



Kew Baptist
CHURCH

WORSHIP GUIDE



So what are we doing-and why- when we come together for worship? This brief guide attempts to give some structure and guidance concerning the different elements are in our services. This list does not include various creative aspects we may employ from time to time, but covers the regular things. God gives us much freedom in how we construct our worship gatherings.

If that were not the case, he would have given us an eternal order of service in the Bible! And this guide is not the end of the matter. More thought and reflection as a congregation is needed and welcomed.

What are we doing when we come together as Christians? The testimony of the Bible is that God will not share His glory with another and we should have no other gods or idols before Him. God is Sovereign. We are summoned to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength" (Deut 6:4; Mt 22:37). As disciples of Jesus, we are responding to all that God has done for us through the life, death and resurrection of our Lord. We seek to honour Him and give him utmost supremacy in our lives. Secondly, from the very earliest church, and before that in the Synagogue and Temple, the people of God have always gathered together in the worship of God, to learn from the Bible, eat together, share the Lord's supper, pray for one another and the world, sing, and share the good news of Jesus with each other and the wider community. (Acts 2:42-47). Worshipping God is a joy and a delight, a privilege and an honour. So let's flesh out some of the things we do when we gather together.

Call to Worship



The whole Bible is a call to worship God. This is the opportunity to arrest the attention of the congregation and present them a vision of God to help lift their eyes and hearts upward. Obviously the best place to present God clearly is Scripture. Therefore, it goes without saying that the Bible must form the centre of every call to worship. You and I have no authority to call people to see, hear and worship God; the Bible does. Psalm's

95-100 and 145-150, and the book of Revelation are good places to start, but there are a plethora of wonderful passages, when prayerfully and thoughtfully linked to the theme for the day, enable us to lift our eyes and hearts to God.

Pastoral & Intercessory Prayer (Mt 6:5-15; Phil 4:6-7; 2 Tim 2:1-6)



Three movements help us here. Prayers for the world, our nation/state, and our church. Intercession is not a describing of events to God, but a purposeful and intentional faith-filled pleading and asking for His intervention and aid. For instance, intercession is not “we pray for the Middle-east”, and that’s it. What do we ask for specifically? Prayer is not describing events God already knows about, but seeking his will and mercy in those events through intercession.

This is where the Bible is a great aid. We can use and modify the prayers that are already recorded and make them our own for today’s needs. Check the weekly bulletin for info about upcoming events and people news. And to help you prepare, ask yourself Do you really feel personally burdened and concerned for the issues? Have you prayed about the prayer you will lead everyone in?

It may be helpful to prayerfully write out points for your prayer to keep it focussed and purposeful. Spontaneous and extempore prayer is also a part of this prayer time. You may also consider a responsive prayer where the congregation is involved at some point.

Greeting One Another (Jn 15:12-14; 2 Cor 13:12; Phil 4:21; Col 3:12-14)



Some people can find this annoying. “We are here to worship God”, they say, “and this is a distraction!” Fellowship and love for one another are an imperative for the gathered church. Our gathered worship is not a mere private experience; it has a corporate dimension. The greeting and welcoming one another is a concrete act of hospitality and love, worthy of the gospel of Christ

Welcome & Announcements

We want to be a warm and hospitable church and the welcome gives an opportunity to welcome visitors and one another. Announcements can often be seen as a hindrance to our worship. But the communication of events, news and plans is a vital part of our life together in a community of faith. Obviously a main source of information sharing is through our weekly newsletter and on our website, but this aspect of our service fulfils an important role in our life together.

Offering (Mal 3:1-6; 1 Cor 16:1-2; 2 Cor 9:6-11)

The key thing here is this: we do not TAKE UP the offering. That would be robbery, rather than a generous and free act! We receive the offering— or, “We continue in our worship of God as we give of our tithes and offerings”. Might sound pedantic, but language is important. Every part of our gathering is an act of worship, including our financial giving. It is good to pray either before or after the offering, focusing on gratitude for God for all he has given us, and wisdom as a church community to manage these finances well for his kingdom purposes. And since we cannot serve both God and

Money (Mt 6:4), the regular act of giving challenges the temptation of greedy and hoarding wealth. The key dimension is wide and faithful stewardship of the financial and material gifts God has given us.

Children's Talk (Lk 18:15-17)

The community of faith has a call and responsibility to nurture children and youth wisely and well. We want to welcome the kids, show them that we value them, and pray for and bless them. Some points to consider concerning the talk are: fun and educational, connecting theme for the day, one main point, and always lead the kids in prayer. In terms of time, 5-7 minutes is enough time to make one key point and pray.

The Lord's Supper (Mt 26:17-30; 1 Cor 11:23-26)

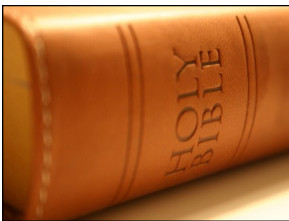


This is a vital and central part of our worship once a month. In this meal we are doing several things. Firstly, we are remembering the death of our Lord Jesus for our sins. Therefore, the prayer for the bread will include confession of our sins, and thankfulness and gratitude for the costly sacrifice of Jesus on the cross. The prayer for wine will move the focus into our response to this great gift, affirm that in

Christ our sins are forgiven, and look ahead in hope to the kingdom that is to come where we shall see Christ in all his glory and majesty. But communion is not solely "my private time with Jesus". It has a communal element. Jesus gave us this practice in the context of a meal where people were looking into one another's faces. In Christ our sins are forgiven, but through this meal we are also commanded to forgive one another's sins.

In summary, our meal with Jesus has the elements of the past (remembering Jesus' sacrificial death for our sins), the present (believing what Christ has done and receiving forgiveness for our sins), and future (looking to faithfully serving God as we go and longing for his kingdom to come).

Sermon



Jesus was a teacher and a preacher. He taught and preached in Synagogues, in houses, in the open and in the Temple. His first followers did the same. In fact one of the first events in the birth of the church was the preaching of a sermon. Through preaching and teaching a number of things are happening. Firstly, we acknowledge the high place the Bible has in matters of faith and life. Secondly, through the preaching of the Word of God we are seeking

to hear and discern what the Spirit is saying to us as individuals and as a congregation. By expounding the written Word of God through the preached Word of God we seek to encounter afresh the living Word of God, Jesus Christ

Songs & Music (Psalms are songs; Ac 16:25; Rom 15:11; Eph 5:19; Jam 5:13)



Singing to God is not a personal preference of ‘musical types’, it is a divine command repeated throughout the Bible. Music and singing is a great gift to be received and enjoyed with gratitude. There is no one cultural style or form of music that is more pleasing to God than another. So we have great freedom in selecting and forming our music for our worship gathering. But lyrics are especially important. Our songs reflect our theology and doctrines and therefore we need to evaluate the lyrical content of our songs of praise and worship. But we need not be too pedantic. Our songs should help us express love, praise and gratitude to God with personal and emotive language. They should also help us proclaim the great truths of God’s character and actions in the great redemptive story of Jesus Christ.

Baptism

This is not something we do every week– but it would be great if we did! People old enough to understand the good news of Jesus and the call to repent of sinful and self-absorbed lives, believe in and trust Jesus’ life death and resurrection for restoration with God, and commit to follow Christ all our days, are baptised in accordance with New Testament teaching. In baptism we are confessing our faith in Jesus Christ and committing ourselves to live that faith out in a local church community. We are baptised into Christ, but also his body, the church. Baptisms is an outward symbol of the following inner transformation: We are born again (Jn 3:5-6), washed and cleansed of our guilt and shame by Christ’s atoning death (2 Cor 5:14-25; Titus 3:5), buried and raised with Christ (Rom 6:3-4), and immersed or baptised in the Holy Spirit (Lk 3:15-18; Acts 1:8). We are baptised in response to Jesus’ command in Mt 28:19, and to follow Jesus’ own example (Mt 3:13-17). We also confess Christ publicly (Mt 10:32). Baptism is not just symbolic. In it the power and presence of God confer blessings and encouragement on both the person baptised and those gathered to share in this momentous occasion.

Benediction

This is an opportunity to say a final blessing over the congregation, and to send them out to the mission in the world that God calls us to partner Him with.

Morning Tea/Supper and beyond

Our worship and discipleship do not begin and end in our gathering together. We continue to worship God when we take interest and care for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We continue to worship when we live out our faith in our homes, workplaces and the various spheres that we inhabit throughout the week. We continue to worship as we make the sharing of the good news of Jesus in word and deed the priority of our lives. We continue to worship when we work for the alleviation of poverty and injustice, seeking to put hands and feet to our prayers that “Your Kingdom Come”.