

overheads, slides, etc.) the church must have the permission of the writers and composers. It is both unethical and illegal to copy music without permission unless the copyright has expired. The most practical solution is to subscribe to Christian Copyright License International (CCLI) ¹.

Music is often the predominant element in worship, but other elements are also important. First Timothy 4:13 enjoins the public reading of Scripture, and there are many creative ways to do so. Prayers are another important element (see the suggestions to follow). Testimonies can take all forms—prepared personal accounts of God’s work, finish-the-sentence sharing (*e.g.*, “One verse that comforts me is...”), video stories, etc. Worship can also be enhanced by the verbal arts, like drama, choral readings, monologues and poetry, and by visual arts, like banners, calligraphy, photography and paintings. Many churches have the capacity to project images that can enhance worship. (Again, make sure permission is granted.) The elements included here are common to many kinds of services.

Calls to Worship

A brief spoken or sung summons to the privilege of worship. While a Call to Worship can be a song, or a non-scriptural invitation, biblical statements like the following are especially fitting.

Psalm 5:3: In the morning, O LORD, you hear my voice;
in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait in expectation.

Psalm 9:9-10: The LORD is a refuge for the oppressed,
a stronghold in times of trouble.
Those who know your name will trust in you,
for you, LORD, have never forsaken those who seek you.

Psalm 11:4: The LORD is in his holy temple;
the LORD is on his heavenly throne.
He observes the sons of men;
his eyes examine them.

Psalm 62:5-8: Find rest, O my soul, in God alone;
my hope comes from him.
He alone is my rock and my salvation;
he is my fortress, I will not be shaken.
My salvation and my honor depend on God;
he is my mighty rock, my refuge.
Trust in him at all times, O people;
pour out your hearts to him,
for God is our refuge.

Psalm 84:1-2: How lovely is your dwelling place,
O LORD Almighty!
My soul yearns, even faints,
for the courts of the LORD;
my heart and my flesh cry out
for the living God.

Psalm 84:10-12: Better is one day in your courts
than a thousand elsewhere;
I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God
than dwell in the tents of the wicked.
For the LORD God is a sun and shield;
the LORD bestows favor and honor;
no good thing does he withhold
from those whose walk is blameless.
O LORD Almighty,
blessed is the man who trusts in you.

Psalm 96:1-6: Sing to the LORD a new song;
sing to the LORD, all the earth.
Sing to the LORD, praise his name;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.
For great is the LORD and most worthy of praise;
he is to be feared above all gods.
For all the gods of the nations are idols,
but the LORD made the heavens.
Splendor and majesty are before him;
strength and glory are in his sanctuary.

Psalm 100: Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth.
Worship the LORD with gladness;
come before him with joyful songs.
Know that the LORD is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his;
we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and praise his name.
For the LORD is good and his love endures forever;
his faithfulness continues through all generations.

Psalm 118:22-24: The stone the builders rejected
has become the capstone;
the LORD has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.
This is the day the LORD has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 122:1-2: I rejoiced with those who said to me,
“Let us go to the house of the LORD.”
Our feet are standing in your gates, O Jerusalem.

Psalm 145:18-21: The LORD is near to all who call on him,
to all who call on him in truth.
He fulfills the desires of those who fear him;
he hears their cry and saves them.

The LORD watches over all who love him,
but all the wicked he will destroy.
My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD.
Let every creature praise his holy name
for ever and ever.

Isaiah 1:18: “Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD.
“Though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red as crimson,
they shall be like wool.”

Isaiah 6:3-4: And they were calling to one another:
“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”
At the sound of their voices the doorposts and
thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

Isaiah 40:31: ... those who hope in the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Micah 6:8: He has showed you, O man, what is good.
And what does the LORD require of you?
To act justly and to love mercy
and to walk humbly with your God.

John 4:23-24: Jesus said, “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.”

Hebrews 4:14-16: Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Prayers ²

The best guide and source for prayers is Scripture. Beyond that, there are many books of eloquent and meaningful prayers, most notable perhaps being *The Book of Common Prayer*. It is customary in the EFCA for prayers to be extemporaneous and the following ideas will help in shaping those prayers. However, written prayers are opportunities to capture in classic and poignant language the cries of the individual heart, as well as the petitions of an entire church.