

Frequently Asked Questions about Life and Worship at CREC

Welcome to CREC. If you are new, you probably have some questions about why we do the things we do. Or you might have been here for some time and need a refresher. Regardless, we want everyone to worship with all of their mind as well as heart, soul and body, so here are some answers to common questions.

Why do you worship the way you do?

While not every church thinks of itself as “liturgical”, every church worships in a particular way. In this sense liturgy, like tradition, is inescapable; it’s not *whether* a church will have a liturgy but *how* the liturgy it does have will honor God and bless worshippers.

The Bible speaks of a particular flow of worship. While the animal sacrifices were types that ultimately pointed to Jesus (Luke 24:27), their order was logical and relational. Anyone who approaches a holy and loving God is called to

- first acknowledge and confess sin.
- Having received forgiveness, we “ascend” to God as we confess our faith and are transformed as we hear His word (Scripture readings and the sermon).
- Lastly, God welcomes us to His table (communion) to eat, drink and fellowship with Him and one another.

First we are justified (sin offering, or confession); then we are sanctified (ascension offering, or consecration); and finally, we are glorified and have intimate fellowship with God (peace offering, or communion). Add a call to worship to begin, and a commissioning to send the church out, and you have our order of worship: Call to Worship, Confession, Consecration, Communion, and Commissioning. This is often referred to as Covenant Renewal Worship because God renews His covenantal promises to us, and we pledge our continuing love and loyalty to Him.

Isn’t this all a bit formal?

Yes and no. If by formal you mean stiff, quiet, subdued and solemn, then no. But there is another sort of formality that characterizes beautiful and glad occasions like weddings. People are dressed, there is a ceremony with serious vows, and yet the whole thing is marked by joy and anticipation.

The Bible describes Sunday worship as part of a feast day that looks forward to the final wedding feast when the church, the bride of Christ, will be united to God in great joy. God is our loving Father, and because of Christ’s death on the cross for our sins, He is also our friend, but at the risk of sounding redundant, He is also *God*, who made heaven and earth. If you have ever been struck dumb by the grandeur of Mt. Rainier, been quieted by the beauty of Bach’s Cello Suites, felt the power of a thundering waterfall, or marveled at the intricate engineering that went into the human ankle, you’ve had a small taste of the power, glory, creativity and gift of God. Nature, music, human relationships and countless other things give us glimpses of the overflowing personality of the one who made it all.

This wild and omnipotent God has given himself—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—to us which is why we’re told to “Worship the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling” (Psalm 2:11). Worship is too important to be partake of it casually. And our God is living and wonderful, never to be worshiped with mere formality, lifeless and boring. Worship is a time to meet with the

awesome (in the old, staggering sense), triune God, something to give thought and preparation to, something to revel in and enjoy.

Why is there no children's church?

Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me." We believe that God meets with His people, even the small, noisy ones, on the Lord's Day. Not wanting to deprive our children of time worshiping God with their families, we welcome them into our main service, where we all seek to mature like little children (Matt. 18:3). We also have a nursery with a sound system connected to the service for infants and nursing mothers.

What is this reformed theology I hear about?

Reformed theology emphasizes the doctrines of grace, belief in the exhaustive sovereignty and efficacious love of God. These doctrines are prominent in the Bible and have been articulated in history by people like Augustine, Martin Luther, John Calvin, the Puritans, Jonathan Edwards, and Charles Spurgeon. We believe that our race fell into sin and death in Adam and that Jesus died in order to save the world (John 3:17), turning away the wrath of God from all who call on Him.

Why is our music like it is?

For millennia the church has been writing and singing music to the glory of God. At CREC, we strive to enjoy the best of what has been sung by the church over the centuries, and look to build upon that foundation, creating new music, singing new songs to the Lord because he has done marvelous things (Ps. 98:1). Since the book of Psalms is God's inspired hymnal, we seek for all of our music to be consistent with and patterned after it.

Some of this music is hard to sing.

We sing psalms and hymns at CREC. Some of it is familiar and easy, and some of it like the Genevan psalms (or jigs as Queen Elizabeth called them) and Luther's original "A Mighty Fortress" takes some getting used to. Thankfully, it gets easy after a little practice. If you are new to and unfamiliar with the music, or are just interested in learning more, we want to help. You can listen to many of the songs we sing at <https://www.christkirk.com/music-library/>.

Why do you take communion every week?

In the early church, communion was a regular part of worship (Acts 2:24; 20:7), and it wasn't until the middle ages that churches began to take it infrequently. Some argue that frequent communion diminishes its importance, but we believe that like the Word, the sacrament is a means of nourishing grace to be taken often. Like many of the Reformers, John Calvin argued for a return for weekly communion when he said, "The Lord's Table should have been spread at least once a week of the assembly of Christians, and the promises declared in it should feed us spiritually". We take this meal together as the culmination of worship where we sit down at God's table with Him. All baptized Christians are invited to take the Lord's Supper, including infants. If you have not been baptized, please contact us to arrange it.