**A Sampling of Written and Verbal Announcements
Regarding the Practice of Closed Communion**

The Lord’s Supper is a wonderful gift in which we receive Jesus’ own body and blood to forgive our sins and to strengthen us in our faith. It is, however, a gift that is given us with certain responsibilities. The sacrament is intended for those who have been instructed and who understand what they are doing. It is also a way for us to express our unity of faith. Therefore, we ask that only confirmed members of \_\_\_\_\_ Evangelical Lutheran Church or other churches of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) come forward to receive Communion. If you would like to become a communicant member of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_, or have any questions about this practice, please speak with the pastor after the service.

+

The Bible tells us that those who take Communion together are to:

1. Recognize that Christ’s true body and blood are present in the Sacrament (1 Cor. 11:29),
2. Examine themselves (1 Cor. 11:28), and
3. Be united in faith with the congregation with which they commune (1 Cor. 10:17).

For these reasons, it is our practice that only those who are members of our congregation or a congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) join us for Holy Communion. If you are interested in learning more about becoming part of our fellowship, please speak to the pastor after the service.

+

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church follows the Bible’s teaching and practices closed Communion. This means that only those who are bound by a common confession of faith should properly commune together. If you are not part of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), we respectfully ask you to refrain from communing at this time. If you are visiting from a congregation of the WELS, we invite you to join us in receiving Holy Communion. If time permits, please speak to the pastor before the service, so that you are not overlooked as members are ushered up to the Lord’s Supper. If you have any questions or desire to discuss what God teaches about this precious sacrament, please ask. We are eager to hear and share over an open Bible.

+

Confirmed members of \_\_\_\_\_\_ who have examined themselves and announced their desire to partake of the Lord's Supper will now be ushered forward to receive Holy Communion. In Communion we receive the true body and true blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in, with, and under the bread and wine, for the forgiveness of sins and the strengthening of faith in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We practice closed Communion. This means that we invite to commune with us only those who are members of this congregation or members of another congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). By so doing, we are being faithful to the Lord’s teaching about his Holy Supper. He teaches that those who commune together express their agreement with all his teachings (1 Corinthians 10:17). Sadly, all Christians are not in complete agreement because of false teachings. By not inviting Christians outside our fellowship to commune with us, we avoid an expression of unity where it does not exist.  If you have questions concerning this practice, please speak with the pastor.

+

At \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ we practice closed Communion. If you are a guest at worship today and interested in receiving the Lord’s Supper, please speak with the pastor prior to the service.

+

At **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** we practice closed Communion, to which only congregational members are invited, in obedience to Scripture’s teaching that the Lord’s Supper is an expression of our complete unity in faith. This has been the historic practice of the Christian church for nearly 2,000 years. If you are our guest today, we respectfully ask that you speak with the pastor before approaching the altar for Communion.

+

Out of sincere love for the truth of God’s Word and precious souls, we practice closed Communion in our congregation. This has been the practice of Christians for centuries and is thoroughly scriptural. It judges the heart of no individual, yet expects that there be full doctrinal agreement among those who commune. For this reason we ask that only members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) join us for the Lord’s Supper today. If you have any questions about this or any other matter of the Christian faith, please feel free to speak with the pastor.

+

As we celebrate Holy Communion this morning, let’s rejoice in the communions we enjoy. Through faith in Christ Jesus, we are united with God himself. As we kneel together at this table, we express a unity of faith with one another. We confess that we believe everything this church teaches and confesses. Because we do not want to put anyone in the uncomfortable position of declaring their full agreement with us before we have had opportunity to instruct, we respectfully ask that only those who are communicant members of this congregation, or another Wisconsin Synod congregation, come forward to receive the sacrament.

+

Our church follows the historic and widespread Christian practice of closed Communion. We ask that only members of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or another congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) partake of the sacrament. We follow this practice because the Bible teaches it and because we love you. Please speak with the pastor if you have any questions.

+

We believe that in Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, God comes to us with forgiveness through tangible means. Because the Bible has convinced us that Jesus’ body and blood are present in the sacrament and that receiving the sacrament together is a public statement of oneness in our beliefs, we ask our guests to speak with the pastor before communing. We look forward to any opportunity to discuss our Christian faith with you.

+

The Lord’s Supper is being celebrated in our service this morning. Communicants are to examine themselves before they receive the sacrament. In accordance with the Scriptures, the Lutheran churches of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) practice closed Communion, that is, we celebrate Holy Communion in the close circle and fellowship of those who repent of their sins, believe in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of sins, and are of one faith and confession with us. Guests and visitors are, therefore, asked to refrain from participating in the Lord's Supper with us until they have studied and confess what our WELS churches believe, teach and practice.

+

At \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ we believe that participation in the Lord's Supper is both a confession of faith and an expression of our unity in that faith. When you commune with us you are saying that you agree with our teachings about the Lord's Supper and all the other teachings of the Bible. If you have never communed with us before, we ask that you speak with our pastor to learn how you can establish a communing fellowship with us. We are eager to enjoy that fellowship with you!

+

God's Word teaches us that the communion of the Sacrament is not only a communion of the bread and wine with the body and blood of Christ, but also a declaration that all who commune together are one in a common confession of faith (1 Corinthians 10, 11). For that reason, we practice closed Communion, admitting to the Lord's Table only those who have been instructed in the basic teachings of the Scriptures and have publicly indicated their agreement with us by their communicant membership in the congregation. We ask that all visitors who desire the Lord's Supper speak with the pastor before the service.

+

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ practices member Communion. Please contact the pastor to discuss this practice and God’s Word and the love that motivates it.

+

In his Word God tells us that something very special happens in the Lord’s Supper. Here Christ comes to us in, with, and under the bread and wine. Because partaking of this meal is a statement of fellowship with one another, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Lutheran Church practices closed Communion. We ask that only communicant members of congregations of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) partake of the Sacrament of the Altar. We do not want to put you in a position of declaring your agreement with us before we have had a chance to discuss what we believe.

+

The Lord’s Supper, or Holy Communion, will be celebrated in today’s service. The Bible teaches us that Jesus offers us his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins in the Lord’s Supper. The Bible also instructs us that receiving the Lord’s Supper together is a public expression of our complete “oneness,” or unity of faith.

Because the Lord’s Supper is an expression of our unity in faith, we invite to the Lord’s Supper only those who have expressed that unity with us through membership in our congregation or one of our sister congregations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS), or our sister denomination, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS).

If you are a guest from another Christian church, we kindly ask that you simply refrain from participation in our celebration of the Lord’s Supper today. We don’t want to be presumptuous and put you in the position of declaring your agreement with our beliefs before you have had a chance to learn more.

We would like you to be able to join us for the Lord’s Supper in the near future. If you would like more information, please speak to our pastor after the service, or pick up a copy of the brochure, “Attending the Lord’s Supper,” that is found on the podium in the back of the church next to the Communion registration form. We look forward to any opportunity to discuss the Christian faith with you and to work toward a common confession of faith!

+

Out of love for God’s Word and people’s souls, we offer the Lord’s Supper only to communicant members of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or other congregations of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) (1 Corinthians 10:17; 11:26-29). Visitors who are not yet communicant members of our church are respectfully asked to refrain from communing today, but are encouraged to speak with the pastor after the service about how to become communicant members.

+

Today we celebrate the Sacrament of the Altar in which we joyfully receive Christ’s body and blood, in, with and under bread and wine, for the forgiveness of our sins. As we celebrate the Sacrament we also give public confession to our unity in the Christian faith. We invite communicant members of this congregation, or another congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) or of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) to commune. Guests wishing to receive the sacrament should speak with the pastor.

+

Our congregation is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). Together we pledge ourselves to teach and to believe what the Bible says. We believe that we are given great responsibility to commune only those who are members of our church body. We want to express our sincere welcome to our guests and assure them that for their spiritual welfare we practice closed Communion. Guests desiring to learn more about our beliefs are asked to speak with our pastor.

+

In Holy Communion Jesus forgives all our sins as he gives us his body and blood. When we receive the Lord’s Supper we are expressing our unity in the faith (1 Corinthians 1:10 and 10:16-17). While we cannot and do not judge anyone's heart, we recognize that there are differences among churches. We recognize that membership in a church means something; it expresses agreement with the teachings of that church. For this reason we ask that only communicant members of our congregation or another congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) come forward to receive Holy Communion with us.

+

Welcome! We are pleased that you have joined us for worship today.

If you are visiting today we ask you to speak to the pastor before communing. Here at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ we follow the historic and scriptural practice of closed Communion (sometimes called member Communion).

Holy Communion expresses our oneness in faith and confession. To commune with us is the same as declaring, “I believe everything this church teaches.” Before communing together we need to study God’s Word together to ensure that we are united in belief and confession. Therefore, we respectfully ask other Christians to receive instruction before communing with us. We welcome to the Lord’s Table those who confess unity in faith with us by their membership in another congregation of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS). If you have any questions about our practice please speak to the pastor after the service.

**Personal preparation for Holy Communion**

Scripture reminds us that a person ought to examine himself before receiving the Sacrament of the Altar (1 Corinthians 11:28). For a fitting way to prepare to receive the Sacrament, you may wish to use “Personal Preparation for Holy Communion,” found on page 156 of the hymnal. You may want to use this resource before the service or during the gathering of our thank offering.