

Scripture and the Divine Service
A Brief Study on our Liturgy
Rev. Mark Braden, 2004 A.+ D.

1. A Brief History of Liturgical Worship:

Genesis 4:3-4

Genesis 8:20

Exodus 12 – Liturgical calendar (Holy time), Passover celebration

Exodus: 25 – The Ark of the Testimony

26 – The Tabernacle (Holy space, see also 36, 37, 38)

27 – The Altar of Burnt Offering

28 – Priestly vestments (see also 39)

29 – Regulations for worship

30 – The Altar of Incense

31 – The Sabbath

35 – Sabbath regulations

40 – Tabernacle set up

Leviticus 1-10, 16, 17 21-23, 25 – Regulations for Worship (see especially 16)

Tabernacle worship replaced by Temple worship (1 Kings 8:1-11). During this time Synagogues develop. During Babylonian Captivity synagogues are common (722 B.C. for Israel, 586 for Judah, through 538. See 2 Kings 17:6, 2 Kings 25:8-11, Ezra 1:1-4).

See Luke 2:27,37, 46, 4:16-20; Matthew 4:23, 12:6, 24:1, 26:55;

After the Ascension of Christ, Christian Worship spreads. Acts 2:41-46 (see *Didache* below). After Acts 6, Christianity spreads all over Asia Minor and to Europe. Christians are persecuted, and frequently must worship in secret. House churches are common (see Romans 16:5, Phm vs 2).

After fall of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. (Matthew 24:2), Sadducees disappear, Pharisees and synagogue worship continue. Christians are continually persecuted.

In the first century A.+ D. (probably before the close of the Canon), the Divine Service is recorded by the Apostolic Church: See **Διδαχὴ** (*Didache*), chapters 7-15 (Appendix A).

7: Rite of Baptism

8: Fasting/Prayer – the Lord's Prayer

9: Eucharist

10: Returning thanks – on 10.6 *marana tha* (Μαρανα θα, מרנא תא),
see 1 Corinthians 16:22, Revelation 22:20, Mark 7:3.

11: Preachers of pure doctrine

14: Lord's Day liturgy

15: Election of Bishops and Deacons

The Apostolic Church is creedal: See Philippians 2: 5-11.

Liturgical Worship is ongoing in heaven. This includes liturgical, orderly, kneeling, bowing and hymnody. The Divine Service on earth brings the Church into communion with the Church in Glory: See Revelation 4:1-11, (Ezekiel 1, Isaiah 6, Daniel 10:4-10), 5:6-14, 7:9-12, 19:1-10.

In c. 312 A.+ D., Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire, with Byzantium as its center. He made Sunday an official holiday of the Roman Empire in 321 A.+ D., and convened the Council of Nicea in 325 A.+ D. The Byzantine Rite (Appendix B) and Byzantine text of Scripture codified the rite for worship and Bible translation throughout the empire.

Leo I (d. 461 A.+ D., Leonine Sacramentary), Gregory the Great (540-604 A.+ D., Gregorian Sacramentary/chant), and the Sarum (13th c. A.+ D. English revision of the Roman rite, used in Salisbury) mark some significant Western liturgical developments over the next 1000 years (Appendix C and Appendix D). The advent of monasticism is also important to liturgical development. A schism develops between the East and West. The great split occurs in the 11th century A.+ D. The Western church is torn by schism in the 14th c. A.+ D. when three popes war for control of the church at the same time.

2. The Lutheran Common Service:

A. Comments from Martin Luther:

1523 *Formula Missae et Communionis pro Ecclesia Vuittembergensi*: Order of Mass and Communion for the church in Wittenberg (AE 53.17-40).

“... we will deal with an evangelical form of saying mass (as it is called) and of administering communion.” (20)

“Now the additions of the early fathers who, it is reported, softly prayed one or two Psalms before blessing the bread and wine are commendable.”

“Those who added the *Kyrie Eleison* also did well.”

“The reading of the Epistles and Gospels is necessary too. Only it is wrong to read them in a language the common people do not understand.” (21)

“Later, when chanting began, the Psalms were changed into the Introit; the Angelic Hymn *Gloria en Excelsis: et in terra pax*, the graduals, the alleluias, the Nicene Creed, the Sanctus, the Agnus Dei, and the *communio*¹ were added. All of these are unobjectionable, especially the ones that are sung *de tempore*² or on Sundays. For these days testify to ancient purity, the canon excepted.”

¹ The *communio* was a chant used during the distribution.

² Propers for Sundays and Festival Days, as opposed to the Sanctoral calendar.

B. The Lutheran Common Service (Reference Appendix E):

Introit: “First, we approve and retain the introits for the Lord’s days and the festivals of Christ, such as Easter, Pentecost, and the Nativity, although we prefer the Psalms from which they were taken as of old.” (22)

Liturgical Calendar: “And if any desire to approve the introits (inasmuch as they have been taken from Psalms or other passages of Scripture) for apostles’ days, for the feast of the Virgin and of other saints, we do not condemn them. But we in Wittenberg intend to observe only the Lord’s days and the festivals of the Lord... We regard the feasts of Purification and Annunciation as feasts of Christ, even as Epiphany and Circumcision. Instead of the feasts of St. Stephen and of St. John the Evangelist, we are pleased to use the office of the Nativity. The feasts of the Holy Cross shall be anathema.” (23)

Kyrie: “Second, we accept the Kyrie eleison in the form in which it has been used until now... together with the Angelic Hymn, Gloria in Excelsis, which follows it.”

Collect: “Third, the prayer or collect which follows, if it is evangelical (and those for Sunday usually are), should be retained in its accepted form, but there should be only one.”

Epistle: “After this the Epistle is read... The Epistles seem to have been chosen by a singularly uneducated and superstitious advocate of works”

Gradual: “Fourth, the gradual of two verses shall be sung, either together with the Alleluia, or one of the two, as the bishop may decide.” (24)

Gospel: “Sixth, the Gospel lesson follows, for which we neither prohibit nor prescribe candles or incense. Let these things be free.” (25)

Creed: “Seventh, the custom of singing the Nicene Creed does not displease us; yet this matter should also be left in the hands of the bishop.”

Sermon: “Likewise, we do not think that it matters whether the sermon in the vernacular comes after the Creed or before the introit of the mass; although it might be argued that since the Gospel is the voice crying in the wilderness and calling unbelievers to faith, it seems particularly fitting to preach before mass.”

Preparation: “After the Creed or after the sermon let bread and wine be made ready for blessing in the customary manner.” (26)

Preface, Proper Preface, Verba Domini: “The bread and wine having been prepared, one may proceed as follows:

The Lord be with you.

Response: And with thy spirit.

Lift up your hearts.

Response: We lift them to the Lord
Let us give thanks unto the Lord our God.

Response: It is meet and right.

It is truly meet and right, just and salutary for us to give thanks to Thee always and everywhere, Holy Lord, Father Almighty, Eternal God, through Christ our Lord...

Then: ...Who the day before He suffered, took bread, and when he had given thanks, brake it, and gave it to his disciples saying, Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you. After the same manner also the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you and for many, for the remission of sins; this do, as often as ye do it, in remembrance of me.” (27-8)

Sanctus: “The blessing ended, let the choir sing the Sanctus. And while the Benedictus is being sung, let the bread and cup be elevated according to the customary rite for the benefit of the weak in faith who might be offended if such an obvious change in this rite of the mass were suddenly made. This concession can be made especially where through sermons in the vernacular they have been taught what the elevation means.” (28) “We do not want to abolish the elevation, but retain it because it goes well with the German Sanctus and signifies that Christ has commanded us to remember him. For just as the sacrament is bodily elevated, and yet Christ’s body and blood are not seen in it, so he is also remembered and elevated by the word of the sermon and is confessed and adored in the reception of the sacrament. In each case he is only apprehended by faith; for we cannot see how Christ gives his body and blood for us and even now daily shows and offers it before God to obtain grace for us.” (*Deutsche Messe und ordenung Gottesdiensts*, AE 53.82)

Lord’s Prayer: “After this, the Lord’s Prayer shall be read.”

Agnus Dei: “Then, while the Agnus Dei is sung, let him [the liturgist] communicate, first himself and then the people.” (29)

Post Communion Collect: Written by Luther, and added in 1525 to the German Mass. (AE 53.84)

Benedicamus Domino: “In place of the *Ite missa* let the *Benedicamus domino* be said, adding Alleluia according to its own melodies where and when it is desired. Or the *Benedicamus* may be borrowed from Vespers.” (30)

Benediction: “The customary benediction may be given; or else the one from Numbers 6, which the Lord himself appointed... I believe Christ used something like this when, ascending into heaven, he blessed his disciples [Luke 24:50-51].”

Vestments: “We have passed over the matter of vestments. But we think about these as we do about other forms. We permit them to be used in freedom, as long as people

refrain from ostentation and pomp. For you are not more acceptable for consecrating in vestments. Nor are you less acceptable for consecrating without vestments...” (31)

Examination of communicants and close Communion: “Here one should follow the same usage as with baptism, namely, that the bishop be informed of those who want to commune. They should request in person to receive the Lord’s Supper so that he may be able to know both their names and manner of life. And let him not admit the applicants unless they can give a reason for their faith and can answer questions about what the Lord’s Supper is, what its benefits are, and what they expect to derive from it.” (32) (Luther goes on to encourage annual examination of all communicants, 33).

Private Confession: “Now concerning private confession before communion, I still think as I have held heretofore, namely, that it neither is necessary nor should be demanded. Nevertheless, it is useful and should not be despised; for the Lord did not even require the Supper itself as necessary or establish it by law...” (34)

Hymnody: “I also wish that we had as many songs as possible in the vernacular which the people could sing during mass, immediately after the gradual and also after the Sanctus and Agnus Dei...” (36)

C. Comments from the German Mass, 1526

Historic Lectionary: “Since the preaching and teaching of God’s Word is the most important part of the divine service, we have arranged for sermons and lessons as follows: For the holy day or Sunday we retain the customary Epistles and Gospels...” (68)

Vestments, Candles, Altar: “Here we retain the vestments, altar, and candles until they are used up or we are pleased to make a change. But we do not oppose anyone who would do otherwise. In the true mass, however, of real Christians, the altar should not remain where it is, and the priest should always face the people as Christ doubtlessly did in the Last Supper. But let that await its own time...” (69)

Augsburg Confession:

“To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the Gospel and the Sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel. And the Gospel teaches that we have a gracious God, not by our own merits but by the merits of Christ, when we believe this. Condemned are the Anabaptists and others who teach that the Holy Spirit comes to us through our own preparations, thoughts, and works without the external word of the Gospel.” AC V, The Office of the Ministry.

“It is taught among us that nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call.” AC XIV, Order in the Church.

“With regard to church usages that have been established by men, it is taught among us that those usages are to be observed which may be observed without sin and which contribute to peace and good order in the church, among them being certain holy days, festivals, and the like. Yet we accompany these observances with instruction so that consciences may not be burdened by the notion that such things are necessary for salvation...” AC XV, Church Usages.

Formula of Concord: “We believe, teach, and confess that at a time of confession, as when enemies of the Word of God desire to suppress the pure doctrine of the holy Gospel, the entire community of God, yes, every individual Christian, and especially the ministers of the Word as the leaders of the community of God, are obligated to confess openly, not only by words but also through their deeds and actions, the true doctrine and all that pertains to it, according to the Word of God. In such a case we should not yield to adversaries even in matters of indifference... Hence, yielding or conforming in external things, where Christian agreement in doctrine has not previously been achieved, will support the idolaters in their idolatry, and on the other hand, it will sadden and scandalize true believers and weaken them in their faith...” SD X, Church Usages, .10, 16.

3. Holy Liturgy – The Word of God

Invocation	Matthew 28:19
Versicles	Hebrews 10:22, Psalm 124:8, Psalm 32:5b
Confession	1st John 1:8,9
Absolution	John 20:23; Luke 10:16; Matthew 16:17-19, 18:18
Introit	Psalms
Kyrie	Κύριε ἐλέησον Mathew 17:15; Luke 18:38-39 (35-43); Mark 10:46-52
Gloria	Luke 2:14
Salutation	Ruth 2:4; 2nd Thessalonians 3:16; 2nd Timothy 4:22
Collect	Prayers of the church, derived from Scripture
Readings	God’s Word
Gradual	Psalms
Alleluia	Revelation 19:1-6 Psalm 104:35 הַלְלוּ-יְיָ
Creed	Philippians 2:5-11 (Apostlic Creed 150 A.+ D., Nicene Creed 321 A.+ D.)

Sermon Mark 16:15, Acts 10:42,43

Votum Philippians 4:7

Prayer of the Church 1 Timothy 4:1-2

Offertory Psalm 51: 10-12

Preface Ruth 2:4, Lamentations 3:41, Psalm 86:4, 2 Timothy 4:22,
Colossians 3:1-2

Sanctus Isaiah 6:3, Matthew 21:9

Lord's Prayer Matthew 6:9-13, Luke 11:2-4

Verba Domini: Words of Institution

Matthew 26:26-20, Mark 14:22-25, Luke 22:17-20, 1st Corinthians 11:23-29

Pax Domini: Peace of the Lord John 20:19, 2 Thessalonians 3:16

Agnus Dei John 1:29

Nunc Dimittis Luke 2:29-32

Thanksgiving Psalm 106:1, 107:1

Salutation Ruth 2:4; 2nd Thessalonians 3:16; 2nd Timothy 4:22

Benedicamus Psalm 26:12, Psalm 103:1,2, 20, 21, 22; Psalm 104:1, 35; Psalm 115:18

Benediction Numbers 6:24-26

4. Ceremony/Rubrics (Outline by Rev. David Petersen, used by permission)
Ceremony vs. Rite

1. Ceremonies as Confession

A. The unseen reality

B. The connection to the past and to those not present

2. General Ceremonies

A. Posture of the Congregation

- I. Standing – indicates praise and honor
- II. Sitting – indicates reception of instruction, listening
- III. Kneeling – highest indication of adoration and humility
- IV. Bowing – indicates adoration and humility

B. Ceremonies of Celebrant's posture and gesture

- I. Facing Congregation – pastor is speaking for God to congregation
- II. Facing Altar – pastor is representing congregation to God
- III. Open hands to people – indicates invitation or blessing
- IV. Open hands to God – prayer and reception of God's will
- V. Closed hands – indicates listening
- VI. Bowing the head – adoration, humility
- VII. Genuflecting – adoration, humility

C. Sign of the Cross

- I. Upon self – indicates that all blessings and identity flow from the Cross
- II. Upon lips – indicates that what comes out of a man defiles him, desire to have speech and heart cleansed by the Cross.
- III. By Celebrant upon the people – indicates blessing whose source is the Cross.
- IV. By the Celebrant on things – item is being set apart for service to God's people under the Cross.

3. Chant as opposed to singing or reading – emphasis interprets text, chant prevents interpretation, music interprets the words. Chant keeps emotion in check.

End Note: Many resources were employed in constructing this short study. Some are cited. Others are not. Rather than attach a bibliography, Pastor Braden welcomes those who are interested to visit the library in his study. There are over 85 books available there on liturgy, the history of liturgy, rubrics, and the conduct of the Services, as well as various hymnals.