



WORSHIP - A SIMPLE GUIDE

Worship is the beating heart of the church, and of each and every Christian disciple. It is always connected with our everyday lives. In all that we do, if we are continuously lifting up our heads to remember that God is creator, sovereign and holy – then we are worshipping. This attitude of our lives returns us again and again to our relationship with God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Our communal acts of worship are a gathering up of this attitude of worship from during the week. And also a re-orientation of ourselves to live worship-fully for the rest of the week.

“As worship begins in holy expectancy, it ends in holy obedience”
 (Richard Foster)

An Egyptian prayer from the 3rd century



*May none of God's wonderful works
 keep silence night or morning.*

*Bright stars, high mountains,
 the depths of the seas, sources of
 rushing rivers:*

*May all these break into song
 as we sing to Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*

May all the angels in the heavens reply:

Amen! Amen! Amen!

*Power, praise, honour, eternal glory
 to God, the only giver of grace.*

Amen! Amen! Amen!



DIOCESE OF TRURO
 DISCOVERING GOD'S KINGDOM
 GROWING THE CHURCH

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN WE WORSHIP?

- We gather as a community and open ourselves to God
- We become aware of our failures to live in God's ways, so we turn to God in repentance and we receive God's forgiveness
- We listen to God's word in scripture and respond in reflection, prayer and reaffirmation of commitment
- We receive from God spiritually in sacrament and blessing
- We are sent out in mission and service



God calls us to worship with the whole of our human being, because we are created by God in all our humanness. As we worship we are caught up in God through the engagement of the whole of ourselves, body, mind and spirit. This involves all our senses; sight and sound, touch, taste and smell. There is therefore a place in worship for music of all kinds, movement of worshippers, colours of flowers, vestments and artwork, smell of flowers or incense, taste of bread and wine, and the touch of greeting we offer to one another.

"Worship is not only a matter of words (and music) but is a foretaste of the God-related destiny of the world, that longed-for state of creation in which everything can be clearly seen as bearing God's glory and love"
(Rowan Williams 2004)



WAYS OF WORSHIPPING

Christians have worshipped God in Jesus Christ for 2000 years. Over time there have been many different ways to express our love for God and to engage with the journey from human wonder to holy obedience. These differences express our different understandings of humanity, our different understandings of God, and/or our different cultural contexts.

Some popular forms of worship today include:

'A Service of the Word':

a simple service focussed around giving attention to God's word in scripture, often presented in a family friendly way. It may include lively music, shortened prayers and opportunities for congregational participation.

'Holy Communion' (also 'Mass' or 'Eucharist'): in this service we remember Christ's last meal with his disciples. We journey together through gathering, forgiveness, hearing and responding to God's word, receiving of God in sacrament and blessing, and being sent out, freshly resourced, in mission.

Book of Common Prayer: the traditional services of the Church of England in sixteenth century language.

And also newer less formal services including: 'teatime services', 'Messy Church' or 'café church' which can be very informal. Or Iona or Taize worship which offer something more meditative.

"Worship is the submission of all our nature to God. It is the most selfless emotion of which our nature is capable"

(William Temple, 20th cent. Archbishop of Canterbury)



WHERE AND WHEN TO WORSHIP

Can I still be a Christian and not share in worship?

It is possible to adore and thank God for all that is good in our lives, and to offer ourselves in God's service, at any time and in any place. But from earliest times, Christians have gathered together to worship God and to share in friendship and fellowship, being mutually supportive of each other. We miss out on something of fundamental importance to our Christian discipleship if we try to 'go it alone'. In our worship we are engaging with a God who is mysteriously 'three-in-one'; Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This relationship of love within God is known as the Trinity. It is for this reason that our Christian discipleship should be grounded in a worshipping community.

If we are truly to engage with God in worship we need to find the right place and form of worship for us.

If you are new to worship do not be afraid to experiment and try different services to find something that suits you. Just be aware that, like any new activity, worshipping can take time to adjust to.

To help us grow in our love and discipleship of Jesus Christ worship needs to become a regular part of our lives. We cannot live or grow strong physically if we eat only occasionally. Similarly we cannot grow spiritually or live the abundant life that Jesus came to offer us (John 10:10) if we worship only occasionally. Weekly is ideal, monthly is a bare minimum, every day is wonderful if you can manage it!

So why not start today on a new and exciting journey and adventure?



WHAT IS WORSHIP?

Worship is ...

- A mystery, but open to us all
- About God and us
- At the heart of the life of a Christian community
- Both private & individual, but also corporate
- Our response to God's generous gifts to us
- Giving honour or 'worth' to God (worth-ship)
- An invitation to become part of the community of love that is the Trinity
- A journey from human wonder to holy obedience

Worship helps us to ...

- Become mature as we seek to follow Jesus
- Share our fears and concerns, our joys and celebrations, with God
- Focus on God in all our life

And it opens the door to ...

- The eternal praise of heaven
- The inner depths of life
- The rhythms of life
- The obedience of our hearts to God

*What we bring, God uses, God touches, and we receive back what we have brought, but it has been transformed.
(Michael Perham 2000)*

RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

The church has a 'branch' serving every local community. Your local parish church will have a noticeboard or church magazine giving times of worship and contact details for people who can give you more information.

See also:

www.achurchnearyou.com

which lists every church in the Church of England with accurate maps, contact information, service times and more.

www.trurodiocese.org.uk

is the website of Truro Diocese which gives information about some special worship events happening locally.

www.christianity.org.uk/index.php/worship.php

has more information about Christian worship.

For more information about some new ways of worshipping try:

www.freshexpressions.org.uk

www.iona.org.uk

www.northumbriacommunity.org

www.taize.fr/en

A book which is helpful is: **'Going to Church – a user's guide'**
by John Pritchard (2009, SPCK)

