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THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP

WORSHIP THROUGH STORYTELLING

I believe that worship is a celebration of the Gospel. Thus, worship should be Trinitarian, yet Christ-Centered. Through Scripture readings and the proclamation of the word, worship retells God's story. The ancient and biblical four-fold structure of entrance, proclamation, response, and sending, along with the rhythms of the liturgical calendar and the readings of the Revised Common Lectionary, allows modern-day worshippers to enter into God's never-ending story. Through the sacraments of communion and baptism, we remember God's saving acts and live out the ideals of responsibility, forgiveness, and community. I believe that worship is a timeless narrative that should draw upon the traditions of the past while speaking with freshness and relativity to our present time.

WORSHIP THROUGH CREATIVITY

I believe that worship should not be viewed as a type of performance, but rather as a genuine expression of praise and thanksgiving. I see worship as a creative endeavor through which all types of art enhance the praise of God and the devotion of God's people. Music contributes significantly to worship, as does the splendor of visual art. God's story can be seen in the colors and symbols of the Christian year, as well as in the beauty of paintings, sculptures, and architecture. More modern additions of expression, such as dance and altar design, also contribute exquisitely to the worship of God. Beauty can be found not only in artistic offerings, but also in the genuineness of our relationships, and in the spirit through which our artistic creations are conceived and presented.

WORSHIP THROUGH DIVERISTY

I believe that worship should embody Biblical, historical, and theological truths. In this way, worship can teach us about our faith. For worship to speak to all people, it must reflect the diversity of the body of Christ. Worship should be ecumenical, multi-cultural, intergenerational, and fully inclusive. In worship, as in the Kingdom of God, all are valued. Worship should also reflect a wide range of emotions, ranging from joy to grief, so that it more accurately reflects our human experience. Finally, I believe that worship should be dialogical and multi-directional. In worship, we have frank conversations with God through prayers, Scripture readings, and the sermon. Likewise, we have conversations with one another through confession, the sacraments, and the passing of the peace.

WORSHIP THROUGH WORK

I believe that worship should be fully participatory. Liturgy means “the work of the people,” and the emphasis we place on our role in worship directly reflects and informs our relationship with God. Corporate worship is a vital part of personal holiness. In worship we are strengthened and our faith is nourished and restored. But worship also challenges us and gives us the opportunity to explore and question our beliefs. Through worship, we develop and refine our relationships with God and one another, and in worship we become a part of the communion of the saints. Worship transforms us and brings about renewal in our lives, the church, and the world. Therefore, worship should inspire us toward compassion and justice so that we can be the hands and feet of Christ.