**What’s happening during Holy Communion?**

There are 3 main streams of though in terms of Holy Communion

(My professors taught me that the easy way to remember this is that Lutherans practice bad math… I’ll include those “mathematical equations.”)

It is also easiest to look at in terms of this spectrum:

Consubstantiation ---------------------------- Real Presence------------------------------------Transubstantiation

**Consubstantiation**

This belief is most commonly held by Baptist churches. It teaches that during Holy Communion, the bread and wine remain only bread and wine. Christ is no way spiritually or physically present in the meal. Communion is done purely as a memorial or remembrance of Christ’s Last Supper. (The term is often incorrectly used as a synonym for Real Presence)

**Bread + Wine = Bread + Wine**

**Transubstantiation**

This doctrine is most commonly held by Catholic Churches. It teaches that during Holy Communion (often referred to as the Eucharist), and specifically during the words of institution, that the bread and wine are fully and completely turned into Christ’s physical body and blood. No part of the bread and wine remains.

**Bread + Wine = Body + Blood**

**Real Presence**

This is the doctrine ascribed to by the ELCA. It teaches that during the Holy Communion, and specifically during the words of institution, the Christ comes to be present in the meal by the work of the Holy Spirit. The teaching is that Christ’s presence exists in, with, and under the bread and the wine. While the bread and wine remains, Christ’s promise that this is his body and blood also becomes true.

**Bread + Wine = Bread + Wine + Body + Blood**