



## **How do we evaluate 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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Worship is always being evaluated. Although it may be informal, everyone that is sent forth from an assembled worshipping body has evaluated that service in one way or another. Evaluations might be based on any number of things: the number of people in attendance, the length of the sermon, the pronunciation of the reader, or the number of flubbed notes by the musician.

The following questions are designed to move beyond surface-level evaluations into the deeper substance of worship. These questions help us consider things that are essential for all Christian worship, things that are faithful to a Lutheran heritage, and things that are biblically rooted. As a means of evaluation these questions can be applied to all types of worshipping assemblies regardless of time, contextual location, leadership, demographics, or style.

**After each statement, select the response that best applies to your worshipping assembly.**

- 1 – Strongest agreement**
- 2 – More agreement than disagreement**
- 3 – Neutral, no response, don't know**
- 4 – More disagreement than agreement**
- 5 – Strongest disagreement**

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1. The words used in our assembly are richly Trinitarian (names the Trinity and all three Persons).

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

2. God's story of salvation is central to our worship.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

3. The ministry of word and sacrament is at the core of our worship.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

4. The primary symbols of communion table, baptismal font, and ambo/pulpit are present in our environment for worship.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

5. There is enough Scripture and scriptural content in our worship to tell a full, broad, deep, rich story of God's salvation.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

6. Our worship is reflective of the ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ, risen and active today.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

7. The content of our prayers is true to Christ's character and the breadth of need in the world.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

8. Our worship seeks the full, conscious, and active participation of all people assembled.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

9. Our people are filled with the Holy Spirit in worship (they are in alignment with the work of the Spirit and are filled with love).

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

10. Our worship is sensitive to the needs of visitors and guests and takes their participation in worship seriously.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

11. The leaders of our assembly are reflective of the Body of Christ that transcends class, age, ethnicity, and gender.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

12. The language of our worship includes a balance of addressing God and addressing people.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

13. Our worship helps the assembly experience its relationship with God.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

14. Our worship is contextually relevant to the culture and setting of our people and community.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

15. Our worship is a feast for the senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell).

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

16. Our worship is filled with life, vitality, and joy.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

17. Our worship offers opportunities for reflection, confession, and lament.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

18. Our worship welcomes and calls people into the baptismal life (united with the death and resurrection of Jesus).

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

19. The word of God, read, preached, and sung by the assembly, is essential to our order of service.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

20. Our worship regularly experiences Christ's presence at the table with bread and wine.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

21. Our worship sends us out as disciples of Jesus, following his mission of serving, blessing, and loving the world.

*Agree* 1.....2.....3.....4.....5 *Disagree*

**Sources:**

Faulkner, Clayton. [“Evaluating Worship”](#)

Ruth, Lester. [“Beyond Style Debates \(Questions to Renew All Christian Worship\)”](#)

McIntyre, Dean. [“Evaluating Worship and Music”](#)

**RESOURCES**

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

- ☪ How is language used in worship?
- ☪ What are the biblical roots of worship?
- ☪ How does worship involve all our senses?
- ☪ How and when might congregations conduct surveys about worship styles and practices?
- ☪ How can we make our worship space accessible?

[Resources Available for Download on the ELCA Website](#)

☪ *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament.* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997. (Available in English and Spanish)

- 📖 *Principles for Worship*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002. (Available in English and Spanish)
- 📖 *Can We Talk? Engaging Worship and Culture*. ELCA, 2016.

### [Resources Available from Augsburg Fortress](#)

- 📖 Brugh, Lorraine S. and Gordon W. Lathrop. *The Sunday Assembly: Using Evangelical Lutheran Worship; Volume One*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2008.

### Other Resources

- 📖 Cherry, Constance. *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010.
- 📖 Cherry, Constance, Mary M. Brown, and Christopher T. Bounds. *Selecting Worship Songs: A Guide for Leaders*. Marion: Triangle Publishing, 2011.
- 📖 Malefyt, Norma deWaal and Howard Vanderwell. [“Evaluating Our Worship Life”](#)
- 📖 Malefyt, Norma deWaal and Howard Vanderwell. *Designing Worship Together: Models And Strategies For Worship Planning (Vital Worship Healthy Congregations)*. Herndon: The Alban Institute, 2005.
- 📖 Miller, Barbara Day. *Encounters with the Holy: A Conversational Model for Worship Planning (Vital Worship Healthy Congregations)* Rowman and Littlefield, 2010.

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