

Philosophy of Worship

Adopted winter 2008 by the Mount Olive worship committee: Pastor Bob Degner, Linda Krueger, Beth Bray, Rebeca Covarrubias, Gary Johnson, Jay Molter, Jacob Notbohm, Mike Peterson

The main event in every worship service is that God comes to his people. The Lord meets His people not because they get excited or emotional during worship but according to His promise, "for where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20, NIV). Worshippers respond to Him by confessing their unworthiness to be in His presence, praising His goodness, and receiving Him through His Word and Sacraments. God's blessing moves worshippers out into the world to follow the righteous path and bring to fruition the gifts He has given them.

The Lord is the primary actor in worship, and the people, the main instrument of praise. The function of choir, praise band, brass, bells, and organ is to encourage and support congregational participation. The sanctuary acts as a sound chamber in blending the main instrument of praise: the voices of those worshipping. Worship leaders are not actors in the center spotlight but prompters for the congregation. When concerning worship space, the designated space, fixtures, colors, light, furnishings, art and instruments should all give the sense that God is present in the worship place.

As Lutherans, we believe that the Spirit of God has been present in and has guided the Church through the ages. We are heirs of a rich tradition in liturgy, the order of which was formulated in the early centuries of the church. In the liturgy, God comes to us in two parts, Word and Sacrament; and we respond in five parts, Kyrie, Gloria in Excelsis, Creed, Sanctus and Agnus Dei. This "2 + 5" liturgical outline can be found in LSB Setting Five. Within this format, we also include hymns and prayers as Scripture encourages: "Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19, NIV).

The scripture read each week is specified by the three-year lectionary, adopted by the liturgical churches, and has its roots in antiquity. Lectionary and church year including Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and the Pentecost season follow the life of Jesus on earth and expose the congregation to the whole counsel of God. We celebrate the sacraments of communion and Baptism regularly to receive forgiveness and new life from God.

Music is prescribed in the psalms, conveys the biblical message, and is an avenue of prayer, praise, and confession for God's people. Hymns and texts should be orthodox, and music should have quality and potential for longevity. All of worship—music and message, contemporary and historical—shapes God's people toward godliness throughout life and gives peace in death. With this in mind the Worship Committee serves to encourage, support and evaluate music and other aspects of worship.