

Third Sunday of Advent – Year C

Sunday 15 December 2024

The Faith Action Programme would like to thank members of the Church of Scotland's Mission Support Programme Group for their thoughts on the fourth Sunday of Advent.

Weekly Worship, based on the Revised Common Lectionary, is for everyone – in any capacity – who is involved in creating and leading worship.

It provides liturgical material that can be used for worship in all settings. Our writers are asked to share their approaches to creating and delivering this material to equip leaders with a greater confidence and ability to reflect on their own worship practice and experience and encourage them to consider how this material might be adapted for their own context.

We would encourage continual reflection on the changing patterns of worship and spiritual practice that are emerging from disruption and how this might help identify pathways towards development and worship renewal.

An archive of resources for daily worship can be found on the Sanctuary First website:
<https://www.sanctuaryfirst.org.uk/daily-worship>

We may not all be gathered in the same building, but at this time, when we need each other so much, we are invited to worship together, from where we are – knowing that God can hear us all and can blend even distant voices into one song of worship.

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Introduction

Rev Jonathan Fleming, Minister of Lyle Kirk, Greenock, Vice Convener of Faith Action Programme Leadership Team, Convener of Mission Support Programme Group

As we prepare for worship on this special Sunday, may these resources, prepared by members of the Mission Support Programme Group of FAPLT, help congregations to reflect on the deep and abiding joy that Advent brings.

On the third Sunday of Advent we are invited to embrace a moment of joyful expectation. Traditionally called *Gaudete* Sunday, from the Latin word for 'Rejoice', this day serves as a pause in the Advent season's more solemn tone.

We are reminded that during the waiting and preparing for Christ's coming, joy is at the heart of our faith. Many churches with an Advent wreath opt to light a rose or pink candle on this Sunday, symbolising the dawning of joy in anticipation of Christ's arrival.

The overarching theme of today's readings is joy – joy rooted in God's presence, salvation, and promises. Each passage highlights a different facet of rejoicing as we await the coming of the Messiah. The sense of joy we encounter is not naive or disconnected from the realities of life; it is a joy that arises from the deep knowledge that God is near, actively working to redeem, restore, and bring peace.

In Zephaniah, the prophet calls the people of Israel to rejoice because God has taken away their judgments and is in their midst as a mighty saviour. This passage reveals a God who gathers the broken and the outcast, offering healing and restoration. It reminds us that even in difficult times, we can rejoice in the certainty of God's redeeming work.

Isaiah continues the theme of joy in salvation. The passage invites us to trust in God's deliverance and respond with songs of thanksgiving. Isaiah's imagery of drawing water from the wells of salvation is particularly meaningful during Advent, symbolising the refreshment and life Christ brings.

In Philippians, Paul urges us to "Rejoice in the Lord always", linking joy with the nearness of God. This joy is not merely emotional but a deep peace and assurance that comes from presenting our worries to God and receiving God's peace in return. Paul's message reminds us that even in times of anxiety, we can find joy through trust in God.

Finally, Luke offers John the Baptist's call to repentance, challenging us to prepare the way for Christ through lives that bear good fruit. While the call to repentance may seem stern, it

is undergirded by the good news that the Messiah is coming with the Holy Spirit and fire, ready to transform and renew the world.

In our waiting, God is present.

In our repentance, God offers transformation.

And in all things, we are called to rejoice because the Lord is near.

Zephaniah 3:14-20 and Isaiah 12:2-6

Rev Stuart Finlayson Forres Community Church Plant Leader and CofS Community Pioneer Minister

The way I approach Scripture doesn't change. I begin by reading the passages a few times (beginning in the wider context of the book) and let that percolate over a day or so, or even between different parts of a day.

Going back to the specific verses I note down anything plain to see: common themes /repeated words/ numbers of significance/ Bible cross-references, etc. Then I take each verse as it comes – one at a time, word by word sometimes – and do a bit of an exegesis. I haven't found a better way for me to gather my thoughts; as an extrovert I process while I'm doing and speaking. The exegesis might include my thoughts or knowledge about a word, phrase, or full sentence, and later on I move to some of my favourite commentaries and Bible studies. I let all that simmer for another day or two.

As I draw everything together, my focus is on allowing the Spirit of God to guide my heart and mind. I can only do so much when it comes to preparation and so I need to lean more than ever on God when capturing and delivering the words God wants people to hear, receive, and be challenged by.

Finally, I aim to leave people asking application questions because Truth should be applied. And I love to polarise opinions, with a view to getting people thinking and praying.

[Zephaniah 3:14-20](#)

Background

Zephaniah, a prophet active during the reign of King Josiah (7th century BCE), speaks primarily of judgment and restoration. He was the great-great grandson of King Hezekiah who reigned when Isaiah was prophesying. The first two chapters of Zephaniah are intense oracles of judgment against Jerusalem and the surrounding nations. This passage is a

marked shift from judgment to hope, offering one of the most joyful proclamations in the Old Testament. The passage is focused on the promise of salvation and restoration for Israel after judgment.

Approach

What I noticed most of all in this passage was the sudden tone shift in verse 14, from the severe warnings earlier in the book, to an outpouring of joy and celebration. The contrast between divine wrath and divine compassion made me wonder about the balance of justice and mercy in the prophetic literature and ultimately in God.

I was also drawn to the language of renewal and restoration – God gathering God’s people, removing their shame, and restoring their fortunes. The image of a mighty warrior (v17) who saves God’s people while simultaneously rejoicing over them with singing is a striking metaphor. As someone who loves to worship in song, to imagine God singing is awe-inspiring, and even makes me feel warmly emotional.

This led me to question: What does it mean for God to rejoice over God’s people? Why is divine joy expressed so emphatically after a period of judgment? Is it suggestive of John 3:16?

Themes

- **Rejoicing and salvation**

The call to “Sing, daughter Zion!” (v14) and the reassurance that “The LORD, your God, is with you” (v17) highlight God’s active participation in bringing restoration – not merely forgiving God’s people but actively celebrating their renewal. God is a fan of His children!

- **Divine presence and deliverance**

God's presence among His people is central; the presence that not only comforts but also empowers – a God who saves and strengthens His people. The idea that God would be a “warrior who gives victory” resonated with Israel’s historical experience of deliverance over the centuries and raises wider questions about what kind of victory God wins in Christ and who the victory is over (not flesh and blood but powers and principalities – Ephesians 6:12).

- **Restoration of fortune and reputation**

The passage promises that the shame of Israel's past sins and exile would be replaced with honour. This raises theological questions about forgiveness and restoration – how does God transform a people who were once under judgment into a people of joy?

[Isaiah 12:2-6](#)

Background

Isaiah 12 is a hymn of praise in response to God's deliverance (see above about God singing) and is a conclusion to the first major section of Isaiah (chapters 1-12). These chapters primarily deal with God's judgment on Israel and the nations, but chapter 12 presents a song of thanksgiving. It is linked to the themes of redemption and trust in God after deliverance, likely echoing the deliverance from Assyria, prophesied in Isaiah 10-11.

Approach

What struck me was the profound trust expressed in verse 2: "Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid." This is a powerful declaration of faith in the midst of the context of war and threat. Something that resonates today as well. As I read it again, I hear someone reminding themselves that God is our salvation.

I was struck by the progression of the verses from personal trust in God's salvation (v2) to communal praise and proclamation (vv4-6). Again, as someone who finds great joy and closeness to God in worship it led me to think more about the communal nature of worship.

Another theme that captured my attention was the connection between salvation and joy. The people are told, "With joy, you will draw water from the wells of salvation" (v3). This vivid metaphor prompted me to question: What are these wells of salvation? Is this a reference to Israel's past deliverances, or is it pointing to a future hope?

Themes

- **Personal and communal faith**

The movement from individual trust ("I will trust and not be afraid") to collective praise ("Give thanks to the Lord") reflects a transition from personal experience of salvation to the mission of declaring God's greatness among the nations (v4).

- **The wells of salvation**

This metaphor intrigued me – wells signify ongoing access to life-giving water, which in the ancient Near Eastern context would have been crucial for survival. This evokes images of God's continuous provision for His people, much like the physical provision of water in the wilderness. It connects physical and spiritual sustenance in a way that brings joy.

- **Universal praise**

Verse 5 calls to "make known among the nations what he has done" – the movement

from Israel's deliverance to the nations' acknowledgment of God highlights the universal nature of God's salvation. This led me to explore the theme of God's mission being bigger than just Israel, reaching out to all nations.

Reflecting on both texts together

Both of these passages are celebrations of divine salvation after judgment. What struck me is that both focus not only on the rescue from danger but on the resulting joy and proclamation. They share movement from fear to trust, from judgment to salvation, and from individual relief to communal celebration.

The image of God's presence, whether as a mighty warrior in Zephaniah or as a source of salvation in Isaiah, challenges the reader to consider how deeply entwined are God's deliverance and joy. In both, God is not distant; God is among His people, rejoicing with them and giving them reasons to celebrate.

Both texts raise questions about how we understand salvation today. What does it look like to draw from the "wells of salvation" in our own lives? How do we balance the justice and judgment of God with His overwhelming mercy and joy? And how does personal salvation translate into a mission to proclaim God's deeds to the world?

Ultimately (and as a church planter in the community), both passages leave me reflecting on the ways that divine deliverance transforms not only individuals but entire communities, leading to a ripple effect of joy, praise, and witness to the nations. I am reminded of Acts 1:8.

Application questions – Zephaniah 3:14-20

- How do you experience joy in your relationship with God, even in challenging circumstances?
- In what ways can you cultivate a heart of celebration and gratitude for the ways God has delivered you from difficult situations in the past?
- Verse 17 portrays God as "a mighty warrior who saves" and who "rejoices over you with singing."
 - Do you believe God delights in you? How does that affect your view of your relationship with God?
 - How can you become more aware of God's active presence in your daily life?
- Zephaniah speaks of God removing shame and bringing honour to His people (v19).

- Are there areas of shame or brokenness in your life where you long for God's restoration?
- How can you open yourself to God's healing work?
 - How do you see God transforming your past struggles into future hope and joy?
- In verse 18, God promises to "gather the exiles."
 - How can you participate in God's work of gathering and restoring others who are marginalised or distant from the faith community?
 - What role does your community play in helping others experience the restoration and joy promised in this passage?

Application questions – Isaiah 12:2-6

- Isaiah declares, "I will trust and not be afraid" (v2).
 - What are the fears you currently face that might be hindering your trust in God's provision and protection?
 - How can you intentionally place your trust in God this week?
 - How does remembering past moments of God's faithfulness strengthen your trust today?
- Verse 3 speaks of drawing water "with joy from the wells of salvation."
 - What practices help you stay connected to the ongoing life and sustenance that God offers?
 - How can you draw more deeply from the "wells" of God's Word, prayer, and community?
 - What aspects of your salvation story bring you the most joy, and how can you share that with others?
- Isaiah urges us to "make known among the nations what he has done" (v4).
 - How are you currently sharing the good news of God's work in your life?
 - What opportunities exist in your daily life to declare God's goodness to others?
 - In what ways does your life reflect the joy and gratitude that come from salvation?
 - How can your actions and words be a testimony to God's grace?
- The passage in Isaiah calls for communal praise.
 - How can you join with others to praise God more intentionally?
 - What role does corporate worship play in deepening your trust and joy in God's salvation?

- What steps can your faith community take to more intentionally declare God's deeds not only within the church but also in your local neighbourhood or city?

Application questions for both passages

Balancing judgment and joy

- Both passages follow themes of judgment with joy and restoration.
 - How do you balance acknowledging the seriousness of sin and judgment with the joy of God's mercy and grace in your life?
 - How can understanding God's justice lead to a deeper appreciation of God's salvation and compassion?

Living in the assurance of God's promises

- Both texts speak of God's promises to restore and redeem.
 - How do you live in the assurance of God's promises, especially when circumstances seem uncertain or difficult?
 - What areas of your life or faith are you waiting for God to restore or fulfil, and how can you cultivate hope while you wait?

Philippians 4:4-7 and Luke 3:7-18

Rev Emma McDonald, Pioneer Minister in Dundee

Philippians 4:4-7

These few verses written by Paul remind us that we worship a living God. The Philippians are facing persecution and are awaiting the return of Epaphroditus, who has been ill (chapter 2:25).

A troubling time, filled with worry, no doubt. Paul encourages rejoicing not because of or despite circumstances, but because of the goodness that is found in God and Paul encourages the practice of gentleness – imitating the character of God. In this Advent season we wait again for Christmas Day to celebrate the birth of Jesus and to anticipate His return. But as we wait, do we remember Jesus's words in Matthew 28:20, which speak of Jesus' ongoing presence with His disciples? Paul echoes this with the words: "the Lord is near". The Psalms also remind us of God's nearness (Psalm 145:18-20, Psalm 34:18). For Paul, God is not distant but is very much present. God is the one in whom he lives and moves and has his being (Acts 17:27-28). Paul seeks to encourage and strengthen the resolve of the Philippians as they follow Jesus in difficult times. Paul explains that prayer should be constant, for everything and in every circumstance, and that prayer should focus

on God rather than worry. Paul chooses to leave the Philippians not only with hope but also with actions they can take: namely, rejoicing and prayer and living gently in the world.

Themes from the text that may be explored

Prayer, the nearness of God, rejoicing and joy within Advent, Peace of God, what it means to be in Christ.

Luke 3:7-18

From everything we have heard of the one who will prepare the way of the Lord (Isaiah 40:3-5 Malachi 3:1, Luke 1:17), nothing prepares us for the abrupt, and confrontational language of John. “You brood of vipers” are not the most encouraging words to begin any sermon with. In this instance God’s words come not from secular nor religious power bases, but from someone on the very fringes of society and do not seem like a gospel of good news, but rather of horror and judgment.

John does not care for formalities or traditions and his words would have been both shocking and offensive to the Jewish people. Racial lineage and traditions are not enough, being a child of Abraham is now not enough. There must be an individual response to those around them. Repentance is not just about faith and sin but about love and loving your neighbour compassionately. Sharing clothes and food, not taking more than is required, not extorting money, contentment with your pay. It was a social gospel that God had laid down through John’s words and it was to be lived daily. Justice, generosity, integrity and contentment with what you have are, in John’s understanding, signs of repentance.

As an authentic messenger, John can make for uncomfortable listening. Integrity in the situation that God has placed us in and small actions in daily living and with the people that we interact with can have either a positive or negative effect – not only on them, but also on us and our relationship with God.

Repentance is an ongoing action. Loving your neighbour is both an act of repentance and an active response to God. John’s preaching anticipates the coming of Jesus, His power and the Holy Spirit. The people clearly were awaiting the Messiah, but John reorientates their expectations away from him towards Jesus, His power, and that of the Holy Spirit. John preached for repentance, for action, and for anticipation of the power and coming of Christ.

Questions that may help with sermon planning

- In this Advent season how do we live in meaningful anticipation of the coming of Christ?
- What does repentance look like in our lives? What are its fruits? What are the signs that it is missing?

- How do we embrace a way of living authentically, without fear and compassionately?

Themes that can also be explored

Repentance, baptism, generosity, the Holy Spirit, Jesus and His power.

Sermon ideas

‘Rejoicing in the midst of expectation’

As we journey through Advent, the third Sunday is often known as *Gaudete* Sunday, meaning, ‘Rejoice!’ in Latin. Today’s readings are full of encouragement, which call us to rejoice and to celebrate as we continue to wait for the coming of Christ. This is a time to reflect on the deep joy that God offers, even amid life’s challenges.

Zephaniah 3:14-20 – Rejoicing in God’s salvation

In Zephaniah, we are presented with a powerful vision of restoration. The people are called to “Sing aloud, O daughter Zion, shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart.” We are reminded that God is present among His people, a mighty warrior who saves (v17). Even though Israel faced hardship and exile, Zephaniah proclaims that God is a God of mercy who will restore the lost, gather the outcasts, and heal the broken-hearted. Like the people of Israel, we continue to face personal struggles, and yet we are reminded to rejoice because God *is* in our midst, actively working for our good.

Isaiah 12:2-6 – Joy in God’s deliverance

Isaiah proclaims, “Surely God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.” The prophet highlights the theme of trust and confidence in God’s saving power, for which we are called to joyful praise: “Shout aloud and sing for joy, O royal Zion, for great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel” (v6). During Advent, may we trust in God’s ultimate deliverance. Despite the world’s uncertainties, may we trust that our security is found in God – our strength and our song.

Philippians 4:4-7 – Rejoicing in the Lord always

Paul exhorts the church in Philippi to “Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, Rejoice!” Paul reminds them that joy comes from living in God’s presence, trusting God with all our anxieties. Paul goes on to say, “The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (vv5-6).

We read that joy is not based on circumstances, but on the nearness of God. So, when we trust God and present our concerns to the Lord, may we trust that God grants us peace

beyond understanding.

Luke 3:7-18 – Joy in repentance

In Luke's Gospel, John the Baptist calls the crowds to repentance, preparing the way for Jesus' ministry. Though his message sounds harsh at first, "You brood of vipers!" (v7), he ultimately points toward the good news of the coming Messiah. John's challenge is to live out repentance by bearing good fruit, being generous, and acting justly in daily life. He reminds the people that judgment is coming, but so is salvation, through Christ.

Repentance is a path to joy. As we turn from sin and seek righteousness, may we make room for the joy of Christ to dwell in us.

This Advent season, let us embrace the joy of knowing that God is with us, both in our individual lives and in the world. Despite difficulties, we are called to rejoice because Christ is near, and His coming brings hope, peace, and ultimate restoration. Let us live out this joy, sharing it with others as we prepare for the fullness of Christ's presence in our hearts and in the world.

Prayers

Sarah Johnson, Faith Action Mission Support Manager

Welcome

In this season of Advent, as we approach the most holy of nights, we are aware that we are waiting. So much of our lives and the lives of those in scripture are defined by a 'waiting'. Jacob, who worked for 20 years serving Laban; Joseph, who waited to be heard from a prison cell; Mary, who carried the Son of God; and the Disciples, who waited in Jerusalem for the promised Holy Spirit. We too wait. But we wait with expectation. Expectation of the Holy One, born of a virgin. Expectation of the joy that does come and is yet to come. Let us learn to rejoice in our waiting for we live in a time of the now and not yet.

Gathering/ Call to Worship *(based on the song 'O Come All You Unfaithful': Bob Kauflin & Lisa Clow)*

O come, all you unfaithful
Come, weak and unstable
Come, know you are not alone

Let us come and see all that our God has done.

O come, bitter and broken
Come with fears unspoken
Come, taste of His perfect love
Let us come and see all that our God has done.

So come, though you have nothing
Come, He is the offering
Come, see what your God has done
Let us come and see all that our God has done. Amen

OR

Gathering/ Call to worship

Loving God,
Thank You for Your presence here with us this day.
Thank You that before time began You were singing over us.
You welcome us, accept and love us in every season of life.
Thank You for this Advent season of preparation and waiting.

Help us to open our hearts to You this day,
Help us to bring our whole, unfiltered, honest selves before You now.
Amen

Confession

Heavenly God,
as Jesus called the first disciples by the Syrian sea, so You call us to rise up and follow You.
To apprentice ourselves to Jesus and to follow 'the way'.
Yet, we confess that we fall short.
We have failed to love mercy,
we have failed to walk humbly,
we have failed to act justly and kindly and selflessly.

But You, Jesus, remain our example.

To follow You is our hearts' desire.

Please forgive us for when we have disappointed, and saddened You.
Please wipe the slate clean and help us start afresh this day.
With eyes fixed on Jesus, reignite a desire within us to become more loving in all our ways.

Thank You that Your mercies are new every morning.

Amen

Prayer of Thanksgiving / Gratitude

Creator God,

thank You that the light shines in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome it.

Thank You for the beauty of creation, for Your handiwork on display each day.

Thank You for the gift of Jesus and the joy of knowing Him – Emmanuel, God with us!

Thank You that You know us, You love us and You care about each of us.

You care about the things we care about because You care for us.

You alone are worthy of all our praise this day and every day.

Amen

Prayers for others / Intercession

God of all,

We ask for Your will to be done on earth as it is in heaven this day.

We think now of places that need Your light and goodness

and of people that need Your peace and assurance.

[In the silence lift up to God all those that come to your mind.]

God, we ask that Your kingdom will come and Your light will shine into the dark places of our world today.

Where there is war will You bring peace.

Where there is hunger will You bring provision.

Where there is sickness, healing.

Help us Lord, to remain patient in our praying and in our waiting for Your kingdom reign.

We thank You God, that You call us again and again in Scripture not to be afraid.

Help us to understand what it means to trust in You more deeply each day.

Amen

Holy God,

As we wait in joyful hope for the coming of Christ our Saviour

we ask that You will answer our prayers and make us a holy people,

fit to greet Him with eager hearts.

[Hold a short time of silence]

Creator God,
help the leaders of nations to seek justice and peace
which come from the Word of God,
may there be good news for the poor and the broken hearted;
end conflicts throughout the world which lead to so much grief and mourning.
We pray too for all those who strive to rebuild in places which have been ravaged by war or
natural disaster.

[Hold a short time of silence]

Merciful God,
may Your blessing be upon all those who are in pain or sickness,
those who are anxious or troubled.
We know that You are always present with us,
even when sometimes You seem far away.
Help us to feel Your presence when we pass through dark places,
and sustain us and all who suffer through our pains and sorrows.

[Add the names of those requesting prayer, followed by a time of silence]

Faithful God,
as we continue this Advent journey,
teach us to turn to You in times of joy and pleasure,
as well as when faced with fear and sorrow.
Help us to put our differences behind us
and to unite behind the great commission of Jesus to make disciples of all nations and all
people.

Merciful God: accept these prayers for the sake of Your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Amen

Blessing / Closing prayer

Await the coming of God to you,
allow the revelation of God to sustain you,
accept the fullness of God's glory upon you,
attend to God's presence with hope and joy.

Amen

As you wait for Christ to return,
live as people of hope, and go with God's blessing.
May hope in Christ's return sustain you,
God's peace saturate the world around you,
the joy of the Holy Spirit strengthen you,
and the love of the triune God encircle you,
in this moment and in all the moments to come.

Amen

Musical suggestions

God Welcomes All (GWA) is the new supplement to Church Hymnary Fourth Edition. This exciting new collection features over 200 hymns and songs in a wide range of styles by writers from Scotland and around the world.

The full music version is now available; and the words-only book, digital resources including the expansion of the existing Church of Scotland music website, will be published in due course, with streaming functions and further information on each song; backing tracks; and lyric videos. *God Welcomes All* is available to order from

<https://chbookshop.hymnsam.co.uk/books/9781786225573/god-welcomes-all>

Our [online music resource](#) is on the Church of Scotland website; you can listen to samples of every song in the Church Hymnary 4th edition (CH4) and download a selection of recordings for use in worship. You will also find playlists for this week and liturgical seasons and themes on the *Weekly Worship* and *Inspire Me* tabs.

You can find further musical suggestions for this week in a range of styles on the [Songs for Sunday blog](#) from Trinity College Glasgow.

- GWA 90 – “We are a people of hope” – this would be a great Advent candle lighting song for the Season of Advent as a whole
- GWA 96 – “Joyful is the dark” – an opportunity to explore the Advent theme of joy in a more contemplative way
- GWA 99 – “Joy has dawned upon the world” – a joy-filled song by Getty and Townend, which is to be sung in a joyous way

- CH4 359 – “He came down that we may have love” – a helpful reminder that Christ came that we may have love, peace and joy
- A suggested [playlist of songs from CH4 throughout Advent](#) can be found on the Church of Scotland website.

Reflecting on our worship practice

Since the start of the pandemic in 2020, the way we worship has changed and we need to reflect on the changing or newly established patterns that emerged and continue to emerge as a result of the disruption.

We can facilitate worship for all by exploring imaginative approaches to inclusion, participation and our use of technologies in ways that suit our contexts. This is not an exhaustive list, but some things we could consider are:

- Framing various parts of the worship service in accessible language to help worshippers understand the character and purpose of each part. This is essential for creating worship for all (intergenerational worship) that reflects your community of faith.
- Holding spaces for reflection and encouraging prayer to be articulated in verbal and non-verbal ways, individually and in online breakout rooms.
- In online formats the effective use of the chat function and microphone settings encourages active participation in prayer, e.g. saying the Lord’s Prayer together unmuted, in a moment of ‘holy chaos’.
- If singing in our congregations is restricted, we can worship corporately by using antiphonal psalm readings, creeds and participative prayers.
- Using music and the arts as part of the worship encourages the use of imagination in place of sung or spoken words.
- Use of silence, sensory and kinaesthetic practices allow for experience and expression beyond regular audio and visual mediums.

The following questions might help you develop a habit of reflecting on how we create and deliver content and its effectiveness and impact, and then applying what we learn to develop our practice.

- How inclusive was the worship?

Could the worship delivery and content be described as worship for all/ intergenerational? Was it sensitive to different “Spiritual Styles”?

- How was the balance between passive and active participation?
- How were people empowered to connect with or encounter God?
What helped this? What hindered this?
- How cohesive was the worship?
Did it function well as a whole?
How effective was each of the individual elements in fulfilling its purpose?
- How balanced was the worship?
What themes/topics/doctrines/areas of Christian life were included?
- How did the worship connect with your context/contemporary issues?
Was it relevant in the everyday lives of those attending and in the wider parish/ community?
How well did the worship connect with local and national issues?
How well did the worship connect with world events/issues?
- What have I learned that can help me next time I plan and deliver worship?

Useful links

God Welcomes All can be ordered from [Hymns Ancient & Modern](#)

You can listen to samples of every song in the Church Hymnary 4th edition (CH4) and download a selection of recordings for use in worship [here](#)

You can find an introduction to spiritual styles online [here](#)

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