



Project #5

DEVELOP A WORSHIP SERVICE PLAN

OBJECTIVE: To create a detailed worship service plan that demonstrates a strong understanding of song linking (musically and textually), thoughtful integration of various worship elements, and a seamless flow designed to engage the congregation in transformational worship. This exercise will help you apply the building blocks to designing a worship service and understand how all the preparation for the worship service grows out of the worship plan you create. This project draws heavily on the principles of *transformational worship* outlined in the book, emphasizing intentionality, congregational participation, and spiritual responsiveness.

Read pages 173-182 in *The Worship Ministry Guidebook*.

NOTE: This project uses songs from the song list you developed in Project #3; you can use the tabs of the Google Sheet you created to help you with songs that provide smooth transitions from one key to the next. See the description in the ADDITIONAL RESOURCES section in this document.

Steps to Create Your Worship Service Plan:

Utilize Your Church's Song List:

- » **Draw upon the “Current songs” list** that you curated in an earlier project.
- » Ensure all selected songs are in **congregationally-friendly keys**. Remember, the sweet range of the average voice is the octave C to C, and the singable range of a congregational song is A-D (Eb).
- » Review your song choices against the **evaluative criteria for lyrics and music**. Ensure lyrics are biblically and doctrinally sound, spiritual and God-centered, and clear and understandable. Musically, ensure excellence, memorability, singability, and compatibility with the lyrics.
- » Consider the **variety of songs** in terms of addressing God/about God, doctrine/experience, corporate/personal dimensions, and various responses of worship.

Select the Sermon Topic and Synopsis:

- » **Choose a sermon topic and write a brief synopsis (2-3 sentences)**, including the Scripture passage, that outlines the main message for the morning.

Select Congregational Songs with Linking in Mind:

- » Choose **3-5 congregational songs** for your service.
- » You must have **at least two songs in succession** (a set of 2-5 songs) that demonstrate clear musical and textual linking. This is crucial for creating a seamless flow and sense of journey.
- » **Focus on textual or thematic connections for as many transitions as possible.** You can achieve text links by looking for key words or phrases that suggest another song; thematic links by choosing songs with similar themes; or response links by asking, “Where do I naturally want to go next?”
- » Remember, you can begin a song with the chorus, bridge, or a verse other than the first verse to connect songs best textually.
- » **For this project, no more than two songs in a row should be in the same key** unless you are using an abbreviated version of songs, encouraging variety in key relationships.

Plan Musical Transitions for Linked Song Sets:

- » For the set(s) of linked congregational songs, detail exactly how each transition will play out musically as you did in Project #4.
- » Utilize at least two types of transitions within this single service plan:
 - **Intro Overlap:** The introduction to the second song begins “underneath” the last note of the first song. This usually works for songs in the same key. If tempos differ, you can creatively add a tag, extra chorus, etc., to the end of the first song at the second song’s tempo.
 - **Short Gap:** The first song ends, and the second song begins after a very brief moment, just enough to ‘clear the air’. This best connects songs a whole or half step apart and works well for planned spontaneity. It can also be used if tempos are pretty different.
 - **No Break:** The two songs are seamlessly joined, with one song ending and the next beginning, and the beat continues uninterrupted. This works for songs in the same key or a fourth or fifth apart. You can play an extra measure or two of ‘filler’ between songs.
- » Refer to the *Chart of Major Key Relationships for Simple Transitions* on page 161 to guide your **key relationship choices**. The song list spreadsheet prepared in Project #3 will provide help in this area.
- » **Include at least one instance of planned spontaneity** within your service. This is a planned connection where it seems you’ve suddenly thought of a second song that would be a great response. It often starts with very little instrumentation and builds. Be sure to note the worship leader’s responsibility to know the starting note and new key immediately.

Select Other Elements of Worship:

- » Incorporate several **additional non-musical worship elements** into your service. These elements will engage the hearts of your people in ways that music alone cannot do.
- » Consider elements from the New Testament ‘essentials’ for corporate worship, such as **Scripture reading, prayer, and preaching**.
- » Also, consider **presentational/representational music** (e.g., choir, ensemble, soloist), **confessions, creeds, drama, video, or other creative arts** (e.g., interpretive movement, visual art).
- » If applicable, include **notable** inclusions like the Lord’s Supper or baptism, treating them as central to worship.

Create a Flow from Beginning to End:

- » **Design a complete sequence of events for the entire service**, from opening to closing. The order should be carefully considered and ordered logically and progressively.
- » Think of the service as **a logical, unfolding drama**, not a selection of loosely strung items.
- » Consider the common practice of beginning with faster praise-themed congregational worship songs and working towards quieter, more intimate worship music later in the service.
- » **Strive for creativity and avoid predictability** by varying your church’s service order at times.
- » Plan how to **minimize distractions**, such as by offloading announcements to other channels and only making necessary announcements at the beginning or end of the service.

Plan Song Presentation and All Transitions:

- » For each song, briefly describe its **presentation**: What is the planned instrumentation (e.g., full band, acoustic, keyboard pads)? Will it begin with an intro, or go straight to the vocals? What is the intended feel (e.g., joyful, solemn, majestic)?

- » For **every transition between all elements** of the service (not just songs), describe how one element will connect with the next. This includes moving from a song to a prayer, a Scripture reading to a sermon, etc.
- » **Plan musical bridges** between songs to keep a continual flow.
- » Indicate where **verbal inclusions** (e.g., leader talking between elements, a spoken transition) might occur, and if so, how they will enhance the flow or theme. You will write out what will be said in Project #11, so note where the talking will occur for this project.
- » Consider how you will **prepare for spontaneous moments** and maintain flexibility. This might involve having additional well-known songs ready or the technical team knowing how to extend or cut sections. You need to be aware of what is happening among the people and be prepared to adjust your plans if God is moving in a way that our plan can be a barrier.

Deliverables:

Submit a document that clearly outlines your worship service plan, including the following sections:

Service Title/Theme: A concise title or theme for your worship service, connecting to your selected sermon topic.

Sermon Topic & Synopsis:

- » Topic: [Your chosen sermon topic]
- » Synopsis: [2-3 sentences describing the sermon's main message]

Worship Service Order (Detailed Plan):

- » Present your service chronologically, listing each element.
- » For each element, include the following:
 - **Name of the element** (e.g., opening congregational song, prayer, sermon, etc.)
 - **Number the elements** in chronological order so that you can refer to element numbers in additional descriptions following the order of service.
 - *If a congregational song*, list the song title with the congregationally-friendly key.
 - *If presentational music*, list who is presenting the song and the song title.
 - *Brief Description:* What is the purpose of this element in the service? (e.g., call to worship, expression of praise, confession, prayer, response, teaching).
 - *Planned Presentation:* How will this element be presented? (e.g., full band, vocal team only, solo, specific instrumental arrangement for songs; specific reader for Scripture; congregational reading, short video played during offertory, keyboard pads underneath speaking.)
- » Transition from Element [X] to Element [Y]:
 - **Musical Transition Type (if applicable):** (e.g., *intro overlap*, *short gap*, *no break*, or *no break with planned spontaneity*).
 - **Key Relationship (if applicable):** Describe the key relationship (e.g., same key, half step up, fourth up, non-simple key transition).
 - **Execution Description:** Detail exactly how the transition will be executed.
 - *For songs:* Specify how the first song ends (e.g., sustained chord, abrupt cutoff) and how the second begins (e.g., immediate intro, direct into vocals, drum count-off, use of dominant seventh chord).

- *For non-musical elements:* How will the flow move? (e.g., “worship leader speaks a transitional prayer,” “pads play as a Scripture reader steps forward,” “video fades in after song ends”).
- **Planned Spontaneity Note** (*if applicable*): Clearly state if this is your planned spontaneity moment and explain how it achieves that effect.
- **Textual/Thematic Connection:** Explain the specific textual or thematic link between the elements. If a song starts with a chorus or different verse, explain the textual rationale.
- **Verbal Inclusions (if any):** Note any planned spoken words by the worship leader or others during the transition. (You will be writing out these moments in Project #11.)

By following these steps, you will develop a well-structured and deeply connected worship service plan, demonstrating your expertise in facilitating congregational engagement and transformational worship.

Turn in your project as a written report with all the details described here.