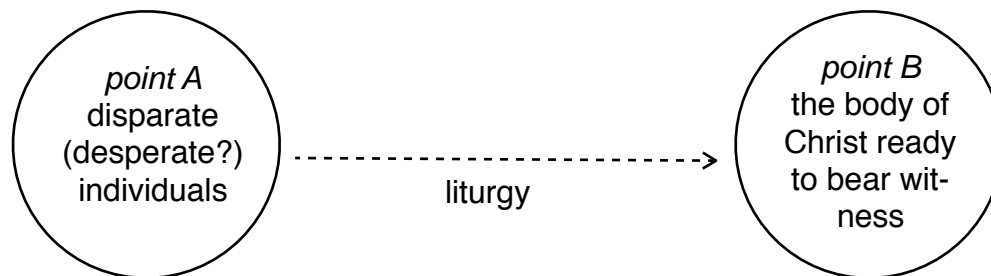# what hath silicon valley to do with jerusalem?
technological innovation and ancient practice in worship

PART ONE: THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

what is liturgy?

acts performed by a people gathered together in a *designated space* in order to move (or be moved) from point A to point B.

point A
disparate
(desperate?)
individuals

liturgy

point B
the body of
Christ ready
to bear wit-
ness

what has to happen for liturgy to accomplish this?

The community must hear and believe the gospel (i.e. that in Christ God is reconciling all things to himself).

The primary means by which the gospel is heard are preaching and sacraments. All other acts (singing, confessing, praying, etc.) and objects (architecture, banners, seating, video loops, etc.) which compose the worship experience should be (a) reflective of the gospel and (b) either prepare us for or enable us to respond to the gospel proclaimed in preaching and sacrament.

PART TWO: TECHNOLOGY'S ROLE IN LITURGY

starting points:

considering the use of technology as it figures both into the *designated space* and the *acts performed* within the liturgy.

the designated space.

the best worship spaces create a visual environment enhances our capacity for hearing the gospel. A screen is a major part of a worship space. It's likely going to draw more visual attention than your biggest banner or most ornate stained glass window. Technology, therefore, never merely transmits information. It informs the meaning of that information. The medium shapes the message.

How is your screen and what is projected onto it going to contribute to creating a space in which the gospel can be heard?

What is its relationship going to be to objects (other banners, for example) and architecture that compose the worship space?

the acts performed

Worship is something we do, not observe. Because technology supplies us with the capacity to program and record content which it will then present on demand, utilizing technology in worship can remove the sense of immediacy (in terms of both time and space) of worship, the sense that this is something we are doing now, together. In short, it risks reducing us to passive observers of the acts of worship.

However, if used wisely, it does provide incredible new opportunities a for leading worshippers more deeply into the various acts of worship.

What makes for a good worship leader? What makes for a bad one? How can we use technology in ways which reflect the qualities of effective worship leadership?

In order to keep the immediacy of worship (i.e. the sense that worship is happening here and now), how can we combine technological presentation with corporate action?

s p e c i f i c s :

welcome screen

transitions between acts (examples on page four)

video

suggestion: combining video with some other activity (readings, singing, etc.) can be tricky. A song maybe three minutes but the video only two. Video loops are helpful in this regard in that they are non-narrative (i.e.

there's no clear beginning, middle, end) and they are created to simply re-
peat themselves.

recommended digital media sources:
   stock photography:
      istockphoto (www.istockphoto.com) is the best of the numerous royalty-
      free photo sites i've come across. better selection, better organization.
      plus, it offers video clips, vector illustrations, and flash files. no member-
      ship or subscription fees. ~150 KB photos @ $1. ~30MB for $15. videos
      at $10. membership allows you to create lightboxes which are handy for
      organizing selections without necessarily purchasing anything.

      stock.xchg (http://www.sxc.hu) offers totally free ~1 MB photos. check re-
      strictions on individual photos. occasionally photos require you ask per-
      mission from photographer. Most are ready for downloading.

      flickr (http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons/) is mainly for personal use.
      lots of vacation and birthday pix. however photos can be licensed using
      creative commons, a nonprofit alternative to full copyright. so you may
      need, for example, to attribute a photo to its author.

      wikimedia commons (http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/) is a media re-
      pository. not as likely to find more artistically done photos. but among
      other things, a good collection of historical images in the public domain.

   video
      again, *istockphoto* is a good source for video clips and digital animation.

      the work of the people (http://www.theworkofthepeople.com/) is, far and
      away, the best site I've encountered offering video for worship. in addition
      to loops and nooma-like teaching videos, they create films based on lec-
      tionary texts. videos are $15. but they offer a variety of membership pack-
      ages (ex. 10 videos for $50).

      midnight oil productions http://www.midnightoilproductions.com

      lumicon digital productions http://www.lumicon.org/

sample slides illustrating transitions:

god's greeting

L: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.
P: And also with you.

the passing of the peace

easter gathering

prayers of confession

P: Almighty and gracious God,
creator and judge of all,
we acknowledge and confess that we have
sinned in thought, word, and deed, against
you and against our neighbor. Forgive us all
of our sins and offenses, and strengthen us
by your Holy Spirit,
so that we may serve you and love our
neighbor in newness of life to the honor and
glory of your name.

easter reflections

addressing God
the complaint
confessing trust
   lighting the advent candle
   hearing God's word

addressing God
the complaint
confessing trust
   lighting the advent candle
   hearing God's word
      prayer for understanding