

## EPC Sermon “Sacraments”

November 2, 2025

New Testament Readings: (English Standard Version)

### **Matthew 28:16-20**

#### *The Great Commission*

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them.

17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted.

18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

### **Matthew 3:13-16**

#### *The Baptism of Jesus*

13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him.

14 John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

15 But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented.

16 And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him;

### **John 3:22-23**

#### *John the Baptist Exalts Christ*

22 After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing.

23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized

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### **John 4:1-2**

- 1 Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John  
2 (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples),

### **Matthew 26:26-29**

#### *Institution of the Lord's Supper*

- 26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body."  
27 And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you,  
28 for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.  
29 I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

### **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**

- 23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread,  
24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."  
25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."  
26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

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### Opening

This Saturday at our church,

1. Men’s group – fellowship and service
2. Wedding – some attended – some served
3. Food Bank – serve those in need
4. Praise team practice – prepare for worship

### Not unique Christian activities

1. Service clubs
2. Civil (by a Judge) weddings – other faiths have weddings
3. Food distribution by Government and other groups
4. Bands practice

Today I want to talk about two ceremonies we do as Christians that are often misunderstood by non-Christians.

### Baptism and Communion (Lord’s Supper)

These are instituted (founded, introduced) by Jesus Christ.

(Quick examples from scripture readings)

Often referred to as “sacraments” or “ordinances”

Christian denominations do not agree on the number, the meaning or description of them.

For instance Roman Catholic – seven Reformed – two

### Baptism and Communion

From W-3.04 Book of Order

**The Sacraments** are the Word of God enacted and sealed in the life of the Church, the body of Christ. They are gracious acts of God, by which Christ Jesus offers his life to us in the power of the Holy Spirit. They are also human acts of gratitude, by which we offer our lives to God in love and service. The Sacraments are both physical signs and spiritual gifts, including words and actions, surrounded by prayer, in the context of the Church’s common worship. They employ ordinary things—the basic elements of water, bread, and wine—in proclaiming the extraordinary love of God.

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### W-3.0402 Theology of Baptism

**Baptism** is the sign and seal of our incorporation into Jesus Christ.

Through His baptism, Jesus set us free from the power of sin forever.

Jesus commissioned his followers to go and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them to obey his commands.

The disciples were empowered by the outpouring of the Spirit to continue Jesus’ mission and ministry, inviting others to join this new way of life in Christ.

Baptism holds a deep reservoir of theological meaning, including:

dying and rising with Jesus Christ;

pardon, cleansing, and renewal;

the gift of the Holy Spirit;

incorporation into the body of Christ;

and a sign of the realm of God. A sign of God’s covenant.

Baptism enacts and seals what the Word proclaims: God’s redeeming grace offered to all people.

Baptism is at once God’s gift of grace, God’s means of grace, and God’s call to respond to that grace.

Through Baptism, Jesus Christ calls us to repentance, faithfulness, and discipleship.

Through Baptism, the Holy Spirit gives the Church its identity and commissions the Church for service in the world.

Baptism is the bond of unity in Jesus Christ. When we are baptized, we are made one with Christ, with one another, and with the Church of every time and place.

Both believers and their children are included in God’s covenant love.

The baptism of believer’s witnesses to the truth that God’s gift of grace calls for our grateful response.

The baptism of our young children witnesses to the truth that God claims people in love even before they are able to respond in faith. These two forms of witness are one and the same Sacrament.

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God’s faithfulness to us is sure, even when human faithfulness to God is not. God’s grace is sufficient; therefore Baptism is not repeated.

Baptism marks the beginning of new life in Christ. The new way of life to which God calls us is one of deep commitment, disciplined discernment, and growth in faith.

The gifts of the Holy Spirit, given with and through Baptism, equip and strengthen us for the challenges of Christian faith and life.

As there is one body, there is one Baptism. We recognize all baptisms by other Christian churches that are administered with water and performed in the name of the triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

### W-3.0409 Theology of the Lord’s Supper

The Lord’s Supper is the sign and seal of our communion with the crucified and risen Lord.

On the night before his death, Jesus shared bread and wine with his disciples. He spoke of the bread and wine as his body and blood, signs of the new covenant and told the disciples to remember him by keeping this feast. On the day of his resurrection, Jesus made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread.

The disciples continued to devote themselves to the apostles’ teaching, fellowship, prayers, and the common meal.

The Lord’s Supper theological meaning, including:

thanksgiving to God the Father;

remembrance of Jesus Christ;

invocation of the Holy Spirit;

communion in the body of Christ;

and a meal of the realm of God.

The Lord’s Supper to be a sign of God’s covenant.

The Lord’s Supper enacts and seals what the Word proclaims:

God’s sustaining grace offered to all people.

The Lord’s Supper is at once God’s gift of grace, God’s means of grace, and God’s call to respond to that grace.

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Through the Lord’s Supper, Jesus Christ nourishes us in righteousness, faithfulness, and discipleship. Through the Lord’s Supper, the Holy Spirit renews the Church in its identity and sends the Church to mission in the world.

When we gather at the Lord’s Supper the Spirit draws us into Christ’s presence and unites with the Church in every time and place.

We reaffirm the promises of our baptism and recommit ourselves to love and serve God, one another, and our neighbors in the world.

The opportunity to eat and drink with Christ is not a right bestowed upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love.

All who come to the table are offered the bread and cup, regardless of their age or understanding.

If some of those who come have not yet been baptized, an invitation, when appropriate, to baptismal preparation and Baptism should be graciously extended.

Even those who doubt may come to the table in order to be assured of God’s love and grace in Jesus Christ.

Baptism can be seen as the beginning of a Life in Christ.

Communion can be seen as the on-going practice of a Life in Christ.

***Both are an interaction with God through the Holy Spirit!***