altar.

(Isaiah 53:4-7; John 1:29; Revelation 5:6-12)

**Words of Institution** *an event in history*

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup, after the supper, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink of it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

**Lamb of God**

O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, Have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, Have mercy upon us.  
O Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, Grant us your peace.

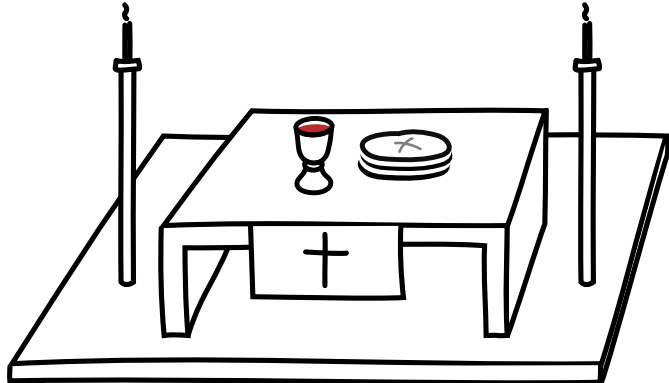
Took, thanks, broke, gave  
The same four verbs used throughout the New Testament to describe the meal.

Took bread, took the cup  
The minister not only repeats the Lord's words, but imitates his actions. At the words "took bread" the minister lifts the paten/plate. Similarly the minister takes the filled chalice/cup at the words "took the cup."

A covenant and testament  
Remember that a "covenant" is a legal agreement or promise. Sometimes the word "testament" is used instead. A last will and testament is the promise of an inheritance to an heir after someone dies.

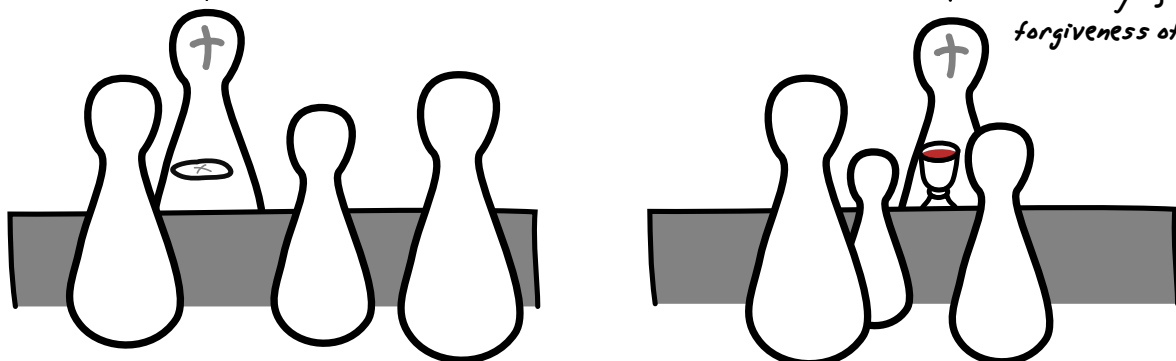
Administration

In the early church servers would simply say, "The body of Christ" and "The blood of Christ." Around 600AD Gregory the Great expanded it. Some German reformers said we should say nothing, but the current words were suggested in about 1530.



"Take and eat, this is the body of Christ, given for you."

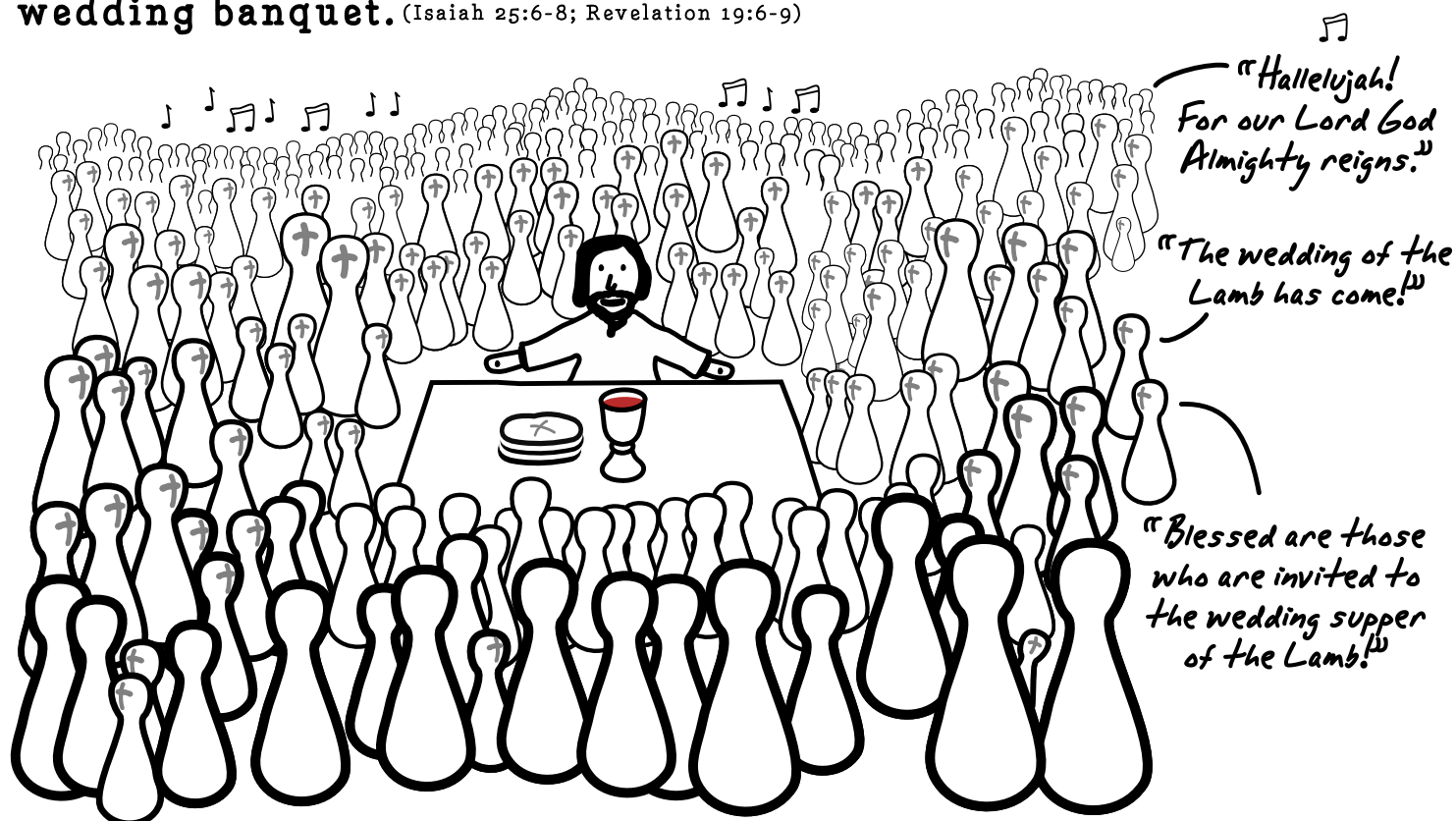
"Take and drink, this is the blood of Christ, shed for you, for the forgiveness of sins."



**?** If you take communion, what do you do when you return to your seat? Share this with the group.

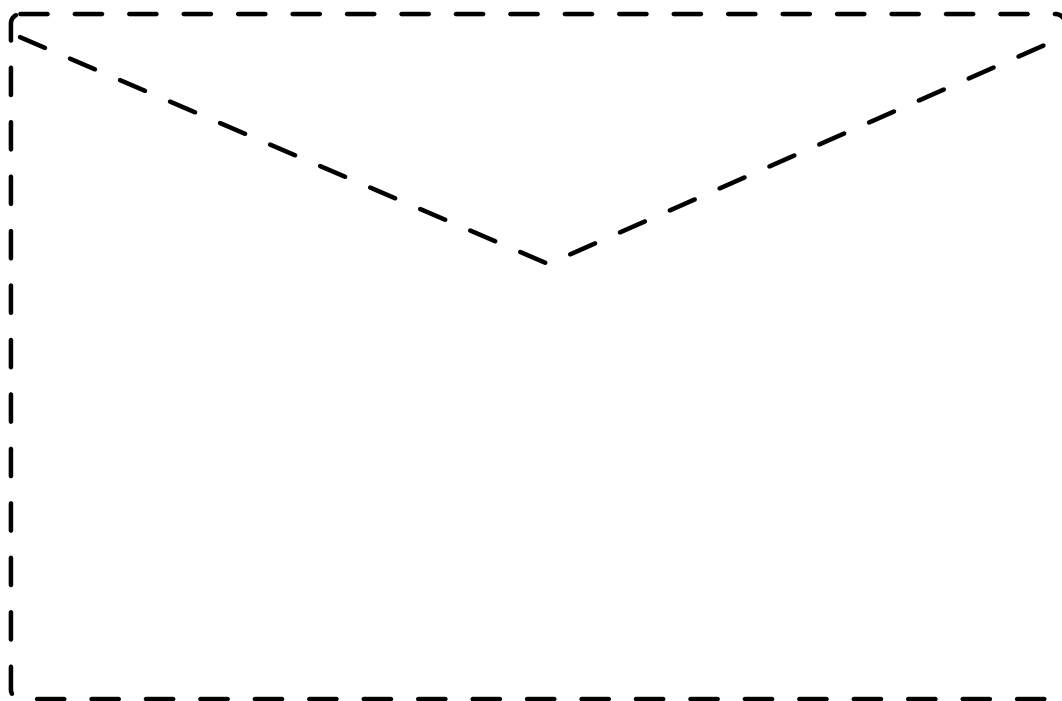
# The meal continues forever...

The Lord's Supper is a "dress rehearsal" for an everlasting wedding banquet. (Isaiah 25:6-8; Revelation 19:6-9)



## ... and you're invited!

You have done nothing to deserve it, yet you get an invitation to the meal! Jesus invites you, saying "Come to the wedding banquet. Come, everything is now ready." (Matthew 22:4; Luke 14:17)





# Further reading

Martin Luther, 1529, 'The Large Catechism.'

Tom Wright, 1999, 'The meal Jesus gave us.'

Robert Kolb, 2000, 'The Christian Faith: A Lutheran Exposition.'

Steven P Mueller ed, 2006, 'Called to Believe.'

This booklet is inspired by the work of Daniel Erlander

<http://danielerlander.com/>

“

Faith can not walk away from the table  
without recognising how good God is!

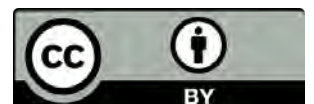
~ Robert Kolb, 2000

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