

WORSHIP MINISTRY

1. Both Kinds of Worship are Important

Corporate worship services and personal worship. Both are important. Churches sometimes have a tendency to be strong in the service on Sunday and weak in helping members to read, pray and serve the other 6 days.

Corporate – Hebrews 10:24,25, Acts 20:20, Acts 2:42-47

Individual – I John 1:9, Phil 4:6-9, Colos 2:6,7, Psa 119:11

Church Health Suggestions:

- a. Ask your members to read the chapter you will be preaching from before they come Sunday.
- b. Give members application questions about the sermon to discuss as a family by email, on the website or in the bulletin. They can discuss these questions as soon as they get home on Sunday afternoon.
- c. Ask every Sunday School class member to read the Bible chapter that the lesson will be in before they come to Sunday School and pick out a verse that stood out to them to share with the class.
- d. Ask the whole church to read one Bible chapter together every day. Start with Matthew on Jan 1st.

2. Do any parts of the worship service need to be strengthened?

Preaching – teaching God's Word, what does it say, what does it mean, how can we apply it?

Singing – expressing praise, truth, thanks, and singing words of scripture

Prayer – confession, praise, thanks, praying for our church, community and the world

Testimonies – asking members of the church to talk about what God is doing is very powerful

Baptism – a great opportunity to help people share their testimony verbally & w/ the symbol of baptism

Lord's Supper – celebration of what Christ did for us and a time of examination of our life

Church Health Suggestions:

- a. Add a testimony by a church member in the worship service as often as you can – if not every week, then at least once or twice a month. Put a staff member or a volunteer in charge of signing people up to share a testimony on their salvation, evangelism, discipleship, missions, answered prayer or some other topic. It might be easiest to have a 1 to 2 minute testimony on video to be able to manage the time. The senior pastor doesn't have to be in charge of this.
- b. Could you have a prayer table in the foyer or in a room off the foyer but still visible so that anyone leaving the worship service could stop and ask for prayer and be prayed for immediately?

3. Better balance for health.

Churches put in a lot of effort to make the worship service happen each week. We also have to have a healthy balanced emphasis on small groups and serving others.

Church Health Suggestions:

- a. The pastor will be fired if he is not ready to preach every week, so that seems to get 95% of the weekly attention. But a HUGE part of the health of a church is whether people are forming healthy friendships in their small groups. Small groups close the "back door" of the church.
- b. Your Sunday School strategy will always default to the way things have always been done. It will take continual ongoing training to help Sunday School teachers and classes to change their practices. A one-time one-hour training is not enough.
- c. To increase the serving ministry in your church, ask every Sunday School class and Small Group to plan and carry out a serving project to help someone every other month and more often as needed. Of course, your Children's, Student, Men's and Women's ministries can also look for ways to serve others.

4. Traditional or Contemporary?

Some churches pick only one, but other churches offer both options and let people choose the type of service that speaks to their heart. Some choose to have services one after the other – maybe at 9:30 and

then 11:00. Other churches have two services at 11:00 – the traditional in one building and the contemporary in another building. Both services at 11:00 can share the preaching but have different styles of music.

Church Health Suggestions:

- a. I suggest having both services at 11:00 but in different rooms. Second choice would be dual Sunday School and Worship at 9:30 and 11:00. Last choice would be a super early service on Sunday. It is an uphill battle to get families to get their families up early and make it in time for an early service at 8:30 a.m.
- b. If you start a new contemporary service, don't just change a couple of songs to new songs instead of hymns. Change 5 things about the service to make it really different – message style, music, instruments, prayer, testimonies, sitting close together, announcements, greeters, etc. Some churches even have the contemporary service around tables for added fellowship.

5. Too Full.

When the worship seating is 80% full or higher, it is a good thing because it communicates enthusiasm, but it is also bad because it begins to cause frustration for families trying to find enough seats to sit together. Researchers say that your worship attendance will stall when 80% of seats are full. At that point, churches think about finding or building a larger room, adding more chairs, or adding another worship service either at another time or at the same time but in another room. Most people say it is better to be too full than to have two services that both seem too empty.

Church Health Suggestions:

- a. Add more chairs and keep one service.
- b. Add an overflow room for 20-40 members to help you by watching the service on a large screen.

6. Too Empty.

When a church has a large worship space but a small number of people attending the service (only 1% to 30% of the chairs are filled) this can be a big problem for the health of the church. It creates a psychological atmosphere that communicates to guests and members that this church is struggling.

Church Health Suggestions:

Some possible options might be:

- Move your worship service to a smaller room to better fit your attendance.
- Remove some of the pews or chairs so that 50-70% of the chairs are filled on Sunday. You can add chairs back in as attendance increases.
- Set up some dividers or ropes across the pews/chairs in the back so that people sit closer together and toward the front.
- Probably the most difficult option is to ask your church members to voluntarily sit closer to the front and to one another. You will probably have a lot of resistance to this.
- If you don't solve this problem, it will communicate to people – “these members don't like each other enough to sit close together”. It will hurt the singing – people will stop singing. It will chase guests away. It hurts the preaching – everyone communicates better when you are closer together and have good eye contact. A big part of communication is reading facial expressions.
- If you removed the last several rows of seats at the back of the auditorium, it would provide more room for people to stand and talk to one another. It would also allow room for information tables about ministry, small groups, prayer request tables, student ministry, coffee, etc.

7. Move the invitation to after the service is over.

Church Health Suggestions:

- a. At the end of the service – give the invitation like this: “If you would like to talk with someone, join our church, ask for prayer or know more about a personal relationship with Christ, come see me after the service is over and I would love to talk with you.”