

THE LUTHERAN LITURGICAL SERVICE

Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thanks and praise. Music is drawn into this thanks and praise, enlarging and elevating the adoration of our gracious giver God.

Saying back to Him what He has said to us, we repeat what is most true and sure. Most true and sure is His name, which He put upon us with the water of our Baptism. We are His and this we acknowledge at the beginning of the worship service. Where His name is, there is He. Before Him we acknowledge that we are sinners, and we plead for forgiveness. His forgiveness is given us, and we, freed and forgiven, acclaim Him as our great and gracious God as we apply to ourselves the words he has used to make Himself known to us.

The rhythm of our worship is from Him to us, and then from us back to Him. He gives his gifts, and together we receive and extol them. We build one another up as we speak to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Our Lord gives us His body to eat and His blood to drink. Finally His blessing moves us out into our calling, where His gifts have their fruition.

In the Lutheran liturgical service, we are heirs to an astonishingly rich tradition. To those familiar with its form and function, every word has an inspiring and uplifting meaning. If our services at first seem mysterious and otherworldly it is so intended. God created this world but is not of it.

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) is used for all services. Divine Services One, Two, Three, and Four are used on Sunday mornings. Vespers is used for Advent and Lenten evening services.

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ALL SERVICES

OPENING HYMN - One of praise, often reflecting the season or time of the church year

INVOCATION - Our Christian service begins in the name of the Triune God

CONFESSION OF SINS - We lay down our burdens before the Lord. We believe that we dare not engage in the mysterious service except with clean hands and a pure heart so we confess our original sins and our actual sins, those committed against God in thought, word and deed

INTROIT - Latin for "entrance", the Introit strikes a keynote of the day or season by use of the pertinent verses of the Psalms, uniting the congregation in a central theme of the service

KYRIE - Used in the church since the third century, a triple prayer for mercy from life's problems.

HYMN OF PRAISE - Or Gloria in Excelsis. An outburst of joy and praise lifts the worshipers from thoughts of their own problems to God's Majesty, Power and Holiness.

COLLECT - A reciprocal prayer of the minister for his people and the congregation for its pastor, before they together offer their petitions to God.

THE OLD TESTAMENT - Now God speaks to us through His words in this and the two readings which follow. They are often pertinent to, and therefore lead us toward the text of the sermon.

THE EPISTLE - The word of Christian Law as excerpted from the New Testament.

THE HOLY GOSPEL - Liturgical summit of the first half of the service. The Office of the Word. Everyone stands as a sign of respect.

THE CREED - The Apostles' Creed pertains to baptism, the Nicene Creed to Communion. By reciting it we renew our baptismal covenant.

HYMN OF THE DAY - Again, often reflecting the seasonal or sermon message.

SERMON - The application and explanation of the Word of God. The sermon is the Audible Word and the Communion Sacrament is the Visible Word.

OFFERING - The outward sign of our spiritual dedication to our Lord.

OFFERTORY - Having received the Word, we offer ourselves to God.

THE PRAYERS - Prayers of thanks and songs of praise. The Lord's Prayer was taught us by our Savior Himself. By reciting it we become conscious of our adoption and feel that we may come to the Lord as fellow members of the same body.

COMMUNION SERVICE ONLY

THE PREFACE - The communion service is introduced with effusive words of thanks and praise.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION - With these the bread and wine are set apart for sacred use.

AGNES DEI - We pray that the Lamb of God will grant us peace.

HOLY SACRAMENT - Believers come reverently to the altar. We are privileged to receive Christ in all His Glory.

POST COMMUNION CANTICLE - We give our most grateful thanks to the Lord for His gift of our salvation.

CLOSING OF SERVICES

CLOSING HYMN - Often one of uplift, praise and triumph, by which to properly begin the week ahead.

BENEDICTION - The last word that falls on our ears is the word peace. We begin our service with the confession of sins and end with the assurance of peace.