

Why we do what we do.

(For more complete answers, please check out our FAQ page at www.CommunionPres.org.)

Why do you observe the Lord's Supper so frequently?

We observe the Lord's Supper nearly every week because we want to regularly remind our congregation that Jesus Christ came to save sinners! They are saved as a result of the person and work of Jesus Christ. We remember His saving work specifically at the Lord's Table. When a sermon finds itself ending at the Lord's Table, it pushes away the simple "skills for life / pep talk" message, and gets at, and to, the heart of the gospel: Christ's prophesied advent, His righteous life, atoning death, victorious resurrection, compassionate intercession, confident reign, imminent return, and His abiding presence with us individually and corporately as the church. This kind of preaching and observance is part of a "covenant renewal" service. It affirms that God has called a people unto Himself. He has cleansed and consecrated them. His desire is to commune with His children, so that they would be assured of His love for them, and to inspire them to carry out His commission.

Why does the pastor wear a robe?

Historically, the robe represented two things 1) that the minister is a representative of Christ and wears the "uniform" of his ordained calling (to proclaim the Gospel) and 2) to remind the congregation that the minister is a humble servant and his leadership is always submissive to the Word of God.

Why do you sing hymns and praise songs?

"Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord," (Eph. 5:19) The Scriptures teach that singing should be sung in such a way that it: 1) expresses our heartfelt emotion to the Lord, 2) serves as a corporate or individual "offering" representing our appreciation of God's beauty and glory, and 3) teaches us to embrace and remember Biblical wisdom! How do we do this? By selecting songs that: represent the words and doctrine of Scripture, support the theme of the morning message, and encourage the whole congregation to sing. We strive to present music in a way that is reverent and beautiful. As we are a church that must "set-up and tear down" each Sunday, we depend on "portable" instruments. We also sing some songs *A Cappella*. Our desire is to integrate the varied musical talents of our church family into our worship service. All those desiring to offer their musical gift to the Lord are encouraged to do so.

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Why do you read so many Bible passages?

The Scriptures are God's word of revelation. They speak of the history of a unique people, they speak of God's eternal plan of redemption. In every book of the Bible God's salvation is announced. The themes of this salvation are also found throughout. When Jesus outlined God's plan of salvation, he described it like this in Luke 24:44: *"These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."* Since Jesus readily quoted from all of the Scripture, we also want to express the scope of God's activity from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

Why do some families chose to have their children participate in the worship service?

We are "idealists" at heart and can think of no greater joy than to be worshipping God in heaven with our families! Consequently, we are striving to establish a church that is especially committed to encouraging family and intergenerational worship. The Bible repeatedly states that our children will ask their parents why they worship the way they do — this is the soil of fruitful conversation. But they will never ask us about our faith if they never see us in worship! Some younger children, after a few weeks of attending are able to stay and learn about their faith in a worship service. However, we also have a children's room and nursery for those families who believe that their children are not yet ready to participate in corporate worship. (Volunteers wearing blue smocks are ready and willing to assist!) We recognize that God matures and develops His own children in His time.

Why do you greet each other for an extended time before the service?

"Fellowship" is another word defining *communion*. We want to emphasize the fellowship of our church by allowing people the opportunity to meet and greet several people with more than just a handshake. We are often times preoccupied with many concerns prior to a service, this should not keep us from sincerely greeting someone. In some churches, "passing the peace" is a communal gesture designed to prepare Christ's disciple before coming to The Table. We appreciate this tradition and have placed it right up front of our service time so we might have peace with our family, our conscience, and our Lord.

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What does it mean to be Presbyterian?

"*Presbyterian*" comes from the Greek word, *πρεσβύτερος*, which means "elder." Presbyterians are therefore led by a group of elders. This means first of all that a Monarch or a Pope does not run the church, but gifted men elected by individual congregations. "Elder rule" also provides a system of checks and balances designed to keep sole control of a church from the whims of just one person. Elders share the oversight of a church as shepherds. They are charged to lead the sheep into truth, love, and service while defending the flock from error. While other Christian churches can be "elder ruled," Presbyterians adhere to the Westminster Confession of Faith (1646) as a standard for interpreting the Scriptures, and seek to be "connected" so that no single church would be alone, but rather a member of a cohesive body for mutual support and accountability.

What is the Westminster Confession?

In 1643, the English Parliament called upon the theologians of the day to write a concise statement of Protestant belief regarding doctrine, worship, church government, etc. The result of this meeting at Westminster Abbey was a 33 chapter document that has become the standard Confession of the Presbyterian church, as well as the historic Congregational and Baptist churches. In brief, the Confession affirms the ancient creeds of the Christian faith while opposing specific dogmas of the Roman Catholic church. The Confession is NOT considered to be equal with Scripture and is not a complete theological treatise. It is simply an overview of the most important convictions for which all (Protestant) Christians should affirm. Although Christians DO disagree about certain aspects of the Confession, Presbyterian elders must hold the "most essential and necessary" assertions of the Confession regarding faith and practice.* (* *Some "scruples" are permitted! However, "ordaining bodies" of conservative denominations are consistent about what is "essential and necessary" to believe.*)

How can I meet with an elder of this church?

Each Sunday, our elders attend and participate in our services. They are happy to meet, pray, and discuss any and all matters related to the Christian faith and the life of our fellowship. Our elders also have specific areas of responsibility for the oversight of our church. This means that one elder may be better equipped than the other to address a specific question. However, our elders work in concert with each other, and meet monthly as a "Session" to specifically pray, organize, and chart direction for this ministry. The congregation is invited and encouraged to attend our monthly Session meetings.