NewSong Church

HARRISON, OHIO

POSITION PAPER

The Lord's Supper

A covenant meal for the gathered church.

OUR POSITION

The Lord's Supper is a covenant meal Christ gave to His church, for believers to remember His death, proclaim His return, and commune with Him and with one another. NewSong observes it every Sunday, and we welcome to the table all baptized believers who are in good standing with a gospel-preaching church.

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What the Supper is

On the night He was betrayed, Jesus took bread and the cup and told His disciples to do this in remembrance of Him (Luke 22:19–20; 1 Corinthians 11:23–25). Our Statement of Faith calls it "a covenant meal given to believers to remember Christ's death, proclaim His return, and experience communion with Him and His body" (Article 9).

The Supper looks in three directions:

- **Back** to the cross, where Christ's body was given and His blood was shed for our sins (1 Corinthians 11:24–25)
- **Forward** to His return: "you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" (1 Corinthians 11:26)
- **Around** the table, to the brothers and sisters we share it with: "we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17)

Christ's presence in the Supper

The bread and cup do not become Christ's physical body and blood, and the Supper is not a sacrifice offered again. Christ's sacrifice was once for all (Hebrews 10:10–14). Yet the Supper is more than a memory. Believers who take it in faith truly feed on Christ, spiritually. The 1689 Confession says believers "really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally, but spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of His death" (30.7, spelling modernized).

Who may take it

The Supper is given to believers. We welcome to the table all baptized believers who are in good standing with a gospel-preaching church, whether NewSong or another church. Three convictions shape this practice:

- **Faith comes first.** The Supper is a sign of belonging to Christ, so it is for those who have trusted in Him.
- **Baptism comes before the table.** In the New Testament, those who believed were baptized and then devoted themselves to the breaking of bread with the church (Acts 2:41–42). Baptism marks entry into the visible church; the Supper is the ongoing meal of those within it.
- **The table belongs to the church.** The Supper is a meal of the gathered body (1 Corinthians 11:18–20, 33). Belonging to a gospel-preaching church means a believer is known, cared for, and accountable, which is what the table expresses.

Scripture calls each person to examine himself before he eats (1 Corinthians 11:27–29). This is not a call to perfection, since the Supper is for sinners who trust in Christ. It is a call to come in repentance and faith, not in unconfessed sin or division with a brother (Matthew 5:23–24).

The Supper and church discipline

Because the Supper is a sign of communion with Christ's body, it is tied to membership and discipline. When a member persists in unrepentant sin and the congregation reaches the final stage of discipline, the church removes both that person's membership and their “ability to partake in the Lord's Supper” (Bylaws, Article VII). The aim is never punishment, but restoration, and the table is joyfully reopened when the person repents.

How often

NewSong observes the Lord's Supper every Sunday. The early church gathered on the first day of the week “to break bread” (Acts 20:7), and Paul speaks of the Supper as part of what happens “when you come together” (1 Corinthians 11:18–20, 33). Christ gave His church this meal to strengthen faith, and we are glad to receive it each Lord's Day.

If you are visiting and have questions about coming to the table, please speak with one of our elders before the service. We would be glad to talk with you.

KEY PASSAGES

Matthew 26:26–29; Luke 22:14–20; 1 Corinthians 10:16–17; 11:17–34; Hebrews 10:10–14. Statement of Faith, Article 9. 1689 Confession, chapter 30.

NewSong Church · 120 North State Street, Harrison, Ohio · newsongharrison.com · 513-202-0654

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