

The most important thing about the character of our worship is that it is directed to God, not toward us. Christians are formed in dialogue with God through liturgy, the form and structure of worship. "Liturgy" literally means "the work of the people." Liturgy has sustained the Church for 2,000 years and it continues to sustain us because it is God-centered.

That's the "traditional" part of the Traditional Blend worship service (8:30 a.m. Sundays) and the "ancient" part of the Ancient-Future service (10:00 a.m. Sundays). The "Blend" part means that forms can be adapted, and the "Future" part is that God is always calling us forward. Music and technology can change, while the message remains the same as it was from the beginning.

Liturgy is two-edged sword, however. The idea is to make sections of a liturgical worship service the same every week so that a person can have spiritual depth and meaning without having to bury their nose in a book, so that we can hear when God speaks. Repetition, however, can also make worship too familiar. Repetition, however, can also make worship too familiar.

Like the "You might be a Lutheran if...." joke: You go to a Star Wars movie and when a character says, "May the Force be with you" you have to stifle the urge to say, "And also with you." We can put our minds on autopilot and walk out of a service having never been engaged in worship.

Part of the difference between engagement and indifference is a matter of worship planning and leadership. Part is a matter of individual focus. Liturgy always takes work, and the goal is to become more engaged even as we become more comfortable.

Robert Webber, the professor and author who developed the Ancient-Future worship model spent his entire career teaching young people in evangelical colleges. His ideas grew from the hunger young evangelicals expressed for a depth of liturgy they did not find in their home churches.

We're hopeful that our worship formats will allow lots of different kinds of people to realize the presence of the living God and worship from their hearts in an atmosphere that is both new and very, very old.

We are laying the worship foundations for generations of people to come who will live in times that are both similar to and different from our own. We are rethinking worship in terms of how it will be experienced by our current members, and by people who have no current association with the Christian church.

In the end, our goal is to please God alone in our prayer, praise and thanksgiving and, in so doing, discover our true selves in a relationship of faith to the one true living God

We pray and plan that worship will never seem long, that people will be caught up in the worship.

We have one segment of time during the one holy day of the week that is set aside entirely for the things of God in which to fully express our love and devotion in a Christian community. This is our worship time. Come and worship.

