# ORDERS FOR HOLY COMMUNION

*The following document includes five different Orders for Holy Communion each with their own specific character. These Orders have been crafted to provide a joyous, and dynamic celebration at the Lord's Table, with the focus on what God does for the Church in the Supper. All the Orders have been framed on the basis of the New Testament and apostolic tradition and within the rich Reformed tradition in which we stand. This is in contrast to the pietistic and subjective emphasis of some modern worship. The services include some responses to engage the congregation actively in the worship.*[1] *The orders explore the possibility of using modern songs in sung responses.*

*Order 1 is a modern adaptation of the classic order for Holy Communion of one of the greatest of the church fathers.*
*Order 2 digs into the best of the Reformed tradition and adapts the prayer of thanksgiving of John Knox.*
*Order 3 is a thoroughly modern and biblical order with fine creative possibilities for worship.*
*Order 4 is designed for children and services where a shorter order is required.*
*Order 5 is an ecumenical order designed especially for when different denominations worship together.*

*Words in* bold *may be said by the congregation. They may also be said by the minister alone, should he wish to limit the number of responses.*
*Words in brackets are optional.*
*The orders here are shorter than older Reformed orders and can therefore be used for more frequent celebrations of Holy Communion.*

## First Order [Classic][2]

### The Peace and the Offering

*Following the sermon, a creed and a hymn, the minister says:.*

Jesus said:
If you are about to place your gift on the altar
and remember that someone is angry with you,
leave your gift there in front of the altar.
First go and make peace with your brother, your sister:
then come back and offer your gift to God.

*Or*

Jesus said:
Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid. Before we offer our gifts and come to the Lord's Table,
let us share the peace of Christ with one another.

*Each person then shares the peace with the words:*

Peace be with you.
**And with you.**

*The minister says:*

Let us worship God with our gifts.

*As the offerings are taken up, the minister and elders prepare the Table. The bread and wine are brought to the Table, or uncovered if already in place. The offerings may then be brought forward. The people stand to sing a doxology such as:*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,**
**in heaven above and earth below;**
**one God, three persons, we adore–**
**to this God praise for evermore!**

*A brief prayer such as the following may be said:*

Bless, Lord, your gifts to our use and us to your service. Amen.

*The people may be seated.*

### The Invitation

*Standing at the Table, the minister invites the people to the sacrament, using this or another invitation.*

This is the Table of our Lord Jesus Christ.
All those who have been baptized in his name
are invited to share in this sacrament.
As Jesus welcomed children and did not forbid them,
so we welcome children at his Table,
under the care and guidance of their parents.
Let us come with regard for the deep wonder of this holy mystery.

*Pause.*

*The minister may then say one of the following:*

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[1] The use of responses, of course, involves printing leaflets with the versicles and responses for the people in the pews. Some people are averse to this because they think that it is not part of the Reformed tradition to put anything into the hands of the laity. In fact, however, it was the Reformers who invented service books for use by the laity. And it is clear from the Bible that responses were used in the Old Testament and in the apostolic Church. See Ps.136 NIV and I Cor.16:22, Rev.22:20.

[2] Order 1 has been translated and adapted from the Greek *Anaphora* of John Chrysostom.

Blessed is the kingdom of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
now and for ever. Amen.

*Or*

Surely the Lord is in this place!
This is none other than the house of God;
this is the gate of heaven.

*Or*

Let us lay aside the cares of this world,
for now we are to receive the King of All
who comes accompanied by unseen hosts of angels.
**Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.**

### First Action: Taking (as Jesus 'took bread')

As the Lord Jesus,
on the night of his arrest, took bread,
I now take this bread and this wine,
to be consecrated from common use
to this holy use and mystery.

*Following ancient Jewish custom, as the italicized words above are said, the minister raises the bread and wine a handbreadth from the Table.*

### Second Action: Giving Thanks

And as he gave thanks and blessed,
let us draw near to God
and offer our prayers and thanksgiving.

The *Lord* be with you.
**And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts.
**We lift them up to the Lord.** *The people may stand.*
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is our duty and our greatest joy to bless you, to praise you, to thank you and to worship you
in every place where your glory resides
for great is the majesty of your name,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
ever-living and ever-merciful God.

You brought us into being out of nothing
and when we fell, you raised us up again.
You left nothing undone until you led us to heaven
and lavished on us your future kingdom.
For all these things we thank you,
for all that we know and do not know;
for the blessings we see and for those we cannot see.
We thank you that you are pleased to accept this worship from our hands,
when in heaven
myriads of archangels and angels attend you,
cherubim and seraphim who sing and shout the victory hymn:

*The people sing this or similar song:*

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty!**
**All your works shall praise your name,**
**in earth and sky and sea:**
**Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,**
**God in three persons, blessed Trinity.**

*Or the people say:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**
**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.**

Holy Father, we too cry out and say,
You are holy and most holy,
You and your only Son and your Holy Spirit;
You are holy and most holy, and great is your glory.
You so loved the world that you gave your only Son,
that whoever believes in him
should not perish but have eternal life.[3]

Remembering all that he did for us:
the gifts he gave at the Supper
the cross, the tomb,

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[3] The words of the institution may be said here or later at the fraction. Historically, their earliest place is within the Great Thanksgiving. In the Reformed tradition, however, they are normally said at the breaking of the bread. If they are said here, following the words "eternal life", they take the following form: "When he had finished the work you gave him to do for us on the night he was given up when he gave himself up for the life of the world he took a loaf of bread and after the blessing, he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. Then he took the cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them saying, Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

the resurrection on the third day,
the ascension into heaven, the sitting at the right hand,
the second, glorious coming again,
we offer to you these gifts from your own gifts,
on behalf of all and for the sake of all.
**We praise you, we bless you, we give thanks to you,**
**Lord our God.**

*The people sing this or a similar song:*

**He is Lord, he is Lord,**
**he is risen from the dead and he is Lord.**
**Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess**
**that Jesus Christ is Lord.**

*The minister may stretch out his hands over the bread and wine as he says:*

Lord, pour out your Spirit upon us and upon these gifts.
May this bread and cup be for us
the precious body and blood of your Christ,
that we who partake of them may not come to judgment,
but may be given purity of heart, forgiveness of sins,
the communion of the Holy Spirit,
the treasures of the kingdom of heaven
and the paradise of your presence.

**With one voice and one burning heart,**
**Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,**
**majestic in holiness, before all ages,**
**from everlasting to everlasting,**
**we acclaim you, we praise you, we bless you,**
**we give thanks to you, and we worship you,**
**now and for ever.**

*The Amen is sung.*

Let us pray to the Father in the words our Saviour gave us.

**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.**
**Do not lead us into temptation,**
**but deliver us from evil.**
**For the kingdom, the power and the glory**
**are yours, now and for ever. Amen.**

### Third Action: Breaking

*The minister breaks the bread and pours wine into the cup. The action should be clearly visible to all present.*

When Jesus had finished the work
the Father gave him to do for us,
on the night he was given up,
when he gave himself up for the life of the world,
he took a loaf of bread,
*(the minister takes the bread with both hands)*
and after the blessing (*he raises the bread*)
he broke it, *(the minister breaks the bread)*
gave it to his disciples, and said,
Take, eat; this is my body.

Then he took the cup, and when he had given thanks,
he gave it to them saying, Drink from it, all of you;
*(the minister takes the flagon or pitcher)*
for this is my blood of the covenant,
(*the minister begins to pour the wine into the chalice*)
which is *poured out* for many for the forgiveness of sins.

### Fourth Action: Sharing

Holy things are for the holy.
**Only Jesus Christ is holy.**
We are made holy in him.

*Or*

**Lord, I am not worthy to receive you,**
**but only say the word and I shall be healed.**

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.**

*The minister partakes of the bread, and then without undue delay, he partakes of the wine.*

The body of Christ, given for you.
**Amen.**

The blood of Christ, shed for you.
**Amen.**

*The elements may be taken to the people in their seats or the people may gather around the Table or they may come to the Table to receive either standing or kneeling.*[4] *When all have received, the vessels are returned to the Table. The minister may clean and cover the elements as a way of bringing the service to a close.*

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his Holy name.
**Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

### Notices and Prayers

*Items of important news are announced, including prayer needs. The minister may invite any visitors present who would like to identify themselves and where they come from to stand up and do so. The congregation may be asked to stand for the prayers of petition and intercession.*[5]
*An appointed person leads these prayers from among the pews or from the front. Alternatively, if the acoustics are suitable, the congregation may be invited to offer brief open prayers of intercession and petition, aloud or with biddings and silences. Following the intercession, a brief post-Communion prayer such as the following may be said:*

Now, Lord, you can let your servant go in peace.
Your word has been fulfilled;
for with my own eyes I have seen
the salvation you have prepared
in the presence of all the peoples,
a light to reveal you to the nations
and be the glory of your people Israel.
Glory to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. **Amen**.

*A closing hymn may be sung.*

### Commission and Blessing

*The minister then dismisses the congregation, using this or a similar charge:*
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
*The minister blesses the congregation, using a scriptural benediction:*
May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

## Second Order [Traditional]

### The Peace and the Offering

*This Order retains the classic Reformed structure of Holy Communion by placing the words of the institution as a warrant and at the fraction.*[6]

*Following the sermon, a creed and a hymn, the minister says:.*

Jesus said:
(If you are about to place your gift on the altar
and remember that someone is angry with you,
leave your gift there in front of the altar.)
First go and make peace with your brother, your sister:
then come back and offer your gift to God.

*Or*

Jesus said:
Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.

Before we offer our gifts and come to the Lord's Table,
let us share this peace with one another.

*Each person then shares the peace with the words:*

Peace be with you.
**And with you.**

*The people are seated and the minister says:*

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[4] The custom of serving Holy Communion to people in their seats is the unfortunate innovation of Ulrich Zwingli. It was introduced into Scotland only in 1824 in St John's Church, Glasgow, by Dr Chalmers. Chalmers was imitating English Nonconformist practice. Despite repeated opposition by the Scottish Assembly, this mode of distribution has persisted as the norm in Presbyterian congregations. William D. Maxwell, *An Outline of Christian Worship: Its Development and Forms*, 4th Impression ed. (London: Oxford University, 1958), 126. Prior to 1824, Communion was served in Scotland with people seated around a trestle table in the aisle. Even this practice is a departure from the oldest liturgical traditions in the Church, when people came forward and stood at the table to receive Holy Communion from the presiding minister. One of the more serious negative consequences of the sitting mode of receiving is the inappropriate emphasis on Communion as an act of individual piety. Church of Scotland, *Holy Communion: Why Can't We Share?*, ed. Committee on Ecumenical Affairs, 9.

[5] Prayers of petition and intercession appropriately come after Communion, as the people prepare to go into the world. This accords with the apostolic order in Acts 2:42, taken over from the synagogue. Lay people should be invited to lead these.

[6] This Order has been adapted from the First Order for Holy Communion in the *Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1994).

Let us worship God with our gifts.

*As the offerings are taken, the minister and elders prepare the Table. The bread and wine are brought to the Table, or uncovered if already in place. The offerings are then brought forward. The people stand to sing a doxology such as:*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,**
**in heaven above and earth below;**
**one God, three persons, we adore–**
**to this God praise for evermore!**

*A brief prayer such as the following may be said:*

Blessed are you, God of all creation;
through your goodness we have these gifts to share.
Accept and use our offerings for your glory
and for the service of your kingdom.
**Blessed be God for ever.**

*The people may be seated.*

### The Invitation

*Standing at the Table, the minister invites the people to the sacrament, using this or another invitation to the Lord's Table.*

This is the Table of our Lord Jesus Christ.
All those who have been baptized in his name
are invited to share in this sacrament.
As Jesus welcomed children and did not forbid them,
so we welcome children at his Table,
under the care and guidance of their parents.

*Pause.*

### First Action: Taking (as Jesus 'took bread')

Let us pray,

O God, through the blood of your dear Son
you have made it possible for us
to come into the holiest place of all.
As we come, may we do so reverently and sincerely,
with clean hands and a pure heart,
trusting not in our own goodness,
but in the perfect righteousness of Christ.
We pray, that as we receive this bread and wine from his hand,
we may receive from the same hand
that food by which our souls are fed.

(Hear the words of the institution
of the Lord's Supper, according to Paul:

The tradition which I handed on to you
came to me from the Lord himself:
that on the night of his arrest
the Lord Jesus took bread,
and after giving thanks to God
broke it and said:
This is my body, which is for you;
do this in memory of me.

In the same way, he took the cup after supper,
and said: This cup is the covenant
sealed by my blood.
Whenever you drink it, do this in memory of me.)

As the Lord Jesus,
on the night of his arrest, took bread,
I now take *this* bread and *this* wine,
to be consecrated from common use
to this holy use and mystery.

*Following ancient Jewish custom, as the italicized words above are said, the minister raises the bread and wine a handbreadth from the Table.*

And as he gave thanks and blessed,
let us draw near to God
and offer our prayers and thanksgiving.

### Second Action: Giving Thanks

The Lord be with you.
**And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts.
**We lift them up to the Lord.** *The people may stand.*
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Father of mercy and God of all comfort,
we acknowledge you to be the Lord;
and at all times we honour
your greatness and glory.

First, because you created us
in your own image and likeness;

but chiefly because you freed us
from the enslavement of sin,
through your only Son.

You gave him in love to be made man,
like us in all things except sin,
that by his death and resurrection,
he might bring again life to the world.

Lord, we are not able, in our dullness,
to understand the breadth and length
and height and depth of your love;
but, as our Lord Jesus Christ commanded,
we come to this Table which he has left to us
in memory of his death and resurrection,
until he comes again.

Here we declare and witness before the world that
through him alone we have received liberty and life,
through him alone you claim us as children and heirs,
through him alone we have access to your favour,
freely shown,
through him alone we are raised into your kingdom,
there to eat and drink with you and the Son
at the most joyful Table of eternal life.

In this present time
we on earth have communion with you in heaven.
But in the time to come
we shall be raised to that endless joy
prepared for us before the foundation
of the world was laid.

We acknowledge that we have received
these gifts by your free mercy and grace
through your only Son Jesus Christ.

*The minister may stretch out his hands over the bread and wine as he says:*

Send now, we pray, your Holy Spirit,
the Spirit of our Lord
and of his resurrection,
that we who receive the Lord's body and blood
may live to the praise of your glory
and receive our inheritance
with all your saints in light.[7]

*A song invoking the Holy Spirit upon the congregation may be sung.*

Father, moved by your Holy Spirit,
we, your church, give you all thanks, praise, and glory,
for ever and ever.

*The Amen is sung.*

Let us pray to the Father in the words our Saviour gave us.

**Our Father …**

### Third Action: Breaking

*The minister takes the bread and breaks it, and pours wine into the cup. The action should be clearly visible to all present.*

Our Lord Jesus,
on the night when he was betrayed,
took bread *(the minister takes the bread)*,
and when he had given thanks,
he broke it *(the minister breaks the bread with both hands)*
and said: This is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup,
*(the minister pours wine into the cup and raises the cup)*
saying: This cup is the covenant sealed by my blood.
Whenever you drink it, do it in memory of me.

### Fourth Action: Sharing

Holy things are for the holy.
**Only Jesus Christ is holy.**
**We are made holy in him.**

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.**

*In giving the bread and wine the minister says:*

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[7] From the Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship., *Lutheran Book of Worship*, Ministers ed. (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1978).

The body of Christ, given for you.
**Amen.**
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
**Amen.**

*The elements may be taken to the people in their seats or the people may gather around the Table or they may come to the Table to receive, either standing or kneeling. When all have received, the vessels are returned to the Table. The minister may clean and cover the elements as a way of bringing the service to a close.*

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his Holy name.
**Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

*A post-Communion prayer such as the following may be said:*

As Christ so graciously has given himself to us,
let us now stand to offer ourselves to God:

Father almighty, by your grace
we have celebrated the feast,
the banquet of the age to come,
and, through your Spirit,
we have tasted that the Lord is good.
So now, we ask you graciously to accept
the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving
we have made before you;
and to accept us now, as in Jesus Christ
we offer our very selves to you
as living sacrifices.
Make us holy and pleasing to you;
and send us out into the world in your power,
so that we may live and work and witness
to your praise and glory alone.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*A closing hymn may be sung.*

*The minister then dismisses the congregation, using this or a similar charge:*

Go out into the world in peace;
have courage;
hold on to what is good;
return no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted;
support the weak, and help the suffering;
honour all people;
love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*The minister blesses the congregation, using this or another scriptural benediction:*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Amen.**

## Third Order [Contemporary]

### The Peace and the Offering

*After the Order for the Word is completed with an ascription of glory or a period of meditation and brief prayer and/or the saying of a creed or declaration of faith, a hymn may be sung. The offering is taken up.*

*As the last part of the Communion hymn is being sung, the bread and wine, if not already on the Table, are brought up the central aisle or the aisles to the Table. Or if they are already on the Table, they are unveiled.*

*The offerings are then brought to the Table. If no hymn has been sung, the congregation may stand and sing a short doxology as the offering is brought forward.*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,**
**in heaven above and earth below;**
**one God, three persons, we adore–**
**to this God praise for evermore!**

Jesus said:
(If you are about to place your gift on the altar
and remember that someone is angry with you,
leave your gift there in front of the altar.)
First go and make peace with your brother, your sister:
then come back and offer your gift to God.

*Or*

Jesus said:
Peace I leave with you;
my peace I give to you.
(I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.)

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.
**Peace be with you.**

Before we offer our gifts and come to the Lord's Table,
let us share this peace with one another.

*Those holding the offering bags or plates put them down on the floor.*

*Each person then shares the peace with his or her neighbours, particularly with anyone with whom he or she needs to be reconciled, by way of a handclasp or embrace and the words:*

Peace with you.
**And with you.**

*Those who have brought up the offerings return, pick up the offertory bags and stand in front of the Table. If the people are to be served in their pews, the appointed elders stand with them.*

*A brief prayer such as the following may be said:*

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory,
the splendour and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.
All things come from you,
and of your own do we give to you.

*A doxology may be sung, if one has not been sung before.*
*Or the following versicles and responses may be said loudly here, if they will not used in the Prayer of Thanksgiving.*

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
**Hosanna!**
Blessed is the King of Israel!
**Hosanna in the highest heavens!**

*The congregation is seated. The appointed elders are seated at the Table.*

## The Invitation

Jesus Christ is risen! He stands among us as the living Lord
and invites us to his holy Table.

It is his Table, not ours, and he has prepared it for his disciples.
In his name we invite to the joyful feast all who turn from their sins,
trust in him as their Saviour, and seek to live a new life
in the power of his Spirit and at peace with all their neighbours.

*Or*

This is the Table of the Lord,
made ready for all who love him
and for all who want to love him more.
So come, you who have much faith and you who have little,
you who come often, and you who do not come often enough
you who have tried to follow and you who have failed.
Come because the Lord invites us all to meet him here.

Brothers and sisters, listen to the gracious words
with which he bids us come to him and assures us of his welcome:

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

*Or*

Listen! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to be with him and eat with him, and he with me.

*And*

It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh is of no avail.

(To all who receive the bread and wine with believing hearts
the Lord, through the power of his Holy Spirit
gives the food and drink that bring true and eternal life:
his own body and blood,.
so that he may live in us and share with us
all the benefits of his death and resurrection.)

Let us say together:

**We come to your table, Lord,**
**trusting not in any goodness of our own,**
**but only in your great mercy.**
**For we are unworthy to eat**
**even the crumbs that fall from your table,**
**but you have declared to us your grace;**
**you have called us to your banquet.**
**So by your Spirit feed us now**
**with your body and blood,**
**that you may live in us and we in you for ever.**
**Amen.**

## First Action: Taking (as Jesus 'took bread')

Following the example of our Lord
and obeying his command,
we do this to commemorate him
and be united to him in his death and resurrection.

Thus as the Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest,
took bread, and after supper took the cup,
I now take *this bread* and *this wine*,
to be consecrated from common use
to this holy use and mystery.

*Following ancient Jewish custom, as the italicized words above are said the minister raises the bread and wine a handbreadth from the Table, each with both hands.*

## Second Action: Giving Thanks

As he then gave thanks to God,
let us come to God and offer our prayer of thanksgiving.

The Lord is here.
**God's Spirit is with us.**
Lift up your hearts!
**We lift them up to the Lord!** *The people may stand.*
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God!
**It is right to give God thanks and praise!**

*The minister lifts up his hands and leads in a Prayer of Thanksgiving. This may include (before the Sanctus) thanks for our communion with all the saints, for the great witnesses of the faith in the past and for departed loved ones (who should be named if they have died recently or it is the anniversary of their deaths).*

*One of the following Prayers of Thanksgiving may be used:*

### First Prayer of Thanksgiving

Almighty God, we thank you for making all things through your Word,
for commanding light to shine in the darkness,
for stretching out the heavens and laying the foundations of the earth,
for creating us in your image and keeping us safe in your faithful love.
In silence we each thank you now for particular blessings in our lives….
So with all the angels and archangels
we proclaim your great and glorious Name,
for ever worshipping you and saying/singing together:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty,**
**heaven and earth are full of your glory;**
**glory be to you, Lord most high.**
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
**Hosanna in the highest!**

Thank you for the Law and the Prophets, who show your purpose to us.
But above all we thank you, O God, for Jesus Christ your only Son,
who was born of Mary and lived among us full of grace and truth,
who died on the Cross in obedience to you,
whom you raised from the dead by your power
and who reigns as Lord of creation and Head of the Church, his body.
Thank you that our Lord Jesus instituted this sacrament,
so that through our celebration of it
his death and resurrection might avail for us.
Therefore we rejoice with all God's people who cry out:

Our Lord, come!
**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**
Come in victory!
**Come in glory!**
For already now
**You feast with us.**

Grant, O Lord, that the bread we break and the cup we share
may be a means through which your Holy Spirit unites us all with Christ
and with one another as members of his one Body.
So may we be his faithful disciples
and true sisters and brothers to one another
until we feast with him in his Kingdom.
Through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.[8]

### Second Prayer of Thanksgiving

O Lord most high and holy, we thank you that you have made us
and given us space and freedom to move.
You make the sun rise over good and bad alike.
You have given the earth into our keeping.
You have called us to stand shoulder to shoulder in care and trouble,
and in joy and sorrow, always living with our faces toward you.
(In silence) we now (each) thank you for special blessings: ....
Therefore, with all creatures in heaven and on earth ,
we praise you, for ever worshipping you and saying/singing together:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty,**
**heaven and earth are full of your glory;**
**glory be to you, Lord most high.**
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
**Hosanna in the highest!**

We thank you for Jesus Christ, your only Son,
who came into this world to deliver us,
to be the great Sacrifice atoning for our sins,
to be our Shepherd until we die,
and to be our example from day to day,
that we might do what he did and be like he was,
and so be bread and peace to one another.
We thank you that on the night he was arrested,
he broke bread with his friends,
calling them to bear witness to his life
and proclaim his death until he comes.
We thank you that you raised him up to be the new creation;

[8] Based on the *Book of Common Worship* (United Presbyterian Church, USA, 1966).

you glorified him and he is now hidden in you.
Therefore we rejoice with all the people of God who cry out:

Our Lord, come!
**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**
Come in victory!
**Come in glory!**
For already now
**You feast with us!**

Send your Holy Spirit upon us and these gifts
and let us now share the life of our Lord that conquers death for ever.
Do not put us to shame, and grant us your peace.
Through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.[9]

## Third Prayer of Thanksgiving

O holy Father, the hour has come.
Glorify your Son here among us, that we may glorify you in him.
We thank you because you called light into being,
you established the earth,
you fashioned men and women in your image
and placed eternity in their hearts.
(In silence) we now (each) give thanks to you for particular blessings....
Therefore with all who have been made by you and blessed by you,
all creatures in heaven and on earth,
we praise your name, Lord our God,
ever worshipping you and saying/singing together:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty,**
**heaven and earth are full of your glory;**
**glory be to you, Lord most high.**
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
**Hosanna in the highest!**

You looked for us when we were lost.
You have found us, claimed us and glorified us in Jesus Christ your Son.
We thank you for this unforgettable man.
He is the beginning and the end, the light of the world,
the first to be born from the dead, the ruler over all creation.
Yet he took the place of a slave among his friends,
taking a towel and washing their feet.
And now he offers his presence to us in the breaking of a little bread
and the passing of it from hand to hand as a sign of love between us.

[9] Based on Huub Oosterhuis: *Open Your Hearts* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1972) # 3.

Therefore we rejoice with all the people of God who cry out:

Our Lord, come!
**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**
Come in victory!
**Come in glory!**
For already now
**You feast with us!**

We thank you, Lord God, that you send your Holy Spirit,
let that Spirit now move us to become like this man
and do the things he did,
so that we may be your peace in the world, your justice,
and a new beginning of love among people.
Through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.[10]

## Fourth Prayer of Thanksgiving

Lord God, you are; you always have been; you always will be.
Yours are the white beaches, the clouds in the sky, the sun,
the seed in the womb, the heart that falters,
the mourner who grieves, the living, the dying.
Though we are of dust, and our days are hay and grass,
yet you do not take your hand from us, for you have made us all.
You have said, I shall be with you, for ever,
and now (in silence) we give thanks to you for particular blessings....
Therefore, with all your creatures, we rejoice in you and praise you,
for ever worshipping you and saying/singing together:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty,**
**heaven and earth are full of your glory;**
**glory be to you, Lord most high.**
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!
**Hosanna in the highest!**

Lord, you have called us from near and far.
each different in face and in heart, but all of us your people.
You lead us through the desert and the darkness to a city of light.
You go before us while we live, and on the day we die you are with us.
Most blessed are you because of Jesus of Nazareth.
Your Son, our Christ, he came and worked your will in the world.
Before he suffered and died for us, he took bread and wine in his hands
and gave them to his friends.
Therefore, Lord God, with this bread and wine

[10] Based on Huub Oosterhuis: *op. cit.,* # 4.

we proclaim his death for the sins of the world,
and commemorate his resurrection until he comes in glory.
So with all the people of God we cry out:

Our Lord, come!
**Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!**
Come in victory!
**Come in glory!**
For already now
**You feast with us!**

Send down your Holy Spirit on us, Lord God,
that, as we eat and drink this bread and wine,
Jesus may be with us and in us.
Make us new people,
people who hear your voice and obey you with all their hearts.
Through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.[11]
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Praise and honour**
**and glory and power**
**be yours for ever.**

And now make us worthy, O Lord,
that with joy and without presumption
we may be so bold as to call upon you, God in heaven,
as our Father, and say/sing:

**Our Father in heaven,**
**your name be honoured,**
**your rule begin,**
**your will be done on earth as in heaven.**
**Give us our bread for the day ahead.**
**Forgive us the wrongs we have done**
**as we also forgive those who have wronged us.**
**Keep us from temptation,**
**and save us from evil**
**For you rule in power and glory, now and for ever.**
**Amen.**

*Alternatively the Lord's Prayer is sung.*

*The congregation sits.*

[11] *Based on Huub Oosterhuis: op. cit., # 5.*

### Third Action: Breaking

After he had taken the bread and given thanks to God,
the Lord Jesus *broke it*.

*The minister breaks the bread in full view of the congregation.*
*The following may then be said.*

Jesus, Lamb of God
**Have mercy on us**
Jesus bearer of our sins
**Have mercy on us**
Jesus, Redeemer of the world
**Give us your peace.**

*Silence.*

Amen.

### Fourth Action: Sharing

Then our Lord gave the bread he had broken to his disciples,
saying: This is my body which is (broken) for you;
do this in commemoration of me.

The bread which we break
**Is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?**

In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying:
'This cup is the new covenant sealed with my blood,
*which is poured out* for you and for many,
for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it,
do this in commemoration of me.'

*The minister pours the wine from the flagon or pitcher into the chalice as the italicized words are said.*

The cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks
**Is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?**

Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life,
and I will raise him to life on the last day.

*Or*

My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink.
Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood
remains in me, and I in him'.

Alleluia! Christ our Passover Lamb has been sacrificed!

**Therefore let us celebrate the feast! Alleluia!**

Take and eat; this is the body of Christ which is given for you.
Feed on him by faith,
with thanksgiving in your hearts.
*The minister consumes a small piece of bread first.*
*The minister then hands on the bread to the elders at the Table with the words*

(Name), the bread of life.
**Amen.**

This cup is the new covenant sealed by his blood. Drink from it, all of you.

The minister drinks from the cup, wipes it, and hands it to the elders at the Table with the words

The cup of salvation.
**Amen.**

*If the congregation is served in their pews, the elders at the Table stand to receive the trays and distribute the bread and the wine to the congregation.*
*If a single loaf is used, part of it is passed from the tray down each pew. Each person breaks a piece of bread off for him/herself and passes on the main part. Each person takes a glass from the tray and passes it on.*

*Alternatively, if the congregation is small, it may be asked to come and stand around the Table and pass the bread and wine in a circle. The minister should then invite everyone to come, whether or not they will consume the elements.*

*If the congregation is large, it may come forward a row at a time and stand in front of the Table to receive the bread and wine from the minister and an assisting elder.*

*The invitation to come forward may be issued just after the words* Alleluia! Christ our Passover Lamb *etc. and the response.*

*As each person is handed the bread and the wine, the same versicles and responses are said*

*The minister may invite anyone who needs ministry to come forward or remain behind afterwards.*

*After the vessels have all been returned to the Table, the minister says:*

Because there is one loaf, we who are many form one body
**For we all share the same bread.**

*The following acclamation may be said:*

Praise the Lord, my soul!
**All my being, praise his holy name!**
Praise the Lord, my soul
**And do not forget how kind he is!**
He forgives all my sins
**And heals all my diseases!**
He saves me from the grave
**And blesses me with love and mercy!**
He fills my life with good things!
**Praise the Lord, all creatures!**

*Or, on other occasions and especially at Ascension, the following may be shouted:*

Christ is Victor!
**Christ is King!**
Christ is Lord of all!
**Christ is Victor!**
Christ is King!
Christ is Lord of all!

## NOTICES AND PRAYERS

*Items of important news are announced, including prayer needs.*
*The minister may invite any visitors present who would like to identify themselves and where they come from to stand up and do so. The congregation may be asked to stand for the prayers of petition and intercession.*

*An appointed person leads these prayers from among the pews or from the front.*
*Alternatively, if the acoustics are suitable, the congregation may be invited to offer brief open prayers of intercession and petition, aloud or with biddings and silences.*
*The following versicles and responses may be used after each petition:*

Lord in your mercy,
**Listen to our prayer.**

*or*

Listen to our prayer, Lord;
**Hear our cry for help.**

*The intercessions may end with the Prayer for Africa:*

**God, bless Africa:**
**guard her children,**
**guide her leaders**
**and give her peace,**
**for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.**

*A brief Prayer of Self-Offering may be said, such as the following:*

As Christ so graciously has given himself to us,
let us now stand to offer ourselves to God.

O God, may we who share Christ's body live in the power of his risen life,
we who drink his cup share his life with others,
we whom the Spirit enlightens take your light out into the world.
Keep us firm in the hope you have set before us,
until we and all your children are free
and the whole earth praises your name.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord.
**Amen.**

*A final hymn is sung, usually on the theme of the sermon.*

### COMMISSION AND BLESSING

*The minister dismisses the congregation, a charge such as one of the following:*

Jesus said:
All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.
Therefore go and make disciples of all nations.

*Or*

The Spirit of the Lord is upon you;
for he has anointed you to tell the gospel to the poor,
he has sent you to proclaim liberty to the captives
and recovery of sight to the blind,
to set free the oppressed,
to announce the time of the Lord's salvation.

*Or*

Jesus said:
Peace be with you!
As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.

In the power of the Spirit, go into the world:
serve the Lord and witness to him
**We go in the name of Christ.**

*The minister pronounces a scriptural benediction:*

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace
by your faith in him,
until, by the power of the Holy Spirit,
you overflow with hope.

*Or*

May God's grace be with all those
who love our Lord Jesus Christ with undying love.
Or

May the God who gives us peace make you completely his,
and keep your whole being, spirit, soul and body,
free from all fault,
at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Or*

May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times
and in all ways.
The Lord be with you all.

*The threefold Amen is sung.*

*The Bible, the bread and wine and the offerings may be carried out through the front door of the church in procession, followed by the Communion elders and the minister.*

## Fourth Order [Children][12]

When Jesus was on earth he told his disciples,
If you are about to place your gift on the altar
and remember that someone is angry with you,
leave your gift there in front of the altar.
Make peace with that person,
then come back and offer your gift to God.

The peace of the Lord Jesus be with you.

Let us give one another the sign of peace.

*The people greet each other with the peace of Christ.*

*The minister says:*

Let us worship God with our gifts.

*The offerings are taken by the children and brought forward. The people may sing a song or doxology. The minister asks:*

Where are we to find bread for these people to eat?
**There is a boy/girl here who has bread and wine!**

*A boy or girl comes forward carrying the bread and gives it to the minister, standing at the Table. The minister holds the bread with both hands and says:*

Eat the loaves and be filled!
Jesus is the bread of life and the true vine.

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[12] This Order has been adapted from the First Order for Holy Communion in the *Book of Common Order of the Church of Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Saint Andrew Press, 1994).

When Jesus was on earth,
he often enjoyed meals with his friends.
On the night before he died,
when darkness was beginning to fall,
he sat at table with the disciples
in an upper room in Jerusalem.
At this Last Supper,
he broke bread and took wine,
and told his disciples to remember him
by following his example.
Today we are his disciples,
and we are glad to do what he has told us.

### First Action: Taking (as Jesus 'took bread')

*The minister uncovers the elements (and pours the wine), and says:*

As the Lord Jesus took bread,
I take this bread and wine
to be set apart for this holy use.
And as he gave thanks,
let us give our thanks and praise.

### Second Action: Giving Thanks

The Lord be with you.
**And also with you.**
Lift up your hearts.
**We lift them up to the Lord.** *The people may stand.*
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Loving God,
you made this wonderful world
for us to enjoy.

You gave us Jesus
to be our friend and Saviour
and to bring us to you.

You send your Holy Spirit
to make us one family in Christ.

For these gifts of your love we thank you,
and join with angels and saints
in this joyful hymn of praise:

*The people sing a song about God's holiness. Or they say:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**
**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.**

For your kindness to us
and your goodness to all
we give you thanks.

We thank you that you showed your love
by sending your Son,
who gave his life for us,
and rose again from death,
and lives to pray for us for ever.

We thank you that he has taken away
all that separates us from you,
and has made us friends with you
and with one another.

We thank you that
he has brought us together at this table,
to strengthen us by his love.

*The minister may stretch out his hands over the bread and wine as he says:*

Send your Holy Spirit
on us and these your gifts of bread and wine,
that we may know Christ's presence,
real and true, and be his faithful followers,
showing your love for the world.

Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all glory and honour is yours,
almighty Father, for ever.

*The Amen is sung.*

**Our Father …**

### Third Action: Breaking

*The minister says:*

The Lord Jesus took bread

*(the minister takes the bread),*
and when he had given thanks, he broke it
*(the minister breaks the bread)*
and said, This is my body, which is broken for you.
Do this to remember me.

In the same way he took the cup
*(the minister raises the cup),* saying,
This cup is the covenant sealed by my blood.
Drink from it, all of you.

### Fourth Action: Sharing

*In giving the bread and wine, the minister says:*

Taste and see the Lord is good.
**Happy are they who find refuge in him!**

*The elements may be taken to the people in their seats or the people may gather around the Table or they may come to the Table to receive, either standing or kneeling. When all have received, the vessels are returned to the Table. The minister may clean and cover the elements as a way of bringing the service to a close.*

*The minister may say:*

All children, including those who did not take Communion,
may come forward to receive God's blessing.

*The minister then lays his hands on the children and blesses them.*

*A closing hymn may be sung.*

*The minister then dismisses the congregation, using this or a similar charge:*

Go out to love and serve the Lord.

*The minister blesses the congregation, using this or another scriptural benediction:*

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **Amen.**

## Fifth Order [Ecumenical][13]

### The Peace and the Offering

*Following the sermon, a creed and a hymn, the minister says:*

Jesus said:
Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you.
I do not give to you as the world gives.
Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.

Before we offer our gifts and come to the Lord's Table,
let us share his peace with one another.

*Each person then shares the peace with the words:*

Peace be with you.
**And with you.**

*The people are seated and the minister says:*

Let us worship God with our gifts.

*As the offerings are taken up, the minister and elders prepare the Table. The bread and wine may be brought to the Table, or uncovered if already in place. The offerings may then be brought forward. The people stand to sing a doxology such as:*

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,**
**in heaven above and earth below;**
**one God, three persons, we adore–**
**to this God praise for evermore!**

*A brief prayer such as the following may be said:*

Yours, O Lord, are grandeur and power,

majesty, splendour, and glory.
**All in the heavens and on the earth is yours,**
**and of your own we give you.**

*The people may be seated.*

### The Invitation

*Standing at the Table, the minister invites the people to the sacrament, using this or another invitation to the Lord's Table.*

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[13] An ecumenical prayer composed by Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Catholics and Anglicans and based on the Greek *Anaphora* of Saint Basil. It is Thanksgiving F in the PCUSA*Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993).

Jesus said:
Come to me, all who labour and are heavy laden,
and I will give you rest.
Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;
for I am gentle and lowly in heart,
and you will find rest for your souls.
For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

*The minister lifts the bread and says:*

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made.
It will be for us the bread of life.
**Blessed be God for ever.**

*The minister lifts the wine and says:*

Blessed are you, Lord, God of all creation.
Through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands.
It will be our spiritual drink.
**Blessed be God for ever.**

## The Great Thanksgiving

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

It is truly right to glorify you and to give you thanks;
for you alone are God, living and true, dwelling in light
inaccessible from before time and for ever.

Fountain of life and source of all goodness,
you made all things and fill them with your blessing;
you created them to rejoice in the splendour of your radiance.

Countless throngs of angels stand before you
to serve you night and day;
and, gazing on the glory of your face,
they offer you unceasing praise.
Joining with them,
and giving voice to every creature under heaven,
we acclaim you,
and glorify your name, as we sing,

*The people sing this or another similar song:*

**Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty!**
**All your works shall praise your name,**
**in earth and sky and sea:**
**Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,**
**God in three persons, blessed Trinity.**

*Or the people say:*

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,**
**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.**

We acclaim you, holy Lord, glorious in power.
Your mighty works reveal your wisdom and love.
You formed us in your own image,
giving the whole world into our care,
so that, in obedience to you, our Creator,
we might rule and serve all your creatures.
When our disobedience led us far away,
you did not abandon us to the power of death.
In your mercy you came to our help,
so that in seeking you we might find you.
Again and again you called us back to your covenant,
and through the prophets you taught us to hope for salvation.

Father, you so loved the world
that in the fullness of time
you sent your only Son to be our Saviour.
He took flesh through the Holy Spirit,
was born of the Virgin Mary;
he lived as one of us, yet without sin.
To the poor he proclaimed the good news of salvation;
to prisoners, freedom; to the sorrowful, joy.
To fulfil your purpose he gave himself up to death
and, rising from the grave,
destroyed death and restored life.

So that we might live no longer for ourselves,
but for him who died and rose for us,
he sent the Holy Spirit,
his own first gift for those who believe,

to complete his work in the world,
and to bring to fulfilment the sanctification of all.

Heavenly Father,
when the hour had come for him to be glorified by you
having loved his own who were in the world,
he loved them to the end:
at supper with them he took bread,
and after giving thanks to you,
he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:
Take, eat. This is my body, which is given for you.
Do this to commemorate me.

After supper he took the cup, saying:
This cup is the covenant sealed in my blood,
shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Whenever you drink it, do it to commemorate me.

Father, we now celebrate this memorial of our redemption.
Recalling Christ's death and his descent among the dead,
proclaiming his resurrection and ascension to your right hand,
awaiting his coming in glory;
and offering to you, from the gifts you have given us,
this bread and this cup,
we praise you and we bless you.

*The people sing this or another similar song:*

**He is Lord, he is Lord,**
**he is risen from the dead and he is Lord.**
**Every knee shall bow, every tongue confess**
**that Jesus Christ is Lord.**

*Or the people say:*

**We praise you, we bless you,**
**we give thanks to you,**
**and we pray to you, Lord our God.**

*The minister may stretch out his hands over the bread and wine as he says:*

Lord, we pray that in your goodness and mercy
your Holy Spirit may descend upon us
and upon these gifts,
sanctifying them and showing them to be
holy gifts for your holy people,
the bread of life and the cup of salvation,
the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and this cup
may become one body and one in spirit,
a living sacrifice in Christ,
to the praise of your name.

*A song invoking the Holy Spirit upon the congregation may be sung here.*

*The minister may include the following intercessions.*

Remember, Lord,
your one holy catholic and apostolic church,
redeemed by the blood of your Christ.
Reveal its unity, guard its faith,
and preserve it in peace.
Remember our Presbytery and our Session
and all who minister in your church.
Remember all your people,
and those who seek your truth.
Remember ….
Remember all who have died in the peace of Christ,
and those whose faith is known to you alone;
bring them into the place of eternal joy and light.

And grant that we may find our inheritance
with the Blessed Virgin Mary,
with the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and all the saints
who have found favour with you in ages past.
We praise you in union with them
and give you glory through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,**
**in the unity of the Holy Spirit,**
**all glory and honour are yours, almighty Father,**
**now and for ever.**

*The Amen is sung.*

Let us pray to the Father in the words our Saviour gave us.

**Our Father …**

## THE BREAKING OF HE BREAD

*The minister takes the bread and breaks it in silence, and pours wine into the cup. The action should be clearly visible to all present.*

## Sharing

Holy things are for the holy.
**Only Jesus Christ is holy.**
**We are made holy in him.**

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.**

*In giving the bread and wine the minister says:*

The body of Christ, given for you.
**Amen.**
The blood of Christ, shed for you.
**Amen.**

*The elements may be taken to the people in their seats or the people may gather around the Table or they may come to the Table to receive, either standing or kneeling. When all have received, the vessels are returned to the Table. The minister may clean and cover the elements as a way of bringing the service to a close.*

Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me bless his holy name.
**Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.**

*A closing hymn may be sung.*

## Commission and Blessing

*The minister then dismisses the congregation, using this or a similar charge:*

Go out into the world in peace;
have courage;
hold on to what is good;
return no one evil for evil;
strengthen the fainthearted;
support the weak, and help the suffering;
honour all people;
love and serve the Lord,
rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*The minister blesses the congregation, using this or another scriptural benediction:*

The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord be kind and gracious to you.
The Lord look upon you with favour
and give you peace. **Amen**

### Appendix: A Recipe for Communion Bread

5 ½ cups bread flour
2 cups water
1 packet yeast
1 teaspoon salt

Dissolve yeast in warm water. Sift in flour. Knead for 10 minutes. Let rise for 1 ½ to 2 hours. Knead again, for about 2 minutes. Shape into four round loaves. Score top, or use a Eucharistic bread stamp. Bake at 350 degrees for 20-25 minutes.