

A Methodist Way of Life for September 2024
Our Calling: Worship

Worship

The umbrella term 'Worship' has three different dimensions: as well as worship in the traditional sense, there is also prayer, and noticing God. These practices might be called 'breathing in' God; they help us connect to God and helps to inform us on how we live in the world. Being open to God in all we do is a good way to approach Him in our worship.

A Reflection

Worship has "a two-fold intention: first, adoration and praise, and second, our transformation by the grace and power of God.

Worship is the Christian community's celebration of its faith in a living God. It is an exultation, a hymn of praise, a great thanksgiving, for the truth and love shown to us in Jesus Christ and made real for us by his transforming spirit. We sometimes call this 'adoration'. When we worship, or 'go to worship', we do not need to ask God to be with us: God isn't there just because we have come. We have come because God is already there and God welcomes our worship.

As Christians, worship is an activity to which God calls us so that our faith is strengthened and we become increasingly aware of God's love. We are transformed through God's grace.

Key themes in Worship

- Worship is one way we respond to and celebrate God's unbounded love of, and grace to, us.
- Worshipping with others helps to knit us into a faith community, with mission as "the natural, even inevitable, consequence"
- We also worship God through our everyday activities – at work, at home, and wherever we live our daily lives .
- Worship can 'look' different in styles of music for instance but there are shared elements in Methodist Churches: reading the Bible, participating in prayers, and singing songs.

Here is a warning!

Worship should not be a passive recitation of words but an opening of ourselves to God's power. We respond to God in heart, mind, body and soul.

The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely

human rules they have been taught.

Source: Isaiah Chapter 29 verses 13;

Here is a better way!

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Source Colossians Chapter 3 verse 14 to 17.

Why do we worship with others?

The followers of Jesus are called to be a community of believers, a faithful people, and to make disciples of all nations (see Matthew 28:19 and 1 Peter 2:9-10). We also worship with others in the universal Church and with "all the company of heaven". Though there are many differences between different denominations and movements, we are united in that we follow Jesus and all are welcome.

Ways to respond

Try keeping a journal for one week on the place of worship in your daily life. How do you notice God at work in your job, your family, your quiet times, your community?

Source: Abridged from "A Methodist Way Of Life"

www.methodist.org.uk/faith/a-methodist-way-of-life/ Search "Worship"