

*A Convocation on the Formal aspects of Worship:
Seeking after a theologically driven media/message dynamic in Worship*

Introduction: An Exercise in “Forms”

First, take a moment and complete the following questionnaire indicating by a check in the circle which answer ***MOST*** expresses your present “inclination” I.e. which way you tend to lean. (5 min. max.)

- When it comes to the use of candles in worship (as related perhaps to other liturgical aesthetics such as liturgical furniture and art):
 - I prefer more to less because they give me a greater sense of the mystery and transcendence in worship.
 - I prefer less to more because they are a distraction from the simplicity and purity of worship in the Spirit that is present in the basic elements of worship as prescribed by God.

- In the kinds of music and hymns that we use in worship:
 - I prefer the God centered traditional hymns as they tend to be more theologically robust, historically rooted and aesthetically appealing to my sense of the dignity and decorum of reverence in the presence of God.
 - I prefer the God centered folk/contemporary sounding hymns (not to be confused with “rock and roll” sounding) as they tend to be sounds and words that more reflect who I am in the worship of God and tend better to affect my emotions/affections toward a more authentic worship experience.

- While conceding that the officiating minister should wear something ☺:
 - I would prefer he not wear a liturgical robe (say a black Geneva gown) since it feels to me very pretentious, as if the person wearing a liturgical gown is somehow better than everyone else rather than really being one of us. I therefore prefer that he wear whatever is deemed respectable attire in the context of our particular church at a given time. (e.g. perhaps semi-formal or high-end casual?) Somehow, it all just seems more personal and “real” for the pastor to wear what we wear to church.

 - I would prefer that the pastor wear a liturgical gown (again, say a black Geneva gown) since a gown seems less pretentious to me as it would remind us that during worship, the person filling the office of pastor is not acting in the capacity of being my friend, my father or my husband, nor is he acting out of his particular personality per se, his culture, his socio-economic upbringing or educational status as can be reflected in clothing styles. Nor is he acting as if he’s a spiritual businessman, entrepreneur or CEO. Rather when a pastor wears a liturgical gown during worship, it seems to me that the person is veiled more behind the office that is intended to mediate Christ’s presence to me in word and sacrament each Sunday. Somehow, it all just seems more reverent and holy in the presence of God acting through the means of grace for the pastor to wear a robe.

- When it comes to the use of various ceremonies and/or liturgical forms in worship (e.g. symbolic gestures, prescribed order, language for corporate use as in corporate prayers, confessions of sin and faith, Eucharistic expressions of thanksgiving, etc):

- I tend to prefer more ceremony and liturgical forms because it tends to dignify the moment in a way that seems more reverent or set apart as fitting a real encounter with a living and holy God whose voice is better preserved through well thought out liturgical forms and ceremonies symbolic of what we believe is going on and protects us against syncretism with pop-culture.
- I tend to prefer less ceremony because it seems artificial and contrived such as to distract from the true evangelical sense of having a personal and authentic encounter with God. A more spontaneous and spirit-filled worship experience helps me to feel as though God is really in our midst and protects us against “dead orthodoxy.”
- Not to be confused with the previous question, concerning then the manner in which the forms are led in worship:
 - Throughout the service, it is important for the leader to carefully explain what we are doing in order for the liturgical forms to be more edifying and evangelical as led by the Spirit.
 - Throughout the service, it is better for the leader to allow the forms to speak for themselves, and to not say too much so that the profound beauty and truth within the forms that are specially set apart for worship are themselves not lost or diminished amidst the human aspects of spontaneous verbiage.

Second, briefly organize into groups of about 5, and then take each question one at a time, listening to what each of you in the group checked off per question, perhaps with some brief elaboration if desired. (8 min)

Third, the following Biblical passage—what do you think is the greater point of this exercise that we need to keep in mind when we talk about “forms” in worship?

1Cor. 12:14ff

Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot would say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear would say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many members, yet one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22 On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; 24 whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, 25 that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. 27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ... But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. (c.f. Rom 14, Eph.

Eph. 4:1 *I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.*

Theological and Practical Considerations for the Use of Forms in Worship:

First, what is our “theology” of worship? (From Heb12, Rev. 4-15, Eph. 4, etc)

- Corporate NT Worship is fundamentally to participate in the mediated presence of Christ vis-à-vis our present history. As per Heb 12, Rev. 4, Eph. 4, etc. Fundamental to our theology of the church and worship is our theology of the ascended ministry of Christ being mediated by the Holy Spirit in/with/through common/unholy elements in order to become the holy/uncommon, life giving and redemptive presence of Christ in our midst. This mediated presence is executed via the Holy Spirit by means of the prescribed instrumentality of word, sacrament and community as then to become the very real “household of God” or “NC temple.” There is then in worship both a “transcendent” aspect of our being united to Christ in heavenly worship, as there is an imminence of Christ’s presence in our earthly context in worship. The ascending/descending theme as by Christ vis-à-vis the Holy Spirit in, with and through the elements of worship is essential to our theological understanding of worship. How then to convey this in our forms/circumstances? For instance:

Edmund Clowney:

The picture of the church as a worshipping assembly is nowhere more powerfully presented than by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. 12:18-29). He contrasts the worship of God at Mount Sinai with the worship of the New Covenant. We do not come to Mount Sinai in our worship, but to Mount Zion. That Zion is not the earthly, but the heavenly Zion, the sanctuary of the eternal city of God. For the author of Hebrews, this is not a figurative way of speaking. The heavenly Jerusalem is not a Platonic abstraction. It is as real as the living God, as real as the risen body of Jesus Christ. In our worship in Christ's church we approach the throne of God the Judge of all. We enter the festival assembly of the saints and the angels. We gather in spirit with the spirits of just men made perfect. We enter the assembly of glory through Christ our Mediator, and the blood of his atoning death. For that reason we must hear and heed the word of the Lord, and 'worship God acceptably with reverence and awe' (v.28).

- As applied to the sacraments: In the mystery of Christ’s ascended presence in our midst by the Holy Spirit, there is a mystical union of the common and uncommon, holy/unholy, corporeal and spiritual, human and divine in order that Christ is really, present “in our midst” unto salvation. There IS a “flesh/corporeal” presence of Christ, not by any material transformation of the human/material to divine, but by the joining of Christ by the Holy Spirit to the human/material as the so called “mystical “body of Christ.” This mystical union works itself out in so far as there is a cultural/human vernacular dynamic that form a synthesis with the a-cultural/divine vernacular dynamic. Its where these two meet, the transcendent with the imminence, that we have what is called “forms” of worship.
- The “body of Christ” then assume two dynamics — one prescribed in scripture and enlivened by the spirit, the other provided by the flesh/blood of the people (thus the vernacular principle) as also enlivened by the spirit — thus the miracle of sacramental presence working in, with and through the common/unholy for an uncommon and holy use. This is the mystery of the ascended ministry of Christ vis-à-vis history.
- Moreover, this whole transaction is not just “rational” but holistic as to involve our reason, senses, emotions and relationships. A Biblical anthropology is to know ourselves as we are known by God (Calvin). That is to say that God knows us as living soul, even “body and spirit. We then commune with God in body, mind, emotions, affections, etc. Worship then is a whole person event involving the whole of our sensory and non-sensory being.

What responsibility then does the church have in determining the aesthetic, musical, ceremonial, liturgical “forms” as to most effectively accomplish the biblical ends of each element in worship. From the context of our tradition as per above, quite a lot, albeit within the regulated means of grace and the directed forms! (see Below)

Second, by way of definition, we can distinguish between at least two different aspects of a given worship service, each with their own inherent relation to scripture and culture:

Elements of Worship (or the “elemental things”): By positive institution from God in scripture, these are the things we do in worship that come directly from Christ vis-à-vis the apostolic foundation.

- In relation to scripture: Elements are prescribed, nothing contrary to or beside should be done in worship since the scripture is our only rule of faith and practice in worship. Thus the so called “regulative” principle of worship as related to elements.
- In relation to culture (common vernacular): Elements transcend all cultures.

Note: Acts 2:42 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Therefore, 4 Essential Elements:

Prayers
Spoken and Sung
Sacraments
Baptism-entrance
Lord's Supper- Renewal
Word (Apostolic)
Read and especially preached
"Fellowship"
Congregational collection and pastoral prayers

Forms of Worship (or the formal things, sometimes also referred to as “circumstantial” things as to include “forms”): It is the manner in which the elements are done in a way that both fits the theology of the element with the way this theology is best suited toward the Biblically directed effect it has upon the congregation. The “forms” include all things related to the language used, style, order, surrounding aesthetics of the space used, etc. — Anything as per the “media” that either helps or hinders the “message” as per even various social conventions in so far as they carry inherent social meanings, etc.

- In relation to scripture: Forms are directed from scripture in terms of their intended affect as to be most edifying, not prescribed (The Directory principle of worship)
- In relation to culture (common vernacular): Forms are directed, not prescribed

Further Observations concerning the use of forms:

- It would be an exercise of naiveté of thinking in terms of “no-forms” vs. “forms”, even as this would open up the possibility of an un-scrutinized pop-culture being trafficked in the form of worship. (thus syncretism — c.f. Dt. 12)
 - Not: Ministerial clothing vs. clothing — in so far as the minister wears cloths in worship (an assumption we dare not challenge, it is liturgical cloths! His cloths depict what exactly (west/east, male/female, rich/poor, white collar/blue collar, the “glass ceiling” to some perhaps???, oppression???, etc. etc)

- Not: Liturgical Furniture vs. no liturgical furniture—in so far as we use furniture for worship, it's use is liturgical! The room is liturgically decorated, even if after the pattern of a nice looking living room or whatever,
- Not: Liturgical Music vs. no liturgical music.... the musical sounds are located both historically and culturally—albeit European, western, eastern, folk, classical, contemporary, even as what was once contemporary is not classical, etc. etc.
- Not: Liturgical ceremonies vs. no ceremonies... The way we enter and leave worship is a “routine” which then either better reflects or lesser reflects what we thing is going on in worship.

All of it IS liturgical form in so far as it is used for the purpose of worship.. and so the question is NOT liturgical forms or not, the question is which liturgical forms best fit the directory principle of worship as applied to forms (e.g. form = medium as related to theology=message/biblical ends).

- Likewise, the practical impossibility of thinking in terms of “form” vs. “freedom.” The issue rather is “form prescribed or form directed and if directed, how self-consciously by scripture in relation to things common to society vs. not self-consciously such as to open up the greater possibility of trafficking pop-culture as necessarily edifying in worship. .
- It is therefore desired that we consider the intended “ends” of a given element as then to direct us in how to do them given the social conventions/context of a given vernacular so as to be most edifying as per Biblically directed ends..

Decisions on forms are both objective and subjective in nature as to combine two things together:

- 1) A particular church’s confessional understanding of scripture coupled with,
- 2) A particular church’s practical knowledge of its own social/linguistic/conventional context.

Note:

Acts 2:6And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

1Cor. 14:26 How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for **edification**.

E.g. for the sake of edification as directed by biblical theology of an element, social conventions were used in worship in NT such as was in their own context found to be most effective and the intended ends:

Social Conventions “common to man...” included:

1. Head-covering --1 Cor.11:2-16 is required to preserve good order and as a sign of authority in the exercise of the prophetic gift...
2. Washing of feet-- (John 12:1-20)-- reflects a society that knows only unpaved roads-- open toed sandals, etc. bathing of feet was a mark of hospitality-- thus a "common to man" practice in that day that fulfilled Paul's more general principle to "showing kindness to others with cheerfulness." (Rom.12:3-8)
3. The "Love feast" as practiced in Corinth and elsewhere (2Pet.2:13, Jude 12)-- a sign of partnership between Christians as they held a common meal at worship to help the poor members... (Acts2:44-46) later abused and rebuked for this (1Cor.11:33, 34)

Thus, the directory principle for the sake of edification clarified: Edification Principle Clarified:
NOT: As an appeal to the sympathies of the flesh in order to grow the church per se vis-à-vis popularity “of this world.

RATHER: As an appeal to the sympathies of effectual calling in election in order to edify the church, albeit directed to both the elect who are church-ed and unchurch-ed, resulting in spiritual and perhaps also numeral growth. Vis-à-vis “in the world but not of the world and for the world.”

Our Confessional Summary Thus Far:

Notice the way our Confession refers to the use of scripture in worship:

WCF 1:6

Concerning the elements of worship:

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men.

c.f. WCF 21:1

the acceptable way of worshipping the true God is instituted by Himself, and so limited by His own revealed will, that He may not be worshipped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.

Thus the “regulative” principle applied to elements in worship

Concerning the forms/circumstances of worship:

Nevertheless, we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word: and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

Thus the “directory” principle as applied to forms/circumstances:

Addendum: Concerning the historic Westminster Assembly in 1644

When their chairman... laid the first draft of the work before the full Assembly (May 1644) he reported that "many serious and sad debates" had taken place over the crucial issue of form and freedom.¹ To satisfy the desires and scruples of all the parties the subcommittee had found it expedient to produce a directory, as opposed to a liturgy, which outlined the main headings of worship and described the substance of each element in such a way that "by altering here and there a word, a man may mould it into a prayer." Where disagreement could not be overcome, the committee made compensation by allowing variety in practice or by using rubrics of lesser compulsion.

Completed in 1744, entitled *A Directory for the Public Worship of God...*

*The preface commenced with a typical Puritan thesis: the Anglican reformation remains to be finished... The Book of Common Prayer, while commendable in its day, had become a burden upon the conscience of "sundry good Christians" causing ministers to be deprived and laity to be kept from the Lord's Table.² It produced prayer-book idolatry to the depreciation of preaching. **It confirmed rendered the clergy "idle and unedifying" and brought untold contention upon the church.***

Quoting from the Directory for Worship preface:

*[Prayer book idolatry becomes a] means... to make and increase an idle and unedifying ministry, which contented itself with set forms made to their hands by others, **without putting forth themselves**³ to exercise the gift of prayer, with which our Lord Jesus Christ pleaseth to furnish all his servants whom he calls to that office.*

The Directory (vs. Prayer Book)

- 1. It contained ordinances which were of divine institution (Prescribed elements)*
- 2. It promised uniformity by setting forth the principle headings of worship and the sense and scope of the prayers.*
- 3. As a directory, it provided ministers "some help and furniture" without depriving them of the **gift of prayer.***
(I.e. spirit filled liturgical leadership)⁴

Thus for example as related to the Lord's supper:

*First, he (minister) read the words of institution... which he could also "**explain and apply**" if it seemed appropriate...*

Second, The elements, having been "sanctified by the Word and Prayer"... the minister delivered bread and cup to the people who sat "about" the table or "at" it.

(thus up-front or in seats-- the Scots preferred the people sitting at the table and handing the elements to one another, the Puritans preferred to receive the elements from the hands of the ministry...)

(taken from *Liturgies of the Western Church*, ed. By Bard Thompson)

¹ OF which we do well to avoid by remaining true to that which the Westminster decided for us... rather than re-living them all over. Thus the value of denominationalism-- there ARE other church options for those who are not comfortable with the Scoto-Presbyterian tradition.

² Thus the call for a "regulative principle" as directed not to forms but to elements, so on the one hand to prescribe what scripture prescribes, nothing more and nothingless... etc.

³ The recognition of "several" authority being expressed in worship by the minister

⁴ Notice then the "middle ground" between liturgy on the one hand and independence on the other-- thus a directory and between Anglican/prelacy and Independency... A regulated service albeit with freedom for inspired leadership...

Semper reformanda at CPC:

Recommended “Reforms” In some Formal Aspects of Our Worship

- “Priest with No Name”-- MSC that only during state worship, only the officiating pastor of Word and sacrament wear a liturgical vestment (Plain Black Geneva Gown, not to be confused with an academic gown)

Arguments in favor of wearing a Robe:

- a. A vestment/clothing that is specifically designated for use during worship by only the officiating minister of word and sacrament (e.g. tied directly to a function less person) will better emphasize the priestly office of pastor during worship and de-emphasize the personality of the man filling it.
 - a. It is important for each member, but especially those who are closest to the “person” who fills the office of pastor, that during the worship service itself they are enabled to feel and experience the reception of the word and sacrament not from a man, along with all the personal associations that may be more or less offensive or attractive, but from the office that mediates Christ’s word and life to us-- it should never be about a person or personality—and the robe is a medium through which this message is best preserved. We submit to the office, not to the man, during worship even as the robe is a “form” of clothing that best visualizes this. The purpose of the robe is to cover the man and accent his God-ordained office or calling. The robe is not meant to set a person apart in worship, but to set the pastoral office together with the functions that it executes apart from the person during worship.

Here’s what the French Calvinist theologian Richard Paquier says about this:

It is natural that the man who officiates in the worship of the Church be clothed in a manner corresponding to the task assigned to him and expressing visibly what he does. Moreover, whoever leads in the act of worship does not perform as a private party but as a minister of the church; he is the representative of the community and the spokesman of the Lord. Hence, an especially prescribed robe, a sort of ecclesiastical "uniform," is useful for reminding both the faithful and himself that in this act he is not Mr. So-and-so, but a minister of the church in the midst of a multitude of others. (Dynamics of Worship: Foundations and Uses of Liturgy [Fortress Press, 1967], p. 138).

- b. It is important for the pastor to in act of humility to loose himself to the office of pastor during the liturgical context of word and sacrament. He speaks not on behalf of himself, but on behalf of Christ as mediated through the confessional context of the church. The pastor can speak nothing save what Christ speaks, even as this is understood in the confessional context of the church as preserved through the laying on of hands. The liturgical uniform of the pastor is a symbol of humiliation in so far as the pastor recognizes that it is not about himself and/or his own journey in faith, but about Christ and his presence among his people.
- c. It is important that the mediating office of Christ be “not of this world” in a way that is most culturally most universal and least particularistic. In short, it is most ideal if there is nothing about the “vestment” that the pastor wears during worship that is related to a specific culture OR worldly vocation/function!!! . We noticed for

instance, how a liturgical robe can be found in almost every culture in the world and in ever socio-economic context, but not so a Brooks Brothers tie and coat! And while the person filling the office is certainly a specific culture, Christ, albeit incarnate, transcends all cultures and non-liturgical vocations as a “meta-human-divine” figure as best symbolized through the medium of liturgical clothing (which means it is specifically designed and associated with a view toward the liturgical function in worship.) To see a pastor wearing a road, there is no possibility of his been identified with any one culture of the world or vocation of this world at worst, only as perhaps associated with this or that liturgical tradition (which btw is why we chose the most universal of all liturgical vestments in the plain black gown in order even to transcend tradition to some degree as representing in worship the one holy and catholic service of worship.

- d. In the bible, no less than today, clothing and calling are often connected; a person’s calling or office together with whatever authority is connected with the office is often visually symbolized by the clothing the man wears (Gen. 9:20-27; 39:1-13; 37: 3-11, 23; 41:1-44; all of the references in Exodus and Leviticus to the clothing of the priests; 1 Sam. 2:19; 15:27; 18:4; 24:4, 5, 11, 14; Ezra 9:3-5; Esther 8:15; Isa. 22:21; Jonah 3:6; Matt. 22:11ff.; 27:31; Mark 16:5; Luke 15:22; Rev. 1:13; 4:4; 6:11; 19:13, 16). Today, “uniforms” give people a sense of comfort that what they are receiving is coming from something bigger than the person- as to carry with it the credentials of those who administer the uniform or “badge.” This is a much important today as it has always been, even as this was very carefully related to the Biblical images of pastor/priest. To say it differently, the pastor in office is not a CEO, a golfer, a western male, an academic, etc. He is a “priest with no name” —e.g. an office wherein Christ mediates his presence in word and sacrament to his people in a unique way during worship.
- e. The liturgical robe, adds to the aesthetics of worship that speaks of an “otherworldly” albeit “in the world” experience in worship—it beautifully ties together the transcendent and imminence aspects of worship-- Christ descending and ascending in the office of pastor during worship...

Anecdotally—when I perform weddings and funerals, not to mention worship, it is often commented that it seems “odd” that I didn’t wear a robe of some sort- what were these people hoping for—isn’t it some symbolic media that spoke to them the message—Christ is with us? The robe has this affect much better than when I am wearing a western style, male dominated style, suit.

Possible objections:

- 1) It feels to “RC”—actually it would be hard pressed to attach liturgical robes to RC—Most Presbyterians throughout the century, together with most other protestant traditions, wore liturgical vestments of some sort—in fact, the most staunchly devoted and conservative Presbyterians, the same men who would even decry Rome as the “anti-Christ” historically, wore robes (Scottish ministry like John Knox, James Bannerman, American pastors like Jonathan Edwards, RL Dabney, Hodge, Thornwell, on an on it goes...) Reformed pastors in the past actually wore uniforms of some kind not just in worship, but during the week as well. That holds true for continental Reformed churches and even for many of the Puritans.
- 2) It seems pretentious and glorifies the man filling the office. Again, it is just the opposite, IF THE ROBE IS SIMPLE AND WITHOUT THE CUSTOMARY REGALLIA AND EXTRAVANCE THAT IS OFTEN ASSOCIATE WITH SUCH VESTEMENTS. It forces "PRESTON

GRAHAM" to recede and brings forward the office of pastor. The robe will highlight the pastor's office and role.

C. S. Lewis has said, "The modern habit of doing ceremonial things unceremoniously is no proof of humility; rather it proves the worshiper's inability to forget himself in the rite, and his readiness to spoil for everyone else the proper place of ritual."

Summary: When the pastor acts "in office" during a called worship service of God (covenantal, weddings, funerals), the robe is a visual representation (media) corresponding to the official reality (message) that when acting in office, he acts not acti severally in his personal capacities, but jointly in his corporate and ordained capacity within the church. During worship, he is not "my friend, my husband or my father" wearing that which perhaps evokes the images common to these more personal functions, He is not a businessman or CEO or entrepreneur (all with their distinctive "look" in cloths). He is not an academic (academic gown), a western or eastern as reflected in clothing styles. He is not a person representing one or another socio-economic context as from an affluent or poor background as to inherent a certain taste in clothing. When acting jointly "in office" He is, in the NT sense, the pastor is acting in his priestly capacity as an under shepherd of God an under shepherd, even a "priest with no name. Acting in office, the office itself is the point, not the person holding it per se. It is God in Christ acting in, with and through the ordained office in succession to the apostolic foundation that we encounter in the officiation pastor every Sunday morning. The person filling the office does not act in or for himself, but in Christ and for the benefit of Christ's sacred flock of God (1 Peter 5). Just as a judge or a policeman, when "on duty" wears a uniform because he/she is not acting in or for himself severally, but is acting "jointly" under "orders" and within the conditions of the constitutional system he/she has sworn to uphold, so to the pastor, on duty in his liturgical functions during covenantal worship is acting under orders from Christ within the constitutional system that Christ handed down through the apostolic foundation (Mt. 16, Eph. 2) even then "confessed" not merely by the person holding office in the church, but by the church corporately and historically as within the church confession of faith. To be sure, the pastor's authority and credentials when acting "in office" has nothing to do with his economic, social or educational status as reflected, albeit perhaps inadvertently, in the sorts of cloths that a pastor can wear on Sunday. Acting in office, he does his credentials are unrelated to his natural charisma or personality as reflected perhaps even in his aesthetic tastes. The pastor acting in office most certainly does not derive his credentials from the fact that he looks and acts like other business leaders in the world (business suits). In other words, just as the location of the pulpit and table have symbolic significance, so also the minister's clothing communicates something—albeit selfconsciousloy or not. The question then, what best communicates as a medium in cloths the truth about the office of pastor when function during worship in word and sacrament. to administer the wor message that he is the ordained servant of the risen Christ, called to "shepherd the flock of God" as an "under-shepherd" wherein God is in the midst of his people here on earth, even as the people are in the midst of God in heaven—even as the pastoral office acting in worship is the locus of this mysterious "descent/ascent" activity by means of the word and sacrament in covenant initiation and renewal ever Sunday morning.

- To work at the aesthics of our "space" as to more resemble the transcendent/imminence aspects of a NT temple of God
 - MSC to ask Catherine Kupiec to research on short and long term chancel art and report back to the senior pastor in one month.
 - MSC to remove flowers from altar and evaluate other options. (e.g. what can we do to make it feel less like a comfortable living room and more like a sacred space for worwship...)
 - MSC to move toward making a decision and purchasing ASAP the artwork for the "wall"
 - Theological Question: What do we believe about the "space" on Sunday morning? Is it a "temple" or is it a ????? What decorations/furniture would best communicate the theology of that space

- Ascended ministry of Christ remembering Christ incarnation, death, resurrection awaiting consummation.
 - Temple “in the world but other worldly
 - The Household of God...
 - Observation: the glorification of worship. Every place of worship in Scripture – the tabernacle, the temple, the heavenly court in Revelation
- MSC for officiating pastor to pour wine into chalice during communion and for officiating pastor to, at the appropriate time, drink from that chalice.
 - Portray the Common in Communion with Christ vis-à-vis the office under Christ...
- MSC to have TE and RE to pray the pastoral prayer. The TE will introduce the prayer and pray for the specific needs of the congregation (Prayer Book) and the RE will pray for the traditional categories and the church member(s) of the week.
- MSC to initiate on the 1st Sunday of the month, a blessing and laying on of hands of the covenant children. 2TE and 2RE will be involved. The TE will administer the bread, laying on of hands, and blessing. The RE will administer the wine.
- MSC to investigate prayer railing around the chancel pending review of the Session. This is to be accomplished as soon as possible.
- A Liturgical “Side Bar” in Bulletin in order to explain the service and put it in context of the heavenly center of our worship, but also to perhaps minimize the amount of verbal explanations that can tend also to detract (diminish) the power of the liturgy (although will continue to “pastor” and “mediate” the liturgy in vernacular—as this is important, etc.

Right after the sermon is a good time to retrieve your children from childcare to experience the Lord’s Table, especially on the weeks we come forward in order to receive God’s blessing for his covenant children.

People were bringing even infants to him that he might touch them; and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. But Jesus called for them and said, “Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs.

Luke 18:15-16