of personal Christian conviction; a testimony to the experience of God's people in accepting his Word as the rule of faith and life" (Reed, 1947). Following the sermon, after a few moments of silent reflection, the congregation joins in singing the hymn of the day. This hymn is chosen with care to reflect the main idea of the Gospel and the sermon (Reed, 1947).

Application:

Looking at the appointed lessons from the Third Sunday after Epiphany, found on page 42, what is the overall theme? Come up with at least three different subjects for a sermon.

The Bride Responds to Christ's Stories: The Creed

C: "I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen."
Alternate Liturgy:

"We believe in God, the Creator of all things, the source of all goodness and love. We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, true God yet true man. He was crucified, died and was buried for our sin that we might be free and know the joy of life. He was raised on the third day and ascended to heaven, and will come again in power and glory to judge both the living and the dead. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the power of God at work inside of us. We believe in the church of God, the people of faith throughout the world. We believe that our sin is forgiven and that we will live together with God now and throughout eternity. Amen." (Taken from "Mid-Week Worship" used at The Lutheran Center, Ball State University, 2003)

Questions:

1. What role does the creed play in the service? ____________________________

Application:

Look at the Athanasian Creed on page 54 of Lutheran Book of Worship and the Nicene Creed on page 64 and the Apostles’ Creed on page 65. What are common elements of all three creeds? Write your own creed based on those elements.
Christ and His Bride Share Concerns: Prayers of the Church

P: "Let us pray for the whole people of God in Christ Jesus, and for all people according to their needs."

Prayers are offered for the whole Church, the nations, those in need, the parish, and special concerns. After each prayer, the minister and congregation respond in the following way:

P: "Lord, in your mercy,"

C: "hear our prayer."

The prayers conclude with:

P: "Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord."

C: "Amen."

The lessons, Gospel, sermon, and creed of the Word lead the congregation to respond in prayer through their own spoken word to God (With one voice, 1995). The prayers of the church present a significant form of the communion of saints in which Christ and his bride share their concerns with each other and the bride asks each Christ for his help in these matters. The prayers begin with a concern for the Church in all its operations. Then they show concern for the state and its governance. The prayers then become more personal.
and show concern for the home, and the individual’s calling and needs. Because adoration to
God was already expressed earlier in the service, the prayers of the church do not include
adoration. Neither do they attempt to please or instruct. By ending each prayer with “Lord,
in your mercy,” attention and participation of the congregation is secured. It also relieves the
monotony of a long, unbroken prayer (Reed, 1947).

Questions:

1. What role do the prayers of the church play in the service?

2. How do the scripture references on page 48 relate to the prayers of the church?

Application:

1. Look at the prayers found on pages 42-51 in Lutheran Book of Worship. Place
   them in one of the following categories: whole church, nations, those in need, parish,
   special concerns.

2. Write your own prayers to fit into each category.
Act III: Meal

"I am the bread of life." John 6:48

Have you ever been so interested in a play or movie, that as you watch you begin to place yourself in the plot and identify with the characters? This is a similar experience in the worship service. After being gathered, hearing the word of God read and explained, and praying with others, you begin to feel a connection with the congregation and you better understand the story of the main character, Jesus. As you enter Act Three, the Meal, you are able to share in the experience of Jesus. With the breaking of bread, his story is not only retold, but also acted out, and by communing with the whole church, you are experiencing this act together. With One Voice (1995) described the Meal as such; “Welcomed to the table, each one is untied with God in Christ, with each other, and with the Church’s mission in the world” (p.9). The meal is set up in such a way, that every detail preceding it prepares you to receive its gifts and every detail following it allows you to share those gifts with others. In our plot it is like a marriage in which the courtship of Christ and the church allowed for the relationship to grow to the point of dedication to each other. The bride is ready to commit to Christ and the two become one as she receives his body and blood and they commune together.
Key Question: What elements does the meal consist of and what is the meal’s significance in the worship service?

Key Meal Components:  
A. *Greeting of Peace*  
B. *Offertory*  
C. *Preface*  
D. *Consecration and Administration*  
E. *Post Communion*
The Bride Reconciles Past Relationships: Greeting of Peace

P: "The peace of the Lord be with you always."
C: "And also with you."
P: "Let us share that peace."

The greeting of peace is an outward expression toward others of your love and forgiveness of them as a part of the body of Christ. Matthew 5:24 says to first forgive your brother before offering your gift at the altar. Sharing the greeting of peace is an expression of this forgiveness that allows you to bring yourself to the altar without any burdens holding you back. As we look at worship as a drama, we understand the greeting of peace to be a time of preparation for an exclusive relationship between Christ and the church. For this relationship to be healthy, the bride must first mend her past relationships with others.

Questions:

1. What role does the greeting of peace play in the service?

________________________________________________________________________

2. How do the scripture references above relate to the greeting of peace?

________________________________________________________________________
Application:

Describe ways that others have expressed God's peace and love to you.

Could any of these expressions be implemented in the worship service rather than a hug or handshake? How can we express God's peace in the service in ways that are different than outside the service?

The Bride Shares Her Possessions with Christ: Offertory


C: "Let the vineyards be fruitful, Lord, and fill to the brim our cup of blessing. Gather a harvest from the seeds that were sown, that we may be fed with the bread of life. Gather the hopes and dreams of all; unite them with the prayers we offer now. Grace our table with your presence, and give us a foretaste of the feast to come."

After the gifts have been presented, a prayer is said.

P: "Let us pray. Merciful Father,"

C: "we offer with joy and thanksgiving what you have first given us- our selves, our time, and our possessions, signs of your gracious love. Receive them for the sake of him who offered himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."
Also, as the bride prepares for a committed relationship with Christ, she realizes that she must share her possessions with him. During the offeratory she gives of her belongings to Christ and to others. The offeratory consists of the offering, the offeratory sentences, and prayer as noted above. It is thought to be reflective of the word and preaching, but it also is a look forward to the remainder of the service. It is an act of corporate thanksgiving and personal reception. In anticipation of the gracious gift of God, we bring before Him our substance (II Corinthians 8:2-4) our praise (Hebrews 13:15,18) and our very selves (II Corinthians 8:5). This act of worship acknowledges our stewardship.

Offering to the Lord our gifts of substance, or monetary possessions, is an outward sign of our inward, spiritual dedication to Him. The offerory sentences and prayer are a request of God to bless our gifts and multiply their significance for their use in the church (Reed, 1947).

**Alternate Liturgy:**

*Let these gifts be like seed in fertile soil and rain in a parched land that they may affectively grow and be used by the ministry of your kingdom. And as we are affected by this new growth, receive our efforts to love you and live by your word that we may affect each other, and prepare us to receive your sacrifice with a surrendered heart.*

*Father, if we try our hardest, we would not be able to give you enough of ourselves and our thanks in proportion to what you have first given us. Please receive what we do have to offer and bless it for the glory of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.*
Questions:

1. What role does the offertory play in the service?

2. How do the scripture references on page 53 relate to the text of the offertory?

Application:

Write your own offertory, including the offertory sentences and prayer.

**Christ and His Bride Get Married: Communion**

After the courtship of Christ and the church in the gathering, their sharing of stories in the word, and the reconciliation and gifts already experienced in the meal, Christ and his bride are ready for the ultimate level of commitment to each other. The Communion, which is broken up into three parts (the preface, consecration and administration, and post communion), represents the climax of our drama. It represents the wedding of Christ and the church.
Engagement: Preface

Scripture References: Isaiah 6:3, Mark 11:9, Matthew 21:9, Psalm 118:25-26, Revelation 4:8

Before any wedding, there is a period of engagement when the bride and groom plan and prepare for their life together. It is a time of expressing joyous thanks and love and respect for each other.

P: “The Lord be with you.”
C: “And also with you.”
P: “Lift up your hearts.”
C: “We lift them to the Lord.”
P: “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.”
C: “It is right to give him thanks and praise.”

These brief, but lofty, sentences express the bride’s reverence, adoration, joy, and thanksgiving to the Lord, her husband. As Christ’s bride, they call us to lift up our soul above all earthly things and give God the thanks and praise that He is worthy of. Responding with reciprocal statements to what the pastor has said expresses our agreement to these commands (Reed, 1947).

Questions:

1. What is the progression from response to response? What connection do you see from command to command? ____________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________
P: "It is indeed right and salutary that we should at all times and in all places offer our thanks and praise. Therefore with the angels and the hosts of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn."

This statement shows our invariable thanksgiving. It also unites the church with the angelic host in praise that magnifies God's holy name and introduces the next element in the liturgy.

Alternate Liturgy:

It is right and good that we should offer you thanks and praise, O God, for with great love you have led us out of slavery into the freedom of the promised land. You guided us along the way, giving us power to rejoice in the face of evil and death, and, fulfilling your ancient promise, you continue to lift up the brokenhearted even in our own day. And so, with the multitude from east and west, from north and south, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, we lift our voices in the unending hymn: (This Far By Faith, 1999, p.82)

C: "Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might: heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna.
Hosanna. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest."
This, the “most ancient, most celebrated, the most universal of Christian hymns,” is the climax and conclusion of the preface. It is a solemn act of thanks and adoration in the spirit of holy awe, joining the songs of angels as found in the Old and New Testament (see scriptural references above). It is also the same scripture that Christ chanted with his disciples at the Last Supper (Reed, 1947).

Questions:

1. What role does the communion preface play in the service?

2. How do the scripture references on page 56 relate to the communion preface?

Application:

Based on the traditional liturgy and alternate liturgy examples, write your own preface components for communion.

The Ceremony: Consecration and Administration


Following the preface, or engagement, in the marriage there is the wedding ceremony represented in our drama by the consecration and administration of the communion.
P: "In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body given for you.

Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this for the remembrance of me."

The words of institution are a record of Christ’s original institution. In the wedding they are Christ’s expression of love toward his bride. They set apart, or consecrate, the earthly elements of bread and wine for holy use and give objective validity to their every subsequent administration. These words express the meal as more than the recital of a historic act however. It is also a solemn, corporate act of prayer in which the congregation apprehends and holds the divine promises, claims divine sanction, and invokes divine blessing (Reed, 1947).

Questions:

1. What role do the words of institution play in the service?

2. How do the scripture references on page 58 relate to the words of institution?
Application:

We hear the words of institution every time we share communion. What have they meant in your life and communion experience?

C: “Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.” (Matthew 6:9-13)

Following Christ’s expression of love, the bride acceptingly responds by praying her husband’s prayer, the Lord’s Prayer. The Lord’s Prayer plays a role in the communion, yet it has nothing to do with the consecration of the bread and the wine. Rather, it represents the assembly of believers in the congregation. By praying the same prayer that Jesus taught his disciples, the congregation exhibits its fellowship and unity in the communion of saints who are about to share in the meal (Reed, 1947). The Lord’s Prayer first addresses God as our Father. Then it proceeds to ask of our Father seven things and concludes by stating the nature of our Father and his power as the reasons for asking these things (Luther, 1943).
Questions:

1. Beginning with “Hallowed be thy name” as the first petition, what are the seven petitions of the Lord’s Prayer? What does each petition mean? ______

2. What role does the Lord’s Prayer play in the service? __________

Christ and his bride exchange vows in the distribution and reception of the communion. Christ gives his body and blood and the church gives up her sins. Communion is administered as the believers come forward to the altar. Either kneeling at the altar rail or standing in front of the minister, the worshiper receives “the body of Christ, given for you” and “the blood of Christ, shed for you.” The administration of communion is for every believer. It is also a proclamation of the Gospel of Christ that everyone who responds to when they receive communion. Fasting and bodily preparation are not necessary to worthily receive communion. However, for it to be received worthily it is necessary to have faith in the proclamation of the Gospel that the body and blood were given for the forgiveness of our sins. Doubt or unbelief in this Truth results in being unprepared and unworthy to receive the communion (Luther, 1943).
Scripture Reference: John 1:29

**C:** "Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; grant us peace."

During the distribution of communion, the Agnus Dei, which means "Lamb of God" in Latin, may be sung. Pope Sergius added this communion hymn to the liturgy in 700 C.E. as a devotion sung to occupy the time required for the priests to prepare as they were at the altar. It is not so much a renewed confession of sin as it is a means of spiritual communion with Christ who is directly addressed in this hymn. Referring to Christ as the Lamb of God, it reveals the sacrificial character of his death, his freedom from guilt, and his patience and gentleness (Reed, 1947).

**Alternate Liturgy:**

"Worthy is the Lamb, worthy is the lamb, worthy is the lamb that was slain for me. His blood has saved my soul, his love has made me whole. Worthy is, worthy is the lamb." (Louis Jackson, Jr., 2002)

After all have received the communion and have returned to their seats, the minister blesses the congregation by saying, "The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace." This means that with the body and blood in the bread and
wine, we are forgiven of our sins and renewed in our spirit, and remain in God’s steadfast love. Through this we are joined to Christ, and like in a wedding, the two become one. The congregation agrees with this blessing by adding, “Amen” (Reed, 1947).

Questions:

1. What role does the agnus dei play in the service?

2. How does the scripture reference on page 62 relate to the agnus dei?

Application:

1. Have you shared communion in other Lutheran churches or churches of another denomination? How is communion different there?

2. Can you remember your first communion? How has communion had new meaning for you since then?

3. Write your own alternate liturgy for the agnus dei.

The Celebration: Post Communion


After a wedding, there is always a celebration. The Post Communion elements

C: “Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell everyone what he has done. Let all who seek the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name. He recalls his promises and leads his people forth in joy with shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia. Alleluia.”
After receiving communion and the forgiveness administered with it, it is only natural to adore and thank God and seek his further grace and strength in our daily lives. The post communion canticle celebrates this fullness of our spiritual satisfaction. It is also appropriate because it imitates the same action of Christ and his disciples after the Last Supper as Matthew 26:30 says, “When they had sung the hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.” It appropriately ends the communion service and leads to the post communion prayer and the benediction.

_P: “Let us pray. We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life; and we pray that in your mercy you would strengthen us, through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord.”_  
_C: “Amen.”_

This prayer is offered to emphasize that the sacrament is God’s gift to man, not man’s gift to God. That sacrament is recognized as a means of grace, and we pray that it would strengthen us. The post communion prayer also expresses that we strive for stronger faith toward God and love among Christians. It is a proper prayer as we prepare to go out into the world and share the love and grace of our worship with others (Reed, 1947).
Alternate Liturgy:

*We thank you all-powerful God, for giving us this renewed relationship with you in communion through the sacrifice of your one and only son. We pray that as we have communed with you and with each other, you would build up these relationships and help us to continue in fellowship with each other, for the glory of your son, Jesus Christ. Amen.*

Questions:

1. What role does the post communion play in the service?

2. How does the scripture reference on page 63 relate to the post communion?

Application:

Write your own alternate liturgy for the post communion components. Be sure they express adoration and thanks to God for the forgiveness of your sins.
Act IV: Sending

“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” John 20:21

Like the closing act of a production that prepares the audience to leave with the plot fresh on their mind, Act Four, or the Sending, of a worship service prepares the congregation to leave the sanctuary as changed people refreshed by their worship experience. In its simplicity, it contains a benediction and dismissal. The intent of this sending is expressed in With One Voice:

“All are invited to leave in peace, sent out to serve in word and deed; to speak the words of good news they have heard, to care for those in need, and to share what they have received with the poor and the hungry” (1995, p.9).

Act IV, although the shortest act in the worship service, is the longest act of our service. It begins in the church but continues as we are sent out to forever love and serve the Lord. In our worship drama, it shows that our wedding ceremony has ended, but the marriage has begun and we now go into the world walking beside Christ and building our family as we share his love with others. We are sent out in peace and joy knowing that we will celebrate our anniversary every time we meet again in the church building.
Key Question: How does the Sending appropriately end the worship service?

Key Components of the Sending: A. Benediction  
B. Dismissal
Christ and His Bride Prepare for Life in Their Home: Benediction

Scripture Reference: Numbers 6:22-27

P: “The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look upon you with favor and give you peace.”

C: “Amen.”

The word benediction comes from two words. Bene means good and diction means to speak. Therefore the benediction speaks good to the congregation, imparting a blessing on them in God’s name, giving positive assurance of His grace and peace. Taken from the Old Testament, God’s command was for Aaron to bless the Israelites using these words. It was the only benediction commanded by God. Other benedictions are seen in the Bible however, in the closings of Paul’s letters. For example, II Corinthians 13:13 says, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you” (Reed, 1947).

Alternate Liturgy:

“Now, as you go on your way into the worst places of society, Christ will go with you. He will go before you always showing you the way; He will go behind you encouraging you; He will be beside you befriending you; above you watching over you; and always within you giving you His peace.” (Walt Wangerin, Jr., 2003, p.11)
Questions:

1. Look at the last few scriptures in each of Paul's epistles of the New Testament.
   What characteristics are common of each benediction? ______________________
   ______________________
   ______________________

2. What role does the benediction play in the service? ______________________
   ______________________
   ______________________

3. How does the scripture reference on page 68 relate to the benediction?
   ______________________
   ______________________
   ______________________

Application:
Write your own benediction.

Christ and His Bride Begin a Family: Dismissal

Scripture Reference: Luke 7:50

P: "Go in peace, serve the Lord."
C: "Thanks be to God."

This dismissal is significant. It not only gives the congregation permission to leave and go out into the world, but it ends the service in peace. Ending the service in peace is important because it reflects how the service began with the kyrie that says, "In peace, let us pray to the Lord." It is in peace that we join in worship and it is in peace that we thankfully go out to express our worship (Reed, 1947).
Alternate Liturgy:

P: “In renewed calmness, go into the world to love and serve the Lord.”

C: “We will and we thank the Lord for the opportunity.”

Questions:

1. What role does the dismissal play in the service?

2. How does the scripture reference on page 69 relate to the dismissal?

Application:

Write your own dismissal.
Conclusion: The Application of Liturgy Today

The Issue

After examining the Lutheran liturgy in detail and seeing how it is a continuation of ancient Christian worship, it is helpful to ask about its relevance today. Comparing traditional liturgical worship of the Lutheran or Catholic Church to free worship of the Baptist or Pentecostal Church, we see a clash in styles. Also, the contemporary styles of worship that are growing in popularity today reflect free worship more than liturgical worship. As these popular styles emerge and influence the church, the liturgical styles seem to fall short of what is popular, especially among the young. We see that this may cause a problem in preserving ancient liturgy and unity in the church, especially as churches strive to reach new Christians and young generations in their communities. The question to ask now is “How does liturgical worship remain liturgical yet appeal to the desires of contemporary free worship?” Before answering this question for the Lutheran church, it is important to understand why worship should remain liturgical.

Variables to the Issue

We have already looked at the meaning and history of each component of the liturgy and have seen how these components fit together in worship to form an allegorical drama. From the invocation to the dismissal, the components of the liturgy work to create unity within the worship service. The liturgy itself also creates unity within the church. Because it is the work of the people, liturgy creates a common response to the Word and Meal of worship.
As Gordon Lathrop (1999) emphasized, it unites individual worshippers into an *ekklesia*, or community of worshippers. This is significant not only for the unity of each parish, but also for the unity of parishes nationwide. Like a patchwork quilt, with each congregation represented on a different patch, liturgy is the thread of commonality and consistency that holds the quilt together. The significance of this thread goes much deeper, however. Let us think of this patchwork quilt as a family heirloom that has been passed down from generation to generation. Likewise, the liturgy has been passed down from ancient Jewish tradition. It unites not only each individual worshipper and each community of worshippers, but it also unites today’s worshipper and worship community to the original worship community of the Bible.

After recognizing the significance of liturgy, let us look to the wisdom of the pioneer of our Lutheran faith, Martin Luther. Luther emphasized that there should be freedom in worship. He stressed the Word and Meal as significant expressions of the Gospel. However, how the expressions are made is not significant and should not cause dissension. He addressed this concern of expression when he spoke about the differences between churches that practiced formal worship and the churches that practiced spontaneous worship. He said, first of all, there should be a balance between “wild worship and worship that is too sanctimonious” (Plass, 1959, p.308). Or, in other words, there should be a balance between free worship and liturgical worship. Based on this statement by Luther, we see that Lutheran worship does not need to be only liturgical. It can and should include elements of free worship that we observe in other denominations such as Baptist or Pentecostal. He also said, “For such things (*free worship or liturgical worship*), if not abased, neither add to, nor
take from, the Gospel anything at all; but they must never be regarded as necessary for salvation or made a matter of conscience” (Plass, 1959, p.305, italics mine). According to Luther, this freedom in worship should be celebrated as diversity not criticized as a lack of unity. When the worshippers focus on the Word and Meal as the central expression of the Gospel, whether their worship is “wild or sanctimonious,” they are united in this diverse, yet common, work of the people.

**Solutions to the Issue**

Seeing the significance of liturgy and learning of our freedom in worship, we can now offer solutions to our original question of how to remain liturgical, yet meet contemporary desires. Different Lutheran churches have answered this question in different ways.

One church may say this question is not important and there is no need to change because the traditional liturgy is serving their congregation quite well. Perhaps this statement is true for some churches. However, by admitting there is no need for change, the church runs the risk of complacency in worship and stagnant ministry.

Other Lutheran churches have answered this question by offering alternative services. Some churches, for example, may have two services each Sunday. One service offers the traditional Lutheran liturgy and hymns and another service offers a liturgy in more contemporary language and praise choruses. This approach is nice because it aims to please everyone in the congregation. However, it can create a lack of unity as church members get comfortable going to one service and never meet their fellow church members who comfortably attend the other service. A better solution through alternative services is one that
encourages church members to participate in each style of worship service. This can be accomplished by alternating services each week. For example, some churches are offering contemporary worship on the first and third Sundays of each month, while the second and fourth Sundays are devoted to the traditional worship style.

The solutions presented thus far have taken an either, or approach; either you attend a traditional service or you attend a contemporary service. However, there are solutions that blend traditional and contemporary worship into one service. The easiest way to do this is through the blending of music styles. Combining hymns with contemporary praise choruses or placing hymns and traditional songs against the music of a contemporary praise band allows for this blending to occur. Traditional and contemporary worship can be integrated as well if room for individual expression is allowed in the liturgy. There are components of the Lutheran liturgy that do not need to be scripted that would allow for this individual expression. For example, if a common congregational response is kept, the kyrie could be a series of individual pleas for mercy on behalf of the congregation. Likewise, the prayers of the church are often offered as individual petitions to God with the congregation responding in agreement.

Another solution that blends traditional and contemporary worship and also allows for individual expression is seen in the applications of this curriculum. This solution is to rewrite the liturgical script. By understanding what each liturgical component means, we can rewrite these components to match a specific liturgical season (Lent, Epiphany, Pentecost, etc.), a specific need, or a celebration of the church.
All of these solutions offer us alternatives that are still very liturgical in the sense that we understand liturgy as scripted worship with elements of freedom. What would happen if we used unscripted liturgy? We would have no call and response written for us, but we would maintain the acts and components of liturgy. For example, the minister would incorporate all components of the Gathering, Word, Meal and Sending, speaking from her heart in a free, spiritual manner and allowing the congregation to respond individually, either spoken or silent, at the same time. In contemplating this solution, I ask, "Can this worship still be corporate? Does it remain the work of the people or does it become the work of the individual?" With a spiritually mature congregation that is educated in the liturgy, this solution could work. However, as in all solutions, the focus must remain on the *ekklesia gathering* in response to the *word and meal* and being *sent* into the world to share its response.
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