

Sixth Sunday of Easter – Year C

Sunday 25 May 2025

The Faith Action Programme would like to thank Rev Stuart Finlayson, Community Pioneer Minister of Forres Community Church (Presbytery Mission Initiative), for his thoughts on the sixth Sunday after Easter.

Weekly Worship, based on the Revised Common Lectionary, is for everyone – in any capacity – who is involved in creating and leading worship.

It provides liturgical material that can be used for worship in all settings. Our writers are asked to share their approaches to creating and delivering this material to equip leaders with a greater confidence and ability to reflect on their own worship practice and experience and encourage them to consider how this material might be adapted for their own context.

We would encourage continual reflection on the changing patterns of worship and spiritual practice that are emerging from disruption and how this might help identify pathways towards development and worship renewal.

We may not all be gathered in the same building, but at this time, when we need each other so much, we are invited to worship together, from where we are – knowing that God can hear us all and can blend even distant voices into one song of worship.

Introduction.....	3
Acts 16:9-15	4
Psalm 67	5
Revelation 21:10,22-22:5.....	7
John 14:23-29.....	9
John 5:1-9	10
Sermon ideas	11
Prayers	13
Musical suggestions	15
Reflecting on our worship practice	17
Useful links	18

Introduction

As a church planter, I'm used to doing things differently. Our church plant, Forres Community Church ('FCC') focuses on engaging the unchurched, especially those aged under 40 and young families, building relationships and encouraging them to join a Discovery Bible Study. Our goal is not just one congregation, but a network of disciple-making groups that support and equip each other to follow Jesus.

We currently run four Discovery Groups in the town, where most of our discipleship happens. We also gather weekly for informal worship—usually in our home, although we're about to move into a local funeral director's facility because when everyone turns up, our house is too small. We are very excited about what God is doing just now, even though it's all very precarious and fragile.

When preparing to lead worship, my goal is to be guided by the Holy Spirit. This begins early in the week with prayer and seeking God, doing my best to drown out unnecessary distractions. Mondays start with silence and solitude—wordless prayer, often just, "Come Holy Spirit." Without this time, I feel unprepared to seek and lead for God. After reflecting on God's goodness, I get on with daily tasks before returning to Scripture. I read the passage aloud, sometimes using an audio Bible. Then, I retell the Scripture in my own words, writing the whole thing out in a notebook with old-fashioned pen and paper. I have even used www.freebibleimages.org to print out a storyboard of the passage that I can stick down in my notebook. This stage often includes wee diagrams and flow charts, similar to Bible study methods such as mind-mapping and the three-column/four-square inductive approach. Inductive Bible study method is particularly wordy and includes a lot of writing, so will not suit everyone's style.

Next, I step away again before beginning exegetical work. I copy the passage by hand, verse by verse, noting what stands out. This process is repeated probably two or three times.

At FCC, we primarily use the Discovery Bible Study ('DBS') model because it is simple and accessible (for all, regardless of literacy level, too), so I apply key DBS questions to my study as well:

- (1) What does this passage reveal about God/Jesus/Holy Spirit?
- (2) What does it reveal about people, including myself?
- (3) What is God saying to me through this text?

The reason I include this in my messages, is that we feel that if our folks (who are often unchurched) hear similar language to what they are using in their Discovery Groups, then they will be encouraged.

Only after a couple of days of prayer and study do I turn to commentaries. While I appreciate the ideas and insights of theologians, particularly on the original languages and historical context, I am often reminded of the wisdom of another Scottish pastor I greatly admire who stated, “The main things are the plain things, and the plain things are the main things.” Doing this keeps me from imposing *my* ideas/interpretations onto the biblical text. My messages go through multiple revisions throughout the week (sometimes four or five!) until I can (somewhat) confidently say, “There... that’s it!”

Scripture Passages

Usually, I only use one passage of Scripture for preparing FCC messages, since our people are generally from an unchurched or de-churched background and more than one text could easily be too much for them.

On this occasion, however, I have used all the lectionary passages for the sixth Sunday after Easter and approached them in a way similar to that noted above.

So, without the use of commentaries (you will have your favourites, I’m sure!) here are just a few of my thoughts:

Acts 16:9-15

1. God’s guidance and our obedience

Paul receives a vision of a Macedonian man pleading for help, showing that God directs people to where the Gospel is needed. Paul and team immediately respond, demonstrating faith and obedience. This reveals that God is actively leading God’s mission, and we are called to listen and follow.

Am I paying attention to where God is leading me?

2. The Gospel reaches unexpected people

Instead of a synagogue, Paul goes to a riverside where he meets a group of women praying. Lydia, a wealthy merchant from Thyatira, is among them. Though she already worships God, she still needs to hear about Jesus. God opens her heart, showing that salvation is God’s work. This reminds us that many are spiritually searching, but need someone to introduce them to Christ.

Who in my life is seeking God but hasn't yet encountered Jesus?

3. The power of immediate response

Lydia and her household are baptized right away, showing that faith leads to action. She also opens her home to Paul's team, demonstrating that true faith results in generosity and community.

Am I doing all I can to help new people of faith respond with action?

How can I be more hospitable and open in my faith?

4. Trusting God's work in others

Paul doesn't force Lydia to believe—God prepares her heart. This challenges us to trust that God is already working in people's lives before we even speak. Remember that you are only one step on a person's faith journey.

Do I believe that God is at work in those around me?

Key takeaways:

- God actively directs His mission—We must be willing to follow and do so without hesitation.
- The Gospel is for all people—God calls unexpected individuals like Lydia and can do the same in your community. Lydia was a person of peace with the ability to open doors for Jesus' followers.
- Faith leads to action—Baptism and hospitality mark a transformed life.
- God prepares hearts—Our role is to share the message and trust God's work.

This passage calls us to listen for God's leading, share the Gospel boldly, and open our lives to others, trusting that He is at work in those He is calling. This is called 'all of life discipleship'.

I often wonder how comfortable we have got in our congregations, especially when the early church was so driven to share the good news about Jesus. This passage demonstrates quite clearly that God gives us ample opportunity to meet people where *they are* and how we can be the next step on their faith journey.

[Psalm 67](#)

1. The desire for God's blessing and glory

The psalm opens with a request for God's grace, blessing, and presence (v.1), which is echoed in the final verse (v.7). The repeated prayer for God's blessing points to the connection between God's favour and mission to bring all nations to Himself. The psalmist longs for God's face to shine on them, signifying God's favour and presence.

Do I recognise the importance of God's blessing in my life?

2. God's saving power among all nations

The psalmist's prayer is not only for personal blessing but for God's way and salvation to be known throughout the earth (v. 2). This reveals the global scope of God's mission and the universal call for all peoples to know God's saving power.

How can I actively contribute to sharing God's saving power with others?

3. Universal praise and joy

The repeated refrain, "Let the peoples praise you" (v.3 & 5), highlights the psalmist's desire for all nations to join in worship and adoration of God. This widespread praise is tied to the recognition that God judges equitably and guides the nations with justice (v.4). Joyful praise is a natural response to God's fairness and loving guidance.

Am I cultivating a heart of praise, and how can I encourage others to join in worship?

4. God's justice and guidance

Verse 4 emphasises that the nations can rejoice because God is a just judge, offering equitable rule over all peoples. God's guidance leads to harmony and joy, contrasting with earthly injustice.

Do I trust in God's justice, and how can I reflect God's fairness and guidance in my relationships?

5. The earth's response to God's blessing

The earth yields its increase because God has blessed His people (v. 6). This reflects the connection between God's provision and the earth's flourishing. The psalmist seeks ongoing blessing and reverence from the ends of the earth (v. 7).

Do I recognize that God's blessings are intended to be shared with others?

How can I steward God's blessings for the kingdom?

Key takeaways:

- God's blessing leads to global praise—God's favour isn't just for us, but for the nations.
- Praise flows from justice and guidance—God's equitable rule leads to joy.
- The earth responds to God's provision—God's blessings invite praise and reverence from all peoples.

This psalm challenges us to give praise for God's justice, grace, and global mission, recognising that God's blessings are meant to spread the glory of God across the world.

Do you believe that as followers of Jesus, we have a unique position to advocate for causes that many people (young people!) are passionate about today?

We have a worldview that speaks directly into the mess around us. As we spread the Gospel, not just in words, but in deeds – and with power – we might just give people a reason to say, “Surely this is the work of God!”

[Revelation 21:10,22-22:5](#)

1. The vision of the new Jerusalem

John, while exiled to Patmos for his faith, receives a vision of the New Jerusalem descending from heaven (21:10). The city is shown from a great, high mountain, evoking biblical imagery of divine encounters (e.g., Moriah, Sinai, Zion). This vision reveals God's plan to dwell fully and permanently with God's people.

Am I longing for and actively anticipating the fullness of God's kingdom?

2. The absence of a temple – direct access to God

Unlike old Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem has no temple (21:22) because God's presence is immediate. Through Jesus' sacrifice, the barriers between God and humanity have been removed. No mediator or sacred space is needed—God and the Lamb are the temple.

Do I recognise the access I have to God through Christ, and do I live in that reality?

Do I invite people to a better understanding of what constitutes a 'sacred' space?

Can we be exemplifying praise and worship in more secular spaces?

3. God's glory replaces created light

There is no need for sun or moon (21:23) because God's glory provides all the illumination needed. Jesus, the Lamb, is the lamp—a fulfilment of God's words that Christ is the Light of the World (John 8:12). The nations walk in this light, signifying complete restoration and redemption (21:24).

Am I walking in the light of Christ and reflecting His glory to the world?

4. The ever-open gates – unhindered fellowship with God

The gates remain open (21:25), showing that nothing separates God's people from God anymore. This speaks of total security, peace, and unhindered relationship. However, only those written in the Lamb's Book of Life can enter (21:27).

Do I cherish and invite others into the promise of eternal fellowship with God?

5. The River of Life and the restored Eden

In 22:1-2, John sees the river of the water of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. This recalls Eden's rivers (Genesis 2) but surpasses them. The tree of life, once lost to sin, is now fully accessible, bearing fruit for healing. This is the ultimate restoration of all creation.

Do I understand salvation not just as a personal rescue but as cosmic restoration of the whole created order and does this inform my view of mission?

6. Seeing God's face – the ultimate hope

God's people will see His face (22:4), fulfilling the deepest longing of human hearts. God's name on their foreheads signifies complete belonging and identity in God. There is no more night—only the eternal light of God (22:5).

Is my ultimate hope set on seeing God's face and living in God's eternal light?

What are you doing to carve out opportunities for seeking God's face, prior to going out into the world?

Key takeaways:

- God's presence replaces the temple—Jesus' sacrifice grants direct access to God.
- God's glory is the only light needed—Jesus, the Lamb, illuminates the new creation.
- The river and tree of life restore Eden—God's plan is not just individual salvation but the full renewal of creation.

- The ultimate hope is seeing God's face—a restored, eternal relationship with our Creator.

This passage paints a breath-taking vision of the new heavens and new earth—God dwelling with His people in complete restoration. It invites us to live in hope, walk in Christ's light, and share the promise of full renewal in Christ.

People need to know that restoration in Christ means more than just personal salvation. This is a powerful thought when we live in a world that does all it can to eliminate the power of community. One day, we will live in the permanent presence of our Maker and will truly be able to enjoy God forever.

And what about our spaces? Are we living and worshipping like we believe that God can be worshipped everywhere? At FCC, we believe that we can worship in our homes, in community cafes, outdoors among woodland and wildlife, by the Mosset Burn, anywhere!

People are seeking answers to big life questions, but they aren't coming to church to find them. It's probably time we went to them – or as one of my practical theology lecturers used to say, "We've spent so much time trying to get people into our churches that we've forgotten how to take the Good News out."

[John 14:23-29](#)

1. Loving Jesus means obedience and God's indwelling presence

Jesus teaches that those who love Him will keep His word, and in response, Jesus and the Father will make their home with them (14:23). This speaks of an intimate, ongoing relationship between believers and God through the Holy Spirit. The evidence of this love is obedience, which is empowered by the Spirit.

Do I see my obedience as a response to love rather than duty?

2. The Holy Spirit as teacher and advocate

The Holy Spirit, sent by the Father in Jesus' name, will teach and remind believers of everything Jesus has said (14:26). This highlights the Spirit's ongoing role in guiding, instructing, and strengthening believers.

Am I relying on the Spirit's teaching and reminders in my daily walk?

Am I asking the Holy Spirit where I should go?

3. Christ's peace versus the world's peace

Jesus leaves the disciples with His peace—not as the world gives, but a deeper, abiding peace that sustains them through trials (14:27). The coming of the Holy Spirit might seem unsettling, but Jesus reassures them not to be afraid.

Am I resting in the supernatural peace Jesus offers, or seeking a worldly peace that fades?

4. Jesus' departure and the disciples' rejoicing

Jesus says He is going away but also coming to them (14:28), pointing to His return through the Spirit. If they understood, they would rejoice because Jesus is returning to the Father, as this would highlight both the unity and distinction within the Trinity.

Do I trust that Jesus' ascension was for my good, and do I rejoice in His ongoing presence through the Spirit?

5. Jesus' words fulfilled – strengthening faith

Jesus tells the disciples all of this beforehand, so that when it happens, they will believe (14:29). God's word prepares us for what is to come, building our faith as we see God's promises fulfilled.

Do I take God at His word, trusting in God's promises even before I see their fulfilment?

Key takeaways:

- Obedience is a mark of love—loving Jesus leads to keeping His word, empowered by the Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit teaches and reminds—guiding us deeper into Christ's truth.
- Jesus' peace sustains us—it is greater than any worldly peace.
- Jesus' departure was for our good—through the Spirit, He remains with us.
- Faith grows through fulfilled promises—God's word prepares us to trust Him.

[John 5:1-9](#)

1. Jesus seeks out the needy

Jesus encounters a man who has been ill for 38 years (5:5). This highlights His compassion—Jesus sees, knows, and acts. The man does not even ask for healing; Jesus initiates it.

Do I trust that Jesus sees my struggles even when I don't cry out for help?

2. "Do you want to be made well?"

Jesus' question (5:6) challenges the man to consider his desire for healing. Sometimes, people grow accustomed to their brokenness.

Am I truly willing to receive the healing and transformation Jesus offers, or am I clinging to what is familiar?

3. Healing by Jesus' word alone

Instead of helping the man into the pool, Jesus simply commands, "Stand up, take your mat, and walk" (5:8). The man is healed instantly, showing Jesus' authority.

Am I waiting for external solutions when Jesus is offering me healing through His word?

4. Healing on the Sabbath – a sign of Christ's lordship

Jesus heals on the Sabbath (5:9), provoking controversy. Jesus demonstrates that He is Lord of the Sabbath, bringing true rest and restoration.

Do I recognize Jesus as the source of true rest and healing, beyond religious rituals?

Key takeaways:

- Jesus sees and knows our needs—acts even when we don't ask.
- Healing requires a response—do we truly want to be made well?
- Jesus' word has power—His command alone brings restoration.
- True rest is found in Christ—not just in religious observance but in Christ.

These passages remind us that Jesus not only provides healing and peace but also gives us the Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen us in our journey of faith.

Once again, we see Jesus acting completely for the restoration and healing of those who need him the most ("I have come to call the sick!"). Do we know where to find the sick in our community? Are we reaching out to them with healing and help?

Sermon ideas

At Forres Community Church, we sometimes skip a sermon and instead, use the same Scripture passage in all our Discovery Groups that week. This equips small group leaders for discipleship and leadership, while ensuring everyone engages with the same Scripture.

When we have open discussions on the following Sunday, we hear a wide range of insights from across the groups.

Using the Discovery Bible Study (DBS) method, here are some of our insights for Acts 16:9-15:

1. What does this passage reveal about God/Jesus/Holy Spirit?

- God actively guides His people – Paul’s vision shows that God directs mission work, leading followers to where the Gospel is needed.
- God calls people to salvation – Lydia’s heart is “opened by the Lord,” showing that salvation is ultimately God’s work (v. 14).
- The Gospel is for all people – God leads Paul beyond Jewish communities to Macedonia, reaching Gentiles, women, and influential figures like Lydia.
- God works through obedience – When Paul follows God’s leading, doors open for the Gospel to spread in Philippi.

2. What does this passage reveal about people, including myself?

- People need spiritual guidance – The Macedonian man’s plea, “Come and help us,” reflects the world’s need for the Gospel.
- Obedience leads to impact – Paul and his team respond immediately, showing that when we trust God’s leading, we can make a difference.
- God prepares hearts to receive the Gospel – Lydia was already a worshipper of God, yet she needed to hear about Jesus. Many people today are spiritually searching.
- Hospitality is a response to faith – Lydia welcomes Paul’s team into her home, showing that true conversion leads to generosity and community.

3. What is God saying to me through this text?

- Am I listening to God's guidance? – Like Paul, I need to be sensitive to where God is calling me to share the Gospel.
- Who around me is spiritually seeking? – Lydia was searching for God, but she needed someone to bring her the full truth. Who in my life is like Lydia?
- How can I be more open and hospitable? – Lydia’s response to the Gospel was immediate faith and radical hospitality. Am I welcoming others into my life and faith community?
- Do I trust that God is working in hearts before I even speak? – Paul didn’t ‘convince’ Lydia; God opened her heart. Do I believe that God is already at work in people around me?

Our goal at FCC is to make the Bible accessible and remove barriers to hearing from God. It's encouraging when people share what they've discovered with the wider group—it builds confidence in their ability to engage with Scripture and to use their voice in sharing the Gospel.

I also podcast messages, sharing them via WhatsApp, so our community can listen anytime, anywhere!

Prayers

At FCC, our prayers are simple and accessible, aimed at encouraging and equipping people to grow in their prayer life. We want everyone—whether new to faith or long-time disciples—to feel confident to pray in groups and to share what they've learned with others.

One of our favourite prayer tools is the TEASPOON prayer, a simple and effective way for anyone to begin talking with God – imagine a recipe asking for a teaspoon of an ingredient: T – thanks, S – sorry, P – please. This simple framework is easily remembered and helps us to express gratitude, seek forgiveness, and bring our requests before God.

Here is an example:

Thanks

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your love and faithfulness.
Thank You for the gift of today, for the people around me,
and for the ways You work in my life, even when I don't see it.

Sorry

Lord, I'm sorry for the times I have fallen short—
when I've spoken harshly, failed to trust You, or put my own desires ahead of Yours.
Please forgive me and help me to walk in Your ways.

Please

Father, please guide me today and give me wisdom in my decisions.
Be with those who are struggling, bring comfort to the hurting,
and help me to be a light for You in all I do. Amen.

When it comes to more traditional corporate prayers, I tend to draw from themes within the Scriptures and start there. When it comes to intercessory prayers, I look to particular events and situations locally and further afield.

For this week's set of lectionary readings, I might use something from the following:

Call to Worship – Psalm 67

Leader: May God be gracious to us and bless us, and make His face shine upon us!

All: That God's ways may be known on earth, God's saving power among all nations.

Leader: Let the peoples praise You, O God; let all the peoples praise You!

All: The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, has blessed us.

Leader: May God continue to bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere God.

Gathering Prayer

Gracious God, we come before You with hearts open to Your presence.

As You have gathered Your people across generations, so now You gather us.

We rejoice in Your faithfulness and in the promise of Your kingdom.

Fill this space with Your Spirit, that we may worship You in spirit and in truth.

Amen.

Adoration & Confession (*John 14:23-29 & Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5*)

Almighty and Everlasting God,

You are the light that shines in the darkness, the One who dwells among Your people.

We praise You for the gift of Your Son, Jesus, the Lamb who is our light and our salvation.

You have made Your home with us and promised us peace that the world cannot give.

Yet, Lord, we confess that we have often turned from Your ways.

We have failed to keep Your word, to love as You have loved, and to trust in Your promises.

Forgive us, we pray.

Cleanse us by Your Spirit and restore us in Your mercy,

that we may walk in the light of Christ, bringing glory to Your name.

Amen.

Thanksgiving & Supplication (*Psalm 67 & Revelation 22:1-5*)

God of all nations, we thank You for the abundance of Your blessings.

As the psalmist declares, the earth has yielded its increase,

and You have poured out Your goodness upon us.

We rejoice in the vision of Your kingdom,

where the river of life flows,

where the nations are healed,

and where we will see You face to face.

We pray for Your continued presence in our lives.
Strengthen our faith, deepen our love, and equip us by Your Spirit
to bear witness to Your grace.
May we live in the hope of Your renewal,
knowing that You are making all things new.
Amen.

Prayers for Others (Intercession) (*John 5:1-9 & John 14:23-29*)

God of compassion, we bring before You those who need healing—
those who, like the man at the pool, long for restoration.
Be near to the sick, the lonely, and the burdened.
Touch them with Your peace and bring them wholeness in body, mind, and spirit.

We pray for those who seek direction,
who stand at the crossroads of life, unsure of where to go. Lord, be their guide.

We lift up nations in conflict, those suffering under oppression, and communities in need.

Lord, bring peace where there is strife, justice where there is wrongdoing, and hope where
there is despair.

And we pray for Your church, that we may be faithful in mission—
proclaiming Your truth, sharing Your love, and shining as lights in the darkness.
Fill us with Your Spirit, that we may live as Christ's hands and feet in the world.
We ask all this in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray, saying:
Our Father...

Blessing & Closing Prayer (*Revelation 22:5 & John 14:27*)

Go now in the peace of Christ, the peace that the world cannot give.
May the Lord bless you and keep you,
may God's face shine upon you,
and may the Spirit guide you in all truth.
And may you walk in the light of the Lamb,
knowing that He reigns forever and ever.
In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Musical suggestions

God Welcomes All (GWA) is the new supplement to Church Hymnary Fourth Edition. This exciting new collection features over 200 hymns and songs in a wide range of styles by writers from Scotland and around the world.

The full music and words-only versions are now available; and digital resources, including the expansion of the existing Church of Scotland music website, will be published in due course, with streaming functions and further information on each song; backing tracks; and lyric videos. *God Welcomes All* is available to order from

<https://chbookshop.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9781786225573/god-welcomes-all>

Our [online music resource](#) is on the Church of Scotland website; you can listen to samples of every song in the Church Hymnary 4th edition (CH4) and download a selection of recordings for use in worship. You will also find playlists for this week and liturgical seasons and themes on the *Weekly Worship* and *Inspire Me* tabs.

You can find further musical suggestions for this week in a range of styles on the [Songs for Sunday blog](#) from Trinity College Glasgow.

At FCC, we tend to use more contemporary and accessible worship music that can be easily sung in small groups, often with little or no accompaniment—perhaps just a guitar. This is a practical choice that aligns with the preferences of our community.

As we transition into our new gathered space, we anticipate using YouTube videos with lyrics to support congregational singing until our worship team grows.

With this in mind, here are some traditional hymns and contemporary songs that could enrich our worship:

Traditional Hymns (CH4):

- CH4 153 – “Great is thy faithfulness” – a declaration of God’s unchanging love and provision.
- CH4 160 – “Praise, my soul, the King of heaven” – a majestic hymn of praise.
- CH4 465 – “Be thou my Vision” – a timeless hymn of devotion and surrender.
- CH4 561 – “Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!” – a hymn celebrating the assurance we have in Christ.

- CH4 739 – “The Church’s one foundation” – a powerful reminder of Christ as cornerstone of the Church.
- A suggested playlist of songs from CH4 throughout the Easter season can be found on the Church of Scotland website (<https://music.churchofscotland.org.uk/inspire-me/playlist/easter>)

Contemporary Worship Songs (YouTube with lyrics):

- GWA 15 – “Bless the Lord, O my soul” [10,000 Reasons] – Matt Redman
https://youtu.be/DXDGE_IRIOE?si=jBQvKEWWXJntdlZ0
- GWA 124 – “How great the chasm that lay between us” [Living Hope] – Phil Wickham
- <https://youtu.be/u-1fwZtKJSM?si=SzjPZLFwpZ63inzl>
- *Build My Life* – Pat Barrett - https://youtu.be/QZW4_8_zCBE?si=hQfY-T8Uply_B5QH

Reflecting on our worship practice

Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, the way we worship has changed and we need to reflect on the changing or newly established patterns that emerged and continue to emerge as a result of the disruption.

We can facilitate worship for all by exploring imaginative approaches to inclusion, participation and our use of technologies in ways that suit our contexts. This is not an exhaustive list, but some things we could consider are:

- Framing various parts of the worship service in accessible language to help worshippers understand the character and purpose of each part. This is essential for creating worship for all (intergenerational worship) that reflects your community of faith.
- Holding spaces for reflection and encouraging prayer to be articulated in verbal and non-verbal ways, individually and in online breakout rooms.
- In online formats the effective use of the chat function and microphone settings encourages active participation in prayer, e.g. saying the Lord’s Prayer together unmuted, in a moment of ‘holy chaos’.

- If singing in our congregations is restricted, we can worship corporately by using antiphonal psalm readings, creeds and participative prayers.
- Using music and the arts as part of the worship encourages the use of imagination in place of sung or spoken words.
- Use of silence, sensory and kinaesthetic practices allow for experience and expression beyond regular audio and visual mediums.

The following questions might help you develop a habit of reflecting on how we create and deliver content and its effectiveness and impact, and then applying what we learn to develop our practice.

- How inclusive was the worship?
Could the worship delivery and content be described as worship for all/
intergenerational? Was it sensitive to different “Spiritual Styles”?
- How was the balance between passive and active participation?
- How were people empowered to connect with or encounter God?
What helped this? What hindered this?
- How cohesive was the worship?
Did it function well as a whole?
How effective was each of the individual elements in fulfilling its purpose?
- How balanced was the worship?
What themes/topics/doctrines/areas of Christian life were included?
- How did the worship connect with your context/contemporary issues?
Was it relevant in the everyday lives of those attending and in the wider parish/
community?
How well did the worship connect with local and national issues?
How well did the worship connect with world events/issues?
- What have I learned that can help me next time I plan and deliver worship?

Useful links

God Welcomes All can be ordered from [Hymns Ancient & Modern](#)

You can listen to samples of every song in the Church Hymnary 4th edition (CH4) and download a selection of recordings for use in worship [here](#)

You can find an introduction to spiritual styles online [here](#)

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