

**THE COMMON ORDER OF MORNING
WORSHIP: EMBODIED IN FIVE GRADED
SERVICES BASED ON A COMMON
ORDER WITH A VIEW TO PROXIMATE
UNIFORMITY OF WORSHIP**

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The Common Order of Morning Worship: Embodied in Five Graded Services Based on a Common Order with a View to Proximate Uniformity of Worship by Edward Hungerford

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EDWARD HUNGERFORD

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The
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EMBODIED IN FIVE GRADED SERVICES
BASED ON A COMMON ORDER

WITH A VIEW TO

Proximate Uniformity of Worship

PREPARED BY

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And The Five Services Approved

BY THE

Conference of Congregational Churches

OF

Chittenden County, Vermont

For the Use of its Churches

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A Preface with Suggestions to Pastors

The services here presented are the result of serious study and thought, on the subject of public worship, begun eighteen years ago, in the course of which I have given attention to numerous ancient liturgies of the Catholic Church and have examined all the leading Protestant liturgies and many of the books of worship put forth by pastors of non-liturgical churches. By these investigations I have been confirmed in the conviction, that the present movement, in these last churches, towards liturgical forms will not reach its purpose by the imitation of any existing liturgy. Its aim can only be reached by means of a teachable spirit, which merges individual prejudices in a reverent appreciation of all that the church has prized in the past, and in a readiness to adopt suggestions from her best experiences, while it is free to mould the elements of worship, which come to us from manifold sources, into a liturgy which expresses the deepest and richest experiences of Protestant Christianity in its life of to-day.

These services are the outcome of such studies and of this conviction. In their fullest form they present, as nearly as may be, my ideal of protestant worship, so far as that ideal is attainable under present conditions.

The presentation of five orders is prompted by the need of adaption of services to churches in differing stages of liturgical advancement. They have been prepared on a single basis, or a common order, believed to represent the natural progress of thought and feeling in worship. This common order and the recurrence of the same elements in the different services constitute their approach to a uniformity, which, for various reasons, is not now attainable, but may be promoted by placing in the hands of congregations a series, in which one order is carried through all the numbers, while each successive number introduces new features.

The educational value of such a series is manifest. While each church provisionally adopts that service which is best suited to its needs, the series offers to a growing sentiment of worship additional means of expression.

Attention is particularly requested to the following features:

The services are arranged with reference to a natural progress of thought and feeling towards a climax in the Pastoral Prayer or Prayers and the following Doxology.

(1) The Period of Preparation for Worship extends from the opening Organ Meditation to the close of the Lord's Prayer. (2) The Period of more Impassioned Worship extends from the close of the Lord's Prayer to the close of the Pastoral Prayer, each element heightening the spirit of worship until the climax is reached in the Doxology from Rev. 7:12. (3) The remainder of the service belongs to the sermon and the dismissal of the congregation.

The Impression of Length occasioned by seeing the elements printed is misleading. Service No. 5 is easily included in the one and one-half hour with a sermon of thirty to forty minutes.

The services aim to secure Audiable Participation of the congregation in worship by responses, as far as possible under diverse degrees of readiness on the part of the people. In this matter experience and observation assure me that whenever the service is judiciously chosen, the people are more ready to do their part than pastors are to trust them. In this respect I have never been disappointed, but have been surprised at the heartiness and promptness of congregations.

Some preparation is needed. It is advisable to devote a mid-week meeting, or other occasion, to a careful exposition of the meaning and relation of parts in the service, and of its whole spirit, calling attention to details in the participation of the people.

The same precautions should be taken with the choir. The pastor should go through the service with his choir in private, rehearsing with the choir its parts and insisting on promptness in coming in on its parts, and on their duty to lead the congrega-

tion in its parts. In such services the importance of the choir is greatly enhanced.

Emphasis should be placed on the character of Hymns and Anthems, as required in different parts of the services.

The Hymn of Aspiration should distinctly embody such sentiments as are expressed in those hymns, the first lines of which are given in the back part of the book, and the same is true of the Hymn of Praise. The Choir Call to Praise should second the Pastoral Call to Praise by as distinct a call upon the people to praise God.

If a Church will use a Processional Hymn before the Sentences it will be best to make it a Hymn of Aspiration, omitting this Hymn from the place provided for it. The Hymns used in the Procession are too often unsuited to the opening of a Service.

The Chief Anthems may range from praise and adoration through a great variety of themes, to suit the Minister's immediate purpose, which will also give an undertone to the whole service by means of his selections.

There are Three Critical Points in the services.

(1) The succession of parts which specially constitute the season of praise, (the Pastoral Call to Praise, the Choir Call to Praise, the Congregational Hymn of Praise), will afford a deeper impression if they follow each other promptly, and without interruption by giving out the hymn. For this it is earnestly recommended that the Hymn of Praise be posted on a tablet in sight of the congregation, and to this may well be added the Hymn of Aspiration. The hymn before the sermon may be given out, and even read by the minister.

(2) It would seem superfluous to emphasize the importance of the Pastoral Prayer, and yet it is to be feared that the almost exclusive attention given by pastors to the preparation of their sermons often blinds them to the fact that this prayer, in which the minister gathers up the petitions of the people to present them to God, is the great act of the whole service, and requires the pastor's best and most earnest exercise of thought and feeling and utterance.

(3) The impressions of the service will be greatly

enhanced by faithful observance on the part of the congregation of the prescribed attitudes. This is particularly true of the close where the congregation, still standing, engages for a moment in silent prayer before it is dismissed by an Organ Chord. Rightly conducted this becomes a serious moment in the service.

Flexibility and voluntariness have been consulted so far as consistent with a definite spirit and a fixed order. All the Hymns, Responsive Readings, Scripture Lessons and Anthems are open to choice, and abundant provision is made for extemporaneous prayer, while in the few instances in which fixed forms are prescribed a choice is usually given between alternates. The charge of sameness or of bondage to fixed forms finds here but slight application. It is also to be noted that intermediate services, between the five of the series, may easily be secured by the introduction of some part belonging to the Minister into a lower number from a higher. For example, into a lower number may be introduced, from number three, The Pastoral Call to Praise or the Sentences or the Prayer of St. Chrysostom, without disturbing the order, and therefore without lack of uniformity.

Pastors who give Childrens' Sermons may best introduce them at close of the Notices.

Throughout this book great care has been taken to refer to their sources all prayers and petitions, which have not been specially prepared for this work or for the American Book of Church Services.

May one who has devoted much time and labor to the preparation of these services be pardoned the mention of these details, and be permitted the hope that his labor will not be without good results in the worship of the churches.

EDWARD HUNGERFORD.

Burlington, Vermont.

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