



[sandra.rhein@lcms.org](mailto:sandra.rhein@lcms.org)

## The Culture of the Liturgy

The culture of the liturgy is the title of a presentation I gave for an annual worship conference at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Topeka, Kansas. I also got to give a shortened version of this topic on Sunday morning for a Sunday School class at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Council Bluffs, IA.

The root meaning of the word “culture” is shared with the word agriculture, referring to soil that has been tilled. By extension, one could say that culture is a set of traits that have been plowed into a group’s way of life. It is transmitted from one generation to the next through language, material objects, ritual, institutions, and art.

The liturgy is the structure or ritual through which we receive the sure and certain gifts of the Gospel. It is the vehicle through which the Bridegroom comes to His Bride, providing the external content and structure by which the Word is delivered to the people of God. The entire point of the liturgy is the Gospel of the forgiveness of sins by the grace of God in Christ Jesus. It is a service of Christ to His bride, on her behalf. The Gospel and the historic liturgy give us certainty of Jesus’ love for us, and of our forgiveness and salvation.

The culture of the liturgy  
transcends earthly cultures  
unites Christians  
is corporate as opposed to private



Lutherans view themselves as part of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church and look to the experience of the church at worship throughout history as an important source of its way of worship. It uses forms and practices which the church has prayed for centuries—forms that have been tested, tried, and affirm Lutheranism’s continuity with the whole church. In its life of worship Lutheranism gives such forms and practices a central place.

In my work as a sacred music educator, I will work with church musicians who want to learn more about the culture of the liturgy and how to lead the church’s music. This may take the form of teaching hymns, providing simple hymn accompaniments, or organizing some intensives taught by other musicians and pastors. Together we will look for opportunities to bring Christ to the world through that music.



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I was able to make my first support building trip in August, and was blessed with warm welcomes and heartfelt hospitality from congregations in Iowa, Kansas, and Nebraska. This past Sunday, back at my home congregation, we sang “Where Charity and Love Prevail,” and it brought to mind the lovely visits of the past two weeks.

*Where charity and love prevail  
There God is ever found;  
Brought here together by Christ's love  
By love are we thus bound.*



*Let us recall that in our midst  
Dwells Christ, His only Son.  
As members of His body joined,  
We are in Him made one.*

**PLEASE PRAY FOR:**

- *Patience for missionaries who have had to postpone travel to visit family, to carry on their work, and to connect with supporters.*
- *Health, safety, and healing for God's people around the world.*



**GIVE THANKS FOR:**

- *The opportunity to visit several congregations and share the love of Christ with brothers and sisters.*

**PRAISE GOD FOR:**

- *The many congregations and individuals who pray for us, encourage and support us .*

Please contact me if I might visit your congregation. I look forward to those invitations, and appreciate the opportunity to tell others about this work.



others about this work:

*Make a joyful noise to the Lord,  
all the earth; break forth into  
joyous song and sing praises!*

*Psalm 98:4*



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at [lcms.org/service](http://lcms.org/service). Click on "Service Opportunities."

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