



Gracehill
CHURCH

Liturgy Explained

Curious about what we do during Sunday morning worship and why?
We've unpacked the meaning and value behind each piece of the
liturgy for you in service order.

Song of Gathering

The Song of Gathering prepares our hearts and minds for communal worship. Congregants are invited to sing aloud or quietly meditate on the words as they gather for this time of worship.

Call to Worship

The Call to Worship is taken directly from Scripture and continues to prepare and call our hearts to worship the Living God.

Song of Praise

The Song of Praise helps us to recognize God's ever-present work in our lives and praise him for who he is, delighting in his desire to be in relationship with us.

Prayer of Adoration

The Prayer of Adoration helps us to recognize and acknowledge the character of our Sovereign God and the power of his work around and among us. We adore God for who he is and what he has done through his son, Jesus Christ. We conclude this prayer by reciting together the Lord's Prayer.

Call to Confession

The Call to Confession invites us to see how the Spirit is showing us our own imperfections in light of our perfect God. In love, God calls us to freely and openly confess our sins before him.

Prayer of Confession

The Prayer of Confession is a response to the Call to Confession. Sin is impossible to conquer on our own, so we are called to repent and humbly surrender to God's mercy. In this time we pray that he forgive and conquer sin for us. It is by his grace and through faith alone that we are saved.

Assurance of Forgiveness

The Assurance of Forgiveness is a different scripture reading each week that reminds us of God's promise of salvation through Jesus. God has sent his son to conquer our sin, and because of him, our penalty is paid in full. Because of Jesus, we are no longer condemned, but are brought into new life by the Spirit.

Song of Thanks

The Song of Thanks allows us to respond to God with thankful hearts, knowing that we are forgiven and loved, and knowing that Jesus has reconciled us with God the Father.

Congregational Prayer/Apostle's Creed

The Congregational Prayer is a time to turn to God in intentional prayer on behalf of the Gracehill Community. This is an opportunity to praise and thank God for the ways in which he blesses us as a community and showers us in his mercy. This is a time to present any needs to God on behalf of the congregation. Every third Sunday of the month, in the place of the Congregational Prayer, we recite the Apostle's Creed together, grounding our fellowship in the common declaration and acknowledgment of these truths. *See the last page for more on the Apostle's Creed.

Sermon

The sermon is the time in worship where God speaks to us through the instruction and exposition of his Word. A sermon is a study in Scripture, the announcement of the good news in Christ, and an invitation to submit to the authority of God's Word and truth in our daily lives. At Gracehill, our sermon series are not topical. We work through individual books of the Bible, allowing the themes of Scripture to guide us.

Communion

Communion is an invitation to commune with God and one another through the fellowship we have in and only through Jesus Christ. We immediately follow the hearing of his word by partaking in the Sacrament of Communion every Sunday. We gather around his table, allowing the beautiful and solemn truth of Jesus' spilled blood and broken body to transform our hearts, as the only response to the promise of the Gospel.

Sending Song

The Sending Song is sung in response to the hearing of God's faithfulness and love for his people, as revealed in his son, Jesus.

Announcements

Announcements are also an essential part of our worship, informing the Church of opportunities throughout the week to continue our lives of worship in fellowship with one another. In response to the Good News we have received, we are sent out to love and serve our neighbors and our church.

Benediction

The Benediction is a blessing by God to conclude the service. The Benediction is taken from Scripture. It is God's seal and mark on his children, both as individuals and as a united church. We take this blessing with us as we carry the light of the gospel and go out into a dark world, so that others may see the Light.

Doxology

In the Greek - doxologia, a word (logos) of glory (doxa). The doxology is an ancient hymn of praise, and has been part of the worship service in many churches for centuries. It is sung in response to the Lord's abundant grace for us and his church.

Giving

Giving is a way of participating in and praising God for the work he is doing. Giving does not just mean financially, but can also include giving of our time, energy, and resources. For none of these things truly ours in the first place. All that we have belongs to God. In response to the grace he shows us, we are called to participate in this grace through giving to his Church and building his Kingdom.

*Apostle's Creed

While we acknowledge that there are different views on how this phrase is to be interpreted, the session of Gracehill agrees that it should not be understood to mean that Jesus literally descended into the place of torment called hell. We believe that this conclusion is supported by Scripture; including, but not limited to, his statement to the thief on the cross in Luke 23 that, "today you will be with me in paradise." What we do maintain, and therefore why we support the use of the phrase in the Creed, is that the central doctrinal truth articulated in this phrase is that in his life and in his death on the cross Jesus experienced all things necessary for our salvation. And that through his unique experience of death on the cross he had to undergo, as Calvin writes, "the severity of God's vengeance, to appease his wrath and satisfy his just judgment. For this reason, he [also had to] grapple hand to hand with the armies of hell and the dread of everlasting death." And so, we affirm the use of the phrase, "he descended into hell," in the Apostles' Creed. Additionally, please see Westminster Larger Catechism Q50, and the Heidelberg Catechism Q44 for further explanation.

"Catholic Church" That is, the true Christian church of all times and all places.



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