

HopeNET



Tips for Worship leaders

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Tips for worship leaders.

These points are mainly for those congregations or leaders who are keen to develop the Sunday service as a congregational participating event. Pick what seems relevant for your fellowship.

Key thing is **preparation**. It may take a little while for a congregation to grow in confidence and trust to express the truths in word, song, reading, prayer or whatever from the truths learned during the week. So its not one person preparing but as many of the congregation keen to participate. This means that we develop a culture of congregational preparation, at least amongst those so willing.

Have a slow and thoughtful read of 1Corinthians 14.26 ff. Much teaching on worship relies on Old Testament and levitical leadership. But NT does not have a concept of worship leaders, rather whole congregtn are levitical priests ministering before the Lord.

Thoughts to proceed : Don't be a worship leader. Be a co-member and at most a facilitator. Pray for and develop a vision of the body of worshippers following the invisible presence of God. See role as a worship starter then merge into congregation and listen to the Spirit leading the Body of Christ. Maybe falteringly at first but more confidently over the weeks.

So how do we **transition** from mono towards greater 'body ministry which encourages, comforts and strengthens the body of Christ?

At a simple level open with a call to worship and an uplifting hymn(s) and song(s) and from then on a listener as the body of Christ worships and serves.. Of course this may take some time for a congregation to understand and practise. But it will be worth it.

Don't be afraid of silences. Equally don't shy from taking a lead.

Avoid giving orders; 'stand up, sit down', 'now we'll have a time of .' 'let us pray .' (meaning I alone will pray) Add to as part of congregation rather than command.

Avoid saying a 'time of sharing', You are on the path of the whole service being participatory.

Understand **being led** by the Spirit is actually listening to the mood and expressions of the church .

How to prepare? Involve the people. As the people get used to it they will do it anyway. Accept not all will engage at first. If it is gentle and sincere you will be surprised as to who will begin to participate.

To help starting off; Ask 2 or 3 to prepare prayers of thanksgiving and praise advising the congregation the Sunday before that it will be open for vocal praise. Keep prayers short-very short. Ask a child and an elderly person. Suggest prepared prayers using verses from the readings as substance and inspiration. Ask one or two to prepare 3 min. talk on readings. As this generates, more may come prepared and sermon(if necessary) will adjust to incorporating ideas already flowing and provide a summary and drawing together of what messages and truths have been coming from within the body.

Likewise Ask congregation the Sunday before to phone favourite **songs** through

Don't worry about **themes** that will look after itself

Make sure **suffering** church is prayed for; (may use Barnabas Sunday prayer from magazine)

This scheme is ideal for smaller congregations. (Though I have seen it happen year by year unforgettably in a congregation of 300 plus) Yes it may take some training and preparation and if you are used to one person each Sunday 'doing it all' it can be a joyful path of re-learning. Try moving away from writing a pre-planned 'order' . Be patient.

Remember preparation is the key. Our default is to leave it to one or two to do all the prep but here all are invited to anticipate Sunday ,to gather up thoughts on the Lord's works in our lives and insights from Scripture during the week.

Note: We are willing to workshop this way of congregational participation to help churches proceed as far as they feel they can in this 'can't wait for Sunday' exciting and uplifting event. Make contact if you are interested in such.

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