

Setting God's People Free

Worship and Liturgy Resources



Renewal & Reform



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
Diocese of Chester

Setting God's People Free: Worship and Liturgy Resources

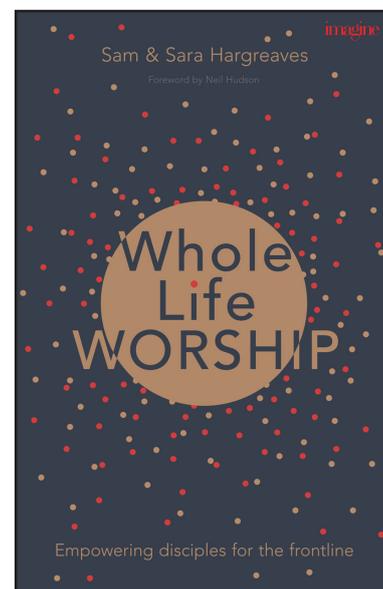
Books and Resources

Whole Life Worship

Sam & Sara Hargreaves (London: IVP, 2017)

This book offers a combination of theological reflection and creative worship resources to help bridge the gap between our gathered and scattered worship. It is easy to read and has lots of helpful suggestions for how we might shape our worship to empower and enable whole life worship of all God's people.

The ideas it offers will be most easily applicable to lower church settings, but the theological reflection it offers helps to frame the challenge facing all our churches. If the resources offered do not fit your context, you might want to write liturgy to help frame the ideas in a more suitable way. The book is supported by group material and videos available separately.

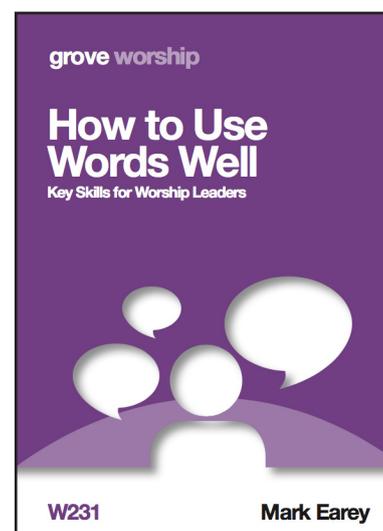


How to Use Words Well: Key Skills for Worship Leaders

Mark Earey (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2017)

Grove Booklets are short booklets giving a first look at a particular subject. If you are wanting to explore writing liturgy or seeing how you can link liturgy together more intentionally, this booklet offers some helpful, practical advice.

It covers what the context of corporate worship demands and then gives advice how we can select and write liturgy to meet those demands. It is also gives advice about how we then say those words as we lead worship.



Liturgical Resources

There are three areas where the resources of Common Worship may be supplemented to help emphasise the ideas that Setting God's People Free aims to address, namely gathering, offertory and dismissal. There is a danger that the Common Worship liturgical resources tend to assume the link between our lives in the world and our shared corporate worship rather than making it explicit. One of the ambitions of Setting God's People Free is to use our liturgy as a lever of change and employ the formational nature of corporate worship. To support this, this booklet offers liturgical resources for these three areas. They are intended as ideas or starting points, and may require some adaptation to best suit your context.

Gathering Liturgy

This gathering liturgy aims to show the diversity of where God's people spend the majority of their time. Adapting it to fit the major employers and places in your parish would help affirm its relevance to the people it names.

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
All **His love endures for ever.**

Let the redeemed of God share their story,
All **For he has set us free.**

From North and South, East and West,
All **God calls his people to come.**

From office and school, factory and field,
All **God calls his people to come.**

From site and plant, hospital and home,
All **God calls his people to come.**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
All **His love endures for ever.**

cf Ps 107: 1-3

This gathering liturgy is suitable for All-Age Worship. It aims to gather and welcome us, reminding us of our unity in Christ despite our diversity in other ways.

Young and old,
All **we welcome you.**

Happy and sad,
All **we welcome you.**

Regular and visitor,
All **we welcome you.**

Quiet and noisy,
All **we welcome you.**

People of God,
All **we welcome you.**

It could be adapted by adding the names of church groups, or places to it. For example:

*From Whizz Kids and Powerpack,
we welcome you.*

Or

*From school and workplace,
we welcome you.*

Or

*From Barrow and Hollowmore Heath
we welcome you.*

Liturgy can be developed from specific Biblical texts. For example, Matthew 25.31-46 talks of how those who serve the needs of the world serve God. In this liturgy, we focus on how our faith is served practically in the world. It could be adapted to be used as a sending out liturgy.

All The Lord blesses those he calls.
We serve him with our lives.

All Where we meet the hungry and thirsty,
we give them food and drink.

All Where we meet the stranger,
we invite them in.

All Where we meet those who need clothes,
we clothe them.

All Where we meet the sick,
we care for them.

All Where we meet those who are imprisoned,
we visit them.

All As we serve the least,
we serve Christ.

All As we gather today,
we worship Christ.

cf Matthew 25.34-36

Offertory Liturgy

The National Stewardship team have produced a helpful report called 'Re-imagining the Offertory'. This introduces and discusses helpful ideas around how the offertory might be used to encourage giving and to grow a sense of the offertory being about giving the whole of our lives to God. The following liturgical ideas incorporate some of these themes and show ways we might adapt our practice at our Sunday services.

Adding introductions and words before prayers we are used to using adds a different context to those prayers. It allows different ideas to be added and the formational nature of liturgy to be exercised. This introduction reminds us that we offer our whole lives in worship to God.

As we gather as community,
we respond to all that God has given us.
We make our lives an offering,
our time, our money and our love.

A moment of silence is kept.

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power,
the glory, the splendour, and the majesty;
for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.
**All things come from you,
and of your own do we give you.**

Allowing the Liturgical year to shape the words we use enables the message we are trying to share to be refreshed and enhanced. These offertory prayers follow the same themes above, but follows seasonal imagery and themes.

Advent

As we look for signs of Christ's return in glory,
we respond to all that God has given us.
We make our lives an offering,
our time, our money and our love.

A moment of silence is kept.

**Generous God,
accept these gifts
and with them our lives
to be used in the service of your coming Kingdom
through Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.**

Christmas

The generosity of God is revealed as Christ is born amongst us,
so let us respond to all that God has given us.
We make our lives an offering,
our time, our money and our love.

A moment of silence is kept.

**Gracious God,
accept these gifts
and with them our lives
to be used to glorify your incarnate Son,
our saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.**

Lent

The Lord is gracious and compassionate,
slow to anger and rich in love.
Let us respond to all that God has given us:
as we make our lives an offering,
our time, our money and our love.

A moment of silence is kept.

**God of life,
saviour of the poor
receive with our gifts
gratitude for your goodness
penitence for our pride
and dedication to your service
in Jesus Christ our Lord,
Amen.**

2nd half from Common Worship Main Volume, p291 Prayer 3

Easter

Gracious God,
through the raising of Jesus Christ from the dead
you have given us immeasurable grace.
As your boundless generosity overflows in our lives,
May the offering of our time, our money and our love
reflect all that you have given to us.

A moment of silence is kept.

**Almighty God,
As we offer you these gifts,
grant that we may live in the light of the Resurrection;
offering our whole lives in adoration,
to the one who is redeeming the whole of creation
Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Dismissals

Offering a longer dismissal liturgy allows specific ideas to be given to people about how they might worship and serve God. This example is a commissioning liturgy that aims to send people out for specific purposes.

Almighty God,
in the power of the Holy Spirit,
send us out into the world
to build your Kingdom.

All **Here I am, send me.**

Will you go and pray for each other
until your hearts beat with the longings of God?

All **We will go.**

Will you go and carry the hope of Christ into the world?

All **We will go.**

Will you go and faithfully build the Kingdom of God?

All **We will go.**

Will you go and stand with the hurt and the broken?

All **We will go.**

Will you go and stand with the old and the young?

All **We will go.**

Will you go and stand with the rich and the poor?

All **We will go.**

Will you go and carry the light of Christ,
bringing out the God colours in the world?

All **We will go.**

Adapted from Pentecost Commission CW T&S p501

This dismissal has the familiarity of the CW Order 1 Communion Dismissal but extended and shaped around the 5 marks of mission. One way of developing new liturgy is to take well-known responses and add to them.

Christ calls us to worship and serve him.
He sends us out to build his Kingdom.

Tell the good news of Jesus Christ.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Teach the faith.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Serve the needs of others.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Transform society and stand against injustice.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Treasure creation and renew the earth.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

This approach to writing liturgy could be taken to embody a Church's mission or vision statement.

Let us go to live like Jesus.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Let us go to live for Jesus.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Let us go to live with Jesus.
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

The dismissal is one of the key areas where making connections between the gathered worship of Sunday services and the scattered worship or the rest of the week is key. Making connections explicit rather than implicit is valuable, as it helps people to feel affirmed in their vocation as God's people. This dismissal echoes the Prayer after Communion used in many churches based on Romans 12.1

Let us now go and offer our lives as living sacrifices,
holy and pleasing to God.

All **This is our worship.**

As we work in offices and industry,

All **this is our worship.**

As we teach and learn,

All **this is our worship.**

As we cook and clean,

All **this is our worship.**

As we rest and relax,

All **this is our worship.**

As we care and support

All **this is our worship.**

We are sent by God to serve him in the world.

All **This is our worship.**

Common Worship Seasonal Resources

There is a risk that any piece of liturgy which is used week-in week-out begins to lose some of its impact due to familiarity. The Church Year offers a great gift in this respect as it gives space for a variety of liturgical content to be offered within a familiar liturgical shape or framework.

Common Worship Times and Seasons includes material for use throughout the church's year, and has been compiled so particular seasons have a particular emphasis. For example, the Epiphany season offers material focussed on unity or mission. The material for Embertide does also include material suitable for lay as well as ordained vocations.

The Setting God's People Free report highlights the significance of the Renewal of Baptismal Vows material included within the Easter material of Common Worship Times and Seasons. It is presented within the Easter Liturgy and may require some adaptation to be used away from this service.

Creative use of the church year gives opportunity to focus on particular ideas through a related season. This can be valuable in making best use of corporate worship as a formational experience. The Setting God's People Free report offers an example of using the seasons from Advent to Easter as a period of nurturing faith, Easter to July as a time of deepening faith and the remainder of the year as a timing of sowing, and intentional evangelism and outreach.

This resource was prepared by the Revd Andy Stinson, Worship and Liturgy Missioner in the Diocese of Chester. For further discussion or support in using these materials, please contact him on:

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