



# Guiding Thoughts for the Gathering Rite

## Gathering rite: music timing with spoken texts

The gathering rite music may begin before or after the invocation. The music is continuous, played softly during spoken parts, then becoming louder to cue the congregation's sung parts.

An audio file of the gathering rite is available [HERE](#). This is provided primarily for churches without live musicians. But pastors can also use it to practice the timing of spoken parts while the music plays. While some musicians (a minority) can adapt the interludes to fit the time needed, the sample audio file shows one ideal model.

The middle spoken section might seem to involve an “unexpected gap” between speaking and the next sung part is the middle section. But during this middle section time is provided for lighting the candle(s).

Different churches have different customs for lighting the candle(s). Some light them before the service begins, and so the spoken part is then just an acknowledgement of the completed action. Others have an usher/acolyte light the candle(s) during the speaking. Still others speak the dialogue, and then watch in silence (except for the background music) as the usher/acolyte/pastor lights the candle(s). This third option is recommended for the sake of pace, focus, and ritual; it works best with the background music.