

Ideas for All-Age Worship:

It is important to remember that worship is much more than singing. It is an 'all of life' response to an incredible, almighty, loving God (Romans 12: 1&2). This incorporates not only what we do when we meet together as believers, but how we live out our lives each day in response to this amazing God. Over the years however, the phrases 'worship service' or 'time of worship', have been used to signify the part of the week when Christians gather together. In essence, it incorporates the music, the praise, the fellowship, the teaching and the prayers. The purpose is to build up the believers and encourage them as they then go out and share the good news of Jesus wherever they are placed. How this corporate time of worship is expressed varies from denomination to denomination and even from church to church.

It is also important to remember that in Simple Churches, worship is important, but will often be more varied than in a more 'traditional church'. The factors of size, relational emphases and all age involvement necessitate a different approach. In its narrowest sense, the worship time is used to indicate the period of time during the gathering, when we express our adoration to God, usually with music and singing. It is important to keep in mind the fact that we are all different and what is meaningful to one person may not have any meaning to another person.

There are a variety of different 'worship' pathways and we would highly recommend reading the following books for a greater understanding and ideas in this area:

'Teaching Kids Authentic Worship'
Kathleen Chapman

'Creative Worship Ideas for Small Groups'
Yvonne Morey

'50 Creative Worship Ideas'
Nancy Goudie

'Sacred Pathways'
Gary Thomas

The following are just a few suggestions of things that we found helpful in this time of focussed worship in the Simple Church context.

- Observe nature (either outside or using a DVD) and respond to God's amazing work of creation.
- Put out various colour cards and ask each person to choose a colour that reminds them of some aspect of God. (Can also be done for feelings and individuals can choose if they would like to share why they chose that colour).
- In small groups, create a song, artwork, poetry, rap... and present to the whole group.
- Place various words on a table or around the room that describe an attribute of God (loving, patient, always present...) and ask each person to choose one or stand near one that is relevant for them at the moment.
- Divide into small groups and spent time focussing on a passage of scripture that praises God.
- Have each person express through an art form (painting, drawing, movement, song, playdough...) something that helps them think about God.
- (If a child has been drawing during a discussion time, ask them what they have drawn. Sometimes they come out with something quite amazing! Use it as worship.)
- Develop conversational prayer... a topic is mentioned, and sentence prayers are encouraged on that topic before another is chosen.
- To encourage both adults and children learning how to pray, make a 'prayer pot' where written prayers can be drawn out and read.

- Spend time learning about and developing the four aspects of prayer... STIR... S (Sorry God), T (Thank You Lord), I (I love You God), R (Request...Asking God for something).
- Make a 'Thank You' book that people are encouraged to add to each week.
- Have little children bring along and share, something 'special' to them... together thank the Lord for His blessings.
- Use songs to worship the Lord... instruments (guitar, piano, percussion, pots, spoons), sing acapella using no instruments, use CD's, DVD's, YouTube...
- Sit quietly and listen to instrumental worship music. Ask if anyone had a picture, word, bible verse, song etc. that came to their mind during that time. Share.
- Encourage members in the group to share Bible passages in the time of worship.
- Place verses of scripture around the room and quietly move around and reflect on each (adults helping young children).
- Use a Psalm of praise or parts of scripture as responsive reading e.g. Psalm 136.
- Encourage movement such as dance. Celebrate each person's uniqueness and gifts.
- Sometimes it is helpful to have a separate space set aside in the room for prayer, when moving from a period of activity and noise to a period of quietness.
- Encourage times of quietness to develop the importance of listening to God.
- Share communion together.
- Share a testimony of something the Lord has done that week. Give thanks.

BE CREATIVE! BE FLEXIBLE!

BE OPEN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT!