



Worship Formation & Liturgical Resources: Frequently Asked Questions

When do we make announcements in worship?

The worship staff receives a number of similar inquiries on worship-related topics from across the church.

These responses should not be considered the final word on the topic, but useful guides that are to be considered in respect to local context with pastoral sensitivity.

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Where to place the announcements within a worship service is a question that many congregations grapple with on one occasion or another. Although announcements are not a required part of the Sunday liturgy and may be omitted altogether, there are a variety of appropriate placement options to consider.

What are "the announcements" in your congregation?

There are two types or categories of announcements. The first type relates to the service itself. There may need to be an announcement about something that will happen in the worship service. Something may need further explanation. Such announcements may also be printed in a bulletin, but oftentimes they are not. If this type of announcement is necessary, it may be most suitable as part of the Gathering (See the pattern for worship outline in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, pp. 92-93).

The second type of announcements is "general" announcements (hereafter simply called "announcements") that note various congregational concerns, from bake sales and anniversaries to hospitalizations and deaths. They most often concern the missional life of the assembly, the ways worship intersects with daily life as Christ's people.

When announcements occur within the liturgy, it is important to place them at transition points, where they will least disrupt the flow or logic of the service. There are three transitional options that may work.

As part of the Gathering

Announcements can occur before the liturgy begins. In some congregations, this is a time for silence or quiet reflection. For others, it is a time for meeting and greeting. Often, this time is concluded with either music or an order for confession and forgiveness.

Some possible arrangements:

quiet or active gathering time

announcements

prelude or gathering music

quiet or active gathering time

prelude or gathering music

announcements

(continued)

(confession and forgiveness/
thanksgiving for baptism)
Gathering song(s)

(confession and forgiveness/thanksgiving for
baptism)
Gathering song(s)

When announcements are made before the service, they should take on a preparatory character, related to the worship to follow. For example, parish concerns noted prior to the liturgy provide an opportunity to encourage worshipers to remember people or concerns in prayer and appropriately signals to them that these people or concerns will be included in the prayers later.

Announcing such concerns *for the first time* prior to the liturgy and then praying for them during the prayer of the church is much preferable to making first references to concerns within the prayers. When important concerns or joys are sprung on the people for the first time within the prayers, people will sometimes respond to the prayers like listeners to a newscast, who are often shocked or startled by what is announced. When people are surprised, it is difficult for them to move into the depths of prayer.

At The Offering

The time when the offering is received, which includes the movements of ushers or acolytes, the passing of plates, and sometimes a procession of money, bread, and wine, provides a transition point within the order of worship for announcements. Since the collection usually follows the exchange of peace (see also, [“What is the Exchange of Peace?”](#)), the assembly may have been standing and can come back together with time for announcements. Announcements placed within this time frame might reflect the work of the people, and the practical business of being church could be noted.

Announcements can occur before the offering is gathered, during the collection (if there is no music or assembly song), or after the offering is gathered and before the gifts are brought forward.

As part of the Sending

The *rubrics* (italicized directions in red print) in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* make provision for the announcements as part of the sending rite (See ELW p. 114). They can occur after the post-communion prayer and before the blessing.

Making announcements here makes practical sense as the announcements often pertain to our life outside of worship. We are sent forth remembering the various events that further our mission and service. Announcements about the worship service, however, would be out of place here.

Some possible arrangements:

Post-communion Prayer
announcements
Blessing
Sending Song
Dismissal

Post-communion Prayer
Blessing
Sending Hymn
announcements
Dismissal

No Announcements

When the goal is to omit verbal announcements, an effective strategy is to make them outside the liturgy itself, perhaps using other media. Announcements can be:

- printed and inserted into the bulletin or worship folder or distributed by the ushers after worship
- printed and posted on a well-placed bulletin board in the narthex or parish hall
- given after the liturgy, during the coffee hour
- posted as e-mail via a congregational listserv or as a Web page on the congregation's Web site or other media outlets.
- printed in a monthly or weekly parish newsletter and mailed to all members
- projected onto screens before or after services in congregations with this equipment

RESOURCES

[Frequently Asked Questions:](#)

- ☞ What is the pattern for worship?
- ☞ What is the Exchange of Peace?

[Resources Available from Augsburg Fortress:](#)

- 📖 *Evangelical Lutheran Worship, Leaders Desk Edition*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006.
- 📖 Burke, Suzanne and Martin Seltz, eds., *Worship Matters: An Introduction to Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2012. (Leader edition and Participant edition also available separately).

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