

**GOD FOR YOU**  
**in the**  
**DIVINE SERVICE**

**An Introduction and Explanation of Worship**  
**and the**  
***Lutheran Service Book's, "Divine Service"***

Pastor Tim A. Sims  
Oklahoma Avenue Lutheran Church & School  
Milwaukee, WI

***Some general terms:***

The Divine Service:

The name of the worship service we use holds *great* significance. God does powerful things for us in the worship service. He serves us in giving us the gifts of His forgiveness and new life in Christ through the power of His Word and Sacrament. We then respond in service to Him through thanksgiving and praise.

Liturgy:

Liturgy, or “order / arrangement”, further is defined in the Lutheran Confessions as the “public service” within which God comes to His people with His gifts.

Halleluiah or Alleluia:

Hebrew for “Praise the Lord.”

Hosanna:

Derived from the Hebrew term meaning “Rescue us now!”

Amen:

This is a term of Hebrew origin meaning “true and certain” or “verily, it shall be so.”

***The Service of the Word***

The Invocation (p. 167):

The word “invocation” is *Latin* for “to call upon”. As the pastor makes the sign of the cross and says, “In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit”, we are calling upon God to be present with us as we worship. This is also a reminder that God comes to us when we are baptized with these same words. For this reason it is also appropriate (though not mandatory) for worshipers to make the sign of the cross as well. (Matthew 28:19)

Confession of Sin & Absolution (p. 167):

In this portion of the worship we together admit to our sins and ask God for His gift of forgiveness. The pastor announces forgiveness through the authority of Jesus Christ and the power of His sacrificial death on the cross. (I John 1:8-9; Matthew 18:18; John 20:19-23)

The Introit (p. 168):

From the Latin word meaning “entrance”, this is basically a *Psalm* directly from Scripture that fits with the theme proclaimed by the readings assigned for the day. The *Introit* is a joyful proclamation of God’s great deeds in response to His forgiveness in Christ. It is typically read or chanted responsively between pastor and people.

The Kyrie (p. 168):

This portion of the service is explained in its name: *Kyrie eleison* is a Greek phrase meaning “Lord, have mercy.” Following the Confession & Absolution and the Introit, the Kyrie is a liturgical prayer thanking God for His forgiveness and asking us to help us in every need. (Mark 10:46-52)

The Hymn of Praise (p. 170-172):

This is a time for the worshippers to praise God for the miraculous things He has done for us. The *Gloria in Excelsis* (Glory to God in the Highest) and *This is the Feast* are important scriptural teachings set to music. (*Gloria in Excelsis* Luke 2:14; John 1:29 *This Is the Feast* Revelation 5:12-13; 19:5-9)

The Collect of the Day (p. 172):

*Collect* comes from a Latin word meaning “gathered together.” This brief prayer is made up of promises from God that give those who pray comfort and confidence in God’s saving promises. (The Collect begins with a mutual greeting that comes from II Timothy 4:22)

Scripture Readings (p. 172-173):

We read Scripture from the Old Testament and the New Testament. The New Testament readings include an *Epistle* and *Gospel* reading. The *Epistle* is a book of the New Testament other than the Gospels. The *Gospel* is one of the four books in the New Testament that is a “bios”, or narrative of the life of Jesus Christ. In honor of our Savior, the congregation stands for the *Gospel* reading.

The Alleluia and Verse (p. 173):

These are sung as the congregation stands for the *Gospel* reading. Both are directly from Scripture. The *Alleluia* comes from John 6:68 and reminds us that Christ is the only source for our salvation. The verse sung for the season of *Lent* is from Joel 2:13 and reminds us of our dire need to repent of our sins and God’s gracious forgiveness given in the bloody sacrifice of Christ. (John 6:68; Joel 2:13)

The Creed (p. 174-175):

The word “creed” is from the *Latin* for “I believe.” When we say the creed we are standing together as one proclaiming that we trust in God and the great deeds He alone is able to do to save us.

The Offering & Offertory (p. 175-176):

Everything we have is a gift from God. When we “tithes” (give back to God 10% of what He has given us) and/or give our offerings we are merely giving back to God something that is already His. The “offertory” is a short song thanking God for the blessings He has given us as individuals and as a church. (Psalm 107:36-38; 116:12-13, 17-19)

The Prayer of the Church:

It is both pleasing to God and beneficial to us when we bring our requests, concerns, and thanksgivings to God in prayer. We have a God who promises to hear our prayers through our mediator and Savior Jesus Christ. (I Timothy 2:1-6)

## ***The Service of the Sacrament***

### The Preface and Sanctus (p. 177):

This is a dialogue between the pastor and congregation that begins the liturgy of the Lord's Supper. This worship practice dates back to the second century. *Sanctus* is a Latin word meaning "holy" and is a fitting response drawn from the song of the angels in Isaiah 6:3. (*Preface* II Timothy 4:22; Colossians 3:1; Psalm 136 *Sanctus* Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9)

### The Prayer of Thanksgiving and Lord's Prayer (p. 178):

The *Preface* ends with a short prayer of thanksgiving praising God for the forgiveness and salvation He has given us through Jesus' death and resurrection and requesting that God be powerfully present in the sacrament; the powerful gift of the Lord's Supper. We close this prayer with the prayer that Christ Himself taught us to pray. (Matthew 6:9-13)

### The Words of Institution (Words of our Lord) (p. 179):

Christ instituted the Lord's Supper when He spoke these words to His disciples while celebrating the Passover meal with them the night before His crucifixion. With these words, God does a powerful thing: His body and blood are really in, with and under the elements of bread and wine. This powerful gift gives the recipient forgiveness of sins and the promise of salvation through faith in Christ's sacrificial death. This is repeated, in so many words, as the communicants receive the supper.

(Matthew 26:26-30; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:17-21; I Corinthians 11:23-24)

### The Pax Domini and the Agnus Dei (p. 180):

The *Pax Domini* is Latin for "peace of the Lord". This is a sharing of the peace that God so richly gives through Christ. Just as Christ came to the disciples bringing them His peace, He comes to us now in the sacrament giving us His peace. The *Agnus Dei*, which is Latin for "Lamb of God", is made up of the words of John the Baptist that pointed his disciples to Jesus. As part of the communion liturgy we are praising Christ who is present in his body and blood and asking Him to have mercy on us and grant us His peace. (John 20:19; John 1:29)

### The Post-Communion Canticle and Collect (p. 181-182):

A canticle is a biblical song, other than a psalm. For example, one of the post-communion canticles is the Song of Simeon (*Nunc Dimitis* "now dismiss") and is the song Simeon sang when he saw the baby Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:29-32). These canticles praise God for the powerful thing He has done for us in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper—forgiveness of sins. The collect is a prayer thanking God for this gift and asking Him to continue to do His work in our lives through the continual power of His sacrament. (Luke 2:29-32)

### The Benediction (p. 183):

The benediction, or "blessing", is a sending of sorts. The pastor speaks as God's messenger, sending Christ's redeemed people into the world with His promise of care, favor, and peace. (Numbers 6:22-27)