

WORSHIP PLANNER EXPLANATION

THE WORSHIP SERVICE SHOULD BRING A LITTLE BIT OF HEAVEN DOWN TO EARTH

NOTE: This information is based on a 2 hour worship celebration. For shorter worship services many items can be alternated and used biweekly.

1 *Welcome* – The center of worship

A **warm** welcome needs to be demonstrated by several people.

With handshakes, hugs, smiles, helpful comments, thoughtful suggestions. (Men hug MEN – Ladies hug ladies.)

Most new attenders decide within the first 4 minutes of entering a building if they will return or not. This decision is made prior to the singing, prior to the opening prayer, and prior to the sermon.

2 *Opening Praise & Worship* – using 3-5 Bible verses on Glorifying God.

For believers praise brings heavenly realities into daily life. For all of us praise memos and passages are the most encouraging parts in Holy Scripture. God has ordained that we could live a ‘*heavenly life*’ here on earth. The Bible abounds with promises from the Holy Trinity. Always appreciate – always give thanks – always rejoice. The Lord’s Day and the Lord’s Worship Services should exude with encouragement that carries members through the coming week.

3 *Singing* – This is today’s most frequent communication among young people.

If at all possible use a male song-leader – you want MEN to sing.

A colorful background for each stanza is recommend for MEN. Men respond to pictures better than words.

The first song should be a joyous one, one of Glory & Praise. New songs should be repeated twice. Others should preferable be related to the worship theme for that week.

4 *Prayer*—why

To gather power and obtain our Lord’s favor new church plants should be encouraged to return to the New Testament template of being “*Houses of Prayer*.” After all, this was Jesus’ desire!

Prayer focuses on the presence of God, not us. Prayer brings unity. There is Prayer Power in agreeing together. Prayer provides an opportunity for God to show Himself strong. (Ps 34:15) Use variety. Always emphasize SHORT prayers (not sermon prayers!) Have the congregation participate. Short one-sentence prayers - family prayer groups – prayer circles – and other wide varieties of congregational prayer styles are applicable as moments for personal worship within the morning service. Encourage ‘*amens*’ or *other comments* during prayers.(not automatic—but listening and agreeing).

5 *Celebrating Blessings* – Sharing in testimony format.

Reporting on home activities / blessings that resulted from the previous Worship service or Sermon.

6 *Recognition Time*

Church services consist of ‘family gatherings’. It is a time God’s family members come away from their mundane worldly involvements that are in general not deeply satisfying. They come to gather around their Heavenly Father and His earthly representatives. As family members they deserve special recognition for special events in their lives - a service done – a birthday – a graduation – a promotion – an anniversary. This brings unity – this makes worship a celebration – honoring one another, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith... Eph 4:12,13

7 Holy Scripture Reading

a) The Holy Scripture passage is based upon the Worship Theme and Purpose Statement. This Holy Scripture passage serves as the focus point for the whole worship service. It covers thus both sermons. Preachers may use additional texts to enhance specific message points.

b) It is to be read twice. Note the following congregational blessings.

- Reading it twice shows the importance of the Holy Scriptures.
- Priority needs to go to God, not preaching a message.
- It gives people an opportunity to engage better in the text.
- Most older people are used to and prefer the older standard version – so that is read first.
- Most younger people prefer a modern version because it is their daily language – so it is read secondly.
- Furthermore, we still have numerous churches that use the Russian text. But the Russian text is no longer acceptable to the younger generation. So the first reading can be in Russian and the second in Ukrainian.
- Reading Holy Scripture twice is a very effective way to bridge the generation gap. It is very helpful for the older generation to understand the meaning better.

8 Announcements

Announcements bring focus on how we as a team of church members will serve others. Whether it is a youth group, a community clean-up, a kid's club, Bible studies or get-togethers, camp or retreat, or ministry to shut-ins, handicaps or retirees. Announcements are an expression of who we are and how we put flesh and bones on the gospel.

Announcements are the verbal expression of what the Church offers to their surrounding community:

9 Sermon – a message from Heaven.

Know what the key truth is that you want everyone to remember when they go home.

Give practical application, a practical activity they can do—a challenge.

Use some kind of physical illustration—Jesus did, all the time. Communicate with a story from Ukraine or your own life.

10 Generosity Moment

In the Holy Writ God clearly stated on numerous occasions that He is NOT interested in physical sacrifices. God already has more than enough. God is generous – God is a giver – God gives birth – He gives life – He gives eternal feasts. Therefore, His interest is that we imitate Him – and become like Him, generous - Joyously generous. Exuding and overflowing with generosity brings Him joy.

11 Testimonies Psalm 66:16-20

God is working in everyone's heart. Not just the hearts of preacher or leaders.

Testimonies portray the present reality and activity of Jesus Christ in your community.

Testimonies glorify Jesus – testimonies bring joy – testimonies invoke participation.

Most people need some training in how to glorify Jesus/Holy Spirit.

To honor Jesus the emphasis should be on the solution (what Jesus did) not on the problem.

12 **Connecting with Jesus** – *Moment of Decision*

Worshippers know about God the Father, they know about Jesus the Christ, and they know there is Spirit influence. But for most – even baptized members-- it is abstract – it is passive - it is somewhat assumed – taken for granted, but often it is not vibrant as an active communication with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Brothers, Sisters, religious ones, seekers, all need to be regularly reminded to make fresh choices/decisions.

Life consists of choices/decisions! Decisions, to go to work, to finish tasks, to marry, to be faithful, to be honest, and many more. Life itself requires constant choices! We live by them, depend upon them. Without decisions it is impossible to have relationships. Fresh lively invitations need to be weekly presented for spiritual renewal. Every wedding must be renewed constantly by endless commitments; myriads, and myriads of them. Without it divorce is the only other recourse.

Likewise spiritual participation, unity, joy, growth requires endless re-commitments or else some form of growing cold or a type of spiritual divorce occurs.

Two choices or two decisions face each believer constantly. Choices to decline the negative elements we face, and choices to cling to and desire things that are good, better, more honorable. Every worship service should provide such challenge and invitation. It is the worship leader's privilege to turn his distraught, mundane, passive congregation into active joyful participants. That requires prayer and decision making. Sermons do not change people – decisions DO!

13 **Assisting New Believers**

Growing MEN into participants.

The Preacher and Worship Leader should be aware of the life-status/level the new believers are at.

The Church Planter's job is to assist his new believers.

They know nothing about God.

They have not yet read the Bible.

They need to discover what real prayer is.

They need to comprehend that praise must have a higher priority than prayer.

The very key element – if not the only one – is a lifestyle displaying gratitude. 1Thes.

5:16,17,18,19

There is a deep 'hangover' within their physical bodies and brains of past sinfulness.

Their friends, colleagues, neighbors continue to exert strong negative influences and temptations.

Struggles and temptations remain strongly until higher levels of escape have been reached.

That is the Church Plant leader's job – holiness, purity, moving new believers up the staircase.

Their desire is 'mercy' – mercy is also Jesus' desire. !!!??? Can you give that???!!!

More than 70 times 7? – Your mercy would exclude excommunication.

Excommunication will not be necessary because people who become rebellious will of themselves depart. 1 John 2:19

If your worship service exhibits the above qualities, no rebellious people will be comfortable – so they will leave.

For New Believers a key element of all services is to include LOVE, HOPE, PEACE, JOY, FAITH.

One of these 5 should be strongly noticeable/felt by the attenders in each service.

They responded to be Born-Again because of these 5. Heb. 11:6b

Following a Worship Service, the crucial question each New Attender asks himself during the next few days is: "Was this Service worthwhile enough that I want to go back for it next Sunday?"

Was it worth my time? Was it enjoyable, uplifting, encouraging enough for a repeat visit or not?

Was it helpful? How did it benefit me? (If you have to ask/beg please come again – you have already missed it.)

Three recommended tools for Spiritual growth messages are the NLC - New Testament Course; Experiencing God course, and the Basic Christian Life course.

14 **Home Activity**

The greatest blessings in believers' families occur through carrying on the Sunday worship events at home during the week that follows. Working 6 days and resting, enjoying, celebrating on the Lord's Own Day brings powerful openings for a variety of spiritual applications within the family setting. Jesus provided every year 52 steps for spiritual growth. Fifty-two ways to enhance spiritual beauty in your family members. Six days to delight in reminiscing as well as anticipating the following worship celebration. What tool, what nugget, what guide will you provide to carry on desires and possibilities for continued joyous worship at home during the week? Such ought to be a major goal, a major contribution of the Sunday worship service.

15 **Farewell Blessing**

Nearly all worshippers return home to face a demanding week in some form. Their need is to be anointed with joyful power. Just dismissing them simply means you are done with whatever you wanted to do. Worshippers should receive a type of spiritual dessert from their leader so they leave joyfully, fully satiated spiritually to face the week. This blessing should be spoken very slowly and very distinctly. The worship leader as Almighty God's representative should raise his hands in extended blessing and lay a well thought through farewell anointing upon his beloved congregation. Beginning in the New Testament, this was practiced by all denominations throughout the centuries.

16 **Discussion Moment** - Family Fellowship Times

Discuss sermon focusing on the purpose statement.

This is recommended as a standard time of fellowship after the service with tea, coffee, cup of soup or snack. Family Fellowship Times of members following the worship service are common among active churches in nearly cultures worldwide. It provides camaraderie, friendships, prayer, one-on-one, and laughter. The younger generation is desperately lonely as they walk the streets mesmerized by their phones and missing all of life around them. The New Testament church included such activities as well.

Discussion questions should be displayed on the screen. Simple questions – 1 or 2, or perhaps 3, not more.

The leadership team mingles with the people asking and discussing questions. During the Discussion Moment the greeters are also assigned to engage people and ask them a question.

17 **Additional Helps**

Each **active** worship service requires special attention to unique happenings or arrangements.

This may be the weather, a funeral, a guest performance, and so on. How will we deal with this as a highlight in this service and not let it detract? How will we truly glorify God by this, not just make it a necessary addition? How will we bless our congregational family with it?

18 **Christ Centered** - not tradition oriented.

When we gather together **Jesus** is there. But we want JESUS to **manifest** Himself.

That includes praise; (opening prayer should turn people's thoughts to how great a God we serve—ask God to come in a special way).

Thanksgiving (1 Thess. 5:16-18—God's will)

Singing (we are told repeatedly to sing, or at least shout to the Lord. Not to listen to songs)

And of course, the sermon should be centered on Christ and what He has to say to us.

19 **The Décor** - needs to be uplifting – male oriented most of the time.
Use Bible verse or motto posters – change monthly.

20 **Atmosphere** – an analysis for future planning.

Did YOU enjoy it? Did you go home tired but deeply satisfied – deeply fed – deeply ministered to? What did the faces of your team tell you? Are they so excited that they are eager to attend the planning session for the next service? Are they ready to participate again next week? Was it Joyful? Welcoming? Were people connecting to leaders and each other? Was there plenty of time for relaxed participation? Did most people attend the discussion time? Were there numerous people reluctant to leave the House of Prayer?

21 **Teach**, teach, teach.

In everything you do, give them the Biblical reason. At least share a Bible verse related to that 'topic'. (samples: Outdoor greeters, indoor greeters, a special Missionary offering; a call for volunteers; quality testimonies, raising hands; clapping to express thanks; attending the Discussion Time, discussion time instructions / participation.