
VARIETY IN WORSHIP (10 IDEAS)

By Mark Haven Hoyle

The most valuable lesson I've learned in my 25 years of leading worship is **variety**. We are not in the business of entertaining people, but our goal is always to lead the people to the feet of God while getting ourselves out of the way. This takes creativity each Sunday! It comes naturally for some and is a hard fought, learned skill for others. In no particular order, here are some ideas to inspire you.

#1 – Teens Dancing

From time to time we give our teens the opportunity to dance in the aisles during the close out song. It has proven to be very successful, but we do a few things to make it appropriate and flow well. First, we sought the approval of the elders. Before the dancing begins we will read a scripture so everyone sees it as a biblical act of worship, not just a liberal “hip” thing to do. We choose a fun upbeat song like Praises Heard Around The World. Finally, we coordinate with the teen leaders to lead the dancing through the aisles in a conga line rather than letting all the teens “go crazy”.

#2 – Teens reading scripture and praying publicly

Getting our younger generation of disciples actively involved is critical. Once a month we plan a communion talk where 2-3 teens come up and read portions from the Bible. We regularly have teens pray publicly. A lot of coaching goes into these two acts of worship.

#3 – Women reading and singing

This can be a touchy subject in our fellowship of churches. Again, we are careful to seek out the approval of the elders before proceeding. As you will see in the video link below, there is a special atmosphere, a unique “soothing of the soul” that occurs, when a woman reads from the Bible. The same can be said when a talented sister leads a congregational song in worship. In both cases, we are careful to keep the focus on worshipping God instead of the person leading. For instance, you won't see the pulpit (a symbol of authority for some) while Aubrey Jacobs leads the song Sanctuary. Please watch the example video.

[Scripture and Song Combo](#)

<http://youtu.be/6B4rcEMJ2yk>

#4 – Regularly showing videos

Videos can really help members connect with God. There are ICOCHotNews videos for example. **I highly recommend you feature one of Dave's video lessons at the beginning of your service.** There are inspirational videos from Christian drama groups like The Skit Guys and OneTimeBlind. You can also find great videos from websites like IgniterMedia.com. A video doesn't have to be religious in content to have an impact. Once I showed a video called The Jesus Christ Lizard. This lizard actually runs on top of the water, hence the name. It was humorous and it showed just how creative our God is. Also, please check out this hilarious and convicting video below.

[Funny Church Invite](#)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18CF7bPKi_o

#5 – Using a video with a worship song

Last year we tried an idea that I'm certain has been done before, but it sure felt novel. We sang God Of Wonders while showing a muted video of God's creation. There were no lyrics projected, so the song leader (yours truly) had to be well rehearsed to lead the audience thru the song smoothly. It was important to sing a well-known song. Most of the audience sang along, but a few preferred to watch the video and listen to the music. The goal was to inspire the people to stand in awe of God. This idea served that objective nicely. Please watch the demonstration video.

[Video and Song Combo](http://youtu.be/HMhc74YRRSw)

<http://youtu.be/HMhc74YRRSw>

#6 – The Choir

Choir performances are always a hit in our fellowship of churches. At our last congregational service the choir sang two songs from the back of the sanctuary during communion time. We received more positive comments for that performance than any other rousing band song we did. Try performing a choir song from the back of the sanctuary next Sunday.

#7 – Instrumental groups

The church always responds well to polished live music during communion or contribution. Our brothers and sisters feel inspired to worship God when talented and trained musicians perform together. It's worth noting that members have also thanked me for silent time during communion. Therefore, we have silent time every 4 to 6 weeks during communion.

#8 – Raising hands in prayer

We make a deliberate effort to "raise our holy hands" (1 Timothy 2:8) in prayer. From time to time the person leading the opening prayer will read 1 Timothy 2:8 to prepare the people to lift their hands. We remind our members that everything we do is an act of worship and we encourage everybody to express themselves freely until it becomes comfortable.

#9 – Cardboard testimonies

Cardboard testimonies begin with a selected group of people writing their answers to a simple question on a piece of cardboard. In preparation for communion or contribution, the coordinator (leader) will address the crowd with that question, then each person walks across the stage showing their answer on the piece of cardboard for the crowd to read. It's a powerful testimony.

#10 – Dramatic presentations

Dramatic presentations (skits) take a lot of preparation and coordination, but they can be very impactful. As I shared earlier, there are several Christian drama groups on YouTube that have produced some great videos you can imitate. We had 3 teenagers act out a short skit from OneTimeBlind called The Stool. It was a huge hit! More recently, a larger group of teens performed The Resurrection Skit for Easter. Click on the link below to watch their performance.

[Resurrection Skit](http://youtu.be/MZxbz_mOlGk)

http://youtu.be/MZxbz_mOlGk

I truly hope these ideas change the way you view leading worship each Sunday.