



First Presbyterian
CHURCH of VIRGINIA BEACH

Worship Element Explanation:
Learn how we worship & follow our service as we gather around, proclaim, respond to, & are sent out by the Word of God.

The Gathering	Our worship services are centered on the Word of God. We gather together in the presence of the triune God prepared to worship and glorify the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
	Gathering Hymn: Sacred music helps us learn about and praise God. The organ's powerful sound enhances the grandeur we feel upon entering God's house. Music commands our attention. We begin worship by singing part of a hymn seated in contemplation and preparation. <i>Use the time before the service to note announcements, prayer requests, and lectionary readings for the day.</i>
	Greeting: Worship is a shared experience. During the Greeting, one of the pastors shares announcements, and then we greet one another in Christ's name. <i>Extend your hand. Say "Peace be with you" to those around you.</i>
	Voluntary and Introit: These are musical invitations led by our organist and choir to begin formal worship and continue preparing our hearts to praise God. <i>Use this time to be still and think about God.</i>
	Call to Worship: We believe God calls us to worship as God's people. This is a spoken and responsive invitation to start worship. <i>When prompted, read the bold words printed in the bulletin.</i>
	Opening Prayer: Prayer punctuates everything we do in worship. The pastor offers this prayer on everyone's behalf. During prayers, you may choose to bow your head and close your eyes or you may look upward to heaven. Just try to focus on God!
	Processional Hymn: We stand to sing joyful praises to our God as the choir enters. <i>Reading the verses in a hymnal can be tricky if you don't read music. Ask a neighbor if you need help finding your place.</i>
	Call to and Prayer of Confession: The pastor invites the congregation to confess and then leads this unison prayer. We all make mistakes as human beings, so we use this time to apologize to God for what we've done wrong. We believe God listens to us, regardless of our wrongs, so we ask for forgiveness for our own and the world's sins. We then continue in silent, personal prayer.
	Kyrie (Eleison): This is a song we sing to ask for forgiveness after we have prayed specifically. The title is Greek for "Lord (have mercy)." Singing makes us ready to receive the Gospel afresh.
	Declaration of Pardon: The pastor shares the Good News that God's grace is sufficient for all. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven for everything!
	Congregational Response, Gloria Patri: This is a song we sing in great joy as we respond to the assurance of pardon. The title is Latin for "Glory to the Father."

The Word	We focus on the written Word of God in Scripture and proclamation. At least monthly, we celebrate God's Word sealed in our hearts by the sacraments.
	The Sacrament of Holy Baptism: On special Sundays upon Session approval, our pastors administer Baptism to children of members or newly confessing adults who want to join the Christian Church. Baptism celebrates God's claim on our lives through the promise of Jesus Christ, as we are all children of God.
	Word for Children: This is the particular time for children to come forward to the chancel to learn about the faith: God's love; God's Word in Scripture; how to praise and pray to God together. Adults can sign and pass the pew pad during this time.
	Prayer for Illumination: We believe the Holy Spirit allows us to understand Scripture. Praying before we read reminds us that God guides us through the Word. Scripture Lessons: The Bible is the written Word, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ. We listen to one or two lessons from the Old and New Testaments, typically from the New Revised Standard Version in our pews.
	Choir Anthem: When the choir sings, we can hear God's Word for us in a new way. Music is not a performance in worship, rather it is an offering to God.
	Sermon: The pastor preaches on Scripture and proclaims God's Word for the congregation in the here and now.
The Response	Having heard God's Word, we respond in song, statement, prayer, and offering.
	Responsive Hymn: We stand to sing to show our praise to God for teaching us through the Word proclaimed.
	Affirmation of Faith: We remain standing and together confess what we believe as the body of Christ. This is often the Apostles' Creed or something from the PC(USA) <i>Book of Confessions</i> .
	Morning Prayers and the Lord's Prayer: The pastor offers prayers of praise, thanksgiving, and healing for others and the world. These prayers lift up timely concerns for the congregation. They end with the Lord's Prayer in unison.
	Offering: This is the time for adults and children alike to respond to God's Word by giving money back to God to support the church's missions. The Offertory is sacred music offered by our choir to help us draw closer to God as we consider God's generosity and how we respond to it through our actions.
	Doxology & Prayer of Thanksgiving: Everyone stands up to sing praise (Psalm 100) and give thanks to God for our blessings and ability to offer back ourselves.
	The Sacrament of Holy Communion: Typically on the first Sunday of each month, we celebrate Communion together. The pastors offer the words of institution from the Lord's Table, and the ruling elders serve the elements to the congregation in the pews. This is the <i>Body of Christ</i> and <i>Cup of Salvation</i> given by Christ to all.
The Sending	We believe that the real service begins for us when we leave worship in the church. Having heard God's word, we are sent out into the world to share it with others.
	Recessional Hymn: We stand to sing as we prepare to leave, led by God's Word.
	(Charge and) Benediction: The pastor may offer a charge, a command echoing lessons from the Bible (e.g., "Go in peace.") The pastor always offers a benediction, a blessing reminding us of God's presence with us. It is appropriate to look at the pastor or to bow your head to receive the benediction. Amen means "may it be so!"
	Voluntary (and Choral Response): Music concludes our time together as we are sent out into the world by God's Word to love God and serve neighbor in response to God's grace in our lives. Thank you for worshipping here. The Lord be with you.