

## **BASIC WORSHIP SERVICE**

Worship services should have a theological “flow,” since it is not only the words spoken and sung or the music performed that gives meaning to the service, but the very structure itself. Worship is best when viewed as a cohesive whole, rather than segmented snippets.

With this in mind, one can imagine a variety of ways in which a cohesive and theologically-sound worship service can be constructed. The following are a few simple suggestions. The worship leader is advised to look not only at the structures illustrated below, but at the theology behind these structures in order to tailor these suggestions to best fit the local congregation's needs.

### **A Basic Service of the Word**

This order sets the sermon in the center of the worship service, with the congregation moved “from hearing to doing, from proclamation to thanksgiving, and from Word to table.” (Book of Common Worship, 33)

#### **Gathering**

#### **Call to Worship**

#### **Opening Prayer**

#### **Opening Hymn**

#### **Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon**

#### **Passing of the Peace**

#### **Hearing the Word**

#### **Prayer for Illumination**

#### **The Readings** (Old Testament, Psalm)

#### **Choral Anthem**

#### **Gospel Reading**

#### **Sermon**

#### **Hymn**

(Baptism, and other Pastoral Rites of the church)

#### **The Prayers of the People**

#### **The Eucharist**

**Offering**

**Invitation to the Lord's Table**

**The Great Thanksgiving**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**The Breaking of the Bread/Words of Institution**

**Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Sending**

**Closing Hymn**

**Charge and Blessing/Benediction**

## **A Focus on Preparation**

This order of worship spends most of the service preparing the congregation for an encounter with God's Word. It concludes with the sermon and a hymn of response, leaving the congregation with the preached text as it is dismissed into the world. The order is adapted from the Congregational Worshipbook, pp. 3-5

**Call to Worship**

**Hymn of Praise**

**Opening Prayer/Lord's Prayer**

**Responsive Reading**

*(Usually a psalm or other scriptural text. Many hymnals include responsive readings of various types.)*

**Choral Anthem**

**Scripture Lesson**

**Call to Prayer**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Hymn**

**Offering**

**Doxology**

**Sermon**

**Closing Hymn**

**Benediction**

## **An Additional Focus on Preparation**

Adapted from *A Book of Worship for Free Churches*, pp. 5-8

**Opening Prayer**

**Organ Prelude**

**Call to Worship**

**Hymn**

### **Prayer of Humble Access/Assurance of God's Love**

*A prayer of humble access is access just what it sounds like: a prayer asking God to allow the congregation to approach the throne of grace with all due humility. It is followed by the assurance of God's love, assuring the congregation that God has indeed opened the door of the divine throne room and welcomes the congregation in love.*

**Call to Praise**

**Gloria Patri**

**Old Testament Lesson**

**Choral Anthem**

**New Testament Lesson**

**Pastoral Prayer/Lord's Prayer**

**Offering/Doxology/Prayer of Thanksgiving**

**Hymn**

**Sermon**

**Prayer**

**Hymn of Consecration or Recessional**

**Benediction/Choral Response**