

“Why Presbyterian? A Six Week Series on the Past, Present, and Future of the PCUSA”

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A Brief Overview of the Class

1/8 Introduction to Presbyterianism and A Brief History

1/15 What do Presbyterians Believe and Why? #1

1/22 What do Presbyterians Believe and Why? #2

1/29 What Makes our Worship Presbyterian?

2/5 How do Presbyterians Get Things Done? (Polity)

2/12 What is the Future of Presbyterianism: The PCUSA and Beyond

Introduction: Presbyterian Identity

- A. Theology: Reformed theology from John Calvin to today
- B. Worship: Reformed worship
- C. Polity: Representative democracy through Presbyters (elders)

Worship: Presbyterian and Reformed

The Directory for Worship (Book of Order “W” section)

The Book of Common Worship

Worship: Reformed according to Scripture by Hughes Oliphant Old

I. The Directory for Worship

A. Preface: Worship, Witness and Service are inseparable. The theology of worship is based on the Bible, instructed by the Confessions, and seeks to be sensitive to ecumenical discussions...diversity of traditions and cultures...suggests possibilities for worship (descriptive rather than proscriptive)...listening to the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture and guided by the Confessions.

B. The Dynamics of Worship

- Definition of Christian Worship (W-1.1001)
- God’s Initiative and the Human Response
- The Common Life
- Jesus Christ in Word and Sacrament
- The Language of Worship
- Time, Space and Matter
- Responsibility and Accountability for Worship

C. The Elements of Worship (W-2)

- Prayer
- Scripture Read and Proclaimed
- Baptism
- The Lord’s Supper
- Self-offering
- Relating to Each Other and the World

D. The Ordering of Worship (W-3)

- Principles and Sources of Ordering: Scripture and History; Form and Freedom; Guidance, Participation and Leadership; Children in Worship
- Days and Seasons
- Service for the Lord's Day: General Directions/Appropriate Actions; Setting and order for Worship—Gathering around the Word, Proclaiming the Word, Responding to the Word, The Sealing of the Word; Bearing and Following the Word into the World; Other Regularly Scheduled Services of Worship

E. The Ordering of Worship (Special Purposes) (W-4)

- Guidelines for Special Occasions for Worship
- Types: Welcome/Reception; Commissioning for Acts of Discipleship; Ordination, Installation and Commissioning; Transitions in Ministry; Censure and Restoration; Recognition of Service to the Community; Services of Acceptance and Reconciliation; Marriage; Death (Funerals/Memorials)

F. Worship and Personal Discipleship (W-5)

- The Relationship between Personal Worship, Discipleship and the Community of Faith (community, life, ministry, and discipline)
- The Discipline of Daily Personal Worship—attending to God and accepting God's grace
- Scripture, Prayer and Other Disciplines in Personal Worship and Discipleship
- Christian Vocation
- Worship in Families and Households

G. Worship and Ministry within the Community of Faith (W-6)

- Mutual Ministries—Ministering to one another as the response of God's call and gifting, and the need for nurture and pastoral care in the church
- Christian Nurture—Education to live out vocation in response to God's calling
- Pastoral Care—Mutual care is the responsibility of all God's people to care for one another with others having special gifts, callings and responsibilities; pastoral counseling; care in illness, death, loss, broken relationships, sin and forgiveness, transitions of life

H. Worship and the Ministry of the Church in the World (W-7)

- Worship that is Missional
- Proclamation that is Evangelistically Missional
- Compassion (and Advocacy) that is Missional
- Ministry of Reconciliation (Justice and Peace) that is Missional
- Creation Care that is Missional

The Reign of God (The Church and the Kingdom; Worship, Ministry and Mission that is Confident and Hopeful)

Worship as Praise: In worship, the church is transformed, renewed, equipped, and sent to serve God's reign in the world looking forward to the day...

II. *Worship: Reformed According to Scripture (Old)*

- Some Basic Principles: Worship that is according to Scripture. Worship in the name of Jesus Christ. Worship is the Work of God and the People of God in Response to who God Is and what God Is Doing.
- Baptism, The Lord's Day, The Ministry of Praise, The Ministry of the Word, The Ministry of Prayer, The Lord's Supper, Daily Prayer, Alms

Tradition and Practice: Avoiding TWO EXTREMES (an archaeological reconstruction OR liturgical romanticism)...a tradition that changes every generation is not really a tradition. Tradition must have a considerable amount of permanence and changelessness. Tradition can only become a tradition when it is passed from one generation to another (*tradere* = to hand over). Tradition can be received or rejected, but it cannot be invented. Tradition needs to be (re)interpreted.

Reasons for Maintaining the Reformed Tradition of Worship

1. The Worship Tradition provides perspective to human beings who feel a need to keep in contact with our roots (who we are, where we came from, and where we are going)...a living tradition.
2. The Worship Tradition contains material of lasting (eternal) value.
3. The Worship Tradition witnesses to the authority of Scripture.
4. The Worship Traditions at the heart of Reformed Protestantism
 - Expository Preaching; *Lectio Continua*; Praying the Psalms; A Full Diet of Prayer; Regular Celebration of the Lord's Supper; The Lord's Supper as Eucharist; The Epicletic Nature of the Lord's Supper (literally "*the call to prayer*" which invokes the Holy Spirit to consecrate the bread and wine); The Diaconal Nature of the Lord's Supper; Baptism and the Emphasis on the Covenant; Baptism and the "unity" of the Sacrament (there is only *one* baptism); Baptism as a sign given at the beginning of the Christian life and through the whole of the Christian life...living the baptized life. Baptism should include the teaching of "*all I have commanded*" (discipleship).; The Daily Service of Morning and Evening Prayers; The Discipline of Daily Family Prayer and Discipleship.

The Sense for the Majesty and Sovereignty of God, with a sense of reverence, simplicity and dignity, and the conviction that worship must above all serve the praise and glory of God.