



# The Divine Service

## An Explanation



Our worship before God is based on what He has taught us through His Word, the Bible. Since it is God who graciously gives us life and salvation, we first gladly receive from Him and then respond in prayer and praise. This is called “Divine Service” because in it God serves us His Word and Sacraments. He serves us His gifts, and we thankfully receive. Our worship stems from our faith, and speaks the words of faith given us by God.



*Liturgy* describes the order and structure of a church service. Our Church follows the basic liturgical orders used by the church for the last 2,000 years. It has its roots in Old Testament worship practices and, as illustrated by the numerous Scripture passages below, is based on the teaching of the Bible. The particular liturgy outlined below is the order of service for Holy Communion, the chief service of the Church. We may use a different setting of this basic service, but it will include these elements, though perhaps in a slightly different order.



The liturgy brings us the service of God’s forgiveness in the language we speak everyday, but with a reverence that distinguishes itself from the irreverent and capricious character of today’s pop culture.

The Scriptures listed first below are directly quoted in the liturgy. The Scriptures in parenthesis present supporting texts.

Worship Component	Scriptural Basis	Meaning	Application for Daily Living
<b>I. SERVICE OF PREPARATION</b>			
<b>Pre-service Music</b>	(1 Samuel 16:23)	This is a good time to review the readings for the day and reflect upon your relationship with God and others. Separate yourself from the clutter of everyday life and focus on God with a prayer. Sample pre-service prayers are on the inside front cover of the hymnal.	You can take brief moments throughout each day to re-focus on your life with God.
<b>Invocation</b>	Matt 28:19 (Col 3:17; Matt 18:20)	We invoke the name of the Trinity to signify our worship as exclusively Christian and to remember that we are God’s baptized people. Gathered in His name, we are sure of His presence and His blessing.	Beginning each day yourself with the invocation is a great reminder that your life and day are sanctified by Holy Baptism.
<b>Confession</b>	1 John 1:8-9 (Rom 3:9-12, 23; 7:8-25, Psalm 51)	We cannot approach God without having our sins forgiven. He is holy and we are not. Confession assures us of a <i>clean slate</i> before God and prepares us for worship, hearing God’s Word, and receiving the Lord’s Supper.	Each day we ought to confess our sins to God and ask Him for His forgiveness.

<b>Worship Component</b>	<b>Scriptural Basis</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Application for Daily Living</b>
<b>Holy Absolution</b>	Matt 16:19 (John 20:21-23)	God is gracious and merciful. He forgives us for Christ's sake. This assures us that we can receive the rest of His gifts through the service and return thanks for those gifts, having been set free from the burden of sin.	Having confessed our sins each day, we can rejoice in God's forgiveness and cleansing.
<b>Introit, Psalm, Or Processional Hymn</b>	(Psalm 100, 1 Cor 15:3-4, Psalm 40:3, Psalm 150)	<i>Introit</i> means <i>to enter</i> . Reminding us that salvation comes to us through Christ crucified, we sing the story of God's love by singing verses from the Bible's hymnbook, the Psalms, or a parallel hymn sounding forth the theme of the day.	Keep your eyes fixed on the cross of Christ, and you will find strength as you live through each day.
<b>Kyrie</b>	Mark 10:47-48	<i>Kyrie elesion</i> [kir-ē-ā ə-lā-(ə-)sān] is a Greek phrase meaning <i>Lord have mercy</i> . We have already received the mercy of God for forgiveness in Holy Absolution. Now we ask His mercy for all other things we need for a God-pleasing spiritual life.	Instead of taking the Lord's name in vain, (for example "Oh God"), turn your times of frustration into prayer with the Kyrie.
<b>Gloria or Hymn of Praise</b>	Luke 2:14 John 1:29 (Gloria) Rev 5:11-14; 19:5-9 (This is the Feast)	Having just petitioned the Lord for blessings beyond the forgiveness just granted in absolution, we now praise Him as the One who can deliver those blessings, because He is the all-powerful God. His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the Lamb worthy of our praise, just as the angels praised Him at His birth. (see note below)	Just as the angels proclaimed Christ's birth, glorify the Lord with rejoicing as you go about your daily work.
<b>Salutation</b>	2 Tim 4:22 Ruth 2:4 Judges 6:12 Luke 1:28	The salutation is found all through the Scriptures. The pastor stands before the congregation as Christ's servant. As the Lord's servant, he speaks God's peace to the congregation. As the congregation responds with "and also with you," they affirm his call and vocation with respect and Christian love.	This is an excellent greeting when you meet brothers and sisters in Christ at church or in the community.
<b>Collect</b>	(Jude 25)	The Collect is a short general prayer that makes a request of God based on the theme of the day. It is a 5-part prayer: 1) address, 2) basis for the petition, 3) the petition, 4) reason for the petition, 5) conclusion of praise to God.	The five parts of the Collect are an excellent pattern for adding richness to one's daily prayers.
<b>II. SERVICE OF THE WORD</b>			
<b>Old Testament Reading</b>	(Lk 4:17-21)	The Old Testament is the foundation for the New Testament. We read it and meditate on it just as Christ Himself did.	Always read the Old Testament in the light of what we know about God from the New Testament.

NOTE: During the Lent and Advent seasons the Church's worship assumes a more penitential character. The "Hymn of Praise" is omitted from the liturgy. The word "Alleluia" is usually omitted during Lent as well. By not using the alleluia (a joyful expression meaning "Praise the Lord") the season is clearly set apart as a distinct time from the rest of the year. Additionally, it forms a powerful contrast with the festive celebrations of Jesus' birth and resurrection when our alleluias ring loud and clear.

<b>Worship Component</b>	<b>Scriptural Basis</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Application for Daily Living</b>
<b>Psalm or Gradual</b>	(Eph 5:19 Psalm 89:1)	<i>Gradual</i> comes from a Latin word that means <i>step</i> . Historically, music may have been used as a transition to the next reading. We respond to hearing God's Word by singing God's Word. Psalms echo the Old Testament reading and anticipate the Gospel for the Day. Graduals also highlight the season of the church year. Many of the psalms were written to be sung responsively, and so we often follow this ancient practice.	Every Christian should seek to know the link between the testaments. Antiphons [an-tə-fən] are sung responses that contextualize the psalms and help keep them in your mind throughout the week.
<b>Epistle</b>	(Acts 2:42 Eph 4:11 2 Tim 3:16-17)	Acts 2 says that the early church was devoted to the teachings of the Apostles, and so is the church today by regular public reading of their letters.	The weekly readings make great texts for further study and prayer.
<b>Verse</b>	John 6:68	Because we are about to hear the very words and deeds of Christ, the congregation acknowledges the Lord's presence in their midst through His Gospel by standing and singing <i>Alleluia</i> , which means <i>Praise the Lord</i> .	Praise the Lord, for He alone has the words of eternal life. When tempted, remember to trust Christ above all things.
<b>Gospel</b>	(John 6:63 John 20:30-31)	The third reading of the day comes from the life and teachings of Christ. It establishes the theme for the day and is usually noticeable in the prayers, sermon, and other parts of the service that are "proper" or specific to this particular Sunday.	Discuss the readings with your family around the dinner table.
<b>Hymn of the Day</b>	(Col 3:16 Psalm 78:4)	The only Lutheran addition to the historic Mass, this hymn is usually doctrinal in nature, teaching the theme of the day by placing it on our lips.	Daily prayer life is enriched by meditation upon hymn verses.
<b>Sermon</b>	(1 Cor 1:23 2 Tim 4:1-2)	As the prophets, apostles and even Jesus Himself did, the pastor speaks on behalf of God, bringing His Word to shepherd His people.	Further exploration of the sermon text during the week makes a great Bible study.
<b>Creed</b>	(1 Tim 6:12 Matthew 10:32-33 Romans 10:9-10)	Upon hearing the Word preached, the congregation unites in one voice to speak a summary of the Christian faith just preached. The creeds signify our allegiance to Christian doctrine and unite us with over 2,000 years of Christian history.	Repetition of the creed equips us for public witness by grounding our confession in the fundamentals of our faith.
<b>Prayer of the Church</b>	(1 Tim 2:1-6 James 5:16)	As baptized children of God, we have a responsibility to pray not only for ourselves, but also for the world. As instructed by the Word, we pray that earthly rulers would keep the peace that we might worship God in quietude.	The wide variety of needs prayed for in this prayer is a good model for our daily prayers.

<b>Worship Component</b>	<b>Scriptural Basis</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Application for Daily Living</b>
<b>Offering/ Offertory</b>	Psalm 116:12-14, 17-19	We receive so many bountiful gifts from God that we are glad to give back to Him. Psalm 116 teaches that the highest offering is to simply receive in faith the cup of salvation, especially as we look forward to the Lord's Supper.	Our offerings can lift our daily work out of the routine if we see it as opportunity to earn gifts to return to God.
<b>III. SERVICE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER</b>			
<b>Preface and Proper Preface</b>	2 Tim 4:22 (Col 3:1) Psalm 136	First recorded in AD 220, this dialog and prayer begins the liturgy of the Lord's Supper. Each season has its own unique text.	The gift of the Lord's Supper is worthy of our thanks every day.
<b>Sanctus</b>	Isaiah 6:3 Matt 21:9	<i>Sanctus</i> means <i>holy</i> . The body and blood of our Lord are present in this Sacrament, and so we use the words of the angels from Isaiah 6 to acknowledge the holy presence of God in this meal.	The intense reverence for God's holiness in this song should carry over into our daily lives.
<b>Prayer of Thanksgiving</b>	(Luke 24:30)	As the testaments are linked to Christ in the Service of the Word, so do we remember and give thanks for salvation history in the Church's table prayer.	Daily the baptized people of God pray. The Lord's Prayer is both a prayer to pray and a model for all our prayers.
<b>Lord's Prayer</b>	Matthew 6:9-13	The Lord's Prayer, given by Christ Himself, is wonderfully appropriate as we approach his Supper.	
<b>Consecration</b>	Matt 26:26-28 Mark 14:22-24 Luke 22:19-20 1 Cor 11:23-25	The words of our Lord bestow exactly what they say. In the words of consecration the Lord's Word delivers His body and blood for our forgiveness.	Though we are blessed with many good foods, no other meal gives the body and blood of Christ to sinners.
<b>The Peace</b>	John 20:19-21, 26, 14:27	The resurrected Lord calmed the fears of the disciples with His peace. The resurrected Lord is present in the Supper, and so the pastor speaks peace to us on His behalf.	During stressful times, remember the peace of Christ that you received on Sunday in His supper.
<b>Agnus Dei</b>	John 1:29	<i>Agnus Dei</i> [äg-nüs-dä(-ē)] means <i>Lamb of God</i> , and reminds us that Jesus is the Lamb of God, sacrificed for our forgiveness.	
<b>IV. CLOSING AND BENEDICTION</b>			
<b>Post-Communion Collect</b>	(Psalm 136 Psalm 118)	Having received forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation, we thank the Lord for His gifts and pray that He will grant us faith to use them in love toward our neighbor.	Daily we remember His blessings. In our words and deeds we will tell what He has done.
<b>Nunc Dimittis</b>	Luke 2:29-32	The <i>Nunc Dimittis</i> is named after its first words in Latin, meaning <i>Now you dismiss</i> .	
<b>Benediction</b>	Numbers 6:22-27	In Numbers 6 God tells Aaron to put His name on the people of God with these words. As we began the service with the Lord's name, so we are sent out in His name.	Live each day with confidence, knowing that you have the Lord's blessing and presence with you.