

Stepwise: Faith-filled Worship stream outline, March 2020

This internal working document is being made available to Mission Council in March 2020 to aid discussion and understanding. It provides an overview of the ongoing work of the Faith-Filled Worship Design Group: the Revd Dr Matthew Prevett (convenor); the Revd Fiona Bennett (URC Minister); the Revd Elizabeth Clark (URC/Methodist Rural Officer); Joan Colwell (Lay Preaching Commissioner); Nicola Grieves (CYDO) and the Revd Samuel Silungwe (URC Minister)

Introduction

Stepwise is a discipleship development programme based on blended learning, designed for the church today and as it is becoming. Each stream within Stepwise uses a pattern of:

- personal study pre-session introduction to key concepts and new ideas for the session, accessed online;
- a group session exploring new ideas in depth and applying them practically face-to-face, in person; and
- personal reflection after the discussion session, online and offline, according to participant's context, needs and situation. Participants are also encouraged to undertake journaling in whatever format suits them best. Reflection is supported through contact with a mentor.

The Faith-filled Worship stream

The eleven sessions of this stream address various aspects of worship. They each use a specific practical or thematic 'Tool of Worship' as a thread running through the session. However, all aspects of worship (prayer, music, bible, liturgy) are included and addressed in some way in each session. The stream is likely to take up to 12 months to complete.

The online Stepwise Hub will also allow all material to be viewed in a thematic shape as well as by session. Therefore if at any point during (or after completing) the stream participants need to think particularly about one aspect of worship they can view the material through that focused lens too.

Each of the sessions one to eleven will have associated extension tasks available for people to undertake who are working towards Synod-Recognition as Lay Preachers. Possibilities for these, which may be individual or group activities as appropriate, include:

- read and review articles
- worship planning assignments – e.g. provide content for worship with a specific group or setting such as messy church/care home residents/ café church
- liturgy reading and writing exercises
- prayer reading/writing/reflections
- formal essay assignments
- practical tasks – attending services, assisting at specific kinds of services
- short placements beyond participant's home church.

Stepwise: Faith-filled Worship stream – provisional outline and summary of content, March 2020

Session no.	Provisional title	Outline of content	Tool of worship
0	Come inside	Reminder of the key features of Stepwise and how the programme works.	
1	What is worship?	An introductory group session to provide an overview of the stream as well as thinking about what worship is.	
2	Seasons of worship	Introducing the place of worship as telling God's Story and Our Story.	The lectionary
3	Whose book is it?	Introducing the Bible and exploring how it is understood and used in different contexts and communities. <i>N.B. Biblical material will be embedded in all sessions in varied and appropriate ways.</i>	The Bible/ commentaries
4	A gathered people	The role of community as a place of worship. It's about relationships with God and with each other – a shared encounter.	Community
5	Encounter with God	How worship is an encounter with God. The sacrament of every moment – as well as looking at the sacraments and other 'special' services.	Sacraments
6	Communicating in worship	Thinking about different forms of communication with God. Speaking and listening; in private or communally. How do we exercise discernment and hear call?	Prayer
7	Breaking open the Word	The challenge and comfort of sharing the story in conventional ways but also in different and creative ways. What are our expectations as worship leaders and congregations?	Preaching
8	Dance of the Spirit	Collaborative forms and experiences of worship. How can freedom in the Spirit lead to creativity allowing worship to speak to people in different circumstances? How can we embrace difference in an ecumenical Church?	Liturgy
9	Dare to be different	Exploring the challenges and importance of taking risks in worship. Thinking about music, technology, use of modern biblical translations. Taking people beyond their comfort zones!	Music
10	Pushing frontiers	Thinking about the spaces we use for worship – how these spaces shape our worship and how worship shapes them. Exploring the boundaries and barriers that restrict our worship – accessibility and inclusivity etc – and preparing worship that can engage all people.	Space
11	Resourced as disciples	The place of worship in our everyday lives. How can we shape our discipleship and the discipleship of others by our worship?	