

Serving as a Liturgist at Smith Memorial Presbyterian Church

The word liturgy comes from the Greek meaning “work of the people”. Working together with the Pastor, the liturgist leads the congregation in worship. We hope these guidelines will answer most of your questions and help you prepare for your time of service.

On a typical Sunday morning worship service, the liturgist will lead the:

- Greeting, Church Alive, Opening Prayer, and Call to Worship
- Invitation to the Offering and Prayer of Dedication
- And, perhaps other responsibilities as agreed between the liturgist and the pastor.

The pastor will email you the liturgy by Wednesday. (This email will include the opening prayer and the prayer of dedication). In order to be effective in leading worship a liturgist needs to be extremely comfortable with the material to be used as well as with the reasons for its use in the service. The material needs to be read out loud until it is alive and familiar.

Please arrive in the Sanctuary at least 20 minutes before worship to go over any last minute changes with the pastor. Also, take time to adjust the microphone so it points toward your chin. The worship leaders will pray at the piano 15 minutes before the service. Until the prelude begins, use the time to review the service, pray silently, or greet people as they gather for worship. When the prelude begins, take your seat in the chancel.

Enjoy yourself. A smile can go a long way.

Talk louder than you think you should - imagine you are talking to your grandmother in the last row.

Greeting

At the end of the prelude, please walk to the lectern and smile as you make eye contact with the congregation. Say the “Greeting” as it is printed in the bulletin before you say “Good morning” or introduce yourself. Both the Greeting at the beginning of the service and the Benediction at the end of the service will always come from a verse in the Bible. It is the intention that the service be bookended by what the Spirit is saying to us through scripture. So, please have the “Greeting” be the first words that are spoken in the service.

Church Alive and Opening Prayer

After you say the “Greeting,” you may say something like “Good Morning” or whatever seasonal greeting might be appropriate. Then introduce yourself by saying your name and your role in the church – liturgist, elder, etc...

The next thing you should do is to say something to acknowledge to the people present that we are happy to see them and we are glad that we are worshipping God together. Be sure to especially express that we welcome anybody who might be visiting this morning and what we hope they might experience. (Say, this even if you don’t see any visitors. We want our members to expect visitors and be reminded of what we want visitors to experience at our church.)

Explain the yellow attendance cards and invite people to the Coffee and Cookies in the Fellowship Hall. Go over the announcements, and ask for any special announcements. Say again how glad you are about their presence and lead the opening prayer.

Example (if you like, you may use this word for word or adapt it to your personality)

This is the day the Lord has made! *Let us rejoice be glad in it!* (use Greeting printed in bulletin)

Good morning! My name is _____ and I am one of the members here who will be helping with the service. Welcome to Smith Memorial Presbyterian Church! We are glad you have chosen to worship with us! We especially welcome any visitors today. Whether you are seeking a church home, looking for spiritual guidance, or just passing through, you are our honored guest and we hope that you feel the love of God through the ministries of our church.

If you have not done so already, we invite you to indicate your presence by filling out one of the yellow cards inserted in your bulletin. You may place these cards in the offering plate later in the service.

After worship, everyone is invited for a time for coffee and cookies in the Fellowship Hall. This is a great way to get to know some of the other people here in worship. So, we hope to meet you in the fellowship hall after worship.

Please read over the announcements in your bulletin. At this time, I would like to invite anyone to share any special announcements...

Once again, we are so glad to have you worship with us! Let us begin in prayer.

Let us pray...

(Read the opening prayer)

(Wait for acolyte to light the candles)

Now, let us stand, as you are able, for the "Call to Worship."

Call to Worship

The Call to Worship should be lively and joyous. Your voice and facial expressions will set the tone for the congregation's worship experience. In a responsive reading, speak the leader's part with conviction and also speak the congregation's part in a more subdued tone.

Hymns

Out of respect for any guests who might be new to our worship service, it is helpful to announce the Hymn # and names of any songs that will be sung. (Check with Randy on who will do this.)

Once you have completed the first section you may return to your seat or sit with your family/friends in the congregation.

Invitation to the Offering

Consider the theme of the service and introduce the offering by either the scripture verses below or by saying something personal in a way that people can connect. Feel free to share what the love of God and/or this church means to you. Feel free to talk about the importance of one of the ministries of our church. Feel free to connect with something from the sermon. Or feel free to share a short story about generosity. You can be serious, but you can also be humorous. Put in some thought about how you might encourage people to give with gratitude and joy. The more personal the better. And, the shorter the better. (Sometimes there might be a special offering or minute for mission which could take longer.) Again, feel free to introduce the offering with some personal words or just quote a passage from scripture.

2 Corinthians 9:7-8 states: "Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." Let us now share in our offering.

Psalm 103:2 states: "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits." Let us now share in our offering.

In Matthew 5:16, Jesus said: "'Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.'" Let us now share in our offering.

Let us remember the words of the Lord Jesus as recorded in Acts 20:35 – "It is more blessed to give than to receive." Let us now share in our offering.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths." Let us now share in our offering.

Proverbs 3:9 states: "Honor the LORD with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce." Let us now share in our offering.

Psalm 23 states: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." Let us now share in our offering.

In Luke 12:48, Jesus said: "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required; and from the one to whom much has been entrusted, even more will be demanded." Let us now share in our offering.

In Matthew 6:21, Jesus said "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Let us now share in our offering.

In Romans 12:1, Paul said, "I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." Let us now share in our offering.

Hebrews 13:15-16 states: "Let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." Let us now share in our offering.

1 Peter 4:10-11 states "Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received." Let us now share in our offering.

In Matthew 6:31-33, Jesus said: "Do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." Let us now share in our offering.

In Luke 12:15, Jesus said, "Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one's life does not consist in the abundance of possessions." Let us now share in our offering.

Ephesians 5:1-2 states: "Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Let us now share in our offering.

In 1 Timothy 6:17-19, Paul wrote: "As for those who in the present age are rich, command them not to be haughty, or to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but rather on God who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment. They are to do good, to be rich in good works, generous, and ready to share, thus storing up for themselves the treasure of a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of the life that really is life." Let us now share in our offering.

In Genesis 28:20-22, Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that you give me I will surely give one tenth to you." Let us now share in our offering.

Prayer of Dedication

After the ushers come forward, use the prayer of dedication that was emailed to you or create your own as the Spirit leads you.

After the Service

Greet people at the side door and especially talk with people who you don't know very well.

Thank you for serving as a liturgist. The Worship Committee welcomes any comments that you may have which could be helpful to others in the future.