

NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

EDUCATION IN LITURGY FOR CHRISTIAN FORMATION AT
SCOTTSDALE FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

A Project Submitted to the Faculty In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

By
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Kansas City, Missouri February 20,
2016

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EDUCATION IN LITURGY FOR CHRISTIAN FORMATION AT
SCOTTSDALE FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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ABSTRACT

EDUCATION IN LITURGY FOR CHRISTIAN FORMATION AT SCOTTSDALE FIRST CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

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The true end goal of this project was Christian formation - helping the people of Scottsdale First Church of the Nazarene become more like Christ. In general this paper is about Christian formation, liturgy, and education in liturgy. The project presented here is a seven-week series of education in liturgy classes (teaching why we do what we do in worship at Scottsdale First) as a strategy for Christian formation. The paper sketches the importance of liturgy and education in liturgy by looking at the work of James K. A.

Smith in concert with several liturgical scholars and the Wesleyan theological tradition. The content of what was taught in the seven-week series of education in liturgy classes is included. Results are presented from pre-and post-class surveys, along with qualitative responses, that suggest that education in liturgy is an effective strategy for Christian formation.

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CHAPTER 1 - OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT -EDUCATION IN LITURGY

Introduction to the Study — What is This About?

This project is about Christian formation, liturgy, and teaching why we do what we do in worship at Scottsdale First Church of the Nazarene. This chapter will introduce the study by providing some

background regarding my own journey, the church I pastor, and the way we worship communally. This will include the story of how our church came to worship in a way somewhat comparable to Rite II of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer. This story will serve as background to the study, the reasons for the study, and as background to the study's participants and context. After that story is told, we will look at how the "problem" that led to this study became evident.

Personal History and Background to Scottsdale First

Personal Journey

The Lord's Supper was never emphasized in my youth and certainly not a full liturgy of Word and Table. I attended two churches in my formative teen years, one on Sunday mornings and one for youth group. The youth group was marked by games, music, Bible study, and tended to be overtly hostile toward Roman Catholics and anything associated with them. The church I attended with my family on Sundays was a Willow Creek model church that never served Communion on a Sunday morning and employed a rather straightforward music/preaching order with skits sometimes a part of the mix. The Lord's Supper was seen as a possible offense or at least an overly religious action that might scare off un-churched people and so it was only served at a nighttime

service that few people attended. Even after sensing a strong call to vocational ministry early in high school the ancient liturgy and sacraments of the church never played a prominent (nor even memorable!) role in my education, formation, or thinking.

That lack of sacramental theology began to change in graduate school. In seminary the importance and centrality of the Lord's Supper began to emerge simply from close Bible study and reading at church

history. By the time I had graduated with a Master of Divinity I was convinced that the central act of worship in the church was the Eucharist, which is to say, the service of Word *and* Table, and that the pinnacle of worship happens at the Table. I had some exposure to the liturgy of other denominational traditions in my time at Fuller Theological Seminary, and though it was only a small taste, the flavor lingered. I came to love the benediction, the words of institution, the corporate confession, and other ancient or more formal components of worship that I did not understand, but that I intuitively knew possessed significance. One professor introduced us to Robert Webber's work on worship, and I signed his 2006 "Call to an Ancient-Evangelical Future." I had no real awareness about the path down which I was beginning, but I was on my way toward embracing an ancient-future way of being.

¹I was never present for one of these Communion services, which occurred once a month. ² Throughout this paper I will use the terms the Lord's Supper, Communion, the Table, the service of the Table, and Eucharist interchangeably.

I began to attend a Nazarene church that offered a celebration of the Lord's Supper weekly, off in a corner after the dismissal, for anyone who might want to partake. Eventually someone told me that when the church was planted there were a large number of former Roman Catholics who attended and the leadership wanted to make Communion available to them to make them comfortable. I agreed that the Lord's Supper should be served weekly, but the theology of this way of practicing (optional, after, and off to the side) struck me as shallow, though I could not articulate exactly why. I recall thinking that something called "Communion" should be celebrated the context of the whole congregation, rather than just for some.

Scottsdale First

When I became the lead pastor at Scottsdale First in the summer of 2011, I joined a congregation that served the Lord's Supper sporadically (from less than once a quarter to as often as once a month

throughout its history). Going against advice to change things slowly, my conviction regarding the Eucharist was strong enough that I began serving Communion every other week right from the beginning. I also introduced the church calendar (along with the use of the Revised Common Lectionary) and with the arrival of Advent that first year I began serving Communion every week as part of celebrating the season. We never stopped. Since then we have celebrated the Eucharist every week and have continued to keep time according to the Christian calendar.

³I still think this is true and important, but also that there is more going on than simply another opportunity to preach.

The theology that guided the move to weekly Eucharist was not well developed and, as I look back upon it, underdeveloped. I was convinced that we should celebrate the Supper more frequently, but the major reason was because it seemed a good way to proclaim the Gospel - Jesus is King!³I was focused on proclamation and information. In a paper I wrote for a theology class in seminary, I expressly wrote that the elements "do not impart grace." In that paper I emphasized unity, mystery, and proclamation. Thus, I stressed (1) the fact that we are all invited to the Table, that differences break down around this common Supper, (2) that there is some sort of special event happening here though I used memorialist language and did not emphasize a real presence, and (3) I

thought that the Supper was primarily an opportunity to teach about Jesus, crucified and risen, the center of our faith.

That was the extent of my sacramental theology and understanding at the time. It guided our practice at Scottsdale First where I tended to use Communion as a platform for teaching. Unity was emphasized and I alluded to mystery, with an understanding of some sort of spiritual presence. We served the Supper weekly, with individual cups and individual pieces of bread, passed to people as they sat in their

pews.

As time went on, I began to sense the need for deeper theology. I grew in my conviction that Christ was really present in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. As this conviction developed I added a prayer of Epiclesis in addition to the Words of Institution. We also shifted to having people come forward to take the elements from a server who said, "the body of Christ, broken for you" and "the blood of Christ, shed for you" (though we still used individual cups and crackers and people would reach out and take the elements for themselves). A major shift happened when I began to work on a Doctor of Ministry at Nazarene Theological Seminary (NTS). It was in this setting that I encountered a far deeper sacramental theology than I ever did at Fuller. Those early tastes of the ancient liturgy became a banquet of liturgical theology.

In my first doctoral class at NTS I wrote a paper about Eucharistic theology and practice. The implications of that paper changed everything we did on Sunday mornings at Scottsdale First. The order of service changed, more elaborate prayers were added, the real presence of Christ was emphasized, and we began using one loaf of bread and one common cup, serving by intinction. People stopped taking the elements for themselves and instead began to hold out their hands to receive "these gifts of grace." I began to wear

a stole and a clerical collar as I began investigating sacramental and liturgical theology more seriously. Without knowing it, we found ourselves following the fourfold pattern of ancient Christian worship: gathering, Word, Table, and sending. Later, when I became more familiar with Word and Table patterns and the Book of Common Prayer, I realized that we had begun following the basic pattern of Rite II, "on accident." All of this led to more intentional research and reading and over time our pattern became more intentional, more ancient, more formal.

Before these changes, Scottsdale First's order of service could have been classified as a version of

what some call revivalist or frontier style worship. James White uses the term frontier worship to describe traditions that came into being on the American frontier especially through the camp meeting movement and revivalism.⁴ According to White, Frontier (or Frontier-revival⁵) worship is marked by pragmatism and freedom from set forms found in service books.⁶ A typical three-part order of service came to dominate this Frontier-revivalist tradition: (1) a song service, (2) sermon, and (3) response time for new converts (sometimes an altar call and sometimes simply a song after the sermon).⁷ This three-part service is exactly what the order of worship looked like at Scottsdale First before I began making changes. Here is the service order from my first week at the church:

Song
Introduce the new Pastor
Song
Song

⁴ James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989) 171-8.

⁵ Ibid. 171

⁶ Ibid, 172.

⁷ Ibid, 177

Song

Pastoral prayer
Song
Song
Offering
Song
Sermon
Song

Benediction

It seems evident from that order of worship that the focus of our gathering was music and preaching. The climax of the service was preaching — all else lead up to it - and the people of the congregation expected an evangelistic message and call to respond. Pragmatic concerns tended to dominate worship planning: what

people might enjoy, how we might attract new people, etc. And there was a complete absence of any sort of prayer book structure. All prayers were spontaneous, there were no formal responses from the congregation (such as "Thanks be to God" after reading scripture), and apart from the three-part service described by James White, we used no standard rubrics in the service.

But all of that changed overtime as I explored sacramental theology and began incorporating newfound convictions about ancient Christian worship into our service. This is now our weekly order of worship:

* * The Gathering* *

Opening Song
Call to Worship
Welcome
Collect for Purity
Gloria Path (sung) **The

Service of the Word**

Prayer for Illumination
Reading OT
Song
Reading NT Song
Reading Gospel (from the center of the congregation)

The Benediction was added at my insistence — before I arrived at Scottsdale First, they simply had a closing song.

Sermon Prayer

time:

- Creed (in unison)
- Psalm
- Silence
- People's Prayer
- Prayer of Confession
- Absolution
- Passing the Peace

The Service of the Table

Offering and Song
Presentation of gifts and *The Doxology* (sung)
Communion

- *Sursum Corda*

- *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*
- Great Thanksgiving prayer
 - Words of Institution
 - Prayer of Oblation
 - Prayer of Epiclesis
- Fraction and Unity
- Our Father
- Libation
- Invitation to receive
- (prayer and anointing are available) **The

Sending**

Sending Prayer
Announcements

Benediction

This order of service is considerably dissimilar from the simple music-preaching worship that Scottsdale First had practiced throughout its long history. We pray many written prayers. The people respond in unison in several paces ("Thanks be to God," for example, after reading scripture). We recite the Apostle's Creed each week. The Lord's Supper is the climax of the service. Much of what we do is repeated verbatim week after week. Though we still sing songs and preach, their function in the service has become a part of the whole, rather than the whole. We have become a church that makes use of a set form of worship (i.e. a prayer book) and look to theology and history rather than pragmatics. The shift has been enormous.

Most of the people accepted the changes, though it was too much for others (mostly from Baptist backgrounds) who ended up leaving our local congregation. Throughout the process I would offer brief reminders about our history in Methodism and the heritage we have from John Wesley, who promoted the use of a prayer book.⁹ Because of these reminders (or perhaps it was due to a certain stubbornness in some people) most of the Nazarenes stayed with us, even if they felt uncomfortable or questioned what we were doing, which many did.

Summary to the background story

Over time my theological convictions regarding worship changed drastically. Early in my Christian life I had no exposure to ancient historic patterns or rich sacramental theology. As I began to think more about theology, worship, and pastoring, I began to intuitively question some of our practices (such as infrequent communion or communion celebrated haphazardly). Theological education exposed me to other Christian worship traditions, theology, and church history, each of which contributed to my changing convictions. Eventually these intuitions became intentional as I purposefully investigated the theology of worship, Eucharist, and broader sacramental theology.
⁹ James White, 151, 179.

Changes in practice came along with (and mirrored) changes in theological conviction. At Scottsdale First, as the pastor, many of the initial changes made toward more ancient-historic Christian worship were based on underdeveloped theology, but were moving in the right direction. As my investigation into the theology of worship,

liturgy, and the sacraments became more intentional, much more deliberate (and drastic) changes took place in our worship.

As we moved toward historic Christian worship, I noticed my own life and perspective changing, as well. I felt a much deeper connection to the whole church, in its variations today and throughout history. I noticed the Spirit of God moving in my life through bread, water, wine, colors, smells, and patterns. I began to love and rest in written prayers. I longed for rich religious imagery found in stained glass. I found

that I was being shaped more into Christlikeness as I memorized prayers and doxologies. I found that through enacting forgiveness in confession, absolution, and the peace I have been able to forgive wrongs in my life that I was holding on to for too long. I felt a joy in celebrating the Eucharist, praying prayers of Oblation and Epiclesis. I felt that I was becoming a priest for my congregation, not only a preacher. This journey into historic Christian worship has made me a better husband, father, and pastor.

The "Problem" of Liturgy

My own personal theological journey, and the worship practices that go along, are a major part of the "problem" of liturgy. I have spent years on this voyage. I have read a great many books and articles on these subjects. I have interacted with others in graduate level classes digesting these concepts. But the people in my congregation have not had the benefit of all these things. In a sense, the farther I have gone along this path, the further separated I become from my congregation. I have mentioned the changes and given some rationale, but nothing close to the depth of what I have learned.

Furthermore, many of the benefits I have personally experienced from the liturgy are directly related to learning about the liturgy. Knowing the reasons, the mystery, the history, and meaning behind certain prayers and actions helps me to be open to God's transforming presence in the midst of the formal components of the service. But the people in my congregation did not have the benefit of all my study, so much of the power of the historic patterns we use went unnoticed.¹⁰ Before this project, their embrace of the liturgy was on the level of intuition or based on their trust in me. Part of what prompted this project was that I wanted their intuition to move to intention, mirroring my own journey, so that they could connect to our liturgy in a more meaningful way.

I first began to think about this as a potential project after a pastor's retreat on my district. I was

asked to lead Communion and I did so the way I always do (according to the service of the Table order above). At some point in presiding over the Supper, I mentioned that I understood that many of the components might be new to those participating and that I would be available to discuss why we did what we did. Later that week, I received a call. It was from a children's pastor who was part of our gathering. She said, "I grew up a Lutheran, so what you did was familiar to me. But I never understood why we did any of that; it was just what we did. Could you help me understand?" After we met and talked through the liturgy of the Table, she thanked me for showing her the richness that she had missed for so many years. Her questions and response drew me to think of my own congregation.

10 This is not to say that God could not (or does not) use them anyway. Part of the point of liturgy is that it "works" at a precognitive level. However, being aware of the rich theology helps to awaken the power of the liturgy, helps one to notice it, submit to it, or look for it.

I thought to myself, "I don't want anyone to go to my church for years and not know why we do what we do on a Sunday morning." I began to wonder about my own people. The whole order of worship we go through every Sunday morning teems with theology, grace, and meaning - but how many are oblivious to the gift before us in the

liturgy? Do they understand what is going on? Do they catch the rich theology? Or are they like this cradle Lutheran, "going through the motions without understanding," as she put it to me. I wondered if my congregation would benefit from education about why we do what we do in worship so that they might understand more. I also wondered whether deeper engagement in worship might lead to greater maturity in Christlikeness.

It is more than a question of simple book knowledge. When thinking about and planning the project, I did not want to simply help people become smarter about what we do so that they might be able to

pass a liturgy quiz. I wanted the knowledge they gained to help them wake up to what it means to be the church, to be the people of God, blessing bread and wine and water. I wanted to help them be more fully engaged, be more aware of what is going on, and be more receptive and responsive to God's grace in worship.

As I considered this as a project I thought that most people probably did not catch or understand all that was happening in worship, and that lack of understanding may be hindering their openness. Perhaps they were resistant to the formality or ritualistic nature of our patterns. Perhaps they simply could not grasp what was happening. Perhaps there were people who were new to the church and all of this is strange. I began to think that educating people about the liturgy - why we do what we do in worship - would help them understand the story being told in worship, help them be more present to God's work in the midst of it, and ultimately help them be shaped more into the image of Christ through our worship.

I realized that the people who attend Scottsdale First represent diverse attitudes regarding the liturgy. Some had specifically asked for more instruction about what is going on in our worship. Others were from more so-called liturgical backgrounds and

were already comfortable with our service (some have history in the Eastern Orthodox, Lutheran, Episcopal, or Roman Catholic churches). Despite their comfort, some of them had indicated a desire for deeper understanding. Others in our church came from free-church or frontier-style traditions and bring a skepticism to our worship, a skepticism that had been voiced on more than one occasion. All of that diversity, the skepticism, and the voiced longing for deeper understanding confirmed the need to address why we do what we do in worship in a systematic and deliberate way.

The Purpose of This Study The true end goal of this project was Christian

formation - the desire to see my congregation become more like Christ. As a pastor, this is a primary responsibility I feel for my congregation. One of the theological convictions that I have adopted over the years is that historic Christian worship is a path toward Christian maturity. But any order of worship comes with roadblocks. If people simply go through the motions, if they are not fully engaged, then the formational potential of worship could be inhibited. People may simply go through the motions because they do not understand what is going on, or they may be resistant to certain practices. The former Lutheran friend loved the liturgy she grew up with (she described it as "a warm blanket" - the familiar words and actions were comforting to her), but despite her enjoyment of the liturgy, she did not appreciate what was going on. I was once in her shoes. And, farther back in my journey, I was outright resistant to "all this Catholic stuff" (a phrase I used to utter and one that I have

heard a few in my congregation repeat). Both of these problems that inhibit full engagement in worship derive from a lack of understanding.¹¹

These issues - the potentially formative power of liturgy and the unfamiliarity or resistance of my congregation — call for a pastoral response, and that response came in two steps. The first part of my response was to shape our Sunday morning worship according to patterns and practices that I thought best fit with my theological understanding. This step has taken place over time and was well established before the beginning of this project. The second part was what became this project: to clearly articulate the theological rationale behind those patterns and practices. Coming into this project I thought that teaching the theological reasons behind our worship would address any potential issues of unfamiliarity or resistance. Educating people about the liturgy would help them understand the story being told in worship, help them be more present to God's work in the midst of it, and ultimately help them be shaped more into the image of

Christ - as individuals and as a congregation - through our worship.

In short, I came to the conclusion that I needed to conduct education in liturgy for my congregation. Throughout my own journey I both learned about and experienced liturgical practice. This back and forth between participation and reflection helped me understand and appreciate worship more deeply. As my congregation experiences the practices each week, I need to fill in the needed reflective part of the equation.

¹¹ These are all potential problems in any form or order of Christian worship, not only the more formal ones. I know a good number of people who attend frontier type churches that simply go through the motions week after week. Education in their liturgy might wake them up to what is intended in that form of worship, too.

The project consisted of a seven-week series of classes about why we do what we do in worship. These were deeply theological and applied directly to the exact words and

actions we use Sunday mornings. The classes were taught immediately before worship, so that their reflection and participation would coincide. This format - action and reflection - was important part of the education process. Furthermore, I employed twice-a-week surveys that functioned as additional points of reflection throughout the week. I also used pre- and post-class surveys that helped me measure the effects of the classes.

I held four goals in mind throughout the study. (1) Clarity regarding liturgy. This goal contains two sub points: a) that people would understand the power of liturgy in general, including to ability to exegete cultural liturgy as well as the liturgy of the church; and b) that people would be familiar with the specific liturgy at Scottsdale First and the story it invites them into. This first goal is largely "informational," that is, that people would know and be able to recognize certain things, but also contains a hope that they would

develop exegetical skills so that they can recognize important liturgy wherever it shows up, be it in a church or at a stadium. (2) Posture entering Sunday worship. I wanted people to enter worship ready for God to move through the means of grace offered therein. This goal relates to their feelings of engagement and whether they find the service meaningful. It has to do with how they enter, ready or resistant, and *their* presence in worship. It also has to do with removing feelings of resistance they may feel. (3) Response to God in worship. I wanted to help my congregation better respond to God's transforming presence in worship. This includes our response to God's call, entering God's story, and responding to God's sending us into mission from the Table. And (4) formation; I want God to form us into the image of Christ through our worship. This will be the most difficult goal to measure in only seven weeks. But if people are more informed about why we do what we do, if they are entering worship ready for God to move, and if they are responding to God's grace, then formation will take place. So, these four goals were in my mind throughout the study: clarity, posture, response, and formation.

Overview of Methodologies

The educational methodology used was a seven-week series of classes taught during our Sunday School hour about why we do what we do in worship. These classes went through our worship order and discussed some of the reasons and implications of various aspects of our worship along with the narrative the liturgy invites us into. The first class contained foundational information, giving the theological rationale behind why we worship the way we do, and included things about liturgy, story, and cultural liturgy. Humans were described in terms used by James K. A. Smith in his work *Desiring the Kingdom* and links were made to Wesleyan theology, stating that the means of grace shape our affections (see chapter 2 for a detailed unfolding of this). In the second week I addressed the topic of time, the way we keep time, the

ways inhabiting time forms us as people, and that God uses time to sanctify us and the world. In week three I spoke about the "gathering" and "Word" section of our service and in week four our response in prayer. In weeks five and six I delved into the mystery and meaning of the Lord's Supper and week seven the sending and ways our Sunday service connects to all other aspects of church life.

The measurement methodology used was a series of surveys. The most important survey tool was a pre- and post-class survey. The results of these were compared to ascertain whether there seemed to be a noticeable change in the answers over the course

of seven weeks. The specific questions are listed in Chapter 3 and the results from these surveys are given in detail in Chapter 4.

Surveys were also given twice a week (Mondays and Fridays) and filled out

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online using the service Survey Monkey . These were meant to see if the immediate class had effect, to see whether there was change over time, and also as a way to keep the ideas of class in front of the participants throughout the week in a way similar to journaling. In other words, these surveys measured responses and were intended to be part of the formational experience.

Limits and Possible Implications

¹² www.surveymonkey.com

The scope and focus of this survey was extremely local: Scottsdale First Church of the Nazarene in Arizona, people that attend there, and the specific liturgy used on Sunday mornings in our congregation. Though this project specifically addresses the components in this particular context, much of this project could be generalized to other congregations. One general implication for those in a Wesleyan tradition is the theological connections made between the work of James K. A. Smith and our own Wesleyan

theological tradition. This connection implies that historic Word and Table worship is formative and an important (perhaps indispensable) component of growth in holiness. It implies that Nazarenes should broaden our use of the means of grace to include those things found in historic worship (call to worship, benediction, doxologies, weekly Communion that includes prayers of oblation and epiclesis, etc.). Other congregations might realign the shape of their worship gatherings or the components in their service to match this formative structure.

Furthermore, the very act of theologically analyzing our worship was a valuable exercise and other congregations could reflect upon what I have done here as a model for their own study in their own contexts. Teaching the theology of any order of worship and the components they contain could benefit those who plan and participate in worship. Thinking about story, formation, and how what we do tells a story and a counter-story to cultural liturgies are all transferable concepts that I hope others will pick up and utilize in their own contexts.

Overview of This Paper

This project contains five chapters. They will describe the theological background and content of the seven-week classes, detailed analysis of the questions and responses, and implications of the study. Here is a brief overview of each chapter:

¹³ See especially James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009).

Chapter 2 - Literature Review: Holiness, Habits, Liturgy, and Education in Liturgy for Christian Formation. This chapter provides the theological foundation undergirding the project. Briefly stated, James K. A. Smith¹³ argues that people are formed by what he calls "liturgy" because liturgies shape desires, habits, and the imagination. His claims are shown to be consistent with several respected liturgical scholars

and with the Wesleyan theological tradition in terms of habits, affections, and means of grace. After this exploration of formation through liturgy, several attempts at education in liturgy are briefly examined for strengths and weaknesses as applicable to the context of Scottsdale First. Finally, the topics and themes I taught in the education in liturgy at Scottsdale First are presented in detail.

Chapter 3 - Project Design: Measuring the Impacts Education in Liturgy. This chapter describes the research methods and rationale behind the project. The specific questionnaire strategy is defended and the rationale behind each question is presented.

Chapter 4 - Outcomes: Charting the Results of Education in Liturgy. This chapter contains the data gathered through survey tools and includes charts and narrative descriptions of what happened during the seven-week training period. Quantitative and qualitative data are analyzed.

Chapter 5 - Summary and Implications. In this chapter I record ideas regarding possible next steps this project prompts in my ministry at Scottsdale First and ways that others might benefit from the work done here.

CHAPTER 2 -LITERATURE REVIEW: HOLINESS, HABITS, LITURGY, AND EDUCATION IN LITURGY FOR CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Introduction

The true end goal of this project is Christian formation - the desire to see my congregation become more like Christ. After reading and thinking about Christian formation and liturgy, I have become

convinced that educating people about the liturgy -why we do what we do in worship - will help them understand the story being told in worship, help them be more present to God's work in the midst of worship, help them respond to God's grace and call in worship, and ultimately help them be shaped more into the image of Christ through our worship. This chapter represents a summary of my research in liturgy and the formative power of liturgy.

¹⁴ See especially James K. A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009).

The purpose of this chapter is to lay theological groundwork, to look at various books intended for some sort of education in liturgy, and to develop my own approach to education in liturgy in the specific context of Scottsdale First Church of the Nazarene. The chapter will examine the work of James K A Smith¹⁴ who argues that people are formed by what he calls "liturgy" because liturgies shape desires and habits. His claims are shown to be consistent with several respected liturgical scholars and with the Wesleyan theological tradition in terms of habits, affections, and means of grace. Then several examples of education in liturgy are evaluated for their benefits or shortcomings for use in the context of Scottsdale First. Finally, the content of the education in liturgy used at Scottsdale First is presented.

Humans and Their Formation

This section will examine a model of human formation articulated recently by James KA Smith and show that Smith's model is compatible with a Wesleyan understanding of Christian formation. Using Smith's argument as an outline, I will show that the basic points of what Smith argues are echoed by several liturgical scholars. This line of thinking will then be connected to Wesleyan theology and a discussion of the means of grace as a way to understand formation in the church.

James K. A. Smith's Argument James K. A. Smith's argument regarding human beings forms an important conceptual foundation for this project, so a detailed summary of his thesis is in order. His basic argument in the *Cultural Liturgies* series¹⁵ is that (1) the Protestant world has largely bought into the notion that humans are primarily thinking or believing creatures.¹⁶ (2) This kind of reductionist anthropology is inadequate because it misses the complexity of embodied humans.¹⁷ (3)

Humans should be understood as "embodied agents of desire

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¹⁵ *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), *Imagining the Kingdom: How Worship Works* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013), and an as yet unpublished third volume.

¹⁶For example, Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 42

¹⁷For example, *ibid*, 44-6

¹⁸*Ibid*, 47.

or love." And (4) humans as lovers are formed through a framework of practices and story telling mechanisms that shape both desired ends and habits - such frameworks he calls "liturgies." Furthermore, these liturgies are all around us, in the culture, and are often powerful forces that shape people toward ends antithetical to the Kingdom of God. All of this heightens our awareness of the importance of Christian practices that shape people who "desire the Kingdom" of God.

In the following sub sections, each part of Smith's argument will receive attention and the work of other thinkers is shown to compliment Smith's contentions.

I think, therefore I am

Smith first describes the dominant Western view of persons by summarizing Rene Descartes exercise in doubt resulting in the famous statement "I think, therefore I am."

Racked with doubt, Descartes isolates himself and tries to think through the problem of doubt - what can be certain? Every time he finds some ground of certainty, he also finds that he can doubt that also. Finally, he realizes that if he can think (or doubt) then he must exist. Smith summarizes Descartes' conclusion:

And so, in the *Meditations*, Descartes' famous maxim "I think, therefore I am" takes on an even starker form: "I'm deceived, therefore I am" - because even if I am being deceived, I would have to exist in order to be deceived.. ..Descartes concludes that "I" am a "thinking thing." In other words, what I am is an essentially immaterial mind or consciousness - occasionally and temporarily

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embodied, but not essentially. Smith also notes that this picture of the human — what he also calls "rationalist" or "intellectualist" model - did not really originate with Descartes, but can be traced to Plato and (through various philosophers, theologians, and forces such as the enlightenment) continues to be the dominant picture in the Western world in general and the Protestant

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church in particular.

²⁰ Ibid., 41-2.

²¹ Ibid 42-5. In this section Smith expands his observations to certain Protestant groups — especially in the Reformed tradition (his own) — which have begun using the language of "believing" rather than thinking; however, he shows that, though well intentioned, the changes is mostly semantic. We are left with a Protestant world that insists humans are defined by the mind.

Smith is not alone in finding that a rationalistic model dominates the Church. Randy Maddox traces some philosophical developments in the Methodist movement and

comes to the same conclusion. Maddox shows that John and Charles Wesley subscribed

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to what Maddox calls an "affectual moral psychology" (which is not Cartesian). However, after the Wesley brothers' deaths, Methodists quickly adopted what Maddox calls a "decisionistic rational control" model of the human (a model decidedly Cartesian). In the new decisionistic-rationalistic model an emphasis on intentional rational choices came to dominate Methodist thinking.²⁴ As a result, Wesley's theological descendants "typically restricted interest in the means of grace to those aimed mainly at exhorting our

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intellect: sermon, Bible study, and prayer." James White identifies the strong influence of the enlightenment on American Methodists (and almost all other Protestant families) resulting in a strong emphasis on moralism and rationalism.²⁶ A rationalistic or intellectualist model of humanity still dominates the Church of the Nazarene as well as much of the Church in general.

Aidan Kavanagh, a Benedictine monk, priest, and highly regarded liturgical scholar, frames his discussion of this theme by focusing on "Prosper of Aquitaine's

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²² Maddox, "Reconnecting the Means to the End: A Wesleyan Prescription for the Holiness Movement," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 33.2 (1998): 44ff

²³ Ibid, 46.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid, 47

²⁶ James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989) 181.

²⁷ Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (Collegeville, MI: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1984), 3. Most often in the book this phrase is in Latin: *Lex supplicandi legem statuat credendi*

phrasing, it is the law of worship which founds or establishes the law of belief." Kavanagh repeatedly makes the point that "the law of prayer" and the "law of belief" work together. This goes against the grain of the intellectualist models of humanity which would emphasize belief and thinking over worship and action.

Kavanagh insists that too much of the church has moved in an intellectualist or rationalistic direction noting that

the word "orthodox" means right *worship* not right *belief*. For example, observing ways in which terms are translated in church documents, Kavanagh laments that, "*Orthodoxia*, right worship... has become *orthopistis*, right believing, or *orthodidascalia*, right teaching" Though the church, following the ancient maxim *lex supplicandi legem statuat credenda*, should be worship/prayer/heart first and mind/intellect/head second (and always interacting), the situation is often reversed, leading to a Cartesian model of a thinking human which ignores the body, actions, and heart.

All of those examples - from Maddox, White, and Kavanagh - support Smith's claim that a rationalistic model dominates many corners of our culture and the church has, by and large, adapted this model as its own. This, in part, explains why so much emphasis falls on teaching and preaching in our Nazarene churches. The sermon is the most important part — often construed as rationalistic moralism, presenting truths to which listeners should intellectually ascent - the pulpit receives the most prominent and central focal point in most Nazarene sanctuaries, and our discipleship materials tend heavily toward Bible studies, scripture memorization, and other learning opportunities. Bible study and learning have their place in the church, but such emphasis on these means alone reveal an underlying rationalistic model. Such a model has some flaws and only captures a small part of what it means to be human.

Critiquing the rationalist model

²⁸ Ibid, 82

Though one must recognize that humans are at least partly thinking creatures and that humans do deliberate, to make a disembodied mind the center of our being is mistaken. So much of the biblical story becomes moot if we are minds to the exclusion of

the body (even if this move is made unintentionally). The human was formed from the *dust of the earth*. The Word became *flesh*. *Taste and see* that the Lord is good. You are the *body* of Christ. The very notion of *physical resurrection*, Christ's or ours. All these lose meaning if Descartes, Plato, et. al. are correct that we are first and foremost thinking (or believing) things who do not really need a physical body. An intellectualist anthropology wades only into the shallows. A deeper more holistic picture of the human is needed, one that captures mind and body together, for humans are thinking, believing, acting, imagining, communal, and loving creatures.

The critique of an intellectualist approach falls swiftly from Smith and others. Smith writes, "we could describe this [rationalistic model of the human] as 'bobble head' Christianity... mammoth heads that dwarf an almost nonexistent body." He goes on to chide the church for adopting "a stunted pedagogy that is fixated on the mind."³⁰ Brent Peterson laments, "too often discipleship or catechism is reduced to facts, figures, dates, and Bible trivia. Even theological truths are emphasized as something merely to be mentally believed."³¹ In a scathing remark, Kavanagh writes, "One has serious reservations about what sort of theology must be produced by the western Taw of worship' construed as a 'learning experience.' One doubts that it would be construed as

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²⁹ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 42.

³⁰ Ibid,

³¹ Brent Peterson, *Created to Worship*, Kansas City (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2012) Kindle location 460-3.

³² Kavanagh, 4-5.

orthodoxy in the traditional meaning of that term." The rationalist approach does not account for the richness of human life and experience. It does not capture the heart. It focuses on ideas, beliefs, and propositions to the detriment of prayer, bath, meal, and relationship. The cognitive approach tends toward individualistic interpretations and

applications and even the marginalization of the church; for if church becomes merely a place to listen to a sermon, to learn, then why "attend" a church when one could listen to sermons anywhere at leisure?³³ These enlightenment types of approaches are simply too narrow and do not account for the complexity that people experience nor the spiritual mystery of God creating, interacting with, and making God's self known through the physical world.³⁴ Relationship, partnership, and interaction with other embodied creatures and physical objects (water, bread, and wine for example) are tools that God uses to form us. While learning and thinking are an important part being human, the mind is only one part of a complex whole. And if we aim only at the mind, we have missed much of the person.

What is a person?

³³I meet more and more people who, when I ask "where do you attend church?" answer with, "oh, I go to such-and-such church... but I don't really go, I just listen to the sermons online."

³⁴ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 43-46.

³⁵ Ibid, 47

³⁶ Such as that advocated by N. T. Wright and other theologians. See also Nancy Murphy, *Bodies and Souls, or Spirited Bodies?* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), who makes hope in a bodily resurrection a recurrent theme in her work on a physicalist anthropology.

So then, if we are not "thinking things", then what is a person? Smith's answer: "we need a nonreductionistic understanding of human persons as embodied agents of desire or love."³⁵ Important in this description is the idea of being embodied. Our core self is not complete without a physical body. This works well with a robust theology of bodily resurrection and of the incarnation.³⁶ It also coincides with the more holistic picture of the human that John Wesley painted by his emphasis on the whole person, the sacraments, people's affections, and growth in holiness through a wide variety of the means of grace.

Craig Keen, speaking from a Wesleyan theological perspective, argues for a holistic and bodily understanding of the person. In an article about Theological

Anthropology he writes,

Since the fifth century, under Platonism's influence, the body has often been sharply distinguished from soul and spirit.³⁷ However, closer to the OT and NT is the view that body, soul and spirit are different ways of regarding the same complex whole. Thus soul may be a bodily yearning especially for God; spirit, that aspect of bodily life most directly envied the Holy Spirit; and body, what is enlivened by the Spirit and yearns for God."

Keen argues that humans are one thing, a complex body, so complex that aspects of its existence can be described as soul and spirit, but not dissected. This description of the body, soul, and spirit is helpful for moving this argument forward for it speaks of a complex embodied existence and the language of "yearning" falls in line with picturing people holistically including mind, body, and emotions. Nancy Murphy argues along similar lines and warns, "the radical dualism of Plato and Rene Descartes, which take the body to be unnecessary for, or even a hindrance to, full human life, are clearly out of bounds." Humans are complex physical beings and must be addressed as such.

Kavanagh seems to understand embodied "knowledge" as superior to mind-alone knowledge. In a wonderful word picture he writes,
³⁷ Perhaps Wesley is overly influenced by Platonic thought in this regard, thus he sees a sharp division between body and soul.

³⁸ Craig Keen, "Anthropology, Theological" in *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press, 2013) 55.

Tourists on a bus in Santa Fe have access through their books and guides to more facts about the rain dance they are watching through their windows than do the Indians themselves. But the tourists can never really know the dance as the dancers know it, and knowledge alone does not make tourists Indians.

With these words he introduces his readers to a recurring theme in his work: bodies, actions, and liturgies matter. These bodily expressions of the church often come first, before the more cognitive undertakings of the church like systematic theology and belief. The church's active bodily liturgical actions and prayers in worship establish belief, not the other way around. He writes, "*lex supplicandi* and *lex credendi* are not detachable or opposable laws but subtly correlative, the first founding the second, the second affecting (although not founding) the first."⁴¹ With this sort of argument Kavanagh affirms the holistic embodied nature of humanity (and the church) and the complex interaction between body and mind.

Furthermore, Alexander Schmemmann's work in *For the Life of the World* implicitly argues that humans are complex embodied creatures. Though his goal is not dismantling an intellectualist anthropology, this theme comes through nonetheless. For example, he mocks those who reduce Christianity to intellectual categories.⁴² He recognizes, throughout the book, that the incarnation matters, that bodies matter, and that the physical world matters. He writes, "we *need* water and oil, bread and wine in order to be in communion with God and to know him.. .There is no worship without participation of the body, without words and silence, light and darkness, movement and stillness."⁴³ A Christianity captured by a rationalist approach to humanity, missing the deep bodily and worldly and sacramental nature of worship, are going down a "hopeless dead end."⁴⁴

⁴¹ Ibid, 150.

⁴² Alexander, Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1973) 118.

⁴³ Ibid, 121. Emphasis in original.

⁴⁴ Ibid, 119.

Smith develops his "embodied agents of desire or love" anthropology in detail. He argues that

humans are not empty static containers of or for information; rather people

are creatures aimed at something — humans are intentional; humans are more like an arrow-moving-toward-a-target than an x-marks-the-spot. This arrow of intentionality develops as human persons attend the world not primarily as thinkers about the world, but as active bodily participants in the world. Smith suggests that humans are, by nature and at our very core, loving or desiring creatures. Furthermore, that which we love (that which we desire) indicates who we are. By 'love' or 'desire' here, Smith does not mean simple loves or desires such as how one can love certain foods or desire certain people. He means desires that fundamentally guide us toward certain ends, what we picture as the ideal life or way of life. This sort of love can be described as allegiance or worship. Deep love or desire operates even if one does not utilize our mental capacities of reflection. And, because this love aims at something, the direction of the aim defines us. Every person aims their love at something - the target defines who we are.

Smith's picture of the human continues by discussing love's target. Smith defines this target or *telos* of love as "a specific vision of the good life, an implicit picture of what we think human flourishing looks like." This "vision of the good life" includes all sorts of components - work, relationships, economics, what one values, what someone enjoys, and so on. This picture of "human flourishing.. what we think it looks like for us to live well.. governs, shapes, and motivates our decisions and actions." Again Smith emphasizes the noncognitive nature of this picture of the good life, this *telos* or target. He insists that "such pictures are communicated most powerfully in stories, legends, myths,

⁴⁸ Ibid,53.

plays, novels, and films rather than dissertations, messages, and monographs."

Propositional statements, books, and other cognitive media have their place, but story gets at the heart like arguments and facts usually do not because story captures the imagination not only the mind. This capturing of our imagination draws us, moves us, gets into the heart, and thus these stories, have an enormous impact on our hearts, what we do, how we think, and how we live. The target - the picture of the good life; that which we desire or love or yearn for - could be any number of things. It could be the kingdom of God as Jesus announced or it could be any other kingdom of this world. The point is that we are creatures who love and that love is aimed at some vision of the good life.⁴⁹

In the third part of Smith's anthropology, he asks about the process by which human desires are aimed. If we are creatures who love and that love is directed, *how* is it directed? He contends that our love is directed through the acquisition of habits⁵⁰, a technical philosophical concept he defines: Habits "represent our default tendencies and our quasi-automatic dispositions to act in certain ways, to pursue certain goods, to value certain things, to cherish certain relationships, and so forth."⁵¹ They operate at a precognitive level, they are acquired and develop over time, and they "constitute the

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⁴⁹ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 52-55.

⁵⁰ In this technical way, habits are sometimes called dispositions, affections, or tempers, or other related terms, depending on the author or sometimes used interchangeably for the sake of variety. They can all refer to the same concept.

⁵¹ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 55.

⁵² Ibid.

fulcrum of our desire: they are the hinge that 'turns' our heart." This turning of the heart by acquiring habits

aims the heart toward ultimate ends. Thus, humans become certain kinds of people - people who value and pursue certain kinds of things and relationships — through the acquisition of habits.

So far Smith has insisted that (1) people are "embodied agents of desire", (2) our desire (or love) is directed toward some ultimate end — we might call this directed desire *worship* or *allegiance*, (3) the target (or *telos*) of that desire, the ultimate end, is a picture of the good life, and (4) we are directed toward a particular target by the shaping of habits - the very shaping of the heart in a certain direction.

Now, how is the heart shaped? How are habits formed? Smith already alluded to one such way: "affective images" such as story, film, icons,⁵³ and so on. Such images get into us and influence the direction of our habits. Furthermore, habits are directed through "bodily practices and rituals."⁵⁴ The heart and body are so intertwined that what bodies do, see, taste, smell, and touch shapes the heart. "Over time," Smith writes, "ritual and practices - often in tandem with aesthetic phenomena like pictures and stories - mold and shape our precognitive disposition to the world by training our desires."⁵⁵ He will call this confluence of practice and picture "liturgy." In the next section, the concept of liturgy will be examined in more detail.

Implications

⁵³ In a broad sense of the word: an icon could be any image or vision that captures the sense of the good life. For Smith this could be the image of Pat Stark from the Avengers films, an icon of St. Perpetua, a mannequin at Macy's, or a shampoo commercial.

⁵⁴ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 58

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

This part of the chapter has been about how humans are formed and shaped. A problem has been identified and a solution sketched. The problem: too often we in the church view humans as disembodied

minds or as bodies whose primary job is to house the mind (in both cases, the mind is the significant part of a human). Many in the Nazarene tradition tend toward some sort of "decisionistic rational control" model of the human. These sorts of rationalistic or intellectualistic models fall short for a number of

reasons, failing to do justice to the complexity of the human and human experience. The solution to this problem comes in four parts. (1) To envisage humans in a more holistic way, body-soul-spirit-mind as integrated. (2) To understand humans as moving or pointing toward an ultimate *telos* or a vision of the good life. (3) To understand what directs the human heart (or soul) toward a given target is determined by habitual dispositions developed over time. Furthermore, (4) these habitual dispositions are not shaped by information alone, but by story and bodily practice - individual and corporate — in conjunction with rational considerations. One important implication of this model of the human is that the church should pursue a holistic model of worship (and education) that strikes the imagination, body, and mind through means such as story, myth, symbol, icon or image, bodily practices, sacraments, movement, the five senses, intellectual reasoning, and propositions — but none of these alone and as often as possible in some rich combination of them working together. This combination of story and practice (in their many varieties) that shapes human hearts is what Smith calls liturgy. The next part of this chapter explores how liturgy of all sorts shapes the human heart.

Liturgy Shapes People

This part of the chapter will give some characteristics and examples of how "liturgical formation" happens outside the church. Then attention will turn to potentially formative power of historic Christian worship. What Smith calls "liturgy" and what Gordon Lathrop calls "symbols" powerfully shape people toward ultimate ends. In other words, liturgy shapes people. Both Lathrop and Smith use the "religious"

terminology of symbol or liturgy to heighten our awareness of what goes on around us every day in "normal" cultural life.

Lathrop, for example, sets up the importance of Christian worship partly by noting the power of politics, entertainment, and consumerism in the American culture. Such institutions act as collective incubators in which people from different walks of life

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can "enact a shared vision that has public and communal meaning." By observing such power - and speaking of cultural "symbols" - Lathrop begins pointing toward the power of liturgy of all kinds, including the liturgy of the church.

One of the great contributions of James Smith's work in *Desiring the Kingdom* is encouraging and conducting detailed "cultural exegesis." Cultural exegesis means to discern not only the *message* that this movie or that sporting event might be communicating, but also the *kingdom* to which it points and the *liturgy* it utilizes to form people toward that end. Smith, citing the work of Scott Daniels on the book of Revelation, notes that this sort of cultural exegesis happens regularly in Apocalyptic literature. Apocalyptic literature *reveals* the true nature of the world. In the book of Revelation, for example, Rome is exposed as a whore seeking the destruction of God's people rather than the beautiful life-giving goddess she pretends to be. Cultural exegesis will perform a similar task but with those activities, images, practices, stories, or institutions so common in our culture people have come to think of them as normal, neutral, or even good (as some ancient Christians had with Rome).

These formative cultural liturgies surround us. In *Desiring the Kingdom* Smith exegetes the mall, the sports stadium, and the university as prime examples (and each of these have tentacles that ubiquitously

reach into our lives). He asks questions like, "what vision of human flourishing is implicit in this or that practice? What does the good life look like as embedded in cultural rituals? What sort of person will I become after being immersed in this or that cultural liturgy?"⁶³ He also points out that cultural liturgies are never neutral. They, by their nature and ours, shape us toward some *telos*, and the ends to which cultural liturgies point are usually antithetical to the Kingdom of God.

And so humanity is bombarded — in the most subtle and usually unnoticeable of ways - by cultural liturgies, rituals, and symbols. Some of these form people to consume more and more, to be nationalistic patriots who will kill and will be killed if asked to, and to become successful competitive producers (so, of course, one might consume even more again).⁶⁴ There are shopping seasons and corresponding "liturgical" colors. Baseball games follow historic rituals, honor the soldiers in our midst, and at the seventh inning stretch people standing to sing a baseball hymn in unison to organ music. School children repeat a nationalistic version of a creed every day - the pledge of allegiance. And the list goes on. Smith helps his readers see the ubiquity of liturgical activity and symbols in the culture.

⁶³ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 89.

⁶⁴ These discussions are important and fascinating. See Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, for the mall and consumerism, 93-103; for sports and nationalism, 103-12; and savvy career minded producers, 103-118.

Cultural liturgies surround people and shape them to become producing, consuming, and defending-the-nation sorts of people who form producing, consuming, and defending-the-nation sorts of societies. Liturgy shapes people individually and

collectively. Because habits of the heart produce action, even if people are unaware of the reasons, influences, and systems at work, such liturgies lift and carry people to ends often far from the Kingdom of

God. The church sometimes only reinforces these counterfeit ends by catering to the consumerist or nationalistic tendencies of cultural liturgies.⁶⁵ But in historic Christian worship the church has the potential for powerful counter cultural formation into Christlikeness.

The Power of Christian Worship

⁶⁵ Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 4.

⁶⁶ Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 43-53.

⁶⁷ *Ibid*, 2.

⁶⁸ *Common English Bible* (Nashville, TN: Common English Bible, 2011), Acts 2:42.

⁶⁹ N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003) 660.

⁷⁰ *Common English Bible*, Luke 24:27—30.

The term "historic Christian communal worship" means the Eucharist, the historic communal gathering of Word and Table.⁶⁶ This pattern, setting proclamation of the scriptures next to a meal, "has been practiced more or less in this form, for a long time, being traceable to the earliest centuries of the Christian movement."⁶⁷ In fact, traces of this pattern can be seen in the New Testament. Acts 2:42 includes this teaching-meal pattern, "The believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, to the community, to their shared meals, and to their prayers."⁶⁸ Luke records one of the first encounters with the risen Lord in this word-table rubric which N. T. Wright describes as "paradigmatic for subsequent worshipping life"⁶⁹: "Then he [Jesus] interpreted for them the things written about himself in all the scriptures, starting with Moses and going through all the Prophets.. .After he took his seat at the table with them, he took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them."⁷⁰ Justin Martyr's well-known description of worship in Rome at around AD 150 outlines what has become the classic pattern for

(nearly) all Christians throughout time. His brief description includes components such as gathering together, reading and explaining the scriptures, prayers, collecting offerings, and the ritual Eucharist meal.⁷¹

The Word-Table pattern is ancient and it is pervasive.

As mentioned earlier, one important implication of the model of the human sketched in this paper is that the church should pursue a holistic model of worship that strikes the imagination, the body, and the mind through means such as story, symbol, icon or image, bodily practices, sacrament, movement, the five senses, intellectual reasoning, and propositions - but none of these alone and as often as possible in some rich combination of them working together. Historic Christian worship contains just such a union of all these components. In historic Christian worship people are immersed in a suite of disciplines, story telling devices, and means of grace that act as a formidable center for Christian formation.

Wesley's means of grace theology fits with these ideas perfectly. Indeed Wesley's admonition to receive the Lord's Supper as often as possible indicates how highly he thought of corporate Christian worship, for the Eucharist was only available in the liturgy

⁷¹Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 46-1.

⁷²John Wesley, "The Duty of Constant Communion" in *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 7* (Third Edition; London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 147ff. Also note that any service of the Lord's Supper would have been some version of historic Word and Table worship.

⁷³John Wesley, "The Means of Grace," *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 5* (Third Edition; London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 188.

of the Church of England. In such worship a good number of what Wesley identifies as means of grace converge: Prayers of the church (from the Book of Common Prayer, the Psalms, and the Lord's Prayer), scripture reading and reflection, and the Lord's Supper.⁷³ Some of these are indispensable in Wesley's eyes (such as Eucharist) and all of them beneficial. So many means of grace happen at one time in corporate worship that its

importance in Christian formation cannot be overestimated. Because the means of grace form such an important part of Wesley's vision of shaping disciples, we now turn to an overview of his theology of the means of grace.

The means of grace.

Paul Jensen writes that the "imitation of Christ.. .requires God's grace." This is an important and critical point: Any growth in Christ, any power to respond to God, any maturing or perfecting or loving finds its source in the grace of God and nowhere else. Grace can be understood as the underserved healing and transformative presence of God. John Wesley criticized those who thought the means of grace could be used to manipulate God. However, Wesley also criticized those who dismissed using means of grace, expecting to encounter the grace of God through "immediate and intense religious experience." Rather, Wesley held that God's grace was usually mediated through

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means.

John Wesley's sermon entitled, "The Means of Grace" begins with quoting Malachi 3:7, "Ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them" then begins:

⁷⁸ Ibid.

But are there any *ordinances* now, since life and immortality were brought to light by the gospel? Are there, under the Christian dispensation, any *means ordained* of God, as the usual channels of his grace? This question could never have been proposed in the apostolical [sic] church, unless by one who openly avowed himself to be a Heathen; the whole body of Christians being agreed, that Christ had ordained certain outward means, for conveying his grace into the souls of men [i.e. all people]. Their constant practice set this beyond all dispute; for so

long as "all that believed were together, and had all things common," (Acts 2:44,) "they continued steadfastly in the teaching of the Apostles, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Verse 42.)

The means of grace, to Wesley, are so central to Christian life and experience that only a heathen could have wondered about their importance. It has always been that there are "means ordained of God as the usual channels of his grace." Grace - God's healing and transformative presence - is mediated through means. The book of Acts provides an early list: the teaching of the Apostles, breaking bread (Eucharist), and prayer. Again, this early list hints that Word and Table worship took root in the earliest of church gatherings.

In his sermon "the Means of Grace" Wesley defines the means of grace in the clearest terms possible:

By "means of grace" I understand outward signs, words, or actions, ordained of God, and appointed for this end, to be the ordinary channels whereby he might convey to men [i.e. all people], preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace.

I use this expression, means of grace, because I know none better; and because it has been generally used in the Christian Church for many ages,—in particular by our own Church, which directs us to bless God both for the means of grace, and hope of glory; and teaches us, that a sacrament is "an outward sign of inward grace, and a means whereby we receive the same."

Several things are important to note in this extended definition and defense of the term:

(1) A great variety of things can be called "means of grace," for they can be "signs, words, or actions." This is demonstrated in Appendix A where the means of grace are categorized. Though Wesley gives several lists of the means of grace, those lists are liable to grow.

(2) Despite a great variety of means, orderly and historic Christian worship seems to play a prominent role. Wesley mentions sacraments (which would only occur in the church by ordained clergy) and refers to prayers prayed in corporate worship.

(3) The means of grace are the "ordinary channels" of God's grace; so God's grace may be found in other extraordinary ways, but Wesley seems to have understood God's grace as mediated typically through a means found in historic Christian worship. In his journal, Wesley recounts a disagreement with the Fetter Lane Society for abstaining from the means of grace and instead practicing quietism (simply waiting on God while doing nothing). His conclusion is that they are in folly for abandoning God's

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ordinary channels of grace and transformation.

(4) The means of grace are given to convey "preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace." In stating this, Wesley has in mind the whole process of salvation: God's work before we find explicit faith (so that even "non believers" should be encouraged to participate in at least some of the means of grace), God's work in conversion, and God's work in sanctification. Remember that in Wesley, there is a continuum of salvation and that sanctification is not some option for super Christians, it is the natural working out of one's salvation, it is full salvation. Steve McCormick states that "the *use and practice* of

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⁸¹ John Wesley "Journal from November 1, 1739, to September 3, 1741", *The Works of John Wesley, Volumes 1—4* (Third Edition; London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), vol. 1 248.

⁸² Steve McCormick, "Theosis" in *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, Ed. Al Truesdale. (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2013) 538.

the means of grace.. .is how Christians fulfill their potential for *theosis*

(5) Finally, there is an explicit connection made between the means of grace and the sacraments. The sacraments of the church should always be included in any list of the means of grace. In fact, the chief of the means of grace in Wesley's writing seems to be

(6)

the Lord's Supper. And beyond the sacraments themselves, all of the means become sacramental, for they convey God's healing and transformative presence.

In that same sermon, "The Means of Grace," John Wesley makes a preliminary list of the means of grace as he understood them: "The chief of these means are prayer, whether in secret or with the great congregation; searching the Scriptures; (which implies

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reading, hearing, and meditating thereon;) and receiving the Lord's Supper." One might look at that list and condense it to "corporate Christian worship of Word and Table." Again, historic Christian worship plays an important role in Wesley's understanding of means of grace.

The ecclesial nature of these chief means of grace should alert us to the importance of gathered corporate historic worship. The ordinary channels of grace and transformation are found in corporate worship and performed as a community. Thus, Wesley was critical of the Fetter Lane society and quietism, for their corporate worship lacked the ancient and historic means of grace. In historic Christian worship, prayers are often said in unison or with a corporate "amen" and the liturgy of Communion is literally the "work of the people" together as a body. The chief means of grace are performed in the context of the gathered church, they are sacramental, and they help transform recipients of grace into God's image as a people together and as people individually.

⁸³ John Wesley, "The Means of Grace," *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 5*, 188.

⁸⁴ Constance M. Cherry, "Liturgy and Worship," *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, Ed. Al Truesdale (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2013) 304.

So, one connection between Smith's argument and Wesleyan theology is the language of means of grace, for means of grace are holistic, corporate, touching mind and body, and they constitute historic Christian worship (in other words, historic Christian worship is made up of a series of the means of grace,

including the most important of

them). There is another link between Smith and Wesley, and that link is the language of tempers or habits.

Habits and Tempers

The concept of *tempers* plays an important role in Wesleyan theology when speaking of the means of grace and Christian formation. The reason means of grace "work" is that the healing and transformative presence of God heals and transforms a person's habits and tempers. Tempers can be defined as, "an enduring or *habitual*

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disposition of a person" or "dispositions for all of life, master passions which shape all behavior whether they are consciously felt or not." Some of the most important Wesleyan scholars today note the way tempers (which will also be known as affections or

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habits - thus the connection to Smith) are central to Wesley's vision of holiness. Randy Maddox writes, "The proper enduring orientation of these affections would constitute the

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Christian tempers (or inward holiness)." Kenneth Collins writes that, for John Wesley,

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⁸⁵ Randy Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville, TN: Kingswood Books, 1994), Kindle location 1394.

⁸⁷ Though certain authors find distinction between them, the terms *habits*, *affections*, *dispositions*, and even *tempers* are used somewhat interchangeably, depending on the person. Collins and Maddox are well known for arguing about these terms. Typical amongst most is that habits and affections develop over time into tempers, which are more enduring (though can still be subject to change through). The point here is simply that these "enduring dispositions," call them what you will, exist and can be shaped.

⁸⁸ Clapper, 95.

⁸⁹ Kenneth J. Collins "John Wesley's Topography of the Heart: Dispositions, Tempers, and *Affections*." *Methodist History* 36.3 (1998): 162

the idea of tempers "constitute the very substance of holiness." In describing John Wesley's theology Henry

Knight writes, "Sanctification is the gradual process of growing

in love and other holy tempers through grace." And because grace is mediated, growth in holy tempers comes through the means of grace.

Randy Maddox provides helpful insight for understanding how the formation of a holy people is connected to tempers and habits. He argues that John Wesley held a virtue ethic based on Thomas Aquinas and this habituated virtue model of moral psychology plays out in Wesley's view of sanctification: God enables people to respond to love (prevenient grace) and these responses, over time, develop the character (habits, and eventually virtues) of a holy person.⁹¹ None of this is instantaneous. It is a slow, habituated, growth in grace and holiness. Humans can stifle the process, frustrating God's desire to form holy people.

⁹⁰ Henry H. Knight, "Wesley, John, Theology of *Global Wesleyan Dictionary of Theology*, Ed. Al Truesdale (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2013) 564-6.

⁹¹ Maddox, "Reconnecting the Means to the End," defines moral psychology: "one's fundamental assumptions about the dynamics that account for human moral choice and action," 33.

⁹² Maddox, "Reconnecting the Means to the End," 33.

⁹³ John Wesley, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," in *The Works of John Wesley*, Volume 11 (Third Edition; London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 379.

⁹⁴Maddox, *Responsible Grace*, Kindle location 1394.

Wesley defines Christian Perfection (a phrase describing Christian formation into holiness) simply as "the pure love of God and man [i.e. all people]; the loving God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves. It is love governing the heart and life, running through all our tempers, words, and actions."⁹³ So if love is understood as a temper, "an enduring or habitual disposition,"⁹⁴ then it is right to say holiness is love. But love could be misdirected, so one should describe holiness as love of God and neighbor. Holiness is not simply "love." It is love directed toward God and others; and such is a temper or habit that is developed over time, through grace, by practicing the means of grace. This directed love connects exactly with James Smith's description of the human person: an embodied agent of desire or love. A holy person, then, is one whose loves and

desires are aimed toward loving God and neighbor. This is because, for both Wesley and Smith, through practicing the means of grace, God forms holy tempers in God's holy people.⁹⁵

This understanding of gradual growth in grace led Wesley to prescribe the various means of grace as the primary way one would seek and maintain maturity. Maddox writes, "The means of grace were central to Wesley's model of holiness of heart and life. He relied on them both as the ordinary avenues through which God conveys gracious transforming *power* and as trustworthy exercises by which we responsibly *form* holy tempers."⁹⁶ The formation of holy tempers - enduring character - requires a method, a means that forms them overtime. These are the means of grace. The means of grace prescribed by Wesley spoke to the whole person, intellect and affect, because his approach was holistic. As mentioned earlier, foundational amongst these practices are those involved in historic Christian worship: gathering together for prayers, scripture reading, and the participating in the Lord's Supper.

⁹⁵ Or, we could use another term in place of tempers: habits, affections, virtues, imaginations, or desires. But the emphasis here would be on the enduring and habituated quality of the cumulative result of

these practices over time.

⁹⁶ Maddox, "Reconnecting the Means to the End," 58. Emphasis in original.

⁹⁷ In addition to those resources already mentioned, see Dean G. Blevins, "A Wesleyan View of the Liturgical Construction of the Self" *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 38, no. 2 (Fall 2003) 7-29. This article articulates a vision in which the historic liturgical actions of the church provide space for the formation of a self. The themes in this article support the idea that liturgy is formative and that thinking about liturgy as formation resides well within the Wesleyan tradition.

Reading Wesley together with Smith, liturgical and Wesleyan scholars illuminate connections and overlap between their concepts of Christian formation. That overlap can be summarized by saying that the historic liturgy of the church constitutes a powerfully formative complex of images, storytelling devices, participatory actions, and means of grace that help shape Christians to be the holy people of God.⁹⁷ This formation is not

instantaneous, but gradual and accumulates over time, by the grace of God through the means of grace, as habits are formed into holy tempers, especially love of God and neighbor.

Education in Liturgy for Christian Formation Education in liturgy means explaining why worship happens the way it does: the order, words, prayers, colors, smells, and so on. Each of these components contributes to the whole, each points to some reality about God or humanity or the world. The way the liturgy functions in time tells a story. Teaching people about these often hidden or obscure meanings can be an important part of growing in Christ. Liturgical education is happening all the time, by what is said and by what is left unsaid. If attention is not given to intentionally instruct people in why we do what we do in worship, then people may pick up misunderstandings, superstitions, or simply remain oblivious to what is happening (in effect, they may have learned that this or that part of worship does not matter, or they may supply their own - potentially erroneous - meaning). This subsection of the chapter

examines the importance of good and intentional education in liturgy.

A personal memory and analogy may help explain why education in liturgy is so important. When I was a young teenager my parents had tickets to the well-known Broadway musical *Les Miserables*. However, my father, having become ill, could not attend so I accompanied my mother to the play. I recall fully enjoying the experience. The set and stage impressed me (a moving platform!), people sang wonderfully, I laughed and cried, and I simply enjoyed being with my mom. Though I could apprehend much of what went on, most of the play danced past me without my actual understanding. I was impacted on a precognitive heart level, but the plot was unavailable to me. The play moves in scenes that jump from place to place and over many years. Characters weave in and out in complicated relationships. The entire play is set to music, and some of the dialogue was hard to understand in the midst of song. Because of these things, I simply missed much of the play. Over the next year I read about the plot and the characters. I listened to and became familiar with the music. I learned what was going on in the storyline and engaged more deeply with the plot and characters. The next time I saw *Les Miserables*, the whole thing meant a great deal more. I laughed harder, cried larger tears, and generally found my heart more deeply stirred. This important change occurred because I had learned about the play I was going to see.

This depth of engagement I experienced with *Les Mis* is precisely what happens as a result of liturgical education. There is a plot to historic Christian worship that plods right past many people. There are important lyrics to songs and prayers and responses that many people miss. There are reasons and symbolic import to all sorts of smells, tastes, and colors that may go unnoticed. Teaching why we do what we do in worship may help people be more open to what is going on, more fully engaged, and more responsive to the working of God through these means of grace.

John Wesley suggests that if the purpose of the means of grace was lost (and that purpose includes developing holy tempers), then someone could confuse the means themselves with their purpose and end up worshipping the means of grace rather than worshipping God. This would result in empty ritual; so even if they employed the correct form, the experience would be hollow of meaning and power. Wesley writes that

external worship is lost labour, without a heart devoted to God; that the outward ordinances of God then profit much, when they advance inward holiness, but, when they advance it not, are unprofitable and void, are lighter than vanity; yea,

that when they are used, as it were *in the place of* this, they are an utter abomination to the Lord.

This warning from Wesley supports the claim that education in liturgy is an important part of Christian formation. Teaching what the church does and why, always keeping an eye toward holiness and the shaping of holy habits, will help prevent worship becoming devoid of its power and meaning.

⁹⁸ Wesley, "Sermon XVI: The Means of Grace" vol. 5, 185.

⁹⁹ Lathrop, *Holy Things*, 4.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 300.

Furthermore, education in liturgy protects against other possible problems in worship. Lathrop cautions that when the church forgets or hides the symbolic nature and power of words and ritual, the church can fall into a mode of entertainment or simply an extension of the culture of consumer choice." Eugene Peterson similarly critiques parts of the church that have given in to consumerist business models, complete with campaigns, marketing, and using "media manipulation to get people to do something they were already pretty good at doing: being consumers." Peterson eventually recognized that such a model of church "violated everything - scriptural, theological, experiential -that formed my identity as a follower of Jesus." Smith levels this same warning, writing that the church often fails to counteract such cultural liturgies and indeed "the church ends up mimicking it, merely substituting Christian commodities." Good education in liturgy assists the church from hiding or forgetting the richness and counter-cultural power of

her liturgy. Good education in liturgy helps churches from falling into consumerist models, for in light of the rich symbols and rituals of historic Christian

worship the consumer model fades into the shadow as a pitiful substitute for the real thing.¹⁰⁴

In *Created to Worship*, Brent Peterson suggests that education in liturgy would help new Christians unfamiliar with components in the worship service as well as seasoned Christians who miss why certain things are done. He suggests that short teaching moments within the worship service itself would be helpful (when appropriate and, he cautions, never more than a few minutes at most). But he also suggests more formal teaching on why we do what we do. The goal of such teaching "is aimed not at making people *smarter* but at making them, in the work and response of worship, more *present to* God, others, and themselves."¹⁰⁵

Smith boldly states "we might think of the heart of discipleship and faith formation as liturgical catechesis whereby instruction in the faith is primarily focused on helping the people of God understand why we do what we do when we gather for worship."¹⁰⁶ Smith contends that the intellectual teaching *about* worship will help move people "to be committed to immersion in the practices"¹⁰⁷ He also uses the language of "angle of entry"¹⁰⁸ and "posture"¹⁰⁹ when describing how education in liturgy might benefit

congregations. These metaphors speak to the fact that learning about worship practices help people be more receptive to them and to God's action in them.

¹⁰⁴ This assumes "historic Christian worship" is what the education in liturgy is about. It could be possible for a church — already given in to a consumerist model — could simply perpetuate it's own design. Thus the continual insistence on "historic Christian communal worship."

¹⁰⁵ Peterson, *Created*, Kindle location 2963. Emphasis in original.

¹⁰⁶ James K. A. Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, Kindle location 4041.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, Kindle location 4050.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, Kindle location 4053.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, Kindle location 4065.

Finally, if education in liturgy teaches people about the nature of liturgy and how it forms people toward an ultimate end, then people could be trained in cultural exegesis

so that they might resist destructive liturgies and seek godly ones. Smith suggests the importance of simply recognizing that formative cultural liturgies exist and that such recognition could constitute some level of resistance.¹¹⁰ Because part of the power of cultural liturgies is found in their furtive ways, Smith states bluntly that simply "recognizing cultural practices and institutions *as* liturgies somewhat undercuts their formative force."¹¹¹ Smith also links cultural exegesis with apocalyptic literature, an observation that is helpful in recognizing the importance of seeing things as God sees

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them. Recognizing things for what they really are has a formative (or resistive) impact. Scott Daniels writes, "Christians must constantly be alert to the ways the empire is pressing them into its mold."¹¹³

Education in liturgy, in part, seeks to expose things for what they are, in the culture and in the church.

¹¹⁰ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 91-2.

¹¹¹ Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*, 208.

¹¹² Understood as a type of literature that reveals hidden truth, NOT as literature that predicts the future. See Daniels, *The Seven Deadly Spirits*, especially 19-20.

¹¹³ Daniels, 21.

Four themes demonstrate the importance of education in liturgy. The first has to do with the simple knowledge of things missed or unknown. So much goes on in worship with so much history and symbolic

meaning that teaching about these things only seems appropriate. The second theme revolved around ways that this increased knowledge might help people engage or open themselves more to what is going on. Believing that God partners with God's people, the more receptive and open the congregation is to God, the more God can do with them. So helping people enter worship with a better posture, a better angle of entry, more present and ready for God to use the means of grace in worship could have a powerful impact on their spiritual formation (as holy individuals and as a holy community). The third theme insists that education in liturgy can form a

protective barrier against the church falling into empty ritual or morphing into a sad imitation of culture or empire. Forgetting (or hiding) the reasons, meanings, and history of the Church's liturgy opens her to rival liturgies and kingdoms. Finally, education in liturgy acts as a present day apocalypse, revealing liturgy for what it is, thus causing people to avoid or resist cultural liturgies leading away from the Kingdom of God and increasing their commitment to Godly liturgies that will help shape the habits of their hearts to love God and love people.

Examples of Education in Liturgy

In this section of the chapter, several attempts at education in liturgy are examined. These are books published in order to help people understand what is going on in liturgy. They will be evaluated for their strengths and weaknesses as a tool for use in the specific context of Scottsdale First. Then Susan White's categories of worship are used as a way to understand the worship at Scottsdale First. This leads to the final section, which will articulate the content of education in liturgy used at Scottsdale First. The style of this last section is more informal and meant to be used directly in teaching or as a potential written

resource for people in the congregation.

In examining books that could be considered education in liturgy, several problems came to light. These problems made each book, even if a great book, unacceptable for direct use in the context of Scottsdale First. This means that fresh material, specific to the context of this particular church, is needed.

One of the problems was that many of these books are written to scholars, pastors, or other leaders, not to the average person attending church. Books like *For the Life of the World* contain valuable theological insight, but are not written for the average person in my congregation.

Other books were written directly to the average churchgoer, but also written about a very specific liturgy that we do not use (or we use only parts of). Books in this category include *The How-Two Book of the Mass*, written for Roman Catholics and their particular liturgy, and *The Liturgy Explained (New Edition)*, written for Episcopalians and their 1979 American Book of Common Prayer. Though the liturgy at Scottsdale First uses much of the Episcopal Rite II, we do not use all of it. Some of what we use comes from the 1982 Scottish BCP, others parts were written just for us, or are a redaction of several sources (including the *United Methodist Hymnal*). Furthermore, the language used in these books often does not match how we talk about worship. In *The Liturgy Explained*, for example, Farwell talks about a ninefold pattern, whereas we talk about a fourfold pattern. Therefore, these books, though helpful, do not precisely meet our needs.

¹¹⁸Mark Galli, *Beyond Smells & Bells: The Wonder and Power of Christian Liturgy* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Press, 2008).

Other books, such as *Beyond Smells and Bells* and *Evangelical is Not Enough*, do not walk through any particular liturgy, rather they illuminate themes within more "liturgical" churches. That makes

them helpful as introductions to the liturgy

of historic Christian worship and liturgical thinking, but fail at addressing the specific prayers and rituals people at Scottsdale First encounter week after week.

Others are too broad or too narrow. Will Willimon's, *Sunday Dinner*,¹²¹ is a superb examination of the Lord's Supper, but not of the full liturgy. On the other hand, books like *The Wonder of Worship*,¹²² *Foundations of Christian Worship*,¹²³ and *The Work of the People: What We Do in Worship and Why*,¹²⁴ simply cover so many various traditions that, again, they miss the specific liturgy and context found at Scottsdale First. They are especially helpful for students of liturgy, worship planners, scholars and pastors, but not as much the everyday churchgoer.

One way to understand the specific needs of Scottsdale First is to look at Susan White's categories of worship. In *Foundations of Christian Worship* Susan White delineates six basic understanding of what happens when Christians gather for worship: Service to God, a mirror of heaven, affirmation, communion, proclamation, and

transcendence. Let us examine how the worship at Scottsdale First fits within her categories. This will help explain why the needs of Scottsdale First (along with many congregations) would benefit from a custom made localized curriculum for education in liturgy.

¹²¹ William H. Willimon, *Sunday Dinner: The Lord's Supper and the Christian Life* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 1981).

¹²² Keith Drury, *The Wonder of Worship: Why We Worship the Way We Do* (Indianapolis, IN: Wesleyan Publishing Company, 2002).

¹²³ Susan J. White, *Foundations of Christian Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006).

¹²⁴ Marlea Gilbert, et al. *The Work of the People: What We Do in Worship and Why* (Herndon, VA: the Alban Institute, 2007).

¹²⁵ Susan White, *The Foundations of Christian Worship* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006)1-13.

Though White notes that her six models overlap in some ways, it is better to say that historic Christian worship - when not trying to defend one particular point of view

encompasses important components from all six of her categories. This is another way that historic Christian worship of word and table is so powerful: it can be a full, rich, transformative encounter with God. Here are the six categories again and ways in which the worship at Scottsdale First includes them all.

Worship as Service to God. This category includes the idea of sacrifice — that the people bring worship/sacrifice/offering to God. Worship at Scottsdale First fits this category in several ways: (1) The prayer of oblation, part of the Eucharistic prayers, explicitly includes of sacrificial language, "we offer ourselves to you, as a holy and living sacrifice, in praise and thanksgiving, and in union with the Sacrifice of Christ for us...." (2) The theological understanding behind this prayer - and the reason it has been incorporated in our worship - includes the idea that as we come to the Table, we are walking to an Altar, a place of sacrifice. It is here that we surrender, that we die to selfish motivation, and that we give up and give all to God. (3) People walk to the altar to receive the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. This action of

walking oneself to the altar is a physical representation and enactment of walking to our death. (4) And of course, the offering enacts giving and sacrifice. Gifts are collected (food, clothing, and money) and are brought forward with the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper and all placed on the altar. This represents our sacrifice again, united in and with Christ's sacrifice: these things, our things (given to us by God!), we place on the altar as a sacrifice. Indeed, worship at Scottsdale First can be said to be service to God.

Worship as the Mirror of Heaven. White classifies worship in this category as eschatological: it has to do with a world beyond our world, mimicking or joining the worship in Heaven, a foretaste of the coming Kingdom. This type of worship shows

through at Scottsdale First most noticeably in the Sanctus when the minister says, "Let us join in with the heavenly choir in their unending hymn" and all the people declare, "Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory!" Those words are taken seriously. The reason they have been included at Scottsdale First is exactly the theology behind this category of worship. Somehow, at the Eucharist, heaven and earth collide. Time collapses. Heaven descends to envelop the worship or else the church is lifted into the very throne room of heaven. Either way, there we are, at the throne, and what else can we do but to sing the song always sung in this place. And so we join in, and we sing.

Worship as Affirmation. This category speaks of encouragement, healing, gaining power to live in a world often hostile to Christianity. Though this is not the focus of the gathering at Scottsdale First, it certainly comes into play. In our prayer of Epiclesis, we pray that God would unify and heal us to become God's body in the world. And one of the ways we talk about what happens at our gathering is to say that God gathers the congregation, then in the prayers, the reading of the Word, and at the Feats of the Table, God feeds, heals, unifies, blesses, graces, and then sends the people back out. That sort of language matches the category of affirmation.

Worship as Communion. This category speaks of embodied worship, making the realities of the fellowship between God and God's people (and between God's people) tangible in physical ways (smell, taste, vision, etc.). At Scottsdale First we display physical and relational category in a number of ways. (1) The bread used in the Lord's Supper has been chosen for this reason: King's Hawaiian bread is used in every season but Lent. It is sweet and delicious and we can give out big pieces. We want people to "taste and see that the Lord is good!" During Lent our penitence is displayed in using unsalted matzah bread: dry and bland to represent our sorrow and sin. (This makes the reception of King's Hawaiian at Easter all the more special.) (2) We make use of smell to help mark seasons: myrrh during lent and frankincense in Advent. (3) The colors of the liturgical calendar are prominently displayed. (4) Artwork, including stained glass, has been recently added to the church for further engagement of the senses and for another way to communicate symbolically. (5) There are ways that we are blessed by God (and so we receive, not only give): anointing of oil is always available, receiving the Lord's Supper, the benediction, prayers offered for people. And (6) there is fellowship between people as we gather, at the Peace, and after the sending. Indeed, physical enactments and the word "communion" or "fellowship" certainly mark worship at Scottsdale first.¹²⁶ The birth, life and ministry, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ along with Pentecost and hope of Christ's appearing again.

Worship as Proclamation. This category contains two ideas, first that worship is about proclaiming the faith (which can take on evangelistic or "seeker friendly" overtones in some churches) and service to others, outside the congregation. Aspects of worship at Scottsdale First fall into this category. White mentions the creeds, preaching, and certain songs as examples of proclamation. All of these are included in our gatherings each week. Furthermore, we continually have an eye to service and to the "other" in our gatherings. The fact that our offering includes food and clothing for the needy exemplifies the missional direction of our worship. Furthermore, much of what we do and say is a proclamation of the story

of God and God's people: that is our understanding of the Christian calendar (walking through the parts of the Christ event¹²⁶ in time each year), it is why we read all four readings from the lectionary, it is why we

preach, and proclamation is built into the Eucharistic prayers and institution narrative. Worship at Scottsdale First does not fall toward seeker sensitive, but it certainly contains a good deal of proclamation.

Worship as the Arena of Transcendence. This view of worship has to do with expecting God to interact, interrupt, and possibly transform those involved. We invoke the Holy Spirit to enliven and change us at the beginning of each service using the words of the Collect for Purity: "God of Love, to whom our hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden; Cleanse our hearts by the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name. Through Christ our Lord, amen." We also have an extended time of prayer that includes a period of silent waiting. And the fact that we anoint with oil for healing indicates that we know that God might fall powerfully upon us.

And so, worship at Scottsdale First, containing so many components as it does, fits into any of White's seven categories. Another way to talk about all these components is to call them "means of grace" or "embodied practices." In these means and practices God works to shape the habits of the heart. God uses this rich mixture of story telling devices, physical enactments and movements, tastes, smells, textures, and interactions to shape and form a holy people for God's holy purposes.

Summary of These Examples of Education in Liturgy

In general, these examples of education in liturgy fail the specific and localized needs at Scottsdale First for a number of reasons: (1) they are written to the wrong audience, (2) they are written too broadly, or

(3) they are written too narrowly. Furthermore, a book is not likely to be read by very many people, so a book itself does

not satisfy the goals of education in liturgy (though readings and suggested readings certainly could be part of a larger overall strategy for education in liturgy). Each book contains valuable insight and would benefit many readers, but the needs of Scottsdale First call for specifically localized material.

Education in Liturgy at Scottsdale First Church of the Nazarene

What follows constitutes the bulk of the material used in teaching the seven-week series of classes at Scottsdale First. The exact words and parts of the particular ritual and order used at our church are included, along with explanations and teaching. The style of this section is much more informal as it is meant to be used as a potential teaching tool or turned into a booklet that people in my congregation might read or use as a reference.

Introduction

In the following pages our order of worship appears as it occurs much of the year. The liturgy itself will be marked with a vertical line to the left. Bolded words in these areas are said in unison, regular type said by one person (often the pastor), and italicized words or words in brackets are for informational purposes. Following the specific words of the liturgy explanations follow to give you a sense of why we do what we do in worship at Scottsdale First.

The Pattern - Word and Table¹²⁷ Sometimes this order of worship is

called "Word and Table." There are actually

¹²⁷ This part, the pattern of Word and Table, along with the extended section on Time (see pages 96-106) comprised the content of Week 2 in the seven-week series of classes.

¹²⁸ Gilbert, 16.

four parts to our worship service: (1) Gathering, (2) Word, (3) Table, and (4) Sending.

This pattern can be understood as God's people being separated out from the world and gathered in this place, filled by the Word of God and at the Lord's Supper, then sent back out into the world to be a blessing.

You might imagine God breathing: we are breathed into God's own self, filled and changed in the presence of God, then breathed back out.

Or, imagine a piece of tan colored play dough. Smaller pieces are taken from the large piece, then gathered together into one smaller clump, then filled with color, then broken into smaller bits and put back into the whole piece. The new color from the separated parts will begin to transform the rest of the dough. Christian worship is like that - we are separated, filled, and sent back to be a blessing (gathered into this place at this time, filled and transformed in hearing the Word and receiving the Lord's Supper, then sent back into our everyday lives); worship is meant to be for the world, not only for those who are gathered each week. God uses the church to sanctify the world.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Peterson, *Created*, chapter 5, "The Rhythmic Breathing of Communal Worship"

¹³⁰ This is one of the themes in Schmemmann's *For the Life of the World*.

¹³¹ In week 3 of the seven-week series of classes, I covered the content in the Gathering and the.

The Walk In - Glass and Water¹³¹ The first part of our order of worship is architectural. Notice that you enter the front doors under symbols of sacraments (the Eucharist, Baptism, and foot washing). Allow these to shape your expectations and begin to open you to the work of God in worship. Also note that you enter the sanctuary by a baptismal font. Touch the water, make the sign of the cross, and remember your baptism (if you have been baptized, that is). Baptism forms an important part of

our identity: beloved of God, washed, claimed, ordained for ministry - yes, all the baptized are a part of "the royal priesthood." Touch the

water and hear God speak over you, "you are my child, whom I love, in you I find

■ 1 3 2 '

happiness." In baptism we are made into the people of God, priests of God, so that together we can do the "work of the people" in all the prayers and rituals that make up our worship gathering.

The Gathering

Opening Song Call to

worship:

One: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Many: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.**

One: The LORD our God is worthy of praise!

Many: **God's faithful love lasts forever!**

One: Come! Let us worship the LORD with thanksgiving!

Many: **We give thanks to the LORD for He is good!**

The Opening Song

We sing a song together as our first act as a sign of unity, and as a response to having been called together by God. The song choice here usually has something to do with the cosmic or universal nature of God's love and grace and brings to mind that God has called us from various places and calls all things to

God's self.

¹³² Mark 1:11

The Call to Worship contains important language. We praise God using words of scripture (these

words come from the Psalms; in other times of the year we use a different call to worship and those are also inspired by particular scriptures). The specific language for each season helps bring the themes of that season to light: hope, celebration,

forgiveness, etc.

We say these words together. *We* have been gathered here. *We* are a we.

But the most important word in the call to worship is the command, "**Come!**" Hear that word as the voice of God, to us: God says, "Come!" and God brings us together, into this place. You are not here by accident. You are not here even by your own choice alone. God has called you here and you said yes.

As mentioned earlier, different times of year this call will change to reflect the season (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and ordinary time each have their own words). But in each of them that command from God remains: "Come!" and our response, "Let us worship." We have been called to gather. This is said in the passive voice: we have been gathered, it is God's doing.

Welcome and Opening Prayer (The Collect for Purity)

All: God of love, to whom our hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse our hearts by the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Christ our Lord, amen.

The movement of gathering continues with a welcome extended to those gathered. Then we pray a

prayer called the collect for purity (pronounced CALL-ect). This is the first of three prayers we pray asking God to specifically enliven us with the Holy Spirit. (The other two have names also: the Prayer for Illumination and the Epiclesis section of the Eucharistic prayer.)

The Collect for Purity begins by identifying God as the one who knows us through and through. Our desires are identified because humans are creatures of desire —

we are creatures that are moving toward a desired end. God knows all of our desires, what we really want, even if we try to hide them.

The Collect for Purity continues by stating what we hope God will do to and for the people God has gathered (individually and as a group): that our hearts would be cleansed. This is a way of asking God to make us more like God's own self: holy. The word heart means the seat of desire and will in a person - who we really are. We want to truly become more like God. This will be accomplished only by the power of the Holy Spirit. And when we have grown more like God, we will perfectly love and magnify God's holy name. It will be done through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

I cannot think of a more appropriate prayer to begin each service together. And as we pray it each week, you will memorize it. You may find yourself praying it throughout the week.

A Song of Praise — the Gloria Patri

This song, also called *Gloria Be to the Father* is last part of the gathering. The words are:

Glory be to the Father And to the
Son And to the Holy Ghost. As it
was in the beginning, Is now and
ever shall be, World without end.
Amen. Amen.

The song is Trinitarian doxology - a song of praise to or about the three-in-one God. This little song tells a story: God is everlasting. It is a prayer: that glory would be given to God, now and always. It is the story of the new time that God makes — the age to come. It is a statement of hope and confidence: God will outlast any trials that come

along and his kingdom will not end (this is the age to come, where time no longer leads to decay). The people God has gathered have sung together, responded to God's call, prayed together, and have offered praise again in singing a doxology.

Nicholas Ayo, an expert on the doxology, wrote that it "is not only a statement about the Trinity and an acknowledgment of how glorious it must be to be God. **The doxology enacts and embodies our inclusion in the glory of God...** We receive in our very existence a participation in the divine glory that is the life of God, and we return that glory in our praise and worship." This is an important concept for all of our worship: we are enacting and embodying reality as it is in God. We are being changed. We are being filled. We are participating in the glory of God by hearing, responding, giving, eating, etc. Charles Wesley wrote, "Let us here Thy nature share,/Holy, pure, and perfect be,/ Transcripts of the Trinity." By singing the doxology (along with other liturgical enactments) God is forming us into God's image, together as a community and as individuals.

Notice the order, the plot: we are gathered into this place (into the presence of God), we declare God's goodness in anticipation, we ask for healing and transformation, for clean hearts, and we - realizing we are in the presence of God - sing our praise in doxology. All of this "enacts and embodies our inclusion in the glory of God." This is the plot of Christianity — God gathers us into God's own self, to heal and transform us (and bread, water, wine, and time), in order to heal and transform the world.

So, thus far God has inhaled a deep breath, and we have been gathered into God's own self. Or, if you'd rather, a piece of dough as been separated out into the hands of the master. We have been gathered. It is time for the next act to take place, the service of the Word.

The Service of the Word¹³⁷

The Prayer for Illumination

The one reading the first scripture also prays this prayer on behalf of the congregation to begin the Service of the Word:

Lord, open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit, that, as the Scriptures are read and your Word proclaimed, we may hear with joy what you say to us today. Amen.

Again we ask God to change us: open our hearts and minds. We ask God to make us receptive to God's intervention through spoken word. We ask that our whole beings would be made receptive. We ask for joy - that what God loves we would also love.

This is the second of three prayers in which we evoke the Holy Spirit to change us. In that way, this is linked to the Collect for Purity and the Epiclesis (prayed during the

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Lord's Supper). In each of these prayers we want God to make us "more fully human" and more like God.

The Reading of Scripture.

¹³⁷ Along with the gathering (just prior) this section was part of Week 3 in the seven-week series of classes.

¹³⁸ The idea of "becoming more fully human" is central in Peterson's *Created to Worship*.

After the Prayer of Illumination, we read an Old Testament text, then sing a song, then read the New Testament text. We use a grouping of readings called the Revised Common Lectionary. This set of readings, that runs on a three-year rotation, is used by

many denominations (thus it is "common"). We use the lectionary readings for a number of reasons. First of all, by joining so many others in using the same texts on the same week, we enact the unity of the church. We join the choir, all reading the same words, no matter which local congregation we are in. Secondly, the readings are taken from the Old Testament, New Testament, Gospels, and Psalms. Over the course of three years, much of the Bible is read aloud in our midst. And lastly, preaching from the lectionary is a discipline I, as a preacher, feel compelled to submit to. Rather than choosing whatever passages I like most or that I am most familiar with, the lectionary provides me with a set of scriptures from which to preach. Sometimes I do not like the texts that are chosen for me; sometimes difficult or confusing passages come up. But it is good for me and for us to wrestle with even these texts that I might otherwise avoid.

After the reading of a scripture, the one reading says, "this is the Word of the Lord" and we all respond by saying, "**Thanks be to God.**" Sometimes the word spoken from scripture contains beauty and so this joyful response is natural. But sometimes the word is confusing or hard. But we are trained to say "thanks be to God" anyway. This is real training for real life. We are trained to say "thanks be to God." It is a way to live into the prayer for illumination, that we may "hear with joy" what is said today.

In this part of the service, we read scriptures and sing songs. It is important to note that we sing songs in response to the scriptures being read. If you pay close attention, there will usually be an obvious link between the scriptures and the music. This is part of the "call and response" inherent in Christian worship, the back and forth of God

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¹³⁹Farwell, Kindle location 241 ff.
and creation.

Brent Peterson wrote, "As the scriptures are read, they are enacted."¹⁴⁰ A year we see this theme of embodying and enacting. Worship is real. The words, songs, prayers, handshakes, hugs, seasons, smells, and tastes are made real amongst us. Having been gathered together, God begins to infuse us with his own life and glory.

The Reading of the Gospel

The enacting of scripture becomes evident in the reading of the Gospel: the Book is carried down, into our midst, and we stand, turn, and face it. This ritual action enacts the incarnation: "the Word became flesh and made his home with us." Other parts of scripture, spoken through prophets or apostles or others, were the word of God through people. But the in Jesus, in the incarnation, God dwells amongst us. We enact this in our ritual.

This ritual also highlights that the Gospel is the most important part of the scriptures. We treat the words of Jesus with special reverence: standing at the gospel, the gospel coming into the middle of the congregation, and the more elaborate responses that go with the reading of this piece of scripture:

[At the introduction of the reading:]

One: The Holy Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ according to (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John)

Many: **Glory to you, Lord Christ**

[Then, after the reading:] One: The Gospel

of the Lord. Many: **Praise to you, Lord**

Christ.

When we first began thinking about making this change (we used to simply read the

gospel from the same place as the others, with the same response, "thanks be to God"),

¹⁴⁰ Peterson, *Created to Worship*, Kindle location2045.

one of the people in the conversation said, "I think we should change to the new way. I

need to learn to say 'Praise to you, Lord Christ' more often." This man understood the power of repetition and liturgy. He knew that as we repeat phrases, week after week, we are trained in response.

The Sermon

For many people, the sermon is the highlight of the service; this is why they have come: to hear the Word preached!¹⁴¹ But remember, we have been gathered, we did not come of our own volition. The invitation of God was to be healed and transformed, not merely to hear a sermon or to learn. Healing and transformation happens through receiving the grace of God (grace is the healing and transformative presence of God¹⁴²). And the presence of God is to be found in doxology, reading, hearing, greeting, singing, eating, seeing, kneeling, being blessed and sent out - in other words, grace comes through the many means of grace throughout the whole worship service. A sermon is a small part of the whole story being told and is only one amongst many means of grace offered this day.

Yet the sermon is certainly important, for the preached word is God's word to us. We believe that the community should wrestle with the scriptures, to figure out what it means in this time and in this place. The sermon is a dialogue between the text, God, the preacher, the congregation, and the wider Christian community throughout time.

¹⁴¹ This is especially true of those from a revivalist or frontier worship tradition.

¹⁴² Peterson, *Created to Worship*, Kindle location 3445.

There is a balance to be found in understanding the place of the sermon in worship. We would be wrong to completely downplay its importance (or to remove the sermon altogether). And yet we would also be wrong to place too much importance upon it. This mistake — making too much of the sermon — is a mistake many people make. For

us, begin to see the sermon as an important theological part of the service, but it is properly only one part amongst many.

Above all, remember that through the service of the Word, God is pouring grace into our very selves. We are becoming "transcripts of the Trinity." But also remember that hearing the Word alone is not enough. And so we move on to response: to prayers and then to the Lord's Supper.

*Prayer Time*¹⁴³

Our time of prayer, following the sermon, contains several important parts, all of which represent ways to respond to what we have heard in the reading and preaching of the Word:

The Apostle's Creed
The praying of a Psalm
Silence
Prayer of the People
The Confession
The Absolution
The Peace

Each of these components represents a form of prayer; dialogue between God and people. We say things to and about God, God says things to and about us, we say things to and about each other. There is back and forth, give and take, relationship, and response.

¹⁴³ The topic I discussed in week 4 in the seven-week series of classes was the prayer time — here through The Peace on page 76.

¹⁴⁴ Kavanagh, 150.

An old saying speaks to the importance of prayer and worship: "the law of prayer founds the law of belief."¹⁴⁴ In other words, what we pray forms us into people who believe certain things and act in particular ways. Pay close attention to what sort of

people we might become by praying these prayers (and the others throughout the service). We also might want to consider what sort of God the prayers assume.

But we do not want to only become "students" of the liturgy or of the prayers. Liturgical scholar Aidan Kavanagh warns that liturgy should be performed and not turned into a learning exercise. Rather than learning, the gathered people of God are to perform the prayers and the rest of the liturgy. God will use the liturgy to form us *and* to teach us. We must pay attention to and allow both to happen. And more than that, by performing the liturgy, God is sanctifying the world through us. It is bigger than you and me and certainly bigger than what we might get out of it or learn from it.

The Apostle's Creed:

We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended to the place of the dead. On the third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father Almighty. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Apostle's Creed is a prayer, not only a declaration, and it serves several purposes:

- First, creeds like this are old, really old. They were used widely as standards of belief before the New Testament as we know it existed. In

many ways, the creeds and the scriptures influenced and informed each other as they took shape in the early centuries of the Church.¹⁴⁷ ◦ The creed is a statement of core unity of belief.

In a worldwide church so diverse, nearly all Christians believe (and always have believed)

these core things.

- It is an opportunity to remember and reaffirm our baptism. This creed has been used since the earliest days as the belief into which one is baptized.¹⁴⁸
- It is a summary of the teachings we heard in the reading of the Word (note that this comes immediately after the service of the word). Even if the sermon was bad, the creed gets the central things right.
- It is a proclamation of our faith - a pledge of allegiance — which tells the story of our faith and helps to form us into a people who believe these things, desire these things, and experience the world in ways congruent with this story.

Written prayers

This is a good point to mention why we often use written prayers as opposed to extemporaneous prayers. Sometimes people are uncomfortable with written prayers, thinking that they are less genuine than prayers said on the spot. Here are several reasons

¹⁴⁷ Paul, L. Gavriilyuk, "Scripture and *the Regula Fidei*: Two Interlocking Components of the Canonical Heritage" in William J Abraham, Jason E. Vickers, and Natalie B. Van Kirk, *Canonical Theism: A Proposal for Theology & the Church* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008) 27-42.

¹⁴⁸ Bettenson and Maunder, 25-27.

¹⁴⁹ Many of these insights come from Howard, 47 ff.
to pray wrtten prayers:

1. Sometime we do not know how to pray, we are at a loss for words, or we are simply empty; written prayers give us words. They are a great help to us.
2. We pray these with others who came before us and with those who will come after us - it unites us

across time into one body. They form us into community. (That is a really important aspect of prayer — like the Sabbath prayer scene in *Fiddler on the Roof*, though we recite the prayer in isolation, in our own home or church, we are part of a great choir from all over the world and throughout time praying the same prayers.)

3. They are often better - in beauty and theology - than our own prayers are. (Left to ourselves, our own prayers can be shallow or full of filler words -written prayers, having been prayed often times for centuries, are honed wonderfully.)
4. They teach us how to pray.
5. God's people have always done this: the Psalms and other scriptures are written prayers and the people of God have prayed "ritualistic" prayers forever.
6. Submitting to forms takes the focus away from me, myself, and I.
7. "Clearly, to pit the liberty of the Spirit against set forms is to insist on a false distinction... .No one may mock another's form of prayer. Extempore prayers and set prayers both reach the Throne if there is any spark of desire in the one praying that they do so. God is not a literary critic or speech teacher. He does not grade our prayers. But it is for us to realize that there is great help available for us in our prayers. Spontaneity is impossible sooner

8.

or later; there only remains for us to choose which set of phrases we will make our own.

The prayers of the church lead us into regions that, left to our own resources, we might never have imagined."¹⁵⁰ —Thomas Howard

A Psalm

Next, we pray a Psalm. Though Psalms are scriptures, most of them are also written prayers and as

such make for an appropriate response to the spoken word.¹⁵¹ The Psalms model for us that prayers can be honest, angry or happy, hopeful or full of sadness, and often not what we expect from prayers. The raw and unexpected nature of the Psalms again instructs us on our own prayers. We at Scottsdale First began to pray the Psalm as part of our prayer time after Pastor Matt spent some time with the Benedictine sisters at Mount St. Scholastica. There he learned the importance of praying the Psalms in the Benedictine tradition.

After the Psalm, we keep *silence* for a few moments. In a world so busy, so full, with the TV always on or a phone always in our view, silence appears to us as a rare and

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precious gift. Silence is also a form of prayer and response. We do not need to speak to pray - we can sit in silence and allow God to speak to us and for us.

After silence, the pastor says, "Are there any requests?" At this point many people say someone's name (or a name and a short description of the need; something like, "Bob who is recovering from surgery.") Then the congregation says, "Lord, hear our prayer." This helps us make the prayers specific to our own

awareness of needs. These are our ¹⁵⁰ Howard, 48.

¹⁵¹N. T. Wright, *The Case for the Psalms: Why They Are Essential* (HarperOne, 2013), 15. ¹⁵² Adel Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2005), Kindle location 1277-3484.

Prayers of the People

names, our friends or family, our concerns. And the congregational response helps, once again, to reinforce the idea that we are a we and that we pray together. None of us are going it alone. In praying like this, we ritually enact the communal nature of bearing one another's burdens. It helps teach us how to respond to the needs of others around us. Like so many of these responses, we could leave it alone and learn to simply say "Lord hear our prayers" then move along with our own business. Or, we could allow this pattern to be for us

a means of grace, and allow God to form us into people who hear the needs of others and are moved to prayer and action.

Praying with and for one another is one of the ways we are shaped into the image of God. God, after all, cares for others and Jesus prayed for others. When we enter into prayer for others, we are living into the life of God.¹⁵³ Prayer shapes us, becoming more like God, "transcripts of the Trinity."

After several of these requests comes what is often called the "Pastoral Prayer." This is when the pastor prays on behalf of us all. We do not use a set form here, but typically the prayer includes petition for the whole world, for the whole church, for our church, and for individuals. Note the global reach of this prayer. It transcends boundaries of nation or denomination - this prayer recognizes that we are one and embodies unity.

The Confession

This all leads into confession, when we pray together in unison:

¹⁵³ Farwell, Kindle location 489-501.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in

your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen. (This is followed by silent confession and prayer.)

We confess as a body because we, as corporate people, sin in cooperative ways (this is an important point, worth pondering).¹⁵⁴ It is also a chance for each of us to confess individually. It reminds us that to harm others is to harm God. It reminds us that we can sin in a number of ways. It reminds us that sin is primarily a failure to love. And it contains the alternative to selfish living: to walk in the ways of God, delighting in God's will.

The Absolution

After we have confessed our sins and sat again in silence, this assurance of forgiveness or absolution is pronounced:

One: May God, who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and bring us to new life in Christ our Lord. In the name of Jesus Christ, we are a forgiven people. Many: **Thanks be to God!**¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, Kindle location 512-547.

¹⁵⁵ Adapted from The Scottish Episcopal Church, *Scottish Liturgy 1982: With Alternative Eucharistic Prayers* (Edinburgh: General Synod Office of the Scottish Episcopal Church, 1996), 8.

The pronouncement of forgiveness should not be taken lightly. This is not flippant "anything goes because God forgives." Note the words: forgive us and FREE us from our sins. That means remove even the will to sin. Heal and strengthen us. Again, being shaped into the image of God, healed and transformed! That is not living in sin and being forgiven, this is "new life in Christ." And note the way that these words can be understood individually and corporately. We seek, pray for, and pronounce the transformation of the church and the world (together with their broken sinful systems) not only you and me.

Furthermore, and this is major, the confession and absolution - week after week -forms us into the kinds of people who will ask for, grant, and receive forgiveness in our day-to-day lives and in all of our relationships. This is huge. It tells in important part of the story into which we live as Christians.

The Peace

After the absolution, our assurance of forgiveness, comes the peace:

One: May the Peace of the Lord be with you!

Many: **And also with you!** Here we stand and greet one another, "passing the peace" of Christ to others. It is common during this time to say "peace" or "the peace of Christ" or "peace be with you" as you shake hands or hug one another.

Do not look at this time as a simple greeting - rather, realize that this is an important ritual act of worship. For here we embody and enact the forgiveness just pronounced. We enact the healing. We enact the new life in Christ. We embody reconciliation. Find someone you love, and also someone you are angry with or someone who has hurt you or annoys you, and enact the reconciliation, forgiveness, and peace of Christ in that relationship. If such a person is not present, then imagine them there and imagine someone standing in for them. Make this time real. It can be an incredibly powerful moment in worship.

Just after the peace we will present gifts (the offering) and come to the Altar to celebrate the Eucharist. The peace is a way to enact Matthew 5:23-24: "Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something

against you, leave your gift at the altar and go. First make things right with your brother or sister and then come back and offer your gift."

So, we have been gathered, we have heard the Word read and proclaimed, we have responded in prayer including confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation. It is now time to offer our gifts to God in thanksgiving, gifts of bread and wine, money, food, clothing, and our very selves.

The Service of the Table

The Service of the Table is the climax of our worship gathering - all things lead to this and all things flow out from here. The Table is the center: it is the center theologically, the center metaphorically, and the table is actually in the center of our worship space. This part of the service contains many

components:

- Offering and Song
 - Presentation of gifts and The Doxology
 - *Sursum Corda*
 - *Sanctus* and *Benedictus*
 - Thanksgiving prayer
 - Words of institution
 - Prayer of oblation
 - The mystery of our faith
 - Prayer of epiclesis
 - Fraction and unity
 - Our Father
 - Libation
-
- Invitation to receive

The idea here is not to learn all these parts, their names, and details about them. Rather, simply submit to the rhythm, beauty, and grace they contain. We will talk through each part in hopes that awareness of their meaning will help us more freely receive the

grace of God they offer, that we would be more open to the work of God through these components, and that we would more fully live into the story they tell.

NOTE: although we say that this is the service of the table and call this part of our gathering the Eucharist, it is more correct to call the whole Sunday morning ritual -gathering, Word, Table, and sending - the Eucharist. The whole thing is one thing, and the whole thing is Eucharist. To come to the table without having listened and responded in the Word would be incomplete. Likewise, hearing the Word without responding in prayer and at the Table would also be incomplete. They go together as one unit.

The importance of the Eucharist cannot be overstated. (Eucharist simply means "thanksgiving.") One scholar says, "wherever there is the eucharist [sic] there is the church in its fullness as the Body of Christ." The converse of that claim would also stand: wherever there is not the Eucharist, there is not the

church in its fullness. Eucharist is important for a great number of reasons, not least of which is the simple existence of the Church.

Offering

The service of the Table begins by receiving the offering and praying the Offering

Prayer:

Join me in prayer as we prepare to receive our tithes and offerings:

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, and the glory; for everything is yours.

All things come from you, and of your own we give you.

Accept these gifts and bless them.

Use them for your good purposes here in this neighborhood and around the globe. And we will give you all the praise, honor, and glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, One God. Amen.

God creates the world, all things, to give life and to bring us into communion with God's own self. We acknowledge that all things come from God and what we give is God's already. Humans are created to be priests in the world: we receive from God our lives and livelihood in the world, we thank God for all this, and we offer those very things back to God. This action transforms our lives, and all the world, into communion with God, into true life.¹⁵⁸

When Jesus instituted the Eucharist, these words describe Jesus' actions: he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it. Four steps, that reflect priestly action: receiving the gift, blessing it, and giving it.

Because it is said that "Jesus took bread," someone gave it to him.¹⁵⁹ And so our first action in the Eucharist is giving back to God that which we have been given. The Eucharist is an offering, and an offering is a sacrifice.

Therefore, sacrifice is part of the service of the Table. We offer our gifts (which we have received from God): bread, wine, money, food, clothing, our very selves - things

that mysteriously encompass the whole world. Offering this gift is what our first parents failed to do - they ate in secret for their own ends; we eat together, bringing the gift of God back to God in thanksgiving.¹⁶⁰ Emblems of this gift are received from the congregation and then brought forward to the altar (the Table) as we sing *The Doxology*

(the word doxology means "praise"):

¹⁵⁸ Schmemmann, 15

¹⁵⁹ Thomas Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1983), 121.

¹⁶⁰ Schmemmann, 34-6.

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise him all creatures here below
Praise him above ye heavenly hosts
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost!

| Amen.

This doxology is appropriate for receiving offering because it acknowledges again that all blessings come from God (and again, whatever we give to God has its source first in God anyway). It speaks of the all-encompassing reach of God's goodness and praise, all creatures in heaven and on earth (a phrase meaning "absolutely everywhere"). It is a command to praise. A statement of praise. A glimpse into the future when all things will rightly praise. To be fully human is to live this doxology: receiving all these things as gifts from God, blessing them and thanking God for them, and giving them back to God in praise; this is a Eucharistic life, it is true life.¹⁶¹

Also recall what we said earlier about singing Trinitarian doxology: it "enacts and embodies our inclusion in the glory of God... We receive in our very existence a participation in the divine glory that is the life of God, and we return that glory in our praise and worship." — Nicholas Ayo.

Repetition plays an important part in the liturgy. Repeating the same things week after week inscribes them onto our hearts. Not only do we end up memorizing them (a mental exercise), but they can become part of our hearts, shaping our desires and our habits. Week after week of offering and doxology (and the rest of the liturgy) will shape us into people who no longer live for things themselves (a consumeristic life), rather we will grow into people who live a Eucharistic life.¹⁶²

The Great Thanksgiving

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

¹⁶² Schmemmann, 17-18.

The next part of the Eucharist is really all one large prayer with many components. The prayer is called The Great Thanksgiving.

Sursum Corda

The first part of the Great Thanksgiving is called the *Sursum Corda* (Latin for "lift up your hearts"):

One: The Lord be with you!

Many: **And also with you!**

One: Lift up your hearts!

Many: **We lift them up to the Lord!**

One: Let us give thanks.

Many: **It is just and right to give thanks.**

God in Christ has descended, becoming human, even dying on the cross. In this act God absorbed death, old time, and sin into himself; in the cross and the resurrection the old has been vanquished. Then, after the resurrection, Jesus ascended into heaven to take his place as the King of all kings. By Christ ascending, he brings us with him. We lift up our hearts to the Lord. Lifted up. Where? Into heaven itself. We have been taken with

Christ up in his Ascension. We now stand outside time and space. In new time. Being made more like God. This morning this place has become part of heaven, part of the past, and part of the future; we are "always and everywhere," as the celebrant says:

One: It is just and right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give our thanks and praise to God. And so, let us join with the heavenly choir in their unending hymn:

The Sanctus and *Benedictus*

Because we have been taken into heaven, it is only fitting that we join in singing the song that is always sung at the throne of God, songs or words called *The Sanctus and Benedictus*:

Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory,
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna
in the highest.

The *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* speak of God as high and far above us and also lowly and near to us. It is the exalted God and the humbled Christ, all at once. Isaiah sees God, "high and lifted up" and hears the angels sing, "holy, holy, holy...." Jesus comes into Jerusalem on the colt of a donkey and the people say, "Hosanna! Blessed in he who comes in the name of the Lord." We are before the God who is glory beyond comprehension and who dwells among us in humility. And it is in the presence of this God that we continue in prayer, praying *Prelude to the Great Thanksgiving*:

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

Much of the Eucharist is one prayer often called the Great Thanksgiving. The words to this part will change with the season⁷⁶⁷, but it always retains memory of God's work in creation, in the Hebrew people, in Jesus, and in the Spirit. This is a retelling of our narrative, our story, The Story of redemption - and we recognize that it involves all things (creation) and was carried to us through the Jewish people by the Spirit of God.
¹⁶⁷This part of our Eucharistic prayer changes with the season. For the seasonal variations on this prayer, see Chapter 2 Appendix 3.

The story culminates in Jesus, so next we remember the words Jesus used to give us the

Eucharist, what we call the Words of Institution. For all the glory of God is finally and ultimately revealed in Jesus.

Words of Institution

We remember that on the night that the Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed, he took bread and after giving thanks, he broke it, and he gave it to his disciples and said, "This is my body, given for you." Likewise, after supper, he took the cup and after giving thanks he said, "This is the cup of the new covenant in my blood which is poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me."

So we "remember," re-member. This is more than mere recollection, but in our act of remembrance we enter a different reality. Remembering in the way intended by Jesus makes past events present, alive, real.. Recall that we are outside of time and space, so the Table we gather around is the same

table where Jesus ate with his disciples, it is the field where he fed the five thousand, it is the house on the way to Emmaus, it is every church that ever was or will be, and it is the final and ultimate banquet table in God's blessed Kingdom. This is one reason we believe Jesus is really present. And so here, in the presence of the victorious one, we once more offer all that God has given to us back to God in the *Prayer of Oblation* ("oblation" means "thanks offering"):

Prayer of Oblation

And so, Lord God, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with the sacrifice of Christ sacrifice for us, as we proclaim the mystery of our faith:

All: Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again

An altar is a place of sacrifice. We have come to the altar. We offer ourselves, a sacrifice. And the bread and the wine are the body and blood of Jesus. This re-remembering of Jesus' sacrifice is one reason that the Eucharist is seen as sacrifice. It is the sacrifice of Jesus, offered for us and for the entire world.¹⁷⁰

Only in the mystery of theology is the saying true, "you are what you eat."¹⁷¹ By the grace, love, and power of God, in this meal we become what we eat, the body of Christ. So this sacrifice before us is Jesus, and we are in Christ, and the church is called the body of Christ, so the sacrifice is also the church. We have been gathered and made into the church, the Body of Christ, and so we, too are on the Table as an offering, a sacrifice.

Sacrifice can mean, "to make holy" and so as we offer ourselves to God - in union with the sacrifice of Christ - God's healing and transformative presence (God's

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sanctifying grace) makes us holy. From the earliest days the church has understood the Eucharist to be a sacrifice.¹⁷³ Because of this, one scholar wrote, "In Wesleyan theology, therefore, the Lord's Table is a

place where we can come and offer ourselves as 'living sacrifices,' thereby receiving sanctifying grace."¹⁷⁴

¹⁷⁰ Dubruiel, Kindle location, 1405-1423.

¹⁷¹ William H. Willimon, *Worship as Pastoral Care* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979), 194.

¹⁷² Peterson, *Created to Worship*, Kindle location 3724.

¹⁷³ Rob Staples, *Outward Sign and Inward Grace: The place of Sacraments in Wesleyan Spirituality* (Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1991), 236-40.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 240.

Just after this moment of re-membering and oblation - in this moment of union with Christ, taken into the center of heaven - we declare together the story of our hope in the simplest terms, *The Mystery of our Faith*. "Christ has died. Christ is Risen. Christ will come again." We speak the reality *now* of Christ's death, resurrection, and future

redemption, past, present, and future, all at once in this moment. It is a mystery - but we are outside the constraints of time and space, so mystery is accepted. These three things also comprise the simplest statement of our faith. When we are tempted to division, we can come back to this and find that we share the same meal and the same faith even with Christians who look and act quite differently than us.

Epiclesis

In the next and final part of the Great Thanksgiving prayer, a part of the prayer called the *Epiclesis*, the hope for sanctification is made explicit:

Hear us most merciful Father, we know you create and intend all things to be means of communion with you, so sanctify these gifts, send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this cup, that, overshadowed by His life-giving power, they may be for us the Body and Blood of your son, Jesus the Messiah, and we may be unified, healed, forgiven, filled with your grace, kindled with the fire of your love, and renewed for the service of your kingdom. Make yourself known in this supper and through us. And we will give you all praise, honor, and glory, now and forever, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God. **Amen.**

Here is the third prayer of the Sunday morning that specifically calls upon the Holy

Spirit. The first was the Collect for Purity ("cleanse our hearts, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you...") and the second was the Prayer for Illumination ("...open our hearts and minds by the power of your Holy Spirit...").

In this prayer we ask for God to send the Holy Spirit upon us and upon these gifts. (Notice how the gifts and the people are one in the same.) We ask that Jesus' presence through the Holy Spirit would overshadow us and these gifts. The word "overshadow" is chosen intentionally to recall the way in which the Virgin Mary became pregnant according to Luke 1:35: "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy." We are asking God to sanctify us (and these gifts); we are asking God to make us (and these gifts) holy.

Specifically for us, we ask that Christ would be made known through us. This is no small request. One of the ways that Jesus is present in the Eucharist is through the community - Jesus is here, made real through and amongst us. (In some traditions - and amongst some in our own congregation - people will bow to one another. This is to recognize the presence of Christ in the other.) Also, this is one important way that mission is linked to the Eucharist. It is here that we are made and empowered to be the presence of Christ in the world (that is one way to define "mission").

We also ask to be unified - that division between us would cease, that we would be truly made into one body. We ask this for the whole church, for our local church, and for each of us individually.

We ask to be healed - that whatever is broken would be made whole, that whatever we face would become a means of communion with God, and that we would be made holy.

We ask to be forgiven - that at the Table we might find the mercy of God for rebellious and mistake-prone people.

¹⁷⁵ John Wesley, "Sermon XVI: The Means of Grace" in *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 5* (Third Edition; London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 187.

We ask to be filled with God's grace — that in this supper we would come into the healing and transformative presence of God, that God would transform us, and that we might be vehicles of that grace to others. The grace offered to us could be "preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace."¹⁷⁵ Some might find here steps toward salvation. Others could find salvation itself. And all of us will find grace to grow more like Christ.

We ask to be kindled with the fire of God's love. This is a beautiful saying and a powerful statement. We want God to set us on fire with the love of God. That means that we will love as God loves. One definition of holiness is, "we are holy as God is holy when we love as God loves." We want the love of God to burn in us and burn for others!

And we ask to be renewed for the service of God's kingdom. Again "mission" comes to play in the Lord's Supper. It is here that we are renewed for service. Our aim is the Kingdom of God, not any other kingdom.

Specifically for the bread and wine we ask that the presence of Christ would be made known to us. It is this presence that makes the ritualistic meal a means of grace, for in the bread and in the wine we encounter the healing and transformative presence of God. Christ is really here. It is not a mere memorial. We do not understand how this happens, but we give thanks to God, and recognize Christ's presence amongst us. This understanding of Christ's real presence has been a part of the church for a long time. Irenaeus, for example, wrote this, probably before the year 200, "the bread of the earth, receiving the invocation of God, is no longer common bread but Eucharist, consisting of

¹⁷⁸ Bettenson and Maunder, 80.

two things, an earthly and a heavenly." Somehow God causes a mystery to take place, and the bread and wine become more than only bread and wine. The healing and transformative presence of God — a heavenly presence - meets us here.

Included in the gifts that are sanctified are money, food, and clothing. Here, once more, mission comes from the table. The money is used for local ministry, local mission, and global mission (we give a portion of our offering to the general Church of the Nazarene and from there it is sent all over the globe for various projects and needs). The food and clothing are used in the close closet and food bank that we run from the church. It is important that these gifts are consecrated for use in God's work. When we give gifts to others, they were once gifts at this altar, blessed, sanctified, and sent out on mission.

The sanctification that happens in the Eucharist is for you and me, for us as the church, for all people, and for all things. The Eucharist is the church acting as an offering of the world, given to God, and made holy for the life of the world.

The Fraction

This is made explicit in what is called The Fraction, when the pastor lifts the bread and breaks it in two, with these words:

One: The living bread broken for the life of the world. Many:

Lord, unite us in this sign.

¹⁸⁰ Schmemmann, 102-3.

The miracle of healing is that the brokenness itself is redeemed and made into a means of communion with God. The sickness is not always taken away, the brokenness is not always mended. But the "wrong" itself is made into a "right."¹™ So it is with the brokenness of Christ and OUR own brokenness (remember that the loaf of bread is Christ and it is us). God makes brokenness into unity even when the Body of Christ is torn into

pieces. In God's kingdom, things are not as they seem: death is the way to victory, the last shall be first.

The living bread is broken, and this sign unites us.

The words "the living bread" and "for the life of the world" come from John Chapter 6. For example, in John 6:51 Jesus says, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this

bread will live forever, and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." The breaking of the bread visually tells the story. It enacts it. It invites us into it. God enacts grace amongst us in the real and fleshy medium of bread and wine.

"For the life of the world." Mission, once again, comes into play. Christ and the church exist for others, not for themselves. The glance is always outwards.

Unity

Our unity within diversity is made explicit with the next words, a rough quote from 1 Corinthians 10:17:

Because there is one bread and one cup, we though we are many, are one, [here the pastor will elaborate on ways we might be divided and how such divides are irrelevant - no means we use to separate us matter: color, ethnicity, denomination, gender, identity, class, education, whatever. We are one, and all are welcome here.] So, let us join in praying the prayer the Lord taught all his disciples to pray:

¹⁸¹ Brannon Hancock, *The Scandal of Sacramentality: The Eucharist in Literary and Theological Perspectives* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014) Kindle location 2818-2840.

At Scottsdale First we want to focus on the unity of the church rather than on its division. People have reported that these words in the Eucharist were meaningful to them because they had seen the church fight and bicker - but here was a proclamation of unity. Our proclaiming it and enacting it makes it real. And so in the Eucharist we enact unity, rather

than only talk about it. The one loaf of bread is a symbol of that unity. We used to use many pieces of bread, but in order to enact the truth of this saying (from 1 Corinthians 10:17), we began to use one loaf of

bread. The visual reality of one loaf is important.

The Lord's Prayer

This is a proper time to recite *The Lord's Prayer* together. The phrase "our daily bread" has regularly been understood to refer to the Eucharist meal. And so we repeat these words together, along with the rest of the church, week after week as we come to the Table of the Lord:

Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven; give us today our daily bread; forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us, not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

The Libation

After the Lord's Prayer, we pour the wine into a cup and invite people to the Table. This pouring out is called *The Libation*, and it is performed with these words:

One: Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world! [*The unfermented wine is poured at this time.*]

Many: **Lord Jesus have mercy, and grant us peace.**

taking a posture of humility before the great sacrifice of God for the world. Have ¹⁸² Dubruiel, Kindle

locations 1582-1589.

The words of John the Baptist announcing Jesus are used here. They recall for us the image of the Lamb of God, innocent and slaughtered. We see the blood of Christ poured out; once more the sacrifice is enacted and the story proclaimed through what we do, not only what we say. The response from the congregation is a request for mercy and peace,

mercy! For we are fallen, sinful creatures in need of God's grace. Grant us peace! Peace means to make all things right, and we wish to be made right in all ways, and we wish for the world to be made right. It is a request that God would enact the promise at the Birth of Jesus: Peace on earth.

The Invitation to Receive

Those who will serve come forward, holding the elements, and this invitation to receive is given:

The Table is prepared; all who are hungry and thirsty are invited to come and receive these gifts of grace; may Christ be fully formed in you.

This invitation is for all - anyone who has been a part of this gathering and wishes to come forward is welcome. We are called "hungry" and "thirsty." This highlights our needy status, for we need God. It echoes Matthew 5:6, "Happy are people who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness, because they will be fed until they are full." It also is ambiguous enough to not mention what we are hungry and thirsty for - though we hope to be shaped into people who hunger and thirst for God. The words "receive these gifts of grace" speak to what it is we are doing - receiving grace, the very presence of Christ into our bodies (making us the Body of Christ, the church). These words remind us that we believe this to be a means of grace. And finally our prayer: "may Christ be fully formed" in each of us and in us together. Our prayer is that the saying will come true, "you are what you eat."

These are the instructions printed in how to receive:

We invite all to participate and receive. We have a gluten-egg-soy-corn-dairy-nut-yeast free option. If you desire this option, say 'gluten free' to the server. When you come forward down the center aisle, hold out your hands to receive a piece of the bread. The server will say, 'the Body of Christ, broken for you.' You may

respond, "amen." Then dip the bread into the cup of (unfermented) wine. The server will say, 'the Blood of Christ, shed for you.' You may respond, 'amen.' Return to your seat via the side aisles.

Coming forward to the altar is important. The walk enacts the story, enacts our prayer, and enacts our sacrifice. Standing and moving become prayer and the action, week after week, can shape us to be people who give ourselves to God. And it may take some time for everyone to receive the elements. This "down time" gives us a moment to be silent, to pray, to receive God's grace to us.

Note, too, that the children have joined us for communion. It is important that they participate in the Eucharist, the central act of the church. They have lived the same pattern: gathering, word, and now with the rest of us, table and sending. The noise and distraction of the kids is part of the plan, too. We are all one church, young and old, well behaved and rambunctious.

The Sending¹⁸³

The sending consists of a prayer, announcements, and the benediction. Throughout this walkthrough of our worship, the outward nature ("for the life of the world") of the liturgy has been noted. It becomes explicit here as we are sent out.

This is the final act of the weekly gathering rhythm: gathered, filled (at Word and Table), and now sent out. After being "out there" we will be gathered again, filled (at Word and Table) again, and then sent out again. This is the rhythm of worship. God breathes us in, fills us (changes us, blesses us, makes us holy), and breathes us out.

¹⁸³I presented this material — the whole sending portion — in week 7 of the seven-week series of classes.

Ezekiel 47 depicts a vision of the Temple of Jerusalem; from the temple waters flow in many directions. As the water goes, it brings blessing. While this is a picture

appropriated by Jesus ("I am the living water") and certainly of the future hope of God

remaking all of creation, it is also a good picture of what happens when God has gathered

and filled and sent out the church. Here are the words from Ezekiel's vision:

When he brought me back to the temple's entrance, I noticed that water was flowing toward the east from under the temple's threshold (the temple faced east). The water was going out from under the temple's facade toward the south, south of the altar.. He said to me, "Human one, do you see?" Then he led me back to the edge of the river. When I went back, I saw very many trees on both banks of the river. He said to me, "These waters go out to the eastern region, flow down the steep slopes, and go into the Dead Sea. When the flowing waters enter the sea, its water becomes fresh. **Wherever the river flows, every living thing that moves will thrive.** There will be great schools of fish, because when these waters enter the sea, it will be fresh. **Wherever the river flows, everything will live...** on both banks of the river will grow up all kinds of fruit-bearing trees. Their leaves won't wither, and their fruitfulness won't wane. They will produce fruit in every month, because their water comes from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for eating, their leaves for healing. (From Ezekiel 41:1-12, emphasis mine.)

We are sent from the gathering at church into the world as the water flows out from the temple. We bring the blessing, the newness, the grace of God with us so that even the Dead Sea becomes full of life. God has brought us together to make us a blessing for the rest of the world.

Another way to think about the altar — and the Eucharist we celebrate there - is as the center of gravity around which the church's life of mission and devotion orbit. Imagine an object in a tight elliptical orbit - being pulled to the center, then flying out again, only to be drawn back. We are sent from the altar and we are pulled back to the altar; it is the center of all church life. Of course God is the center of all our life, but because God is made known to us in such a powerful way in the Eucharist, this becomes the center of the life of the church. For it is here that God calls us to meet, here we meet God, here God fills us, it is from here that God sends us out again, and it is back to here that God will call us once more. Other aspects in the life of the church point us to back

the altar of the Eucharist, and the life of the church flows out from the altar of the Eucharist. All of our mission and devotion — in whatever form they may come -find meaning in the Eucharist, where God has

called us, filled us, and sent us.

The Sending Prayer

This is the Sending Prayer we recite after everyone has received the Lord's

Supper and everyone has returned to their seats:

God of love, we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food of the most precious body and blood of our savior Jesus the Messiah; and for assuring us in these holy mysteries that we are living members of the Body of Christ.

And now, Father, send us out to do the work you have given us to do, to love and serve you as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.

In the sending prayer we summarize and thank God for what has just taken place. God has fed us and made us "living members of the Body of Christ." We have become what we have eaten and this prayer reminds us to be assured of this mystery, despite how we might feel about it. God has done something to us; we have been changed even if the change is imperceptible to us. It is like the building of stalactites and stalagmites in a limestone cave: one drop of water does not seem significant, but over time, drip by drip, beautiful formations are made. And so it is with us - though we often need to be assured of these mysteries.

This being "living members of the Body of Christ" also means we are broken and poured out for others. We have been joined to Christ in the Eucharist. We have been united as the people of God. And because we are one with Christ, we along with Christ, have been broken and poured out for the life of the world.

The last part of the prayer, which we say together in unison, is the sending out and speaks

specifically of our life and mission in the world. We pray for God to "send us out" unambiguously. As we go we will "do the work you have given us to do." This prayer

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should help orient us. We are a gathered and a sent people. We have work to do.

All of this has not only been for our benefit (though we have benefitted!), it is also for others. The work before us is clarified as, "to love and to serve you." In this living out of the greatest commandment (to love God) we remember the whole command: love God and love others, for we cannot love God without loving our neighbors.

We are sent out as "as faithful witnesses." We do not serve God as conquerors or warriors. We have been made into the cruciform shape of God. James Smith has this to say about being sent out as witnesses:

The church is elected to responsibility, called to be the church to and for the world - not in order to save it or conquer it or even transform it, but to serve it by showing what redeemed human community and culture look like, as modeled by the One whose cultural work led him to the cross. In short, we're sent out to be

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martyrs, witnesses of the Crucified One. In that way, we win by losing. If ever we are tempted to defend God, to "win," to conquer, or even to save and transform, we must remember this call to be witnesses (and that the Greek word we translate as "witness" is also the word for "martyr"). We are sent to serve. We are being made into the image of God, a God shaped like a cross. This means we are to lay our

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¹⁸⁴ N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003). Wright notes that in the resurrection stories the news is not, "Jesus is risen, therefore you will be too... .Instead, we find a sense of open-ended commission *within* the present world: 'Jesus is risen, therefore you have work ahead of ^ou.'" 603, emphasis in original.

Smith, *Imagining the Kingdom*, 201.

¹⁸⁷ John 15:13

lives down for others.

We end once more in Trinitarian doxology, giving praise to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in whose life we have been invited, and in whose image we are being made. We began the morning blessing God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We end the same way; always because of God.

Announcements

After this sending comes church announcements. When I was a young man working as an associate at a large church, one of the major "problems" was where to put the announcements on a Sunday morning. They did not seem to fit in the rest of "worship" as we conducted it. As I look back on that now, I see that our failure was to miss the "sent" nature of the church. Announcements are part of the liturgy of the sending. So now I realize that as we go we need to note some ways to serve, to be the people of God in our community and in the world.

The Benediction

Finally The Benediction is spoken over all the people:

And now may the Lord Bless you and keep you;
May the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
May the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace;
From this day forth and forever more.

Amen

With those words we are "done." But the end is the beginning, we are not dismissed, we are sent. And we are sent with the power and blessing of God. We are empowered by the presence of God (that is what all the references to God's face mean - God's face shining on us is God's healing and transformative presence).

When Moses saw God's face, Moses' face gleamed with God's glory. And so it will be with us. Our faces glow, for we have been in God's presence. We have been made into vessels of the living water,

flowing from God's throne into the Dead Sea making the salt water become fresh and teeming with life. We carry the Eucharist with us, in us, as us. Let it be!

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Christian Time and Keeping the Calendar All of this takes place within the context of keeping time. Why is keeping time in a Christian way important? Part of it is that keeping calendars help to "make" us certain kinds of people (who desire certain kinds of things, do particular things, think and love and inhabit the world in certain ways). All calendars do this:

- School calendars help make us students (with semesters, finals week, breaks, etc.),
- Sports calendars help make us fans (opening day, spring training, playoffs, the weekly rhythm of the particular sport, etc.),
- Shopping calendars help make us consumers (shopping seasons, high holy days like Black Friday, seasonal sales, etc.),
- The civic calendar helps make us good citizens (Memorial Day, Veteran's Day, 4th of July,

Presidents' Day, Tax Day, election days, etc).

So, if we want to be Christians, we would be helped by keeping time according to the rhythms of Christ and his Church. One important aspect of Christian time is the

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difference between old and new time

In the book (and movie) *The Hobbit*, there is a contest of riddles. One of the riddles Golem (the villain) gives is:

¹⁸⁸In the seven-week series of classes, this content occurred in week 2. It formed the context in which the rest of worship took place.

¹⁸⁹Schemmann is particularly helpful here. See Chapter 3, "The Time of Mission," in *For the Life of the World*. Many of the insights in this section come from Schemmann's work in that chapter of his book.

This thing all things devours:

Birds, beasts, trees, flowers;
Gnaws iron, bites steel;
Grinds hard stones into meal;
Slays kings, ruins town,
And beats high mountain down.

Time as we know it now always breaks things down. Always destroys. Always leads to death and decay. "This thing all things devours." It is a reality we cannot escape and this drain of time always weighs upon us. But in the redeeming actions of God in Christ (Jesus' birth, life and ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost) God is

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making time new. Brand new time breaking into old time. The Age to Come (new time) operates differently than this present age: jars of flour don't run out, dead people live, time no longer leads to decay, Golem's riddle no longer applies. Because Jesus enters old time and transforms it into new time, we can live into this new time also.

God in Jesus enters "this thing all things devours." And Jesus the King is slain on a Friday. The dead body of Jesus the King decays in a tomb on a Saturday (the last day of the week — the last day of this age). Jesus, with a new body is risen on a Sunday, the first day of the week, the first day of the Age to Come. And in the age to come, everything about Golem's riddle is reversed:

¹⁹² N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (HarperOne, 2008), 273-5.

This thing all things empowers: Birds, beasts,
trees, flowers; Strengthens iron, beautifies
steel; Shapes hard stones to reveal The risen
king, in all his glory, And brings all things
into his Joy.

Indeed, because of Christ and his work, the old way of the world has ended. In Christ there is new time. We are invited into it, to live into it, to help bring the glory of new time and new creation into the world. It has already happened, it is happening now, and it will yet be completed.

Story also forms us - makes us who we are. So because the story of Christ and God's intervention in the world is told in the calendar, celebrating the Christian calendar helps shape us.¹⁹⁴ We miss this if we simply submit to cultural calendars; or worse, they shape us, which might form us away from Christ or toward idols.¹⁹⁵

Keeping Christian Time is a way to witness to the world that NEW time has broken into this age. The Age to Come has been made real in Jesus and we help to sanctify time itself by participating in time in Christ. It is a missional endeavor. It is a reversal of Golem's riddle. We miss this opportunity when we keep only cultural time.

Knowing and keeping Christian time (with its colors, smells, fasts, and feasts) protects us from insignificant controversy. The "war on Christmas" in its various forms becomes moot when we realize that the war (if it even exists) is against the consumerism version of what they call "Christmas" and has nothing to do with the way the church actually celebrates Advent and Christmas.

¹⁹⁴ Robert E. Webber, *Ancient Future Time: Forming Spirituality through the Christian Year* (Grand Rapids, MI: BakerBooks, 2004) Kindle locations 195-200.

¹⁹⁵ Galli, 20.

The calendar helps to draw us into a larger community that supersedes language and national borders. We are not alone. My church is not alone. We are in the great company of the saints for thousands of years and around the globe. I am a part of the one church. Christians all around the world - in languages I have never heard of and in

countries I could never visit - are also celebrating Advent, the Day of Holy Innocents, The Feast of the Ascension, and so on.

The church has inherited a calendar with seasons and holy days. Even the most "low church" amongst us recognizes Christmas and Easter. I sometimes ask people, "What would you identify as the most important Christian Holyday?" The usual candidates are Christmas (with Christmas we'd have no Jesus at

all!) and Easter (without the resurrection, it is all for not!). Some mention Good Friday. The more charismatic might say "Pentecost." But nobody every says, "the Ascension of our Lord." The correct answer is, of course, "all of them."

In seminary I learned about something called "the Christ Event." No one single day is the most important. Rather, a complex of events - the Christ Event - marks the significance of the coming of Christ: Jesus' birth, life and ministry, death, resurrection, ascension, and Pentecost. Together, these days and events reveal the work of the God in Christ for the redemption of the world. These events are the very core of the Christian story.

For some, the basics of the Christian calendar are well known. For others, this might be a new concept. So, let's look briefly at how each season of the year helps us to see, retell, and embody the Christ Event and our interaction with it. Each season will be ¹⁹⁶ Webber, *Time*, Kindle locations 193-200.

Those who follow and celebrate the Christian Calendar retell and enact this story every year. In so doing, we enter into the story, we invite others into the story, we keep the story always in front of us so that it can form and shape us as God's holy people.¹⁹⁶ We enter into this rhythm of fasting and feasting, of remembering, of celebrations and of ordinary days.

marked with colors, smells, fasts, or feasts to help us embody and enact the Christ story. The series of seasons is Advent, Christmas, The Ordinary Time After Epiphany,

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Lent, Easter, and the Ordinary Time After Pentecost.

Advent. In a world that preaches immediate gain and satisfaction, Advent forms the Christian and the church in the way of waiting. Advent means "coming," it is a time of longing, praying, and preparing for Christ's coming.

Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas (usually late November or early December). The First Sunday in Advent marks the beginning of the year for Christians. We keep a wreath of five candles, three blue, one pink, and one large white Christ candle. One is lighted each Sunday in Advent and the Christ Candle is lighted on Christmas.

In Advent we remember the past - the first "coming" of Christ - the Christmas story, the birth of Jesus. Because of this, we also especially think about Mary during Advent. Usually we make it a point to have women read all of the scriptures, often teenagers, because Mary was probably a young teenager. We visualize and enact the important role of women, especially during Advent.

In Advent we prepare our hearts now, in the present, for the celebration of Christ amongst us. It is a time of anticipation and preparation - here and now - making room in our life for the coming of Christ at every moment.

¹⁹⁸Joan Chittister, *The Liturgical Year: The Spiraling Adventure of the Spiritual Life* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009) Kindle locations 495-532

In Advent we anticipate the future by preparing for the coming of Jesus at the Parousia or "the second coming."

Counter to our culture, which marks the days prior to Christmas with parties, celebrations, and spending, the church takes these weeks as fasting days. We slow down, spend less, and contemplate our own need of the coming Savior. Our church does not have any "Christmas parties" during Advent. Our

Christmas parties fall in the actual Christmas season - we usually have an all church Christmas party the first Sunday of Christmas.

During Advent we decorate our church with blue to help us visualize hope, repentance, the coming King. Furthermore, blue is the color associated with Mary the Mother of Christ. We also burn frankincense to help us smell the sweetness of the coming King. The scriptures we read this time of year speak of impending judgment and hope as we await God's intervention in the world. In Advent we anticipate the first part of the Christ Event (teaching us patient waiting amongst other things). In Christmas we celebrate the arrival of the Savior.

Christmas. The Christmas of our consumerist economy is about production, pride, and spending. Contrary to this, the Christian Christmas is about celebrating the incarnation of God in Christ. It also teaches us that tragedy is mixed with joy, for on the third day of Christmas we celebrate the "Day of Holy Innocence" on which we

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remember the children murdered in Bethlehem - the first people killed for Christ.
²⁰¹ Webber, *Time*, Kindle location 1105-13.

Christmas is a season lasting twelve days - yes, the 12 days of Christmas. It begins on December 25, Christmas Day, and ends on January 5. These are feasting days, the time when we rejoice at the marvel of the incarnation. We decorate with white and

gold to symbolize joy and celebration (not green and red which are the colors of the consumer "Christmas").

Epiphany. The Feast of Epiphany, held on January 6, is an even older celebration than Christmas. The word means "appearing" or "brightness" and has to do with realizing something or knowing something - as in "I had an epiphany" meaning "I came to understand" or "I have discovered."

Epiphany is about realizing and understanding who Jesus really is. The events that Epiphany commemorates are important points of revelation in Jesus' life: the coming of the Magi, Jesus' baptism, and Jesus' miracle of changing water into wine.

The coming of the Magi was the first revelation of Jesus to the gentiles. These pagan wizards recognized the importance of Jesus and came to worship him. Jesus is thus identified as the Savior to the *whole* world and *all* its people, even the most extreme

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"outsiders" we could imagine.

In Jesus' baptism he is revealed as the Son of God - and his public ministry begins. The miracle of turning water into wine reveals Jesus as a miracle worker. This is sometimes understood to be Jesus' first miracle. Thus the day (and season following) Epiphany is when the church focuses on the "life and ministry" part of the Christ Event.

The white used to decorate the church for Epiphany represents joy and celebration. The "ordinary time" following the Feast of Epiphany is marked with the color green, symbolizing our continued growth in

knowledge regarding Jesus' identity.

²⁰² Chittister, Kindle location 044-50.

Lent. Lent is a period of fasting and sorrow for our sin and preparation for the celebration of

Easter. Confession and honest appraisal of our own shortcomings are about

as counter cultural as concepts come and the church celebrates and enacts these virtues every year as a part of our calendar.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and lasts 40 days, not counting Sundays. Ash represents the death and destruction caused by sin. To receive an anointing of ash is a sign of repentance. It is another embodied action - it is quite impactful to have ashes smeared on your forehead as a minister says, "Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return."

We use of the color purple during this time to mark repentance and sorrow. We also burn myrrh, which has a harsh smell to emphasize the harshness of this season. And for the bread of the Eucharist, we use unsalted dry flatbread because it is simple and has little flavor. Eating this bread enacts the penitent nature of Lent.

During this time people often fast from something like chocolate, TV, or eating meat. The purpose of a fast is to heighten your awareness of the presence of God, "to

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establish, maintain, repair, and transform our relationship with God." It can be a good way to break a bad habit. Many also try to add something to your life during Lent; like a spiritual discipline, or being more generous. It can be a great way to begin a good habit.

Part of keeping the rhythm of these days is to allow them to be what they are: celebration on Palm Sunday, serving one another and dinner on Maundy Thursday, and ²⁰³ Webber, *Time*, Kindle location 1905.

Lent is concluded with Holy Week, beginning with Palm Sunday (the Triumphal Entry) and includes Maundy Thursday (when Jesus washed the disciple's feet, celebrated the Last Supper, and gave the "new command" to love one another), Good Friday, and Holy Saturday. Thus, some major moments of Jesus "life and ministry" are celebrated during Lent as well as the death of Christ.

darkness on Good Friday and Holy Saturday. If we treat every gathering as a happy occasion, we miss the rhythm. When these days are kept and observed, the formative power of time can help shape us into people who find victory through love and sacrifice rather than through power and violence.

Easter. Easter is a fifty-day celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus the Christ. Yes, fifty days. In this season we rejoice in Jesus' victory over sin and death in the Resurrection, Jesus' being crowned as King in the Ascension, and Jesus' sending of the Holy Spirit to begin the Church on Pentecost.

It seems common amongst many Protestants I know to miss the importance of the Ascension of our Lord.²⁰⁴ The Ascension, at the most basic level, simply means that Jesus is in charge; Jesus is the true King of the universe. Jesus is the Lord of all - even of the church. Keeping the Ascension in clear view helps us to remember and know our place: as subjects to the King standing above us. We have plans at the church to install a large stained glass window depicting the Ascension so that all of these themes are kept in front of us the whole year.

Many also miss the importance of Pentecost. But Pentecost is the birth of the church, the Spirit given to women and men, old and young, people of every kind. The Spirit gives birth to the possibility of

"heaven on earth" in the church where we say "Your Kingdom come, your will be done."

See an excellent discussion of the importance of the Ascension in N. T. Wright *Surprised by Hope*, 109ff.

Ordinary Time. Ordinary time makes up most of the year. Just plain old ordinary time. Nothing

special. Ordinary.

This is a good reminder that most of life is ordinary. The noteworthy times are less common and that is ok. Not every day will you feel fantastic - usually just ordinary. Most days at church are just ordinary. Most sermons are just ordinary. Most PRPs are just ordinary. Most of anything is just ordinary.

So in these ordinary times, we are not celebrating anything extraordinary; rather, we relish the fact that God is at work in the midst of every day whether it be spectacular or routine.²⁰⁵

The first day of ordinary time is Trinity Sunday - a special high holy day in which we celebrate the Trinity. The church is decorated in white on this day.

Then the colors switch to green and will stay there most of the rest of the year. Green symbolizes growth and the fact that God is always at work, even if things seem commonplace.

Toward the end of ordinary time is All Saint's Day. This is a day that we remember "the great cloud of witnesses" that have gone before us. This day is noted by white. At our church we will light candles and pray prayers especially for this day. It is a highlight of the year for many in our congregation.

As the church enters into the rhythm of the church calendar we retell and enact the most important parts of our faith every year. Through this ongoing cycle of story and enactment God uses the church to sanctify time itself. All things were meant to proclaim²⁰⁵ Chittister, Kindle location 2066ff.

The last Sunday of ordinary time is Christ the King and celebrates just that. In all of this ordinary time, in all time, Jesus is the King - though king in a different way than we are used to. He is a king who

shows power through death and sacrifice and service to others. This is our King.

the glory of God, even something so simple as time. So not only do we hear the story and live the story, not only are we transformed by the story, but we bring the story to the world and God uses the church to redeem another aspect of God's good creation: time itself.

Why is Your Church So Catholic?²⁰⁶ Some people wonder about what we do at Scottsdale First asking "Why are you so Catholic?" They have in mind things like: written prayers, ritual, the "Word and Table" format, and often mention the fact that we celebrate the Eucharist every week. Here are a few thoughts in reply:

(1) These things are ancient, not Roman Catholic. (And Roman Catholic Christians are Christians, too, so there would be nothing wrong with being Catholic, if we were.) The basic pattern, "gathering, Word, Table, sending," has existed since the earliest days of the church, well before there was a "Roman Catholic" church. It is part of the ancient heritage which all Christians share.

(2) The ritual and ceremony that we do - the words and actions we take, even the order in which we do them - are all based on ancient forms of Christian worship. They are not new, not made up, and not the property of any one single Christian group. Many other groups will have similar services including many Reformed groups, Methodists,

²⁰⁶ I wrote this content to be put in wherever I had time to present it. I presented it in week 5, but it could have fit in several other places as well.

²⁰⁷ Galli, 121.

Lutherans, Anglicans, and some non-denominational churches.

(3) It "works." That is not to mean that pragmatics determine what we do (it does not), but it does

mean that God has been using these means of grace, these patterns, these

(4)

sacraments to shape the People of God for centuries. It works for kings and peasants, learned and simple, old and young.

(4) What Protestants were "protesting" in the 1500s is called "late medieval

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Catholic worship" which is markedly different than what you and I know of Catholic worship today. In the 1300s to 1500s, Catholic worship took on some peculiar tendencies (not found in the ancient church). These included

(a) worship was a "spectator sport" where the congregation watched as the professionals "did church" on stage.²⁰⁹

(b) the worship was incomprehensible to ordinary folks: it was said in Latin,

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quietly, with the priest facing away from the crowd.

(c) the Lord's Supper was only served a few times a year to the congregation, and when it was, they only received the bread (the priests received every day from both — church was basically watching this happen on Sunday). This was a major complaint of all the major reformers: they wanted weekly Eucharist served to all the people using both the bread and the wine.²¹¹

Roman Catholics did not start having communion every week until Pope Pius X — that was the Pope who saw the Cubs win the World Series! Weekly Eucharist for modern Catholics is a fairly recent (re) innovation.

²⁰⁸ James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville, KY:

WestminsterVTohn
Knox Press, 1989), 25-27.

²⁰⁹ Ibid.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid., 42, 65, 98.

(5) That means that when Protestant churches put on a show with performers and a crowd or when they seldom serve the Lord's Supper, or both, they are acting like medieval Catholics, the very thing Protestants were "protesting" to begin with!

(6) Vatican II changed everything. This was a major council for the Roman church in the 1960s. Changes made there saw the Roman church, again, reaching back to the ancient church and becoming more like some Protestant churches at the same time. One of the repercussions of this council has been a great amount of theological and liturgical borrowing from across traditions because everyone was looking to the early

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church for inspiration at the same time.

(7) John and Charles Wesley - important theological founders of the movement that eventually became the church of the Nazarene - were advocates of weekly Eucharist and deep sacramental theology when the church was tending toward infrequent

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²¹² Ibid. 32-5

²¹³ For Wesley's commitment to frequent communion, see his "Sermon CI: The Duty of Constant Communion," *Works*, Vol. 7, 147-57. On their sacramental theology on the Lord's Supper, see John and Charles Wesley, "Hymns on the Lord's Supper," *The Political Works of John and Charles Wesley*, Vol. 3, 185-342.

communion and enlightenment attitudes regarding sacraments. They were also big fans of the Book of Common Prayer (versions of which are where most of our ritual, order, and prayers come from). In other words, the way we do church can be seen as faithful to our heritage in the Wesleyan tradition; the correct

identification would be to say that we look Wesleyan, not that we look Roman Catholic.

CHAPTER 3 - PROJECT DESIGN: MEASURING THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION IN LITURGY AT SCOTTSDALE FIRST

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the research methodology in detail, including why this methodology was chosen, descriptions of the people involved, and details regarding the surveys used including specific reasons behind each question used. A brief outline regarding what was taught is provided as well as the procedure followed throughout the study.

The Study Purpose and Population

The end goal of this project was Christian formation - the desire to see my congregation become

more like Christ, individually and communally. One critical way toward that formation was education in liturgy, why we do what we do on Sunday mornings. The study itself consisted of a survey conducted before and after a seven-week series of classes about why we do what we do in worship. These survey tools were meant to help ascertain whether the classes had an effect on the individuals. Twice a week surveys were also provided as a tool to assist in the learning process and to get more information about how the classes might be affecting the participants.

I received 32 responses at the beginning and 31 responses at the end. However, only 26 of each were used. (See the results in Chapter 4.) These 26 were chosen because they met several criteria: (1) the participant took both the pre- and post-class surveys and (2) they missed two or fewer classes of the seven-week series. I felt that those who missed three simply did not receive enough instruction to be counted in the post-class survey. Because the demographic data obtained was unique to each individual, I could assure that the same people were included in the pre and post class data set. I will focus my report on the population to these 26 individuals.

All of the people who participated in the study are a part of Scottsdale First Church of the Nazarene. One has been a part of the church since its founding 1958 (and he was an adult then), others for a decade or more, and many for five years or less. There were a few who had only begun attending the church within the last few months. Within this group of 26, the median years of attendance was three.

The ages of these participants varied from the eighties to one 13-year-old boy. The median age was 39.5. The decades represented: one in their 80s, three in their 70s, four in their 60s, three in their 50s, two in their 40s, 5 in their 30s, three in their 20s, and five in their teens - 19, 17, 16, 15, and 13. Of the 26 participants used in these pre- and post-class surveys, there were 12 males and 14 females.

Their church backgrounds were diverse. Some have history in the Church of the Nazarene, others

in Baptist or Baptist-like non-denominational churches, others have some experience in a more "liturgical" churches including Methodist, Lutheran, Orthodox, Episcopal, and Roman Catholic. I also know that some would say that they enjoy the liturgy and others have expressed some level of unease with it. I know this information from my relationships with the participants. I did not ask their denominational background as an official part of the study.

Scottsdale Nazarene has shifted in the last four years from a typical frontier-style worship gathering (lots of music followed by a long sermon) to an a more ancient Word and Table format. Our service order is complex and contains many components, all within the framework of gathering, Word, Table, and sending. Here is our order:

* * The Gathering* *

Opening Song
Call to Worship
Welcome
Collect for Purity
Gloria Path (sung) **The

Service of the Word**

Prayer for Illumination
Reading OT
Song
Reading NT Song
Reading Gospel (from the center of the congregation)
Sermon
Prayer time:

- Creed
- Psalm
- Silence
- People's Prayer
- Prayer of Confession
- Absolution
- Passing the Peace

The Service of the Table

Offering and Song
Presentation of gifts and The Doxology (sung) Communion

- *Sursum Corda*
- *Sanctus and Benedictus*

- Great Thanksgiving prayer
 - Words of Institution
 - Prayer of Oblation
 - Prayer of Epiclesis
- Fraction and Unity
- Our Father
- Libation
- Invitation to receive
- (prayer and anointing are available) **The

Sending**

Sending Prayer
Announcements
Benediction

Because the order of service is so complex and we focus so much on the Service of the Table, some people involved in the study (and in the congregation) have had

questions over the years. Sometimes people ask, "Why are we so catholic?" Others wonder about the ritual or liturgy. One man specifically asked for more information about how we worship, wanting to learn and be more engaged. These questions have come from a range of people in the congregation who ended up participating in the study, older and younger, with church experience in a variety of traditions. There seemed to be a general interest in why we do what we do.

The Method - Survey

When conceptualizing this study, I wanted to find a way to see whether (and what) sort of impact the classes worship had on the participants, especially regarding the four overarching goals mentioned in Chapter 1 of this work: (1) clarity regarding liturgy, both in general and specific things at Scottsdale First; (2) their posture entering worship, especially regarding their feelings of engagement, level of presence they bring, and how they notice God moving through the liturgy; (3) their responsiveness to God in worship

including their sense of being sent from worship into mission; and (4) their sense of being formed through the liturgy. Pre- and post-class surveys seemed like a logical way to try to measure change. These questionnaires were a way to gather data about the attitudes and perspectives of the participants as well as change overtime.

Furthermore, survey tools are widely accepted. As Louis Rae notes, "As a research technique in the social sciences and professional disciplines, survey research has derived considerable credibility from its widespread acceptance and use in academic

²¹⁵ Louis Re a, *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide (Jossey Bass Public Administration Series)* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass Press, 2005) 4. institutions." Though I made use of surveys, the context was parish ministry and so

tight controls needed for "true" quantitative research were not practical. Thus the quantitative tools used were, as William Myers put it, "borrowed" for use in my study. In other words, I could not begin to control for all variables associated with education in liturgy and setting up a control group was impractical in my setting (I wanted everyone in my church to participate, if possible, due to the ministry implications). Nevertheless, the results (as you will see in Chapter 4) showed trends that I anticipated and wanted to see.

Qualitative tools were also employed to a degree. Some of the questions asked were qualitative in nature and I kept record of conversations with people in the study to track how they felt about the study. These answers provided valuable feedback, information, and insight into how people perceived the value of the classes.

The exact survey tools used can be found in Appendix C. What follows here is a listing of each question from each survey along with the reasons that question was chosen and what I was trying to discern

by asking the question.

The Reasons for Each Question

The following questions were found on both the pre and post surveys given to participants.

Question 1: "Rate your current feelings toward the Sunday morning service at Scottsdale First on this scale. Circle only one: 1 2 3 4 5. Choice 1 would mean completely meaningless, boring, dry. Choice 5 would mean fully meaningful, formative, engaging."

This question sought to discern the general feeling toward worship at Scottsdale First and whether this has changed over the course of the seven week class. My hypothesis was that once someone had attended these classes, their general feeling toward the service would improve. Some of the discomfort that comes with the unknown would be removed, freeing the individual to enjoy our worship gatherings more fully. This question helped to assess change regarding the second overarching goal regarding improved posture entering worship.

Question 2 and 3 both had people rank a series of components of the service. Those components were:

Opening parts of the service (Call to worship, Opening prayer, etc.)

The music and singing songs (throughout the service)

Reading scripture aloud

Preaching

Reciting the Creed

Prayers (including the prayers of the people and confession)

Passing the peace

Offering

Eucharist (the whole service of the table)

Benediction

These ten parts of the service are a rough outline of what we do each week. They were chosen for a few reasons. If we included the entire order there would simply be too many components. On the other hand, if we only had four, such as "gathering, Word, Table, sending," that does not seem specific enough. The number ten seemed like a common size list for rankings (top ten lists abound) and so these ten components were chosen as a

number that seemed reasonable and as distinct components within the service. These questions help gauge how people understand our liturgy, so these questions address the first overarching goal, clarity regarding liturgy.

Question 2: "Rank the following from 1 to 10 according to what part of the service you most ENJOY. Use all ten numbers and each number only once. You might start with finding your favorite part (giving that a 1), then the next favorite (giving it a 2), then the next (giving it a 3), and so on until you reach 10. You may like all the parts, so 10 does not necessarily mean you do not like it, only that you like the other parts more."

I wanted to force people to choose between options, otherwise they were likely to give everything (or at least several things) the same ranking, so I chose this sort of rank order, forced choice, question. The way I asked the question forced them to make choices.

Question 3: "Rank the following from 1 to 10 according to which part of the service you think is most IMPORTANT. All of them are important, so rank them for their relative importance as compared to other aspects of the service. You might start with finding the part you think is most important (giving that a

1), then the next (giving it a 2), then the next (giving it a 3) and so on until you reach 10. 1 = most important, 2 = next most important, 3 = next most, and so on until you reach 10."

The same logic for the shape of question 3 follows. The distinction between question 2 and 3 is in which is their "favorite" and which they view as "most important." There is a significant enough difference between these two to warrant two questions.

²¹⁷ Arlene Fink, *How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2009) 26.

There is also a teaching point to be made. I hoped that they would pick up on the fact that what we like is not necessarily the same thing as what is important.

My hypothesis regarding this question was that people would tend toward preaching and music as favorite (or important) components within the service before the classes. After the education in liturgy, I hoped that the preaching and music would decline in these lists. This is not because they are not important or enjoyable, but that after learning about the whole liturgy, other parts would become more noticeable. Again, these questions address their general understanding of our liturgy.

Question 4 was designed to measure people's understanding of the Eucharist and the question contained four parts. Each of the four parts called for participants to rank

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their agreement using a typical Likert-type scale. Because these questions deal with how people understood parts of the liturgy, this questions addresses the first overarching goal: clarity regarding liturgy. Depending on their understanding of Christ's presence and issues of sacrifice, their answer could also have bearing on their posture toward or the meaningfulness of the Eucharist; in this way question 4 also address the second goal,

their posture entering worship.

Question 4: "These four statements have to do with your sense or understanding of the Eucharist. In each of the following, indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement using this scale:

5 = strongly agree 4 = agree

3 = neither agree or disagree

2 = disagree

²¹⁸ Arlene Fink, *How To Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications) 25.

1 = strongly disagree"

Then came the four statements.

a) "What happens at the Eucharist is only memorial, Jesus is NOT really present (any more than always) - we are simply remembering what Christ has already done." This statement sought to discern how people understand the presence of Christ at the Eucharist and whether this understanding has changed over the course of the seven-week series of classes. Statement 4a specifically addresses a strictly memorial understanding -an enlightenment, "real absence," position. I anticipated that more people would agree with this on the pre-class survey and more would disagree with it on the post-class survey.

b) "Something mysterious happens so that Jesus is really present in an extraordinary way through the bread, cup, and congregation (but I don't know how)." This question sought to discern how people understand the presence of Christ at the Eucharist and whether this understanding has changed over the course of the seven week class. Statement 4b specifically addresses a real presence position described as "doxological

²¹⁹ Peterson, "A Post-Wesleyan Eucharistic Ecclesiology", 21.

agnosticism" - there is a mystery about Jesus' presence that we do not understand, but gratefully accept. I expected people to move toward agreeing with this statement more on the post-class survey.

c) "The Eucharist is a sacrifice of those who participate (the people in the congregation)." This question sought to discern how people understand the nature of sacrifice in the Eucharist as self-sacrifice, and whether this understanding has changed over the course of the seven week class. This was an important statement because I hope that people understand themselves as incorporated into the Eucharist. This is part of being

d)

made holy. Again, I expected people to move toward agreeing with this statement more on the post-class survey.

d) "The Eucharist is a sacrifice of Jesus." This statement sought to discern how people understand the nature of sacrifice in the Eucharist as a sacrifice of Jesus, and whether this understanding has changed over the course of the seven-week series of classes. Because the idea of sacrifice in the Eucharist is not well understood, I once again expected people to move toward agreeing with this statement more on the post-class survey.

Question 5: "Do you feel like God is forming you more into the image of Christ through our Sunday morning worship gathering? Circle only one: 1 2 3 4 5. Choice 1 would mean 'not at all.' Choice 5 would mean 'Yes, definitely.'" This question sought to discern whether people feel that worship at Scottsdale First helps to form them into Christlikeness and whether this perception has changed over the course of the seven-week series of classes. This helps gauge the fourth (and most important) overarching

goal, formation into the image of Christ. Because Christian formation happens in worship and education in liturgy will increase this formative power of worship, I expected people to move toward more agreement with this statement on the post-class survey.

Question 6: "How connected are our Sunday morning gathering and our mission in the world (missional activity, doing good, serving others, self-sacrifice, etc.)? Circle only one: 1 2 3 4 5. Choice 1 would mean 'Fully disconnected - they are two separate things.' Choice 5 would mean 'Fully connected - without Sunday we would have no mission in the world.'" This question sought to discern whether people perceive a strong or weak connection between worship and mission and whether this perception has changed over the course of the seven week class. I believe that mission flows from the Eucharist and so I wanted to see whether the participants do, too. This question was meant to help discern their response to worship regarding being sent on mission (overarching goal three). I expected there to be more agreement with this statements once the classes were completed.

Question 7: "How connected is our Sunday morning gathering to your other spiritual practices (private prayer, devotions, use of icons, or any other Christian spiritual practice)? Circle only one: 1 2 3 4 5. Choice 1 would mean 'Fully disconnected - they are two separate things.' Choice 5 would mean 'Fully connected - without Sunday I would have no meaningful spiritual life.'" This question sought to discern whether people perceive a strong connection between worship and spiritual disciplines and whether this perception has changed over the course of the seven-week series of classes. This question was meant to help discern their response to worship regarding being sent on mission (overarching goal three). I believe that spiritual disciplines flows from the Eucharist and so I wanted to see whether the participants do, too. I expected there to be more agreement with this statements once the classes were completed.

Questions 8 and 9 were demographic. I asked for a self-reporting of "How many times a month do

you usually attend the Sunday morning worship gathering at Scottsdale first (circle one): 4 3 2 1

less than 1." I also asked for their age, gender, and how long they had been attending Scottsdale First. I wanted to gather this information so that if there was an unusual pattern to answers, the demographic data might help explain it. It also functioned to help me be certain the surveys I used for the

data collection came from the same people as I was able to match the data, assuring that the same people's responses were analyzed each time.

Question 10: "How would you describe our worship gatherings to a friend who has never been to our church?" This question sought to discern what words people would use to describe our worship gatherings. I thought this might give me a clue as to their perceptions and attitudes toward our church and our worship.

On the post class survey I asked two more questions that were not included in the pre-class survey. Question 11, "Indicate which weeks you DID NOT attend (or catch up on in some other way)? 1 (intro) 2 (time) 3 (gathering/word) 4 (prayer/peace) 5 (table 1) 6 (table2)." Question 12, "Did you fill out the pre-class survey (several weeks ago)? (Circle one) Y N." These two questions helped me to disqualifying people from being included in the final data analysis. If they had missed three or more of the classes or if they did not take the pre-class survey, their survey was not used in the final analysis.

The Monday and Friday check-in surveys were designed to do two things. First, they functioned as reflective moments for people. In this way they functioned like the spiritual discipline of journaling or reflecting. But they also provided data to analyze. Some of it is quantitative and some of it qualitative.

Because demographic data was not gathered in the same way in these surveys, and the response rate was somewhat low, I do not know whether the same 26 participants were answering these or whether these answers were from other participants eventually disqualified from final analysis on the pre and post

surveys.

Monday Question 1: "Did you attend the Sunday morning worship gathering at Scottsdale First this week?" This question was to qualify or disqualify the respondent's

answers if they continued on with the survey. People simply stopped short here if they had not attended worship.

Monday Question 2: "Tell me about this week's service. What stood out to you? What seemed most meaningful or significant?" This question sought to discern what the participant was drawn to and whether there seemed to be any trends over time as the classes progressed. I also wanted to know whether talking about certain parts of the service in the class would make that part of the service come alive for people. Answers given here might help me assess the overarching goals one and two, regarding clarity about liturgy and their posture entering worship.

Monday Question 3: "In what ways did you recognize the presence of God on Sunday?" This question sought to discern where (or whether) people sensed God's presence in the service. I know that some participants were resistant to the idea of God's presence in the sacraments, so I was curious whether people would recognize God's graceful presence there or in any other parts of the service. There are no right or wrong answers, but I wanted to know how people felt God in our worship and whether there were any trends over time. Answers given here might help me assess the overarching goals two and three, regarding their posture entering worship and their response to God in worship.

Monday Question 4: "How present were you at communal worship on Sunday? *{Present* here means engaged, paying attention, sensing the spirit working, noticing God giving you grace through the various components of the service, etc. *Not present* means you simply showed up but you were bored or distracted or in some other way not engaged. This is about what you bring to the service, not what the

service does to or for

you.)" They were to rank their level of presence using a Likert scale from 1 to 5; 1 meaning "my body was there" and 5 meaning "really present." This question sought to discern the quantity of presence, their "posture" entering worship. One of my hopes in this study was that those who participated in the classes would become more present in worship as the classes went on. This question was designed to see whether that tended to happen.

Monday Question 5: "What facilitated or hindered your level of presence on Sunday?" This question was partly reflective for the person, but also sought to reveal the participant's perception of what was going on internally to help or hinder their level of presence. Partly this was a pastoral question, helping me identify things we do that might help or hinder. But I also wanted to know whether the classes were having any effect on them.

Friday Question 1: "Did you attend the Sunday morning worship gathering at Scottsdale First this week?" This question was to qualify or disqualify the respondent's answers if they continued on with the survey. Most simply stopped short here if they had not attended worship.

Friday Question 2: "In what ways did our Sunday morning worship move you into mission throughout the week?" This question sought to discern how the participant understood their missional activity being related to the Sunday worship gathering. As the classes went on, I wanted to see whether the participants began to connect mission with being sent from the service.

Friday Question 3: "In what ways did our Sunday morning worship form you throughout the week? How did your personal spiritual disciplines seem connected or

disconnected to Sunday worship?" This question sought to discern how the participant understood their

formation and spiritual disciplines being related to the Sunday worship gathering. As the classes went on, I wanted to see whether the participants began to connect our devotional lives and formation with the service.

Friday Question 4: "What other liturgies (including "cultural") did you notice participating in this week? How did/are those practices forming you?" One of the major parts of the teaching (and theory behind it) is that liturgy is formative, including "cultural liturgies." One skill I wanted people to develop is an ability to "exegete" culture for formative liturgy. This question reminded people to work on this skill and sought to discern whether people were beginning to practice cultural exegesis.

The Procedure

The first step, after my initial research and planning of the classes (see Chapter 2) was to do research on survey design. I read several books on research methods including

²²⁰ Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney, *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998).

Studying Congregations: A New Handbook, *How to Conduct Surveys: A Step-by-Step Guide*, *Research in Ministry, A Primer for the Doctor of Ministry Program*, and *Designing and Conducting Survey Research: A Comprehensive Guide*. These books provided valuable guidance in designing the surveys, writing questions, pilot testing, and data analysis.

The next step was to design the survey tools. After writing what I thought were good and helpful questions, I had colleagues read them and make suggestions. When I thought I had a good tool, I conducted a pilot study.

The pilot test was administered to three individuals who were not part of the study to identify changes needed. I watched as they filled out the questionnaire and made notes regarding comments and questions. I also timed how long it would take them to complete it. I heard four questions for clarification: (1) "what is the opening prayer?" (2) "what is the creed?" (3) "what are the prayers of the people?" and (4) "what do you mean by our mission in the world." These requests for clarification prompted me to expand some descriptions in the questionnaire. There was some confusion regarding question 2 and 3, so I expanded the instructions, simplified the choices, and provided expanded explanations for possibly unclear descriptions of service components. I conducted a second pilot to three more individuals with the modifications and no one asked for clarification. All the participants in both pilots finished within ten minutes. This gave me a good indication that the tool would be understandable and useful to my purposes.

Then I recruited participants. In the context of local church ministry this meant normal Sunday morning announcements, regular bulletin announcements and a special bulletin insert, Facebook announcements (including paying a few dollars to promote the post so that everyone would see the announcement), announcements in the Sunday School class, announcements during our Wednesday night gatherings, an all church email, and through personal invitation to some more fringe people who I thought would benefit especially from the class. Depending on the nature of the relationship with specific people, the personal invitations were through phone calls, or text messages, or Facebook messages.

Finally the classes began. On the first day I distributed an informed consent form and administered the survey (hard copy for people to fill out with pen or pencil). I gave minimal verbal instructions on the survey as it seemed easy enough to follow based on the pilot. I also asked each person to provide me with their email address (and whether an online survey would work for them) so that I could easily send to them the twice-a-week surveys. I was prepared to make arrangements for hard copies to anyone who could not

use email or a computer, but everyone indicated that they could. So I utilized the online

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tool SurveyMonkey for the twice-a-week surveys.

Once all the informed consent forms and pre-class surveys were collected, I began to teach the classes and send out the twice-a-week surveys on Mondays and Fridays. I decided to video record all of the classes so that people could watch them to "make up" any sessions they may have had to miss. Ideally, I wanted people to go to the class and follow immediately with worship. However, I knew that several had work conflicts or were going to be out of town for one of the weeks, so recording them seemed like a good

option. Also, I will be able to point people to these videos at a later date.

²²⁴ <https://www.surveymonkey.com>

For a detailed written account of the content of weeks two through seven, see the section titled "Education in Liturgy at Scottsdale First Church of the Nazarene" in Chapter 2. The content of week one was a summary of the theological work in Chapter 2 regarding human formation in general and liturgy as formation specifically. Because they were recorded, they can be viewed as presented here:

<https://vimeo.com/album/3678817>.

The classes were designed to occur in conjunction with worship. The theoretical foundation of the project states that humans are not only mental and that Christian formation and education should be aimed at the whole person, not only the mind. The classes were fairly basic content-oriented classes that utilized discussion, drawing on a whiteboard, video, and lecture. As a way to ensure that they were more than mere mental exercises, they took place just prior to the actual worship gathering, where we would be immersed in

the concepts discussed. In other words, action and reflection were intentionally paired. This action-reflection model was a key component of the teaching.

Each week began with prayer followed by an opening question, something like, "any feedback from last week, any further reflection, or any cultural liturgies you noticed throughout the week?" This opening question allowed us to continually visit the concept of liturgy as formative, continue the discussion about the ubiquity of cultural liturgies (and explore further examples), and clarify and reflect upon last week's teaching. Once we had the opening discussion, we moved into the topic at hand.

Throughout the process I kept track of conversations I had with people about the classes and comments they had. Some of these were sent via email and some were face-to-face conversations.

On the last day of class, I ended about twenty minutes early and handed out the post-class survey. These were collected and all the data was analyzed. I utilized the program Numbers and created a method of inputting the data and creating tables. These reports are shown in detail in Chapter 4 as are summaries of conversations and observations from the twice-a-week survey tools.

Chapter 3 Summary and Conclusion

The major part of the study was fairly straightforward: (1) pre-class survey, (2) conduct classes, (3) post-class survey. This simple procedure enabled me to evaluate whether there were any changes between the pre- and post-class surveys.

The questions were designed to evaluate participants' attitudes and theological opinions regarding several aspects of our worship gathering. These included their general feeling of engagement, what parts of the service they like most and feel are most important, some aspects of Eucharist theology, and how connected mission and devotion are to the Sunday gathering.

Twice-a-week surveys were also utilized to gather more subjective data and to function as a

prompt to reflect upon what they were experiencing. These questions were designed to help them practice cultural exegesis, remind them that their posture entering worship is important (the question about their own "presence" in the service), and to help them begin to look for ways mission and devotion are connected to Sunday. These twice-a-week surveys really functioned to help tether their lives throughout the week back to our Sunday gatherings.

CHAPTER 4 -OUTCOMES: CHARTING THE RESULTS OF EDUCATION IN LITURGY AT SCOTTSDALE FIRST

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to report the results of the surveys. Each question will receive attention. First the pre- and post-class survey results are shown and analyzed. There is a separate section on the Monday and Friday surveys and one section on conversations, emails, and other qualitative responses from the participants. Some of these conversations and comments will be mentioned earlier, because they corroborate the findings of the quantitative data.

Before and After — the Pre- and Post-Class Survey

Note that because this is not a purely "scientific" study, I do not pretend that any of these results prove the effectiveness of this exercise in education in liturgy. However, the results do demonstrate the actual answers participants gave, and so changes in these answers are important. The results show at least slight change in each question.

A total of twenty-six surveys were used in this data analysis. These twenty-six people completed both pre and post surveys and attend at least five of the seven classes.

Question 1 - General Feelings

The after results showed a general increase in the participants feeling of engagement. This table shows the number of people who chose each number on the scale before, after, and the difference.

The data shows a move toward participants feeling that our worship gatherings were more engaging and meaningful after they went through the process of education in liturgy. No one, after the classes, indicated a negative feeling (choosing 1 or 2) about our worship gathering while one person did on the pre-survey. Before the seven-week series of classes, 20 people chose 4 or 5, indicating that they felt our worship services were "meaningful/engaging" while afterwards that number jumped to 25, an increase of 9. Another way to see this shift is by comparing the median scores from each survey: the pre-class median score was 4 and post-class was 5. Again, this demonstrates the shift toward a more meaningful experience after education in liturgy.

These results match what I had hoped for. I had anticipated that once people learned about why we do what we do in worship, the worship gathering would become a richer experience.

Furthermore, this result - and increase in meaning and engagement - is corroborated by comments I received from some of the participants. In a written comment, one person wrote that the classes "Completely changed my perspective of the entire service. Loved it, Loved it, Loved it!!!!!" Another said in conversation, "I want to

thank you for the Sunday School classes [on why we do what we do in worship]. It has made a huge difference for me, so I imagine it has for others." And another wrote, "I feel that I learned a lot and all the aspects of the service have become much more meaningful to me." And another in conversation said, "I have become more aware of what God has for me in the worship service. I grew up in a music and

preaching kind-of church. But now I see God in so much more, understanding why we do all the things we do in worship." These comments suggest that people genuinely feel more engaged and find more meaning in our worship service after participating in the education in liturgy classes.

Question 2 - Favorite Parts of the Service For scoring these, I weighted the answers so that choice 1 received a weight of 10, choice 2 a weighted score of 9, and so on. So in what follows, 10 is the maximum score and 1 is the lowest. Here are the median averages before and after (and change between the two), based on the weighted scores shown in Table 2. **Table 2. Question 2 - Favorite part, weighted**

| Description | Median weighted rank Before | Median weighted rank after | Change |
|-------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------|
| Opening | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Music | 7 | 6 | -1 |
| Readings | 6 | 6 | 0 |
| Preaching | 9 | 8 | -1 |
| Creed | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Prayers | 6 | 7 | +1 |
| Peace | 4 | 4 | 0 |
| Offering | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Eucharist | 9 | 10 | +1 |
| Benediction | 4 | 6 | +2 |

The music and preaching categories each lost one average position and prayers, Eucharist, each gained one, and and the benediction gained 2.

While these trends are what I had expected and hoped to see, the changes are so minimal that no conclusions can be safely drawn. Furthermore, the range of answers varied considerably in each category. The smallest variation in any categories was seven and most were nine; this means that some people chose 1 and some chose 10 on the same category, in almost every category. This part of the survey did not provide results from which conclusions can be drawn.

Question 3 - Most Important Parts of the Service For scoring this question, I weighted the

answers so that choice 1 received a weight of 10, choice 2 a weighted score of 9, and so on. So in what follows, 10 is the maximum score and 1 is the lowest. The median averages before and after (and change between the two), based on the weighted scores are shown in Table 3. **Table 3. Question 3 - Most important parts, weighted**

| Description | Median rank Before | Median rank after | Change |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------|
| Opening | 4 | 3 | -1 |
| Music | 5 | 3 | -2 |
| Readings | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| Preaching | 8 | 6 | -2 |
| Creed | 4 | 6 | +2 |
| Prayers | 7 | 7 | 0 |

| | | | |
|-------------|---|----|----|
| Offering | 4 | 3 | -1 |
| Eucharist | 9 | 10 | +1 |
| Benediction | 2 | 6 | +4 |

Again, some of this data matches what I wanted to see: a two point drop in music and preaching and gains in the creed, Eucharist, and benediction. However, again, the range of answers was huge — often one category would receive at least one '1' and at least one '10.' Because of this range, I am hesitant, once again, to conclude that significant change occurred, even though the trends to show some movement.

Question 4 - Regarding the Eucharist

Question 4 makes use of a Likert scale regarding four statements about the Eucharist.

4a— Memorial Understanding

The statement in 4a describes a memorial understanding of the Eucharist. I expected that more people would agree with this statement on the pre-class survey and more would disagree with it on the post-class survey. The results confirm this hypothesis.

In Table 4 the data has been reduced to three categories: agree, neutral, and disagree. This collapse of data helps to show the categorical acceptance or rejection of the memorialist position:

It is clear from this chart that after the seven-week series of education in liturgy classes, far more people rejected the memorialist position.

4b — Real Presence

The question in 4b describes a real presence position. I expected people to move toward agreeing with the statement about real presence more on the post-class survey. The results confirmed my hypothesis.

Again, in Table 5 the results are collapsed into simple agree, neutral, disagree categories. This helps to clarify whether participants agreed with a real position or not (or if they were uncertain). As the data in this table demonstrates, after the classes all of the respondents agreed with a statement describing the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist:

The shift of eight people from uncertain about or disagreeing with the statement on real presence to all of the participants agreeing with it shows a positive result from the

classes. The education in liturgy seems to have effected how these people understand Christ's presence in our midst. This is exactly what I had hoped would happen.

4c — Self Sacrifice

The statement in 4c, "The Eucharist is a sacrifice of those who participate (the people in the congregation)" was important because I hoped that people would understand themselves as incorporated into the Eucharist. This is part of being made holy. I expected people to move toward agreeing with this

statement more on the post-class survey. The results are not as strong as I expected.

Once more, the data in this table is collapsed into three categories: agree, neutral, and disagree.

Table 6 displays the results from the surveys: **Table 6. Sacrifice of self**

| Description | Before | After | Change |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Agree | 13 | 14 | + 1 |
| Neutral | 9 | 10 | +1 |
| Disagree | 4 | 2 | -2 |

There is not enough change here to be significant. The full data (prior to collapse) shows that four more "strongly agree" with this statement in the after survey, but the increase in the "agree" category in general only increased by one. I find this result dissappointing, as I felt that this was an important concept for understanding the role the Eucharist plays in holiness. Perhaps this demonstrates that I did not teach this concept well enough. Or, perhaps, it indicates that this is a difficult concept to grasp and further instruction is needed.

4d — Sacrifice of Christ

I expected people to move toward agreeing with this statement more on the post-class survey.

Once more, the data is collapsed into three categories: agree, neutral, and disagree. This table displays the results from the surveys: **Table 7. Sacrifice of Christ**

| Description | Before | After | Change |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Agree | 23 | 24 | +1 |
| Neutral | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Disagree | 2 | 1 | -1 |

The results from this questions are unremarkable. Most participants already agreed with the statement and the classes only convinced one of the three neutral or disagrees to change their position.

Because Christian formation happens in worship and education in liturgy should increase this formative power of worship, I expected people to move toward more agreement with this statement on the post-class survey. The data shows a slight increase.

In this table all five categories are left in place because the change in degree seems to be important in these changes. One person, on the pre-class survey, chose 1, not formed at all. On the post-class survey, none of the negative choices were indicated (1 or 2). Furthermore, option 5, "yes, definitely I feel formed by the worship gathering," received an increase of 4, while the uncertain option decreased by 2. The data is shown in Table 8.

This shift indicates that after the education in liturgy people felt that God was forming them more than they did before.

Question 6 - Mission I expected more people to see a strong connection between weekly worship and mission once the classes were completed. The data indicates that this expectation was correct.

Again, the data is left showing all five choices because the degree of connection matters. Choice 5, indicating the strongest connection between worship and mission, increased by 6. The data is shown in

Table 9. **Table 9. Worship's connection to mission**

| Description | Before | After | Change |
|----------------------|--------|-------|--------|
| 1 Fully Disconnected | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| 3 | 9 | 2 | -7 |
| 4 | 15 | 16 | +1 |
| 5 Fully Connected | 1 | 7 | +6 |

This data indicates that once people went through the seven-week series of classes on why we do what we

do in worship, they were able to perceive a stronger connection between worship and mission.

One man's conversation with me demonstrated that he began to see connections between worship and his weekly missional (and related devotional) life. He works in the food service department in a hospital. He told me that he has begun praying over and blessing all the food in the staging area before it is prepared or sent out to people that day, thanking God for it and asking that God would use this food to reveal God's self to those who will eat it. I asked him why he had begun this prayer practice. He responded with two words: "The Eucharist." In the rest of our conversation it became clear that he saw his work at the hospital as an extension of our work on Sunday mornings. He felt himself called to be a priest of God, receiving good things from God (the food), giving thanks for it, and offering it back to God in praise and thanksgiving. This is the pattern of the Eucharist, and he began to incorporate it into his daily work life.

Another woman, a teacher, said that as she began to dismiss her class at the end of the day she said, "and now..." and was going to say something about homework or give them a reminder but instead almost began to say, "may the Lord bless you and keep you...." The ritual action of benediction had become so engrained in her, that she began to speak these words out of habit. She also said that she realized that she does want to send them off with a blessing, even if she does not say the words out loud, she will say

²²⁵ And devotion — they are hard to separate sometimes
them to God, over those children. This is another example of the way mission has

worked itself into the lives of the people in the congregation. Her life as a schoolteacher has taken on the priestly function of blessing.

Question 7 - Devotion

I expected more people to see a strong connection between weekly worship and their devotional lives once the classes were completed. The data indicates that this expectation was correct.

Again, the data is left showing all five choices because the degree of connection matters in this continuum. Choice 5, indicating the strongest connection between worship and devotion, increased by 4.

See the data in Table 10: **Table 10. Connection of Worship to Devotional Life**

| Description | Before | After | Change |
|----------------------|--------|-------|--------|
| 1 Fully Disconnected | 1 | 0 | -1 |
| 2 | 2 | 1 | -1 |
| 3 | 6 | 4 | -2 |
| 4 | 14 | 14 | 0 |
| 5 Fully connected | 3 | 7 | +4 |

This data indicates that once people went through the seven-week series of classes on why we do what we do in worship, they were able to perceive a stronger connection between worship and devotion. This change was not quite as strong as it was in the question about mission, but the classes did not focus as much on this topic as it did on mission. Furthermore, the two reports mentioned in the last section (on mission) apply here, too, for they each had to do with prayer.

Questions 8 and 9 - Demographics

One of the questions was self-reporting of attendance. One of my hoped-for outcomes from the education in liturgy classes was increased attendance amongst the participants. To truly measure this over time I would need to conduct follow-up research to see whether church attendance truly increased after the classes. The data I collected on these surveys, because it is self-reported, could easily fall victim to the

social desirability bias, resulting in overstating "good" behavior (attending church). The data is given in Table 11.

These results indicate a slight bump toward greater attendance. This could be due to inconsistencies in individual's memory, social desirability bias, or a real change in behavior. I can report that one individual who seldom attended prior to the classes did continue to come to church even after the series of classes had ended. So, though it is impossible to be sure, indications are that church attendance has been increased in at least one of the participants.

The ages of these participants varied from in their eighties to one thirteen-year-old boy. The decades represented: one in their eighties, three in their seventies, four in their sixties, three in their fifties, two in their forties, five in their thirties, three in their twenties, and five in their teens - ranging from nineteen to thirteen. The average age (mean) was forty-four; the mean age was thirty-nine and one half. Of the twenty-six participants used in these before and after surveys, there were twelve males and fourteen females.

The final demographic bit of information was "How long have you attended Scottsdale First." The most common answer was three years (this was also the median). However, answers ranged from fifty-seven to only a few months.

Question 10 - Description of Scottsdale First The pre- and post-class surveys show generally the same kinds of responses - all positive descriptions of our community. Upon analyzing the text for word use frequency, a few important changes can be seen.

The word "different" occurred 5 times in the pre-class surveys (this was the most

commonly used word). On the post-class surveys, however, the word different only occurred 2 times.

The word "meaningful" occurred 3 times in the pre-class surveys. However, on the post-class surveys, 5 people used the word "meaningful." In fact, "meaningful" was the most commonly used word in the post-class surveys.

While she did not use the word, "meaningful," one of the teens wrote, "Different. Not what you'd expect. Not stereotypical church. Traditional (ish) but really cool:-)" This response, combining some sort of "traditional yet meaningful," was particularly common in the post-class surveys. Another man wrote on his post-class survey, "It

comes off a bit traditional, but it has transformed me more than any other church I have been to."

Another commonly used word or concept was "nonjudgmental." Four people used "nonjudgmental" before and three used it after. One person, on the post-class survey, wrote, "Accepting of where you are, focusing on God's love and impacting the world in a good positive way. Nonjudgmental."

The responses to question 10 were all positive and tended to mention being "meaningful" or "transformative" more on the post-class surveys, though the idea of being meaningful was present on the pre-class surveys, too. It seems that people had better ways to describe our gathering after the classes had ended choosing more descriptive words than simply, "different."

Monday and Friday Surveys

The Monday and Friday check-in surveys were designed to do two things. First, they functioned as reflective moments for people. In this way they functioned like the spiritual discipline of journaling. But they also provided me with data to analyze, mostly of a qualitative nature. Only one question (Monday

question 4) was asked using a Likert-type scale, so it can be analyzed using a table and a chart. The response rate on these was poor and declined rapidly after the first week, so I have been cautious in interpreting this data. Nevertheless, some general findings from the Monday and Friday surveys seem relevant and helpful.

Monday Question 1 The first question was simply to disqualify anyone if they answered questions about that week's worship gathering without having actually been a part of the gathering. No one did this, so no answers were disqualified.

Monday Question 2

Monday Question 2: "Tell me about this week's service. What stood out to you? What seemed most meaningful or significant?" This question sought to discern what the participant was drawn to and whether there seemed to be any trends over time as the classes progressed. I also wanted to know whether talking about certain parts of the service in the class would make that part of the service come alive for people.

There did seem to be a connection between what was discussed in the class that morning with what people noticed in the service. For example, the week we talked about time, several mentioned time and the way time played into the service. The week we discussed the opening parts of the service, several people mentioned noticing the collect for purity or the gathering portion of the service specifically. One person's response to this question sums up what seems to be going on (written after week 3's class, which was about the opening parts of the service including the collect for purity):

This week our prayers really stood out. I usually feel like we're just reciting from memory versus from the heart. I'm rarely connecting with the words I'm saying and I was able to connect better

this week with the background from Sunday school. With the understanding that what we're saying is more a form of prayer I was able to better connect with the true intent of what we're doing and saying, and why it's being done and said.

Another person the same week wrote, "After looking more deeply at the purposes and meanings behind the liturgies (call and response portions²²⁶), I found them to be more significant and meaningful." Another noteworthy response from Monday question 2 relates an "ah ha" moment: "For the first time ever I actually felt as if I was praying as a

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'church' and not just an individual. Very moving and very enlightening." These responses suggest that the classes have, at least, had some positive short-term effect in ways that I intended.

Monday Question 3

Monday Question 3: "In what ways did you recognize the presence of God on Sunday?" This question sought to discern where (or whether) people sensed God's presence in the service. I know that some participants were resistant to the idea of God's presence in the sacraments, so I was curious whether people would recognize God's graceful presence there or in any other parts of the service. There are no right or wrong answers, but I wanted to know how people felt God in our worship and whether there were any trends over time.

The only trend over time that I noticed was that as the classes moved on, more people explicitly mentioned how attending the classes somehow has helped them sense God's presence. This is exactly what I had hoped would happen.

²²⁶ Such as the call to worship, the collect for purity, the response after reading scripture

²²⁷ During the class that week we had talked about how when we do these things we are joining a large choir of many churches saying, singing, reading, and praying the same things.

Below I have listed each week with a number of comments from that week. In general, people seemed to recognize the presence of God in a number of ways. Here are some comments from each week, it

is not exhaustive, but it is representative:

Week one:

I recognized God's presence in the other worshipers, in prayer, in songs, confession and forgiveness, in the bread and the wine, in the scripture readings and preaching.

I felt God's presence during the worship singing. Many times I find myself tearing up when I sing in church. I also feel closer to God during the prayer and reflection. I like to sit silently and wait on Him.

I love prayer time ... The quiet beginning and then the sharing time when we are all able to bring to God our requests.

Through the kids and through Eucharist.

Week 2 occurred on All Saints' Day and we included a candle lighting ritual for those who have died. We also baptized two people that day, a baby and a teen. Many people mentioned both the baptism and the All Saints' candle ritual.

As I was watching people light candles and then lighting my own candle, I pictured my parents and brother in the presence of God. Somehow that made me feel a little closer to Him as well.

During baptism I saw how God moves in families and generations.

I appreciated the simple symbolism of water during baptism, bread and wine during Eucharist.

Children attended service this Sunday, so my children being in worship. And noticing they were actually listening to Pastor and reciting and replying when

appropriate. Very proud moments.

Week 3. Some people this week wrote comments that suggest they have begun to see God's presence in the ritual and repetition of what we do. Other comments were typical of other weeks (the message, Eucharist, prayer time, etc.).

²²⁸ This is one of the reasons why we include children in the whole service from time to time and in the Eucharist, the service of the Table, every week. We want them to learn the patterns, words, and ritual of

Christian worship. I am glad to hear this comment from a parent.

I noticed how much the specific liturgies mean so much to the congregation. Call and response has been difficult for me, but I noticed much more this week how much it means to the congregation of Scottsdale First.

In the routine, in everyone joining as one.

Mainly through the service of the table but somewhat in reading scripture, the message and prayer.

Week 4. One person repeated their answer for question 4 (meaningful parts),

For the first time ever I actually felt as if I was praying as a 'church' and not just an individual. Very moving and very enlightening." And added, "Amazing!"

Another person wrote that they were beginning to find God's presence in more

places:

My expectations of what the presence looks like or feels like are not what they use to be and I am learning to experience [God's presence] in a new way.

And one person commented that they are still open, but not sensing God's presence:

Still waiting for a more complete feeling. Week 5:

When praying with Pastor Corey after receiving the Eucharist. Again the corporate aspect of praying together, really sharing our most intimate parts knowing that it is a safe place with no condemnation.

Somehow I felt in subtle ways God's presence in the communal gathering of worshipers and knowing I was participating in something much bigger than myself.

After the class that morning, the Eucharist was more meaningful than usual in sensing God's presence.

When you were telling the story of the "stranger" on the Emmaus Road, it was

²³⁰ During the time when we serve the Eucharist, we have a pastor, normally Pastor Corey, standing to the side with oil to anoint and pray for any who so desire. That is what "praying with Pastor Corey" meant in this comment.

²³⁰ This comment actually had to do with some of what was said during the classes

like Jesus Himself was the one telling the story. It was very powerful! One comment this week suggests that the classes have begun to "work" or have their intended outcome:

The whole service has taken on a deeper feeling of connection to God. Week 6:

After the discussion about the parts of the Eucharist, that part of the service was more meaningful.

As I was preparing for the Eucharist, I tried to imagine myself actually being at the Lords Supper with all of the disciples. I felt like I was in a different world and

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it was extremely comforting and humbling.

I thought about God breathing us in, feeding us, and sending us out. I really like that breathing analogy.

Watching everyone receive the Eucharist, noticing how each person is affected differently by it.

And, Week 7. We had another baptism this week (a baby) and this seemed to

dominate the comments:

In the Baptismal Font (not sure if that is what you call it). Relating the purification of the water to the cleansing, anointing power of Jesus.

In the love of the parents for their baby as they presented her to the Lord in baptism. In the Lord's Supper and the fellowship of those gathered to worship.

The whole service but especially the baptism.

He was definitely there during the baptism. It was one of the most moving experiences of my church life and the most present God has ever been in my life.

²³¹ This comment is directly related to the topic of the Service of the Table that we had discussed in class in weeks 5 and 6.

Monday Question 4 Monday Question 4: "How present were you at communal worship on Sunday? *{Present* here means engaged, paying attention, sensing the spirit working,

noticing God giving you grace through the various components of the service, etc. *Not present* means you simply showed up but you were bored or distracted or in some other way not

engaged. This is about what you bring to the service, not what the service does to or for you.)" One of my hopes in this study was that those who participated in the classes would become more present in worship as the classes went on. The survey results seem to confirm that hope.

These results are reported based on the mean score each week. In week one, the mean score was 3.71. After the seven weeks of class, the mean score rose to 4.38, which represents a 0.67 rise. Because of the low response rate and the fully anonymous nature of these online surveys, these findings cannot be conclusive. However, the trend was generally upwards as the classes went on, indicating that as people learned more about why we do what we do, they tended to enter worship with a more open posture.

Though the increase is only slight, the upward trend is clearly seen and represents an encouraging finding to the goals of the study.

Monday Question 5 Monday Question 5: "What facilitated or hindered your level of presence on Sunday?" This question was partly reflective for the person, but also sought to reveal the participant's perception of what was going on internally to help or hinder their level of presence. Partly this was a pastoral question, helping me identify things we do that might

help or hinder. But I also wanted to know whether the classes were having any effect on them.

The most reoccurring themes, as far as what things distracted people, were children and the normal business of life. Here are some representative examples: My inability to completely disconnect from daily life and focus. Unruly child during the Eucharist. My grandchild.

Nothing in the service hindered my presence. It was hindered by busyness.

Outside influences hinder my focus. Worries about work etc.

My children's presence in service can also be very stressful for me.

Distractions such as my phone, and my mind wandering to the things I knew needed to get done.

I was tired.

Again, the two most common points of distraction that people reported had to do with normal life encroaching into their minds or some of the children.

On the other hand, a number of people mentioned things that helped to facilitate their presence on Sunday. One noteworthy trend was how many people mentioned how much the classes helped them be more present. Again, this was one major goal: to help people enter worship with a more open posture, more present, more available to God so that God might form us into God's likeness. Here are some responses:

Being familiar with the ritual facilitated my active participation.

The class discussion about God breathing us in, changing us, then exhaling us to go and be like Him encouraged me to see how God wanted to change me.

Looking at things differently and trying to appreciate more the liturgy.

This class has REALLY gotten me present.

The whole worship service is taking on a more relevant and meaningful purpose.

The class that morning helped me feel more present.

A greater understanding of what is taking place. Overall, it seems that people reported that the

classes helped increase their level of presence in worship.

Friday Question 1

The first question was simply to disqualify anyone if they answered questions about that week's worship gathering without having actually been a part of the gathering. No one did this, so no answers were disqualified.

Friday Question 2

Friday Question 2: "In what ways did our Sunday morning worship move you into mission throughout the week?" As the classes went on, I wanted to see whether the participants began to connect mission with being sent from the service.

As noted in the before/after survey results, some people - in conversations with me - reported an increased awareness of the connection between worship and mission. This awareness became clearer toward the end of the classes; this makes sense because talk of the "sending" into mission was the topic of the last of the classes. Here are some of the comments people made throughout the weeks:

I think the service helped give me courage to act and speak up for my faith and others throughout the week.

After the class on the Eucharist I wanted to take my prayer time one step further than my usual routine. Since I am constantly surrounded by food and am aware of who is receiving it, I decided that before each meal service and patient tray line, I have decided to pray over the food before it leaves the kitchen asking God to Bless it and use it to comfort and nourish those partaking.

Sunday morning worship helped me to be more forgiving and compassionate during the week.

I've been thinking about the gifts we bring to the Table. And also the gifts I bring to God during the week that can be used by those I come in contact with.

I was thinking how I could spend less and give more. The response rate to the Friday surveys was even lower than the Monday surveys and people often skipped this question. The connection between mission and worship seemed difficult to grasp. However, the topic did not come up in a direct way until the last few weeks of class, so this low response rate was expected.

Friday Question 3

Friday Question 3: "In what ways did our Sunday morning worship form you throughout the week? How did your personal spiritual disciplines seem connected or disconnected to Sunday worship?" As the classes went on, I wanted to see whether the participants began to connect our devotional lives and formation with the service.

The responses to this question ranged from some people reporting being fully disconnected to others answering in creative ways. In week 1, for example, this range of responses were given:

I don't feel like my week connected to Sunday morning or worship.

I've started reading the lectionary passages each week in preparation for Sunday. It has helped me to better connect with the service.

²³² This comment came once Advent had begun.

Some, even from the beginning, find that their devotional life flows from the Sunday gathering. Others do not. Perhaps they have no other devotional life or perhaps the connection was hard to see at first.

On the last survey, after week six, no one responded with a "fully disconnected" kind of response. Instead, these were some of the answers written on Friday week six:

The Sunday school discussions have helped me better connect the services to spiritual disciplines.

Remembered to constantly pray and asking God to "hear our prayers"

I have been trying to concentrate more on Advent instead of Christmas.

It gave me a sense of awareness of God working around me and helped me live more fully into that awareness.

This suggests that as the education in liturgy progressed, people were more able to see a connection between worship and their devotional lives. On the other hand, it could simply be that those who chose to answer the survey were the ones more attuned to God and devotional lives to begin with.

There were other interesting responses given to this question as the weeks went on. Here are some more:

I experienced a brief time this week where I wrestled with thoughts that maybe the Christian life is futile and with doubts about Jesus coming back. I think the Sunday morning worship helped get past them.

I walked a Labyrinth and prayed as I walked. I stepped out of the distractions to listen to God.

With being aware of my words and attitude, I finding I am more willing see people and situations with a different thought process. I asking why do I say certain things and why do I do certain things. I am questioning how can I do a better routine that benefits my relationship with God.

My personal spiritual disciplines are very connected through the week.

The going out in peace in the benediction has made me stop and think about my attitude in situations this week. Instead of opening my mouth to these people I've opened my mouth to God.

My prayers are much more intentional.

Being Thanksgiving week, the words of the Doxology were brought to mind all week. Not only being thankful but really praising God for everything.

Reflecting on the sacrifice Jesus made for all of us humbled me and made me think about how I can try to be more like Christ daily.

Again, some people see and cultivate the connection between Sunday worship and their weekly devotional

lives. Others had a hard time connecting the two.

Friday Question 4

"What other liturgies (including "cultural") did you notice participating in this week? How did/are those practices forming you?" One of the major parts of the teaching (and theory behind it) is that liturgy is formative, including "cultural liturgies." One skill I wanted people to develop is an ability to "exegete" culture for formative liturgy. This question reminded people to work on this skill and sought to discern whether people were beginning to practice cultural exegesis.

The answers that people gave indicate that they generally understood this concept and were able to exegete liturgies in their lives, at least at some level. Here are some of the comments given to this question that had to do with cultural liturgies:

Sports seasons, Halloween festivities.

One thing that came to me was the idea of the American Dream and how success is based so much off money. Everyday millions of Americans pile into their cars to sit in traffic to get to work and sit at a computer for 8 hours. While I go with the motions of the typical working American, I don't believe that success is based off how much money I make.

I was following the weekly ads, not only groceries but other stores ...how they were advertising Thanksgiving and Christmas. I started thinking of how we can celebrate without conforming so much to what the world has to offer.

Culturally speaking, I notice my job in retail is the front runner for liturgies.

I looked at all the commercials on TV in a different manner, I was looking for the cultural liturgies and became more aware

I was more aware of cultural liturgies, less participation in them.

I felt stuck in the liturgy that makes going to work a higher priority than spending time with family.

The foods we eat at Thanksgiving. Everybody in the US serves almost the same meal on the same day.

Cultural liturgies included black Friday, Thanksgiving. The discussion of liturgies has made me more aware of how the surrounding culture influences my activities and thoughts.

The start of the "Holiday" season is really getting going. There is a countdown to the 25 days of Christmas, so a countdown to a countdown. I find it frustrating how commercialized the holidays are.

Again, this shows that people were able to make some sort of observations about cultural liturgies around them.

Some answered this question in terms of the way they practice liturgies or ways that thinking in terms of liturgy has changed something in their lives. Here are some responses in this vein:

Everyday I would go into the chapel at work and I found myself praying for every entry that was written in the visitors book. I would lay my hands on the book and pray for all of those people who wrote something in the book, whether it be asking for help or just praising God for his influence in their lives and situations.

My rhythm (liturgy) has been distracted and this has been a help to reconnected to my practices. I have added a night ritual. Which messes with already established habits. This is just what I needed. (I keep telling myself)

I created an Advent wall hanging for our Advent tea. I used a star as the symbol and blue and gold instead of red and green. I feel calmer focusing more on Advent instead of the Christmas our culture celebrates.

In my personal home life. I am putting into practice habits that allow me to be more present with my family... aka put down or off the electronics.

These answers have some relationship to Question 3 (the connection between worship and devotional lives) in that these devotional practices have been affected by the liturgies of the church. Again, this shows that these people were able to perceive various liturgies in their lives.

A Final Question and Other Conversations

I asked the participants one final question electronically: "Please share with me your thoughts about how you feel these classes influenced your attitude toward our worship services (or any other thoughts in general)." Those who chose to respond seemed

to have felt they received value from the education in liturgy. Here are all of the

responses I received:

The class reminded me of the significance and purpose of elements of the service. It confirmed that our actions are purposeful and part of a long tradition with great meaning.

Completely changed my perspective of the entire service. Loved it, Loved it, Loved it!!!!

I enjoyed them immensely and hope there are more to come! I feel that I learned a lot and all the aspects of the service have become much more meaningful to me.

I feel like I had learned a lot about the liturgies we use in worship prior to the class so it did not change drastically. I think it did make me more aware of the idea that liturgies can form us and to recognize the use of liturgies in culture and in use by other churches and how they might affect worshipers either positively or negatively. I am more aware of how I want to be formed by liturgy and that I can and should make choices about the liturgies I participate in both in the church and in culture.

These classes had a major impact on my understanding of the worship service as a whole. It is always good to be reminded and reaffirm one's faith and understanding.

To begin I loved every one of these lessons! Instead of just reading or reciting prayers and the other liturgies I now say them from my heart with meaning. You make everything easy to understand and easy to relate to. Thank you for all of your hard work!

This helped me understand a lot of the Why behind what we do. I've never had an education in the church history and have a limited understanding of our religion and how we differ from others. On another level this helped me connect better with service. What I mean by that is I now have an idea of what is intended to happen during service and then what we are to do after. It was more of an eye-opening experience that broadened the horizon of Sunday worship to carry over into the rest of my daily life.

The class has been very good. It was informative, interesting, and well worth our time. I learned a lot. Thank you for doing it.

These classes helped increase my understanding of the changes you have instituted in the worship services. They have helped make it more meaningful. I believe that it would be beneficial to have you lead such classes on this topic and other related topics periodically throughout the year. I think that it increase the sense of community in addition to the other benefits.

It is difficult to express how meaningful these classes were to me. The worship service at Scottsdale Nazarene is basically one I grew up with and experienced in most of the churches I have attended as an adult. Many of the parts were explained when I went through the confirmation classes in the Episcopal church when I was 12. But since that time, even though I believe I have a

deep and abiding faith in God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, I basically followed the worship service as a ritual. Since attending these classes, I have a better understanding of the whole worship service: why it is set the way it is, what each part is really for and how it is designed to help us in our worship, and that all aspects of the service are important. I'm so glad that you conducted these classes and that I attended. Hearing what others had to say and, also how they related to the topics each week, gave me another perspective. Everything learned will certainly stay with me for the rest of my life. Thank you!

These comments are encouraging to me as the instructor on a number of levels. People reported gaining understanding, that the liturgy meant much more after the classes, and that they became more aware of the formative power of liturgies, inside and outside of the church.

Summary

The true end goal of this project is Christian formation — the desire to see the congregation become more like Christ. I had hoped to help my congregation better respond to the formative power that God could unleash through Christian worship. I had hoped to help people enter worship ready for God to move through the means of grace offered therein. I had hoped that why we do what we do would become clearer to people who attend Scottsdale First. I had hoped that God would form us into the image of

Christ through our worship. The results from the surveys seem to suggest that these goals have begun to take place. Again, I do not pretend that these positive results "prove" that people have experienced transformation into Christlikeness because of these classes. However, from what can be seen, measured, or implied from the data does support the idea that education in liturgy facilitates Christian formation.

One way to summarize the data is to say that every one of the quantitative data points moved in a direction I had hoped (some only slightly, others substantially) and all of the qualitative data indicated that the classes were having their desired effect. Not one person stated or indicated that the classes were not helpful. Rather, many of the comments reflecting back upon the education in liturgy classes indicated that

the participants were grateful and enthusiastic about the results in their own lives. The fact that all of the data, qualitative and quantitative, points toward my desired outcomes indicates that the project achieved its goals.

CHAPTER 5 - SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

In some ways, this project has been an expression of the wider liturgical renewal movement within a local church that had historically only known frontier-style worship. The project met nearly all of my expectations and desires. The quantitative and qualitative data gathered showed improvement in every area measured (even if only slight in one or two categories) and provided positive feedback for the project as a whole. In this final chapter, I explore possible implications of this project for Scottsdale First. I also address next steps for Scottsdale First so that the good from this project can be carried forward. I also include possible implications for other congregations. But first, a hindsight review of the process in general and what I wish I had done differently.

General Lessons Learned

Overall I was extremely pleased with how the project came together. It flowed naturally from the experiences of the congregation in conjunction with my own educational and formational journey. The need for further education in liturgy was met in a way that seemed helpful to the congregation and gives us, as a church, solid footing for taking next steps.

The biggest regret regarding the study design was Question 2 and 3 in the pre-and post-class surveys. By forcing people to rank all the aspects in order, these questions ended up being of little value. I wish that I had simply listed parts of the service and allowed people to rank each from 1 to 5 independently

of the other aspects of service.

Then each one would stand by itself and it would be easier to compare how the respondent's thoughts or attitudes changed regarding each part of the service.

Another major general insight came from Dr. Keith Schwanz. He pointed out that I seemed to be making use of action-reflection educational theory throughout the project. Continually people are asked to pair action and reflection. They had been worshiping with us, then they were asked to reflect upon what we were doing in worship, then they worshiped more, and so on. I regret that I did not intentionally engage in literature regarding this educational theory before the project began. I look forward to reading in this area in the future.

Implications and Next Steps for Scottsdale First

Based on comments received from participants in the study, our experiment with education in liturgy fulfilled my hopes and seemed to be a treasure to many who were a part of the process. Together with the other data (presented in Chapter 4), comments like, "Instead of just reading or reciting prayers and the other liturgies I now say them from my heart with meaning" and "[these classes] completely changed my perspective of the entire service. Loved it, Loved it, Loved it!!!!!!" confirm that the classes worked as far as informing people about why we do what we do and making the liturgy more meaningful for people. Even long after the classes had ended, people still mention to me how greatly they helped them engage more fully in worship.

Because of the long-term and gradual nature of formation into Christlikeness, the ultimate goal of Christian formation will be harder to determine. However, the self-reported data indicate that as people learned more, they felt God was forming them more and they entered worship with a more open posture.

This openness to God's action, our

cooperation with God's grace, should make our worship gatherings more powerfully formative for these people and for our church as a whole. Again, the classes worked as intended and as well as I could have hoped.

The most pressing implication from this project is that education in liturgy should continue and expand. We, as a church, should continue to uncover the hidden mystery that lies behind the liturgy (without explaining away the mystery). The benefits of this project should not be kept only to the participants in this one exercise, but should be made available to everyone at Scottsdale First, whether they are long-time or new attenders. Here are some thoughts about what our next steps should be so that education in liturgy becomes a regular part of who we are as a church.

Because each of the classes was video recorded, all of the lessons are available to anyone already. We could make it a point to publicize these videos in various ways: to new people, in our weekly bulletin, and on our webpage. We could also take some time to edit them down to the most essential parts, condensing them so they are more likely to be watched (right now they consist of over six hours of video). Another thought is to intentionally write and film a condensed version; these could be filmed "on location" around the church.

As I wrote the content for the classes, I had in mind already a written version to be given to people. This could easily be turned into a written resource. It could also be modified and simplified and included as part of a welcome packet given to people new to the church, to introduce them to the idea of Word and Table worship. Furthermore, these resources could become part of membership material for our local church.

A word of caution about the potential video and written material: part of what worked so well was the action-reflection model. So, simple video or written materials could short-circuit the very model that seemed to work in the project. So, further research will be done on this model and I will look for ways to continually include involvement in worship along with reflection upon worship. If anyone else was to embark upon education in liturgy in their own context, I highly recommend pairing the action of actual worship with reflection upon worship. Care must be taken to ensure the educational piece does not become a detached mental exercise.

We could also make use of written material in the church bulletin. There could be a series of twelve inserts written that would simply cycle through the year covering many aspects of the liturgy. Already we include a short section in the bulletin that talks about the season we are currently celebrating and some comments about the special clothing worn by some of the pastors. This method would involve action-reflection, as they would receive the reflection material as a part of the actual worship environment.

Right now we make a detailed order of service available with all the words spoken throughout the liturgy. This could be slightly expanded to include some explanatory notes, without becoming too lengthy or distracting.

The written material could also become a series of articles to post on our website. That would make the material available to a wider audience and available for visitors to explore before they even came to our church.

Because this education in liturgy seemed so successful, the same kind of exercise could be done for other liturgies in the church. We could explore our baptism ritual, what we do at funerals and weddings. Expanding the teaching to include all of our liturgies seems like a natural next step.

I also want to explore how to better connect our devotional and missional lives to the Sunday service of Word and Table. Within the sending portion of the service, I would like to begin commissioning people who will be charged with taking communion to those unable to attend the service that morning, those who are ill, or "shut in." Perhaps if we began to use (or write) prayers that connect our missional activity to the Eucharist, it would help make the implicit connection more explicit. For example, as we prepare the food we give away each month, we could bless it in a fashion similar to the prayer of epiclesis. And we should explore ways to introduce some version of the daily office to our congregation, so that our prayers throughout the week are similar and clearly connected to what we do on Sunday mornings.

piece depicting the Ascension of Christ that would go at the front of the sanctuary, above the altar. These strong symbols of the faith would reinforce the power of our liturgy by visually representing important parts of the story. But we could also introduce other artwork, icons, beauty, prayer gardens, labyrinths, and so on. We should find more ways to make our faith visual and physical, and provide education about why we do what we do, even regarding the artwork, decor, and landscaping at our church.²³³ Similar to a *Christus Rex* crucifix.

We could continue to expand the use of religious and symbolic artwork throughout the church. One project we already have planned is to convert a series of six windows (down the hallway toward our fellowship hall) into stained glass, each depicting a portion of the Christ Event: Jesus' birth, life and ministry, death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost. We also have preliminary drawings for a large stained glass

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Finally, there are implications for our youth and kids ministries. This could be the subject of an entire other paper, but care must be taken so that these ministries (and others!) do not function as separate

entities, but are fully integrated into the liturgical and

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sacramental life of this body of believers. The teens and kids also need to be taught why we do what we do, in ways appropriate for their age. The basic patterns and stories must be made familiar very early on, so that "big church" as we do it is not foreign to them. Already our church is doing this. Kids come into the service each week for the Service of the Table. They can be overheard saying prayers, and responding with the correct responses. But these things must continue and perhaps deepen. We want the richness of the liturgy to be available, even to the youngest amongst us.

Implications Beyond Scottsdale First

Any congregation, no matter the background or whatever liturgy is used, could benefit from intentionally examining what they do in worship. I have met pastors who talk about Sunday morning worship in the most pragmatic terms: time frame, what people like, what can "fit" in the "set" and so on. But these approaches could inadvertently lead to liturgies that simply reinforce cultural liturgies; therefore, a more theologically informed and theologically intentional approach would benefit leaders and their congregations. Leaders of congregational worship must be mindful of the power of liturgy and story, and they would do good to tell a story that points towards the Kingdom of God in Christ, being sure not to simply reinforce cultural narratives.

²³⁴ I have heard of other churches doing these things, integrating liturgical colors and church calendar celebrations in kids ministry.

Churches in the Wesleyan tradition could learn from the connections made in this project between the work of James K. A. Smith and our own Wesleyan theological

tradition. This connection states that historic Word and Table worship is formative and an important

(perhaps even indispensable) component of growth in holiness. This means that those concerned about holiness would do well to broaden their use of the means of grace to include those things found in ancient worship (call to worship, benediction, doxologies, weekly Communion that includes prayers of oblation and epiclesis, etc.). They might not need to "go as far" as we have at Scottsdale First, but many congregations could help foster holiness by beginning to order time according to the liturgical calendar and by instituting the fourfold pattern of gathering, Word, Table, and sending. The grace offered in these rhythms and especially in a weekly and intentional service of the Table seems so naturally Wesleyan that we would be amiss to neglect these means of grace.

Furthermore, the very act of teaching the theology behind our worship is a valuable exercise and other congregations could reflect upon what I have done here as a model for their own study in their own contexts. Teaching the theology of any order of worship and the components they contain could benefit those who plan and participate in worship - with care taken to ensure practice and reflection are paired. One of the comments I received was something like, "These classes have helped me so much; I can't understand why more churches don't do something like it." Indeed, these classes about why we do what we do seemed so helpful to my congregation, that the most straightforward implication for other congregations is to find ways to do education in liturgy in their own contexts.

Revisiting the Overarching Goals

In the introduction I mentioned the four overarching goals of the project summarized with the words clarity, posture, response, and formation. Objectives or hopes related to each of these were met throughout the project. Each one deserves some attention.

Clarity, the first goal, was largely informational. I had hoped that people would begin to understand the power of liturgy in general and the liturgy at Scottsdale First specifically. Additionally, I had

hoped that they would develop what could be called exegetical skills regarding liturgy, so that they could recognize and analyze liturgy whether it showed up in a cathedral or a shopping mall. Results on the surveys and personal conversations indicate that my hopes in this area were met.

Posture, the second goal, had to do with people's feelings of engagement in corporate worship, their quality of presence in the service, and whether they were open or resistant to the components of worship at Scottsdale First. As noted in chapter 4, all indications are that the level of posture improved through the seven-week series of classes.

Response to God in worship, the third goal, largely had to do with helping people grasp and appreciate the overarching story of God told in worship (being gathered, filled, and sent out in mission) and whether they responded to God throughout the week in ongoing devotion and missional activity. Once again, the indications from the survey results and conversations indicate that - at least for some of the people involved - this goal materialized in their lives. The two stories that stand out in my mind are the food service manager who has taken on a priestly role by extending Eucharistic patterns in his work, and the teacher blessing her students (even if only silently) in benediction after class.

Finally, the goal of Christian Formation. Though difficult to measure in such a short period of time (and prior to the resurrection), the quantitative and qualitative data seem to suggest that education in liturgy is an effective strategy for Christian formation.

Conclusion

²³⁵ Pre- and post-class surveys, along with weekly surveys on Mondays and Fridays.

Having been convinced of the formative power of liturgy, I wanted to teach people in my congregation why we do what we do in worship. The intention was that this education in liturgy would help us understand the story being told in worship, help us be more present to God's work in the midst of it, and

ultimately help us be shaped more into the image of Christ through our worship. So I embarked on a seven-week series of classes, teaching why we do what we do in worship, and measuring people's responses with a series of surveys. These surveys measured their attitudes toward various aspects of worship and their understanding of some theological aspects of the liturgy. The changes in their responses over time suggest that the project fulfilled my hopes and expectations. Every indicator moved in a positive direction. Furthermore, the conversations and comments received in gathering qualitative data suggest that education in liturgy increased the meaningfulness of our worship, improved the participants' presence in the worship service, and increased their theological understanding of the liturgy at Scottsdale First. All of this data strongly supports the conclusion that education in liturgy is an effective strategy for Christian formation.

Appendix A: More on the Means of Grace

This appendix explores Wesley's theology of the Means of Grace a bit further than was appropriate in the body of the text.

Wesley included far more than only Christian worship in his lists of means. In his sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Wesley introduces two other (broader) categories of the means: "works of piety, as well as works of mercy... are, in some sense, necessary to sanctification."²³⁶ "Works of piety" are any means of grace that connect us to God in ways such as prayer and Eucharist. "Works of mercy" are means of grace that connect us to someone in need, marginalized, or oppressed (feeding the hungry, helping the hurting, etc.). Activities often thought of as "mission" or "outreach" are, for Wesley, important means of

grace. However, all of our missional activity (all our works of mercy) originate from the Eucharist anyway, and all our works of mercy point us back to the Eucharist. Therefore, these two - works of piety and mercy - are not separate in actuality, even if it may seem so. Nevertheless, this warning is in order: if our worship gathering becomes more important than feeding the hungry, our worship gathering is not doing its job. If we are truly being formed to love God and others, then when the opportunity arises to love others we will naturally engage in "works of mercy." But, again, the works of mercy are woven into the very fabric and meaning of historic Christian worship and so the distinction between piety and mercy becomes blurred.²³⁶ Wesley, "Sermon XLIII: The Scripture Way of Salvation," vol. 6, 49-50.

How many of means of grace are there? Perhaps an unknowable number. Speaking specifically of what can be found in the writings of John Wesley, Henry Knight lists those things Wesley seemed to consider means of grace in his day - seventeen in

all.²³⁷ This extensive list is provided to get a sense of the variety of means that Wesley had in mind and spoke of in his writings. Here is the list provided by Knight:

I. GENERAL MEANS OF GRACE.

1. Universal obedience.
2. Keeping all the commandments.
3. Watching.
4. Denying ourselves.
5. Taking up our cross daily.
6. Exercise of the presence of God.

II. INSTITUTED (PARTICULAR) MEANS OF GRACE

7. prayer: private, family, public; consisting of deprecation, petition, intercession, and thanksgiving; extemporaneous and written.
8. Searching the scriptures by reading, meditating, hearing; attending the ministry of the word, either read or expounded.
9. The Lord's Supper.
10. Fasting, or abstinence.
11. Christian conference, which includes both the fellowship of believers and rightly ordered conversations which minister grace to hearers.

III. PRUDENTIAL MEANS OF GRACE

1. Particular rules or acts of holy living.
2. Class and band meetings.
3. Prayer meetings, covenant services, watch night services, love feasts,
4. Visiting the sick.
5. Doing all the good one can, doing no harm.

6. Reading devotional classics and all edifying literature.²³⁸

²³⁷ Henry H Knight III, *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: John Wesley and the Means of Grace*. (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1992), 5.

²³⁸ Ibid.

In this list there are three categories: general, instituted, and prudential. The general means of grace are those attitudes that should simply be a part of any Christian's life. The instituted (or particular) means are specific actions given to us (or endorsed) by Christ; these are universal to the church in all places and throughout all history. The prudential means of grace are a fluid category which demonstrates God's flexibility in meeting people of differing times and cultures.

The means of grace are known by several terms by those in and outside a Wesleyan theological perspective: spiritual practices, spiritual disciplines, a life of spirituality, and so on. It may be helpful to briefly look at how several authors list or categorize the means of grace.

For example, writers Hardy, Jensen, and Calhoun write about the means of grace common through history and in the present day. Hardy lists the core practices of praying, scripture (reading, listening to, and meditating on), fasting, and serving others. After an enormous amount of scriptural and historical analysis Jensen finds several core practices that seem to be common throughout time. They include solitude, community, ministry, scripture, worship, the Lord's Supper, fasting, prayer, and giving. Calhoun lists sixty-

two individual practices in her a handbook of spiritual disciplines. She groups them into seven categories as an acrostic of the word *worship*: worship, open myself to God, relinquish the false self, share my life with others, hear God's word, incarnate the love of Christ, and pray. Some of her practices are fully modern including practices such as "unplugging" in her list. This variety demonstrates the flexibility of the prudential means of grace and the stability of those instituted (which appear in nearly all lists of the disciplines).

²⁴⁶ Blevins, Dean G., and Mark A. Maddix. *Discovering Discipleship: Dynamics of Christian Education* (Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2010), 86.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 87

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 86-93.

Dean Blevins and Mark Maddix, scholars in the Wesleyan theological tradition and experts in Christian education and the means of grace, have created categories of the means unique to the field. In *Discovering Discipleship*, they create three groups: formation, discernment, and transformation.²⁴⁶ The category of formation includes those means of grace that help someone become a part of a Christian community. They write, "Formation occurs as persons are socialized into the Christian faith through the life and practices of the faith community."²⁴⁷ The specific means of grace in this category include church ritual and ceremony, keeping the Christian calendar, communal prayer, outreach, corporate worship gatherings, and other traditional disciplines that might happen in the context of worship. The discernment category involves any practice that may come up as useful in a given context. This is the most flexible category and roughly corresponds to Wesley's prudential type. Christians and churches are encouraged to be open to the possibility that new practices might - at least temporarily - be means of grace for this community at this time. This category also involves the idea of listening to the leading of God as we discern how God is at work within a community and within the world. Lastly, the transformation category corresponds to what Wesley called the works of mercy. Transformation here is understood to be about healing and liberation, the

very results of works of mercy.²⁴⁸ The authors suggest an answer to people who might inquire as to why a given church should care about a ministry based on the means of grace: "We need to form persons into the people of God, guide them to discern the direction of God's work in the church and the world, and empower them to be transforming agents for the sake of

the gospel." The foundational set seem to be those found in Christian worship and the others flow from there. That directionality fits well with the aims of this project - the actions and rituals of the church forms people into Christian community and then various spiritual disciplines and mission follow.

Appendix B: Seasonal Calls To Worship

These are the calls to worship used throughout the year: Advent:

One: Arise, O Church, and look to the east!

All: **The night is nearly over; the day is almost here!**

One: We do not know not when the Lord is coming.

All: **So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.**

One: Come! Let us worship the Lord as we await his appearing!

All: **May the light of Christ shine in the darkness! His Kingdom endures forever!**

Christmas:

One: Look! I bring good news to you—wonderful, joyous news for all people!

All: **Our savior is born in David's city. He is Christ the Lord!**

One: The Word became flesh, and made his home among us!

All: **We have seen his glory, full of grace and truth!**

One: Come! Let us worship Emmanuel, God is with us!

All: **Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth, peace.**

Lent:

One: Bless the Lord, who forgives all our sins. All: **His mercy endures for ever!**

One: Come! Let us worship the God of grace. Lord, have mercy
All: **Lord, have mercy.**
One: Christ, have mercy.
All: **Christ, Have Mercy**
One: Lord, have mercy.
All: **Lord, have mercy.**

Easter:

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
All: **The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**
One: Darkness has been vanquished!
All: **The brilliant light of hope has come!**
One: Come! Let us worship and celebrate the good news!
All: **Alleluia Christ is risen! Amen!**

Pentecost:

One: Alleluia! Christ is risen!
All: **The Lord is risen indeed! Alleluia!**

One: Christ has ascended into heaven! All: **The Lord reigns over all the earth!** One: The Holy Spirit has been sent! All: **The Spirit will unify the church!**

One: Come! Let us worship the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God! All: **Alleluia the Spirit is here!**

One: When the world divides us
All: **Come, Holy Spirit, make us one.**
One: When the world calls us orphaned
All: **Come, Holy Spirit, make us family.**
One: When the world leads us astray
All: **Come, Holy Spirit, call us home.**
One: When we are gathered to worship God
All: **Come, Holy Spirit, come! Come and fill this place!**

Ordinary Time:

One: Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
All: **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever.**
One: The LORD our God is worthy of praise!
All: **God's faithful love lasts forever!**
One: Come! Let us worship the LORD with thanksgiving!
All: **We give thanks to the LORD for God is good!**

Appendix C: Seasonal Preludes to the Great Thanksgiving

These are the various prayers we use at the beginning of the Great Thanksgiving Eucharistic prayer

throughout the year. Most of wording here has been redacted from the 1982 Scottish BCP, though some of it is original or redacted from other prayers or hymns. The prayer for Ordinary Time is from the 1979 American BCP.

Advent:

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father.
Out of nothing, you called all worlds to be,
and still you draw the universe to its fulfillment.
Dawn and evening celebrate your glory
till time shall be no more.
You gave hope to your people Israel
in the promise of the coming Messiah.
And in the advent of Jesus your Son,
the life of heaven and earth were joined,
sealing the promise of a new creation, given, yet still to come.
Taught by your Spirit,
we who bear your likeness look for the City of Peace
in whose light we are transfigured and the earth transformed.
In Jesus you showed us yourself. Our hope is built on him,
the first, the last, the living one.
Obedient, even to accepting death,
He opened the gate of glory
and calls us now to share in the life God,
to be transcripts of the Trinity
As children of your redeeming purpose who await the coming of your Son, we offer you our
praise,

For we remember that on the night that our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed... Christmas:
Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father.
Out of nothing, you called all worlds to be,
and still you draw the universe to its fulfillment.
Dawn and evening celebrate your glory
till time shall be no more.
You gave hope to your people Israel

²⁵⁰ John Wesley and Charles Wesley, "CXCIII. Hymns for Christian Friends. — Hymn 3" in *The Poetical Works of John and Charles Wesley*. Ed. G. O. Shorn. Vol. 5 (London: Wesleyan-Methodist Conference Office, 1869) 408.

in the promise of the coming Messiah. And now we celebrate
the Birth of Jesus, God who took on flesh and lived amongst

us. Taught by your Spirit,
we who bear your likeness look for the City of Peace
in whose light we are transfigured and the earth transformed.
In Jesus you showed us yourself. Our hope is built on him,
the first, the last, the living one.
Obedient, even to accepting death,
He opened the gate of glory
and calls us now to share in the life God,
to be transcripts of the Trinity.
As children of your redeeming purpose who await the coming of your Son once more,
we offer you our praise,
For we remember that on the night that our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed...

Epiphany/Baptism Sunday:

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father.
Out of nothing, you called all worlds to be,
and still you draw the universe to its fulfillment.
Dawn and evening celebrate your glory
till time shall be no more.
You gave hope to your people Israel
in the promise of the coming Messiah.
And now we celebrate the Birth of Jesus,
God who took on flesh and lived amongst us,
even revealing yourself to the gentiles,
accepting worship from those considered outsiders.
Taught by your Spirit,
we who bear your likeness look for the City of Peace
in whose light we are transfigured and the earth transformed.
In Jesus you showed us yourself. Our hope is built on him,
the first, the last, the living one.
Obedient, even to accepting death,
He opened the gate of glory
and calls us now to share in the life God,
to be transcripts of the Trinity.
As children of your redeeming purpose who await the coming of your Son once more,
we offer you our praise,
For we remember that on the night that our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed...

Lent:

Worship and praise belong to you, maker of light and darkness.

Your wisdom draws beauty from chaos, brings a harvest out of sorrow and leads the exiles home.
In Christ your Son enemies are reconciled, debts forgiven and strangers
made welcome. Your Spirit frees us
to live as sons and daughters in our Father's house.

For in Christ the world is reconciled. Lifted
on the Cross,
his suffering and forgiveness spanned the gulf our sins had made.
Through that dark struggle
death was swallowed up in victory,
so that life and light might reign.

We who by Christ's power follow the way of
the Cross, sharing the joy of his obedience,
now offer you our praise,

For we remember that on the night that our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed...

Easter/Pentecost:

Worship and praise belong to you, Author of all being. Your power sustains, your
love restores, our broken world. You are unceasingly at work,
from chaos bringing order
and filling emptiness with life.
Your prophets declared the coming Day of the Lord
and now Christ, raised from the dead,
proclaims the dawn of hope.
He lives in us that we may walk in light.
Your Spirit is fire in us,
your breath is power to purge our sin and warm our hearts to love, for by the Cross death is
swallowed up in victory. In the first light of Easter glory broke from the tomb
and changed the women's sorrow into joy. From the Garden the mystery dawned
that he whom they had loved and lost
is raised in flesh
And by the Spirit is with us now
in every place for ever.
Making himself known in the breaking of the bread, speaking peace to the fearful disciples,
welcoming weary fishermen on the shore, Jesus
renewed the promise of his presence and of new
birth in the Spirit.
We also remember, that on the night on which our Lord Jesus Christ was betrayed...

Ordinary Time:

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in
creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and
above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be
incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have
delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of
error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

Appendix D: Surveys

In this appendix you will find the pre and post class surveys exactly as they appeared to the participants. Because the Monday and Friday surveys (given each week during the classes) were done electronically using Survey Monkey, the appearance is not the same as users experienced. Their experience with these twice-a-week surveys would vary slightly depending on what platform they used, computer, phone, or tablet. However, the wording of the questions appears accurately here. What you will see in this Appendix is what would have been given to them if they had requested a hard copy rather than electronic.

Pre-Class Survey

Pre-Class Survey about Sunday Morning Worship

Instructions: Please answer truthfully. I am not expecting or wanting any particular answer, only what you actually feel and think.

1. Rate your current feelings toward the Sunday morning service at Scottsdale First on this scale. Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5

1= completely meaningless, boring, dry 5= Fully meaningful, formative, engaging

2. Rank the following from 1 to 10 according to what part of the service you most ENJOY. Use all ten numbers and each number only once.

You might start with finding your favorite part (giving that a 1), then the next favorite (giving it a 2), then the next (giving it a 3), and so on until you reach 10. You may like all the parts, so 10 does not necessarily mean you do not like it, only that you like the other parts more.

1 = favorite, 2 = next favorite, 3, and so on until 10= least favorite.

___ Opening parts of the service (Call to worship, One: Blessed be God... All: And blessed be his kingdom...One: Come, let us worship; Opening prayer: "God of love, to whom our hearts are open, all desires known...cleanse our hearts by the power of your Holy Spirit...")

___ The music and singing songs (throughout the service)

___ Reading scripture aloud

___ Preaching

___ Reciting the Creed ("We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in...")

___ Prayers (the section after the sermon, when individuals speak a request and we all say,

___ "Lord, hear our prayers" and when we pray the confession, "Most Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you..."

___ **Passing the peace** (when we stand and greet one another after the sermon]

___ **Offering**

___ **Eucharist** (the whole service of the table, what we do after we receive the offering and before announcements]

___ **Benediction** ("And now, may the Lord bless you and keep you, and may the Lord make his face...")

Page 1 of 4

3. Rank the following from 1 to 10 according to which part of the service you think is most IMPORTANT. All of them are important, so rank them for their relative importance as compared to other aspects of the service.

You might start with finding the part you think is most important (giving that a 1), then the next (giving it a 2), then the next (giving it a 3) and so on until you reach 10.

1 = most important, 2 = next most important, 3 = next most, and so on until you reach 10.

___ **Opening parts of the service** (Call to worship, One: Blessed be God... All: And blessed be his kingdom...One: Come, let us worship; Opening prayer: "God of love, to whom our hearts are open, all desires known...cleanse our hearts by the power of your Holy Spirit...])

___ **The music and singing songs** (throughout the service]

___ **Reading scripture aloud**

___ **Preaching**

___ **Reciting the Creed** ("We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in...")

___ **Prayers** (the section after the sermon, when individuals speak a request and we all say, "Lord, hear our prayers" and when we pray the confession, "Most Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you..."

___ **Passing the peace** (when we stand and greet one another after the sermon]

___ **Offering**

___ **Eucharist** (the whole service of the table, what we do after we receive the offering and before announcements]

___ **Benediction** ("And now, may the Lord bless you and keep you, and may the Lord make his face...")

4. These four statements have to do with your sense or understanding of the Eucharist. In each of the following, indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement using this scale:

5 = strongly agree 4 = agree
3 = neither agree or disagree
2 = disagree
1 = strongly disagree

a) What happens at the Eucharist is only memorial. Jesus is NOT really present (any more than always] -we are simply remembering what Christ has already done.

1 2 3 4 5

1= strongly disagree 5= strongly agree

h] Something mysterious happens so that Jesus is really present in an extra-ordinary way through the bread, cup, and congregation (but I don't know how].

1 2 3 4 5

1= strongly disagree 5= strongly agree

c) The Eucharist is a sacrifice of those who participate (the people in the congregation].

1 2 3 4 5

1= strongly disagree 5= strongly agree

d) The Eucharist is a sacrifice of Jesus.

1 2 3 4 5

1= strongly disagree 5= strongly agree

5. Do you feel like God is forming you more into the image of Christ through our Sunday morning worship gathering? Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5

1= Not at all 5= Yes, definitely

6. How connected are our Sunday morning gathering and our mission in the world (missional activity, doing good, serving others, self-sacrifice, etc.)? Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5

1= Fully disconnected - they are two separate things
5= Fully connected -without Sunday, we would have no mission in the world

7. How connected is our Sunday morning gathering to your other spiritual practices (private prayer, devotions, use of icons, or any other Christian spiritual practice)? Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5

1= Fully disconnected - they are two separate things
 5= Fully connected -
 without Sunday, I would
 have no meaningful spiritual life

8. How many times a month do you usually attend the Sunday morning worship gathering at Scottsdale first (circle one): 4 3 2 1
 less than 1

9. Age: _____ Gender: M F How long have you attended Scottsdale First? _____

10. How would you describe our worship gatherings to a friend who has never been to our church?

Post-Class Survey

Post-Class Survey about Sunday Morning Worship

Instructions: Please answer truthfully. I am not expecting or wanting any particular answer, only what you actually feel and think.

1. Rate your current feelings toward the Sunday morning service at Scottsdale First on this scale. Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5
 1= completely meaningless, boring, dry 5= Fully meaningful, formative, engaging

2. Rank the following from 1 to 10 according to what part of the service you most ENJOY. Use all ten numbers and each number only once.

You might start with finding your favorite part (giving that a 1), then the next favorite (giving it a 2), then the next (giving it a 3), and so on until you reach 10. You may like all the parts, so 10 does not necessarily mean you do not like it, only that you like the other parts more.

1 = favorite, 2 = next favorite, 3, and so on until 10= least favorite.

___ **Opening parts of the service** (Call to worship, One: Blessed be God... All: And blessed be his kingdom...One: Come, let us worship; Opening prayer: "God of love, to whom our hearts are open, all desires known...cleanse our hearts by the power of your Holy Spirit...)

___ **The music and singing songs** (throughout the service)

___ **Reading scripture aloud**

___ **Preaching**

___ **Reciting the Creed** ("We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in...")

___ **Prayers** (the section after the sermon, when individuals speak a request and we all say, "Lord, hear our prayers" and when we pray the confession, "Most Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you...")

___ **Passing the peace** (when we stand and greet one another after the sermon)

___ **Offering**

___ **Eucharist** (the whole service of the table, what we do after we receive the offering and before announcements)

___ **Benediction** ("And now, may the Lord bless you and keep you, and may the Lord make his face...")

Page 1 of 4

3. Rank the following from 1 to 10 according to which part of the service you think is most IMPORTANT. All of them are important, so rank them for their relative importance as compared to other aspects of the service.

You might start with finding the part you think is most important (giving that a 1), then the next (giving it a 2), then the next (giving it a 3) and so on until you reach 10.

1 = most important, 2 = next most important, 3 = next most, and so on until you reach 10.

___ **Opening parts of the service** (Call to worship, One: Blessed be God... All: And blessed be his kingdom...One: Come, let us worship; Opening prayer: "God of love, to whom our hearts are open, all desires known...cleanse our hearts by the power of your Holy Spirit...)

___ **The music and singing songs** (throughout the service)

___ **Reading scripture aloud**

___ **Preaching**

___ **Reciting the Creed** ("We believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and in...")

___ **Prayers** (the section after the sermon, when individuals speak a request and we all say,

"Lord, hear our prayers" and when we pray the confession, "Most Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you..."

___ **Passing the peace** (when we stand and greet one another after the sermon)

___ **Offering**

___ **Eucharist** (the whole service of the table, what we do after we receive the offering and before announcements)

___ **Benediction** ("And now, may the Lord bless you and keep you, and may the Lord make his face...")

Page 2 of 4

4. These four statements have to do with your sense or understanding of the Eucharist. In each of the following, indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statement using this scale:

5 = strongly agree 4 = agree
 3 = neither agree or disagree
 2 = disagree
 1 = strongly disagree

a) What happens at the Eucharist is only memorial. Jesus is NOT really present (any more than always] -we are simply remembering what Christ has already done.

1 2 3 4 5
 1= strongly disagree 5= strongly agree

h) Something mysterious happens so that Jesus is really present in an extra-ordinary way through the bread, cup, and congregation (hut I don't know how).

1 2 3 4 5
 1= strongly disagree 5= strongly agree

c) The Eucharist is a sacrifice of those who participate (the people in the congregation).

1 2 3 4 5
 1= strongly disagree 5= strongly agree

d) The Eucharist is a sacrifice of Jesus.

1 2 3 4 5

1= strongly disagree

5= strongly agree

5. Do you feel like God is forming you more into the image of Christ through our Sunday morning worship gathering? Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5

1= Not at all

5= Yes, definitely

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6. How connected are our Sunday morning gathering and our mission in the world (missional activity, doing good, serving others, self-sacrifice, etc.)? Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5

1= Fully disconnected - they are two separate things
5= Fully connected -without Sunday, we would have no mission in the world

7. How connected is our Sunday morning gathering to your other spiritual practices (private prayer, devotions, use of icons, or any other Christian spiritual practice)? Circle only one:

1 2 3 4 5

1= Fully disconnected - they are two separate things
5= Fully connected - without Sunday, I would have no meaningful spiritual life

8. How many times a month do you usually attend the Sunday morning worship gathering at Scottsdale first (circle one): 4 3 2 1
less than 1

9. Age: _____ Gender: M E How long have you attended Scottsdale First? _____

10. How would you describe our worship gatherings to a friend who has never been to our church?

11. Indicate which weeks you DID NOT attend (or catch up on in some other way)?

1 (intro) 2 (time) 3 (gathering/word) 4 (prayer/peace) 5 (table1) 6 (table2)

12. Did you fill out the pre-class survey (several weeks ago)? (Circle one) Y N

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Monday Survey

Monday Check-in: Worship at Scottsdale Nazarene

1. Did you attend the Sunday morning worship gathering at Scottsdale First this week?
2. Tell me about this week's service. What stood out to you? What seemed most meaningful or significant?
3. In what ways did you recognize the presence of God on Sunday?
4. How present were you at communal worship on Sunday? [*Present* here means engaged, paying attention, sensing the spirit working, noticing God giving you grace through the various elements of the service, etc. *Not present* means you simply showed up but you were bored or distracted or in some other way not engaged. This is about what you bring to the service, not what the service does to or for you.]

| | | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|--------------------|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 = my body was the re | | | | 5=real ly pre sent |
5. What facilitated or hindered your level of presence on Sunday?

Friday Survey

Friday Check-in: Worship at Scottsdale Nazarene

1. Did you attend the Sunday morning worship gathering at Scottsdale First this week?
2. In what ways did our Sunday morning worship move you into mission throughout the week?

3. In what ways did our Sunday morning worship form you throughout the week? How did your personal spiritual disciplines seem connected or disconnected to Sunday worship?

4. What other liturgies (including "cultural") did you notice participating in this week? How did/are those practices forming you?

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