Why We Worship the Way We Do: Sending
Faith Presbyterian Church, Adult Sunday school
August 30, 2026

Opening Prayer

Introduction and Overview

Elements of the Sending:

Closing Hymn
Commissioning / Prayer of Blessing
(Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows, Altar Call)
Charge / Call to Service
Benediction / Blessing
Acolyte leads us out with the light of Christ
Postlude

Questions:

Theologically and biblically, what do you think is the purpose of this final "movement" of our worship?

If you were designing the Sending portion of a worship service, what would you want the congregation to know, experience and feel during and as a result of the Sending?

Taking a Look at Each Element of the Sending

Closing Hymn: "Hymn (Song) of Faith"

Commissioning / Prayer of Blessing

Call to Membership, Altar Call, Passing of the Peace

Charge / Call to Service

"The charge serves as a direct corporate commission challenging the congregation to go out and lead a missional life." — Book of Common Worship, 2018

Examples of Charges:

Charges based on Scripture:

- Go out into the world, and remember what the Lord requires of you: to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)
- Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey everything that Christ has commanded, remembering that he is with you always, to the end of the age. (Matthew 28:19-20)
- Go out and let your love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. (Romans 12:9-11)

Charges based on our Reformed Confessions:

- Go out into the world in peace. Remember that you have been bought with a price and redeemed by grace. Therefore, let your whole life be an offering of gratitude. Do good works not to earn salvation, but to glorify your Heavenly Father and bear fruit that shows His love to a broken world. (Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 86)
- Go into the world as ambassadors of the King. Proclaim the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ in word and in deed. Stand firm in the truth, resist evil, and shine as lights in the darkness until our Lord returns in glory. (Westminster Larger Catechism, Q&A 101)
- Remember whose you are. You do not belong to yourselves; you belong to Jesus Christ. Go into your homes, your workplaces, and your communities this week living entirely under His gracious lordship, knowing He sustains you by His Holy Spirit. (Heidelberg Catechism, Q&A 1)

Traditional Charges in PCUSA Resources:

- Go into this world that is weary and hungry to bring the Bread of Life, and live as those who know and have experienced God's goodness.

- Let us go forth into the world rejoicing in the power of the Spirit, loving and serving the Lord in our daily lives.
- Go forth into the world in peace; be of good courage; hold fast to what is good; render to no one evil for evil; strengthen the fainthearted; support the weak; help the afflicted; honor everyone.
- Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
- God has blessed us so that we can be a blessing to others. Go out to follow Jesus into the world—to show and tell the good news of God to everyone.

Contemporary Charges from PCUSA Pastors:

- Go forth into the world with compassion and justice in your heart.
  Hear voices of the long-silenced.
  See strength in what has been deemed weak.

  See one another,
  Hear one another,
  Care for one another,
  And love one another.

  It's all that easy,
  And it's all that hard. (Bruce Reyes Chow)
- So, go out into this world encouraged and in peace, determined to share the love of Jesus with everyone you meet. (Rev. Lorenzo Small)
- The universal divine is bigger than you and doesn't belong to you,
  so be open to how God's love shows up in others—
  it might blow your mind, but it will widen your heart. (Rev. Ivan Herman)

Trinitarian Benediction / Blessing

The benediction is one further and final expression of the gospel of God's grace in the worship service as the officiating pastor/preacher pronounces a blessing over the people of God as they prepare to leave the sanctuary and head out into the world of the everyday. Our Book of Order specifies that it is to be a blessing in the name of our Triune God.

Examples of Benedictions:

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (Numbers 6:24–26)

The grace of [our] Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. (2 Cor. 13:14)

May the blessing of our Triune God — Father, Son and Holy Spirit — abide with you and among you, now and forever. (Based on John 15 and 17)

May the love of the Father enfold us,
the wisdom of the Son enlighten us,
the fire of the Spirit inflame us;
and may the blessing of the triune God rest on us,
and abide with us,
now and evermore.
(Author unknown, found on http://www.biblia.work/sermons/prayersbible-prayers-short/)

We Follow the Light of Christ Out into the World

Postlude

Thinking Biblically & Theologically About the Sending:
Which comes first: the Charge or the Benediction?

Historically and traditionally in Reformed worship, where both a charge and benediction are given, the charge has usually preceded the benediction.

Over the past decade, however, PCUSA worship resources, including the latest editions of the *Book of Order*, have recommended changing that order, with the benediction coming before the charge. Consider these words from the PCUSA's Office of Theology and Worship:

> **Why is the order of the charge and blessing reversed?**
>
> The word of blessing (or benediction) spoken at the conclusion of the Service for the Lord's Day is not intended to lull us into comfortable repose; rather, it is meant to propel us out into the world to love and serve the Lord, going forth to minister in Christ's name. Like Abraham (Genesis 12:2), we are blessed in order to be a blessing in the world. Putting the Blessing after the Charge has the unintended effect of sapping our "missional momentum," or reversing the outward movement of the church.
>
> Therefore, in the Service for the Lord's Day provided with Glory to God [the most recent PCUSA hymnal], the Charge becomes the final word in the Sunday liturgy, directing us toward the week-long worship of God—Christian service and discipleship—that is our daily calling.

Question for Reflection and Sharing:
Thinking biblically and theologically, what are some reasons why it makes sense to have the Charge after the Benediction? What are some reasons why it makes sense to have the Benediction after the Charge? Finally, if it were up to you, which order would you choose and why?

Closing Prayer