

Hilltop Officer of the Day

Hints and Guidelines for leading in Worship



The First Presbyterian Church of Mendham

2021-2022

Background and Questions

Officer of the Day

What is the Officer of the Day?

The Officer of the Day is (usually) a current Ruling Elder or Deacon who assists in worship leadership from Rally Day through the Second Sunday of June each year. We ask our officers to **lead in worship twice a year**. The responsibilities of the officer of the day are as follows:

- To arrive on the assigned Sunday 20 minutes prior to the worship service and check in with the Head usher (listed in the bulletin) to see if any assistance is needed.
- To read the morning Psalm, lead the congregation from the Call to Confession through the Passing of the Peace and offer the Prayer of Dedication. (Sample “calls to confession”, lead in wording to the “Assurance of Pardon” and “Prayers of Dedication” are available in this document.) The preaching pastor will write the prayer of confession so that it can tie into the theme of the sermon. On occasion the Officer of the Day will be asked to lead other parts of the worship service. On some occasions the Officer will be asked to lead fewer aspects of worship.
- To greet visitors and members at the door with the pastors *following worship*. We want our guests to see who our officers are and meet lay leaders.
- To assist ushers as they gather up the pew pad sign-in sheets from the main floor *and the balcony* and return them to the church office.
- To aid in the worship of our congregation, knowing that it is not about us, but all about what God is doing in our midst.

When am I scheduled to Lead?

A schedule for the 2021-2022 year is provided separately. All officer assignments will be listed in the Worship calendar distributed at the monthly Session meeting. This will include the Psalm. The bulletin will be sent to you on the week you are serving by the Office Manager and will contain the Prayer of Confession. If that does not happen... call the office!

What if I have a conflict?

Surely there will be times when officers cannot serve on their assigned Sunday. If that is the case, you are free to exchange with one another if the assigned date proves untenable. You are asked to **find your own substitute** and inform the church office manager **two weeks prior to your assignment** should you encounter a conflict. (You may ask any Elder, Deacon or former Elder if needed.) This enables us to put the correct names in the Sunday Order of Worship. In case of a last minute emergency, please contact the pastor to let them know and they will cover for you!

But I'm Not the Best Public Speaker!

That is fine. No one should feel forced to lead in worship. But you are encouraged to give it a try...you might be surprised! If this does not feel like a good fit, we will ask you to secure another officer to take your place and ask you to let the office manager know that you have switched and who will be serving in your place.

Moses did not want to lead because of his poor speaking skills, Jeremiah said he was too young, Esther did not know that her voice would be the one to change the king's mind and save her people. God calls everyone to lead in their own way. You do not have to be a polished professional to lead worship - be yourself.

God will use you!

To better equip you we have also attached some guidelines for leading worship at Hilltop that may prove helpful. Worship leadership gets easier with time. You are encouraged to remember that you are leading a congregation (not an audience!) and that these people are your friends (not your critics!). You might also consider that in leading worship, all of us have a congregation of one... the God who loves us.

Typical Order of Service and Responsibilities

The following table outlines a typical order of worship service and highlights responsibilities for your information. There will certainly be changes from week to week, as the season warrants.

| Hilltop Church Worship - Order of Service and Responsibilities | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| | Who Selects? | Who Presents? | Sit/ Stand |
| Prelude | Music Minister | Music Minister | Sit |
| Psalm Reading | Per Lectionary | Officer-of-the-Day | Sit |
| Welcome and Announcements | ---- | Officer-of-the-Day | Sit |
| Responsive Call to Worship | Pastor/Guest Minister | Officer-of-the-Day | Sit |
| Hymn #1 | Pastor/Guest Minister | ---- | Stand |
| Prayer of Adoration | Pastor/Guest Minister | Pastor/Guest Minister | Stand |
| Call to Confession | Officer-of-the-Day | Officer-of-the-Day | Sit |
| Confession | Pastor/Guest Minister | Officer-of-the-Day | Sit |
| Assurance of Pardon | Officer-of-the-Day | Officer-of-the-Day | Sit |
| Gloria Patri | ---- | ---- | Stand |
| Passing of the Peace | ---- | Officer-of-the-Day | Stand |
| Liturgy | Pastor/Guest Minister | Pastor/Guest Minister | Sit |
| Sermon | Pastor/Guest Minister | Pastor/Guest Minister | Sit |
| Invitation to the Offering | Pastor/Guest Minister | Pastor/Guest Minister | Sit |
| Offering/Anthem | Music Minister | Music Minister | Sit |
| Doxology | ---- | ---- | Stand |
| Prayer of Dedication | Officer-of-the-Day | Officer-of-the-Day | Stand |
| Pastoral Prayer and Lord's Prayer | Pastor/Guest Minister | Pastor/Guest Minister | Sit |
| Hymn #2 | Pastor/Guest Minister | ---- | Stand |
| Benediction | Pastor/Guest Minister | Pastor/Guest Minister | Stand |
| Postlude | Music Minister | Music Minister | Sit |

Sample Prayers for your Consideration/Use

The following are provided to help you in worship leadership. All officers are **welcome to change, write their own or edit these**. You are encouraged to bring your written speaking parts with you... in a font size large enough to serve your needs. All prayers and readings are to be given from the pulpit. The presiding pastor will give you cues/signals on when to start.

Call to Confession *(Given as a lead in/invitation to unite in the Prayer of Confession.)*

- 1) We come as a community of faith - people who have done good to others and people who have done harm to others. God urges us to admit all of our shortcomings and seek forgiveness, so we join together in our unison prayer of confession, let us pray:
- 2) As those who know the depth of our own need we prepare our hearts for confession. As those who are assured of the depth of God's mercy, let us pray:
- 3) There is not one among us who does not need the grace of God's forgiveness. There is not one among us whose righteousness will stand upon its own strength or whose virtue is beyond question. We gather confessing that the words of scripture speak a deep and penetrating truth about us: all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. But there is One among us who has the words of forgiveness - and He says come unto me...let us unite our hearts in a time of confession...
- 4) Jesus Christ said, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavily laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me; for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light". ... Having offered God our praise let us now confess our sin, let us pray.
- 5) This is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel, says the Lord: I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I will forgive their evil deeds, and I will remember their sin no more. Trusting this great promise, let us confess our sins to almighty God... let us pray:

- 6) The discipline of confession brings an end to pretense. God calls us to be an honest people before Him...to openly confess our faults and frailties... and to know the forgiving and empowering grace of Christ. Honesty leads to confession... Confession leads to change...
Let us confess our sin before God... let us pray:
- 7) The prophet Jeremiah said: "Let not the wise glory in their wisdom, let not the mighty glory in their might, let not the wealthy glory in their wealth; but let those who glory find glory in this: that they understand and know the Lord, who has steadfast love and mercy for all ..." confident of God's forgiveness let us confess our sin, let us pray:
- 8) Trusting that God's love is always seeking us - especially when we are lost and hurting, let us turn to God in prayer, let us pray:
- 9) Confident in the love of God, we have come to know and trust in Christ... let us confess our sin, let us pray:
- 10)How full of compassion is the heart of God!
How broad and deep is the forgiveness of God!
Let us seek God's Grace and Forgiveness...let us pray:
- 11)The understanding of God is un-searchable... The compassion of God is without boundary or border. The forgiveness of God is at hand... let us pray.
- 12)With honest and humble confidence, we approach God and confess the broken places of our lives. Let us pray:
- 13)In the presence of God, we are reassured that the very heart of creation beats with compassion, forgiveness and hope... let us open our hearts in prayer... let us pray:
- 14)Confident that God understands us, loves us and longs to be in fellowship with us, let us confess anything that may come between us and our God or our neighbors...first in shared confession and then in silence...let us pray.
- 15)Trusting in the goodness of God, we confess our sins in the confidence that God knows the very fiber of our being and longs to restore and forgive us... let us pray:

- 16) Confident that God's mercy is always available and God's eye is always scanning the horizon for every prodigal child... let us draw near to God with an open heart and confess anything that stands between us and our Lord... let us pray:
- 17) Trusting in the great compassion of Christ Jesus, let us do as He directs and come unto Him and lay before Him any burden, every care, any broken promise, every regret... let us open our hearts to Him, first in unison and then in silence, let us pray:
- 18) We enter worship with praise on our lips and humility in our heart. We turn to God to ask forgiveness... to be reconciled with our God, our neighbors and ourselves... praying together...
- 19) The invitation of Christ is always: Come unto me... no matter what you've done, what you've failed to do... where you've been... or have not been... no matter who you've become... or have not become... Christ says He will in no way cast us aside... so let us come to Him in moments of unison and then silent confession, let us pray:
- 20) There is so much pain and brokenness in the world... and the truth is that we are part of it, small or large, and the good news is that as we face our own shortcomings, our own broken places, God begins to heal and change us. So let us turn to God in unison and in silent confession... let us pray:
- 21) There are places in every heart that need healing and wholeness. Trusting the mercy of God and the power of God, let us unite first in our unison prayer of Confession and then in silent confession... let us pray:
- 22) To come to the Lord's Day... to enter into Sabbath moments is to come in the recognition that we need worship and we need rest. God gives us the gift of confession so that we may leave behind the things that hinder... and rest assured that deep peace is possible... First and unison and then in silence... let us pray:
- 23) **Advent** is our invitation to Christmas...
It is a season to slow our pace...
a season to remember what we treasure... and to repent and to clear the conscience that our hearts, minds and spirits may become Bethlehem to Christ once more. Let us unite in our prayer of Confession...

- 24) Today we have begun (*or are in*) the Christian season of **Lent...**
a season of reflection, penitence and renewal. Let there be no pretense between us and our Lord. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory God intends for our living. All of us have need of moments of forgiveness and the assurance of a fresh start and the beginning is in honest confession. Let us turn to God first in our unison prayer of confession and then in silent confession... let us pray:
- 25) To come to the Lord's Day... to enter into Sabbath moments is to come in the recognition that we need worship and we need rest. God gives us the gift of confession so that we may leave behind the things that hinder ... and rest assured that deep peace is possible... let us pray:

Assurance of Pardon (*Follows the confession or silent confession*)

- 1) The desire of God is that you have life and have it abundantly. The design of God is that you live in peace with others and within yourself. The delight of God is that you live in the Love of Jesus Christ...
Friends, Believe the Good News of the Gospel!
- 2) There is no one and nothing that can separate you from the love of God made known to us in Jesus Christ our Lord. The disquieted soul God will comfort. The cast down soul God will raise up. The grace of God is sufficient for our every need...
Friends, believe the good news of the gospel.
- 3) The grace of God is sufficient for our every need. The words Christ spoke long ago He is speaking still: is there no one left to condemn you? Neither do I condemn you. Go and sin no more...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 4) What shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation of distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? No, I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities or things present, not things to come, nor powers nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord...
Friends, believe the Good news of the Gospel.

- 5) Remember the words of the prophet Jeremiah: “Behold the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.” ...
Friends, believe the good news of the Gospel.
- 6) Behold, the dwelling of God is with men and women. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more. Neither shall there be mourning, nor crying nor pain any more – for the former things have passed away. And the One who sat upon the throne said: “Behold I make all things new.” ...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 7) As far as the east is from the west – so far has God removed our sin from us. For God sent his Son into the world not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him. If anyone is in Christ – they are a new creation, behold the old has passed away and everything becomes fresh and new...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 8) May the God and Father of us all grant us pardon and remission for all our sins, time for the amendment of our lives and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 9) Jesus Christ said, “If the Son of Man sets you free you will be free indeed.” Free from guilt, free from sin, from the past, free to serve, free to love, free to follow Christ anew...
Friends, this is the good news of the Gospel!
- 10) Forgetting what lies behind set your minds now on the Godly things that lie ahead and let the peace of Christ fill your heart with gratitude and hope...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 11) The love of God is heard in the voice of Christ, Who, even in death said: “Father, forgive them.”...
Friends believe the Good News of the Gospel:.
- 12) God’s grace is sufficient for our every need. Christ came for us, Christ lived for us, Christ taught for us, Christ died for us, Christ rose for us. Christ reigns for us... If Christ is for us... who can be against us?...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:

- 13) The grace of God is sufficient for our every need, the compassion of God is broader than the measure of our minds...for God has so loved the world that we can confidently declare...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 14) Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Nothing we have said or held back. Nothing we have done or left undone. In Christ all may begin again...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 15) There is no better place, no safer place, no more loving place to untrust your heart than to God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel
- 16) We live by faith... faith in the goodness and purpose of the God we have come to know in Christ Jesus... the God who loves and forgives... who encourages us to trust and start over... there is nothing that can separate you from God's love or God's forgiveness...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:
- 17) The steadfast love of the Lord invites us, renews us...and sends us forth in peace...
Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel:

Prayer of Dedication: *(Follows the Doxology - Come to the pulpit before the ushers)*

- 1) Almighty God, we come before You this morning recognizing that the earth and all of its fullness belongs to You. The good gifts that surround us each and every day are ours by Your hand. Grant us grace to recognize and remember that You are the source, not only of our life, but of all of life. It is with joy that we bring our gifts before You and pray that Your blessing may follow after them that the purpose of Jesus Christ may be honored and that Your kingdom may come closer to all who are in need. Amen.
- 2) Holy God, we bring our gifts to You, with grateful and joyful hearts. Please grant that with our gifts we may also offer a ready mind and a willing spirit and show forth the truth of the gospel and the compassion of Christ in our living, for it is in Christ that we pray. Amen.

- 3) Holy God,
 - with hearts grateful for the privilege of being able to give,
 - with hands ready to serve beyond these walls, with minds eager to pursue Your truth and
 - with eyes open to the many ways in which You will be the stranger at our door, we present these offerings in the confidence and hope that You will use all we have and all we are to Your glory and honor. Through Christ our Lord we present ourselves to You. Amen.

- 4) Holy God, it is in response to Your grace that we present these offerings and ourselves for the work Your kingdom.
 - By our gifts, may the lost be found and the bound be set free.
 - By our gifts, may the hurting find relief and the confused find hope.
 - By our gifts, may the friendless find comfort and the hungry be fed.
 - By Your grace, O God, let our giving and our living reflect Your loving kindness made known in Christ Jesus.
 - For it is in Christ that we pray. Amen.

- 5) Holy One, as we gather together in this hour of worship we acknowledge our call to be members of Christ's Body, the church universal. We pray that You would accept these our gifts to be a witness for others. Grant us grace that we may arrange our priorities that we may seek first the Kingdom of God on earth. And keep us mindful that we pray in the name of Christ who was among us as One Who serves and who blessed the poor and the poor in spirit. Amen.

- 6) Gracious God, You give us clear commands and wonderful promises. To follow them is to find our way home, to trust them is to find life. Help us, O God, to see in Your ways the path to the loving life for which we long. Use us in our homes, families and workplaces to spread the love You offer. For here and now we offer You our gifts and ourselves to be used in love and in service... for Your glory alone. Amen.

- 7) Loving God, Giver of all good gifts, we thank You for all that we have received. We recognize that You have given different and precious gifts to each of us. As we present our offering this morning help us to use all our skills and abilities in ways that will benefit others as You have charged us to do. May the gifts of our hands, our voices, our wills, our lives be used wisely and well... all to bear faithful witness to Your Son and to build Christ's kingdom. Amen.

- 8) Loving God, Giver of all good gifts, we thank You for all that we have received. We recognize that You have given different and precious gifts to each of us. As we present our offering this morning, help us to use all our skills and abilities in ways that will benefit others as You have charged us to do. May the gifts of our hands, our voices, our wills, our lives, be used wisely and well... all to bear faithful witness to Your Son and to build Christ's kingdom. Amen.
- 9) God of unlimited mercy and unrelenting patience, we bring our offerings to You. We pray that the work of Your church... the work of grace and gospel... may be enlarged, enriched and strengthened as we seek to show the love, purpose and mercy of Christ our Lord in a world of need. Let our gifts be part of Your goodness... in the name of Him who is mercy and hope incarnate... even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- 10) Holy God, in the abundance of Your goodness, You give us more than we desire or dare to ask. Pour forth upon us, we pray, a spirit of thankfulness, and increase in us the ability to love, that we may always be more willing to give than to receive; and so rule our hearts that all we have may be used for your service, and we ourselves be consecrated to You through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- 11) Holy God, out of Your abundance we have known abundance and we thank You for the privilege of being able to give and to be part of Your kingdom's work. Let our gifts bear fruit in the proper time and the most meaningful way. Help us to be faithful witnesses to Your grace in the way we live and the way we serve. Through Christ our Lord we pray. Amen.
- 12) **Lenten** version of the above:
Holy God, out of Your abundance we have known abundance and we thank You for the privilege of being able to give and to be part of Your kingdom's work. Let our gifts bear fruit in the proper time and the most meaningful way. Help us to be faithful witnesses to Your grace in the way we live and the way we serve, for we are following the One whose compassion and service led to the cross... even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
- 13) Holy God,
we bring our gifts to You with joy. We offer ourselves to You with gratitude. We pray that Your sovereign purpose will be fulfilled in and through us. In the name and to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

14) Holy God,

We have accepted the invitation of Christ... To trust Him, to believe in Him and to follow Him... And so we present these gifts to accomplish His purpose... And ourselves to become evermore like Him... in compassion, in service, in prayer and in sacrifice. Grant us faith enough to follow our Lord this day... and always. Amen.

15) Holy God,

With great gratitude we present our offering and ourselves.
You have provided for us in abundance. let what we give help those who have little. You have given us hope in Christ, let what we give bring the same hope to others. You have given us the gift of this community of faith, let what we give be an extension of Your hospitality.
For we pray in Christ our Lord. Amen.

16) Holy God,

When we are given the opportunity to help... please bring forth our best.
When we are called to serve... help us serve with joy, conviction and humility.
When we are asked to give... inspire us to surprising generosity
For we pray in the Name and Spirit of Him, who gave everything...
Even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Guidelines for Worship Leadership:

Remember you are among friends!

Take your time and go slowly... we are not in a hurry to pray or read scripture.

Stay about **4 inches from the pulpit microphone**. (There is no on or off switch to worry about!)

You don't need to say, "good morning!" It can disrupt the flow of worship and we have plenty of places to greet one another.

This time is not about you... so relax!

If you stumble... don't worry... it is OK to make mistakes!

If you are unsure about something, just ask, preferably before worship begins.

Take time to be prayerful about the hour of worship in which you will lead, about those who will be gathered together today.. and ask for God's presence and peace to be in you and move through you. Take time to use the personal preparation that is in the bulletin each Sunday.

Here is a *prayer for your use*:

Grant us, O God to:
know what we should know, love what we should love, praise what delights You most, value what is precious in Your sight, and hate what is offensive to You... and above all, that we may always seek Your will. Amen.

(Adapted from a prayer by Thomas a Kempis)