

Thank You for Leading Worship!

Thank you for leading worship on _____ . This brochure is provided as a way to help you be better prepared for leading the congregation in worship and to help make the worship service more meaningful for them and for you.

Leading worship is an art. It is one of those tasks that may seem fairly simple; after all, most everything you're going to say is handed to you. However, until you've done it, you may not truly appreciate just how easy others may have made it appear.

Together, the pastor, the musicians, and the worship leader are partners in the worship service. In many ways, the service can be compared to a relay race, where one runner passes the baton to the next. And just like a runner practices before a big race, so, too, should the worship leader practice before the service begins. You will be very glad you did!

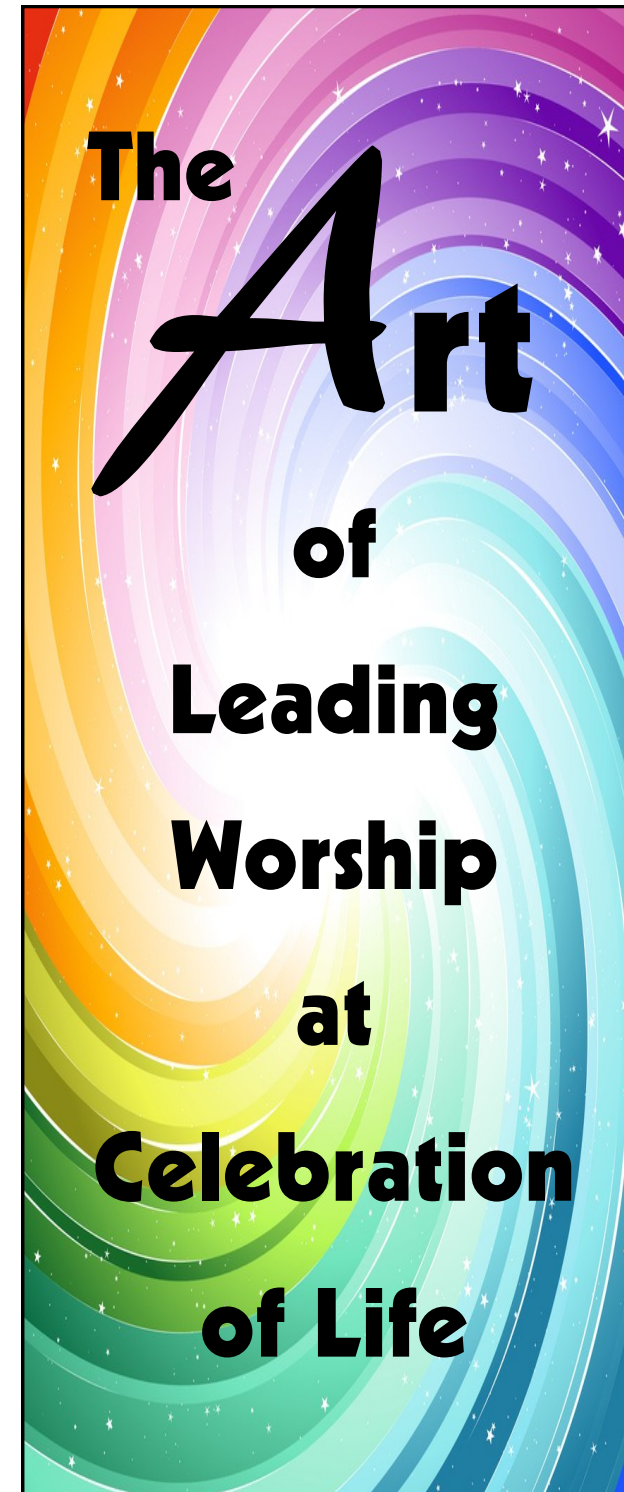
If you have any questions about your role, please know that you can contact the pastor and/or anyone on the worship committee. We thank you for being willing to assume this task. Perfection is not required; rather, just a willingness to share in our life together and lead worship at the church we love, the church we call home.

Inclusive Language

Expansive Images of God

Mother, Father, Midwife, Creator, Shepherd, Light, Eagle, Hen, Vine, Bread, Wisdom, Word, I Am, Baker, Potter, Water, Rock, Wind, Fire

Words That Exclude:	Words That Include:
brothers, brotherhood (in the faith)	brothers and sisters, friends, kindred, family of faith, neighbors, humankind
man, men, mankind	people, all people, women and men, humanity, humankind, all of us, persons, everyone, we, one
sons (of God)	daughters and sons, children of God, people of God, heirs
chairman	chairperson, chair, moderator, group leader, presiding officer
workmen	workers
forefathers	ancestors, forebears, forebearers
disabled person	person with a disability, differently abled
clergyman	clergy, minister
layman	laity, layperson, member of the congregation, congregant
fellowship	community, communion, friendship, "koinonia"
man-made	constructed, not natural, human-made, synthetic
stand as able	if you are able to do so comfortably, please stand
minority people	racial ethnic people, people of color
foreigner, alien	visitor from another country, immigrant
man and wife	husband and wife, woman and man, spouses, partners
kingdom	realm, reign of God
third world	developing nations



Getting Ready for Sunday

Normally, all the items the Worship Leader is responsible for are highlighted in the bulletin. They typically include announcing or reading the:

1. Congregational Introit (if there is one)
2. Call to Worship
3. Opening Hymn
4. Prayer of Reconciliation, followed by the Assurance of Grace
5. First Scripture Reading
6. Dedication of Gifts and Tithes
7. Prayer of Dedication

Practice reading aloud all these items at home. If possible, read them in front of someone to help ensure that words and names are pronounced correctly.

Check on the pronunciation of any names (Melchizedek) or places (Arimathea) that are unfamiliar and/or words that may not be part of your everyday vocabulary (what's the difference between prophesy or prophecy?). For names, see this website for assistance if you are unsure: <http://netministries.org/Bbasics/bwords.htm>.

The Prayer of Dedication after the offering should be no longer than a few sentences and focus on gifts being offered; it is not a general prayer, a confessional prayer or a pastoral prayer. Writing down your prayer ahead of time will help avoid losing your train of thought or a sense of drifting because you can't find the right word or phrase. Websites such as http://www.davidsbell.org/Offertory_Prayers.html may provide some ideas which tend to tie back to the lectionary suggested scripture readings for the day.

Try to use inclusive language whenever possible, or at least be sensitive about always referring to God as He, Him, and His; to people as man, men, or mankind; and, to God's reign as kingdom. If it's

too awkward to always use non-gender specific nouns and pronouns, you may try to balance the reading or prayer with both masculine and feminine references. (See the back side of this brochure for more inclusive images and references for God and God's people.)

Before Worship Begins

Arrive 15 to 20 minutes early to go over with the pastor any last minute changes to those parts of the worship service that you will be responsible for leading. Verify the pronunciation of any words or names that you may have found either difficult to pronounce and/or weren't quite sure how to pronounce.

Stand at the lectern and practice with the microphone. The microphone at the lectern tends to pick up most voices quite easily, but you may need to adjust it so it is pointed in your direction depending on how well your voice carries. The handheld microphone isn't quite as sensitive, so you will likely need to hold it just a few inches from your mouth.

If you're the worship leader when we have a guest preacher, please go over the entire Order of Worship with the guest preacher so he/she knows which parts you'll be leading and which parts he/she will be leading, from the Words of Welcome and Announcements all the way to the Benediction. Make sure the guest preacher knows whether he/she should introduce him/herself (and when to do that) or if you should provide that introduction.

You're On!

Tell the congregation when to stand and when to sit. Say **"If you are able to do so comfortably, please stand."** or **"Please rise in body or spirit."** and **"You may be seated."** or **"Please be seated."**

Tell the congregation where to find the next item in the Order of Worship.

Read slowly when you're leading the congregation and reading in unison with them. For a unison reading, please keep pace with them and do not read ahead of them. Listen as you read with them; if you have to wait for them to catch up to you, you're probably reading too fast.

Allow 15 to 20 seconds for the Moment of Silence after the Announcements and for the Silent Prayer after the Prayer of Reconciliation.

If you can, please give a brief introduction of the events leading up to the scripture reading you'll be reading (rarely does it begin with chapter 1, verse 1). Consider saying who is talking; you may also want to clarify for whom it was written.

Conclude the reading by saying **"The word of God for the people of God."** or **"This is the word of the Lord."** The congregation will respond to either statement by saying **"Thanks be to God."**

For the Dedication of Gifts and Tithes, consider saying **"With gladness, let us present the offering of our life and labor to the Lord."** or a similar phrase that speaks to the opportunity to offer our gifts in thanksgiving with a grateful heart.

As the offering is being taken, remain seated until the pianist plays the introduction to the Doxology. At that time, please rise and stand at the front of the center aisle, indicating to the congregation that they may rise. After the prayer, place the offering baskets on the shelf with the angel or on the Communion table in a way that they do not block the Communion elements, the peace candle, or any other items already on the table.

In Shelly's absence, you will likely take the lead with the Friendship Circle, the prayers of the people, the Lord's prayer, and the sung benediction.