

ALDAN UNION CHURCH POSITION PAPER ON COMMUNION

Communion is one of two ordinances recognized in the Doctrinal Principles of Aldan Union Church that is divinely enjoined on believers.

I. WHAT IS IT?

A. A proclamation – 1 Cor. 11:26

1. This means more than to represent or signify or picture Jesus' death. It is more than an announcement. It means to preach Jesus' death.
2. All who participate in the Communion celebration make public proclamation of the death of the Lord Jesus.

B. A participation together – 1 Cor. 10:16

1. The word for participation is the Greek word *koinonia*. It has to do with fellowship, communion, having in common.
2. When we celebrate Communion together, we experience a deep sense of unity, a common bond, a growing love for one another. All of this is centered around the Lord Jesus Christ, our Head. We are all part of His great body. We have something in common.

C. A pledge of a New Covenant – 1 Cor. 11:25

1. The cup, symbolizing the blood shed by Jesus, is a pledge of the new covenant or New Testament. The blood of Jesus ratifies that new covenant.
2. Matthew 26:28 – “. . . for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.”
3. Heb. 7:22; 8:6, 13; 9:9-10, 11-15.

D. A Memorial

1. Partaking in Communion commemorates the sacrificial work of Christ and the value is in how the observance directs our hearts and minds to God. There is no mystical reality concurrent with the event.
2. This holds that observing Communion is a memorial to His death with no supernatural change in the elements.
3. This may be referred to as the Symbolic, Zwinglian, Ordinance, or Memorial View.

II. WHY DO WE OBSERVE COMMUNION?

A. In remembrance of Jesus – 1 Cor. 11:24-25

1. We need tangible, visible, reminders of Jesus – especially of his death.
2. Unwittingly we are forgetful people – just like Israel was. We tend to have spiritual Alzheimer's disease. We need to be reminded of even the most important things in life.

B. In obedience to Jesus – 1 Cor. 11:24-25

1. “Do this in remembrance of me” is in the form of a command, not a suggestion.
 2. To fail to remember Jesus in this way is a direct act of disobedience for a believer. It is a loving command, but a command nonetheless.
- C. In compliance with the early Church– Acts 2:42.
1. Acts 2:42 - “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.”
 2. The word *devoted* is a strong word, meaning to give constant attention to.

III. HOW DO WE OBSERVE IT?

- A. By praising and thanking God – 1 Cor. 10:16; 11:24-25.
- B. By purifying ourselves – 1 Cor. 11:27-32
1. Not in an unworthy manner – 1 Cor. 11:27. This has to do with our heart’s attitude.
 2. With self-examination – 1 Cor. 11:28. We must prove ourselves, test ourselves as if we were testing a piece of metal to make sure it was genuine. We need to confess any sin to God. Self-examination prevents the need for God’s chastening.
 3. Discerning the body of the Lord – 1 Cor. 11:29. This means to separate, make a distinction, to arrive at the particular significance and sacredness of the Lord’s body so that all of us will shrink back from dishonoring it and we will all be stimulated to faith and a truly repentant spirit.

IV. HOW OFTEN DO WE OBSERVE IT?

- A. *Devoted* indicates a continual action – Acts 2:42
- B. Until He comes.
- C. As often as we desire.

V. WHEN DO WE CELEBRATE COMMUNION? Any day or time that we desire.

VI. WHO MAY PARTICIPATE?

- A. Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ – those who are members of His family, those who have complied with III, B. above.
1. Only family members are disciplined and punished by their father. Only family members are in view in the Communion passages.
 2. None of the questions asked so far have any meaning to the one who has not been washed in the blood of the Lamb.
- B. God takes a very dim view of those who intrude in a sacred family observance.