

# SERMON/WORSHIP SERIES SUGGESTIONS

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## AFFIRMING BAPTISM AND FORMING FAITH

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Faith Formation Committee

These suggestions for liturgy and preaching are intended to follow the outline of material provided by the Faith Formation Committee in its document “Affirming Baptism and Forming Faith”. Our intent is to aid congregations in providing a well-rounded ministry to facilitate a more effective formation of faith in the life of the entire congregation.

A series of services and messages would be a very fitting way to raise the awareness of a congregation on these matters, enable them to think through practices that easily become routine, and to facilitate intergenerational worship. In addition, new life and vitality would be infused into customary practices.

We are suggesting six possible sermons in this series to cover the major areas. Each pastor will obviously modify this plan to fit her/his own preaching plan and the needs of the congregation. The ideas given here are only starters, and titles and content of sermons will be crafted by each pastor. The six areas are:

*The Gift of Faith*

*The Sacraments and Sacramental Practices*

*Baptismal Identity*

*Affirming Baptism Throughout Life*

*Profession of Faith*

*The Lord's Supper*

For each section, the following are provided:

- Sermon starters – some ideas and passages that can provide the beginning of sermons in series for the pastor to develop.

- Confessional references – passages from the Belgic Confession, Heidelberg Catechism, the Canons of Dort, and “Our World Belongs to God” are provided. [note: references to “Our World Belongs to God”, OWBTG, are from the 2008 edition]
- Committee document references -
  - ABFF refers to the document of the Faith Formation Committee entitled “Affirming Baptism and Forming Faith”
  - “A Practice of Christian Unity” refers to a five-lesson series of Bible Studies on I Corinthians 11.

[Note: both of the above documents are available on the web at [www.crcna.org/formation](http://www.crcna.org/formation)]
- Supplementary Scripture passages - these support the preaching passages and can be profitably used in the liturgy.
- Liturgical resources are available in *The Worship Sourcebook*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Faith Alive Christian Resources, and Baker Books.
- Song suggestions – from the following sources [ note abbreviations used]:

PsH – *The Psalter Hymnal*, CRC Publications.

SNC – *Sing! A New Creation*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Faith Alive Christian Resources, and Reformed Church Press.

SNT – *Singing the New Testament*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Faith Alive Christian Resources.

SWM – *Sing With Me*, Faith Alive Christian Resources.

CS – *Contemporary Songs for Worship*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Faith Alive Christian Resources.

## 1. The Gift of Faith:

### Sermon Starters

#### When God Opens A Heart, Acts 16:11-15

Where does faith come from? Why is it that some people believe and some do not? Some may claim that everyone naturally has faith if only they learn to exercise it. Others claim that anyone can get it if only they want. But the brief story of Lydia teaches us that faith is a gift from God through his Holy Spirit. The natural sinfulness of the human heart requires the divine work of God's Spirit to implant the ability to believe. While she listened to Paul teach the Word "...the Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message." (Acts 16:14)

We learn there are four key elements in this faith-giving process: (1) speaking the message of God to others, (2) calling them to respond to the message, (3) God's work of opening their heart, and (4) the willful response of listeners.

Such a viewpoint includes huge implications. Those who believe see the ability to respond as a gift from God. They are marked by joyful thanks to God. They understand the vital importance of the Word of God in their lives as the means through which the Spirit stirs faith, and also the importance of spiritual disciplines through which faith is nurtured.

#### Faith and Unfaith, Mark 9:14-24; Luke 8:22-25

When I was young, I was vaccinated against certain serious diseases. My parents were told the protection was permanent; no repeated shots were necessary. I wish my faith were that way – once given, always permanent, no repeated work necessary. But it's not that way at all. Faith, rather than static, has a very dynamic life to it. Sometimes strong and vital; sometimes weak and failing.

The father of the boy-with-a-spirit was honest about the fact that "belief" and "unbelief" resided side by side within him. (Mark 9:24) He needed support and nurture so that belief would overcome the unbelief or his son might not be healed. The disciples found themselves in a similar state during a Sea-of-Galilee storm. When Jesus rebuked them with, "where is your faith?" (Luke 8:25) he did not intend to say that they were without faith, but rather to point them to the fact they must take the faith they had been given and exercise it, applying it to the perilous circumstances they were facing. They had an unexercised faith.

Much of the success, and failure, of our lives can be explained on the basis of whether our faith is exercised or dormant, nurtured or starved. The heart of Christian ministry in the church is to nurture God-given faith that it might overcome our unbelief within.

Faith Formation Committee Document: ABFF

Prologue: Discerning Faithful Sacramental Practice in Contemporary Culture

Confessional References

Belgic Confession, art.22  
Belgic Confession, art.35  
H. Catechism, L.D.7, Q/A 20-23  
H. Catechism, L.D.23, Q/A 59-61  
H. Catechism, L.D.25, Q/A 65-68  
Canons of Dort, III-IV, art.10-17

Supplementary Scriptures

Matthew 16:17-20  
Mark 9:17-24  
Luke 15:6-11  
Luke 17:1-6  
John 3:34-36  
John 6:43-47  
Acts 16:113-15  
Romans 10:5-15  
Ephesians 2:8-10  
Hebrews 12:1-3

Song Suggestions

*Father, We Give You Thanks, Who Planted – PsH 314*  
*I Sought the Lord, and Afterward I Knew – PsH 498*  
*Jesus Loves Me – PsH 571*  
*My Soul Finds Rest in God Alone – PsH 62*  
*I Love the Lord, for He Has Heard My Voice – PsH 116*  
*And Can It Be – PsH 267*  
*My Lord, I Did Not Choose You – PsH 496*  
*Spirit of God, Who Dwells within My Heart – PsH 419*  
*When Peace like a River – PsH 489*  
*Faith Begins By Letting Go – SNC 172*  
*You Are My Hiding Place – SNC 180*

*In God Alone – SNC 187*  
*Through It All – SNC 189*  
*Want to Walk as a Child of the Light – SNC 77*  
*I Love the Lord - SNC 227*  
*Take, O Take Me As I Am – SNC 215*  
*We Give Thanks for Our Salvation – SNT 147*  
*Open Your Hearts – SWM 175*  
*God's Path – SWM 189*  
*In Christ Alone – CS 20*  
*Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer – CS 21*

## 2. The Sacraments and Sacramental Practices:

### Sermon Starters

#### Much More Than Ears, Acts 8:36-38, I Corinthians 10:14-17

During his ministry, Jesus reminded people that those who have ears must be careful to hear well. (see eg. Mark 4:9 et. al.) It is true that the ears are often the primary way in which God speaks to us. The proclamation of his word comes to us through our ears. Paul tells us that believing comes through hearing (see Romans 10:14).

While it is true that God's primary means of communicating the Gospel to us is through the process of speaking and hearing, the sacraments are supplements which communicate with us through each of our other senses. With our eyes we see the water and font, the bread and cup, the breaking and pouring. With our sense of touch we feel the water on our skin, we hold the bread and cup, and take them into our mouth. Our taste buds receive the bread and taste the juice. Even our smell is involved in the eating and drinking though we're usually not as conscious of it.

This totally sensory communication that is involved in the sacraments ought to shape how we approach the sacraments. Our planning of the liturgy should be careful to give room for each sense; our partaking should be cognizant of each. When we do this, then we can sense more than ever how, in the sacraments, we are actually participating in Christ and all his benefits.

#### Soul-Food , John 6:41-59

Though there is some disagreement about whether John 6 intends to be addressing the sacrament, the majority viewpoint is that the Lord's Supper is certainly in view here. Some find these words to be strange because of Jesus' statements about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, especially when he says "My flesh is real food and my blood is real drink." (see vv.53-56). This calls for some careful theological thinking to avoid, on the one hand, the transubstantiation that our confessions reject, and, on the other hand, to retain our awareness that we really are "partaking of Christ".

The Belgic Confession (Article 33-35) has very helpful insight for us with regards to both sacraments. God has chosen to add the sacraments to the Word of the gospel to better "confirm in us the salvation he imparts to us." (art.33) In art.35, the Confession says that as believers, we have two lives within us. Both of those lives require careful nurture. Our

physical and temporal life, which we have from birth, requires support and care through earthly and material nurture. Our spiritual and heavenly life, which belongs uniquely to believers, is nurtured by Jesus Christ who is the genuine bread from heaven. Christ instituted the Lord's Supper for this purpose. The Confession of Faith is helpful to teach us that faith is the "hand and mouth of our souls" by which we receive the true body and true blood of Christ.

Our participation in the sacraments must be shaped by this awareness – that it is a spiritual banquet at which "Christ communicates himself to us with all his benefits." We must come with humility, hunger, trust, and eagerness. And we leave with gratitude, joy, and a commitment to faithful obedience.

Faith Formation Committee Document: ABFF

Prologue: Discerning Sacramental Practice in Contemporary Culture

Confessional References

Belgic Confession, art. 33-35  
H. Catechism, L.D. 25  
Canons of Dort, III-IV, 17  
OWBTG, art.36-37

Supplementary Scriptures

Matthew 26:26-29  
Mark 14:22-25  
Luke 22:17-20  
John 6:41-58  
Acts 8:26-40  
Acts 16:31-34  
I Corinthians 11:17-34

Song Suggestions

*God is Here - PsH 516*  
*Father, We Give You Thanks, Who Planted – PsH 314*  
*The Lord, My Shepherd, Rules My Life – PsH 23*  
*Lift Up Your Heart to the Lord – PsH 515*  
*As Your Family, Lord – SNC 246*  
*Haleluya! Pelo tsa rona / Hallelujah! We Sing Your Praises – SNC 261*  
*This Is the Feast of Victory – SNC 262*

*Take, O Take Me as I Am – SNC 215*  
*Psalm 34 – SNC 255*  
*As We Gather at Your Table – SNC 245*  
*Go, My Children with My Blessing – SNC 284*  
*Jesus the Lord Said, I Am the Bread – SNT 27*  
*I Am the Bread of Life – SNT 28*  
*Morning Prayer – SWM 171*  
*What the Lord Has Done in Me – CS 31*

### 3. Baptismal Identity

#### Sermon Starters

##### Marked People, Matthew 28:16-20, Acts 16:25-34

We all bear marks that identify us in one way or another. It may be the characteristics of our physical appearance, our dress, a wedding band, a card in our wallet, or many other things. In Revelation, the Bible tells us that even Satan identifies his followers with the “mark of the beast” (e.g. see Revelation 16:2).

Those who believe in Jesus Christ receive the water of baptism as their mark as one who belongs to the family of God. Among the other purposes of baptism – God’s seal of his promises and the symbol of washing – it serves as an identifying mark that shapes who we are and how we are to live. And so throughout the New Testament and Church History there is an unbroken line of people believing and being baptized as their mark of belonging to God.

The implications for us are great. This mark provides our identity in a society in which many other forces attempt to forge another identity on us. Here is the unchanging basis for our self-concept. Parents and congregations are called to train their children and youth to find their identity in their baptism.

##### Holy Children, Genesis 17:9-14, I Corinthians 7:14

There are many fellow Christians who find it difficult to believe that infants should be baptized. It’s meaningless, they say, because the children can’t possibly understand what is going on. It’s dangerous, they say, because it only encourages them to be complacent. And it’s unbiblical, they say, because the Bible says we must believe before we are baptized.

But Reformed Christians point to the continuity of the covenant originally established with Abraham as the basis for infant baptism. After God gave his covenant promise to Abraham, and promised to be God to both him and “...your descendants after you for generations to come...” (Gen.17:7) he instructed Abraham in two matters. First, circumcision is to be the sign of this covenant arrangement (vss.10-11). Second, circumcision is for those who are eight days old (vs.12). This inclusion of children is never abrogated in the New Testament, but is rather reinforced by the baptism of entire

households in Acts and certainly is underneath the bold statement to the Corinthians that their children are “holy”, i.e. set apart, when at least one parent is a believer.

Three parties are involved in carrying out this established-by-God arrangement. God is faithful to his word of covenant promise. Parents must see the spiritual nurture of their children to be of first importance. And baptized children must sense the urgency of their personal faith-response to the promises given by God.

Faith Formation Committee Document: ABFF

Part 1: Baptismal Identity

Confessional References

Belgic Confession, art. 34  
H. Catechism, L.D. 26-27, Q/A 69-74  
OWBTG, art.37

Supplementary Scriptures

Genesis 17:9-14  
Psalm 78:1-8  
Matthew 3:13-17  
Matthew 28:19  
Acts 2:28-29  
Romans 6:1-14  
Galatians 3:26-29  
Colossians 2:6-23  
Colossians 3:1-17  
Titus 3:3-11  
I Peter 3:21-22

The Worship Sourcebook

Part One, Section 6.1-6.5 - Baptism

Song Suggestions

*Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us – PsH 591*  
*Tell Your Children – PsH 588*  
*How Great Is the Lord of the Father – PsH 231*  
*Baptized in Water – PsH 269*  
*Our Children, Lord, in Faith and Prayer – PsH 270*

*We Know That Christ is Raised – PsH 271*  
*You Are Our God; We Are Your People – PsH 272*  
*Almighty Father, Covenant God – PsH 273*  
*O God, Great Father, Lord and King – PsH 274*  
*The Lord Our God in Mercy Spoke – PsH 275*  
*Lift High the Cross – PsH 373*  
*Come to the Water – SNC 234*  
*Take Me to the Water – SNC 236*  
*Crashing Waters at Creation – SNC 237*  
*Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters – SNC 238*  
*Sing! A New Creation – SNC 241*  
*Psalm 105 – SNC 242*  
*Psalm 139: O Lord, My God – SNC 243*  
*You Have Put on Christ – SNC 244*  
*Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer – CS 21*  
*I Am Crucified with Christ – SWM 182*  
*Before the Throne of God Above – CS 28*  
*What the Lord Has Done in Me – CS 31*  
*Unless a Grain of Wheat – SNT 94*  
*We Give Thanks for Our Salvation – SNT 147*  
*All Baptized Beneath the Cloud – SNT 152*

#### 4. Affirming Baptismal Identity as a Lifelong Practice

##### Sermon Starters

###### Washing Reminders , I Corinthians 6:9-11

I remember so well during my adolescence that my father would repeatedly say to me, “don’t ever forget...you are a baptized child!” I knew what he meant - my identity was to be formed by my baptism. My commitments in life (and my behavior) should also be formed by this baptism.

Paul is doing the same with the Corinthians, whom he had baptized some time earlier. The congregation that caused Paul much pastoral pain, hears his reminders that their identity is not to be formed by their pagan culture but by their baptism. While it is true that the sins mentioned in this passage were indeed a part of their earlier experience (“...and that is what some of you were...”) their new identity which comes from their baptism should lead to a new way of living (“But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.” (v.11)

The implications are large for the nurture of long-time Christians and those who are new to the faith. In Romans 12, Paul calls it refusing to be conformed to the image of the world, and being transformed by the renewing of our minds. (Romans 12:2)

Those who are baptized, therefore, are called to higher standards of living, and warned about the tragedy of selling themselves short.

###### Where Your Heart is Set – Col.3:1-17

Paul begins Colossians 3 with a *description* and follows it with an *exhortation*. Both the description and the exhortation are universally applicable to all believers of all generations.

The description (“you have been raised with Christ”) begins with “Since, then....” (see v.1) and immediately links it with what he has said about the supremacy of Christ and their position in him (See Colossians one and two). It also reminded the Colossians of their baptism and its significance. (See also Paul’s teaching in Romans 6:4-5) All those baptized must learn to look at themselves in the same light – raised with Christ!

Consequently, the exhortation follows naturally and points to what a baptized believer must do as a result. A certain concept of self, a pattern of thinking, and a development of Christian virtue must result. The baptized believer is to set her/his mind on the things that are above (vv.1-2), put to death the sins that formerly marked their earthly nature (vv.5-11) and must put on the pattern of a new life in Christ (vv.12-17).

The Heidelberg Catechism, in its treatment of conversion, calls this dying to the old self and coming to life of the new self.

#### It Takes Many Generations – Psalm 78:1-8

The congregations in which we grow up are usually the communities that have formed us spiritually, often much more than we realize. We find ourselves often recalling memories of the church of our childhood and youth, remembering the positive influences, treasuring special experiences, and determining not to perpetuate some of the weaknesses we observed.

Psalm 78 came out of just such a community. Written by Asaph, probably for use in their worship, the Psalm reminds them of their history, much of which includes a record of disobedience which required God to discipline them regularly.

A community of faith is a community with a story of the faithfulness of God. And it is also a community in which faith is formed. Each new generation must be formed in faith or the identity of the community cannot survive. And so the spirit behind this Psalm is concerned about “the mystery of transference”, of passing on what is valuable for one generation to the next one. This task of transference is shared by multiple generations. If you study the first 8 verses of Psalm 78 carefully, you can find reference to at least a half-dozen generations.

The marks of this continuing multi-generational community are these: it had a clear identity before God, for they knew who they were; it had an experience of grace, having been delivered by God; it possessed careful teachers who were intentionally telling the story of God to the next generation; and it had a fear of failure, knowing all too well the history of how stubborn their fathers had been.

Faith Formation Committee Document: ABFF

Part 2: Affirming Baptismal Identity as a LifeLong Practice

Confessional References

Belgic Confession, Art.34

H. Catechism, Lord's Day 33, Q/A 88-91.

Canons of Dort, V, 4-15

The Worship Sourcebook

Part One, Section 6.1-6.5 – Baptism

Part One, Section 7.1-7.6 – Profession of Faith and Remembrance of Baptism

Supplementary Scriptures

Joshua 24:1-27

Psalm 78:1-8

Romans 6:1-14

Galatians 3:26-29

Philippians 1:3-6

Philippians 2:12-18

Colossians 2:6-23

Colossians 3:1-17

Titus 3:3-11

Song Suggestions

*God is Here - PsH 516*

*The Lord, My Shepherd, Rules My Life – PsH 23*

*Tell Your Children – PsH 588*

*We Know That Christ is Raised – PsH 271*

*Living for Jesus – PsH 292*

*Lord, I Want to Be a Christian – PsH 264*

*Fill Thou My Life, O Lord, My God – PsH 547*

*Christ, You Are the Fullness – PsH 229*

*I Will Extol You, O My God – PsH 185*

*Sing! A New Creation – SNC 241*

*Psalm 105 – SNC 242*

*Will You Come and Follow Me – SNC 267*

*Gracious Spirit – SNC 166*

*On Eagle's Wings – SNC 185*

*I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light – SNC 77*  
*Take, O Take Me As I Am – SNC 215*  
*Unless a Grain of Wheat – SNT 94*  
*God's Path – SWM 189*  
*Risen to Life with Christ – SNT 202*  
*Those Who Are Holy – SNT 203*  
*Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer – SWM 21*  
*In Christ Alone – CS 20*  
*One Generation Will Call to the Next – CS 4*

## 5. Affirming Baptismal Identity Through Profession of Faith

### Sermon Starters

#### The Great Divide, John 3:36, Luke 12:8,9

The traditional practice of Public Profession of Faith is not prescribed for us in the Scriptures in the way that the sacraments are given. It has developed historically in the life of the church. In pre-Reformation days Roman Catholicism prescribed the sacrament of Confirmation. John Calvin hesitated to use the same word for a non-sacramental practice and taught that it be called Profession of Faith.

An unbaptized person who comes to know the Gospel and finds salvation in adult life makes a profession of faith at the time of her/his baptism. In this profession a belief in Jesus Christ and a commitment to follow him is expressed.

A person baptized as an infant who comes to know the Gospel and finds salvation also makes a profession of faith. This profession is a personal response to the promises of God given at baptism. This step may be taken at any age in which one is able to meaningfully affirm the truth of the Gospel and experience the love of God.

The Scripture passages for today make it clear that the great divide which runs through the human race focuses on one's personal response to the truth of the Gospel which comes in Jesus Christ. Once we have heard, we must decide. Those who believe receive eternal life, those who reject will not see life (cf. John 3:36). In Luke 12, Jesus adds greater urgency to this response by indicating that the response to us in heaven is shaped by our response to him here in this life (cf. Luke 12:8,9)

#### Faith That Continues, II Timothy 1:1-12

One of the accusations leveled against the practice of infant baptism is that we are encouraging complacency and false security in those baptized and teaching them to think of themselves as covenant members. We must admit that this is a danger we must be aware of, and we must also admit that in too many instances, baptized people have responded to their baptism with a lessened sense of urgency for making a personal commitment.

The truth is that quite the opposite is intended and ought to be the case. To be born to believing parents, to be included in God’s covenant from birth, ought instead to motivate us to respond with grateful and eager commitments to Christ.

Paul’s perspective on Timothy’s life is very instructive for us. While Paul clearly expresses his own faith commitment to Timothy, he also admires Timothy for his sincere faith (v.5) and throughout his two pastoral epistles to Timothy Paul admires him as a man of faith. But the added dimension here is that Paul sees the rich continuity of faith from one generation to the next – from Timothy’s grandmother Lois, and his mother Eunice, and now to Timothy (see v.5).

Far from seeing this as a cause for complacency or false security, he counsels Timothy to “fan into flame the gift of God”(v.6) and testifying about the Lord unashamedly (v.8). Timothy’s covenant standing, therefore, is cause for a rich and eager profession of his own faith!

#### Faith Formation Committee Document: ABFF

##### Part 3: Affirming Baptismal Identity through Profession of Faith

See also “A Practice of Christian Unity”, a five-session Bible Study on I Corinthians 11, found on the website of the Faith Formation Committee – [www.crcna.org/formation](http://www.crcna.org/formation).

#### Confessional References

Canons of Dort, III-IV, 9-11

#### Supplementary Scriptures

Luke 12:8-9

John 6: 35-40

Acts 16:11-15

Acts 16:25-34

Romans 10:5-13

I Corinthians 11:23-26

II Timothy 1:3-12

II Timothy 3:14-15

I Peter 3:15-16

#### The Worship Sourcebook

Part One, Section 7.1-7.6 – Profession of Faith and Remembrance of Baptism

## Song Suggestions

*I Love the Lord, for He Has Heard My Voice – PsH 116*  
*O Jesus, I Have Promised – PsH 285*  
*Jesus Loves Me, This I Know – PsH 571*  
*I Will Sing of My Redeemer – PsH 479*  
*Father, Long before Creation – PsH 464*  
*At the Name of Jesus – PsH 467*  
*Blessed Assurance: Jesus Is Mine – PsH 490*  
*I Know Not Why God's Wondrous Grace – PsH 495*  
*Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing – PsH 486*  
*Love Divine, All Loves Excelling – PsH 568*  
*Step by Step – SNC 17*  
*On Eagle's Wings – SNC 185*  
*I Love the Lord – SNC 227*  
*Will You Come and Follow Me – SNC 267*  
*Here I Am Lord – SNC 268*  
*You Have Come Down to the Lakeshore – SNC 269*  
*My Friends, May You Grow in Grace – SNC 288*  
*If We Confess – SNT 139*  
*I'm Not Ashamed to Own my Lord – SNT 211*  
*May the Mind of Christ – SWM 211 [or PsH 291]*  
*You Shall Love the Lord – SWM 220*

## 6. The Lord's Supper:

### Sermon Starters

#### Table Fellowship, I Cor.10:14-22, I Corinthians 11:17-22

So many of the characteristics of the Lord's Supper point to it as an experience of "koinonia"/fellowship. It's a meal, around a table, often called "communion", and it assumes a bonded relationship among all who participate.

In I Corinthians 10, Paul not only calls this a participation in Christ, but also points to the fact that "we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf" (vv.16-17). Similarly in I Corinthians 11, Paul rebukes them for inhospitality at the Table (see vv. 20-22). In his exhortations for faithful partaking, Paul confronts them for their inappropriate interpersonal behavior (see vv.33-34) and reinforces his counsel with the following two chapters - the unity-of-the-body 12<sup>th</sup> chapter, and the 13<sup>th</sup> chapter on the practice of love.

Our participation in the Table of the Lord, therefore, requires us to not only ask questions about the common experience of faith we have, and our common bond to Jesus Christ, but also our acceptance of one another and behavior toward one another.

#### Faithful Participation, I Corinthians 11:23-34

A careful examination of the terms used in I Corinthians 11 will guard us against a Zwinglian observance of the Lord's Supper as only a memorial feast. We come to the table knowing that Christ communicates himself and all his benefits to us (see Belgic Confession, art. 35).

Paul's words in I Corinthians 11 identify four actions on our part of which we ought to be conscious. (1) *Proclaim* (v.26). Examine the other locations in Scripture in which this word is used and illustrate how we make proclamations when we partake. (2) *Examine* (v.28). This action is to take place prior to partaking of the sacrament. When? How? What is to be considered? (3) *Discerning the body* (v.29). Other translations use the word "recognizing the body". A careful study will have to identify which "body" – the physical body of Christ, the ecclesiological body? And what does discerning mean? And (4) *Judgment* (v.29). This has sometimes been a terrifying word to many. What kind of judgment? What light does verses 30-32 shed on the interpretation of this concept?

In all of this we must bear in mind that different communicants, with differing abilities, and differing spiritual maturity, and of differing ages will participate in these four actions on a different level.

Faith Formation Committee Document: ABFF

Part 4: The Lord's Supper (Coming in future drafts)

See also "A Practice of Christian Unity", a five-session Bible Study on I Corinthians 11 - found on the website of the Faith Formation Committee – [www.crcna.org/formation](http://www.crcna.org/formation).

Confessional References

Belgic Confession, art.35  
H. Catechism, L.D. 28-30, Q/A 75-82  
OWBTG, art. 38

Supplementary Scriptures

Exodus 12:1-30  
Exodus 13:11-16  
Matthew 26:26-29  
Mark 14:22-25  
Luke 22:17-20  
Luke 24:13-35  
John 6:41-58  
I Corinthians 10:14-22  
I Corinthians 11:17-34

The Worship Sourcebook

Part One, Section 8.1-8.5 – The Lord's Supper

Song Suggestions

*O Come, My Soul, Sing Praise to God – PsH 297*  
*As We Walk Along beside You – PsH 299*  
*Gift of Finest Wheat – PsH 300*  
*In the Quiet Consecration – PsH 302*  
*Come, Let us Eat – PsH 303*  
*Let Us Break Bread Together – PsH 304*  
*O Jesus, Joy of Loving Hearts – PsH 307*

*Lift Up Your Hearts unto the Lord – PsH 309*  
*I Come with Joy to Meet My Lord – PsH 311*  
*Eat This Bread – PsH 312*  
*What Shall I Render to the Lord – PsH 178*  
*As We Gather at Your Table – SNC 245*  
*As Your Family, Lord – SNC 246*  
*Holy, Holy, Holy Is the Lord of Hosts – SNC 251*  
*Holy, Holy, Holy Lord – SNC 252*  
*Lamb of God – SNC 253*  
*Let Us Talents and Tongues Employ – SNC 258*  
*Santo, santo, santo / Holy, Holy, Holy – SNC 259*  
*Samos pueblo que camina / We Are People on a Journey – SNC 260*  
*This Is the Feast of Victory – SNC 262*  
*Table of Plenty – SNC 247*  
*You Are Holy – SNC 20*  
*Santo, Santo, Santo – SNC 19*  
*I Am the Bread of Life – SNC 152*  
*Behold the Lamb – CS 27*  
*Before the Throne of God Above CS 28*  
*Jesus, Greatest at the Table – SNT 96*  
*O Thou, Who at Thy Eucharist Didst Pray – SNT 98*  
*Disciples Gathered Gladly – SNT 99*  
*Blood Was on the Crown of Thorns – SNT 102*  
*I Know It Was the Blood – SNT 103*  
*Shadows Lengthen into Night – SNT 106*  
*One Bread, One Body – SNT 153*  
*Cup of Blessing – SNT 154*  
*The Bread is Broken, You Are Whole – SNT 155*  
*That Night, at Table – SNT 156*  
*Christ the Lord, Who Calls Us – SNT 157*  
*O Love of God / Amor de Dios – SNT 158*  
*We Are Members of Christ's Body – SNT 159*