What Liturgy Is

1. **Three Senses of the word “Liturgy”**
   * + 1. What Jesus does for His people when He gathers them together

* Worship from God’s perspective
* Martin Luther calls this “Gottesdienst” – God’s service to the world with His gifts.
  + - 1. What God’s people do when gathered together for Word and Sacrament
* Worship from our perspective
* This is the sense most people think is most important; it isn’t
  + - 1. The structure of the Divine Service – Confession through Benediction
* The order/flow of worship

1. **The Liturgy focuses on the End**
   * + 1. The End is now

The Lord is present by His Spirit through Word and Sacrament

*Luke 10:16 – “The one who hears you hears me, and the one who rejects you rejects me, and the one who rejects me rejects him who sent me.”*

*John 6:51 – “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”*

*Ephesians 1:7-10 – “In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.*

* + - 1. The End is not yet

God is patient, not wanting any to perish

*2 Timothy 2:4 - God our Savior “wants all people to be saved and to come to knowledge of the truth.”*

*2 Peter 3:9 – “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.”*

*Matthew 9:12-13 – “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.**Go and learn what this means: ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.’ For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”*

* + - 1. The End will be the New Beginning

*Revelation 1:17-18 – “Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.”*

*Revelation 21:6-7 – “It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.* *Those who are victorious will inherit all this, and I will be their God and they will be my children.”*

1. **The Liturgy Brings about the New Creation**

The Absolution brings about the New Adam/Eve in us

The preaching of the Word is God speaking to us here and now

The body and blood of Christ sustains the New Adam/Eve in us



1. **God Gives: We Respond**

Offerings to support the ministry of the Gospel

*2 Corinthians 9:7-8 – “Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiencyin all things at all times, you may abound in every good work.*

Offerings to support charitable causes globally and locally

Love shown between brothers and sisters in Christ to show unbelieving visitors the love we have for God

*John 13:34-35* ***– “****A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”*

1. **Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi**

*“Law of worship founds the law of believing*” or more simply: How and what we pray and say in the liturgy is what we believe as Christians

Liturgy, here meaning the structure of worship, teaches us about the one true God who gives Himself away in love *(Philippians 2:7)*

The liturgy then does not vary much because we sinners need to be constantly reminded of all the gifts we receive from the hand of God

The structure of the liturgy, what we’ll be talking about on September 30 through December 18, “preaches” to us who God is and the gifts He desires to give.

*1 Corinthians 14:33 – “God is not a God of confusion but of peace.”*

* + Confession – We are sinners in need of mercy
  + Kyrie – We call out to God for His undeserved mercy
  + Hymn of Praise – We praise God for His promised mercy
  + Scripture and Collect – We immerse ourselves in God’s story of mercy for the whole human race and pray for God’s people in the presence of God
  + Sermon – God speaks to us through His ordained preachers
  + Vestments and Vessels – Worship is otherworldly; Eternity enters the present and the décor of the pastors and sanctuary reflect that reality
  + Prayers of the People – As Jesus our Great High Priest (*Hebrews 4:14* ) intercedes for us (*John 17*), so too do we intercede for others: believer and unbeliever alike, the persecuted Church, for the sick and suffering, for leaders in the Church and in society (*Romans 13:1-7*), among others.
  + Offerings and Offeratory – God gives His best so too, do we
  + Great Thanksgiving – The audible Word (Sermon) is accompanied by the visible Word (Sacrament)
  + Sanctus and Lord’s Prayer – Prayer preparing us to receive the holy Body and Blood of Christ in ordinary bread and wine
  + Words of Institution and Agnus Dei – The Pastor speaks Jesus’ words of the New Testament here and now to give His inheritance away to His people. In response, we give thanks to the Lamb of God (Latin: *Agnus Dei*) who has taken away the sins of the world

