

Creating Worship That Flows

Worship transitions can be artistic, thoughtful, and well intentioned. Presenting practical suggestions to move worship from a series of disparate elements to becoming a unified whole.

Opening Activity:

Write a series of unrelated subjects on the board. Have people talk and make a transition between the seemingly unrelated subjects.

What is worship flow?

- Connections between and among worship elements.
- Ways to connect worship thought, feeling, and mood.
- Logical transitions that eases the worshiper from element to element.
- As an effective modulation is a way to move a person's tonal center (ear) to a new key with ease and grace, worship flow accomplishes the same goal among worship elements.
- A way of helping the body, ear, mood, mind, and senses to move toward something different.

Why should worship flow?

- Aids the worshiper in making connections.
- Avoids unnecessary distractions.
- Shows thoughtful planning.
- Assists the worshiper in maintaining focus.
- Creates worship momentum.
- All worship flows toward a climactic moment which can be different in different traditions and settings.

How is worship flow achieved?

Most effective spontaneity is planned.

Spontaneity usually exposes our weaknesses.

Must be carefully planned and rehearsed.

Write it down.

Hindrances to Worship Flow

- Too much talking.
- Spontaneous or unprepared talking or banter.
- Nervous comments and stereotypical remarks.
- Abrupt shifts that are not prepared or set up.
 - Musical styles
 - Tempo
 - Volume
 - Keys
 - Themes
 - Moods
 - Lighting
 - Presentation methods
 - Abrupt movements – walking forward, change of presenter, etc.

Examples of Poor Worship Flow

- Christmas Eve service in Missouri
- Friend's church from California

Using bridge elements –

Prayers, scriptures, and others – major marking elements that can serve as dividers or significant transitions in the way major heading functions within an imaginary outline.

What elements are good unifiers?

- Some songs
- Prayers
- Series of Scriptures
- Testimonies, intros, outros.

Practical Suggestions: (Can be musical, verbal, or visual)

- Use pentatonic to transition.
- Use unison solo lines with one instrument (unison is your best ally).
- Change moods of one or more of the elements to allow connection, i.e., sing the last stanza of a hymn softer and slower because of what comes next, start a song slowly and then increase tempo and volume.
- Use a cappella beginnings and closings to change mood.
- Repeat refrain with scriptures interspersed.
- Sing song in several keys to get to where you are headed.
- Start songs lower and slower when mood is subdued.
- Repeat a phrase or stanza at a faster tempo or higher key to build momentum.
- Use sequences to make transitions.
- Pedal tones are your friend.
- Overlay more than one song.
- Use ethereal sounds.

Questions for consideration

- What do the elements have in common, and how can these be maximized?
- Where are you ending the previous element?
- How are you ending the element?
- Where do we want to go?
- How will the new element begin?
- What alterations can be made to connect the two elements?