

Elements of Our Liturgy

From our mission statement: Our goal is to offer authentic worship — in “spirit and truth” with “reverence and awe” — wherein the transcendent, imminent Triune God is experienced by the worshiper in every part of his/her being.

Prelude

During the prelude we turn our thoughts, attention and desires away from our worldly distractions, and focus wholeheartedly upon God, preparing our whole being (hearts, minds, and will) for worship. When believers meet together in the name of the Lord, they set apart their gathering from every other meeting.

Call to Worship:

When you join in the call to worship, it is a joyful acknowledgement that God Himself calls his people to worship through his Word. He is the King who opens His gates and beckons us into his courts.

Opening Hymn:

Since the dawn of creation, singing has characterized God’s people in worship. As such, singing is integral to public worship and is itself an act of worship. The opening hymn is a joyous shout to the Lord, an awakening of our souls to the reality of the reverence, awe and wonder at being in the special presence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Prayer of Invocation:

In this prayer we both call upon and honor God’s name. We humbly and reverently ask Him to draw near to us as we worship. Our prayer is directed to the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit. Christian worship is Trinitarian.

Apostles Creed:

The word “creed” comes from the Latin credo, meaning “I believe.” Any attempt to confess what one believes is a creed. We recite creeds and confessions from the early Church, not only to join our voices with theirs in common belief, but also to remind each other that while life is sometimes hard, full of fears and sorrows, the Christian’s hope is grounded, not in the passing trends of our current culture, but in the steadfast faithfulness of Jesus.

Gloria Patri:

The Gloria Patri (Glory to the Father) is a shortened version of the more traditional Gloria in Excelsis (Glory to God). As a Trinitarian song of praise, the “Glorias” acknowledge that we are beneficiaries of the unmerited gift of God’s mercy.

First Scripture Lesson:

We believe that our worship should be filled with Scripture. We read from all of Sacred Scripture as a testimony of the unity and importance of every part of the Bible.

Confession of Sin:

The People of God respond to His Word by confessing their sins, repenting of their sinful ways, and seeking God’s favor through the reconciling work of Jesus, the Son of God.

Assurance of Pardon:

Immediately following our confession, this reminds us that the basis of our forgiveness is the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Choral Amen: (Currently on hiatus due to covid)

This serves as a choral interlude or pause designed to encourage worshipers to contemplate and meditate on the treasure of God’s grace in forgiveness of sins and assurance of pardon as the choir declares Amen!

Second Scripture Lesson:

Typically a New Testament Epistle selection

Pastoral Prayer:

One of the distinctions between public and private prayer is that in public prayer we pray together, as a corporate church for needs within the local church and for the accomplishment of the universal Church's mission. Jesus himself gave a prominent place to intercessory prayer (see John 17). It is in the prayers of intercession that the church continues the ministry of intercession that Christ gave her to perform in his name.¹

Anthem: (Currently on hiatus due to covid)

The choral anthem is not a concert recital, but rather provides important contemplative space within the liturgy to reflect and meditate upon the glory of God and His encounter with you through his Word.

Third Scripture Lesson:

Typically a Gospel reading

Offertory Hymn:

See Opening Hymn above

Offertory Prayer of Dedication:

We offer a prayer of thanksgiving for the good gifts God gives us and ask God's blessing on the gifts given, that they may be used for the building up of the kingdom. And we pray that we may use the many other gifts God has blessed us with for God's work here on earth.

Collection of the Offering: (Currently on hiatus due to covid)

We give our tithes and offerings because all we are and all we have are gifts of God's grace. Additionally, the offertory is not a sort of musical interlude while the tithes and offerings are collected. Far more! Because the offering is itself an act of worship, the offertory aids our hearts in grateful reflection upon all the ways the Lord has blessed us.

Doxology:

This brief hymn reminds us who we worship (the Trinitarian God- Father, Son and Holy Spirit), why we worship (all blessings come from Him), and who is required to worship Him (all in heaven and earth). It also reminds us of the supernatural nature of worship, as we praise Him together with the heavenly host.

Sermon:

The primary task of the Church and of the Christian minister is the preaching of the Word of God. In the sermon, as the pastor opens his mouth to speak and remains faithful to explaining the text, the Holy Spirit opens our hearts and minds to receive the Word of God.

Lord's Supper:

At His Table, God draws His people to commune with Him, to receive nourishment and strength. In some inscrutable way, Christ is present as we partake the elements by faith. Upon receiving this gift of grace, God's people cannot help but make joyous profession of their thanksgiving to Him.

Closing Hymn:

See Opening Hymn above

Benediction:

After calling His people into His presence, forgiving their sins, instructing them in His Word, and communing with them at His Table, God sends His people into the world to show His wondrous light in the darkness.

Postlude

The postlude captures the grandeur of God's majesty and of the day's worship.

¹ Old, Hughes Oliphant. *Leading in Prayer*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995) p. 175.