

# Exploring Worship



**COURSE PARTICIPANT'S NOTES**  
**Introduction to Exploring Worship**

February 2022

In response to God's immense love for us, we seek to be God's people living and telling the story of Jesus:

Dear God, supreme Storyteller,  
thank you that our lives gain meaning  
in the pages of your unfolding story.  
By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit,  
help us to live the story of Jesus  
so that others can see it;  
to tell the story of Jesus  
so that others can grasp it;  
and be part of the new chapter that  
you are writing in your enduring  
love story to the world.

**Amen**

Loving Father

We come together in hope and anticipation:

Ready to do your will

Wherever you will lead us.

Be with us in our learning and our discussions,

In the obscure moments and when your light floods in.

Bind us together in your name

So that we might serve you and one another

In holiness and joy.

**Amen**

## Introduction

“O come let us worship and bow down,  
let us kneel before our maker, for he is our God”

Psalm 95:6-7

In the biblical account of Israel, God appointed people to take care of the arrangements and leading of public worship. This ministry is still crucial to the practice of public worship today and clergy and readers, under licence from the Bishop are given responsibility to lead people in public prayer. Worship itself, however, is the role of all God's people and people are enriched by learning more about corporate worship and having opportunities to use their gifts in leading it.

This course will be of interest to anyone wanting to understand more about worship. It also provides the foundational training for Lay Worship Assistants (LWAs).

## Course Overview

### Objectives for the Course

- To explore the nature of worship and worship leading
- To provide training in the basic skills of constructing and leading a service

### Anticipated Outcomes for the Course

- Increase the pool of people understanding the nature of worship and liturgical leadership
- Enable you to be involved in various aspects of leading worship
- Train people with the potential to become Lay Worship Assistants, who are able to competently design and lead Services of the Word.

## Resources

For this Course you will need access to the following:

- Bible
- A copy of the service book (if any) used in your church which you are likely to lead
- A copy of the hymn book(s) used in your church.

## Sessions

Exploring Worship consists of 8 sessions of 2 – 2.5 hours.

Lay Worship Assistants have additional sessions:

- A session with incumbent to write ministry specification and prepare for commendation
- Safeguarding training

The website for the course is:

<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/ministry-for-mission/training/lay-training/exploring-worship/>

Further resources for participants and worship leaders are available on the LWA Hub:

<https://www.bathandwells.org.uk/ministry/local-ministries/lay-worship-assistants/>

## Sessions

There are 8 core sessions lasting 2-2.5 hours.

Session 1	What is Worship?
Session 2	The Elements of a Service
Session 3	Creating a Service
Session 4	Becoming a Worship Leader
Session 5	Who do we Worship?
Session 6	Specialist Worship 1
Session 7	Specialist Worship 2
Session 8	Practical Session

## Course Details

Your facilitators are:

Contact details:

Dates and times of sessions:

## The Ministry of Lay Worship Assistants

A Lay Worship Assistant may be involved in any appropriate lay leadership of worship in the parishes or benefice for which their incumbent is responsible and the PCC have accepted their ministry. For example, with permission of their incumbent they may:

- Lead Common Worship or BCP Morning and Evening Prayer
- Lead a Service of the Word and any informal services complying with that Service
- Lead or assist in the Gathering and Liturgy of the Word as part of the Eucharist
- Lead intercessions and read the lessons
- Lead a lay worship planning team
- Assist but not lead at occasional offices (Baptisms, Funerals and Weddings)

A Lay Worship Assistant will not normally

- Administer the consecrated elements unless the Bishop's authorisation has been received in the normal way. The Sacraments are the role of the ordained minister.
- Preach. Preaching requires a Bishop's licence (Readers and Clergy). However, LWAs may help the congregation reflect on the scriptures for themselves. Guidance for this is given in **EW3 HO2 Reflecting on God's Word**.

Not all course participants wish to go on to become Lay Worship Assistants. At the end of this course participants have gone on, among other things to lead intercessions, read lessons, be part of worship planning team (Café church, Taizé, Messy Church etc.) or simply more faithful disciples with a deeper understanding and practice of worship without becoming LWAs.

You do not need to make a decision about whether to apply until the end of the course. At that point, you and your incumbent need to discern together whether becoming a commended as an LWA is the right way forward. A 9<sup>th</sup> session, which is a one-to-one session with your incumbent at the end of the course, will provide guidance on this process.

You can find out more about becoming an LWA from the LWA website, including our flyer and the detailed "**Guidance on Becoming an LWA**". You will receive a copy in Session 5.

For those who do feel called to become LWAs, commendation by the Bishop requires:

- Completion of the course with a positive recommendation by the course facilitator
- Approval by your incumbent and the PCC
- Completion of safeguarding requirements - usually a DBS check and safeguarding training
- Agreement of a ministry specification with the local church
- Leading an assessed service.

The benefits of being commended as an LWA include:

- Increased confidence and authority as a result of the commendation
- Recognition in the Diocese and inclusion in Diocesan events
- Enhanced responsibility, commitment and accountability as set out in the ministry specification.

If you wish to become an LWA and your incumbent is not one of your facilitators do make sure he or she receives the Incumbent's notes from your facilitator.

## Session Details

The following is a brief overview of each session and intended learning outcomes

### Session 1 What is worship

As a result of this session participants should:

- Have explored various understandings of worship,
- Be encouraged to ensure that God and not worship tasks are the foundation of all involvement in worship.
- Have gained some new learning about worship and liturgy and the required elements of a Service of the Word.

### Session 2 The Elements of a Service

As a result of this session participants should:

- Have deconstructed CW or BCP Morning or Evening Prayer into its constituent elements
- Have reflected on the flow and journey of worship and the preparation needed to lead such a service
- Understand how to construct intercessions and know where to go for resources

### Session 3 Preparing a Service

As a result of this session participants should have

- explored how to choose hymns, songs and music
- looked at options for reflecting on the scriptures in a service
- attempted, in small groups, to construct a service for a given occasion using New Patterns for Worship

### Session 4 Leading Worship

As a result of this session participants should have:

- Explored through image and word, the role and characteristics needed by a Worship Leader
- Have reflected on some of the practicalities of leading worship
- Considered their own and other's spiritual styles and reviewed their personal prayer life.

### Session 5 Who do we Worship?

As a result of this session participants should have:

- Shared, reflected and contrasted their experiences of a different worship service
- Shared their experience of God, and the nature of God portrayed in their church
- Been introduced to the Church's Year and Lectionary, sacred space and symbol and its contribution to worship.

### Session 6 and 7 Specialist Local Sessions

As a result of these sessions participants should have

- explored issues in worship that are particularly relevant to their local area
- experienced types of worship that exist or might be developed in their area.

### Session 8 Practical Session

As a result of this session participants should have

- prepared a service preferably collaboratively
- led the service or part of it and received feedback
- received information about what might happen after the sessions

### Session 9 Individual Session

This session is undertaken by the Incumbent through a one to one session with the participant

As a result of this session participants should have

- Discussed their calling and the nature of their future discipleship and ministry following the Exploring Worship Course.  
Those participants who wish to become LWAs should have
- Drafted a first attempt at a Ministry Specification
- Prepared an Application form

Made arrangements for an assessed service with appropriate help

## Resources for Worship

The LWA Hub on the Bath and Wells Diocesan Website has the most up to date website resources.

<http://www.bathandwells.org.uk/lwa-hub>

The following are reading material that will take you further in your thinking and reflecting. You are not expected to read everything on this list.

### Worship Resources

Church of England, 2012 *New Patterns for Worship* Church House Publishing, London ISBN 0715123262. Ideas for Services of the Word. Can be downloaded for free, saving typing, from the C of E website, but you may like to have a print version as well.

Fawcett, N., 2004 *A Common Worship Year A/B/C Miscellany*, Kevin Mayhew, Buxhall, ISBN 1844172902. Contains 'meditations', prayers, photocopiable games, etc.

Sayers, S., 2001 *Living Stones: The All-age Resource for the Common Worship Lectionary Year A/B/C : Complete Resource Book* Kevin Mayhew, Buxhall, ISBN 184003212X. Now quite old but has stories/activities/prayers for different age groups. Newer resources are online.

### Practical Guidance on Leading Worship

De Lange, A. & Simpson, L., 2003 *How to ... Lead the prayers* (Grove Worship Series W169), Grove Books Cambridge, ISBN 1851744940

De Lange, A. & Simpson, L., 2003 *How to ... Read the Bible in church* (Grove Worship Series W177), Grove Books Cambridge, ISBN 1851745424

Earey, M., 2005 *Leading Worship* (Grove Worship Series W152), Grove Books Cambridge, ISBN 1851744002. A short but valuable recommended guide.

Myers, G., 2005 *How to ... Lead Evensong* (Grove Worship Series W183), Grove Books Cambridge, ISBN 1851745890. Helpful hints for this style of worship.

### Resources for the Reflection Slot

See the separate handout with resources for the Reflection Slot.

### Prayers

Chapman, R., 1997 *Leading Intercessions*, Canterbury Press, Norwich, ISBN 1853111767

Odell, C., 1998 *Companion to the Revised Common Lectionary*, Vol.1, Intercessions, Epworth Press, Peterborough, ISBN 0716205173

Adam, D., 1998 *Clouds and Glory; Prayers for the Church Year: Year A/B/C* SPCK, London, ISBN 0281050341, 0281051992, 028105200X. In a more celtic tradition.

Brother Tristram SSF, 1997 *Exciting Holiness: Collects and Readings for the Festivals and Lesser Festivals of the Calendar of the Church of England*, Canterbury Press, Norwich, ISBN 1853111740

### What is Worship?

Bradshaw, Paul and Peter Moger, 2008 *Worship Changes Lives: How it Works, Why it Matters* London: Church House Publishing Some lovely reflections on why we worship.

## Glossary

The Church has many technical words and abbreviations. The following are some you may come across. You can add others as you discover them.

<b>ASB</b>	Alternative Service Book. This was a new modern language liturgy produced in 1980 following some earlier versions (Series 1,2,3). It has been replaced by Common Worship and should no longer be used.
<b>BCP</b>	Book of Common Prayer, prepared by Thomas Cranmer, the version currently in use dates from 1662 and was the main prayer book of the Church of England until the early twentieth century.
<b>Compline</b>	A service for night time that can be found in CW.
<b>CW</b>	Common Worship is the name of the current modern language liturgical texts. There are a variety of services and worship books for different occasions. A lay worship leader will use the CW Service of the Word and CW Morning and Evening Prayer most often. They may assist with the Ministry of the Word as part of the Holy Communion Service. These services can all be downloaded from the Church of England website.
<b>EP</b>	Evening Prayer. A BCP or CW liturgy for late afternoon or early evening services
<b>Eucharist</b>	Also called Holy Communion and Last Supper. The service that celebrates Jesus final meal with his disciples and distributes the sacrament of bread and wine
<b>Lectionary</b>	A set of readings for services. The Revised Common Lectionary is used by the Anglican, Catholic, Methodist and other churches giving us a standard set of readings across the country and world.
<b>Liturgical Year</b>	Begins at Advent and outlines the seasons and festivals celebrated in the CofE
<b>Liturgy</b>	Commonly used to mean a set form of service.... See EW1 HO2 Handout
<b>MP</b>	Morning Prayer. A BCP or CW liturgy for morning services
<b>Rite</b>	The prescribed form for a particular service in a particular tradition e.g. The Byzantine Rite – is the service used by the ancient Byzantine church
<b>Rubrics</b>	These are set of instructions that accompany a service and guide how to lead it. Always read the rubrics to understand how the service flows.
<b>Sacrament</b>	A sacrament is a means of imparting God's grace. The church of England has 2 core sacraments: Baptism and the Eucharist. The Catholic and many Orthodox

	churches have 7 sacraments
Worship	Literally it means to give worth to something, to give God the reverence God deserves .... See EW1 HO1 Definitions of Worship Handout