

Worship enrichment Sunday. **September 27, 2020.**

**Service introduction:** Have you ever wondered, “Where did our worship service come from? Why do we use a similar pattern of worship each week? Why do we worship the way we do?” Today’s service is going to be different, and I pray, special. At several points during the service, we’ll stop and explain and answer those important questions. We pray this will help you grow closer to Jesus each time you worship, better appreciate our order of service, and understand why we use much the same pattern of worship every week.

The basic order of service we use is called the Liturgy. Liturgy is a specific term that literally means, “the service of the people.” The Liturgy is a service of God to his people and the service of God’s people to God. We use the Liturgy for three main reasons. First and most importantly, the Liturgy is centered on Jesus. Second, the Liturgy allows the people to participate in worship instead of being mere spectators. Part of this participation is done through repetition, that ensures these key parts of worship will be well-known to all regular worshipers. Thirdly, the Liturgy honors the experience of the Christians before us. There are parts of the Liturgy that Christians have used to worship God for 2000 or even 3000 years. We use these same songs and prayers, humbly admitting that maybe those believers closer in time to Jesus had a better understanding of how Jesus wants us to worship. Each service has one main theme. Our theme today is, “What to do when a Christian sins against you?” We’ll see that theme as we sing our opening hymn, 308.

**Invocation:** So much of the key words in the Liturgy are taken directly from the Bible. The opening response is taken from Matthew 28:19, when Jesus instituted baptism. We begin the service by calling on God’s name and remembering we worship as his baptized children. The word, “Amen,” you see at many parts of the service comes from a Hebrew word that means, “Truth.” The word is spoken or sung as a way to say, “That’s the truth. I agree.”

**Confession of sins:** 1 John chapter 1 says, “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. Whenever we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins.” Right away, God cleans our slates with him in worship as we confess our sins and hear the good news of his forgiveness. You will notice that pastor or vicar usually confess sins with the people on this floor level, showing, “I too am a sinner and I cannot enter God’s presence until sin is forgiven.” The words of the confession are taken from Romans 8, James 2 and Luke 13. The Lord have mercy, or Kyrie in Latin, is an ancient song of the Christian church. It is taken from the prayer of a tax collector in Luke 13. He was at God’s temple, but when he prayed he did not look up to heaven, but beat his chest and said, “Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.” That’s why we often bow our heads during this part of the service. The words from the absolution or announcement of forgiveness are taken from 1 John 2 and Matthew 28. This announcement is a high point of the service, the best news ever!

**Glory be to God:** This song of praise is taken from Luke 2, the words the angels sang announcing Jesus’ birth. So every Sunday remembers Christmas.

**Prayer of the Day:** By this time you might have noticed that pastor or vicar keeps turning around to face the altar and then face the people and back and forth. There’s a reason for this. When pastor is speaking for the people to God: confessing sins, praying, praising, pastor faces the altar. When pastor is speaking for God to the people, the announcement of forgiveness, reading or preaching God’s Word, pastor faces the people.

The prayer of the day is a prayer that reflects the theme of the service and helps us look ahead to the Scripture readings. Remember the theme of today’s worship is, “What to do when a Christian sins against you?”.

**Scripture Lessons:** The particular Scripture lessons we use each week are carefully chosen to reflect the season of the year and to cover all the main teachings of the Bible. There are three years of readings. In year one, most of

the Gospel readings come from Matthew, in year two most from Mark and in year three, most from Luke. Readings from John are spread throughout the three years. The Gospel reading determines the theme of the day and the other readings fit this theme. Usually the first lesson is from the Old Testament. It is often a promise of God which Jesus fulfills in the Gospel reading. The Psalms were the hymns of the Old Testament. We sing these songs that are in some cases 3000 years old to connect with believers who lived on the promises, trusting in Jesus even before he was born on the earth. The second lesson is usually from one of the letters or epistles of the New Testament. Pastor or vicar almost always preaches the sermon from one of these three readings.

**Gospel:** We stand for the Gospel reading to show respect for the words and works of Jesus. The word Gospel means, "Good news." This good news is one of the high points of the service, so we sing or speak a response often both before and after the Gospel is read, to show our joy at hearing the very words of Jesus. Another way we show our excitement to hear the good news is speaking, "Alleluia!" This word means, "Praise the Lord!" In our new hymnal, this spoken verse that often begins and ends with Alleluia, will be more closely connected with the Gospel reading, so we will stand before this verse is spoken and/or sung.

**The Creeds:** Creed is a word that means, "A statement of faith." The Nicene Creed and Apostles' Creed have been used by Christians all over the world for centuries. The Nicene Creed dates back to the 300's AD and was written to defend the Bible's teaching that Jesus is true God. The, "we believe," of the Nicene creed stresses the common faith we confess together. The Apostles' Creed was a simple statement of personal faith adults would speak before being baptized. Those being confirmed today still speak this creed as part of their confession of faith.

**Hymn of the Day:** The hymn of the day looks back at the Scripture lessons and supports the theme of the service. Remember the theme for today? What to do when a Christian sins against you? Many of the hymns have words and phrases taken directly from all over the Bible. Many of these hymns have also been sung by Christians for hundreds of years. This doesn't make them old and out of date. Their age means they have stood the test of time in proclaiming Christ. When new hymns come forward that proclaim Christ, we use them as well. The Lutheran Church has been called the singing church because we let the people participate in songs, hymns and spiritual songs, as God urges us in Colossians 3. I fully understand that few people walk out of worship repeating a line from the sermon, but you just might walk out humming a line from a hymn.

**The sermon:** While in common speech the word sermon means a long-winded and boring oratory, here in God's house, the sermon is a special opportunity to proclaim Christ and to build up the faith of the people for whom Christ died. There won't be a full sermon today, but rather an explanation of what makes us treasure the sermon. Every sermon has a connection to daily life, specific law to show us our sins, specific Gospel to proclaim: Jesus lived, Jesus died, Jesus rose and a specific application of how we can put this part of God's Word into practice.

Take the sermon text for today, Matthew 18:15-20. What to do when a Christian sins against you? That question itself is a connection to daily life, as this happens in daily life and God wants us to know what to do.

We need to be clear that we are talking about the sin of a Christian, someone inside the church. We are talking about a sin against you, not just a general sin or a sin against someone else. What to do when a Christian sins. Against you? Jesus tells us, "Go and show the fault. Just the two of you. And only the two of you." Remember you are a fellow sinner. But so easily we do everything else. We post on social media. We tell some like-minded friends. We say nothing to anyone, but stew in our own self-righteousness and the sin goes unwarned. And the fellow Christian continues on with no one loving them enough to warn them. There's specific law.

But look how much Jesus loved us! He didn't let us stay in our sins. He warned us about sin. The first word of his first sermon was, "Repent!" We need Jesus to show us our sins, so he can win us back! Win us back to his love!

Win us back to his outstretched arms, that stretched out on the cross to declare his love, to declare once and for all, "You are mine!" I love you just the way you are, but I love you too much to let you stay that way. Yes, Jesus loved us so much he warned us to win us. Specific Gospel.

Warn them to win them. That's what to do when a Christian sins against you. Warn them to win them. Don't do nothing. That's not loving. Don't talk to someone else. That just makes it worse. Don't think a social media post does the job. Warn them. Individually. Warn them. Lovingly. Warn them. Gently. Remember your purpose: to win them back to the loving arms of Jesus. Warn them to win them. What to do when a Christian sins against you? Warn them to win them. Specific application.

Maybe you were happy to have such a short sermon today. Maybe not. I pray you see today that our whole service is a sermon proclaiming Christ and that the sermon specifically makes a connection to daily life, proclaims specific law, specific Gospel and specific application.

**Create in me:** This song is taken from Psalm 51. We ask God for pure hearts to do what his Word has urged us to do, "warn them to win them."

**The Prayer of the Church:** The Church is the people who believe in Jesus as their Savior, so the prayer of the Church is the time we pray for people in various circumstances. We conclude with the Lord's Prayer, the prayer Jesus himself taught his followers almost 2000 years ago. The Lord's Prayer is found in Matthew 6.

**The benediction:** The final part of the service is called the benediction. Benediction means to bless or wish well. These words are taken from Numbers 6. They are over 3500 years old. That's 35 centuries!! God himself spoke these words to a man named Aaron, who was the very first high priest, and said, "This is how you will dismiss the people, with my name and my blessing." In 3500 years, we haven't found a better way to dismiss God's people. Just think! Moses, David, Peter, Paul, all believers for 3500 years have left God's house with the same blessing! We sing three amens because of the three part blessing and to remember the Triune God in whose name we began worship.

**After worship:** I realize this may have felt like taking a drink from a fire hose with all this information today. But I pray this will help you see Jesus better in our worship, participate more fully and honor the experience of those Christians who have gone before us.