

Different Practices for Confession during Divine Service

Early Lutherans

Private Absolution only (No Confession-Absolution during Divine Service)	General Confession followed by Declaration of Grace	General Confession followed by Individual Absolution for members	General Confession followed by Corporate Absolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Osiander and Brenz • Martin Luther • <i>Church Order of Ansbach (1533)</i> • <i>Church Order of Nuerenberg (1533)</i> • <i>Church Order of Wittenberg (1542)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philip Melanchthon • <i>Saxon Visitation Articles (1533)</i> • <i>Church Order of Prussia (1535)</i> • <i>Church Order of Braunschweiger (1531)¹</i> • <i>Church Order of Mecklenburg (1545)</i> • <i>Church Order of Wittenberg (1559)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Church Order of Merseberg (1544)</i> • <i>Church Order of Saxony (1581)</i> • <i>Church Order of Schwarzburg (1587)</i> • <i>Church Order of Calenberg</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Martin Chemnitz²

1: The *Church Order of Braunschweiger* was unique in that it contained only the General Confession and did not contain either the Declaration of Grace or an Absolution

2: Martin Chemnitz used a conditional form for Corporate Absolution that differs greatly from later unconditional (or blind) forms of Corporate Absolution

Later Lutherans 1800s

Private Absolution only (No Confession-Absolution during Divine Service)	General Confession followed by Declaration of Grace	General Confession followed by Individual Absolution for members	General Confession followed by Corporate Absolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pietists³ • C.W.F. Walther's Preferred Practice (1872)⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Common Service (1888)</i> • <i>Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book (1889)</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilhelm Löhe • <i>Löhe's Agenda (1844)</i> • <i>LCMS Church Agenda (1856)⁵</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most German Churches • <i>Church of Bavaria⁶</i> • Northern District of the <i>Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (1856)</i> • <i>LCMS Church Agenda (1856)⁵</i>

3: The Pietists actually did away with Absolution altogether, including Private Absolution, instead they only confessed their sins directly to God

4: While Walther allows churches in the LCMS to practice either the Declaration of Grace, Individual Absolution or Corporate Absolution, his preferred method was to return to the days of Luther and only practice Private Confession-Absolution outside of the Divine Service

5: The *LCMS Church Agenda* and *Löhe's Agenda* both used the *Church Order of Saxony (1581)*, some in the early LCMS used this for Individual Absolution and others for Corporate Absolution

6: The *Church of Bavaria* is infamous for using an Open Corporate Absolution, declaring Absolution to all who were present, members and non-members, Lutherans and non-Lutherans, Christians and non-Christians

Later Lutherans 1900s-2000s

Private Absolution only (No Confession-Absolution during Divine Service)	General Confession followed by Declaration of Grace	General Confession followed by Individual Absolution for members	General Confession followed by Corporate Absolution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book (1889)</i>⁷ • <i>The Common Service (1888)</i>⁸ • <i>Service Book and Hymnal of the Lutheran Church in America (1958)</i> • <i>Worship Supplement (1969)</i> • <i>Lutheran Book of Worship (1979)</i> • <i>Lutheran Service Book (2006) – Setting 4</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • St. John’s (COELC) (2019) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Lutheran Hymnal (1941)</i> • <i>Lutheran Worship (1982)</i> • <i>Lutheran Service Book (2006) – Settings 1,2,3,5</i>

7: The *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book (1889)* was originally prepared by *English Evangelical Lutheran Conference of Missouri*, a sister synod of the *Lutheran Church Missouri Synod*. In 1911 the Conference became the *English District* of the LCMS and in 1912 the LCMS adopted the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn Book (1889)* as the synodical hymn book

8: In 1914 the LCMS adopted *The Common Service* for usage in their synod