

First Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church Newsletter

Vol. 43

June 9, 2015

No. 11

From the Pastor:

Dear Congregation of Christ,

When I was a boy around the age of ten, I constantly asked the question, "Why?" I think I responded to nearly every event of life with, "Why?" It probably drove my parents crazy.

It is good to ask the reason for doing something. Reason gives meaning and motivation.

One great question to ask in the church is, "Why do we do what we do in worship?"

It's one of my favorite questions to answer as a pastor. After all, worship is the most important event of the church - now and in eternity!

Here are some thoughts that will answer the question for each element or aspect of worship that we include in our service. These will also help you explain to others why we worship in the way we do and not in the way maybe their tradition does. These are also helpful for those of you teaching your children to participate in worship.

It is of primary importance for us as the people of God to worship Him. We believe that worship is the primary motivator for all of the other things that we do as a church. That is, our worship of God leads us to better discipleship, richer community, and a well-rounded ministry of mercy. A sense of the holy one also makes us better stewards of all that God has provided to us.

Worship is to be God-centered! Our worship service is designed to reveal God through the ministry of the Word and the presence of the Holy Spirit. When God is revealed, we respond to Him! Our response to our great God is our worship. Worship should give the sense that God is high, holy and distant –that God is transcendent. Worship also ought to instill a sense of God's nearness to his children – that God is immanent.

We believe that our worship should not only be God-centered, but simple and reverent. Everything that we do should point the worshippers to Christ, be God-honoring and edifying to the saints.

Worship is simply giving God the glory due His name (Psalm 29:1-2). Humans are created and redeemed to give praise to God. The congregation of God's people gathers on the Lord's Day to worship God, enjoy his blessing and to hear Him speak to us. In worship we read the Bible, sing the Bible, pray the Bible, preach the Bible and see the Bible. The purpose of the church is to put worship in reach of all people. Worship should be simple so that any follower of Christ can participate in all parts of the service in a meaningful way.

Greeting and Announcements

Before the service of worship begins, the congregation is made aware of opportunities to serve the church or to receive ministry. Special aspects of the worship service may be highlighted in order to help worshippers better understand why we do what we do in worship.

Voluntary for Silent Prayer

We take these moments to ready our heart and mind for worship, remembering that we have entered the Lord's house on the Lord's Day to give wholly of ourselves to God.

Votim

The word "votim" is Latin for "desire" or "vow." Liturgically, it refers to the pronouncement/declaration by the minister to the congregation of Psalm 124:8, "Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth." It is a biblical reminder at the start of worship that God is the only help for

sinful man. It also serves as a reminder that God's people should trust God alone as Lord over all of life.

Salutation

God greets his saints who have gathered to worship. This greeting comes from the scriptures and is pronounced by the minister. Usually, the greeting is Trinitarian in nature, such as is found in Revelation 1:4-5.

Call to Worship

The God of the universe summons his people to worship Him. Worship is a response to the grace of our great God. He is worthy of all worship and desires it from those who have been redeemed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hymn of Adoration

The Scriptures command us to give praise to God. The beginning of worship is focused on the adoration of our triune God. Our first hymn in worship should be reverent and joyful. It should remind us of the Scriptural truths that speak of the greatness of our God.

Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

This prayer leads the congregation in telling God how great He is and how much we adore Him. We also ask that God would be present in our worship, that he would dwell in our midst as we worship and commune with us in a special way.

Affirmation of Faith

All things necessary for living life and understanding God, reality, salvation and Christian duty are given to us in Scriptures. It is right and good for the people of God to profess with their lips what we believe is true.

Hymn of Praise

The redeemed of God give praise to the Redeemer for the redemption accomplished for us! We joyfully celebrate the goodness of God and the life of the church. Most often we sing the ancient *Gloria Patri*, a hymn affirming the eternal work of the Trinity.

Reading of God's Word

Our worship service is God-centered and full of Scripture. Paul commands Timothy "to give attention to the public reading of Scripture". God's people are to hear, believe and obey the Word of God. When God's Word is read, God himself is speaking to us.

Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon

As a people who continue to sin in this life we become fully aware, especially in the presence of God, of our great guilt and therefore we confess ourselves sinners and look to Christ alone for the ground of our salvation. In worship we do this both privately and corporately. Those truly repentant in faith receive the forgiveness of God.

Hymn of Reflection

When the Word of God reveals to us the greatness of God, the sinfulness of man and the grace of God in Christ, we must think on these matters and sing of them! Sometimes we sing joyfully. At times we may sing mournfully. Often we sing prayerfully, asking God to be at work in our hearts and minds.

Membership Vows

When people join the church, they are publicly declaring their allegiance to God through Jesus Christ. Joining the church is also a public declaration of submission to God, the Scriptures, God's appointed Elders and the congregation as a whole. We covenant to live life together according to God's Word.

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The Sacrament of Baptism

According to the Westminster Shorter Catechism, “Baptism is a sacrament, wherein the washing with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord’s.”

Ordination of Officers

The risen and ascended Christ gives gifts to his church by appointing ministers, elders and deacons to do and oversee the work of the church. The act of ordination sets these servants apart to do the work God has appointed for them to do. Christians are commanded to obey their leaders, to follow their lead, to receive God’s Word from them and to let them watch over your soul.

Pastoral Prayer

God’s people spend time privately and corporately praying to God for things concerning the needs of the congregation, the mission of the local church, the advance of God’s kingdom and the needs of those supported by the church to fulfill the Great Commission. Prayers are also made for all people, governing authorities, our enemies and those in need of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Tithes and Offerings

God asks that His tithes be given for the ongoing worship, work and ministry of the church. Out of the abundance of what God has given to us, above our regular tithes, we also present offerings to God as a sign of gratitude for His gracious actions toward us.

Offertory

The congregation, choir or a few vocalists offer to God a song of adoration, confession, thanksgiving or petition to God as an act of worship. On occasion, the song may be the singing of God’s Word to remind, edify, exhort or comfort Christians in their faith

Hymn of Praise

The *Doxology* is simply a “hymn of praise”. In the hymn, we acknowledge the greatness of the triune God and His gracious provision of all things for us. We sing this after we offer God the first fruits of our labors, our financial tithes and offerings.

Sermon

The minister of God’s Word reads, explains and applies the Scriptures to the congregation. Our practice is to preach the whole counsel of God. We preach through the Bible, verse by verse and book by book. In the reading and preaching of God’s Word, we believe God himself speaks to his people, convincing, converting, comforting and counseling those who hear by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper

In the Lord’s Supper, we are fed by the Lord Jesus Christ in a special way. Christ reminds us of His work of redemption for us – that he obeyed and suffered in our place. He reminds of us of his ongoing work in our lives now. And we are reminded that His promise of full communion with Him in eternity is indeed true. The Lord’s Supper is for those who have trusted in Christ as he is freely offered in the Gospel and have united with his body, the church. If you are not resting in Christ alone for your salvation, please let the bread and cup pass by. Ask God to make himself real to you and consider your need of Christ to forgive your sins.

Hymn of Response

When God reveals Himself or His commands through the reading and preaching of His Word, a human response is required. After we hear His Word, our minds must consider the truth heard, our hearts must be moved to affection and

our whole beings should be ready to serve our Master. We often sing of these desires at the end of worship.

Benediction

God speaks to His people and he blesses them! Through the minister, God speaks blessing on His children, that they might go into the world to bless others in the name of Christ.

Concluding Thoughts

Our service is designed to be a dialogue between God and his people. He calls, we respond. He is holy, we praise him! Sinners repent when confronted by a holy God. God’s word is proclaimed, we go out to live for him. From beginning to end, God speaks and we respond.

Lord willing, this has been helpful to you to consider why we do what we do in worship. I pray that every aspect of our worship points you to Christ and lifts your heart toward heaven. We don’t want to waste our time in worship and so every choice we make is important. The creeds, hymns, scriptures and content are carefully planned in order that our service is thematically centered around the sermon, which is the main event as God speaks to us by his word and spirit.

“Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.” (Psalm 95:6-7)



PASTOR CROTTS' SCHEDULE

Pastor Crotts may be reached via phone or text message at 336-944-2892. His e-mail address is pastor@firstarpburlington.org His office hours are Monday-Thursday. Please don't hesitate to contact the pastor for any needs you may have!

**ALAMANCE COUNTY MEALS ON WHEELS
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The mission of Alamance County Meals on Wheels, Inc. is to provide in-home nutritional services in Alamance County which improve and enhance quality of life; nourish the body, mind, and spirit; and promote independent living for seniors and their families. *We are in need of friendly and motivated volunteers. Please call Ruth at 336-228-8815.*

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

Women's Bible study: Sunday, June 14 immediately after service. All women are invited.

LADIES EVENTS!

Ladies Mystery Dinner. Please join us for fun and fellowship on Friday, July 10, 2015 from 6 to 8pm in the Church Fellowship Hall. All ages invited & please invite friends!

Please RSVP to Jessica Richardson 336-437-4388 or richardson.jessica83@gmail.com for important information.

SAVE THIS DATE! Saturday, August 15, 2015 at 2:00pm! More information to come soon.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER NEEDS

ILLNESS: Please be in prayer for the following -- Tim Bessette; Owen Constable; Foy Evans; Gary, Hope, & Ben Gregory; Ellen Huffman; Peggy Mitchell; Margaret Owens; Margaret's sister Carolyn Turbyfill; Mary Renegar. **Remember all our shut-ins.**

SYMPATHY: Mandy Crotts and family as they mourn the loss of her grandfather.

CHURCH NEEDS: Pray for Rev. Bryan Crotts as he assumes pastorate of our church, and for the family's adjustment to a new home in Burlington.

MISSIONARIES: Andy & Nannette Howard (Pakistan), Jeff & Lisa King (Chile), Ali & Tara Mitchell (ARP Connect), Jubilee Birthday Ladies – Sheila Osborne & Nannette Howard

OTHER MISSIONS: Jesse Wesselink (International Students, Inc), Siloam Missionary Homes, Alamance Pregnancy Center, Allied Churches, Meals on Wheels.

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Heather Hayes	6/6
Kevin Hutelmyer	6/8
Steven Cobb	6/16
Kelton Christopher	6/17
Audrey Sneed	6/17
Judy Barnhardt	6/18
Aaric Newton	6/21
Kasey Burwell	6/23
Kristen Carter	6/23
Lainey Childrey	6/23
Helen Parks	6/30

JUNE ANNIVERSARIES

Travis & Kristen Carter (2)	6/1
Jim & Lola Knox (59)	6/8
Bryan & Mandy Crotts (16)	6/19
Grady & Patricia Pack (60)	6/19
Karen & Bryan Jones (28)	6/20
Doug & Mary Jane Glass (35)	6/28

FINANCIAL UPDATE

May Contributions	\$16,430.08
May Expenses	\$27,015.06
Year-to-Date Contributions	\$67,419.96
Year-to-Date Expenses	\$76,400.09

MINISTRY REMINDERS

Nursery:	Counter:
June 14: Doug Cobb	June 14: Gene Parks
	June 21: Macon Baird
June 21 Karen Jones	Deacon Duty:
Fran Haynes	June 14: Macon Baird
	June 21: Doug Glass