

# PCUSA DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP & EMERGENT WORSHIP PRACTICES

## From the Preface:

***"This directory suggests possibilities for worship, invites development in worship, and encourages continuing reform of worship."***

### **W-1.2006a/b: Inclusive Language**

*"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."*

Presbyterian worship today will not, nor need it, look exactly like earlier Presbyterian worship. While some elements will remain, it's important for Presbyterians to be alert to the emerging needs of those who are coming to their churches.

### **W-1.3021: Space in Old Testament**

*"Christians may worship in any place, for the God who created time also created and ordered space. The Old Testament tells us that God met with people in many different places."*

Trusting that the Sovereign God created all and is found in all places, having "Theology on Tap" conversations in a bar might be possible.

### **W-1.3034: Artistic Expressions**

*"The Reformed heritage has called upon people to bring to worship material offerings which in their simplicity of form and function direct attention to what God has done...When these artistic creations awaken us to God's presence, they are appropriate for worship."*

Believing that we can participate with God in creating, we create expressions of our faith through the arts.

### **W-1.4001: Responsibility**

*"While Christian worship need not follow prescribed forms, careless or disorderly worship is both an offense to God and a stumbling block to the people."*

Creating new space for new worship practices is messy. People may not be entirely sure what to do at some point. Trying new ways of communicating God's word may not always work out – but we must not be afraid of failure, or of things being a little "disorderly."

### **W-2.1005: Enacted Prayer**

*"In the Old and New Testaments and through the ages, the people of God expressed prayer through actions as well as speech and song."*

To help contribute to a more holistic worship, the body must be taken into consideration. This is a way in which we can help people actually put their beliefs into practice.

One way to incorporate this into the life of the church might be to use Doug Pagitt's *BodyPrayer* book. Or perhaps having prayer stations situated throughout the back of the sanctuary for people to go to during certain portions of the service.

### **W-2.2007 & W-2.2008: Preaching the Word & Other Forms of Proclamation**

*"Those entrusted with the proclamation of the Word through art forms should exercise care that the gospel is faithfully presented in ways through which the people of God may receive and respond."*

This is one thing that some Presbyterians may have a hard time with. Presbyterians are known for their solid preaching, yet it's possible that we need to rethink our preaching methodologies for an emerging generation. Whether we create powerful & effective 3-point sermons, or beautifully weave together stories from scripture, we should avoid giving off an aesthetic of a classroom "lecture". It is our experience that this is not something that many will respond to today.

### **W-2.4006: Sacraments**

*"All the baptized faithful are to be welcomed to the Table, and none shall be excluded because of race, sex, age, economic status, social class, handicapping condition, difference of culture or language, or any other barrier created by human injustice" (2.4006) / "The invitation to the Lord's Supper is extended to all who have been baptized" (2.4011).*

How do the sacraments fit into the idea of *belonging before believing*. Does belonging equal full participation? Or does it look differently?

### **W-3.1001-2: Openness/Creativity**

*"Beyond Scripture no single warrant for ordering worship exists, but the worship of the church is informed and shaped by history, culture and contemporary need" (3.1001) / "The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) acknowledges that all forms of worship are provisional and subject to reformation. In order worship the church is to seek openness to the creativity of the Holy Spirit, who guides the church toward worship which is orderly yet spontaneous, consistent with God's Word and open to the newness of God's future." (3.1002)*

A good word for those of us who desire to continually reform worship!

### **W-3.101(1) & W-3.3400: Scriptural Interpretation**

*"Scripture shall be interpreted in a sermon or other form of exposition."*

An exposition is a "comprehensive description and explanation of an idea or theory." We have to be willing to go beyond exposition-mode when it comes to the interpretation of scripture within the community.

### **W-3.3202: A Suggested Order & "Needs of a particular church"**

*"The order offered here is a logical progression, is rooted in the Old & New Testaments and reflects the tradition of the universal Church and our Reformed heritage. Other orders of worship may also serve the needs of a particular church..."*

The Directory for Worship often mentions "needs of a particular church." It seems that emerging Presbyterian congregations will have some of different needs and it is acceptable, according to the Book of Order, to seek to respond to those needs that may be vastly different than those of traditional congregations.

# Presbyterian Liturgy for alt.worship

**Adam Walker Cleaveland writes:** While I was serving as the Director of Youth Ministries at Living Waters Presbyterian Church in Wendell, Idaho, I began facilitating alt.worship gatherings called .bE. They were received very well by many in that local congregation. When I went to seminary at Princeton Theological Seminary, I had the chance to lead the alt.worship service twice on campus, and more than 150 people came to each service.

Last year I did my Field Education with the Princeton Presbyterians (the Presbyterian campus ministry at Princeton University). The Presbyterian Chaplain encouraged me to lead an alt.worship gathering during the Spring, but he wanted it to be as "Presbyterian" as I could make it. Below you will see an example of how an alt.worship gathering can fit the flow of a traditional Presbyterian service. However, if you had seen and participated in the service, it would have "felt" very different from a traditional PCUSA worship service. If you'd like to see some photos from the alt.worship gatherings done at both Princeton Seminary and the University Chapel, go to [presbymergent.org/resources/](http://presbymergent.org/resources/)

## **.bE** an alternative worship gathering

**gathering**  
call to worship  
icon prayer  
song

**hearing**  
scripture  
song

**responding**  
prayer  
song  
communion

**going out**  
prayer stations

*.bE provides a sacred space for those longing to experience the deep presence of god. come to .bE for a time of alternative worship, stillness, reflection, meditation, peace, focus. enter a journey - a journey of discovering who you are & who god is. come speak with god, rest in god's presence, and commune with the creator. bring your sorrows, your joys, your senses, your faith & doubts, your whole self. come, be still...and...simply .bE*

for more information on **alternative worship**, check out the following websites:  
[alternativeworship.org](http://alternativeworship.org) & [pomomusings.com/category/altworship](http://pomomusings.com/category/altworship)

## CONTACT INFORMATION



**Karen Sloan**  
karensloan.net  
flirtingwithmonasticism.org  
flirtingwithmonasticism@gmail.com

**Adam Walker Cleaveland**  
pomomusings.com  
presbymergent.org  
cleave@gmail.com