PREPARATORY EXHORTATION
BEFORE THE CELEBRATION
OF THE LORD’S SUPPER

A preparatory service may be held before each celebration of the Lord’s Supper, in connection with the Communion service itself, or on the previous Sunday. It may be observed in the worship service just prior to the Prayer of Confession, replacing the normal invitation to pray. The following exhortation may be used to meet the requirement.

EXHORTATION TO SELF-EXAMINATION

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, we propose to celebrate together, with the gracious help of God, the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper this next Lord’s Day. That we may celebrate this Sacrament to our comfort, it is necessary that we rightly examine ourselves. Let us all, therefore, consider our sins, asking ourselves whether we believe this faithful promise of God: that all our sins are forgiven us only for the sake of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, even as perfectly as if we had fulfilled all righteousness. Let us also ask ourselves whether we make it our aim to show true thankfulness to God in our whole life, to walk uprightly before God, and to live in love and peace with our neighbor.

All those who are of this mind God will certainly receive in mercy and count them worthy partakers of the Supper of our Lord. On the contrary, according to the command of Christ and the Apostle Paul, we admonish all those who are continuing in unrepented sin to keep themselves from the Lord’s Table.

This admonition is not intended, dearly beloved, to distress the contrite hearts of God’s people, as if none might come to our Lord’s Table but those who are without sin. For we do not come to this Supper to testify that we are righteous in ourselves, but rather that we are conscious of our sinfulness and trust in Jesus Christ alone for our salvation.

Therefore, despite any feeling that we do not have perfect faith, and that we do not serve God with such zeal as we ought, but have daily to strive with the weakness of our faith and the selfishness of our desires; yet since we are, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, sorry for these weaknesses and earnest in our desire to fight against our unbelief and to live according to all the commandments of God, therefore we rest assured that no sin or infirmity which still remains against our will in us can...
hinder us from being received by God in mercy and from being made worthy partakers of our Lord.

That we may now so examine ourselves before almighty God, let us confess our sins. Let us pray.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

All shall join in making the personal and corporate acknowledge of sin and of their continuing need for God’s redemptive grace. A brief period for silent prayers may follow the corporation confession.