

Serving as Liturgist

Serving as the liturgist is a ministry. We invite you to approach it prayerfully. We want to open this ministry up to as many people as possible, and also to support our liturgists in this "work of the people" (the root of *liturgy* from Greek).

The Worship Leadership Coordinator will schedule your service. The office administrator will confirm your service early in the week before the Sunday you are scheduled. She will forward you the order of service when it's ready, usually on Friday.

Preparing to Lead Worship

You will need to prepare some prayers and introductory sentences in advance. The pastor is available if you need any help. But you need not check in with him: he is often surprised and delighted in service as he experiences with wonder how the faith of the liturgist, shared in their words and leadership, adds to our worship.

For inspiration, you might look at the resources in the back of *The New Century Hymnal*. There are also many resources available online. Here are two places to start:

The Text This Week

www.textweek.com/

Reflections and resources based on the Scripture readings for each Sunday

Worship Leader's Guidebook

worshipleaderguide.blogspot.com/

A compilation of prayers and other resources for worship leaders, from a Presbyterian pastor

A Typical Order of Service

[Responsibilities of the liturgist are noted below in **bold**. Responsibilities that require some preparation on your part are noted with an asterix (*). Responsibilities of others (pastor, musicians, congregation) are noted in *italics*.]

Prelude (musician)

Gather with the pastor in the upper narthex before the Prelude begins; walk down the center aisle together during the prelude.

Pause with the pastor at the railing, so the pastor may say a prayer for our leading worship. You may then be seated on the chair to the right (as you face the altar).

Welcome and Community Life (pastor)

After the pastor leads the Community Life and Announcements, he bids the congregation into a moment of Silence. That is your cue to move to the lectern to lead the Gathering Words.

***Gathering Words**

Prepare an invitation by which you call the congregation into these words. It can be as simple as “Please join me in the Gathering Words.” Some liturgists prepare an insight, teaching or inspiration about what worship is all about.

After this brief introduction, read the Gathering Words as printed in the bulletin.

Hymn (congregation)

(Note: we do not announce this or subsequent congregational singing with words: the piano or organ serve to announce our singing.)

***Prayer of Confession**

You should prepare an invitation to the Prayer of Confession that exhorts us to the responsibility or privilege our faith gives us for confessing. After that brief introduction, invite the congregation with words like “Will you PRAY with me our confession?” (rather than “Will you READ with me...”).

***Silence for Personal Confession**

Introduce the silence with a brief explanation, such as, “Let us in silence make our personal confessions.”

***Assurance of Pardon**

Please prepare an assurance of pardon. It may be helpful for preparing and leading this part of the service to imagine the person who is most heavily feeling his or her failure; what words can most creatively promise him or her that God's grace is strong and unflinching enough to forgive all of our sins?

Sung Response (congregation)

Passing of the Peace (congregation)

First Reading (lector)

Children's Time (pastor)

Second Reading (lector)

As the choir moves into position for the anthem, take a seat in the first pew, so that you are looking at the preacher during the sermon.

Anthem (choir)

Sermon (pastor)

As the pastor finishes the sermon and comes down from the pulpit, return to the lectern to lead the congregation in the Affirmation of Faith

Affirmation of Faith

Invite the congregation with words like: “Please stand that, celebrating the individuality in each of our understandings of faith, together we affirm the faith of the church that holds us together.”

Prayers of the People (led by the pastor)

Sung Response (congregation)

Offering

Retrieve the plates from the stand near the stairs to the pulpit and move to front center. Give the ushers a nod to indicate they should come forward for the plates. Once they are in place, pass out the plates, and bid the congregation into making their offering.

***Invitation**

You should prepare an introduction that invites the congregation to give faithfully. Please consider this as a graceful chance to provide us some teaching on the importance of thanksgiving or generosity, or an exhortation to the opportunity to share what we have been given. You sit as the ushers begin to take up the offering.

Offertory (musician)

Sung Response

When you see the ushers at the back center door, ready to come back in, take up your position front and center. This is the musician's cue, particularly when playing the organ, to finish the offertory and move to the sung response. You receive the plates and make room for the food offering.

***Prayer of Dedication**

As the ushers arrive at the front, they first place on the floor before the table, any food or clothing that has been contributed for the cupboard. Then you receive the plates from the ushers, and holding the plates, face the ushers and the congregation. You then pray a dedication, asking God's blessing over what we have given.

Usually you will not have a microphone, so remember to speak loudly enough that the congregation can hear you. You may wish to prepare this prayer in advance or you may pray spontaneously.

Wellspring has asked liturgists to specifically name gifts for the Food & Clothing Cupboard in addition to financial gifts from the congregation.

Hymn (congregation)

Charge and Benediction (pastor)

After the pastor has finished the benediction, join him in the center aisle and walk out of church together.

Benediction Response (choir or congregation)

Postlude (musician)