**Our Order of worship explained**

You may be wondering why we do what we do. Below is a typical morning service laid out with

explanations. Our service order is based upon our Directory of Public Worship. For more in-

depth details and explanations please consult it.

***Approach to God***

You will notice we have divided up the service into three acts. This is not required but our

session hoped it would be helpful to our congregation to understand the flow of worship.

Approach, Word, and Response are the three acts.

**Silent Prayer**

Here is where we begin. In our confession prayer is stressed as one of the regular elements

of worship. Prayer is essential for the believer. As our shorter catechism Q/A 98 declares

*“Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to His will, in the*

*name of Christ, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies.”*

Therefore, when we come together as a corporate body, we prepare ourselves for the

worship of God through silent prayer. What should we be praying for? Strength to give

God praise, attentiveness to hear God’s word, faith to believe what we hear, willingness to

apply what we learn, help for the minister in preaching, joy in being in the presence of

God. These are only a few things you can pray as you prepare.

**Call to Worship:**

Our services begin with a call from scripture, usually from the Psalms, to worship God. Here our minister speaks on behalf of God, calling on us to corporately respond to God in praise for who He is and what he has done.

**Prayer of Adoration and Invocation:**

Our minister leads us in prayer in response to God’s call to worship. In our worship we

follow a dialogical pattern. God speaks through His minister, and we respond. God calls us into worship, so we respond with prayer asking God to enable us to praise Him as He deserves.

**Hymn/Psalm:**

Throughout scripture, singing is an appropriate response to God and His faithful actions

toward His creation. The first hymn/psalm is often directed in praise of who He is. Singing

is another element of worship that must be present. The use of instruments and number of

songs are circumstantial. (They may or may not be present, depending on the preference of

the congregation.)

**Reading of God’s Law:**

Having praised our God, we then listen to His commands. He calls us to be His people/His

family and like all families, there are expectations we live by. God’s law reveals to us who

He is and how we are to respond to Him and our neighbors. At this time either the law of

God (Exodus 20 or Deuteronomy 5) or a summary of it from the New Testament is read

then briefly explained by our minister.

**Confession of Sin**

The reading of God’s law reveals our sins. We are called to love God and our neighbor. We

often fail, which is sin, so rightly we corporately and individually confess it. Our minister

leads us in prayer of confession as we silently confess our sins to God.

**Words of Assurance:**

Our minister reads from scripture the truth that God forgives our sins through Jesus Christ

our Lord. We who confess our sins need assurance that God forgives all unrighteousness

through Christ.

**Hymn/Psalm:**

Our response to God’s forgiveness in song.

**Confession of Faith:**

We corporately declare what we believe using the creeds of the church (Apostles, Nicene or

Athanasian) or our shorter catechism. The emphasis here is not on the individual but on the

corporate body of Christ. We are members of one body and so with one voice we confess

what we believe.

**Hymn/Psalm:**

Having confessed our faith, we respond again in a hymn/psalm. Usually, this song is sung

as a prayer in preparation to receiving the Word of God.

***Word from God (Act 2)***

Having approached our great God, we prepare to hear from Him through His written word.

While the shortest act in the order of service it is the focal point and takes the majority of the

service. This is one aspect that is different from other evangelical churches. While some will

stress the praise of God’s people, historically Presbyterians have stressed the Word of God read

and preached.

**Prayer for Illumination**

Knowing that the Word of God requires us to approach by faith we seek the Holy Spirit to

work faith and belief in us as we hear the Word of God read and preached.

**Scripture Reading and Sermon**

God’s Word read and preached is the heart of our worship. In this we look to the Spirit to

enlighten us through our minister’s message. Our shorter catechism declares:

*The Spirit of God maketh the reading, but especially the preaching, of the Word, an*

*effectual means of convincing and converting sinners, and of building them up in holiness*

*and comfort through faith unto salvation.*

**Prayer of Application**

Our minister again leads us in a short prayer that we would apply what we have heard and

not deceive ourselves. (James 1:22)

**Lord’s supper**

We celebrate the Lord’s Supper weekly, alternating between the morning and evening

services. The sacraments come after the Word for they are not separate from the Word. This

sacrament is one of union and communion with Christ and His church. It is a sign and seal

of our belonging to Christ. To know more please see Westminster confession of Faith

chapters 27 and 29.

***Our Response to God (Act 3)***

**Offering & Hymn**

Our response to God begins with offering him not only our praise but also our gift. God has

given us all time, talents, and treasures. In this brief portion, we give back to God for what

we have received from Him. We do so from the pattern established in scripture of God’s

people providing for His worship. Our gifts are used to not only support our church but our

presbytery. Our hope is that God’s kingdom will grow in Canada and around the globe

through our gifts.

**Prayer of Thanksgiving & Pastoral Prayer**

Our minister leads us again in the final time of corporate prayer. The focus this time is on

thanksgiving for all we have received from God. We ask a blessing on the offering and then

we pray for one another and the visible church.

**Doxology**

We finish our response to God with a short hymn praising God for who He is and His work

in us.

**Benediction**

Our minister, acting on behalf of God, gives a blessing from scripture to all the

congregation. This is more than offering good thoughts and wishes. It is the minister

reading from scripture the promise that God is for His people.

**Silent Prayer**

Having received God’s benediction or blessing we finish in silent prayer reflecting on all

we have done and learned, asking God to continue His sanctifying work in us.