

Overview

"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 thankfulness and praise. Music is drawn into this thankfulness and praise, enlarging and elevating that 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. This we acknowledge at the beginning of the Divine 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 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 and blood to eat and his blood to drink. Finally, his blessing moves us out into our calling, where his gifts have their fruition. How best to do this we may learn from his Word and from the way his Word has prompted his worship throughout centuries. We are heirs of an astonishingly rich tradition. Each generation receives from those who went before and, in making that tradition of the Divine Service its own, adds what best may serve in its own day—the living heritage and something new." Lutheran Worship, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1982), 6.

Worship is...

"Worship is God's service to us as His gathered guests and our faith-full response to Him in Christ. Worship is also an opportunity to grow and develop as a community and for the community to be empowered to go out into the world. Therefore, Lutheran worship can be described as being downward, upward, inward, and outward—or... Lutheran worship is *encounter*, *expression*, *education*, and *evangelism*." — Timothy Maschke, *Gathered Guests: A Guide to Worship in the Lutheran Church*, 2nd Edition, (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 24.

Encounter

“Christian worship is a centripetal force, pulling us into the center... At the center of Christian worship we encounter the Trinity and, even more, Christ crucified and risen again for us. This merciful God stands at the center of our worship. And our liturgy, with its prayers and proclamation, its sacraments and song, cannot point to itself, much less force us to find that center somewhere else in life, but instead witnesses and draws the worshipping assembly to that very center.” — Timothy Wengert, *Centripetal Worship: The Evangelical Heart of Lutheran Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 11-12.

Expression

“The Lord’s service calls forth our service—in sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to Him and in loving service to one another. Having been called, gathered, enlightened, and sanctified by the Holy Spirit, we receive His gifts with thankfulness and praise. With psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, we joyfully confess all that God has done for us, declaring the praises of Him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.” — *The Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), viii.

Education

“The liturgy of any particular community is its primary theology in action, the teaching of the congregation ought to spring from and be completely dependent upon the community’s liturgy.” — Kent Burreson, “Forming a Lutheran Liturgical Reader,” *Lord Jesus Christ, Will You Not Stay: Essays in Honor of Ronald Feuerhahn on the Occasion of His Sixty-fifth Birthday*, edited by J. Bart Day et al., (Houston, TX: Feuerhahn Festschrift Committee, 2002), 392.

Evangelism

“We do not worship in order to gain converts but rather we evangelize in order to gain worshippers.” — David Truemper, “Evangelism: Liturgy versus Church Growth,” *Lutheran Forum* 24:1 (Lent/February 1991), 32.