

A More Profound Alleluia: Theology and Worship in Harmony— A Guide for Use in Congregational Life

Calvin Symposium on Worship
January 27, 2005

SCHEDULE and BOOK OVERVIEW

- 9:00 Opening Worship
- 9:20 Introduction - Leanne Van Dyk
- 9:45 First Session - John Witvliet, Chapter 1—Trinity/Gathering and Praise
- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 Second Session - Bill Dyrness, Chapter 2—Soteriology/Confession and Assurance
- 11:30 Third Session - Leanne Van Dyk, Chapter 3—Revelation/Proclamation
- 12:15 Lunch
- 1:15 Fourth Session - Ron Byars, Chapter 4—Ecclesiology/Prayers and Creed
- 2:00 Fifth Session - Martha Moore-Keish, Chapter 5—Eschatology/Eucharist
- 2:45 Break
- 3:00 Sixth Session - David Stubbs, Chapter 6—Ethics/Charge and Blessing
- 3:45 Closing Worship

PRIMARY USES

Preaching, Teaching, Discipling Ministries

1. Worship Committee Discussions
2. Preaching Series (or themes within lectionary-based services)
3. Adult Education Sessions
4. A Guide for Leaders for Catechumenate or Seeker Discussion Groups
- (5. College or Seminary Courses in Theology or Worship)

Devotional Uses

1. Readings for Choir, Worship Team, Church Council Meetings
2. Personal Devotional Use for Leaders and Worshipers
3. Quotable Quotes for Church Newsletters, Email Signatures, etc.

Worship Planning

1. Service Planning Ideas
2. Criteria for Worship Committee Discussions

LEADERS

Ronald Byars, Union Seminary—PCSE, Richmond, Virginia
William A. Dyrness, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, California
Martha Moore-Keish, Columbia Theological Seminary, Decatur, Georgia
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Chapter 1: Gathering for Worship/Trinity

John D. Witvliet

Central Idea: God's being is even more luminous and beautiful than we often think. Trinity doctrine is an invitation to probe the beauty, mystery, and grace of God. We often languish with (and unwittingly promote) common misperceptions of God's character as distant, isolated, or capricious. The doctrine of the Trinity invites us to revise how we imagine or think about God as we worship and to come to know that the God of Jesus Christ is present with us "before us, around us, within us."

I. PREACHING, TEACHING, DISCIPLING MINISTRIES

Key Scriptural Texts for Preaching and Teaching

And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

—Galatians 4:6-7

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God.

—I Cor. 2:12

At that same hour Jesus rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, . . .

—Luke 10:21

"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me."

—John 17:20-21

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.

—2 Cor 13:14

Preaching/Teaching Angles or "Hooks"

1. "I had never stopped believing in God. . . [but] mine was a patchwork God, sewn together from bits of rag and ribbon, Eastern and Western, pagan and Hebrew, everything but the kitchen sink and Jesus." (book page 7, from Anne Lamott, *Traveling Mercies*). . . Explore how all of us operate with an incomplete vision of God's being and character.

2. (*Esp. for a Seeker/Catechumenate Audience*) Could it be that what has kept this seeker audience from worship is a view of God that is remote, distant, isolated?

3. Begin with the theme of isolation—a deeply felt concern in modern life. Explore how this Trinitarian vision of God and the church protests isolation.

Children's Classes (or Sermons)

1. Based on book p. 1, ask children, "Where is God?" . . . Challenge children (whose imaginations can handle this much better than adults) to think of God not just as within them, not just as before them, not just as alongside of them, but all three.
2. Categorize familiar children's songs based on whom they address (God, Spirit, Jesus). Emphasize that these three addresses all refer to God, but each still refers to a unique divine person.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you imagine God in worship? How does that match up with either a Unitarian or Trinitarian view? Are there any common misconceptions to which you or your congregation is especially prone?
2. What do you do in worship already that conveys God's Trinitarian nature?
3. What theme in this chapter would be most important for your congregation to engage?
4. What 1-2 practices promise to be most strategic and accessible for helping your congregation to more fully embody the themes in this chapter?

II. DEVOTIONAL USE IN SMALL GROUPS

A. Devotionals

Here are five excerpts from this chapter that could be used as brief devotionals in a worship committee discussion, or at a choir or worship team rehearsal.

1. p. 2-3 "Thinking of God"
2. p. 10-11 "Congregating"
3. p. 12-13 "Praise as anti-idolatry"
4. p. 18-19 "A Pentecostal Christmas"
5. p. 22-23 "Worship as Communion"

B. Quotable Quotes

For use in email signatures, church newsletter sidebars, etc.

1. "God has appeared glorious to me on account of the Trinity," Jonathan Edwards
2. Sidebar quotes in the book on pp. 4, 11, 19.

III. SERVICE PLANNING

Texts: See *The Worship Sourcebook* (Faith Alive/Baker, 2004), pp. 713-724 for "Trinity Sunday" resources.

Music Ideas: See the seven hymns in the chapter (pp. 10-11, 14, 17-18, 22, 24, 28, 29); and don't forget such traditional favorites as "Holy, Holy, Holy . . . blessed Trinity"

Worship Practices to Discuss

1. Trinitarian greeting (p. 12)
2. Expectant (Epicletic) Prayers (p. 14)

Criteria (Questions on page 25), which could be regular discussion questions at worship committees.

For Further Reading

- Tod Bolsinger, *It Takes a Church to Raise a Christian* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos, 2004)—also a presenter at next year's Symposium.
- James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996).
- For recently published sermons on the Trinity, see Roger Van Harn, ed., *Exploring and Proclaiming the Apostles' Creed* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), Colin Gunton, *Theology Through Preaching* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), and Len Vander Zee's sermon archives at www.sbcr.org.

Chapter 2: Confession and Assurance: Sin and Grace

William A. Dyrness

Central Idea: Christian worship is not something that comes naturally to us because we are sinners. For various reasons, we feel unable or unworthy to worship God as we should. The time of confession in our worship is the point at which we remember our baptism: God's gracious acceptance of us in Christ and our participation in his death. As the pastor pronounces the words of assurance—"in Jesus Christ you are forgiven"—we remember God's gracious acceptance of us in Christ. Confession and assurance enables us both to forgive our brothers and sisters and joyfully worship God.

I. PREACHING, TEACHING, DISCIPLING MINISTRIES

Key Scriptural Texts for Preaching and Teaching

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have all turned to our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

—Isaiah 53:6

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits—who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases... As far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us.

—Psalm 103: 2, 3, 12

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized in his death? Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised ... so we might walk in newness of life.

—Romans 6: 3, 4

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

—I John 1: 8, 9

Preaching/Teaching Angles or "Hooks"

1. In J. M. Coetzee's novel *Disgrace*, David Lurie pleads guilty to a moral lapse with a student, but he cannot repent: "I won't do it... I pleaded guilty, a secular plea... Repentance is neither here nor there. Repentance belongs to another world, to another universe of discourse." Develop the contemporary incomprehension of repentance; that in the end repentance is a miracle, a gift of the grace of God.

2. (*Esp. for a Seeker/Catechumenate Audience*) "Just as the failure to admit mistakes destroys our human relationships, could it be that what keeps people from God is their failure to admit that they are lost? That they have strayed from God?"

3. Though spirituality has invaded every part of our lives—from the movies we watch to the magazines at the check out stand ("Spirituality and Health"), contemporary people cannot admit they are sinners. What has happened to sin in our culture? What is lost without this notion? No sin, no confession so no reconciliation.

Children's Classes (or Sermons)

1. Have children remember a time when they did something wrong, or disobeyed their parents. What did they want to do? (Hide, cover it up.) But what was the only way that they could have the relationship with their parents restored?
2. What do you do when you have a cut, fall and break a bone? What if every time there was something wrong with our bodies, we ignored it? This is the way it is with God, when we have done something wrong we must go to God as the great physician and ask him to make it right.

Discussion Questions

1. Discuss all the things that keep us from truly worshipping God. Discuss how these barriers must all be faced and addressed, and how all, in one way or another, relate to sin and suffering in our world.
2. Why does our culture find it hard to face "sin"? How can this be best addressed?
3. Does the practice of repentance also relate to addressing natural catastrophes in our world? Why or why not?
4. Besides the practice of confession and assurance in worship, what other practices could you encourage that would be strategic and accessible for helping your congregation more fully embody the themes in this chapter?

II. DEVOTIONAL USE IN SMALL GROUPS

A. Devotionals

Here are five excerpts from this chapter that could be used as brief devotionals in a worship committee discussion, or at a choir or worship team rehearsal.

1. p. 32 "Confession and assurance are a celebration of the identity of the congregation"
2. p. 33 "We have a deep longing to be accepted unconditionally."
3. p. 40, 41 "Confession of sin as orientation to reality."
4. p. 42, 43 "Litanies recall [a painful] past"
5. p. 52 "In confession and assurance...we remember our Baptism."

B. Quotable Quotes

For use in email signatures, church newsletter sidebars, etc.

1. "We're no damn good, but God loves us anyway." (Will Campbell)
2. Sidebar quotes in the book on pp. 35, 45, 51.

III. SERVICE PLANNING

Texts: See *The Worship Sourcebook* (Faith Alive/Baker, 2004), pp. 81ff. *Book of Common Worship* (PCUSA, 1994), pp. 87-89. See services for Ash Wednesday and Lent, pp. 221ff and 235ff.

Music Ideas: See the two hymns in the chapter (pp. 53, 54); and *Sing! A New Creation*, pp. 49-74 and don't forget the older classics "I Know Not Why God's Wondrous Grace," "Amazing Grace," and "Come Thou Fount."

Worship Practices to Discuss

1. Imposition of ashes (p. 45)
2. Footwashing (p. 50, 51)

For Further Reading

- Cornelius Plantinga, *Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin* (Eerdmans, 1995).
- Marguerite Shuster, *The Fall and Sin: What We Have Become as Sinners* (Eerdmans, 2004).
- For recently published sermons on sin and confession, see Roger Van Harn, ed., *Exploring and Proclaiming the Apostles' Creed* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), Colin Gunton, *Theology Through Preaching* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2001), and Len Vander Zee's sermon archives at www.sbcr.org.

Chapter 3: Proclamation/Revelation, Christology

Leanne Van Dyk

Central Idea: One of the most remarkable things that Christians confess about God is that God self-reveals. Although God does this in a wondrous diversity of ways, God reveals God's own self most significantly in Jesus Christ, in Scripture and through the preaching of the sermon. The doctrines of Revelation and Christology help us understand the richness of the expression "word of God." This has immediate bearing on the worship service, for it is in the worship service that we proclaim and hear the word of God.

I. PREACHING, TEACHING, DISCIPLINING MINISTRIES

Key Scriptural Texts for Preaching and Teaching

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

—John 1:1

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

—II Cor. 5:17

For in (Christ) all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

—Colossians 1:19, 20

Let the word of God dwell in you richly . . . and whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord, Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

—Colossians 3:16, 17

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

—Psalm 119:105

Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ.

—I Peter 4:11

Preaching/Teaching Angles or "Hooks"

1. "God came to earth in a messy, ordinary birth. Sometimes God will reach out in something totally ordinary, something messy even, in the worship service . . . because that's the way God comes to us. God comes to us in *human* form. That's called the Incarnation." (book, p. 58). What is the *connection* here between the doctrine of the Incarnation and the worship service?

2. (*Esp. for Church planters and Seekers*) The word of God – in Jesus Christ, in Scripture and in sermon – *lives among us*, by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. This is no ordinary reality, yet it comes in ordinary form! A person, a book, a proclamation.

3. John Calvin, our brother in the faith 500 years ago, once said that unless we get connected to Jesus Christ, everything that he did for us is useless and of no value. A shocking statement! Begin a sermon or teaching session with this bold claim. (You can find this in Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book 3, chapter 1, paragraph 1.) You'll get your listeners attention! Then explain that we *are connected to Jesus Christ!* This happens through the power of the Holy Spirit. It happens especially through the preaching of the word and the sacraments. We are connected to Christ in *word* and *sacraments*.

Children's Classes (or Sermons)

1. Based on book p. 71, and with a flip-chart or big poster board, make a list of what happens to people when they hear the word of God preached. Then, make another list of what happens to the word of God when it is preached. This will give children a sense that the preaching event is *living and active* by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Based on book p. 67, footnote 15, an inter-generational "reader's workshop" can become part of the worship life of the congregation, by which Scripture is prepared for reading each Sunday.

3. In a children's sermon, the objective is to make clear that Jesus is *God-with-us*. But Jesus is also fully *human*, just like us, except that he is not sinful. Ask the children for their ideas on how Jesus is just like them. Be prepared for interesting ideas!

Discussion Questions

1. How is the Incarnation – the great Christian claim that in Jesus Christ, God has come into human flesh to share human experience – constantly "muted" by us? How is it "muted" in worship? Yet, how do we claim the great truth of the Incarnation in worship?
2. What theme in this chapter would be most important for your congregation to engage?
3. Is the insight that the sacraments are *also* the "word of God", that they "present Christ" along with the sermon, helpful to you as you think about worship leadership and worship participation?
4. How can we reclaim silence as a place to receive the word of God?

II. DEVOTIONAL USE IN SMALL GROUPS

A. Devotionals

Here are five excerpts from this chapter that could be used as brief devotionals in a worship committee discussion, or at a choir or worship team rehearsal.

1. p. 55-56 "God is Present"
2. p. 58a "God Reveals"
3. p. 61-62a "Jesus Christ Lives Today"
4. p. 72-73 "The miracle of the sermon"
5. p. 22-23 "Worship as Communion"

B. Quotable Quotes

For use in email signatures, church newsletter sidebars, etc.

1. "There are two types of preaching difficult to hear: poor preaching and good preaching." (Fred Craddock, sidebar, p. 71.) This would be an excellent quote to start a worship committee discussion or an adult education discussion.
2. "The narratives of scripture were not meant to describe our world . . . but to change the world, including the one in which we now live." (Stanley Hauerwas, sidebar, p. 62).
3. The sidebar quote on p. 57 is a classic quote – it would be a wonderful opportunity to introduce a group in the church – even a high school youth group – to the voice of a Christian believer who lived

1,600 years ago! Notice how the mercy and compassion of Jesus Christ, the Word of God, emerges in the quote!

III. SERVICE PLANNING

Texts: See *The Worship Sourcebook* (Faith Alive/Baker, 2004), pp. 421-685 for all the days of the church year that focus on Jesus Christ. There are no specific church year celebrations for Scripture and sermons, although this same *Worship Sourcebook* has wonderful prayers for illumination that should be prayed before the reading of Scripture.

Music Ideas: The Christian tradition abounds with hymns to Jesus Christ. Any hymnbook's sections on Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter would be a good place to begin.

Here are some particularly good ones:

SNC #128 is a good Epiphany hymn emphasizing the theme of "light." It is a hymn that will appeal to children. SNC #258 is a wonderful Lord's Supper hymn that children will enjoy as well.

"O Word of God Incarnate" is a great classic hymn that highlights Jesus Christ and Scripture. The tune is by Mendelssohn. It is #279 in the *Psalter Hymnal*.

"Praise the Savior, Now and Ever" is a hymn that summarizes the saving work of Christ and how we are brought to that new reality by the Spirit. It is #400 in the *Psalter Hymnal*.

Worship Practices to Discuss

1. The excellent reading of Scripture (p. 67)
2. Expectancy in the worship service (p. 58)
3. The possibility of weekly celebration of communion in order to reinforce the truth that *both* preaching and Lord's Supper "present Christ" to the believer.

For Further Reading

- J.J. von Allmen, *Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968). This is a challenging book, but it is a classic in the conversation between theology and worship.
- James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community, and the Triune God of Grace* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996).
- Leanne Van Dyk, *Believing in Jesus Christ* (Louisville, KY: Geneva Press and Office of Theology and Worship, PC(USA), 2002).

Chapter 4: Creeds and Prayers/Ecclesiology

Ronald P. Byars

Central Idea: The church is both mother and mentor to the baptized and to those who come to her in search of faith. Faith is more than a set of ideas, and yet, the faith of the church has a particular content, which is expressed in the ecumenical creeds, particularly the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene. That faith forms our own, and supports the church in its vocation of "royal priesthood," seeking in both prayer and mission to fulfill its calling to be a blessing "to all the families of the earth."

I. PREACHING, TEACHING, DISCIPLING MINISTRIES

Key Scriptural Texts for Preaching and Teaching

Deuteronomy 26:5b-9 – "A wandering Aramean was my ancestor. . . ." RCL, Year C, Lent 1

Genesis 12:1-3 – ". . . and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." RCL, Year A, Lent 2, and Year A, Proper 5

Acts 13:16b-23 – "The God of this people Israel chose our ancestors . . . He made David their king. . . Of this man's posterity God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised. . ."

Philippians 2:5-11 – "Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself. . . ." RCL, Year A, Proper 21; Years ABC, Palm-Passion Sunday

1 Peter 2:4-10 – "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. . ." RCL, Year A, Easter 5

Preaching/Teaching Angles or "Hooks"

1. Garrison Keillor story on pp. 87 and 88 of the book can be a lead-in to a treatment of the radical individualism that is characteristic of our culture.
2. A letter to the editor by someone who announces her disdain for religious authority declares, "I can think for myself," then, in the arguments that follow, proceeds to exhibit that her thought has been thoroughly shaped and furnished by what Peter Berger has called "the reigning plausibility structure."
3. The parable of the life-saving station can be used to illumine how the church's broad mission frequently narrows. People alert to the problem of shipwrecks off their shore built a little shanty to store boats and life-saving equipment. As years go by, they improve the property, then replace it with structures increasingly more elegant. There are still shipwrecks on that shore, but no rescues, since the members are no longer interested in leaving the comfort of the life-saving station.

Children's Classes (or Sermons)

1. An American family moves to a country where English is not spoken. The small children in the family become accustomed to speaking the local language. Unless the parents make a special effort to introduce them to their native tongue, the children will not learn it. (For the purpose of a "children's sermon," the story

could stop there. For the adults, the point is that the general culture won't teach us the Christian faith. The church needs to be intentional about doing that.)

2. One could ask the children whether they thought it would be okay to pray for their parents; their teachers; the President; the homeless people; the children of Iraq. Presuming an affirmative answer to each query, one could say that the church's work is to pray for people we know, and people we don't know.

Discussion Questions

1. For what people, groups, or nations (outside your own church) did your congregation offer prayers of intercession last Sunday?
2. Does your congregation use one of the ecumenical creeds in worship? Why, or why not?
3. What's the difference between saying a text and singing it?
4. What difference would it make in the life of your congregation (or denomination), if all of its efforts began with the intention of considering how to contribute toward the blessing of "all the families of the earth"?

II. DEVOTIONAL USE IN SMALL GROUPS

A. Devotionals

Here are five excerpts from this chapter that could be used as brief devotionals in a worship committee discussion, or at a choir or worship team rehearsal.

1. p. 83 "Yet the Christian faith does have content."
2. p. 89 "The crucial point is exactly this"
3. p. 90 "Rather than falling silent. . ."
4. p. 99, 100 "Giving thanks to God. . ."
5. p. 105, 106 "The Creed and the Prayers of the People. . ."

B. Quotable Quotes

For use in email signatures, church newsletter sidebars, etc.

1. "The Creed represents the faith of the church—the faith with which, mature or immature, we have to do."
2. "When the church prays . . . it does so in anticipation of God's new creation."
3. Sidebar quotes on pp. 87, 93, 96, 99, 102

III. SERVICE PLANNING

Texts: See the periodical *Call to Worship* published by the Office of Theology and Worship, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.); and Peter C. Bower, ed., *The Companion to the Book of Common Worship* (Geneva Press, 2003).

Music Ideas: Hymns cited in this chapter (pp. 91, 107,108); "Alleluia! Sing to Jesus!"

Metrical versions of the Creed: "In God the Father I Believe," Sylvia Dunstan's "I Believe in God Almighty"

Worship Practices to Discuss

1. Singing the Creed
2. Leading Apostles' Creed from Font, Nicene Creed from Communion Table

For Further Reading

Don Saliers, *Worship Come to Its Senses* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996).

Chapter 5: Eucharist/Eschatology

Martha L. Moore-Keish

Central Idea: Eschatology is more than mere speculation about the future. The eschatological character of Christian faith means that we have hope in the power of God over all that would hurt or destroy. We have confidence in God's ultimate purposes for the restoration of creation. We also affirm that as Christians we live already in that future here and now. One way in which we participate in God's future is by coming to the table of the Lord.

I. PREACHING, TEACHING, DISCIPLING MINISTRIES

Key Scriptural Texts for Preaching and Teaching

“Then people will come from east and west, from north and south, and will eat in the kingdom of God.” [Luke 13:29]

“Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day.” [John 6:54]

“As often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.” [1 Cor. 11:26]

“Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord. Examine yourselves, and only then eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For all who eat and drink without discerning the body eat and drink judgment against themselves.” [1 Cor. 11:27-29]

“And the angel said to me, ‘Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’ ” [Rev. 19:9]

Preaching/Teaching Angles or “Hooks”

1. Invite people to reflect on their experience of the Lord's Supper. What “tense” does the Supper have—past, present, or future? Juxtapose a primarily past or present understanding of the Supper with words from scripture that point to the second coming of Christ (1 Cor. 11:26) or the marriage feast of the Lamb (Rev. 19).
2. Use or refer to the clip from *Places in the Heart* mentioned at the beginning of the chapter. Reflect on what this suggests about the connection of the Lord's Supper and the eschatological banquet.
3. Begin with the question from the Heidelberg Catechism “What comfort does the return of Christ ‘to judge the living and the dead’ give you?” How can we possibly affirm that judgment is comforting?
4. Look at Isaiah 11:6-9 (“The wolf shall live with the lamb . . .” on p. 126 of the book). Think of this as a child's game with toy animals, placing the stuffed sheep next to the woolly lamb, and so forth. How does it illuminate our understanding of the eschatological vision to see it as child's play, as God's wisdom that looks like foolishness to the world?

Children's Classes (or Sermons)

1. Sing together "Let Us Break Bread Together." Talk about the fact that we can sing this as a blessing at meals at home as well as at the Lord's Supper at church. This helps us remember our church family here when we eat at home, and remember all the families at home when we eat the Lord's Supper here.
2. Enact the passage from Isaiah 11, using small figures or stuffed animals. Ask children, "Do wolves and lambs live together at the zoo? What would happen if they were in the same cage together?" Invite them to imagine how in the future reign of God these animals will be friends.

Discussion Questions

1. What methods for receiving the Lord's Supper do you use in your church? How do various methods of participation affect our awareness of the community around us?
2. How could the celebration of the Lord's Supper help us to be more aware of the hunger of the world?
3. How can we understand the final judgment as good news?
4. How might we think about the offering as a response to God's generosity rather than a duty or a celebration of our own generosity? How could we shape our worship in a way that makes this clear?

II. DEVOTIONAL USE IN SMALL GROUPS

A. Devotionals

Here are five excerpts from this chapter that could be used as brief devotionals in a worship committee discussion, or at a choir or worship team rehearsal.

1. p. 109-110 "The Lord's Supper in Waxahachie"
2. p. 116-117 "The community and the individual"
3. p. 117-118 "Moving from pew to procession of saints"
4. p. 120 "The eucharist and justice"
5. p. 129-130 "The table of tomorrow's people"

B. Quotable Quotes

Sidebar quotes on pp. 110, 116, 123, 130.

"We are tomorrow's people." (Jean-Jacques von Allmen)

"We give because God first gave to us." (p. 129)

III. SERVICE PLANNING

Texts: Notice sections of the Great Prayer of Thanksgiving (used in celebration of the Lord's Supper) on pp. 112, 113, 115, 116.

See *Book of Common Worship* (Westminster John Knox 1993), 67-77, 126-158 for additional prayers for use at the Lord's Supper.

Music Ideas: Notice the hymns mentioned in the chapter: 123, 128, 129, 131, 132.

Some African-American spirituals powerfully evoke the relationship between the Lord's Supper and the eschatological banquet: "Welcome Table," "Let Us Break Bread Together."

Worship Practices to Discuss: Great Prayer of Thanksgiving (also called the Eucharistic prayer, the anaphora, or the canon), Methods of distributing and receiving the elements

Chapter 6: Ending of Worship/Ethics

David L. Stubbs

Central Idea: Our corporate worship life has great potential to shape and inform our ethical thinking. In our worship, in the typical patterns of our liturgy, we come into contact with the patterns of the kingdom of God. Participating in those patterns week after week and understanding more deeply the connections between worship and ethics helps us see and act in the world as Christians. While many aspects of our worship have ethical implications, the final moments of the liturgy are a key place that the connection between our worship and the rest of our lives can be highlighted.

I. PREACHING, TEACHING, DISCIPLING MINISTRIES

Key Scriptural Texts for Preaching and Teaching

“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. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds ...”

—Rom 12: 1-2

There are many passages in 1 Cor. where Paul gains directions for right living from right worship: 1 Cor 1:11-13; 5:7-8; 6:19-20; 11:19-20). Here are a few:

“Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. Therefore, let us celebrate the festival, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and evil, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

—1 Cor 5:7-8

The prophets and Jesus often criticized Israel for lives that did not match up to the deeper meanings of their worship: “For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”

—Hosea 6:6

“God has shown you what is good. What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

—Micah 6:8

Preaching/Teaching Angles or “Hooks”

1. Begin with the idea of “practice makes perfect” – that we need to practice things before we can do them well. Relate this to a particular practice in worship, such as confession of sins. Such a habitual practice trains us in ways of confession and forgiveness that should spill out into the rest of our lives.
2. When teaching or preaching about an “ethical” issue, tie it back to a worship practice. Examples: Tie the use of money back to the offering, violence and warfare back to the Eucharist.
3. Teach a whole class or course on Christian ethics which is structured around the basic movements of a typical worship service.

Children’s Classes (or Sermons)

These are wonderful moments to point out the ethical implications of all the different aspects of our worship. For example:

1. Passing the Peace. Dramatize different ways that people greet each other. Show how difficult it is to go through these rituals sincerely when you are mad at someone. Point out how in church, the passing of the peace is the beginning of a larger movement of “peace-spreading” that should spill out into school and the rest of life.

2. Offering. Dramatize the way Christians in earlier centuries used to bring goods and even sheep to church instead of just money. Point out how these offering are a symbol and part of the way we give our whole selves to God and to others in need since we can't fit ourselves into the plate.

Discussion Questions

1. Besides specific directions that we read in a scripture passage or sermon, what are ways that we are taught "ethics" in our worship services?
2. Which ethical issue mentioned in this chapter would be most important for your congregation to engage with? How might your worship practice be enhanced to highlight the connection between your worship and this issue?

II. DEVOTIONAL USE IN SMALL GROUPS

A. Devotionals

Here are six excerpts from this chapter that could be used as brief devotionals in a worship committee discussion, or included in a church newsletter, or placed on the back of a worship bulletin.

1. p. 137 "Becoming Transparent"
2. p. 138-139 "Ethics, The Fall, and The Kingdom"
3. p. 143 "Offering and Economics"
4. p. 145 "Passing the Peace"
5. p. 144-145 "Confession and Assurance"
6. p. 145 "Prayers of the People"

B. Quotable Quotes

For use on the back of a worship bulletin, church newsletter sidebars, etc.

1. 4th verse of *Lord, Whose Love*: "Called from worship into service ..." (p. 154)
2. Sidebar quotes in the book on pp. 134, 137, 140, 145.

III. SERVICE PLANNING

Texts: See *Book of Common Worship* (WJK, 1993), pp. 78, 82-83, 92-93, 159-161 for charges, blessings, and invitations to discipleship that are based on biblical passages.

Music Ideas: Most song collections and hymnals have many songs that are wonderful songs of dedication and parting that highlight connections between worship and the church's mission or life. See two on pp. 154, 155.

Worship Practices to Discuss

1. Charge and Blessing (p. 148-153).
2. Other elements of worship services where the ethical implications (ties to the rest of our lives) could be highlighted through teaching or in the way they are practiced: Gathering and Greeting, Passing the Peace, Confession and Absolution/Assurance, Baptism, Eucharist, Hearing/Submitting to the Word, Intercessory Prayer

Criteria (see p. 137): Are our worship practices capable of becoming transparent to the patterns of the Kingdom of God?

For Further Reading on the Relationship of Worship to Ethics:

- John Howard Yoder, *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community before the Watching World* (Nashville: Discipleship Resources, 1994).
- Anne Y. Koester, ed., *Liturgy and Justice: To Worship God in Spirit and Truth* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002).
- E. Byron Anderson, Bruce T. Morrill, eds., *Liturgy and the Moral Self: Humanity at Full Stretch Before God* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1998).

***Worship and Theology in Harmony:
List of references to the Revised Common Lectionary***

Compiled by Ron Byars

Year A

2 nd of Advent, Matthew 3:2	- Confession and Pardon
Maundy Thursday, 1 Corinthians 11:28	- Confession and Pardon
Palm/Passion Sunday, Philippians 2:5-11	- Creeds
Palm/Passion Sunday, Matthew 26:29	- Eucharist
3 rd of Easter, Luke 24:13-35	- Christology
5 th of Easter, 1 Peter 2:2-10	- Prayers of the People
Ascension, Luke 24:44-53	- Sending
3 rd in Ordinary Time, Matthew 4:17	- Confession and Pardon
19 th in Ordinary Time, parts of Psalm 105	- Creeds
22 nd in Ordinary Time, parts of Psalm 105	- Creeds
25 th in Ordinary Time, parts of Psalm 105	- Creeds
26 th in Ordinary Time, Philippians 2:5-11	- Creeds

Year B

3 rd of Advent, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-24	- Sending
Palm/Passion Sunday, Philippians 2:5-11	- Creeds
Maundy Thursday, 1 Corinthians 11:28	- Confession and Pardon
2 nd of Easter, 1 John 8:9	- Confession and Pardon
Ascension, Luke 24:44-53	- Sending
Trinity Sunday, John 3:1-17	- Doctrine of the Trinity
16 th in Ordinary Time, Mark 6:30-44	- Eucharist
17 th Sunday in Ordinary Time, John 6:1-13	- Eucharist
18 th in Ordinary Time, Matthew 14:13-21	- Eucharist
30 th in Ordinary Time, Hebrews 7:23-28	- Prayers of the People
30 th in Ordinary Time, Mark 10:46-52	- Sending

Year C

1 st in Lent, Deuteronomy 26:1-11	- Creeds
Maundy Thursday, 1 Corinthians 11:28	- Confession and Pardon
Palm/Passion Sunday, Philippians 2:5-11	- Creeds
Palm/Passion Sunday, Luke 22:18	- Eucharist
Ascension, Luke 24:44-53	- Ascension
Trinity Sunday, John 16:12-15	- Christology
14 th in Ordinary Time, Year C	- Eucharist
Thanksgiving, Deuteronomy 26:1-11	- Creeds

Non-Lectionary Texts Mentioned:

Nehemiah 1	- Confession and Pardon
Nehemiah 9:2	- Confession and Pardon
Daniel 9:3-19	- Confession and Pardon
Acts 13:16-33a	- Creeds