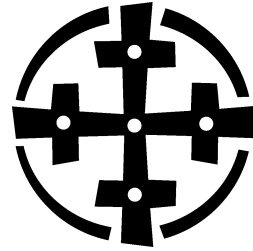


A Guide to Worship

Timber Ridge Presbyterian Church

By the Reverend Dr. Brian C. Wyatt, Pastor



*Drawing from Acts 2:42 and other scriptural references to New Testament worship, plus many documents from the early Church, many Christians around the world and across denominations follow the same basic order of worship. The worship service, or **ordo**, contains four parts—**Gathering, Word, Eucharist** (or **Thanksgiving**), and **Sending**. Our particular order of service is drawn from **The Book of Common Worship for the Presbyterian Church (USA)**, ©1993. There's also a copy in our library, and abridged copies in most pew racks if you'd like to read more about it.*

*This format centers around the two most important elements of worship—the **Word** read and proclaimed, and the **Sacraments** celebrated. John Calvin, along with several of our confessional statements, refers to the true Church as that in which the Word is rightly proclaimed and heard and the Sacraments are rightly administered.*

*You may notice through the service that many of the words used come from different parts of scripture. The Church has long believed that the best way to praise God is with God's Word for us. Because worship is a weekly renewal of the Church's covenant with God, it is rooted in Scripture and shares much in common with the larger Church universal. The same **ordo** is shared not only with other Presbyterians, but also with Methodists, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Roman Catholics and even Orthodox churches. There is much to celebrate about what we have in common with Christians of every denomination and the Church throughout the ages!*

If you find this guide helpful in enhancing your worship—wonderful! If you have more questions about worship, the minister would love to talk with you. If you would like to take this home, please feel free to do so. Otherwise it will remain in the church so that others may use it as well. Thank you for your interest in worship!

GATHERING



Prelude

The prelude is the beginning of worship and a time to prepare our hearts and minds to be present with God.

Greeting

*The greeting reminds us in whose name we gather. It may be Trinitarian in form (addressed to God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), and may also include the response we use most Sundays, drawn from **Ruth 2:4**.*

Announcements

Introit

'Introit' comes from a Latin word that means 'entrance.' In some cases, the worship leaders will actually enter the sanctuary as the Introit is sung. At other times, we are all simply invited to 'enter' into the worship service with our hearts and minds, aided by song. The Introit, along with many other parts of the service, is often led by the choir. Like the minister(s) and acolyte(s), the choir plays an integral role in leading worship (which is why they are often vested in robes like other worship leaders).

Entrance Antiphon (or Call to Worship)

*The call to worship is usually drawn from the day's Scripture readings, and turns our attention to the worship of the living God. This, like many parts of the service, is often responsive (which is what **antiphon** means). Because an important correction to worship made by the Reformers was to emphasize the priesthood of all believers, many prayers and other elements are done responsively or include a response by the congregation to remind us that everyone gathered – minister, congregation, choir, musicians – are **all** worship leaders who are serving God*

alone.

Opening Prayer

Also sometimes called an invocation, the opening prayer gives thanks for and claims the presence of the Holy Spirit in worship, and asks God to help us be fully present in our worship.

Hymn

Hymns are prayers sung by the people and offered to God. Because the Church encompasses believers in every time and place, we sometimes include hymns from different cultures and from different times in the history of the Church. In some services, including most Orthodox denominations and some Roman Catholic and Episcopal churches, the entire service is sung (not spoken) by the minister and people. At other times prayers are still sung while other parts of the service are spoken.

Call to Confession

The call to confession, drawn from Scripture, reminds us of our need to articulate to God and to our neighbors the ways in which we have offended the other (1 John 1:8-9, Romans 5:8, Hebrews 4:14-16, Jeremiah 31:33-34).

Prayer of Confession

We offer a prayer of confession because when we remember all that God has done for us, we are confronted with our own unworthiness. All we can do is respond to God's merciful goodness by confessing our sin together in true repentance. Our confession is a renewal of our baptismal covenant, in which we were asked to renounce sin and turn to Christ. That is why the assurance of forgiveness is offered from the baptismal font, the symbol of our turning away from sin and to God.

Kyrie or Agnus Dei

Kyrie (pronounced kee-re-aye) is the Latin word for 'Lord'

and comes from the prayer “Kyrie eleison, Christe eleison, Kyrie eleison,” which translates as “Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy.”

*Agnus Dei (pronounced ag-noose day-ee) translates as “Lamb of God,” which is a term used for Christ in many places throughout Scripture. The full prayer is “Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, have mercy on us and grant us your peace.” The **Kyrie** and **Agnus Dei** are often sung, frequently based on ancient texts and music, and reiterate our confession and prayer for forgiveness of sins.*

Declaration of Forgiveness

*As the call to confession reminds us, when we confess, we are assured of God’s forgiveness (**Romans 8:34, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Colossians 3:12-14**).*

Gloria Patri

‘Gloria Patri’ is Latin for the first few words we sing – “Glory be to the Father.” We sing it here in grateful response to the good news of God’s forgiveness in Christ. It is also appropriate to sing it in other parts of the service in response to good news, so it is sometimes used after the gospel reading, the sermon, the affirmation of faith, or other parts of the service as well.

THE WORD

The Peace

Echoing the greeting of Paul to the communities he addresses, and reflecting that we have just prayed for forgiveness for our sins against God and one another, we share the peace of Christ with each other as a sign of our reconciliation with God and neighbor.



Prayer of the Day

*The Prayer of the Day is also drawn from or alludes to scriptural themes for the day. Sometimes it is also called a **Collect** because its purpose is to gather, or collect, the people around the theme for the day. It, like most prayers in the service, often ends in a Trinitarian formula.*

First Reading, Psalm, Second Reading

*The Scripture selections each week follow the **Revised Common Lectionary**, a three-year cycle of scriptures used by many denominations around the world. The Sunday lectionary contains four readings. The first reading is taken from the Old Testament, except during the season of Easter when it comes from the book of Acts. The second reading is almost always a psalm, or if not, a hymn from another part of Scripture. The third reading is usually taken from the Epistles, Acts, or Revelation. The final reading is always a gospel reading.*

At the conclusion of a three-year cycle, we will have heard many (though not all) of the texts from all parts of the Bible. Lectionaries were in use even before the time of Jesus. They were developed so that people in the synagogues felt a connection to worship in the temple. Even though they couldn't be physically present, they knew they were sharing the same readings with other worshippers each Sabbath. Now they are still an important way we can 'worship together' with other Christians around the world.

A Lectionary Calendar, showing the flow of the year, can be found in Appendix C of this booklet.

Response to the Readings

The Word of the Lord or The Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God or Praise to you, O Christ.

Throughout the Old Testament, the people respond to hearing the words of the prophets. Here we respond with a corpo-

rate affirmation that what we have heard read is indeed holy and we trust that through those words of God, the Holy Spirit continues to speak to the community of the faithful.

Anthem

The anthem is not a “performance” by the choir any more than any other portion of the service is a “performance.” Rather, it continues the proclamation of the Word of God (like the reading of Scripture and the sermon) but in song.

Children's Time

*The prayer that concludes each Children’s Time is part of the beautiful prayer of St. Patrick (b.387-d.493), supposedly found on his breastplate. It is a simple prayer, but one even young children can remember and of course it is reminiscent for all of us of the promises we find in **Psalm 139**.*

Gospel Reading

The Gospel reading is also taken from the lectionary texts for each Sunday. Each year of the lectionary cycle focuses on one of the three Synoptic gospels (Matthew in Year A, Mark in Year B, and Luke in Year C. John is used at different times each year). Year C begins with Advent in years that are multiples of three. Advent 2010-Christ the King 2011 is Year A.

Sometimes congregations will stand for the reading of the Gospel, again as a way of showing respect for the Word of God and as a sort of communal reminder of the time when there were no pews in churches (which has been the case for most of our history!)

Sermon

*The Church has long held that the two essential parts of worship were Word and Sacrament. This is the form we find in **Acts 2:42** and elsewhere. Calvin believed that the Word must not only be rightly proclaimed, but rightly heard – thus it was*

important that those gathered for worship heard and understood what was being proclaimed in God's word. The Reformation was responsible for the revival of the sermon as an essential part of worship.

Creed

*Most Sundays we respond to the good news of the gospel by affirming our faith together. We use one of two ecumenical creeds that come from the early Church and are still used by the majority of Christians around the world. The **Apostles' Creed** was associated with baptism, and the **Nicene Creed** with the Eucharist. That is why we still use the Nicene Creed on Communion Sundays, and the Apostles' Creed on other Sundays as a reaffirmation of the vows we took at our baptism.*

*By the way, when we confess to believe in "one holy catholic Church" or "one holy, catholic and apostolic Church," we are talking not about a particular denomination (like Roman Catholic – notice the difference in capitalization and the word 'Roman'), but about the one true Church that includes all believers of every time and place. **Ephesians 4:4-6** talks of one baptism and one faith – this is the true Church we confess on Sundays. (The word 'catholic' actually means 'universal'.)*

Prayers of the People

Because these are the prayers of the people, they are led from among the congregation, and it is entirely appropriate for them to be led by someone other than the minister.

Because we believe the Church includes those who have gone before and will come after us, and those around the world of different denominations, we pray for more than just ourselves. We also pray for the broader Church and the world and for those who have died in the faith.

We remain standing through this and



most prayers during the service because, in Scripture, we find three postures taken by anyone who addressed God in prayer – standing, kneeling, or lying prostrate. Since most Presbyterian churches no longer have kneelers, and we would consider it unseemly to lie on the floor, we often choose to stand for prayers out of respect for God.

THE EUCHARIST

The word ‘Eucharist’ means ‘thanksgiving,’ and it comes from our response of thanksgiving to hearing the good news of Christ.

Offering

In early centuries, Christians brought to services gifts of bread and wine from their own tables. A prayer of thanksgiving is then offered for all God has done, and the Eucharist meal (Holy Communion) was then celebrated. Even when Holy Communion is not celebrated, this part of the service is still led from the communion table because whatever offerings we bring are our gifts of thanksgiving (Eucharist).



Doxology

*The word ‘doxology’ is another Latin term that means ‘good word’ or ‘blessing’. Think about the blessing we say at meals – we are praising God, from whom our food and all other daily blessings come. Although we often sing the familiar version set to the “Old Hundredth” tune, there are many other tunes and words that are also **doxologies**.*

[Holy Eucharist]

Scripture and the early Church both presumed that communion would be celebrated every Sunday and each time the people gathered to worship. During the Middle Ages, weekly

communion fell out of practice for all but the priests leading the service. An important part of the Reformation for Luther, Calvin, and other reformers was to reclaim communion as a regular part of worship for the people of God.

Calvin particularly sought to recover the practice of the Church which for centuries centered around the weekly sharing of the Eucharistic meal, and believed that “when the feast of the risen Lord becomes a regular part of worship on each Day of the risen Lord, . . . Word and Sacrament reinforce each other.” While we do not celebrate the Lord’s Supper every Sunday, the order of service remains the same, and we are called to remember the sacrament in worship, even when we do not receive it.

While there is much more we can say about the Lord’s Supper, the Church has always understood it as more than just a memorial of Christ’s last supper. From God’s gift of manna to the Israelites following the Exodus to Jesus and the disciples feeding 5000 followers, God has fed and provided for his people. Luke’s gospel reminds us that after Christ had been raised and was walking with some friends to Emmaus, he took bread, blessed, broke, and gave it to them and their eyes were opened. Every time we celebrate the Sacrament, we continue to meet the risen Christ and find our eyes opened to his presence among us.



HOLY COMMUNION

A schedule of standing Eucharist dates can be found in Appendix B of this booklet.

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The invitation is an important reminder that we come to God’s table (not the minister’s or the church’s table). The Eucharist is the meal for all baptized believers, and we welcome anyone who is a baptized believer, of any age or denomination, to the table. Children are welcomed to receive the sacrament

because we trust that the Holy Spirit works in them as well at different levels of understanding, as is true for all of us (*Matthew 11:28-29, Revelation 3:20, Luke 13:29, John 6:35*).



“Blessed is he
that cometh in the
name of the Lord!”

Mark 11:9

Great Thanksgiving

*The Great Thanksgiving is an ancient prayer form dating back to the first century Church. It contains three primary movements. It begins with a call by the celebrant (the person who leads the celebration of the Lord’s Supper) that the Lord be with those gathered, who respond in kind that they believe the Lord is also with the minister. The celebrant then follows with words from **Lamentations 3:41** and calls us to give thanks (remember Eucharist means thanksgiving). The term for this part of the prayer is called the ‘**sursum corda**’, which is Latin for ‘lift up your heart’.*

*A short preface that has to do with the particular occasion being celebrated (Easter, Lent, Transfiguration, Baptism, etc.) follows the sursum corda. The congregation responds to this with words taken from the synagogue prayer in **Isaiah 6:3** and the proclamation of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem found in **Mark 11:9-10** and elsewhere.*

*The next portion of the prayer is then called the ‘**anamnesis**’, which means ‘remembering’. It is a recounting of different parts of our salvation history, including the Lord’s Supper. Generally the Words of Institution, found in **1 Corinthians 11:23-26**, are said here as part of the anamnesis. The congregation again responds by affirming “how great is this mystery of our faith!”*

*The final portion of the prayer is called the ‘**epiclesis**’, which is a Greek word meaning “to call down” (think of the Holy Spirit coming down upon Jesus like a dove). In it, we pray that the Holy Spirit be present in the gifts of bread and wine.*

*This part of the prayer is sometimes based **John 6:53-59**.*

Lord's Prayer

*The Great Thanksgiving concludes with the Lord's Prayer because it again asks for God's forgiveness and for our daily bread which is, of course, **Jesus – the bread of life** we receive in the Sacrament. If Holy Communion is not celebrated, the Lord's Prayer usually follows the prayers of the people.*

Breaking of the Bread

*The breaking of the bread, or **fraction**, is done by the celebrant to remember what Jesus did in **Mark 14:22**. Following the breaking of the bread, we respond with the words from **1 Corinthians 5:7-8** or with an affirmation from St. John Chrysostom (d.407) reminding us that these are God's holy gifts for God's holy people.*

Communion of the People

Through most of its history, the Church received the elements by coming forward to the table. This was the response, the affirmation, and the choosing of the people to come receive the gifts of God. It is not a passive but an active response, and a physical reminder of our response of commitment to God. (Think 'altar call' here!) This is still the method used by a majority of Christians around the world.

In some denominations, including the Presbyterian Church, pew communion is also served. This was introduced late in the Church's history for a variety of reasons, but it can still be a very important reminder to us of the priesthood of all believers, since we are all (not just ministers and elders) given an opportunity to serve one another.

By whatever method we receive, we are doing more than just passing bread and wine around a dinner table – we are participating in a holy mystery of God given to the community of the faithful. To help us remember this, it is appropriate for

anyone serving another, whether that is an elder at the front or passing a tray down the aisle, to say to the person receiving the elements: "This is the body/blood of Christ given for you."

Prayer after Communion/Prayer of Thanksgiving

*Having received the gracious gifts of God, we respond in thanksgiving for all God has done for us, particularly for the bread and wine. This prayer also asks God to use those gifts to send us out in service. Other times the prayer is a simple one of thanksgiving drawn from **Psalm 103:1-2**.*

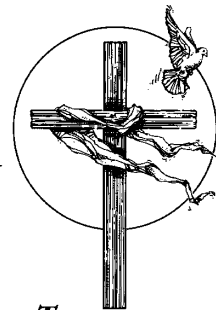
SENDING

Hymn

***Matthew 26:30** reminds us that after the disciples had received the gifts of God in the Last Supper, they sang a hymn before they went to the Mount of Olives. In the same way, having received the gifts of God in Word and Sacrament, we sing a hymn together before we are sent out into the world.*

Charge and Blessing

*In the charge and blessing, the minister reminds us that here is where our service really begins – as we head out into the world. Having gathered as the people of God, heard the Word, received the grace of Christ in the Holy Eucharist, we are now renewed for service in God's name. Knowing this, we depart into the world with God's blessing until we gather again. The charge given most Sundays is drawn from **1 Thessalonians 5:13-22**. Another blessings used on some Sundays ("May the road rise to meet you...") is a traditional Irish blessing with a long history of use in the Church in that part of the world and has some ties to our Scottish Presbyterian heritage. Still other*



***The Lord lift up
His countenance
upon you
and give you peace.***
—Numbers 6:26

blessings may come from 2 Corinthians 13:13, Numbers 6:24-26, Colossians 3:12-14.

Congregational Response

The congregational response we sing is based on the words of blessing that God told Moses to speak to Aaron in Numbers 6:24-26.

Postlude

Appendix A – Brief Glossary

Acolyte – This is a Greek word that means ‘one who follows’. An acolyte assists with different parts of the service and also wears an alb, similar to that worn by the minister.



Celebrant – A term that refers to the person presiding over the communion table.

Church Year—The Church year begins with the first Sunday of Advent and ends with Christ the King Sunday. The year centers around the two great feasts of the Christian year—Christmas and Easter. Both celebrations stretch for several weeks after the actual holiday. The **liturgical color** for Easter and Christmas seasons is white. Preceding each of these two feasts is a time of preparation and fasting. The time before Easter is called **Lent** and begins with **Ash Wednesday**. The time before Christmas is called **Advent**. The color for Lent and Advent is purple. The season of Easter ends with the feast of **Pentecost**. Pentecost, Holy Week (the week before Easter), and other days celebrating the Holy Spirit are red. The days between the two great feast seasons are called ordinary time or propers, and are green. There are several other feast days throughout the year that include Baptism of the Lord, Epiphany, Transfiguration, Trinity Sunday, and Christ the King.

Communion Set – The communion set consists of a **chalice** (the

cup), a **flagon** (the pitcher that holds the wine), and a **paten** (the plate that holds the bread or wafers).

Intinction – A way of receiving communion that involves coming forward to the table for the elements, and dipping the bread into the wine.

Vestments – These are the garments worn by worship leaders. A minister may wear a white **alb** (the traditional symbol of servanthood) or a black robe (signifying academic credentials). It may be accompanied by a **stole** (symbolizing the yoke of Christ) and by a **chasuble** on Communion Sundays.

Appendix B—Eucharist Dates

We try to celebrate the Eucharist frequently enough that it is seen not just as an appendix to worship on certain occasions, but as a regular part of our weekly worship, as scripture indicates. You may notice that we celebrate it more frequently at certain times of the year, particularly around Christmas and Easter. We also celebrate it during special dates on the church calendar, marking significant events in the life of Christ.

Epiphany Sunday
Baptism of the Lord
Transfiguration of the Lord
Ash Wednesday
Palm Sunday
Maundy Thursday
Resurrection of the Lord/Easter Vigil
Pentecost Sunday
Trinity Sunday
World Communion Sunday
All Saints' Sunday
Christ the King Sunday
Christmas Eve

Nativity of the Lord/Christmas (*If it falls on a Sunday*)
Also the First Sunday of most months.

Appendix C—Liturgical Calendar and Lectionary

THE CHRISTMAS CYCLE

ADVENT

Advent is a four-week period in which the Church, rejoicing in Christ's first coming, eagerly looks forward to Christ's coming again. Advent begins with the Sunday nearest November 30, and is observed for the four Sundays prior to Christmas.

Liturgical color: purple (or blue in some churches).

CHRISTMAS

Christmas is the festival of the birth of Christ, the celebration of the incarnation. Christmas begins on Christmas Eve and ends with Epiphany (6 January), and may include either one or two Sundays.

Liturgical color: white (or gold).

ORDINARY TIME

Ordinary Time is divided into two periods. The first period was previously called Sundays after Epiphany, and the second and longer period was referred to as the Sundays after Pentecost. The first period of Ordinary Time begins after Epiphany (6 January) and continues until Ash Wednesday. The Baptism of the Lord is the first Sunday of this period of Ordinary Time, the Transfiguration of the Lord is the last Sunday. Because of the variable date of Easter, this period of Ordinary Time may include from four to nine Sundays.

Liturgical color: green, except for the Baptism of the Lord and the Transfiguration of the Lord when the color is white.

EASTER CYCLE

LENT

Lent is a season of forty weekdays and six Sundays, beginning on Ash Wednesday and culminating in Holy Week. During this season, the Church, in joy and sorrow, proclaims, remembers, and responds to the atoning death of Christ. Two distinct periods at the end of Lent are: Holy Week (the week immediately preceding Easter, beginning with Passion/Palm Sunday) and the 'Triduum' (the final three days from Maundy Thursday through the start of the Easter Vigil). *Liturgical color:* purple (except for Palm Sunday, which is red, and the Triduum, when the church is left bare following the Maundy Thursday service).

EASTER

Easter is a fifty-day season of seven Sundays, beginning with the Resurrection of the Lord (Easter Day), the festival of Christ's resurrection. Ascension Day, forty days after Easter, affirms that Christ is Lord of all times and places. The Day of Pentecost marks the end of the Easter season.

Liturgical color: white and gold, except for the Day of Pentecost which is red.

ORDINARY TIME

The second period which comprises Ordinary Time begins following Pentecost and continues until Advent. Trinity Sunday is the first Sunday of this period of Ordinary Time, and Christ the King (or, Reign of Christ) is its last Sunday.

Liturgical color: green, except for Trinity Sunday, All Saint's Day, and Christ the King (or Reign of Christ), when the color is white.

The lectionary texts for each Sunday, along with other information about worship and many other activities, can be found on the church's website at <www.timberridgepreschurch.org>