



HYBRID WORSHIP OUTLINE

A Local Arrangement Service

Worship resources exploring the theme of creativity in a digital age and the challenges of online life



Produced by

Elliot Crippen | District Digital Enabler

The Internet | Live Streaming | Social Media | Technology | Artificial Intelligence

September 2024



WORSHIP FOR A DIGITAL AGE

A Local Arrangement Service

NOTES TO LEADERS

This service can be led by anyone. Please spend some time reading through beforehand and think about how you will choose what to include and how to present each part. Alternatively, pick and choose parts of it to use in your own way – feel free to adapt anything.

We would encourage you to live stream this service (or record it) – and you may want to advertise this is a special “Digital Sunday”. Additionally, to show we value all voices, we would encourage you to invite contributions from those joining online – e.g. by doing a bible reading or prayer (if you have full hybrid capabilities). Alternatively, they could prepare something in advance or be encouraged to send a message in the chat that will be read out.

TOPTIP – this service has discussion questions instead of a sermon. Why not make it into café church? Sit round tables with coffee & cakes!

WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Suggested form of words

Welcome to hybrid worship. The service today is being [live streamed / recorded / on Zoom] and we’re thinking about worshipping in a digital age. The creativity and the challenges that technology and online platforms bring us in today’s world.

[highlight where people can sit in the building so they don’t appear on camera]

We will have a time of discussion in the service today – please do get involved.

LET US PRAY

Ever-present God,

We come today, gathered in this place and beyond, joined by those online through the blessings of technology.

We pause in our various settings, seeking to become fully present in your Grace.

Open our hearts and quiet our minds as we enter this time of worship. May we sense the unity of our church family, stretching beyond these walls and into homes and hearts around the world.

Fill us with your Spirit as we worship together, both through our screens and in this building, that we might glorify you in all things.

In the love of Jesus Christ, our Lord, we pray.

Amen.

OPENING HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Be still, for the presence of the Lord (StF 20)

Jesu, tawa pano (Jesus, we are here) (StF 27)

Meet and right it is to sing (StF 32)

[*Advice on copyright & licenses to live stream music*](#)

PRAYERS OF PRAISE & CONFESSION

God who speaks to us in our own context,
We seek you, not for the comfort of the past,
but in response to your incredible love in our lives today. We celebrate the ways you have been made known to us: We praise you for God’s love made known in Jesus, the One who told many stories in so many diverse ways. We recognise that we receive your Spirit in countless ways, through word of mouth, the written text, displays of love. Making your salvation known to us. We open ourselves to your love and guidance, that we may respond to your call in a digital age, embracing new ways of sharing the Good News.

Amen.

God of immense love and mercy,
Forgive us when we try to live in the past,
forgive us when we ignore the opportunities of this modern world, forgive us when our uncertainty of new technology drowns out your encouragement to declare you to the next generation, and we attempt to go our own way. Forgive us when our actions prevent others from finding Your grace in the online space.

Amen.

BIBLE READING

John 4:19-24

Jesus and The Woman at the Well

From The Message:

“So you’re a prophet. Well, tell me this: Our ancestors worshiped God at this mountain, but you Jews insist that Jerusalem is the only place for worship, right?”

“Believe me, woman, the time is coming when you Samaritans will worship the Father neither here at this mountain nor there in Jerusalem. You worship guessing in the dark; we Jews worship in the clear light of day. God’s way of salvation is made available through the Jews. But the time is coming—it has, in fact, come—when what you’re called will not matter and where you go to worship will not matter.”

“It’s who you are and the way you live that count before God. Your worship must engage your spirit in the pursuit of truth. That’s the kind of people the Father is out looking for: those who are simply and honestly themselves before him in their worship. God is sheer being itself—Spirit. Those who worship him must do it out of their very being, their spirits, their true selves, in adoration.”

INTERACTIVE

Introduce the talking part of the service, a time limit and explain how it will work (consider how it can take place for those joining online or watching later)

You might like to encourage openness, ensuring it is a safe space for honesty, and remind people there are no right answers. Maybe provide other ways to respond for those who don’t like talking.

Top Tip – *have a dedicated host or facilitator for those online. Even just to check comments.*

Afterwards you could ask for feedback, or provide space for those online to interact. Maybe share a story gathered in advance about one of the questions.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Allow people to choose 3 or 4 to explore in groups

- **Do you use Social Media?**
- **Is internet access a human right?**
- **Have you encountered “Fake News” or misinformation online?**
- **In what positive ways does technology provide or impact our lives?**
- **Can we find God online?**
- **What do the terms “digital church” or “online worship” mean to you?**
- **Are you worried about Artificial Intelligence?**
- **How do you interpret the bible reading in today’s context?**
- **How might the internet help you grow in faith or help your church to develop its ministry?**

PRAYER FOR CREATIVITY AND EMBRACING NEW THINGS

Written by AI (Chat GPT)

O Radiant Light,
Shining forth in the dawn of each new day,
Illuminate our hearts and minds as we venture
beyond the familiar shores of our comfort zones.
Guide us, Lord, as we navigate the uncharted
waters of creativity,
Encouraging us to speak in fresh tongues and new
expressions,
That we might reach the hearts of future
generations with Your eternal truth.

In the brilliance of Your presence,
Help us to cast aside the shadows of fear and
uncertainty,
Empowering us to embrace the unknown with
boldness and grace.
Let us be beacons of hope in a world that yearns
for light,
Drawing others towards Your love through our
innovative acts of service and compassion.

...[continued]

Lord of New Beginnings,
Grant us the courage to dream dreams and
envision a future that reflects Your boundless
creativity.
May our efforts to connect with the post-modern
world be inspired by Your infinite wisdom,
As we seek to build bridges, not barriers,
And to speak life into the hearts of all we
encounter.

Shine through us, O Light of the World,
That in our going out and our coming in,
We may reflect Your glory and share Your message
in ways that resonate deeply with those around us.
Guide us, inspire us, and transform us,
That we might be vessels of Your love, ever
adapting and ever faithful,
In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.
Amen.

HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Will you come and follow me? (StF 673)
The Heart of Worship – Matt Redman
The Church of Christ, in every age (StF 415)

Option one

DIGITAL PRAYER STATIONS

Some creative service elements that utilise
technology or relate to the theme of online. Here
are some examples to pick from:

Social Media Prayer Station:

Invite people to open their preferred social media
app on their phone and pray for the first five
people that pop up.

Gratitude list on your phone:

Invite people to open the notes app on their phone
and write something they are grateful for today.
Encourage this be a daily practice.

Interactive Prayers on the screen:

A modern equivalent of using a whiteboard / flipchart
with pens and sticky notes to add prayers.

Use the free website Slido.com (other options
available) to allow people to send prayers from their
phone to be displayed publicly on the screen. Maybe
have a theme, such as things we are grateful for this
week, and utilise the 'word cloud' feature to show
people's responses.

QR Code videos:

Invite people to engage with online videos that aid
discussion or expand on the bible reading – rather
than showing on the screen, share using a QR code
on tables that people can scan on their phone.

Film your testimony:

Encourage people to embrace the theme of this
service and experiment with some simple digital
evangelism. Take out your phone and film yourself
telling a story: maybe how you've experienced God
this week, what you're grateful for, or part of your
journey of faith – and share this on social media.

News App Prayer Station:

Exactly as you would do with Newspapers, invite
people to open their preferred News app on their
phone and pray for current situations around the
world and in your community.

Message to your future self:

Invite people to open their digital calendar on their
phone and pick a date in the future (a month or a
year). Add an entry and write a prayer or message to
your future self – what will you say?

Thinking of the digital divide:

Print off an image of a phone/laptop to write on – or
maybe you could use a tablet and pass it round?
Invite people to add collective prayers for those who
struggle with technology, are in digital poverty, or
those who experience online abuse. Prayers for the
challenges, worries, rate of change, misinformation,
regulation, and those excluded in our digital age.

Option two

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Gracious God, we give thanks for the gift of technology and the ways it connects us with others around the world. May we use it wisely and compassionately.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

We pray for those who work in the technology sector, creating tools that enhance our lives and open up new possibilities. May they be guided by ethics and a desire to serve the common good.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

For those who feel isolated or overwhelmed by the rapid pace of technological change, we ask for your comfort and guidance. Help them find balance and peace.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

In a world where social media can spread both truth and misinformation, grant us discernment to seek and share what is true, kind, and constructive.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

We lift up those who are victims of cyberbullying, harassment, and online abuse. Surround them with your love and support, and inspire us to create safer online communities.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

For educators and parents navigating the challenges of technology in the lives of young people, give them wisdom and patience to guide with love and understanding.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

We remember those who lack access to technology and the internet, increasing the digital divide. May we work towards greater inclusivity and equity in the digital world.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

In our own use of technology and social media, help us to reflect your love and grace, using these tools to build up rather than tear down, to connect rather than divide.

God who is present in the online space,

All: Guide us in Your wisdom

As we navigate the complexities of this digital age, may we always seek your wisdom and guidance, striving to be faithful stewards of the technological gifts we have received.

Lord, hear our prayer. Amen

CLOSING HYMN SUGGESTIONS

Beyond these walls of worship (StF 547)

God of Justice – Tim Hughes (StF 699)

Sent by the Lord am I (StF 239)

Build Your Kingdom Here – Rend Collective

Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go' (StF 550)

BLESSING By Revd Leslie Newton

*May the light of God shine upon us,
illuminating the spaces we inhabit,
filling us with boundless love.*

*May the grace of Jesus enrich us
enabling us to be Good News,
offering renewing hope.*

*May the life of the Spirit flow through us,
transforming us, both here and online,
making all things new.*

*And may the blessing of God Almighty,
Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer,
be upon us, uniting us as one body,
and remain with us always.*

