

Traditional Liturgy

Why do we use the traditional liturgy? It seems so many churches are trying to be “contemporary” and appealing to the current popular trend. Why are we set on the same old thing? Wouldn’t more people be comfortable and attracted to our congregation if we made it more like their contemporary experience?

First, all things are to be done for the sake of the Gospel. The Church’s liturgy is not the contemporary, that is, the current popular style, reaching for the eternal truth, but the eternal Gospel that transcends time and space crashing into our contemporary world. Christ did not come to earth to establish new and constantly changing worship trends. He Himself went to the synagogue to sanctify the liturgy where His eternal Word was read and the people recalled the great Passover that brought them out of slavery. When He stood up to preach, healed, or cast out demons in the synagogue, He was teaching His Church that the true worship of the Trinity is faith that receives His gifts that free us from captivity to sin, death, and the devil.

Today, the eternal God continues to come and offer His gifts to men in the Divine Liturgy. Liturgy means “service” and here God serves His people the divine gifts of the preached Gospel, Holy Baptism, Holy Absolution, and the Lord’s Supper.

Indeed, this is not the Church’s liturgy to do as She pleases, but it is CHRIST’S Liturgy or service to which we come for help and mercy in our ongoing time of need.

Finally, it is proper that the Lord’s Liturgy or Service to us should involve a certain order, decorum or conduct. Our former Pastor used to say, “When you come to Our Father’s, you know that you’ve been to Church!” There are plenty of places to go for entertainment, but we want to give you a taste of heaven. While we are ordinary sinners, we surround ourselves with the Word of God, spiritual songs that often were first sung in the Bible, and hymns that are Christ-centered and remind us that our salvation is in Christ alone. Church music is not a tune that has a passing emotional connection like those

on the radio or American Idol, but hymns that have been sung for centuries and will be here long after the contemporary is forgotten.

Since Christ is the unchanging Rock upon which the Church is built, we follow an order of service which is generally the same each week, though the trained eye and ear will note a vibrant change as the Church passes through Her seasons. Her colors, songs and readings will reflect certain times and events in the Life of Our Lord, from His First Advent and Nativity through His Death, Resurrection and the sending of His Spirit at Pentecost. At other times, the changes are more subtle, as when the Church passes through the summer season of the Sundays after Trinity. CHRIST'S Liturgy proclaims Christ's work for us.

The Church is never stagnant, nor is CHRIST'S Liturgy. The Church experiences change from one generation to the next, as faithful Christians continue living from the Savior's Gifts of Word and Sacrament, anticipating His return. Technology and living conditions change, but men remain sinners who need the gifts Christ has to give to His Church in every time and place. Our services are conducted in English though Lutheran Christians hear and sing that Word in Spanish, Russian, Latvian, Korean, Twi, as well as many other languages. As the Lord gathers His faithful from the ends of the earth, they come confessing the same Faith in CHRIST'S Liturgy in their various tongues and cultures.

When our generation is gone from this earth, Christ will continue to preserve His Church and She will be fed at His Liturgy. This Liturgy will continue until all the saints are gathered around the throne of the Lamb to sing His praises eternally.