

## ATLANTIC DISTRICT DIACONATE PROGRAM

# WORSHIP

### Session IV: Festival and Occasional Worship Services

#### A. Seasonal Worship Services:

1. Midweek Advent Services
  - a. usually at least 3 services on Wednesday or Thursday
  - b. assist in setting the tone for Christmas
  - c. Help prevent the Season of Advent from being lost in the frenzied “Christmas Season”
  - d. Penitential season
  - e. Advent Wreath and other practices.
  
2. Epiphany
  - a. January 6/ Fixed Day, 13 days after Christmas
  - b. “Little Christmas”
  - c. Is the fulfillment of “the nations coming to the light”.
  - d. Appropriate to schedule services that day.
  
3. Ash Wednesday
  - a. First day of Lent
  - b. Use of Ashes
  - c. Penitential Service—next to Good Friday it is the most solemn day in the Church year.
  - d. Use of expanded Confessional Service is suggested.
  
4. Lenten Midweek Services
  - a. Focus on the suffering and death of Jesus for our sins.
  - b. A time to reflect upon our need for a Savior from sin.
  - c. 6 weeks of Lent (including Holy Week)—generally most churches have 5 services.
  - d. Prepares us for Easter.
  
5. Palmarum
  - a. “Palm Sunday”
  - b. “Sunday of the Passion
  - c. Use of procession singing “All Glory, Laud and Honor”
  - d. Use of Palms
  
6. Holy Week Services
  - a. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week- not observed by most Churches, but would be a rich gift to the Church (noon time or evening services).
  - b. Private Confession can be made available during Holy Week.
  - c. Maundy Thursday
    1. The beginning of the Triduum
    2. “Maundy” comes from “Mandatum” meaning “Command”. On this night Jesus gives the “new commandment” that we love one another.
    3. Individual Absolution
    4. Washing of Feet – sometimes done in congregations- Pastor washes feet of someone.
    5. The Institutional Eucharist- We remember the Last Supper
    6. The stripping of the Altar—everything is removed—candles, crosses, bookstands, paraments, fair linen, offering plates, eternal flame. Done at the end of the service (get your altar guild involved in this). Altar is left bare for Good Friday. Black

paraments are only used if there is communion on Good Friday, which is rare in most Lutheran Churches. It is more appropriate to leave the altar completely nude on Good Friday.

7. There is no benediction. This is because beginning with Maundy Thursday, the *Triduum* is seen to be one long service combining the services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and the Easter Vigil. The benediction is spoken on Saturday at the end of the Easter Vigil.
- d. Good Friday
    1. The most common service is the Office of Tenebrae, or service of darkness.
    2. there should be very little incidental music during this service.
    3. Some churches observe the “Treore” or the three hour service from noon to 3pm. Often the meditation for this service is on the seven last words of Jesus. It involves a reading, a collect, a hymn and a sermon, followed by a period of silence until the next word is read.
    4. The altar should be bare. Lighting should be reduced.
    5. There should be no postlude. Only enough lighting should be on at the end of the service for worshipers to safely exit. The pastor does not greet the people at the end of this service. Worshipers are asked to remain silent when leaving.
  - e. The Great Vigil of Easter
    1. The oldest extant liturgical service that we have.
    2. Originally went all night long (“Vigil”) with communion occurring at sunrise. This is where “sunrise services” came from.
    3. Is actually 4 services in 1:
      - a. The service of Light: A new fire is struck; the Paschal Candle is traced. The people follow the candle bearer into the dark church as their individual candles are lit. The exchange between pastor and people is “The light of Christ/ Thanks be to God.”
      - b. The Service of Readings- Up to 12 lessons are read, all dealing with the Lord delivering His people. These include readings of creation, the flood, Abraham’s sacrifice of Isaac, Israel’s deliverance through the Red Sea, the Three men in the fiery furnace, etc... A collect is prayed after each reading, followed by silence. In the early Church, when the Vigil went all night, this took up the majority of the night.
      - c. Service of Baptism- It is at this service that the Catechumens were baptized. It is a great time to have baptisms, reception of new members, etc... If none are to be baptized or received, the service of Baptism continues with the renewal of Baptismal vows of all present.
      - d. The Service of Holy Communion. This is the first Eucharist of the Resurrection.
      - e. This is an entirely different service than the Feast of the Resurrection on Easter Sunday morning. Members should be encouraged to attend both.
      - f. If you don’t have a Vigil, suggest to your pastor that it be instituted.

## **B. Occasional Worship Services**

1. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism
  - a. Should normally be done in the context of the Worship Service.
  - b. Different modes are ok.
  - c. Required for Baptism: Water and Word.
  - d. Optional: Candle, Baptismal gown, Chrismation. However all of these do have historical precedent in Christian Baptism.

## 2. Confirmation

- a. "Confirmation remained a rite in search of meaning" Geoffrey Wainwright.
- b. Used to take place on Palm Sunday.
- c. Move to Pentecost or Reformation Sunday.
- d. Does not have to be linked with the first reception of Holy Communion, but can be.

## 3. Marriage

- a. Originally done during the Sunday Morning Service
- b. No spectators, only participants
- c. Is a public worship service. God is still the subject of worship over and above the Bride and Groom.
- d. Should be done in the Church.
- e. Be careful not to allow things that undercut the Gospel.
- f. Paraments and Vestments do not change from the color of the Church year.
- g. Use of young children in procession should be discouraged.
- h. Appropriate music should be used. Consider HYMNS!!!!
- i. Communion with caution!

## 4. Funeral

- a. Should be done in the Church, not funeral home for the believer in Christ.
- b. Eulogizing should be done in the funeral home, not at the Church.
- c. There should be no separate, societal services in the Church (i.e. Fire Department, Military, etc...) They should be done at the Funeral Home before the funeral. Exception: Military may present flag prior to committal.
- d. Congregation should be encouraged to participate in the service.
- e. Communion with caution!

## 5. Ecclesiastical Services

- a. Ordination
- b. Installation
- c. Commissioning

## C. Services of the Word

1. Responsive Prayer
2. Service of Prayer and Preaching.

## D. Office Services

1. The original offices: Matins, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, Compline.
2. "At Matins bound, at Prime reviled, Condemned to death at Terce. Nailed to the Cross at Sext; at None His blessed side they pierce. They take him down at Vesper-tide in grave at Compline lay. Whence thenceforth bids His Church observe Her seven fold hours alway."
3. Matins
4. Morning Prayer
5. Vespers
6. Evening Prayer
7. Compline

