

# Practical Suggestions For Change In The Service

[Northern Conference Pastor-Teacher Conference, Owosso, Michigan, February 14 and 15, 1977]

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The assignment of a conference paper with the title *PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS FOR CHANGE IN THE SERVICE* presupposes that pastors see a need for change. There seems to be no reason to argue whether change in the service is desirable; however, the reasons for this apparent consensus may be debatable. Some point to a *liturgical awakening* or new awareness of worship in the United States. This awakening is due in part to the fact that as liberal pastors no longer offer anything substantially spiritual in their sermons and pastoral work, something must be done to hold their parishioners. The service loses some of its traditional aspects and becomes a celebration. Our members can hardly be immune to this celebration innovation. While they may be appalled by the “Catholic” influences in churches of other Lutheran bodies, they are occasionally impressed by the joy and glory themes that seem to be so apparent.

The second liturgical arena into which our members enter is the *Charismatic crusade*. These services, if we can rightly call them that, are brought into living rooms via television. While it may be Graham’s fiery preaching which gets them to listen, they are often impressed by the simplicity of it all: no liturgy, no traditional forms, no tedious prayers.

And so we find our members exposed to both ends of the spectrum, a liturgical celebration on the one hand and a liturgical dearth on the other. The subject of change in the service becomes a topic for discussion when pastors fear that their members are slowly coming to the conclusion that in their services our members find none of the celebration of the former and none of the simplicity of the latter but rather have the same thing Sunday after Sunday.

Teachers maintain that good handwriting declined as the use of the typewriter increased. Educators are now blaming television for the apparent inability of young people to be interested or able to read. *Are we approaching a time when the people of our congregations will become victims of their age and will demand to be “entertained” in the service?* In other words will the message of the forms be less important than the forms of the message? The message remains constant! This question in itself might be the topic of a conference discussion.

Whatever the reasons, you have asked for a paper on practical suggestions for change in the service. It may be beneficial to review the principles of Christian worship before we offer practical suggestions. The primary purpose for the gathering of Christians in an organized assembly is for instruction and edification by the Word of God. Jesus invited this purpose for assembly when He said, “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” (Matthew 11:28-29) James mentions the same purpose when he writes, “Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” (James 1:21)

The secondary purpose of the service is worship, liturgy, service, man’s response to the Word with God as his focus. If we divide worship into two parts, we might call this the vertical nature of worship—*man speaks to God*. David writes again and again of this point in the Psalms: “O sing unto the *Lord* a new song, for *he* hath done marvelous things.” (Psalm 90:1)

Worship also has a horizontal nature—man speaking to man. Paul writes of this aspect to the Colossians: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs.” (Colossians 3:16)

Therefore the basis for the inclusion of any form within the organized service ought to withstand one of these three Scriptural directives:

Does the form, whether traditional or innovative, instruct and strengthen?

Does it give opportunity for praise, thanksgiving or prayer?

Does it allow believers to strengthen each other?

These ought to be the first criteria for change in the service.

When anticipating changes in the service we ought to keep in mind the directives of the Confessions. The Formula of Concord in Article X of the Epitome speaks clearly and will be noted without comment. “We unanimously believe, teach, and confess that the ceremonies or church rites which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God’s Word, but have been instituted alone for the sake of propriety and good order, are in and of

themselves no divine worship, nor even a part of it...that the congregation of God of every place and every time has the power, according to its circumstance to change such ceremonies in such manner as may be most useful and edifying to the congregation of God...Nevertheless, that herein all frivolity and offense should be avoided special care should be taken to exercise forbearance toward the weak in faith...Accordingly, we reject and condemn as wrong and contrary to God's Word when it is taught: That human ordinances, and institutions are violently forced upon the congregation of God as necessary, contrary to its Christian liberty which it has in external things." (F. C. Article X, Epitome p. 329, 831)

The Scriptures and the Confessions are then the basis for any practical or impractical changes we intend to make in the service.

It is not the purpose of this paper to analyze the suggestions that will be made. Eight months of experience hardly qualify me for analysis, although there may be an occasional opinion thrown in. Pastors who know their congregations will have to decide which changes might be beneficial, if any at all. If all forms or changes in the forms of worship can meet the Standards of Scripture and the Confessions there can be no such thing as a bad change or a good change. However, there may be such a thing as a less beneficial or a more beneficial change. Careful analysis on your part ought to determine which changes, if any, will be more beneficial for the worship life of your congregation.

So that we are constantly on the same wave length, I will define what I mean by several terms: *Worship* for the most part will include all portions of the service, not just our response to God and our fellow believer; page 5 will be the *Service without Communion*; page 15 the *Service with Communion*; the *Service of the Word* is both the service which Synod recommended for use on its 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July and the book let which contains that service and other new worship forms. *The Church Year Calendar and Lectionary* is published by the I.L.C.W. and proposes collects, readings, and Psalms for the new three-year cycle. It shall be referred to as *The Church Year. Planning the Service* is a manual for Pastors, organists and choir directors. It shall be, referred to as *Gehrke*. I have included an Addendum to which I shall refer without reading. A bibliography containing additional reference material has also been added.

### **I. Changes in Self Education**

In order to make changes in the service we may feel it necessary to make changes in ourselves! Here is where self-education becomes necessary. It is a good idea to periodically review for yourself what purpose the forms of the service have. Begin with a study of the passages in Scripture that speak about worship. *Nave's Topical Bible* will supply you with an adequate listing of such passages. Article X of the Epitome of the *Formula of Concord* isn't the only place in which the Confessions discuss worship. The *Thorough Declaration* goes into much more detail. There are various types of books that discuss liturgy, changes in liturgy, awareness in liturgy, and the forms of liturgy. The Bibliography includes just a few of these. Besides the traditional manuals (*Reed*) and the kosher manuals (*The Rainbow in My Church*), the market is glutted by contemporary publications on the subject of worship. There is variety for everyone—from exhaustive studies to *Reader's Digest* varieties.

You might, however, want to make your self-education, re-education, or continuing education a little easier by studying worship in group sessions. The family devotion offers an excellent opportunity for reviewing worship. Try studying hymns around the supper table or using the Offertory or the *Nunc Dimittis* as a closing prayer. Although the language is a little heavy, the Morning and Evening Suffrages make fine devotional material. Besides giving your family a little variety around *Meditations*, you offer a chance at participation. Perhaps you might even shorten the Vespers and try it occasionally.

Your own study group or "Winkle" may facilitate self-education. Perhaps an exegetical study of the passages dealing with worship might be in order as well as experimenting among yourselves with some of the proposals listed herein. Later we shall speak more completely on the idea of the united service. You might choose a particular focus at one session and then have all the brothers draw up a unified service on that theme for the next session.

Finally the best way to teach yourself is to experiment. Try your hand at writing prayers for congregational use, and then use these prayers at organizational meetings. Plan a service from start to finish that is as close to being unified as possible: hymns, Introit, readings, Gradual, prayers, *all focusing on the sermon theme*. But be practical! Do your experimenting around a festival, and then use your work on Christmas or Easter.

*By all means check your junk mail.* Most of what comes through other publishing houses or religious organizations isn't worth using—most likely because of its doctrinal emphasis or lack thereof. But occasionally you may find something very usable: a litany or collect, a Lenten series, or a new hymn. For the few extra minutes you may spend your perusal may very well be worth the effort.

## II. Changes in Inflection and Participation

In the majority of cases a congregation places into the hands of the pastor the responsibility to make the changes he deems necessary for the benefit of the worship life of the members. Even with this right the pastor does well to include the elders (or any other responsible group) in his planning ventures. There are several areas, however, in which beneficial changes might be made which involve little, if any, structural change in the service. These subtle changes occur in the area of inflection and participation as far as the pastor is concerned.

*Care ought to be taken lest, by our inflection, parts of the Ordinary are misunderstood by the Congregation.* The well-meant lead of the pastor who prompts devotion with hands folded head bowed, and eyes closed during the Creed all too often gives the Confession of Faith the nature of a prayer rather than the Christian Pledge of Allegiance that it is. A simple change of inflection and an ever-so-slight motion of the hands cements the idea that the Salutation is a greeting between pastor and people rather than an address to the Holy Spirit.

Variety can be added to worship by simple variation in the manner one speaks portions of the Ordinary. *The repetitious manner in which we often speak the Invitation to Confession, the Absolution, or the words during Distribution can almost imperceptibly lull people into inattentiveness.* Change your inflection occasionally. See if your members don't become a little more alert when you speak the same words with a slightly different stress.

Be careful of tipping people off. The hortatory subjunctive, *the vegetable ending* (lettuce) in the sermon is a sure sign that the end is near. Several other *sure signs* are the introductions to the readings ("The Epistle for the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany..."), to the Creed ("With the whole Christian Church on earth..."), and the Lord's Prayer ("In Jesus' name we join in praying...") How about "Today is the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Epiphany. St. Paul gives us Christian advice in his letter to the Romans..." With the Creed, "Christians throughout the ages have confessed to the world the faith that they hold. We join them in the Apostles Creed." A little imagination is the only ingredient necessary to remove a little of the sameness in these introductions.

The Propers have a tendency to become more meaningful if they are rehearsed before you speak them. Check to see to whom the Introit is addressed, if to God speak toward the altar—if to the *congregation*, speak to them. One way to make a clean break between the Absolution and the Introit is to speak the Confessional portion of the liturgy on the step below the altar. As the organist winds down the Amen of the Absolution, step to the Alter and prepare to speak the Introit. This shows the congregation that you are making a break in the service and that which is coming is a new portion and not simply filler. The same holds true for the Gradual: to the altar, if spoken to God; to the congregation, if spoken to Christians. Again, *a clean break signals a separate portion of the service.*

Participation by the worship leader can, as much as his inflection, add meaning to the forms of worship. If we sing along "And with Thy Spirit," we certainly aren't giving people the correct impression of the Salutation. The same holds true for the singing of the Hallelujahs, the Gloria in Excelsis, and the other Chants. If you need to save your voice, it may be better to save it during the hymns; let the people know that you consider the chants to surround the greatest hymns of the church.

I suppose the main thrust of this section might be summed up: *Watch out for ruts!* If you tape services for shut-ins, listen to yourself occasionally. Your wife and children may just be your best critics. Simply

showing that we are not bored by the repetition of our worship service can go a long way in defeating what may be a feeling of apathy on the part of our people.

### **III. Changes in Congregational Education**

To make the changes that we shall now begin to suggest, you will have to be convinced that *changes*, be they ever so slight, *are necessary*, since these suggestions entail extra work and preparation. It may be wise before making a change to educate and train our people to understand their service as it exists. This may be major change in itself. Education is vital if any changes are to be made, but just as essential if our members are to take a meaningful part in the regular Sunday morning worship.

The easiest method we have for Congregational education is the *Liturgy-Explained* service. The fourth Sunday after Easter (Cantate) lends itself well to this procedure. There are several fine books and pamphlets available that contain directions and paragraphs for reading in the service itself. Wunderlich and Field's little book, *The Narrative Communion Service*, is highly recommended for an education Sunday on the service with Communion. *The Service* published by Northwestern is also good. The principal of your school or a layman can read the explanatory paragraphs while you lead the service. A ten-minute sermon on worship ties the whole affair together. One word of caution! Practice makes perfect! Haphazard preparation by pastor, reader, and organist may result in more confusion than existed before.

Education in worship can be accomplished just as effectively and perhaps more thoroughly in the devotions at meetings of the congregation. Unfortunately, you will be dealing with a smaller percentage of your members. You might like to start by polling an organization some evening. (cf. Addendum) search for their thoughts about worship. You may be pleasantly surprised to learn that you have no need of further education. More than likely you will notice the problem areas.

You will probably find that a one night discussion of the service with or without communion does not afford enough time to cover the subject even in a cursory manner. *A series of devotions on the liturgy* may serve this purpose better. I have included a year's series in the Addendum. Since your confirmands, both children and adults, will hopefully worship within the framework of our liturgical service for the rest of their lives, it may be wise to spend a lesson or two studying the forms of the service.

Another possible area for increasing awareness of the worship forms is the sermon itself. A sermon on confession may include the words of the public confession. An illustration on Trinity Sunday could be drawn from the Invocation or the Sanctus. The Kyrie might be explained in a sermon or prayer. Occasional references to the readings may also be beneficial.

If you and your congregation are accustomed to the summer series in preaching, you might try, a series based on the liturgy. This method would explain in detail the theological implications of all the worship forms as well as apply them to everyday living. One such series is proposed in the Addendum.

The Sunday bulletin offers an excellent educational opportunity. The explanatory pamphlets I mentioned earlier supply the paragraphs you could use. *The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal* offers material for occasional comments on hymns.

### **IV. Changes in Language**

The subject of language in the service is under considerable discussion at the present time. This year's Synodical Convention will focus on publication and language. The Seminary is currently active in the translation work of the *NIV*. The Commission on Worship is working toward the mid-1978 publication of the *Worship Companion* that will offer forms written in contemporary English. Pastors throughout the Synod have already begun to use the *NIV* or the *NASB* for the readings. It seems obvious that we as a Synod are moving slowly but steadily toward the day when a current brand of English will replace the Shakespearean style we are currently using.

Because this is true, there may, be some merit in waiting to contemporize the Propers and the Ordinary in our services. Within a few years this work may be done for us. However, if you have already begun to make the change to new, translations and are impatient for a complete changeover, there are certain suggestions that might help in this area of changes in language.

It may be nearly impossible to change the language of the Ordinary without completely rewriting the order of service for the congregation. However, the Propers lend themselves well to such change. *Gehrke* gives the Scripture location of all the Introits and Graduals. A few minutes time can switch them from *KJV* to *NASB* or another Old Testament translation. Occasionally the Introits and Graduals are drawn from Isaiah; you may find help in the recent publication of the *NIV* translation of that book.

For the most part the modern language publications that offer Introits, and Graduals, are fairly well filled with the *Social Gospel* theme. Several that I have found usable are included in the Bibliography. Leslie Brandt's Introits may be used: (with careful scrutiny, please) as Graduals as well. The Commission on Worship's "Easter Propers" uses an original translation and not an existing Bible version. The Sentences for the Day in the Commission's "*Service of the Word*" are also based on original translations and substitute very well for the traditional Introits. (The Propers for Epiphany in the Addendum utilize the Sentence for the Day.)

As far as collects are concerned, you may have at your disposal dozens of books that contain fine modern prayers, which substitute well for the traditional collects. The *Service of the Word* contains contemporary collects for the Church, the Word, the Holy Spirit and the True Faith, which fit well as closing collects. Although one must be discerning, the *Church Year* offers any number of fine collects and has a collect subject index as well. (cf. Epiphany, Propers in Addendum)

Another way to contemporize prayers of all kinds is to write your own. The ancient collects give us guidelines as to form: The Addressee (Gracious God,) the attribute of the Addressee (by the light of your truth you lead), the malady (those who are in error back to your ways.), the petition (Help all your people to avoid whatever is contrary to their faith and to do whatever agrees with it.), and the closing (We come to you through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, through all eternity). One caution when writing prayers: it is easy to eliminate the many fine thoughts of the ancient general prayers. You may wish to consult them from time to time.

The change over into a new variety of language is not an easy one. To put Scriptural ideas into any language is an art calling for dignity besides clarity. The old danger may have been that we were so dignified that we were unclear. The new danger may well be that we are so clear that we are not dignified. When making changes that involve language, be sure that both criteria are met.

## V. Changes in the United Service

*The united service*, the tied-together service, is a concept of which most pastors pay at least lip service. They pick their hymns to go with the sermon and perhaps add an appropriate prayer. But the idea of the united service can be put into practice on a far more advanced level than simply by picking hymns and prayers. This practice does have certain benefits. It points all the parts of the service toward the sermon. It eliminates all that seem to be fillers—parts that aren't really necessary. *If the man in the pew knows from the beginning that the sermon will deal with faith, the Introit, the readings, the Gradual, and the collects, all focusing on faith, will mean a great deal more to him.*

With the necessary tools at your disposal and a day or two of work during the summer, the unified service becomes relatively easy to handle. Start with a *pericope* (Ancient, Thomasius, Synodical Conference, whatever). Choose the *sermon text*: Gospels during Advent and Christmas, Epistles during Epiphany, Old Testament during Lent, however you decide. Read over each text. Within a few minutes you ought to be able to ascertain the *general* focus of the text. Don't worry about becoming too specific in understanding the text. You drew up the focus, you can always change it if it becomes necessary. *A focus will also give your text an added direction.* Matthew's account of the Baptism of Jesus could fit under any of these three foci: Jesus, our Substitute; Jesus' willing Obedience to His Father; The Manifestation of the Trinity. Once you have the focus for the day, you're ready to proceed.

*The first things to add are the readings.* It may be that the pericope you've chosen lists Gospel, Epistle, and Old Testament selections. If you preach on one of them, chances are the other two will agree with the focus of the text. If not, your own knowledge of Scripture or a quick glance into a topical Bible will supply the readings.

*Next, add the hymns.* Even though you may be doing your work during the summer, it is possible to pick an opening and closing hymn. The focus will give you enough insight to be able to choose at least those. Just because you're interested in unification don't shy away from Pentecost, Morning or Opening of service hymns. Nor do you need to feel hesitant about repeating certain hymns. "Come Holy Ghost, God and Lord" (224) "Holy Ghost with Light Divine" (234) are two excellent opening hymns that ought to be used more frequently than on Pentecost. The sermon hymns (before and after) can be chosen as late as your organist allows.

*Now for the introit and the Gradual.* Don't discount the ancient set, especially if you are preaching the old church pericope. Even though you may be looking for clarity, these traditional Introits and Graduals may only need a little revision to fit your particular focus very well. Other materials that have already been collected might be found in *The Church Year*. The I.L.C.W. has compiled Psalm readings for all the Sundays of the Church Year. Especially, if you're preaching the I.L.C.W. series, you will find these helpful for both Introits and Graduals. Synod's Commission On Worship has produced, through the years, a number of pamphlets with Introits for seasonal use, "Easter Propers," Lenten introits," and "Introits for the Easter Season" are three of these publications. They are still available in limited quantities from Professor Martin Albrecht at the Seminary. Pastor Kurt Eggert of Milwaukee has produced a series of Introits for Advent through Epiphany. These are available from Pastor Eggert. The new publication which I have already mentioned, "The Service of the Word, will arrive in the mail with your next *Focus on Worship*. This booklet offers the short Introits called. Sentences for the Day that I have mentioned. These substitute very well. Finally, if you're intent on using new Introits and Graduals and can find nothing suitable in existing manuals, consult a topical index of the Psalms.

Now that you've chosen the text, the focus for the day, the readings, the hymns, Introit and the Gradual, *it's time to take a look at the prayers.* If you are planning to unite the service, whether you are using the common service, Matins, Vespers, or the Service of the Word you will not want to be bound by the standard collects and general prayers. *The Church Year* has almost 200 collects that are categorized under subject listing in the index. These are in 20<sup>th</sup> Century language. The most convenient way to add prayers for the unified service is to write your own. There are, however, dozens of little prayer books on the market to which you can go for help.

We feel the goal of the unified or united service, although requiring added work, does much to make the worship service and the forms of worship more meaningful and fulfilling to the congregation. This effort serves well to prepare them to accept the occasional changes in forms we are about to propose.

#### **IV. Changes in the Propers**

Once the congregation has been trained to a greater or lesser extent to understand the function of the forms of worship, you may on occasion want to, change the forms to relieve the sameness and repetition. It may be that an untrained congregation will resist even the slightest changes. *We cannot stress enough the importance of prior education before making changes in the forms of worship.* If your congregation is one which is used to changes every once in awhile, training isn't as vital they have already been trained, to accept slight revisions.

Pastors occasionally express the opinion that they feel the Introit, the ancient entrance or "opening" hymn of the service has outlived its usefulness. They may have a point. However, there are a number of changes, which may be helpful in restoring the Introit to a functional purpose.

We have already mentioned a number of suggestions for the Introit: the Sentence for the Day, the topical Psalm, the Psalm surrounded by hymns'; as proposed by the Commission on Worship in its "Easter Introits," the I.L.C.W. Psalm selections. There are a number of other suggestions that might be made. Ideally, the Introit is sung by the Choir. There are any number of arrangements of the Introit (and the Gradual for that matter,) arranged, for the most part, in the Gregorian or plain-chant style. These, however, are difficult for the average choir and can become a bit tedious even for the musically above average congregation. Several of our conference congregations are fortunate enough to have composers in their midst who have supplied original music at least for the festival Introits. But if the congregation is trained to understand the function of the Introit, several verses of an appropriate hymn by choir or congregation make for a pleasant change. The congregational



hymn together with the antiphonal or unison reading of the Psalm Introit also give the congregation a chance in participation.

There is little change that can be effected as far as the *readings* are concerned besides careful selection and meaningful reading. The I.L.C.W. suggestions have included series reading for Epistles; portions of one of the epistles are read in *series* from week to week. If this practice is used, we recommend that it be specially noted in the bulletin or by announcement since it will become obvious that the reading has no apparent connection with the other thoughts of the day. You may also be interested in using, readings from the Old Testament. We have already suggested that you use an Old Testament reading whenever you preach a Gospel or Epistle selection. These substitute exceptionally well when referred to as *Old Testament Advice* or Admonition when they replace the Epistle and *Old Testament Gospel* when they replace the Gospel.

The *Gradual* often cones under the same fire as the Introit—it seems to have outlived its usefulness. We no longer need “cover” music while we walk from the Epistle side of the Cathedral to the Gospel side. However, it can return to a meaningful position with careful inflection or a few simple variations.

Again, the traditional role of the choir was to sing the Gradual, and, this custom can be retained in the same way as the Introit choir or congregation singing several verses of an appropriate hymn. (Here is a good place for the Choir’s anthem.) You may like to try the idea of substituting a hymn of the season. This custom has ancient tradition. The old sequence hymns that Luther retained in his early hymnals, because they were the only ones the people already knew, give us examples of this custom. Hymn 62 might be sung verse by verse during Advent, 343 during Epiphany, 187 after Easter; 231 before and after Pentecost. Again, if you are interested in topical Graduals, consult the same Psalm listings I have suggested for Introits. You may also be interested in hymn versions of the Psalms. *Gehrke* lists these on pages 10 and 11 of the introduction.

Enough has been said already about suggestions for change as far as prayers are concerned. One additional comment might be made. *It seems as if the Litany, the responsive prayer, is making a comeback.* Hymn 661 is the traditional litany. The Kyrie is a remnant of what once was a responsive prayer. You will remember the litanies for the Synod’s 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the July 4<sup>th</sup> Service. The new “Service of the Word will contain a number of litanies for festival use. Other than those mentioned, we have not noticed many that are satisfactory. Admittedly, they are not easy to write. But they do offer the congregation a chance to take part in what often becomes the pastor’s general prayer.

## VII. Changes in the Ordinary

Dr. Luther has given us a fine example of changes that might be made in the non-changing portions of the service. His German Mass contained translations of many of the old Latin chants and gave the Ordinary to the congregation: “Kyrie God Father” replaced the old Kyrie; “Glory be to God on High” replaced the Gloria in Excelsis; “We Ali Believe in One True God” replaced the Creed; “Isaiah, Mighty Seer” replaced the Sanctus. But Luther was starting from scratch with new principles of worship and a new service. Our people already participate in the service, and we have an existing order of worship. *You may, however, wish to make an occasional or seasonal change to alleviate repetition.*

The Invocation does not lend itself to variation, but the Confession offers several alternatives. The use of the expanded Confession on pages 47 and 48 in the forepart of the hymnal seems to have merit for use in the service with communion. *The Worship Supplement*, Missouri’s counterpart to our *Worship companion* offers several fine confession sections in the contemporary language. Another variation which seems to have some merit for the service with communion has the service beginning with the Introit an the Confession added just before the Proper Preface on Page 24.

The *Gloria Patri* is correctly a part of the Introit; so any changes with the introit may take the Gloria into consideration. If you use an Introit surrounded by hymns you could eliminate the Gloria Patri. There are a number of Trinitarian hymns that substitute well here. 244 is an example.

The *Kyrie* is an old litany prayer for mercy in all the affairs of life. Too often it leaves the impression of a confession of sin in our services. The ALC’s *Service Book and Hymnal* and the *Worship Supplement* have restored the Kyrie to its original function. In our circles, education alone will effect this restoration. Luther’s

Kyrie, Hymn 6, or another hymn that expresses the same idea might be substituted. When this is done, it may be wise to include the Gloria Patri as a spoken section of the Introit and proceed directly into the Kyrie.

The *Gloria in Excelsis* is one of the greatest hymns of the church. Because it is we will be reluctant to replace it even though it is long and seems repetitious at times. Hymns 237 and 238 are based on the Gloria and are fine occasional replacements. The chanting (for the man with an adequate voice) or the speaking of the opening phrase is a time-honored custom which has merit. The congregation does not repeat the opening phrase if this course is taken.

*The Creed* is another form of the Ordinary that does not lend itself to change. Luther's version of the Nicene Creed, Hymn 251, might be substituted on Trinity Sunday, but his melody is difficult and the old Wisconsin Synod melody has a tediously wide range. The simpler variation of the Apostles Creed, Hymn 252, might more easily be used. The use of the Athanasian Creed on Trinity Sunday carries with it a long tradition. The pastor must be the judge to ascertain whether or not the congregation will benefit from reading it.

One area of the Ordinary where changes may be easily added is the *greeting of the sermon*. The traditional Grace, Mercy, and Peace," carries with it the highest thoughts but may be a little worn. Seasonal greetings have merit. "Grace and Peace from him which is, and which was, and which is to come," fits well in Advent, "Arise, shine, for your Light is come," adds an extra Epiphany touch during that season, "Behold the Lamb of God," hits the Lenten focus. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," is the victory song of Easter.

*There seems to be a movement afoot to get out from under the repetition of the Lord's Prayer.* To this we cannot agree, although the Litany on the Lord's Prayer (cf. Addendum) might be used once in awhile. If you find the Lord's Prayer becoming repetitious, try using another closing prayer for your meetings, and organizations.

The *Sanctus* and the *Nunc Dimittis* in the Service with Communion are not really used so often that they need change. Several hymns might be substituted for both: 249, and 246 for the former, 137 for the latter.

### **VIII. CHANGES IN ALTERNATE SERVICES**

The changes we have suggested for the most part are concerned with the Sunday morning service. They are offered for use if you are looking to alleviate some of the sameness and repetition of the service with or without communion. There is however, something to be said for substituting alternate services rather than alternate forms to accomplish that goal. We offer as a suggestion the occasional use of the Matins and the Service of the Word for Sunday morning worship.

To initiate either service will take plenty of pre-planning and practice if you intend to use it in its complete form. Especially the Matins with its chanting needs to be rehearsed by the Choir and the organist. The Service of the Word is primarily a service of speaking and hymn singing, but here, too, it is essential to have good leadership. In order for either service to be adequately learned by the congregation you may have to use it quite often. For instance, Matins could be used once a month on a Sunday without Communion. The Service of the Word might be used for all the Festivals without communion. With adequate leadership, frequent use, and an understanding of the use of the service being used, the congregation may readily adapt itself to these variations in worship.

### **IX. CHANGE IN THE WORK SCHEDULE**

It is easy to talk about the benefits of relieving the repetition and the sameness of the service. It's also easy to suggest ways to achieve this relief. It's not so easy, however, to carry out these changes. *This paper would not be complete if it failed to warn that to effectively add innovations in the service, extra hours of preparation will necessarily be added to the pastor's already busy schedule.* No matter what changes you make, you will need to find resource material if you are at all concerned with saving time. If you see any benefit in the unified service you will have to schedule time during the summer to begin your planning. If you decide to begin writing your prayers, or to use a litany you will need to put aside extra time for that. *Most changes, if they are to be made effectively, require extra printing.* Notes in the bulletin ought to be made for almost every change. Few hymns, litanies, Introit or Gradual hymns, responsive readings, or new orders of service will require extra printing to a greater or lesser extent. There also exists the danger that the initial enthusiasm will wear off. A

certain amount of *stick-to-itiveness* is essential when one begins to change the forms of the service. You may find that once you have located your source material, once you have become used to writing prayers, once the congregation has learned a new service, and once you have found a little secretarial help (be that help your wife or teenage daughter), the work which goes along with these suggested changes will diminish.

### **CONCLUSION**

In order to use the suggestions that have been offered in this paper a number of things are required. We will need to be convinced that occasional changes are necessary. We will need to find extra time to plan changes and put them into effect. We will need source material to help us in our preparation. We will need some form of congregational education so that our members are not confused or disturbed by the changes we've made. We will need patience while our congregations are accepting the innovations that we feel are beneficial. If we do not feel that changes are necessary there is little point in effecting them. If our work schedule offers precious little extra time, it may be necessary to refrain from making changes lest they become haphazard and not adequately planned. If we lack source material our efforts may lack the dignity which public worship of God calls for. Without congregational education our changes are likely to be met with resistance or come to benefit only the pastor and the organist who understand the changes. And without pastoral patience we lose the purpose of change: the attempt at improving the worship life of the souls God has called us to serve.

The Lutheran Church has throughout the centuries attempted to walk the narrow road between the blind traditionalism of the Roman church and the equally blind anti-traditionalism of the Protestant churches. *If we are to maintain the best of both worlds " the rich tradition of the Christian Church and the freshness of Christian freedom, it is essential that we pass the beat on to our congregations.* By our leadership in worship, by our efforts in education, and by our sensitivity to the Christian who worships in the framework of a liturgical service, let us maintain the high standard of public worship that is our Lutheran heritage.

### **ADDENDUM**

#### **INTROIT FOR CHRISTMAS DAY**

From: *Contemporary Introits for the Revised Church Year*

by Leslie F. Brandt

We could not come to Him, so our great God has come to us. He made Himself known to our world through His Son. He has broken through the darkness and distortion of our sin. He has prepared a way of salvation for us. He came by way of the stable and the manger and the womb of a woman, but He came to be our Savior and King. Let us sing our praises unto God, for He has done a marvelous and miraculous thing in our midst! Amen.

#### **A LITANY OF THE LORD'S PRAYER**

V. O God, who lovingly regards us as Your children in Christ, we pray:

R. OUR FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

V. Help us to know You and grace to believe Your Gospel

R. HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

V. Graciously extend Your kingdom of grace In this world,

R. THY KINGDOM COME.

V. Make us as zealous to do Your will as are the angels and saints in heaven.

R. THY WILL BE DONE ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

V. Grant us truly grateful hearts for all Your bounty.

R. GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

V. Be merciful to us who daily sin much; help us heartily to forgive those who sin against us.

R. AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US.

V. The devil seeks to destroy our souls, keep us from being deceived.

E. LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION.

V. Keep us safe and so preserve our faith that we may be with Christ eternally.

R. DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

V. For all these mercies we look to you who rules the universe, whose power fulfills our prayers, and to whom we give all honor and glory.

R. FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER.

AMEN.

### WORSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

- 1 On an ascending scale from 1 to 10, where does the Sunday morning Church Service rank in your religious life.
2. Would you say you go to church more to get or to give?
3. Outside of the spiritual message, would you say you've been favorably or unfavorably impressed when you visited the church services of other denominations?
4. On an ascending scale of one to ten where does music rank in your life? In your worship life?
5. If you had a choice, which would be the one element you would eliminate in the Sunday worship service? The one element you would retain?
6. As Christian worshippers, what frustrates you more in your worship life: the sameness, the formality, the lack of understanding?
7. Would you rather have church be a comfortable easy chair or a jolting electric chair?
8. If you had a good friend who you wanted to come to the knowledge of his Savior, which of the following would cause you to hesitate to bring him to church with you: strict teachings, long sermons, formal worship service?
9. In each of the following groups, choose the one you feel the church service appeals to most:
  - a. blue collar, White collar;
  - b. long time Lutherans, new converts
  - c. old, young;
  - d. pastors, laypeople.
10. If you were getting married and you wanted your Wisconsin Synod friend to sing ! "We've Only Just Begun" and your Pastor said no, what arguments would you give to try to change his mind?

### SERMON SERIES

Trinity Sunday	INVOCATION	2 Thess 2:13-17	The Trinity and Our Salvation
Trinity I	CONFESSION	Jer 3:20-25	We have sinned
Trinity II	ABSOLUTION	1 Jn 2:1-2, 12	An Advocate with the Father
Trinity III	INTROIT – GLORIA PATRI	Ps 100:1-5	Enter His gates with Thanksgiving
Trinity IV	GLORIA IN EXCELSIS	Php 2:9-11	Every Knee Should Bow
Trinity V	SCRIPTURE READING	Jn 8:31	Continue in My Word
Trinity VI	SALUTATION	Col 4:2-6	The Relationship Between People and Pastor

Trinity VII	CREED	Jn 9:22-38	Confession Brings Two Reactions
Trinity VIII	SERMON	1 Co 1:18-24	The Preaching of the Cross
Trinity IX	VOTUM	Jn 14:27	The Peace of Christ
Trinity X	OFFERING OF GIFTS	2 Co 8:1-10	The Motivation to Christian Giving
Trinity IX	OFFERING OF PRAYERS	Mt 7:7-11	Prayers Requested and Answered
Trinity XII	BENEDICTION	Nu 6:23-26	

### DEVOTION SERIES

September	Invocation	Mt 28:19
October	Confession	Isa 55:6-7
November	Introit – Gloria Patri	Ps 100:1-5
December	Gloria In Excelsis	Lk 2:8-14
January	Collect – Prayer	Mt 7:7-11
February	The Word – Readings and Sermon	1 Co 1:18-24
March	The Offering	2 Co 8:1-10
April	Communion	1 Jn 1:7
May	Benediction	Nu 6:23-26

### PROPERS FOR EPIPHANY - 1977

#### **January 16 – The Second Sunday After Epiphany**

Focus: Jesus As Disciple and Teacher

O.T. Psalm 34:1-12

Gos. John 7:14-18

Introit: Rise up, your light has come and the glory of the Lord shines over you. Look around and see the people coming from afar. Let your hearts be united in love and enriched with the knowledge of Christ. In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Collect: Almighty God, you sent your Son to proclaim your kingdom and to teach as one with authority. Anoint us with the power of your Spirit that we, too, may bring good news to the afflicted, bind up the brokenhearted, and proclaim liberty to the captive. Through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gradual: How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (Hymn 343 vs. 2)

#### **January 23 — The Third Sunday After Epiphany**

Focus: The Presence of Jesus Hallows the Home

Epi. Ephesians 6:2-4

Gos. John 2:1-11

Introit: Rise up, your Light has come and the glory of the Lord shines over you. O thank the Lord for his kindness and the wonders he has done for us. He sends his Word into our homes and gives us unity and peace.

Collect: God, our father, you have commanded us to honor our parents and to bring up our children and you have shown us the ways of Jesus with his family and friends. Give us love and respect for one another in our own families, in the great family of your church, and in all the human race. Through Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gradual: How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (Hymn 343 vs. 3)

### **January 30 - The Fourth Sunday After Epiphany**

Focus: Jesus the Creator of Faith

Epi. Hebrews 11:1-13

Gos. Matthew 6:1-13

Introit: Rise up, your Light has come and the glory of the Lord shines over you. O thank the Lord for his kindness and the wonders he has done for us. He sends his Word to heal us and he works faith in our hearts.

Collect: Lord God, you showed your glory and led men to faith by the actions of your Son in his ministry. Give us now the gladness, which he brought and lead us also to perfect faith In Jesus who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Gradual: How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (Hymn 343 vs. 4)

### **February 6 - The Fifth Sunday After Epiphany**

Focus: Jesus Delivers From Danger and Despair

Epi. Hebrews 11:23-40

Gos. Matthew 8:23-27

Introit: Rise up, your Light has come and the glory of the Lord shines over you. O thank the Lord for his kindness and the wonders he has done for us. He calms the storm and brings his people to a quiet shelter.

Collect: Almighty God, you know that we are set among great dangers and that we think our knowledge and our power are greater than they are. Protect us, and in ways beyond our strength guide us through all dangers and despair. Through Jesus...

Gradual: How Lovely Shines the Morning Star (Hymn 343 vs. 5)

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