

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
February 1, 2026

*"Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ?
Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?"
- 1Corinthians 10:16*



“” = Please stand if you are able.*

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Ephesians 1:18-23

Leader: I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling,

People: What are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Leader: And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.

People: These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might

Leader: Which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead

People: And seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

Leader: Far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age

People: But also in the one to come.

Leader: And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,

People: Which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Hebrews 10:10

***Hymn #342** – “Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation”

Scripture Reading – Colossians 1:13-27

Ancient Creedal Proclamation – Apostles Creed (pg#845 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]
[Gifts labeled “Deacon’s Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

*Doxology #731 (red hymnal)

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.*

*Prayer of Dedication

***Sung Psalm #122A** – “I Was Filled with Joy and Gladness”

Prayers of the Church & Lord's Prayer (sins)

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Reformation Creedal Reading – Westminster Larger Catechism, 168.

Leader: *What is the Lord's supper?*

People: **The Lord's supper is a sacrament of the New Testament,**

Luke 22:20

Leader: *Wherein, by giving and receiving bread and wine according to the appointment of Jesus Christ,*

Matt 26:26-28

1Cor 11:23-26

People: **His death is showed forth;**

Leader: *And they that worthily communicate feed upon His body and blood,*

1Cor 10:16

People: **To their spiritual nourishment and growth in grace**

Leader: *Have their union and communion with Him confirmed;*

People: **Testify and renew their thankfulness,**

1Cor 11:24

Leader: *And engagement to God, and their mutual love and fellowship each with the other,*

1Cor 10:14-16,21

People: **As members of the same mystical body.**

1Cor 10:17

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – 1Corinthians 11:17-34

***Gloria Patri #735** (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – “Discerning the Body”

A Topical Sermon Series on the Lord's Supper

Ministry of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation & Warning

Prayer

Scripture – 1Corinthians 10:16-17

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn #353** – “I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord”

***Benediction**

Everyone is welcome to Coffee Hour Fellowship downstairs after church today

WEEKLY STUDIES & GATHERINGS

Sunday: **Sunday School** (9:00 – 10:00 AM, Grange): Children's curriculum is by KVB Publications. Adults are studying the Westminster Larger Catechism.

Tuesday: **Classics Study** (10:30 AM – noon, Pastor's house): Essential Sermons by Augustine.

Wednesday: **Adult Bible Study** (6:30 – 8:00 PM, Pastor's house)

Wednesday: **Gen-Alpha Club** (2nd & 4th Wednesday, 6:30 – 8:00 PM, Pastor's house)

Friday: **Young Adult Discussion Group** (6:30 PM, 1st & 3rd Fridays, Pastor's house)

Saturday: **Prayer Group** (Please call Sheryl to confirm if the group is meeting that day, 860-309-7250.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

TRC's Webpage: TrinityReformedCT.org

TRC's Facebook Page: facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/

TRC's Youtube Channel: youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT

Pastor Doug's youtube.com/simplyreformed

Youtube Channels: youtube.com/@PilgrimsofPlunder

INTERNET PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer requests for our prayer chain, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

LEADERSHIP

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--|--------------|---------------------------------------|
| Elders: | Rev. Douglas Aldrich, pastor | 860-379-1147 | douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net |
| | Bob Ensminger | 860-485-8738 | robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com |
| | Rich Gabelmann | 860-605-7852 | rgabelmann0415@gmail.com |
| | Rev. Jonathan Haulenbeek | 203-709-0784 | jhaulenbeek@icloud.com |
| Deacons: | David Mattson (chair), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell, Mason Goodell, Dean Winters | | |
| Sunday School: | Verna Aldrich | | Music Coordinator: Cindy Rines |
| Clerk: | Sheryl Gabelmann | | Treasurer: Cindy Rines |

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Worship Starts At: 10:30 AM (9:30 AM in the summer)

Sunday Worship At: Winchester Grange (100 Newfield Rd; Winchester Center, CT 06098)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065 – Phone: (860) 238-7399

Webpage: trinityreformedct.org – Email: trinityreformedct@gmail.com

Sermon Notes

1Corinthians 11:17-34

“Discerning the Body”

A Topical Sermon Series on the Lord's Supper

January 25, 2026

Introduction

- 1) What are the most famous biblical texts on the Lord's Supper?
 - a) The most famous are from Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20;
1Corinthians 11:23-26.
 - i) These texts describe what the Lord Jesus has established, instituted, and commanded, the Lord's Supper.
 - ii) On that Thursday night before His crucifixion.

- iii) Thus, they are called the “Words of Institution”.
 - The “*this is My body... this is My blood*”.
 - Which are spoken at the administration of the Supper.
 - For Rome¹ these words are viewed as consecration and cause the change of the bread and the wine into the literal body and blood of Christ. (This is the heresy of transubstantiation.)
 - For Protestants this is declarative, covenantal words that proclaim the Gospel.
- b) There are other texts: John 6; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1Corithians 10:16-22; the Passover texts (Ex 12-13; Lev 23; Num 9; 16; Ezek 45:21-24; 1Cor 5:7-8; Rev 5:6-14; 7:9-14; 19:6-9), etc.
- c) The second most famous, and one of the longest, however, is 1Corinthians 11:17-34.
 - i) Which includes, the Words of Institution in 1Cor 11:23-26.
 - ii) The Memorialists in particular love this text.
 - Memorialists believe the Sacraments are not means of grace and just are memorials, thus they love “*remembrance of Me*” in 1Cor 11:25b.
 - The Reformed (except Reformed Baptists) believe the sacraments are more than memorials but not magical, and reject the superstition of Rome.
 - iii) However, frequently in the church we stay away from the texts that surround 1Cor 11:23-26 because they lead to a lot of questions.
 - iv) And it is a very challenging text to deal with.

2) To list just a few common questions:

- a) Why and how do factions make evident “*those who are approved?*” – 1Cor 11:19
- b) Why does Paul want them to eat at home (especially the hungry) when ancient Communion seemed to include a full meal as taught in 1Cor 11:33 and Jude 12?
 - i) 1Cor 11:21 – “*for in your eating each one takes his own supper first*”
 - ii) 1Cor 11:22 – “*What! Do you not have houses in which to eat and drink?*”
 - iii) 1Cor 11:23 – “*If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home,*”
- c) To take the Supper “*in an unworthy manner*”, from verse 27, what does it mean?
 - i) What does it mean that we have to “*examine*” ourselves, from verse 29?
 - ii) When should I take the Supper or not?
 - iii) If I am wrestling with sin, should I not take the Supper?
 - iv) What level of sinfulness prevents me from the Supper?
- d) After all, verse 29 tells us we can eat and drink judgment unto ourselves, what does that mean?
- e) And does verse 30 teach that if we take the Supper in a wrong fashion that it leads to weakness, sickness and literally physical death? Really?!

3) We are going through a mini-topical series on the Lord’s Supper.

- a) Since the elders are writing a Lord’s Supper policy for the church.
- b) Today, I just want to carefully work through the entire section of the Supper from 1Corinthians 11.

¹ The phrase “*hocus pocus*” probably comes from a medieval mockery, or superstition, of the Latin for the Words of Institution (*Hoc est corpus meum* – “This is my body”).

4) Two things we have to do to understand this text:

- a) First, as always, read it in context, seeking the meaning the author wants to give, within its historical context.
- b) Second, to ask a very important question, you probably didn't think of:
 - i) What does "body", first and foremost, mean in 1Corinthians 11:29?
 - ii) 1Cor 11:29 (NASB) – *"For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself if he does not judge the body rightly."*
 - iii) Or the ESV – *"For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself."*
 - iv) You might say: The body refers to my body.
 - It is about me, the individual Christian.
 - I am to make sure I am personally good enough to take the Supper.
 - Are you sure that is the primary meaning?

5) Let's ponder this together in context.

Corinthian Background

- 1) The Corinthian church was one of the most troubled churches in the New Testament.²
 - a) Paul wrote at least four letters to the Corinthians, two of which we have.³
 - b) Corinth was plagued with idolatry and worldly thinking in worship.
- 2) You have to understand what the (ancient/cultural) problem was in order to hear the answer in Scripture.
 - a) Note the problems Paul deals with before today's sermon text:
 - i) **1Cor 8-10** is about their misusing of Gospel freedom by eating meat sacrificed to idols and thus causing weaker Christians to stumble. 1Cor 8:7-13
 - ii) **1Cor 11:1-16** is about pagan worship practices about head coverings being imported into the church.
 - b) If you don't understand what idol meant, and what pagan head-coverings mean and represent, those passages are going to be difficult to understand.
 - c) It is important to note, that Paul's response, like all of Scripture, focuses on the church as a collective first, not just individual piety.

² To list just a few major ones: 1) Divisions and factionalism in the church (1Cor 1:10-17; 3:1-9; 3:21-23); 2) Pride, boasting, and reliance on worldly wisdom (1Cor 1:18-31; 4:6-7,18-21); 3) Tolerance of gross sexual immorality (1Cor 5:1-13; 6:12-20); 4) Failure to exercise church discipline (1Cor 5:1-13; 5:9-13); 5) Christians suing one another before unbelievers (1Cor 6:1-8); 6) Confusion about marriage, singleness, and sexual ethics (1Cor 7:1-40); 7) Idolatry and misuse of Christian liberty (1Cor 8:1-13; 10:1-22; 10:23-24); 8) Causing weaker believers to stumble (1Cor 8:7-13; 9:19-23); 9) Disorder and irreverence in corporate worship (1Cor 11:2-16); 10) Divisions, selfishness, and abuse at the Lord's Supper (1Cor 11:17-34); 11) Pride, competition, and disorder in the use of spiritual gifts (1Cor 12:1-31; 13; 14:1-40); 12) Denial or confusion concerning the bodily resurrection (1Cor 15:12-58); 13) Neglect or disorder in material support and stewardship (1Cor 9:6-14; 16:1-4).

³ In 1Cor 5:9 Paul refers to an earlier letter, thus a letter before 1Corinthians. While 2Cor 2:3-4; 7:8-12; 13:2 appears to teach that there was a letter written in-between 1st and 2nd Corinthians.

3) Warning:

- a) Understanding the historical context is critical to understanding Scripture.
 - i) If you think Caesar is a little guy that delivers pizza.
 - ii) You will not understand our Lord's statement, "*Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and to God the things that are God's.*" – Matthew 22:21b
- b) However, like all things in this fallen world, it can be twisted.
- c) A bad use of a supposed historical example can be used to twist Scripture.
 - i) Example: 1Corinthians 6:9 isn't really a condemnation of homosexuality.
 - ii) It is really only about temple prostitution in ancient Corinth.
 - iii) And therefore, all of what Scripture teaches about the subject can be ignored and we can affirm the world's teaching on the subject!
 - iv) To twist Scripture, especially for one's own perverted desires is a grave sin. Deut 4:2; Prov 30:5-6; Jer 23:16,26-32 2Pet 1:20-21; 3:16; Rev 22:18-19
- d) When someone tells you there is special historical knowledge to understand Scripture, be careful.
 - i) They might be right.
 - ii) Or, they have an agenda.
 - iii) Which they, or you, might intentionally have, or not even realize. (We all wrestle with effects of the fall.)
- e) Here is a good standard to judge:
 - i) Does it bring clarity to the text while affirming what else all of Scripture teaches? If so, then good.
 - ii) Or, is it trying to get around the plain meaning of the text to suit a worldly agenda? If so, then bad.

4) I would argue there are two major problems that help us understand 1Corinthians 11:17-34:

- a) **First:** Corinth was/had experienced at least major food shortages and maybe even a famine.
 - i) Starvation could be a common problem in the ancient world. Acts 11:29-30
 - ii) Besides death, the social pressure on a society could be massive.
 - iii) There is good evidence of food shortages, and/or famine at Corinth around the time 1Corithians was written.⁴
 - iv) If there was a famine, it does help to better understand the text.

⁴ There is some biblical evidence for this theory. It helps explain the reference to death (i.e. sleep) in 1Cor 11:30. Also, it helps explain why Paul seems to be against marriage in 1Cor 7:7-8,26-28,32-35 and yet encourages marriage in 1Tim 5:14. Note the language of 1Cor 7:26 – "*I think then that this is good in view of the present distress, that it is good for a man to remain as he is.*"

For historical evidence, most scholars date the writing of 1Corinthians between 50-53 AD, during the reign of the Roman Claudius (r.41-54 AD). There were famines and food shortages in Greece during Claudius' reign, including one around 51 AD, which the ancient Roman historian Tacitus called an "ominous year." For ancient references to food shortages/famines during this period see: Suetonius, *Claudius* 18.2; Tacitus, *Annals* 12.43; Dio Cassius, *History* 40.11; Josephus, *Antiquities* 3.320-21. For modern studies see: David E. Garland, *1Corinthians*; in the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, (Baker, 2003). Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*; in The New International Greek Testament Commentary series, (Eerdmans, 2000). B.W. Winter, *Seek the Welfare of the City*, (Eerdmans, 1994). Bradley B. Blue, "The House Church at Corinth and the Lord's Supper: Famine, Food Supply, and the Present Distress." *Criswell Theological Review*, 5 (Spring, 1991), 221-239. (faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted_hildebrandt/ntresources/ntarticles/CTR-NT/Blue-HouseChCorinth-CTR.htm)

b) **Second:** The Corinthians were combining the Lord's Supper with worldly "high society" dinner parties, thus causing division between the poor and the powerful.

- i) It appears ancient Christian Communion, like the Jewish Passover, included a full meal. 1Cor 11:20
Jude 12
- ii) Remember, there were no church buildings in ancient times; Christians would assemble in a believer's house, usually someone who had property. Rom 16:3-5
1Cor 16:19
Col 4:15; Philem 2
- iii) Class division was the most important social construct in ancient Rome. Matt 20:25-28; Mark 10:42-45;
Luke 22:25-27; Acts 22:25-29
- iv) Ancient Corinth was a very pagan city and some of the Corinthian Christians were tempted by hip/worldly spirituality. 1Cor 1:18-2:16
- v) Roman dinner parties were an important way for the wealthy and socially "superior" to show off their power and importance.
 - The parties in Roman villas would have the best seats (with the best food & service) for the elite in one room. While the "overflow" was for the commoners, crowded in lesser rooms.
 - It was common for these parties that the guests would bring their own food; not to share (like a pot-luck), but for their own consumption.⁵

1Corinthians 11:17-34 (In light of the historical situation.)

- 1) When the Corinthians were coming together as a church (for the Lord's Supper) it was "for the worse" because there were social "divisions" among them. 11:17-18
- 2) With mocking irony Paul comments that their approach to the Lord's Table brings about an evil result; that "*Those who are approved may become evident among you.*" 11:19
- 3) Because they are combining the practice of Roman societal dinner parties with Communion:
 - a) "*It is not (really) to eat the Lord's Supper*" they are taking. 11:20
 - b) Following the custom of the day, they were bringing their own food to eat, but not to share, thus Paul states, "*for in your eating each one takes his own supper first; and one is hungry and another is drunk.*" 11:21
 - c) Thus, Paul asks the emphatic question, "*What! Do you not have houses in which to eat?*" 11:22
 - d) He is so passionate because they are mixing Roman elitist societal dinner party customs with the Lord's Supper and they are shaming "*those who have nothing*" and thus despising "*the church of God.*" 11:22
- 4) Paul then explains the true meaning of Communion, in the famous 1Cor 11:23-26.
 - a) The teaching/command of how to correctly worship God through the Lord's Supper is directly from the Lord Jesus via His Apostles. 11:23
Matt 26:26-35
 - b) Communion reminds the Christian of the night Jesus was about to go to His cross. 11:23
 - c) The Lord Jesus used bread & wine, which proclaims Him, and His sacrifice. 11:23-25
 - d) His body and blood are given "for you" (i.e. all Christians). 11:24
 - e) It is a "new covenant" one of grace and perfect peace with God. 11:25

⁵ See Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 8.365AB.

- f) As often as the church takes the elements, they do it “*in remembrance*” of Christ. 11:24-25
- g) Communion is also a proclamation of the centrality of Christ’s death as the meaning of all history, and the only way of salvation. 11:26 Eph 1:9-12
- h) It is also the faithful proclamation of waiting for the Lord’s return. 11:26

5) Thus, when the Corinthian church takes communion “*in an unworthy manner*” (i.e. encouraging socioeconomic division and mixing it with worldly customs), they are guilty of sinning against “*the body and the blood of the Lord.*” 11:27

6) Therefore, the Corinthians must “*examine*” themselves when coming to the Lord’s Table. 11:28

- a) The focus is not on some individual personal piety test. (Which is the common modern interpretation.)
 - i) Reflection about one’s sin is appropriate when coming to the Table.
 - ii) However, the Table proclaims the Gospel, and the forgiveness of all sins! Matt 26:28
 - iii) Thus, the table requires belief in Christ and His Gospel.
 - iv) It also encourages faith in the promises of God which brings about a constant turning (i.e. repenting) from the world and to Christ.
- b) The Corinthians sin is that they claim Christ, while using the Lord’s Supper in a setting of social division and to enhance the status of some Christians.
- c) If the rich Christians want to have social parties, let them do it at their homes.

7) If one doesn’t judge the “*body*” correctly, one brings judgment on themselves. 11:29

- a) The “*body*” does not refer to some sacrilege against some magical power found in the elements of bread and wine.
- b) The “*body*” is the “*body of Christ*”, i.e. Christ Himself who is in heaven and His spiritual body here on earth, i.e. His church. Eph 1:20-23 Col 1:15-20
- c) Because the Corinthians are being elitist in their combining Communion with high-society dinner parties many of the (poor) Corinthians have become “*weak and sick, and a number sleep* (i.e. died).”⁶ 11:30
- d) But if the church discerns itself correctly it will avoid judgment. 11:31
- e) For God does judge His church, to discipline it, so condemnation will be avoided. 11:32

8) Therefore, when the church comes together, they should “*wait for one another.*” 11:33

- a) The word for “*wait*” (*ekdéchomai*) comes from the word “*to receive*” (*déchomai*).
- b) The implication of “*waiting*” is to share/entertain/receive the poorer members.
- c) “*If anyone is hungry*” (i.e. coming to Communion and expecting a dinner party) they should “*eat at home, so that you will not come together for judgment.*” 11:34

Implications of 1Corinthians 11:17-34 for Today

- 1) The social divisions that plague the Corinthians seem so silly to us today because we have had centuries of good Protestant teaching about the priesthood of all believers (1Pet 2:4-12); and this is by the grace of God.
- 2) Yet, let us not cast stones so quickly at our ancient brethren, whose errors are remembered for our edification. 1Cor 10:11-12

⁶ “Sleep” is an NT euphemism for death. See: Matt 27:52; John 11:11ff; Acts 7:60; 13:36; 1Cor 15:6,18,20; 1Thes 4:13ff; 2Pet 3:4.

- a) Do we have any sins that divide the body?
- b) The fact that we so quickly default to the individual and ignore the church is our besetting sin.
- c) As seen by our assuming the examination of v.28 is solely about our private relationship with the Lord, instead of how we as individuals relate to the body of Christ.
- d) Which explains why the Lord's Supper is rarely thought about in modern churches.

3) Do we understand the centrality of the Gospel?

- a) Paul strongly complains that because of the Corinthian church's sin some members are sick and dead (1Cor 11:30). Though what is his focus? Is it not Christ and His Body?
- b) Communion is the most profound proclamation: From God to us (forgiveness), from us to God (faithfulness), from Christian to Christian (fellowship) and from Christian to the world (identification).
- c) Thus the sacrament are "holy things."

4) Note, what is taught, or at least implied, in these texts:

- a) Those who take the Supper are in the body of Christ.
 - i) This means they have faith, on some basic level.
 - ii) That they have received baptism, because baptism is the sacrament of entrance into Christ's spiritual body (the church).
 - iii) While the Lord's Supper is maintaining and being fed in the body of Christ.
- b) Those who take the Supper should discern the body of Christ.
 - i) So education, to understand the Gospel, to understand the sacraments, to understand the Lord's Supper, is necessary.
 - ii) Therefore what is the minimal knowledge, and/or education, is necessary to come to the Supper?
 - iii) Is there a minimal age? Or basic training? Confirmation class? Catechism class?
- c) If you have to be in good standing in the church, thus it is the duty of the leaders to "fence" the table on some level.
 - i) That is why "excommunication" is directly tied to communion. Matt 18:15-17; 1Cor 5:11-13; 11:27-29
Acts 2:42; 2Thes 3:14; Heb 13:10; Jude 12
 - ii) This requires discerning and godly leaders who are willing to govern.

5) Yet the meal is fundamentally a proclamation of Christ's grace, which cannot be forgotten.

6) All of this is even more complicated by different denominations and the automobile.

- a) That is why the elders have been working on a Lord's Supper policy for months.
- b) This is far more complicated question then simply: Should we have the Supper weekly?

7) Yet the Supper is also so simple, so gracious, so powerful: *"While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, 'Take, eat; this is My body.' And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it all of you; for this is My blood of the new covenant, in My blood, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins."*