

## Worship 101: The Prayers and the Offering

The next two parts of worship that we want to look at are the prayers and the offering.

We begin with the prayers that we pray during the Divine service. Why do we include prayers during our church service? One reason is because this is what we see the early church doing there in the books of Acts. An example would be in Acts 2:42 which says:

"They (the believers in Jerusalem) devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer."

Here we see that one of the things these first century Christians did when they came together for worship was pray. This passage could be translated "They devoted themselves to ... the prayers." The definite article in front of the word prayers suggests that these were set, written prayers. What were these prayers? Well, one of them more than likely would have been the Lord's Prayer. Other well-known prayers may have been also used.

Another reason we pray during worship is because we find St. Paul calling upon the church to do this in 1 Timothy 2:1-4. Here the apostle tells the church that when they gather for worship they are to spend some time in prayer. He says we are to pray for all people including the leaders of our country. This is why we oftentimes pray for our president and the other leaders of our nation. In addition we pray for all those serving in the military. Therefore, prayer is an integral part of our worship.

Receiving the "offering" is also something that takes place during worship. The offering is our response of thanksgiving to God for all that He has done for us, especially His gift of eternal life in Christ Jesus.

Our generous offerings to the Lord's church are one of the ways we obey the third commandment. This commandment has to do with our use of God's word. We make use of God's word as we come to church to hear that word and receive the body and blood of Christ. In order for this to take place however, money is required. The financial support of our church comes from the sacrificial giving of God's people. Without your offerings Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran will not be here. So, as you can see, our offerings not only express our gratitude to God; He does His work in our congregation of teaching and proclaiming His Word through our faithful giving.

In Christ,  
Pastor Bloom