

## Next Step Confirmation Lesson 4 Worship

### THE WORSHIP SERVICE

*The word “liturgy” means “service.” Our whole life as Christians is to be our service (liturgy) to God. It is in the Worship Service, however, that the liturgy of our whole Christian life comes into a joyful focus. We gather together for an intimate communion with our Lord. He comes to us, speaks to us and blesses us through His Word and Sacrament. We come to Him and speak to Him in prayer and praise and thanksgiving. The Worship Service is a foretaste of the heavenly life to come.*

#### **Part 1 - We Prepare**

Come early to the Worship Service! This is your time of preparation, a time to get your mind off the distractions of life, job and the world, and on to God. Prepare yourself for the worship of your God and the hearing and learning of His Word by reading a psalm or pre-service devotion. Or look up and read the Scripture readings, sermon text, and hymns for the day.

**Opening Hymn:** We begin the worship service by singing to the Lord a hymn of praise.

**The Invocation:** We are reminded of our Baptism and declare we worship One God: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. We ask Him to be with us in His house and bless our worship.

**Confession of Sins and Absolution:** Before we draw near to a Holy God we need to be forgiven (clear our minds). We come to in faith and confess our sins, and the Pastor, as God’s representative, speaks to us words of comfort and forgiveness.

#### **Part 2 - We Worship**

**The Kyrie** (Lord, have mercy) is an expression of our emptiness without God and of our need to have Him fill us with His grace.

**The Hymn of Praise** or Gloria in Excelsis (Glory to God): We lift our voices to God in thanksgiving for sending His Son to be our Savior. (This is the song the angels sang to the shepherds in the fields of Bethlehem the night Jesus was Born.

**The Salutation:** The pastor prays that the Holy Spirit would bless the congregation as they offer their prayers to God and open their hearts to His Word: “The Lord be with you.” The congregation answers - “And with thy spirit” or “and also with you.”

**The Collect:** The Collect is a short prayer which gathers or “collects” the thoughts and prayers of the entire Church as they apply to the theme of the day.

#### **Part 3 - Our Lord Speaks To Us**

**The Old Testament** is a reminder that we are “Judeo-Christians” and our theological roots go all the way back to the beginning of time and run through all the wonderful stories of God’s people in the Old Testament.

**The Epistle** is usually from one of the New Testament letters. Here we receive instruction in living the Christian life.

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**The Alleluia:** which means “Praise the Lord!” is a cry of rejoicing that we are allowed to be so near to our Lord.

**The Gospel:** The Gospel reading centers about the life and words of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is often the key to the theme for the day, the main event or lesson which we are commemorating.

**The Creed** We have heard God’s Word to us. Now we respond by confessing what we believe. Our confession of faith is for each other - not God - He already knows our hearts. It also helps us remember what it means to be a believer.

**Hymn:** We sing a hymn that usually is taken from the Bible and not only reinforces our faith, but allows for some time to think about what is happening in worship.

**The Sermon:** is time set apart to have the Bible explained or reinforced.

### Part 4 - We Offer ourselves to the Lord

**The Offering:** We bring our offerings to God’s altar. These gifts are meaningful only if we recognize them as a response to God’s love. While money is the primary way people give offerings, your time and talent are wonderful gifts.

**The Offertory:** Using David’s words of repentance from Psalm 51, we confess our humble and grateful acceptance of the Word and offer ourselves in thanksgiving to the Lord.

**Prayers:** We pray that God would answer us as we lay before Him our needs, the needs of the Church, and the needs of the world.

### Part 5 - Our Lord Gives Himself To Us

**The Preface:** Once again the Pastor and congregation pray for and assure each other of the Lord’s presence. Then comes the invitation to “lift up your hearts” and to “give thanks to the Lord, our God.” This reminds us that our entire Communion Service is a service of thanksgiving.

**The Sanctus:** In this hymn, we join our voices with the angels and archangels and all the company of heaven and proclaim our praise and worship to God.

**The Lord’s Prayer:** We pray the prayer which Jesus taught us. This prayer is the model that Jesus gave us when His disciples asked, “Lord, teach us to pray...” We learn how to balance our prayers.

**The Words of Institution:** are the words which our Lord spoke on the night He was betrayed. They make the celebration of the Lord’s Supper not just something Christians do - but a means of Grace where God actually forgives our sins and declares His love for us.

**The Pax Domini (peace of the Lord be with you...):** The Pastor prays that the people would feel God’s peace.

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**The Agnus Dei** (Lord, Have Mercy): Again - we pray that God would show us His mercy.

### Part 6 - We Receive the Lord's Supper

**The Distribution:** We come before the altar of God, humbly receive Christ into our lives and leave with the assurance of God's forgiveness that He won for all sinners on the cross.

**Communion Hymn:** We sing a hymn which focuses our thoughts on the meaning and benefit of the Lord's Supper.

### Part 7 - God Sends us Forth

**The Benediction:** used in the Church since the days of Moses, the Pastor closes the Service sending the people forth to go about God's Work in their lives - having been forgiven, reminded of His love - they now go to be His hands, eyes, ears and voice in the world.

## The Worship Space

**Sanctuary** - The place where the congregation gathers for worship. It could be a building, a beach, a house. Wherever God is - there it is holy ground.

**Narthex** - Originally the place where non-church members could "watch" the worship (and especially the communion) service. Non-members were not allowed to be in the church during communion.

The Altar - God's Table

The Pulpit - Where the pastor preaches from

Lectern - Where God's Word is read

Candles - Light

Pews -

Baptism Font -

Eternal Flame -

Sacristy -

Vestry -