

**Guidelines for Worship  
Of the  
Presbytery of Grand Canyon**  
*Reviewed & revised February 28, 2007*

Worship of the Presbytery of Grand Canyon shall reflect the distinctive character of Reformed worship in a manner that engages the variety of our people. The Directory of Worship provides the necessary guidelines and inspiration for patterns of worship. There are a few necessary elements that are part of our planning and it is the expectation of the Theology and Worship Committee of PGC that those engaged in the leadership of worship will review and abide by these guidelines that we may better glorify God.

**The Order of Worship:**

Will follow the basic order of the Directory for Worship

**Biblical Text:**

Ordinarily the common lectionary of the day should be followed. (For a variety of presentation and interpretation, refer to Page 3, regarding music, drama, dance, etc.)

**Choice of Preacher:**

1. The retiring Moderator shall always preach at the January meeting
2. The guest speaker at the November Presbytery meeting will ordinarily preach.
3. Other preachers are chosen from within the Presbytery who model excellence, solid exegesis, variety and creativity of style, and who reflect the diversity within our churches.

**Use of Language:**

Language used in the worship of God in our Presbytery reflects a conscious attempt to be faithful to God, the biblical record, our tradition of faith, and the variety of people who worship and their experiences. While we recognize differences of opinion about the use of language in worship, all language with regard to human beings should be intentionally inclusive. Consequently, the *NRSV translation should be used in worship*. Other translations used and the reasons for their use, shall be noted. In reference to God, worship leaders should be sensitive to the fact that participants in worship hold diverse and sincere points of view about appropriate forms of addressing God. The Book of Order provides helpful guidance for worship leaders in the crafting of their language. That guidance is listed below:

**G-4.0403**

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership, and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed, or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church. (G-9.0104ff)

**W-1.2005**

The church in every culture through the ages has used and adapted Biblical symbols, images, stories, and words in worship. The church's use of this language has not always been authentic and appropriate. For the Reformed tradition in its various expressions the historical and cultural use of language proves to be authentic when it reflects the Biblical witness to God in Jesus Christ.

Language proves to be appropriate when a worshipping community can claim it as its own when offering praise and thanksgiving to God. Appropriate language by its nature:

- a. is more expressive than rationalistic,
- b. builds up and persuades as well as informs and describes,
- c. creates ardor as well as order,
- d. is the utterance of the whole community of faith as well as the devotion of individuals.

Appropriate language seeks to recognize the variety of traditions which reflect Biblical truth authentically in their own forms of speech and actions. In doing so, the church honors and properly uses the language of the tradition. The church is, nonetheless, free to be innovative in seeking appropriate language for worship. While respecting time-honored forms and set orders, the church may reshape them to respond freely to the leading of God's Spirit in every age.

### **W-1.2006**

#### **Inclusive Language**

- a. Since the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is a family of peoples united in Jesus Christ, appropriate language for its worship should display the rich variety of these peoples. To the extent that forms, actions, languages, or settings of worship exclude the expression of diverse cultures represented in the church or deny emerging needs and identities of believers, that worship is not faithful to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

#### **Diverse Language**

- b. The church shall strive in its worship to use language about God which is intentionally as diverse as the Bible and our theological traditions. The church is committed to using language in such a way that all members of the community of faith may recognize themselves to be included, addressed, and equally cherished before God. Seeking to bear witness to the whole world, the church struggles to use language which is faithful to Biblical truth and which neither purposely nor inadvertently excludes people because of gender, color, or other circumstances of life.

#### **Themes:**

While dictated primarily by the text, themes should also reflect the seasons of the church year and/or significant events relating to the presbytery.

#### **Music, Drama, Dance**

Choirs or other special music may be recruited by the worship committee, with special attention to the host congregation, but not limited to the host congregation. The lectionary passages should be given to music providers with the request that anthem or solo relate to those themes. In order to vary the means by which the scriptures can be opened within worship, participation of children and youth, ethnic and minority persons should be considered, as well as use of space, instrumental as well as vocal music, dance, drama and dramatic reading.

Hymns should be chosen or approved by the Theology & Worship committee to develop the theme of worship dictated by the scripture passages. Hymns are ordinarily from the Presbyterian Hymnal (blue book) and any piece to be used that is not in the hymnal of the host church should be used with copyright permission obtained and noted. When practical, we encourage the printing of the melody line along with the text of sung responses in the order of service.

#### **Liturgists:**

Liturgists should be chosen by the Theology & Worship committee with attention to good quality of reading and diversity of presbytery membership.

**Visual and other non-verbal means of focus for Worship:**

The use of items that speak to the texts and theme of worship is encouraged. These may be borrowed or created for the occasion. For example: in Lent, a chalice lying on the table with red cloth spilling out; a purple fabric draped on the cross; for baptism, a huge clear bowl of water in visual importance on the font; for mission, a spotlight shining on a revolving globe; for advent, a manger.

**Offering:**

Ordinarily an offering is not to be taken except by action of Council.