



Putting it all together

Fact Sheet 9, The Elements of Worship Series



Now we have learnt about each element of worship, it is time to put it all together. This fact sheet focuses on how lay people might use the Worship Planning Page to create services.

How to prepare a service

- Choose a **service order** – you may have a set of service order templates you regularly use or
 - the Worship Planning Page already has a number of service order templates, which you can find on the Service Orders tab in the weekly service preparation resources. You will notice that each template is available in a variety of formats including Word format if you want to make a printed service order, or PowerPoint (PPT) if you want to prepare slides for the service.
 - It's a good idea to vary the service orders used each week so that they don't become too stale. You can find the options on the Service Orders tab.
 - You can use the Resources to Go, the fully-stocked service order which you might like to use as a base, especially if you are short of time or are preparing a service on short notice. It's fine to change parts of this service order to suit your congregation (for example, changing out the hymn choices).
- Add the **readings**.
 - Read through the Bible readings for the day, and make choices if required. In the After Pentecost season (Ordinary Time), there are two choices of Old Testament reading and Psalm. The first set of readings follow through books of the Bible. The second set link the Old Testament reading with the Gospel for the day. At other times other choices might be offered, especially for the Psalm.
 - Read through the Scriptures carefully, discerning the overall themes/ideas for the passages. You can use the Notes on the Readings document to help you do this. These ideas will determine your choices of liturgy and music throughout the service.
 - Click on the 'Readings' tab and it will bring up all the readings set for that particular Sunday. There is a prepared document provided each week with the readings already formatted and ready to go.
 - If you would prefer to make your own readings document, or to paste directly into your PowerPoint presentation, you can also access the readings on the BibleGateway website by clicking on the hyperlinks on each reading. The default is NIV, but if your parish uses a different version, it's very easy to change. Simply click on NIV in the top right-hand corner, chose your preferred translation, and hit the button with the magnifying glass.
 - There is a psalm nominated for every Sunday. There are two possible locations for the psalm either as an 'entrance' psalm that usually comes after Confession and Absolution, or between the two readings. Choose only one of these locations, and delete the other. Under the 'Readings' tab you will find a PowerPoint slide with the Psalm in responsive format. If you right click on the slide outline in the left-hand column, and click select all, you can the copy all the psalm slides and paste them directly into your own PowerPoint document. If you are preparing a Word document, copy the text of each slide and paste it into your document.

- **Sermons**
 - If you are preparing a lay-reading service, make a selection from the four sermons provided each week. Choose the sermon which best seems to speak to your congregation's needs and context at the time.
 - You can also choose a video sermon most weeks, which has been taken from past livestreamed services.
 - If you are preparing a service for a visiting pastor or you have a lay-reader who is trained to prepare a message, ask them what the main idea in their message will be.
- **Liturgy and Prayers.**
 - You will be selecting the propers – the parts which change from week to week. These have been written to match the lectionary readings. You will also need to provide **prayers** for the day. All the prayer resources you need can be found under the 'Liturgy and Prayers' tab on the Worship Planning Page.
 - You are aiming to select liturgy elements which add to the flow of the service, and which reflects the main ideas of the Readings and the Sermon.
 - You might choose to use the Opening Sentence, one of the Collects, and perhaps the prayers after the New Testament reading or after the Gospel reading. You could select the Dismissal sentences to add to the blessing at the end of the service.
 - Next, open the **Prayer of the Church** for the week. Read through it and change it to suit your congregation's needs and situation. Most congregations will add in the names of specific leaders in their area/state/country, then names of people in their congregation who are sick or otherwise in need of prayer, and perhaps the names of members of the congregation each week, so that in a year, each person has been prayed for. You may know of particular situations in your community that are of general concern, and which require prayer. Avoid making political points – the Prayer of the Church is on behalf of the whole congregation. Insert the Prayer of the Church into the Service Order.
- **Music** - you will need to add hymns and songs to the service.
 - If you click on the 'Music' tab on the Worship Planning Page, you will find a range of hymns and songs that match the Bible readings for the day. Each week, there are also a Top 4 selection of Public Domain hymns for congregations without copyright licences, and a Top 4 selection of contemporary songs to add variety.
 - If you are blessed to have a live musician, it's best to work together with them to make selections for your congregation.
 - However, if you use pre-recorded music or midi-files you will see that there are backing tracks provided for some of the songs which can be downloaded and used in your service. Go to Music Resources on the main navigation pane, to access the Downloadable Hymnal Resources, which has lyric PPTs and .MP3 backing tracks for most hymns.
 - You can also find the Modernised Hymn Lyrics by clicking on the links on songs in the weekly resources or by going to the database on the Music Resources page.
- **Intergenerational elements** – Now add in any intergenerational elements. This could be a children's address, or a moment to stop and explain part of the service, or a moment for discussion and sharing. There are weekly Children's Addresses on the WPP, or visit the GROW Ministries website (<https://www.growministries.org.au/>) for other excellent resources.
- If there are any special occasions such as a baptism, you will need to shorten your service appropriately and insert the necessary rite. Announcements are best placed at the beginning or end of the service, in order to separate them from the worship service itself.
- **Visual elements** should then be included, such as the colour for the season, and appropriate symbols or images which enhance and express the readings and message for the week. Use this to inform your visual presentation (PowerPoint, Presenter etc), and to assist the people responsible for the flowers, paraments etc. You will find a selection of PPT master slides to suit the season of the church year on the Visual Arts & Drama tab each week, as well as a PPT of Images for This Week's Readings and Sermons.