

My Story

- Grew up in parsonage (Minnesota North)
- Catechesis consisted in memorizing 6 chief parts
- Confirmation = admission to the Table
- Parish experience: Bethel 1980-86; St. Paul 1986-96; Wittenberg 1996-present
- Just say “no” was the normal experience; or: just say “yes!” (Open communion)
- Campus environment a special challenge
- Eyes opened: 69% indicated closed practice; 21% actually used the words “closed communion”; 31% practiced open communion.
 - Closed –some kind of requirement
 - Closed –good theology, poor wording
 - Closed –good theology, good wording
 - Open –in effect
 - Open –adroit wording
 - Open –wide

Context for Ministry

- What does the pastor know, believe, and teach regarding closed communion?
- What do the layman/leaders
- What does the style, tone, attitude of the pastor convey?
- What do the laymen/leaders convey?
- How and with what means do you share (communicate) the practice you observe?
- What do you teach about closed communion in catechesis?
- What do you teach from the pulpit? From the Altar? From the Communion rail?
- Narrative Communion Service

Discussion Questions

1. What are your personal challenges regarding the practice of closed communion?
2. What are the context (your people, visitors) challenges regarding this practice?
3. How do you teach closed communion where you are called? Where would you begin such teaching (if you are not currently doing so)?
4. What would you like to start doing regarding the practice of closed communion?
5. What is working well regarding how you conduct the Divine Service?
6. How would you like to change the way you conduct the Divine Service/
7. What have you done regarding instructing the Elders/Ushers regarding this practice? What would you like to start doing?
8. What are you currently doing for bulletin articles regarding Holy Communion?
9. How might you improve this?
10. Describe how you believe you are being “heard” as you verbalize your closed communion practice. How might this be improved?