

# Missional Worship for Missional Living

Webinar  
7 May 2014

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## Missional Worship for Missional Living

**Direction we are headed today is to see together a few ways that worship can form us for mission.**

- Not an exhaustive list
- Not a cookie-cutter program for guaranteeing more people in the pews or more commitment to evangelism
- Assumptions:
  - Worship is shaping us
  - Our cultural context impacts our worship
- Goal: to explore how a missional approach to worship can form us for missional living.

## Missional Worship for Missional Living

### What is worship?

- What happens at church
- What we do on Sunday mornings, and sometimes Sunday evenings
- Praising God & Singing
- Preaching of the Word & Administration of the sacraments
- Prayers & Offerings
- Gratitude/thankfulness for what God has done in Jesus Christ
- Testimony
- A way of life

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### Worship is when...

“Disciples gather and greet; are reconciled with God and one another; hear and share their common story; offer their needs and resources; remember Jesus and invoke his Spirit; and then share communion, before being sent out.

Through worship – preparation, performance, repetition – God’s Holy Spirit gives God’s people the resources they need to live in God’s presence.”

*-Hauerwas & Wells*

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### What is missional?

- Mission is about embodying God's character as revealed in Jesus Christ, through scripture & by the Spirit
- The Church is formed and sent as participants in God's mission
- Emphasis on incarnational ministry in local context
- The Church's privileged position in society has come to an end, leading to a recovery of a servant identity
- The gospel is holistic, aimed at the reconciliation and renewal of all things in Jesus Christ

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**Do worship and mission really go  
together?**

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**Philip Kenneson identifies two assumptions that keep us from seeing worship as formative and engaged with the rest of our lives:**

1. We assume that worship belongs to a separate religious sphere.
2. We assume that our primary identity is as an individual.

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## Missional Worship for Missional Living

**Four Ways that Worship Can Shape Us for Mission:**

1. **Orients us within the rhythms of remembering and anticipating.**
2. **Immerses us in the “grand narrative” of God’s grace in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.**
3. **Locates us in the here and now.**
4. **Sends us as participants in unfolding God’s story.**

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### Four Ways that Worship Can Shape Us for Mission:

1. **Orients us within the rhythms of remembering and anticipating**

Worship involves both remembering what God has done *and* anticipating what God will yet do.

- Reveals God’s character in God’s “mighty deeds”
- Anchors us in what God has already done
- Trains our vision to look for what God will yet do.
- Reminds us that our current circumstances are not the beginning or the end of the story

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### Four Ways that Worship Can Shape Us for Mission:

2. **Immerses us in the “grand narrative” of God’s grace in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit.**

#### A basic structure:

Creation – Fall – Redemption – New Creation  
Planting – Invading – Reclaiming – Flourishing

#### An underlying and overarching purpose:

God is reconciling all things in Jesus Christ, and even now is making all things new.

#### Invitation to see God at work in all circumstances

Meta-narrative in which all of life participates

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### Four Ways that Worship Can Shape Us for Mission:

3. **Locates Us in the Here & Now**
  - Time and location matter within worship.  
*Inclusion of time and location in Psalms*
  - “We are a storied people.”  
*We understand ourselves in context: tradition, relationship, stories*
  - Liturgies of God’s people scattered intertwine with the liturgies of God’s people gathered.  
*Not God of nostalgia or utopia, but present with us*

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### Four Ways that Worship Can Shape Us for Mission:

#### *Sending Us as Participants*

Numerous passages in scripture connect worship and the way God’s people live:

- Isaiah 58
- Jeremiah 7
- Zechariah 7
- Romans 12:1-8

Our gathered time always has a bent toward forming and empowering us to engage more fully as active participants in the continued unfolding of God’s story during our scattered times.

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# Missional Worship for Missional Living

A brief look at five movements within worship

- Gathering & Greeting
- Lament: Confession & Intercession
- Baptism
- Communion
- Sending

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# Missional Worship for Missional Living

## Gathering & Greeting

“The regular gathering of the *ekklesia* for worship is always already an embodied response to God’s prior action: it is an act of trust that God will, through these people and practices, form the *ekklesia* in ways that will edify it for further service and embodied witness in the world.”

- Philip Kenneson

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## Gathering & Greeting

- Gathered in response to God's Call
- Recognize the Spirit's work simply in drawing this group of people together
- A God whose first words are ones of gracious welcome
- Mutual blessing that initiates us through a pattern of passing along what God gives to us

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## Gathering & Greeting

- Emphasize that God has gathered us & that God is forming us
- Find opportunities to acknowledge the diversity of places & circumstances from which we have been gathered
- Name other churches that are gathering as well - God's work is always broader than us
- Highlight the mutual greeting/passing of the peace of Christ as a sending - what we receive from God is intended to flow through us and bless others

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## Lament: A Context for Confession & Intercession

### Lament is:

a crying out to God that what has come to be is not what ought to be, while...

declaring that God is the only one who can set us right, and...

longing that God would transform the contours of our present times into the full flourishing abundance of God's coming kingdom.

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## Lament: A Context for Confession & Intercession

### Confession:

*naming where we contribute to the lingering brokenness of creation and desiring to no longer do so in response to God's love embodied in Jesus Christ.*

### Intercession:

*yearning for God to make particular people and circumstances new now, through the Spirit, in participation with and anticipation of Jesus Christ making all things new.*

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### Lament: A Context for Confession & Intercession

#### Confession:

- Often start with assurance of pardon – “while we were still sinners”
- Personal and communal sins
- Sins of omission – how we choose our comfort & our busyness over God’s story

#### Intercession:

- What we pray for reveals how “big” we believe God is
- Praying for specific streets, churches, & leaders/businesses in the neighborhoods around the church building
- Praying for churches & missionaries in other countries

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### Baptism:

**“In constituting a people, God constitutes a peculiar people – a called-out people who are marked as strange because they are a community that desires the kingdom of God, and thus they reflect the cruciform shape exemplified by Christ.”**

*-Jamie Smith*

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### Baptism:

- Is an extension of God's faithfulness
- Is an opportunity...
  - to remember what God has already done
  - to anticipate what God will yet do
  - to renounce our sins – communal & personal
  - to recommit as participants in God's mission
- Demonstrates that the gospel is multi-generational
- Involves our senses

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### Baptism:

- The font is moved more central & onto the main floor
- Invite children to touch the water and remember their baptism
- Have the font open with water in it on non-baptism Sundays and incorporate the font into other parts of the service
- Sprinkle/throw the water out over the people
- Include commissioning language

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### Communion:

**“At bread and wine we see creation, fall, incarnation, death, resurrection, ascension, church, the kingdom, and the promise of the new heavens and new earth and our own transfiguration accomplished through God’s union with us established through Jesus by the Spirit.”**

*- Robert Webber*

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### Communion:

- Emphasizes God’s hospitality
- Teaches us to lament well
- Tells the whole gospel story – the grand narrative is rehearsed
- Reminds us of what God has already done, while teaching us to anticipate what God will yet do
- Propels us outward as recipient-participants

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### Communion:

- Tell the grand narrative – anticipate the new creation
- Covenant renewal includes making commitments to live a certain way here & now
- Invite different voices from the congregation to lead aspects of a communion litany or to serve the bread & wine; involve children where possible
- Emphasize unity with Christians elsewhere in the world
- Include commissioning language in prayers/litanies: “blessed to be a blessing”

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### Sending:

#### Offering is more than giving money:

- *it is a response to God's generous inclusion of us within his story*
- *it is a first step in actively participating in God's mission of making all things new*
- *it is a symbolic gesture that we are committing all that we are and all that we have to embodying the story of God's love in Jesus through the Spirit at work in us.*

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### Sending:

#### Charge & Blessing:

- God is still the author and primary actor
- God goes with us
- The liturgy of God's people gathered is spilling into the liturgies of God's people scattered
- God's story has more unfolding to do
- Anticipation that we will be gathered again!

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### Sending:

#### Offering:

- Movement/physical response involved with the offering
- Testimony or story of God's people engaged in mission with whomever you are giving to
- Highlight service opportunities in connection with the offering

#### Charge & Blessing:

- Invite the congregation to say the charge/blessing to the person sitting next to them
- Emphasize that we are being sent/scattered in order to participate more fully in the continued unfolding of God's story

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**“To the extent that the *ekklesia* likewise serves the will of the Father, bears witness to the Son, and opens its life continually to the animation of the Spirit, it too participates in the life of God, anticipating in embodied form the eschatological gathering of the people of God.”**

*- Philip Kenneson*

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**A few resources on worship that form us for mission:**


- Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Worship*
- Mike Cospers, *Rhythms of Grace*
- Alexander Schmemmann, *For the Life of the World*
- Stanley Hauerwas, “Worship, Evangelism, Ethics: On Eliminating the And”
- Jamie Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom*
- Hauerwas & Wells, *Blackwell Companion to Christian Ethics*

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## Questions and Answers



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