

# Resources for WORSHIP

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A Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec resource aimed at equipping churches for ministry excellence.



TRANSFORMING



RESOURCING



NETWORKING



PLANTING







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# CHURCH MINISTRY RESOURCES

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The Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec exists to equip churches and leaders as they engage in their mission from God in their community. While every church will have a slightly different vision and calling, churches have historically functioned with four primary tasks:

- gathering as a **community** of faithful believers,
- **worshipping** the living God,
- **forming** spiritually mature followers of Christ and
- engaging in **mission** locally and beyond.

Our desire is to help resource you in these four areas.



# WORSHIP

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Gathering regularly to worship the Living God is integral to the life of a church. We foster an atmosphere and heart of worship in our gatherings so that our lives are formed in the way of God's kingdom.

## (RE-) INTRODUCING the Fourfold Pattern of Worship

Back when the church was still in its infancy, it developed a pattern when it gathered for worship (Gathering, Word, Response and Sending). This pattern was not meant to be a strict formula but rather a rhythm that reminds us of God's story and intentions for us to be formed into mature worshipping followers of Christ. Below you will find some resources and ideas that may help you may find helpful in putting together you worship gatherings.

### Usable & Adaptable

These ideas and resources are meant to be simple, usable and adaptable for your own setting. If you find a posture of the heart or practice that you think might be helpful then try it out, use it and adapt it taking into consideration your own church culture and context.

### Collaborative

The degree to which you are able to include others in the planning, preparations and facilitation of worship gatherings will be the degree to which people are able to utilize their gifts, callings and talents for the honour of God and the blessing of the church community. One way to spark new life into your worship gathering is to include others.

### Share

If you find something here that works for you find a way to share it with another church or association and allow it to be a blessing to them.

# FOURFOLD PATTERN OF WORSHIP

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## GATHERING

God calls us into relationship, abundance and holiness. We are invited to join together as a community to worship the living God, regardless of where we are at in our spiritual journey. We gather to encourage our sisters and brothers in Christ to remain faithful.

- Call to Worship
- Gathering Songs & Prayer
- Reminding people that they were created in the *Imago Dei* “Image of God”
- “Come, let us bow down in worship...” Psalm 95:6



## WORD

Christ calls us to live transformed lives. We gather around the Word of God during worship. We open ourselves to the Word so our hearts and minds will be renewed. While some exercise gifts of teaching and preaching, we all seek to mature as hearers and doers of the Word.

- Confession and Assurance
- Sermons that are faithful to scripture, your people and your context
- Reminding people of how their story fits within God’s grand story for their lives, their church and the world



## RESPONSE

The Holy Spirit unites us with the Trinity and with each other. We are reminded of this when we gather for Communion, through Baptism and as we respond to God's invitation to new life. There is something powerful when we are in an atmosphere of collective and individual prayerful response. It is a space where we can discern God's leading and direction so that our intimacy with God is transformed as a blessing for others.

- Communion & Table Fellowship
- Baptism
- Response activities (time for prayer, silent mediation, prayer stations, active responses, etc)
- Offering
- Inviting people to respond to the Word (important given the array of learning styles)



## SENDING

The Church is Christ's partner in ministry. We don't exist for ourselves, our church community or to make us feel good. Rather, we exist to live faithfully present in our own contexts serving the spiritual and material needs of those around us in Christ's name.

- Blessing / Benediction / Sending
- Sending songs
- Reminding people that as we are called and blessed we are now sent and blessed to be a blessing to others

# GATHERING

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As a Church, we gather as a worshipping community and that is what makes us distinct from social clubs, spiritual formation ministries and social justice agencies.

We have read the statistics and heard the anecdotal stories of declining church attendance. Among the myriad reasons why people say they don't go to church is the response that says "I don't need to go to church, I worship God on my own in nature." But we gather to worship because we are worshipping beings that need a regular rhythm of corporate worship so that our worship stays focused on the Triune God and not the idols that so easily encroach on our lives.

## AN IMAGINATION TO GATHER

- ▶ What makes this gathering unique from other activities of the week?
- ▶ What can we do together as a gathering, worshipping church community that we can't do on our own?
- ▶ What might happen if we truly believed that God would show up as we gather?
- ▶ Given that we were created in the "image of God" (*Imago Dei*) how does that help foster creativity and faithfulness as we gather?
- ▶ The word *ekklesia* means "church" or "called out" how does that shape the way we put together our worship gatherings?

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ We always live in the tension of inviting committed followers of Christ to go deeper in their faith and practice **AND** inviting people exploring faith to be accepted with grace and in humility.
- ▶ As a gathering community we have our own language and customs **AND** we also want to make our services accessible for people who are exploring faith and Christ.



# GATHERING IDEAS

## As people are gathering...

- If you use a visual presentation program - before the service when people are walking in you could use a scrolling / looping presentation that might prepare people for worship. Include...
  - prayers
  - thematic quotes that didn't make the sermon
  - backgrounds (maybe from nature or your neighbourhood)
  - Psalms
  - Once you have used it exchange your file with another CBOQ Church
- Instrumental Preludes
- If you are constantly introducing newer songs to your congregation, use the prelude as an opportunity to play the songs as people are coming into the worship space
- Introduce physical symbolic object representing sermon series topic: i.e. Candle (God's Word), Table set for dinner (Community), Smudged window pane (Divine hiddenness - through a mirror dimly), etc.
- Tell story with sound effects from congregation (four sounds, one from each quadrant, triggered by four keywords that repeat throughout the story)

## Call to Worship

- Call and Response
- Reading from a Scripture (Psalm)
- Write your own call to worship
- Find one online and re-write it
- Find a passage from scripture and apply it to your context by changing a name or phrase with the something relevant to your church (maybe the name of your city, street or church). Jewish Rabbis called this a *Targum*.

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**Come, Let us  
bow down in  
worship...  
Psalm 95:6**

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## Gathering Songs

- Create a list of appropriate gathering songs that help bring remind the congregation why we gather to worship
- Search [www.worshiptogether.com](http://www.worshiptogether.com) for Gathering Song suggestions

## Gathering Prayers

- There are lots of great gathering prayers available online. You can also take one as a basis and re-write it in your own words.
- Palms Down and Palms Up – give people a moment of silence. Invite them to put their palms face downward toward the floor as a physical reminder of what they want to leave with God (that which is heavy on their mind or heart). After a few seconds invite people to turn over their hands so their palms face upward and invite them to consider how they want their hearts to hear from God today.
- Before beginning a prayer try reminding people to take a few depth breaths, close their eyes and let their mind slow down and heart open up to what God's Spirit might have to say to them.

# WORD

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Christ calls us to live transformed lives. We gather around the Word of God during worship. We open ourselves to the Word so our hearts and minds will be renewed. While some exercise gifts of teaching and preaching, we all seek to mature as hearers and doers of the word. In sharing the Gospel we are reminding people of how their story fits within God's grand story for their lives, their church and the world. As Baptists, we believe the Bible is the final authority in matters of faith and practice.

## AN IMAGINATION OF WORD

- We don't preach as an end in itself, we share God's story in order to shape our church community to be maturing, faithful and others focused?
- What is it about hearing God's WORD as a community of believers that is different than watching a sermon online or tv or hearing it on the radio?
- How is God inviting me to be faithful to my role in communicating God's Word while also inviting me to re-imagine new ways of communicating the Gospel?

## CONSIDERATIONS

- We always live in the tension of communicating the Gospel in a way that invites people exploring faith **AND** people deeply committed to life in the way of Jesus to go deeper.
- We are called to navigate the tension of having our passages and ideas that we think are most important **AND** we have a commitment to being faithful to telling the entirety of the Biblical story.

## WORD IDEAS

Sermons that are faithful to scripture, your people and your context

### Collaborative WORD Preparation

- **WORD Team** - If you have some people that are theologically trained, artistic, great communicators – set up a quarterly, monthly or weekly gathering time. Tell them what you will be working on and invite them to think and brainstorm Biblically, theologically and creatively about ways they can supplement and strengthen your presentation of the WORD. You could also use it to help you evaluate and strengthen the effectiveness of your presentation skills.
- **Preaching Guild** - If you have people gifted in the area of teaching and preaching in your church create a “Preaching Guild.” Set up a regular gathering and rotation and help them live into that calling in their lives. It will help sharpen their skills and your skills.
- **Collaborative Preaching Network** – gather some other CBOQ Pastors or pastors from other traditions and work through a series together. You can share your research, stories and themes together and while still writing your own sermons.
- **Pulpit Swap** – Find another CBOQ church and exchange pastors for a Sunday! (The potential downside – they like the other person better. The potential upside – they may appreciate you all the more!!) It’s a great way to build a deeper relationship with a sister CBOQ church. Plus it reminds them that you are part of a larger family of churches and it will sharpen your skills.
- **Quiz**
- **Question** on poster inviting sharpie responses

### Confession and Assurance

- While your worship gathering may or may not include an intentional time for confession and assurance, there is nothing more powerful than giving people the opportunity to individually acknowledge their brokenness to the Lord and receive the assurance that grace and forgiveness comes from the Lord.

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*Let the message of Christ dwell among you.*

*Colossians 3:16*

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# RESPONSE

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The Holy Spirit unites us with the Trinity and with each other. We are reminded of this when we gather for Communion, in Baptism and as we respond to God's invitation to life. There is something powerful when we are in an atmosphere of collective and individual prayerful response. It is a space where we are able to discern God's leading and direction so that our intimacy with God can be used as a blessing for others.

Historically, churches have made the Table or Eucharist the central response to the hearing of God's WORD during the worship gathering. Many Baptist churches only celebrate the Lord's Supper once a month. And while Baptisms and Communion (the two ordinances of Baptists) are only done so often, there are other ways that you can create a RESPONSE time following the WORD.

There are many different ways that churches can provide opportunities for people to respond to the WORD. You may create prayer stations or have a handout that people can fill out a thought or prayer in response to the theme of the sermon.

## AN IMAGINATION OF RESPONSE

- What if we built into our worship gathering a time for people to wrestle with God and/or their own sin?
- What if we gave people an opportunity to rest with God in our worship gatherings?
- What would it look like for someone to embody or incarnate the sermon?
- Could it be valuable to think of a way that kinesthetic people could "hear" the message?

## CONSIDERATIONS

- While the message of the Gospel is the same for everyone, we may at times need to give people at different places in their spiritual journey, different ways to respond to that message?
- When we provide a response time after hearing the WORD we can create an opportunity for individuals to respond in a corporate atmosphere.

## RESPONSE IDEAS

- **Communion & Table Fellowship**
- **Baptism**
- **Offering**
- **Silent Prayerful Mediation** – After hearing the WORD give people a few moments to sit in silence to reflect and pray. This silence can be guided or prompted and creates space for the Holy Spirit to infiltrate the parts of our heart we naturally want to protect.
- **Prayer Stations** – While this might not work for every congregation, some churches have found it very profound to set up prayer stations or prayer activities around the sanctuary. These stations can be made in any number of creative way. One could set up a table with a prayer that can be read. There might be a table for people to write down something they want to give over to God and then put that piece of paper in a bowl of water to be reminded of our baptism. There are all kinds of ways that this can look. One pastor indicated that it was the oldest member of the church who often asked that they do more of these stations, “It is so great when we have to get out of our seats and do the various stations, even with my walker.” While it might feel a bit chaotic at times, it can be a beautifully honouring chaos.
- **Active Responses** – After a sermon you can have people come forward and receive a prayer for
- **Small Group Discussions** – One great way to engage people after hearing the WORD is to ask people to gather around a few others to talk about one or two “take-aways” from the sermon. You will want to make sure that people have the opportunity for silent reflection.
- **Reflection Video** - series of questions/quotes/suggestions/scripture shown with appropriate background music, giving time to ponder silently
- **Interview Video** - ask questions of congregants in advance of sermon, videotape and edit
- **Open mic** for questions or reflection
- **Question** to ask your pew neighbour
- **Symbolic act** - anointing with oil, burning confession written on paper, washing feet

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*Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.*

*James 1:22*

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# SENDING

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The Church is Christ's partner in earthly ministry. We don't exist for ourselves, our church community or to make us feel good. Rather we exist to live faithfully present in our own contexts serving the spiritual and material needs of those around us in Christ's name.

It is one thing to end a service with a song and say... "Have a great week" but it is another thing to send people out into their schools, places of work, families, neighbourhoods, clubs, etc. as people with an imagination to serve God and to love others.

Our task in closing off our worship gathering is to remind people that as we are called and blessed we are now sent and blessed to be a blessing to others.

## AN IMAGINATION TO SEND

- ▶ What postures and practices might help us to send our people as followers of Jesus, leading people in the way of Jesus and leading people towards Jesus?
- ▶ Just as we are a gathering community we are also a sending community. How do we help people have a fresh imagination for seeing where God is already at work around them and joining God there?
- ▶ How do we help people leave both fully encouraged and fully challenged to live faithfully present in their context?

## CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ We always want participants to feel like they were seen by God and others **AND** we want people to feel challenged to go with grace, truth and hope.
- ▶ We send people as a community of faith **AND** we send people as individuals into their own worlds.

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*When we are sent as witnesses, we are sent as evangelists to proclaim the good news, to announce the story of God's redeeming and restoring a peculiar people, grace to bear his image.*

*James K.A. Smith*

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# SENDING IDEAS

## Blessing / Benediction / Sending

- ▶ Scripture is full of great benedictions that can be used to close out a service.
- ▶ There are many blessings that you can find online. Use it as is or re-write it using your own words and expressions.
- ▶ Physical object to take with you as a reminder of topic - string, pebble, candy, etc

## Sending songs

- ▶ There is something very powerful about finding the right sending song that connects with the theme of the service and reminds people of the importance of leaving as called and sent people.
- ▶ Sometimes it is challenging to find the right sending song. Write your own or encourage your worship people to write a solid sending song for the next ministry season.
- ▶ Reprise of song from earlier in service during exit

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***Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you."***  
*John 20:21*

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## Sending Sayings

- ▶ Some churches have come up with their own saying or phrase that they will say each time they gather. Find one that works for your church or write your own.  
Leader says: *Go in peace. Serve the Lord.*  
Congregation says: *Thanks be to God.*

## Commissioning (sending) People

- ▶ Some churches make sure they “commission” or “send” with blessing those that are leaving the church permanently (whether to join another ministry, moving or even leaving the church for another). It is a powerful witness to send people with blessing.
- ▶ One church “sends” / “commissions” people on Labour Day Sunday by having each person (that is willing) to come forward and to be anointed with oil by a board member and prayed for as they go back to school, into their workplace, into their neighbourhood, etc. Someone prays for the students, those working, those unable to work, those retired, etc. each group of people has its own unique calling and challenges.

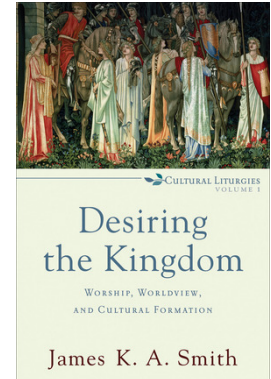
# RESOURCES

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## THEOLOGY OF WORSHIP

James KA Smith – “Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview and Cultural Formation” Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009

- A very useful exploration of how worship shapes us as people.
- Theologically rich and fairly academically written.
- Nice descriptions of the various elements of worship towards the back of the book.
- The author is originally from Ontario and is now teaching in Grand Rapids, Michigan.



## WORSHIP THROUGH MUSIC

**Band in Hand** - download music with individual tracks, missing a drummer or lead guitar? Turn each track up or down as necessary, change keys and tempo, rearrange song as needed. \$10 per song <https://www.worshipbandinhand.com>

**Spotify** – set up a songlist to play before and after the service. Include some of the songs, especially any new songs, from the song list for that day.

**Worship Together** – a comprehensive resource on the web for worship leaders, bands and teams. This is a tool to help you discover new worship songs for your church and put the resources you need to lead them into the hands of you and your team -

<http://www.worshiptogether.com>

## TECHNOLOGY AIDES

**CCLI – Christian Copyright Licensing International** - Provides copyright licensing, lists of most used songs and suggested song lists. [www.ccli.com](http://www.ccli.com)

**SongSelect** - [www.songselect.com](http://www.songselect.com)

**Planning Center Online** - use it to schedule everyone who serves, worship teams, registrations for events/day camps/vbs etc., and for check-ins for our children's ministries/camps. [www.planningcenteronline.com](http://www.planningcenteronline.com)

**Songshowplus** - for projection. Links to Planning Center and Songselect for easy song loading.

**Ryan Recine** - professional sound tech to assist churches with audio setups and training.

<https://www.facebook.com/ryan.recine?ref=ts&fref=ts>

**'Renew and Refresh'** - Annual worship conference in Hamilton

[www.redeemer.ca/worship](http://www.redeemer.ca/worship)







# NEXT STEPS

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