

HELPING HANDS BULLETIN

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**KNOWLEDGE AND BEST PRACTICES FOR
WORSHIP LEADERS**



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INTRODUCTION

In some of our churches, both regularly and occasionally, lay men and women are called on to serve as the worship leader for Sunday services or for a special service.

To that end one of the first things one must understand is that, while *they* are similar, the *worship leader's role* and the role of a *master of ceremony* are not the same. A master of ceremonies or MC is a person who is in charge of a program, ceremony, or entertainment who makes sure that all parts of the program takes place in proper order. ***The critical component for the worship leader, however, is the ability to assist in leading the congregation through worship into the presence of God. The worship leader otherwise is no more than an MC!*** Unless worshippers can genuinely experience the presence of God, worship will be no more than a superficial experience.

KNOWLEDGE AND BEST PRACTICES

1. A personal prayer for direction, correct perception, and appropriate actions should be offered to God prior to taking ones place as worship leader and moving into the “call to worship”. This should never be overlooked or omitted! Partitioning God specifically for a fresh anointing each time one stands before the people will help place the worship leader in the correct frame of mind and allow him or her to act as ***a vessel through whom God operates. One must know, believe, and understand that God alone can inspire worship in the hearts of the people!***
2. **The worship leader's role is to collaborate with the pastor and not to compete.** There should be an element of teamwork in which the pastor and the worship leader are complementing each other with their common purpose. If the pastor's and worship leader's goal is not the same, the worshippers are subject to come up short.

3. The worship leader's role is to be an enhancement to the service and not a distraction.
4. The worship leader should seek to develop a passion for worship. Be careful, however, that this passion does not cause impatience with the way the people are progressing in their expressions of worship. In other words, the worship leader may want folks to plunge deeper into what God has for them, and decide that God needs more help than he really does. If we serve as a worship leader, God may give us a vision for worship in our particular church but, He expects us to work carefully with His Spirit in bringing that vision to pass. Experienced worship leaders hold to the position that worship is **fueled** by the Holy Spirit. Thus, the worship leader should seek to ***learn and understand what it means to move in the flow of the Holy Spirit.***
5. Worship Leaders in speaking to someone who approaches the pulpit/ rostrum during the course of a service should be communicated with as inconspicuously as possible so as not to become the center of attention.
6. **The worship leader should know and understand the meaning of each aspect of the (♦) Order of Worship:**

- ❖ ***Musical Prelude*** - This musical rendition or arrangement that preempts the beginning of the worship service is intended to set a worshipful mood; it is conducive to meditation, for the purpose of creating an atmosphere for worship.
- ❖ ***Call To Worship*** - The Call To Worship is a verbal expression expressed singly or led corporately by the pastor or worship leader. It is a unifying technique designed to establish corporate participation and helps to give direction and further set a worshipful mood for the remainder of the service.

- ❖ ***Anthem or Hymn of Praise*** - A choir and/or congregational expression of adoration by means of singing **fervently** a spirited song, for the purpose of expressing corporately **heart felt thanks** for God's participation in the lives of the members and others who make up the congregation.

- ❖ ***Affirmation of Faith*** - This corporate affirmation is designed to express uniformity of belief and confirm our Christian faith. The Creed points up belief in the Trinity, Immaculate Conception of Jesus, and the resurrection of the flesh. It is the summary of the Gospels and constitutes the common confession of the Christian Church. In brief, the Apostle's Creed binds all Christians together by affirming their faith in: **[1]** God the Father, almighty, who is maker of all things in heaven and in earth; **[2]** Jesus Christ, His only son who is Lord of all; **[3]** The Holy Spirit, who is at work in the world today; **[4]** The holy catholic church (**The word catholic {small "c"} means universal** and is not to be confused with the Roman Catholic Church); **[5]** The forgiveness of sins, through faith in Jesus Christ; **[6]** The resurrection of the body; **[7]** Life everlasting.

- ❖ ***Invocation (Morning Prayer)*** - A communication to God by the Pastor, another minister, or a lay person for the purpose of expressing confessions, petitioning God, and thanking Him for His concern and continued attention. *(The Lord's Prayer, which follows and is generally chanted, is a joint expression by the congregation at the conclusion of the invocation to show additional unity in spirit and belief).*

- ❖ ***Responsive Reading or Old Testament Scripture*** - A scriptural reading, read from the CME Hymnal, directly from the Bible, or the printed bulletin. It is led by the pastor, a minister, or a layperson and is designed to allow **the congregation to read and be involved** in a responsive way to the word of God.

- ❖ ***Gloria Patri*** - A brief praise song to the trinity; generally comes after the

Responsive reading or the Old Testament reading. When song with sincerity and feeling it can and will serve as an enhancement ones worship.

- ❖ ***Scripture*** - The scriptural reading is (but not in every case) the worshipper's initial exposure to the sermon that is to come. In most instances, it is read by the pastor, a minister, or a layperson. This is yet another opportunity for the congregates to get in tune with the word of God, for the purpose of setting the Biblical stage upon which the sermon is focused.
- ❖ ***Benevolent Offering*** - An offering designed to receive financial gifts to assist members of the congregation and members of the community in times of illness and/or financial need.
- ❖ ***Announcements and Acknowledgement of Visitors*** - This time is somewhat of an intermission in worship to make worshipers aware of activities, events, and concerns that they need to be apprised of.
- ❖ ***Tithes and Offerings*** - A demonstration of gratitude and response to God's benevolence.
- ❖ ***Choral Response*** - A musical response (All Things Come of Thee O'Lord...) to God in terms of directing our honor and glory to the divine for the purpose of expressing recognition and gratitude, for his blessings.
- ❖ ***Altar Call*** - An invitation to the congregation to express personal concerns by means of the people assembling at the altar and kneeling to pray. As we seek Christ, this is another opportunity for us to practice and model true worship; we should be seeking a mental connection with God before and during our time at the altar.
- ❖ ***Musical Selection or Hymn of Preparation*** - A technique for setting the spiritual stage by means of praising the Lord through music for the

purpose of stimulating a receptive mood for the sermon.

- ❖ **Sermon** - Divine activity in terms of the Word of God being proclaimed or announced; instruction or exhortation to assist worshipers in their understanding and acceptance of God's word; proclamation to provoke worshippers to rightful living.
- ❖ **Invitation To Christian Discipleship** - An opportunity to join the corporate body of Christ by means of uniting with the church for the purpose of affirming one's faith and actively participating in the ongoing process of Christian growth.
- ❖ **Benediction** - The termination of the revitalizing service in terms of ending the process in a way that dismisses the congregates and **calls for living a life in keeping with God's will for mankind.**

In conclusion the Worship Leader should:

- ❑ **Know and Love Christ for him/herself.**
- ❑ **Be a healthy Christian consistently seeking Christ.**
- ❑ **Exercise patience and not judgment.**
- ❑ **Know and appreciate the order of worship of which he/she is to lead.**
- ❑ **Focus on, learn, and understand what it means to lead the congregation through worship into the presence of God.**

Reference – (♦) Order of Worship - October 2006 Program of Study, - Connectional Lay Council of the Department of Lay Ministry – Christian Methodist Episcopal Church