

RCA Worship Self-Led Study Module

Do this reading and watch these videos at your own pace. Use the exercises to help you think through the materials.

Required reading:

John L. Bell, *The Singing Thing: The Case for Congregational Song* (GIA Publications, 2000), ISBN: 1579991009

James Hart Brumm, *Singing the Lord's Song: a History of the English-language Hymnals of the Reformed Church in America* (RCA Historical Society, 1992), available for free from <http://rcaarchives.omeka.net/items/show/38>

Christian Reformed Church, *Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture* (CRC Publications, 1997), ISBN: 1562122576 (best price if ordered from Faith Alive Christian Resources)

Daniel J. Meeter, "Heidelberg and Westminster, Especially on Worship" (Chapter 5: *Remembrance, Communion, and Hope*), Kindle Edition (Reformed Church Press, 2019). ASIN: B07Y2C96Y9

Reformed Church in America, "Baptized Children and the Lord's Table" (<http://images.rca.org/docs/synod/BaptizedChildrenAtTable1990.pdf>)

Reformed Church in America, "Children at the Lord's Table" (<http://images.rca.org/docs/synod/BaptizedChildrenAtTable1988.pdf>)

Reformed Church in America, "Confirmation and the Reformed Church" (<https://www.rca.org/resources/confirmation-and-reformed-church>)

Reformed Church in America Doctrinal Standards (available through [rca.org](http://www.rca.org))

Reformed Church in America, *The Theology and Place of Music in Worship* (<https://www.rca.org/resources/theology-and-place-music-worship>)

Reformed Church in America, *Worship the Lord* (Reformed Church Press, 2005), ISBN: 0916466094 (best price if ordered from store.rca.org)

Unit 1

Read: Belgic Confession articles 7, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35

Heidelberg Catechism Q & As 22, 23, 58, 65-85, 114-118, 129

Canons of Dort I 3, 17; II 5; V 4

(all found at <https://www.rca.org/about/theology/creeds-and-confessions/>)

Daniel J. Meeter, "Heidelberg and Westminster, Especially on Worship"

Question to think about (*you don't need to write anything down unless you wish to; these are to help your thinking*):

- What do these Standards say about what Reformed worship should be?

Unit 2

Read: “The Order of Worship for the Lord’s Day,” *Worship the Lord* pages 1-17

“The Directory for Worship,” *Worship the Lord* pages 229-244

“The Lord’s Supper in Home and Hospital,” *Worship the Lord* pages 73-78

“Baptized Children and the Lord’s Table”

<http://images.rca.org/docs/synod/BaptizedChildrenAtTable1990.pdf>

“Children at the Lord’s Table”

<http://images.rca.org/docs/synod/BaptizedChildrenAtTable1988.pdf>

Watch: [“The Liturgy for the Lord’s Day,”](#) [“The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper”](#)

Questions to think about:

- How and why do you agree or disagree with the statement “worship is the act of acknowledging God’s worth”?
- John Calvin said the Lord’s Supper should be celebrated every time the Word is preached. Do you agree or disagree, and why? What are the implications of that?
- Look at the structure of the liturgy for the Lord’s Supper. How is this reflective of the pattern of the whole of worship? What does it tell us about how we understand our relationship to God?
- What are one or two burning questions you have from this week’s material that you would like to discuss more?

Unit 3

Read: “Order for the Sacrament of Baptism,” *Worship the Lord* pages 25-32

“Order for the Profession of Faith,” *Worship the Lord* pages 33-43

“Order for the Ordination and Installation of Elders and Deacons,” *Worship the Lord* pages 43-51

“Order for Commissioning Christians to the Ministries of the Church,” *Worship the Lord* pages 52-56

“Order for Recognition of Ministries in the Church,” *Worship the Lord* pages 57-59

“Confirmation and the Reformed Church” <https://www.rca.org/resources/confirmation-and-reformed-church>

Watch: [“The Sacrament of Baptism,”](#) [“Profession, Ordination, and Commissioning”](#)

Questions to think about:

- A central argument to this week’s discussions is that everyone who is baptized receives a ministry. What do you think of that idea, and what are the implications of that for the Christian life?
- How does a sanctuary’s architecture—the placement and size of the font, for example, reflect a congregation’s baptismal theology? What would be an ideal arrangement for your understanding of baptism in the life of the church?
- What are one or two burning questions you have from this week’s material that you would like to discuss more?

Unit 4

Read: “Order for Christian Marriage,” *Worship the Lord* pages 84-103

“Order for Christian Burial: A Service of Witness to the Resurrection,” *Worship the Lord* pages 104-140

Watch: [“Weddings,”](#) [“Funerals”](#)

Questions to think about:

- What do you think are the five most important elements to be addressed in a congregation’s wedding policy, and why?
- How do you help a grieving family balance what they want to do at a funeral with what they need to do to acknowledge their grief and the promise of resurrection?
- What are one or two burning questions you have from this week's material that you would like to discuss more?

Unit 5

Read: “Treasury of Prayers,” *Worship the Lord* pages 177-228

“Order for Christian Healing in the Context of Worship,” *Worship the Lord* pages 60-65

“Order for Christian Healing in Home or Hospital,” *Worship the Lord* pages 79-83
Authentic Worship in a Changing Culture

Watch: [“Prayer and Healing,”](#) [“Principles for Constructing Reformed Worship”](#)

Questions to think about:

- What is your theology of the places of a healing ministry in the life of a Reformed Church?
- What are, for you, three principles for constructing Reformed worship?
- What are one or two burning questions you have from this week's material that you would like to discuss more?

Unit 6

Read: Brumm, *Singing the Lord’s Song*

“The Theology and Place of Music in Worship”

<https://www.rca.org/resources/theology-and-place-music-worship>

Bell, *The Singing Thing*

Watch: [“The Historical Development of RCA Congregational Song,”](#) [“Music in Reformed Worship”](#)

Questions to think about:

- How do you see the historical character of the RCA played out in how it deals with congregational song?
- What are some important considerations for you as you plan music for worship?
- What are one or two burning questions you have from this week's material that you would like to discuss more?