

MODEL COMMUNION CARD STATEMENT*

The Lord's Supper is celebrated at this congregation in the confession and glad confidence that, as he says, our Lord gives into our mouths not only bread and wine but his very body and blood to eat and to drink for the forgiveness of sins and to strengthen our union with him and with one another. Our Lord invites to his table those who trust his words, repent of all sin, and set aside any refusal to forgive and love as he forgives and loves us, that they may show forth his death until he comes.

Because those who eat and drink our Lord's body and blood unworthily do so to their great harm and because Holy Communion is a confession of the faith which is confessed at this altar, any who are not yet instructed, in doubt, or who hold a confession differing from that of this congregation and The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, and yet desire to receive the sacrament, are asked first to speak with the pastor or an usher.

For further study, see Matthew 5:23f.; 10:32f.; 18:15-35; 26:26-29;
1 Cor. 11:17-34.

**To see the cover letter that originally accompanied this statement sent out to all LCMS pastors, which gives the background for the CTCR's assignment to prepare this "Model Communion Card Statement," please scroll to the second page of this PDF.*

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD



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Commission on Theology and
Church Relations

February 22, 1993

Dear Fellow Pastors in Christ's Service:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod believes, together with Lutherans from the time of the Reformation and in agreement with Christians from New Testament times, that the Scriptures teach what has traditionally been referred to as the practice of close(d) communion.

This practice, which seeks to prevent both harmful reception of the Sacrament as well as a profession of unity in confession in faith where this unity does not exist, means that ordinarily the pastors and congregations of the Synod commune only those individuals who are members of the Synod or of a church body with which the Synod is in altar and pulpit fellowship. At the same time, however, this historic practice of close communion also "includes the necessity of exercising responsible pastoral care in extraordinary situations and circumstances," including "the administration of Holy Communion to Christians who are members of denominations not in fellowship with the LCMS" (1986 Resolution 3-08 "To Maintain Practice of Close Communion").

As the Commission stated in its 1983 report "Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper" (which has been commended by the Synod for reference and guidance), this understanding of what the Scriptures teach about the Lord's Supper places "a heavy responsibility on pastors." In response therefore to a specific request from the Board for Parish Services that it develop "a model communion card statement that reflects the Synod's official practice of close Communion," the CTCR has prepared the enclosed "Model Statement." The Commission hopes that you will find it helpful as you evaluate and/or develop your own announcements concerning admission to Holy Communion.

May our Lord help us, while refraining from admitting to His Supper those for whom participation would be a judgment (1 Cor. 11:29), not to refuse admission to all those, as Francis Pieper once put it, "for whom Christ has appointed" this sacrament of forgiveness, life and salvation. Blessings in Christ as you faithfully exercise your oversight in this area.

Sincerely,

Samuel H. Nafzger
Executive Director

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P.S. Copies of the CTCR's *Theology and Practice of the Lord's Supper*, item 9-2441, are available from Concordia Publishing House for \$0.95 each.