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## **Second Presbyterian Worship Survey**

-Narrative responses gathered from the congregation by the Worship Committee of Session,  
July through August, 2015

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experience?**

*Some comments were edited or omitted due to their personal nature*

# 1. How meaningful are various parts of our services?

## Prelude

- While it's nice to talk to people and have fellowship it would be great if there was only music playing in the sanctuary before worship and all the visiting was done before entering. Its nice to have even just 5 min of true reflection and preparation for worship which is really hard to do with a hundred people standing in the pews talking...thanks for asking!
- Would like more prelude than 5 minutes.
- Prelude would be much more meaningful if the congregation were encouraged to use it as a quiet time to prepare for contemplative worship. As it is, why listen anyhow? The break for announcements would ruin the mood.

## Silence/Private Prayer

- I really appreciate time for silent private prayer.
- I'd appreciate more silent time during worship, if possible. It's nice to have a chance for personal private prayer while in the midst of corporate worship.
- Silent prayer needs more "attention" and "focus".
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## Prayers/Creeds

- I do miss the statement of faith--either the Apostles creed or something similar.
- Confession (admitting that we might do better) has become unrecognizable. A "gathering prayer" dumbs it down. Didn't we have a "gathering prayer" in the Call to Worship? The whole worship service has become another exercise in busy-ness.

## Pace

I appreciate the opportunity worship gives me to reflect. Peace is important after a fast-paced week - I'm not looking for an equally fast-paced worship experience.

## Time of Welcome/Passing of Peace

- I am an usher. Feel that we still woefully lack in outreach and hospitality to new visitors.
- I love the welcome at the beginning and the sharing of peace
- Mixed feelings about sharing of the peace/greeting. Is intentional, but wonder about its placement at this point in worship. Preludes can set the mood, but that's all "broken" with announcements and peace passing with the requisite "how do you get them quiet again?"
- I am so-so on the greeting of those around us during the service. I feel it is somewhat disruptive
- Sometimes the greetings can be a little low - everyone is always nice but I feel we can do more.
- As a new member, my perception is that the "sharing of the peace" seems awkward for some. It occasionally leads to more conversation at the end of the service, but hopefully there would be conversation after the service anyway. I think it stops the flow of worship.

## **How meaningful are various parts of our services?**

- The mood for worship is set: beautiful prelude, welcome and announcements. Then the whole thing kind of explodes up when we are asked to greet those around us then quickly quiet back down into a reflective mood for worship once again. I typically arrive late just in order to skip this part of this service.
- The opening of service starts the transition from my everyday world, rush to get to church, to a focus on God and worship as well as prepares my heart and opens my "ears" to God's word. Looks like I am pretty positive
- I find the SHARING OF THE PEACE a bit disruptive when it occurs. We could all so easily do this -- and some of us do -- either before or after the service.
- Sometimes the sharing of the peace seems forced; when I visit other churches it can be awkward for a visitor if you are not greeted. I have always made it a point to connect with those around me and don't need the direction to do so.
- Sharing the peace and greeting those around can be done after the benediction.
- I wish we saved greeting each other for after the worship service is over.

### **Announcements**

- There are too many announcements and I do not like the forced greeting of those around me.
- Welcome and announcements usually too long.
- Sometime Paul rushes through the announcements and maybe needs to slow down. I talk fast, so I completely understand, but others would like it slower.
- spend minimal time on announcements--we can read the bulletin.
- I see no need to ANNOUNCE in detail items that are listed in the bulletin.

### **Choir**

- Would like very much to hear more from our wonderful choir
- Choir adds a lot to worship.
- Offeratory [sic] Anthem needs for professional, studied structure.
- Wish the choir wore robes and processed and recessed!
- The poor choir is no longer effective

### **Music (types)**

- Music with the organ is very important.
- I value traditional worship music style but my preference is contemporary style
- Music is most important to worship---organ, choral work by choir. Calming reflective prelude music important
- Music is important to me and should be thoughtfully selected. We have an amazing organ and organist. Please use them more.
- the more singing and verbal participation the better.. we have eliminated way too much including not singing all verses of a hymn

## How meaningful are various parts of our services?

- I don't get much out of "high church music" for want of a better description. When it is more modern or more upbeat and celebratory it means more to me.
- Hymns are my favorites. The more the better.
- I'd love more communal worship in song.
- I am not a fan of "modern" music nor guitar playing/"singing" in church. The quality of that leaves a lot to be desired!
- Good music is important. It need not always be classical. Beautiful music may be elevating. We have a fine organ and a fine organist and they should be used frequently if not during every worship service.
- I am "old school." I love the organ and traditional music with a large choir. Praise music, to me, is musically very boring. We have an amazing organist and choir, and I feel the selection of pieces - often using only a guitar and a singer, is not making the best use of the musical gifts of the congregation. I wish the full choir sang more often. Part of what has kept me attending Second for so many years is the great music.
- I feel the MUSIC program has deteriorated in quality the past two years.

### Hymns

- I prefer to sing more traditional hymns, rather than the informal hymns often selected for the post-sermon slot.
- One contemporary hymn would be nice in the service somewhere.
- I have warmed up to the "new" hymns that are sung during the service.
- No need to stand for hymn after sermon.
- I love the new hymnals and enjoy reading the origin of the songs.
- I don't mind the new(er) hymnal, but prefer the old one. The new hymns seem more difficult to sing.
- Almost always, the hymns chosen for the service reinforce the scripture and message for the day.
- They say, "No one ever left the church humming the sermon." But we sort of do!
- Personally, I do not have overly positive views of the new hymns. I find them difficult to sing, but I am not a good singer. My wife feels the same. I'm not complaining, simply saying I preferred the prior hymnal.
- I put negative for the opening hymn because they are usually older hymns that I have trouble relating to. It causes the mood created to worship, much distraction.

### Time with Children

- I attend 1st service, so Children's Time it not impacting to the service I attend, but very impactful in 2nd service.
- I am an adult, but I really like the children's sermons. They set the stage for the scripture lesson and sermon in a fun way.

## **How meaningful are various parts of our services?**

- I appreciate weekly children's time as it includes our children in the service each and every week.
- The energy that our leaders have, especially towards the youngsters, is so wonderful. A church without a vibrant young presence is awful. I tip my hat to Meg and Jimmy for their work.
- Although the children's sermon has no real affect on me personally, I think it generally leaves a lot to be desired when compared to the past.

### **Scripture**

- Praise should always be included. Passages from Deuteronomy should never be included merely to shock or amuse.

### **Sermon**

- The lowest I've rated a Paul Rock sermon is A- and that's been rare.
- I believe that sermon's focus on let's be like Jesus. There needs to be more reference to what He would do politically and socially in today's world
- The Children's Sermon is important. The adult sermon is even more important.
- It's the Sermon. Everything else besides the Lords prayer and Communion is just window dressing. I could count on one hand the decent sermons I heard from the last 4 Pastors before Paul Rock. I am not alone in this opinion. So a sincere Thank You! Is in order.
- I don't think it's appropriate to put staff as the sermon in worship.
- The sermon has always had the biggest impact on whether I choose to return to a church. Of all the pastors at Second since I started here, Catherine Price, Don Fisher and Paul Rock have been my favorites.
- Paul has a unique ability to bridge the gap between the 'lesson being communicated' with current events. I need to feel like I'm being spoken to in a way I can learn about the bible and use those lessons in today's society.
- I look forward to more content in the sermons rather than current commentary
- The sermons over the past year have been some of the best I have heard in my lifetime. I have greatly enjoyed the "series" concept.
- SERMONS sometimes come across to me as cheap grace; there is too little challenge for us to address issues of social injustice, etc., & too much accommodation to get folk in the door.
- Reduce the number of images on the walls during sermons...so that when they are used, they are truly meaningful and drive home a specific point. Sometimes we feel it is more of a distraction to what is being said in the sermon. We do not need to be entertained; we are there for a message. I don't want to be entertained...
- The sermons and sermon series have been wonderful.

# How meaningful are various parts of our services?

## Prayers

- I love singing the Lord's Prayer even more than when we speak it. But they are both very important to me.
- Lord's Prayer is contemplative to me, not a performance.
- The use of the Lord's Prayer (spoken or sung) should occur in every worship service.
- Also, the PASTORAL PRAYER (not mentioned above) is important to me. I especially wish that updates were given of people in hospital, etc, and that they were specifically prayed for. (Done in early service, but not 10:15.)
- I think the prayer before sermon is OK, but not the rote one..."May the words..." I don't like that one. I can't explain it. I'd rather the pastor say something from the heart, not a rote prayer.
- I sometimes wish the corporate, pre-written prayers (e.g., the prayer of confession) had a less casual wording. It distracts me from the content of the message sometimes, and can feel forced. I realize this isn't going to change, but I have a real problem with the father stuff in relation to God.
- In my opinion, you can never pray "too much" in worship. All these prayers have a purpose-- and can be offered by leaders other than clergy. Doxology and Lord's Prayer might be offered in alternative forms, or not every Sunday.
- Again, I enjoy the communal prayer --the Lord's Prayer, both spoken and sung, and the doxology.
- Prayers of dedication seem pretty rote.
- The sung Lord's Prayer is uniquely Second, in my experience, and exceptionally meaningful to me.
- I like singing Lord's Prayer at communion.
- The Lord's Prayer needs to be done in a gender neutral way.

## Language

- At our recent service during the children's time, the children were asked what they had learned at Second in church. They all referred to God as he. It became evident to me that the children at Second had learned that God is a male entity. God isn't male. And Jesus was not a "white" person. What message are we sending to the youth? This is an unwelcoming approach to worship.

## Ritual/Tradition

- Stand up/sit down/ stand up /sit down ritual is distracting and laborious. With no obvious purpose.
- I love the traditional elements such as communal prayer and singing the Gloria.
- I will confess that when we used the alternative tune to The Gloria Patri and Doxology (under an interim Pastor), it freaked me out a little. These are the traditional elements of the church I find comforting but not KEY to my spiritual experience.

## **How meaningful are various parts of our services?**

- I know the Gloria Patri is traditional but it really enforces the idea that God is male. I do appreciate that Paul sometimes slips in a few "she" when referring to God but I see that it is lost on the children. Recently they were asked a question about God and invariably their responses included male pronouns. So God is an old white man in the children's minds. They are not being offered the full range of possibilities.
- These "traditional" practices are the anchor of familiarity around which other creative aspects can be added. Some, such as call to worship, prayer of confession, assurance of pardon, and Gloria Patri affirm essentials of the faith. Others, such as opening hymn, sharing of peace, and silent prayer reinforce the sense of a community gathered with common roots and common concerns.
- I appreciate it when we break from the traditional format to try new things.

### **It's all good**

- All these things are important and I don't want to lose any, but none of them blows me away all by itself.
- All these are important to me and well done and varied at Second.
- All the responses under "somewhat positive" are more than "somewhat". They are definitely positive.
- I love all of these elements...they are part of my history at this church and part of my worship life.

### **Misc**

- The music program has gone to pot...very little uplifting about it
- I want to praise God, learn more about what the Bible says and about the people who wrote it. I also want to know what I can do for our church members and community.
- In all cultures, music has been an important part of the religious experience.
- I hardly ever read the whole bulletin. Well organized but lengthy.

## **2. What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?**

### **Greeting/Sharing Peace**

- Greeting one another and then a good hymn fills my heart with such warmth...it is family
- Sharing of the peace, you meet new people if you move around a little bit!
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### **Time with Children**

- I also love the children's time. Meg does a great job with that.

### **Sermon**

- The sermon is the most important. Overall I relate to Paul's delivery and message. It can set the tone for the week.
- The sermon is the key part of the service for me and the sharing of information by committees etc.
- Paul Rock. Because he is very very good.
- The sermon. It sets the tone for my week.
- Sermon-obviously important. Drives the whole experience.
- Sermon, prayer, centering of thoughts before hearing of the written word, singing
- Sermon it is what the service is built around.
- The most important element of the service is the sermon. That's the message, the rest is dressing.
- We need to keep a generational balance with respect for different points of view.
- Sermon - Second's preachers do a wonderful job of relating the Scripture to everyday life.
- Paul's sermons are, generally speaking, outstanding. I feel moved to action weekly. They are relatable, encouraging and real. Thank you, Paul, for being a realist and for encouraging us to become better followers of Christ.
- The sermon
- The sermon! Theme for my week to help me to continue connecting. Of course, I have my daily devotionals, but I want to be part of the larger community.
- Good sermon which stimulates us to live the teachings of Christ.
- The sermon. It gives me food for thought.T
- Preaching 50%
- The sermon. This sets the theme for the day. This makes us think, question, understand. It can make us feel uplifted, challenged, turned on. Gives us something to think about when we walk back out into our world.
- Paul's sermons, their relevance, humor, candor, and challenges to us as Christians.

# What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?

## Prayers

- Especially Lords Prayer
- I like a time for some silent reflection and prayer; I enjoy the silent prayer part of the service.
- Prayers for the people at 8:15. It is a great way to share celebrations and burdens.
- Traditional service this is vague on purpose

## Tone

- I love the Sundays that have a more energetic and positive feeling to them. I love Be the Church and Picnic Sundays.
- Get back to making it a solemn time for personal meditation, worship and a Religious experience. No Beach Balls in the Sanctuary. No Three Ring Circus Worship Hour. Put some dignity into it .. Choir in Robes, Preaching Pastor in Robe and looking/acting like a Pastor.
- I like attending 1st service because it feels more community. For instance, there is a time to share prayer requests.
- times of greeting, times of silence, more up-beat songs/singing, interactive conversational sermons
- A focus of the worship service to be a time of reflection and renewal not one in which the atmosphere is when is the next party going to be.
- I value the form of worship practiced in our church though some elements often seem rushed. Again, peace and "time" for quiet reflection are very important to me in worship.

## Music

- Music - have appreciated different music types that have been integrated more recently.
- Organ music and choir presentation 50%
- The variety of music. I love traditional hymns, but I also love the spin we put on other styles.
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## Communion

- communion by intinction is always powerful
- I notice you didn't mention Communion. We should do Communion every week along with a great sermon. Communion is preaching the gospel in a right-brained way, the sermon is preaching it in a left-brained way. We have people at Second who need one or the other and feel left out if we do only one.
- Communion tradition, current order of worship.
- The Lord's Supper

# **What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?**

- Communion first and foremost. I appreciate passed communion as well as communion by intinction. The first provides time for prayer and reflection supported by music.
- Holy Communion, I did like when we had a cantor for communion. Also some times I felt we are rushing to get communion in and it should never be rushed.
- Communion...at LEAST once a month.

## **Confession and Assurance**

- Confession and Assurance of Pardon

## **Confession of faith/Creedal statements**

- Would like to take part in a Confession of Faith every Sunday.

## **Visuals**

- Appreciate use of visuals...they are very well done.
- I love visual aids. Whether it's projecting the kids' sermon or maps supporting the message. It keeps me engaged.
- Not the "most important" element, but wanted to mention somewhere that Alex's graphics are a wonderful visual aid! Add so much to the sermons...and all church functions.

## **Misc**

- The coordination of each Sunday's "theme" between Paul, Meg, Alex, Stacey & Mark is remarkable/outstanding.
- The prayers, sermon, the occasional quiet time.

## **All Good**

- I'm fine with change or keeping it the way it is now.
- I very much like the service as it is. As indicated above, I could wish for more time for silent prayer, fewer informal hymns, and more formal corporate prayers.

## ***Categorizing of comments under broad headings ceases from this point ...***

Through many small features and activities attached to the services, we have created a strong sense of a committed community. As we consider changes, we should continue to create new ways to maintain this spirit. I believe the process of change, itself, helps to accomplish this goal.

proclamation of the Word, a central component of Reformed worship

# **What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?**

Music always enriches worship

Well selected music. I would appreciate more use of organ, violin, harpsichord, and other instruments along with percussion. It adds to the seriousness and glory of worship. A mixture of serious, classical music and not so much clappy, spiritual, contemporary music.

Sermon. I come for the community building and the sermon. I like to think, be challenged, and to better understand the word of God.

Music is a big part - I think we need to keep that and bring more in. It can connect to people in a way that words cannot. We can use the talents of the congregation more.

Relatable real life sermons

Quiet meditation time. Sermon, scripture,

Anthem... Expression of our faith.

Greeting each other and making those families with special needs children feel welcome.

The sermon should always be the highlight of a service. Just wish we saw more of Paul!

Some form of the sermon. Paul's words are spiritual, enthusiastic, insightful and inspire me to seek and see God in new ways and with new vision.

Prayer and music, and quiet time.

Because Pastor Rock's sermons are why I attend this church.

Paul's sermon....I need the scripture and message to help me grow and learn more about how to live a Christian life. I reflect on what I learn throughout the week and try to apply what I have learned.

Music and hymns! And some of the old favorite hymns--less new stuff.

Music from a spectrum of cultures

Children's service but with more direct targeting the children.

# What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?

A relevant sermon

Music music music. In a former church there was information about the prelude, anthem, etc. in the bulletin, but help us appreciate the music more.

I like the routine and religion-specific Gloria Patri, etc and the sermon. The rest is nice but not the "meat" of worship for me.

The Sermon. Not since Bill Hage have we had such a galvanizing force at Second in the message delivered by Paul Rock. Obviously the sermon is not something that is going away. I just want to encourage our pastor to keep observing God's creation and expressing those insights to us at church through his Sermon. It is the defining moment of my week.

Sermon - whether it is Paul or a guest I have never felt as engaged during sermon time as I do at Second

Singing of hymns. Our voices raised together often sends chills down my spine.

The sermon is the most important followed by prayer and singing.

the sermon

keep the service spiritual and friendly

Well, we need to have scripture and sermon. Proclaiming the Word in our everyday lives seems to be what we're about, and these elements are both instructive and inspirational.

Can't really say. The service has not brought me into church for many months. Closer attention to the proven worship format would be more attractive. The proven worship format (building from contemplation to instruction and then joy) does not bind us to 19th century wallowing in sin -- or emphasis on intermediary priesthood.

The sermon pulls everything together. I would definitely consider it a most important part of the service.

The time when people greet one another

# **What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?**

The sermon. In the Reformed Tradition the sermon is the centerpiece of the worship service. If there is no spiritually elevating sermon there is no meaningful worship. If there is no sermon there is no exegesis of the scriptures.

The music - especially singing - as it gives everyone in the congregation the chance to actively participate in the worship service.

Sermon. We need to be challenged to think about God's word and its meaning in our lives today.

Greeting one another in order to connect with those around us.

The sermon always has the potential to offer something new and inspiring.

Prayers and offertory reflection such as deacon minute & ministry minutes.

Special times of reflection such as communion water pebble. Because it helps me spiritual

All pieces work together. I was reluctant to accept some of the changes we have undergone, but I am growing to appreciate them. I do like much of the new music.

That's hard to say, it all comes together as one whole. If I had to though, I'd say the actions taken before the sermon (Call to Worship, Prayer of Confession, Assurance of Pardon, and silent prayer) and the sermon itself. All works together

Children's sermon. It's short, interesting, and keeps the kids involved.

Sermon - may be obvious, but practical and impactful message with The Bible and Jesus's message as support is the most important part of the service in my opinion.

Obviously, the sermon. I really like Paul's prayer just prior to the sermon.

The presentations recently just before the offering have been very informative and powerfull.

The sermon as it seems to be the "meat" of the service.

An inspiring and educational sermon.

Sermon!! I absolutely love Paul Rock's sermons.

# What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?

Hymns, especially new hymns combined with old

There is no one thing that is most important. It is the combination of elements that make the service a real worship service.

Sermon - it is uplifting and gives food for thought.

spoken lord's prayer

music - it allows the congregation to worship together, helps to focus on our surroundings, reinforces messages from sermon, can be nostalgic and comforting, and can be upbeat and induce the congregation to share in the joy of worship

Minister's sermon.

Time for reflection and prayer

Music helps set the "tone" for and is a key part of the worship service

If I had to pick only one element it would be prayer. Second would be the sermon. But it is hard to separate out just those two things.

Learning how to pray. In silence, in group speaking, watching the kids, etc.

Sermon is and should remain the focal point of our time together.

Prayer - gives peace and hope, sermon - God's word. Music - another way of God speaking to His people.

The sermon. It anchors me, it makes me think, it reinforces my beliefs, it gives me the spiritual guidance that I need.

Well, for Presbyterians, it's not worship without a sermon!

The sermon for me is always the focal point. I often feel there is a message that I needed to hear that day.

# What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?

The sermon is the heart of the service for me. It gives me food for thought for the coming week, and it helps me think about things in new ways that wouldn't have occurred to me otherwise.

A close second would be the music/offertory. I love having a wide variety of styles represented: pipe organ AND guitar are good for me! Drums are cool too!

Loved the quiet time during the service last week.

I love my ruts...and I enjoy a traditional service. But I don't totally reject change. Just fuss a bit. I find great comfort in the current order of service. I do understand that mainline churches are striving to stay relevant in a changing culture...but I do love the old ways...

Not just one element - but the entire worship service needs to fit together and flow and be first rate, whether casual or more formal. Worship needs to be planned intentionally.

Prayers. All kinds. It's powerful and affirming to pray together.

traditional hymns

sermon - makes me think and grow

The Prayer of Confession is a time for reflection and I miss this weekly opportunity to focus on how I can be more faithful. I think the corporate expression is very powerful.

I do like elements of the service with their roots in history, like the Lord's Prayer, knowing that we're doing something that has been done for ages.

We should RETURN to the glorious music of the past.

It should be solemn. The Sermon needs to be delivered in full from the Pulpit. It needs to be based on the Bible (no political stuff like gun control, incarceration ratios, etc,)

Communion - for obvious reasons

Sermon and sermon series - the themes help to keep the lessons and weeks tied together

Traditional hymns and music

## **What is the most important element of the service we should keep and why?**

Sermon, for obvious reasons.

Sharing of our outreach work. It gives me a good feeling about the church and that we are actually doing something that matters!

Sermon/main weekly message for us. Maybe tied with the Benediction.

The Sermon is by far my favorite part.

A sermon that proclaims the good news of the Gospel and teaches us how to be closer to God and how to live a faithful, fruitful Christian life. That's a "have to have" for me. Everything else is a "nice to have".

The traditional hymns and special features of members or guests on orchestral or piano accompaniment. The music makes this church. I can go anywhere else for a bible lesson and mediocre music.

I prefer a more traditional service, so use of the pipe organ with more traditional (not modern) music is the most enjoyable. I would enjoy service at Second if it became to "happy/clappy" as many churches in the suburbs have become - that is not Second Pres to me!

Music, it gives opportunity to be calm, meditate and integrate the message for the day. And/or be part of the joyful noise and celebrate together.

After going to 1st service and attending Sunday school, I can go exercise and have the rest of the day to rejoice.

### **3. What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

Sit down/ stand up.

Sharing of peace

Sharing the Peace. we have already said Good Morning to those around us.

Use the Organ more and less contemporary music systems.

I truly do not know...I feel fed as it is now.

Greeting each other

Silent prayer

leave it alone

wouldn't want to take anything away

Sharing peace/greeting others. Hard for some to do. Takes time and doesn't accomplish much.

I wouldn't remove anything, but I would change or at least mix-up the singing/hymns. I do love the traditional hymns and I have noted that the hymns are chosen to relate to the sermon.

I would love to hear a little bit of contemporary Christian music--even classic popular Christian. I would not stop with the traditional hymns, rather just add contemporary

I do not mind all the songs, but it would not bother me if there were one less.

Open to change...nothing specific to remove though.

The loudness of the electric guitar, etc makes a horrible physical/mental experience especially for those with hearing aids.

I guess the children's sermon (time) but I am only saying this as I need to put something.

Give or take hymns. would like more relevant music. choral anthems are not very strong with so many female voices and a smaller choir. maybe have those once a month then other special music other weeks.

## **What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

I'd keep it all.

Jeans. Pasted posters on the front wall

Guitars

The Children's service. It seems to be a waste of the children's time. They could be learning more in class. Also, it is rather boring to hear something that is meant for children.

Nothing

Sharing the Peace

The announcements are too long. By and large, they are in the bulletin anyway and don't need to be repeated at length, and it detracts from the focus on the service itself. And video could be run while people are coming in and downstairs for coffee afterward.

Can't think of any.

It is not necessary to sing the Gloria Patri and Doxology every worship service. Becomes a bit stale. Makes the structure of each service seem to be too restrictive. Limits creativity and innovations.

Formal attire. I always feel a little sorry for the pastors and choirs when they put the robes back on. Seeing Nick dressed the way he does makes it feel like I won't be judged when I roll out of bed and show up. I love that we can have coffee at our seats and come as we are. I think the older folks find great comfort in the tradition of the service and the younger generation does not place near as much importance in it. Personally I like how we mix the two; our beach ball throwing with the more traditional elements we need to keep.

The opening hymn or the hymn after the sermon. I like to listen to music more than participate in it.

Could shorten the call for the offering unless there really are updates to share. Sometimes feels forced.

Hymns in their present form. Continue to experiment with different types of music.

Children's prayer

## **What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

Greeting each other (I really value that time for a moment to leave my outside life there and take in a few breaths to focus myself before worship, it is such a rush to get to worship most Sundays). I am more likely to visit a moment or two after the service.

Like I said earlier, I feel the in-service greeting is disruptive. Most greeting is done as people walk into the sanctuary or chapel.

Difficult to answer. I think the order of service is good - would hate to remove any one element. It flows nicely; it's "fun & playful" with thought-provoking lessons to be learned.

If I must choose, it would be time for Silent Prayer....we each can do that on our own any time, all the time.

I wouldn't particularly eliminate anything.

The visuals, the visuals, the visuals!!!!

Can't think of anything.

I'd like to see fewer traditional types of prayers. (opening and closing prayer). The prayers should be more contemporary and relevant to the present times. Or maybe there could just be more time for silence and reflection.

Nothing should be removed but balanced change is always good.

I do not think I would remove anything.

It is must to change but a there has been alot of change but what has stuck?

The Gloria, the Doxology, and the prayer before the sermon

shorten the call for offering as it is sometimes too much

Passing of the Peace/Greeting. I like talking to people more than most, but I find it to be forced and a tease. You can't get into anything meaningful so it's just a quick hello. I don't see the point, really.

## **What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

I think all elements have their own importance in the church. With that said, I believe that we drag out what we use our donations for. Of course I will not say we should remove that idea; I'd consider shortening the lengths so that people can stay engaged in what is actually important.

Call to worship

The stopping of the service to go greet people. Forced greeting is fake. We are only saying hello because we have to, it isn't genuine. Also it interrupts the flow of the service.

Singing during communion is an intrusion to the personal meditation time.

Must we fill up every moment with some type of sound? Is quiet meditation time so out of style

Gloria Patri

Going up front for Communion. I prefer staying seated.(During early service) I have tremors and it's a little easier for me. Just self conscious, I guess.

The meet and greet. It is uncomfortable for me and my spouse.

Not remove, but replace some, if not all of the hymns with some less traditional music that I can more directly relate to my life.

Extended announcements, especially those already listed in the bulletin.

The greeting of fellow members. It should be done afterwards. I like to get to church early and prepare myself mentally for worshipping and learning about God and the conversations that take place in the greeting time, interrupt the process for preparing to worship.

Sharing of the peace - comments are included above.

Greeting others nearby -- it is forced, uncomfortable, and awkward! We informally greet each other when we sit down anyway. And there is plenty of time to talk to others after the service.

Passing the offering -- think about better ways to do this because it now seems hackneyed

Sharing the peace. Save the chatting for coffee hour.

## What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?

Sharing of peace.

Greeting those around us after service has started. This is done prior.

Honestly Im not a fan of modern praise hymns. If you look throughout history of all the composers, there are a few that stand out and have yet to be surpassed. I want to hear Handel, Bach, Mozart, Hayden. Lets bring back some class to this beautiful church.

announcements - we can read them

People drinking beverages in church completely turns me off! Surely they can last an hour without liquids.

The sharing of the peace greeting.

hymn after the service

prayer before sermon...more for Paul than the congregation

Announcements can get lengthy. I realize that many people don't quite connect with the announcements written and publicized in other ways. However, a quieter and more reflective entry into worship has its beauty.

Post-Modern philosophy (and religious trend) emphasize the cult of personality and the concept of "destructive creativity". Not a good thing. It may attract a crowd, but does it develop character? The cult of personality isn't that much better than the intermediate priesthood.

When I think about the service, I feel that all the elements work together well; I would not remove anything.

I don't like how we made minute for mission into the time of donation when the collection plates are sent around. So for me that could be taken out and the minute for mission be sporadic as it once was.

The hymn following the doxology. I find it usually an anti-climax.

The handshaking/greeting, to me is so disruptive of getting into the mood of worship. If we can't cut it altogether, perhaps passing the peace could be moved to right before we are dismissed at the end of the service.

## **What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

Announcements. We can read.

Some of the hymns sung by the congregation

Greeting. It takes too long. It is redundant because we greet each other anyway.

None of them

I love music but I find the choir and hymn singing uninspiring and sometimes cringe-worthy.

This is trivial, but I have to admit, I've never liked the sung Lord's Prayer. It's so slow and mournful.

I don't have any

Greeting each other at the beginning of the service.

Hymn/song after sermon.

Nothing

The announcements often go on too long. If they're in the bulletin, do we really need to talk about them?

A close second is the "moment for mission" if it goes on too long. Short is better!!

I think we need to stop trying to have a "little something" for everyone and just be who we are. We have a worship committee and they do a great job. I love the way the elements of the service are all tied together.

The prelude and postludes.

Greeting those around us during the service. I find it conflicts with the mood of the service. I think most of us greet those around us as we arrive in our pews.

I'm really very happy with the current layout of the service. I can't think of anything to remove.

The mike IN the piano often produces too loud a sound And drowns out singers or other instruments.

## **What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

call for offering / outreach moment should be kept short - some people go on and on - 2-3 minutes should be adequate - emphasize the highlights.

I am beginning to enjoy the early service more as it is direct and has less distraction than the later service. The later service has so much going on that it seems to eclipse the message.

I wouldn't mind if the offertory disappeared - if there were another way for the church attendants to give (online, baskets at the entrances??)

All elements have value and should be present at one of the two services. If element elimination or change is desired consider doing it at the first service. If additional worship time is needed to include all elements then so be it.

Greeting each other during the service.

Hymns - instead vary the music and songs

The hymn prior to the offering.

Greeting and wishing of peace - it's awkward to me. There is time for greeting and talking before and after the service.

Announcements; the ones that are printed in the bulletin already.

We could probably sing at least one less hymn. Because we are singing a lot of the newer hymns with a more progressive flavor or revised old hymns, I don't always get much out of the hymns. I liked some of the old ones because I remembered the words and found them meaningful.

Too many hymns.

The choir

You may change anything with my full support; but don't eliminate without thoughtful replacement.

That's a tough one. There's no part of the service that I dislike.

You could remove the post-hymn after the sermon. For me it is just one of the things I don't need.

## **What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

I find nothing in the current service 'unworthy' or needing to be removed.

I'm ok changing it up..

I don't think anything is extraneous. All good.

sung Lord's prayer

Passing of the peace always feels forced and awkward during the service, and is often a repeat of the same interactions that happen before, and after the service anyway.

there really isn't anything I would eliminate

Confession of sin. I like to do my own.

Non Hymnal songs, Use of other than the Organ (we spent \$400.000 fixing it - lets use it).

Sharing of the peace - because I have typically already greeted those around me before the service starts.

Not a fan of guitar-accompanied evangelical-type hymns in the 10:15 service

Maybe the outreach updates. Put these in the bulletin and let people read about them.

I do not think anything should be removed - it's usually a pretty vibrant service.

A hymn? The Sharing of the Peace isn't everyone's favorite, but always a great, joyful feeling results. Fantastic for guests/visitors.

The standing up and greeting. You just get started saying hello and then you're forced to quit any meaningful conversation. It's a tease!

I wouldn't remove anything.

Some of the hymns. I really like a mix of modern Christian music with the hymns.

The peace sharing thing. That feels contrived. I greet everyone before the service and after anyway.

## **What one element of the worship service would you be willing to remove and why?**

Offering as a set piece of the service; however, we would need to find another way to acquire a similar level of weekly donations so the change would be revenue neutral.

The passing of the peace. It is not crucial for the religious experience in my opinion.  
At this time, I would not remove anything from 1st service.

2nd service is always enjoyable, but sometimes too long for me. If I start making a grocery list in my head, then I know that I have become disengaged.

I'd like to see the elimination of the use of gender in relation to God. Also images of Jesus as "white" is completely inaccurate. It is no way possible that he could have been "white" coming from the region of the world that was Africa. We are all God's children. God's son was not the social construct: "white" or "black"

## **4. Is there anything we should consider adding to the worship experience?**

I like when sermons are more life lessons than school lessons

Remove Staff from Worship Committee. It should be made of and represent the Congregation

I think personalizing people who need prayer of have just gone into the hospital etc...for us to pray for them as this particular body of Christ.

More Music

Continue work time Sunday morning- alternative to regular worship

more choir music and the men's group singers who used to perform

Streaming of the service for new prospective members also for members who are sick or out of town.

Longer time for silent prayer. 1 full minute. Time it!

Occasionally mix it up. There are some great songs out there--Revelation Song, In Christ Alone (with the Solid Rock), My Chains Are Gone, are just a few. I do love the hymns, but would love an occasional popular praise song, too. Maybe during the offertory.....

I do love the extra instruments ie the Zulu song today w the drums, etc.

I love being greeted and I love the time to talk with gasp, should I say it... Donuts.

Maybe a little more nice welcome to visitors, not to embarrass them, but it nudges us to notice them and invite them to coffee.

I did like the candle lighting by the youth. I assume there are no youth to do it.

music that will connect with more people

Some occasional prayer requests and some occasional community exegesis of the texts in play that day.

Coat and tie

## **Is there anything we should consider adding to the worship experience?**

More different music. More points of view. More of what we've started in the last few years. It's an exciting time to be at Second. Scary sometimes...but exciting.  
The choir processional was a nice way to begin.

Choir robes make the clothing worn by choir members less distracting.

Pulpit robes worn by clergy. Enhances their status as academically qualified to preach.

I'm not being funny when I say add "10 minutes". Add a little more time and slow things down a bit and add moments for reflection - supported by music or not. Some churches have services that last well over an hour, so 10 minutes shouldn't be an issue.

Add another, truly traditional worship experience

Confession of Faith every Sunday

More cool music. I think it is time to create an all new choir. The current choir is very dedicated but is slowly dying. Let's pump in some new energy sooner than later!

Before announcements I think we have an opportunity to highlight one of our committees by projecting a picture of the group and a mission statement linking the two.

I wish the kids would speak into the microphone during the children's service--it's hard to hear them. Hearing them makes it more fun. Also, do the children ever sing during the offertory? I would like that.

Contemporary Sunday morning service?

No, but thank you for asking

Our service is way, way too noisy, busied up with too much information. We need to return to a more spiritual exercise, not a community rally. We have lost our sense of communicating with God. Rather, the service seems like a meeting of a good non-profit organization. It is a service of worship of God.

Continue to use the sermon topic as a source of education--Scripture ahead of time, linked to Sunday School, perhaps even bulletin outline for taking notes.

## **Is there anything we should consider adding to the worship experience?**

I would enjoy communion every week, but know that is not the way of the church.

Naming joys and concerns in some way

More silence for prayer or meditation

An opportunity, on occasion, to select songs to be sung. Set a better tone for worship by stopping the chattering and wandering during the prelude.

If you're using screens in the Sanctuary anyway, you could put the hymn lyrics and scripture readings up there for farsighted people. They wouldn't have to put glasses off an on throughout the service.

We had attempted to bring alternative services to Second. I'd like to see that happen again.

A few contemporary music selections

Not really. I am just unimpressed with all of the informality. I guess we have to adjust, but some of us old folks feel we are being pushed out. You said to let you know what we didn't like, and this is what I don't like. I sometimes feel we are trying to compete with the mega-churches and all of their gimmicks.

I enjoy when we do a variety of things with prayer. I liked the opportunity to write prayers and deposit them in a bowl in the front of church. I would appreciate more creative prayer opportunities.

Contemporary music

Possibly dance and interpretive drama

Not the regular service, but PLEASE consider doing communion on Christmas Eve. Have attended many Presbyterian Churches and this is the first that offers no Christmas Eve communion service.

Choir/clergy processional at beginning.

Pulpit robes.

I think you are doing a wonderful job. I would add father son and holy ghost during the Lords prayer but it would take an act of congress to get that changed with the Presbytery.

## **Is there anything we should consider adding to the worship experience?**

I always enjoyed the processional when we had it.

bring back a great musical experience are we losing members because of the church services...

A processional. Once in a while, other than, say, Palm Sunday, it might be good to have a "creative" processional of some kind calling attention to a mission activity, the celebration of the Eucharist, the change of liturgical seasons, or some other aspect of the gathering.

We've neglected dance lately--liturgical and/or from another culture?

Let's restore the optimistic, constructive Presbyterian prayer of confession we had when I joined this church : Yes, Lord, I could have done better, and I will try. The whole thing has been dumbed-down until the point it's not recognizable. We are told every day that we are super, unique. We need a nudge that says maybe we aren't -- yet.

We could have special music now and then - an extra anthem or musical interlude. There used to be 2 anthems a very long time ago - not suggesting that as a weekly addition.

Mature lectors that are trained in elocution and diction. Not every child that can read should be allowed to read from the Bible at the lectern.

A worship service should consist of Praise, Gratitude, Awe, Intimacy and Confession and music that contributes to the meaningfulness of these elements. Levity may be okay. Hilarity may not.

Stories from members about their Christian life during the week.

Some more contemporary music

Mixing it up. The predictability is boring week after week after week.

Nothing comes to mind.

I'd like to hear some really good choir anthems. That has been lacking lately, although I realize it's summer and they just may not have the people required to do some really good music.

I prefer a more formal church service. I would like to see the choir in robes as well as the ministers. I also prefer more traditional music.

## **Is there anything we should consider adding to the worship experience?**

I also feel it is important for the minister to greet at the front door after the benediction. This is especially important for visitors.

Dance. Scottish Dance and has performed in the past at Second.

Drama. We have had some excellent amateur performances in the past.

Some contemporary choruses, more singing

Additional displays of musicianship. I enjoy seeing different instruments and talents displayed.

Yes, a sense of reverence and acknowledgement that as a community we are in the presence of God. At times recently, it has felt like it's approached more as a social club, and that distresses me greatly.

I like meditative acoustic guitar music with lyrics. If we had this regularly, maybe it wouldn't seem like an experiment each time, but more like an integral part of the service. (I miss a lot of Sunday 10:15 services, so maybe it has already become integrated.)

Better training of the ushers to handle emergency situations.

Not that I can think of now.

Sermon should be preaching of the Gospel - I'm really tired of the academic graphs and charts about the declining church. Society, etc - put it in a class, or keep it to a small minor point. Makes me want to leave the service.

Preach the Gospel. how to love God and one another better.

More music. Any kind. By any performer(s). Music is a centering experience for me.

Sorry, don't have a suggestion.

Weekly Prayer of Confession.

It would be interesting to have occasional music notes re the author of hymns, anthems, origin of the music; and incorporating soloists on instruments as well as vocal, eg. harp, harpsichord, violin etc.

Alternative worship styles (in addition to hymns).

## **Is there anything we should consider adding to the worship experience?**

I love the special music selections that have been added more recently and would like to see more and have more opportunities to participate rather than more spectating.

More time for contemplation or more liturgical readings, etc added occasionally.

Lay readers for the scripture passages.

More, and longer, silent time for prayer/reflection/meditation

would like to have communion more than once a month

How about something we should NOT add - a Praise Band.

Redesign Sunday morning bulletin.

Not really related but I'd much rather have the sign-up sheet be one page for each side of the chapel (for early service). For the big service, there has to be a better way to collect names that isn't 3 to a page or whatever paltry amount fit on there now. It's SUCH a waste of paper.

Please no contemporary Christian music or any other amplified music. It's terrible.

I would add to the 1st service the ringing of the bell tower after the service like they do at 2nd service.

I would also add a tv monitor to the chapel, so we do not have to have the big screen each week in the corner of chapel.

I would have more kids do the call to worship in 1st service.