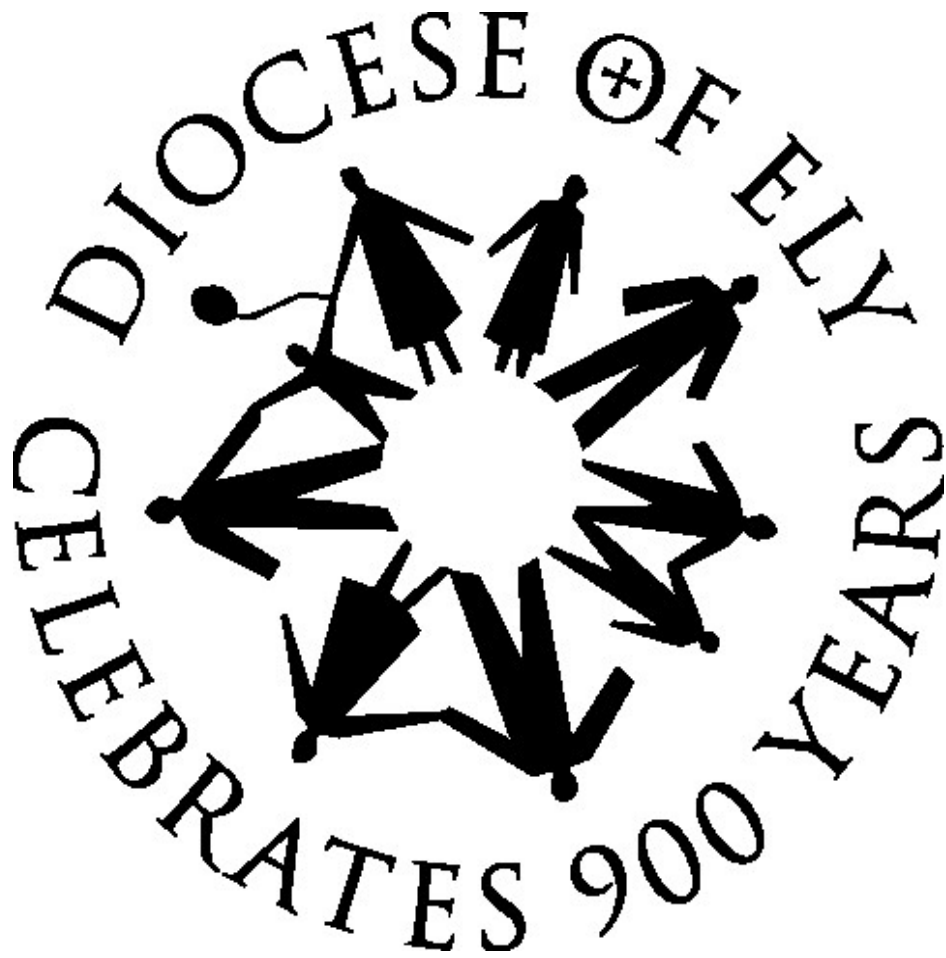


Shaping  
our  
Anniversary



Resourcing our worship

## Introduction

There are many ways in which the Ely 900 celebrations might find their way into the worshipping life of your community. Here are four themes for you to explore through services of Holy Communion, Services of the Word or informal acts of worship:

- ❖ **Sharing in God's Mission**
- ❖ **Giving Thanks for Our Past**
- ❖ **Celebrating Our Community of Faith**
- ❖ **Looking Forward to Our Future**

The Christian year provides some rich opportunities for celebrating the 900<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the diocese. Here are some examples:

- A service for the beginning of the New Year, which could focus on any of the above themes.
- A service to bless and celebrate your completed MAP within your parish or launch your MAP in the wider community.
- A service for Epiphany connected with either the theme of Celebrating Our Community of Faith or Sharing in God's Mission.
- A service for an Ember day which gives thanks for the ministries of those who have shaped the past and prays for future vocations.
- A service for a Dedication Festival which gives thanks for the faithfulness of those who have worshipped in your church or chapel.
- A service for a Patronal Festival or for All Saints which naturally picks up on the theme of Giving Thanks for Our Past.
- A service for Ascension or Pentecost which draws out the themes of Sharing in God's Mission and Looking Forward to Our Future .
- A service for Mothering Sunday which explores the idea of Ely Cathedral as our mother church or the 'mothers' of our particular community of faith.
- A service for the renewal of our Baptismal vows, which explores any of the four themes (which might occur on Easter Eve).

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### **Selected material for inclusion in your own services**

The following liturgical resources can be used in services of **Holy Communion**, **Services of the Word** as well as more **informal times of worship**. The material draws on one or more of the four themes highlighted for our celebrations.

## **Bidding or Call to Worship**

**B1** We come here today as missionaries, disciples of Jesus called to bring others to him. We are heirs to the apostles, saints and martyrs, travellers and merchants through whose witness in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ was first made eloquent.

We are also messengers of God's Kingdom calling people to new relationships; we are custodians of the faith that will help shape and heal, bring peace to its people and envision the people of the world for a new start.

Like others before us we come seeking light for ourselves that we may light the way for others, renewing our faith, so that wherever trust is dimmed and fear casts a shadow, we may reflect Christ's light of love amongst those with whom we live.

**B2** God of all ages, you dwell among us in our world of time and space. Yet our days cannot confine you and our world cannot contain you. Your mercy and love sustain us, and you hold the universe in being by your powerful word. We rejoice in your goodness to us in bringing us to this day, and revealing to us your glory, as we rejoice and sing, put a new joy in our hearts, a new song on our lips. Set the praise of Christ in all our living, and the goodness of Christ throughout the world. Blessed be God for ever! **Blessed be God for ever! Amen**

**B3** Centuries have passed, Lord, God, since you walked this earth in Jesus Christ. We rejoice in all that you have done. Centuries have passed, Lord God, since your Son, Jesus Christ died for us. We grieve that we still crucify him today. Centuries have passed, Lord God, since you destroyed death in Jesus Christ. We celebrate the hope to which you call us. In all our hoping, our grieving and our rejoicing, help us to see you there before us in Jesus, and, through him, give us strength to press on towards our goal – your most holy and perfect presence. **Amen.**

## **Prayer of preparation**

This could also be used by PCCs and at parish meetings when producing MAPs.

God of mission, we are your church, Christ's body on earth, your holy people for your needy world. In our thinking, give us wisdom. In our planning, give us faith. In our action, give us the power of your Spirit. That all we do and think and say may be for

your glory and for the growth of the kingdom of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ.  
**Amen.**

### **Kyrie Confession**

Let us call to mind all that prevents us shining with the light of Christ, and seek God's forgiveness for our sins. You have been faithful to us through many generations. But we have not always kept faith with you. Lord, have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

You have given us a glimpse of your kingdom. But we have failed to seek it with our whole heart. Christ, have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

You have promised us a future that is bright and full of purpose. But we have too often lost ourselves in the glories of the past. Lord, have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

### **Ending for Kyrie Confession or other authorized confession**

**May the past be neither a ghost to haunt us, nor a stick to beat us.  
But a teacher and a guide by which we learn to live in wholeness and holiness,  
with all creation, to your eternal praise and glory,  
and through Christ who is the same yesterday, today and for ever. Amen.**

### **Absolution**

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins,  
heal and strengthen us by his Spirit,  
and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord,  
who is the same, yesterday, today and for ever. **Amen.**

### **The Ely 900 Collect**

Faithful God,  
we give you thanks  
that we are your people  
and you are our God,

in times of fruitfulness and times of need;  
in times of opportunity and times of challenge.  
As you have been faithful to us,  
may we continue in faithfulness to you,  
in witness to your love  
and in expectation of your promises,  
by the power of your Spirit  
and through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### **Gospel Acclamation**

Alleluia, Alleluia.  
'Go and make disciples of all the nations',  
says the Lord;  
'I am with you always to the end of the age'.  
**Alleluia**

### **An ending for an authorized affirmation of faith**

**This is our faith, the faith of Christians before us. By their faithfulness we have received the gospel. This is our faith, the faith we offer to others, the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

### **Prayers of intercession**

**I**

O God, in whom time and eternity are united in Jesus Christ,  
we recall our past – our histories of triumph and tragedy.

As the stories of our people entwine with the earthly life of your Son, we give thanks that you came among us to set us free and we rejoice as we pray in peace:

For all people who with sincerity and sacrifice have led us, inspired us and urged us in our journeys of faith: Gracious God, **hear our prayer.**

For all people who with courage and commitment have drawn us to wonder at the glory of your creation: Gracious God, **hear our prayer.**

For all people who with vision and energy have challenged us to explore new worlds and further horizons: Gracious God, **hear our prayer.**

For all people who with clarity and compassion have longed to heal our divisions, and hold us in our pain: Gracious God, **hear our prayer.**

For all people whose stories are seldom told and whose graves are unmarked: Gracious God, **hear our prayer.**

Gently speak to us of the reality of our story,  
and through the honest exchange of love and judgement  
help us to remember without fantasy and to redeem within our power  
so that even memories that are paved with gold can beckon a way towards the future.  
**This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever. Amen.**

**I2**

Eternal God, our history and our hopes are held in the wounded hands of your risen Son. As we look into time unknown, we pray for the people and the tasks that will weave the pattern of our future days.

To the people we have yet to love, and answers we have yet to find: Loving God, guide us and lead us.

Through challenges we have yet to face and to courage we have yet to need: Loving God, guide us and lead us.

Through suffering we have yet to endure and pain we have yet to know: Loving God, guide us and lead us.

In the renewing of [*your worshipping community*] and the inspiration of new life: Loving God, guide us and lead us.

Towards dreams we have yet to follow and horizons we have yet to see: Loving God, guide us and lead us.

In the freedom of hope and the promise of all creation: Loving God, guide us and lead us.

God of love, you call us to follow paths as yet unknown.

Teach us not to be afraid, and give us your grace,

that we may be drawn together into life and love and peace,  
and in our trusting, find our future life in you.

Through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen.**

### **The Peace**

**PE1** We are all one in Christ Jesus.  
We belong to him through faith,  
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you...

**PE2** We are the body of Christ.  
In the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body.  
Let us then pursue all that makes for peace  
and builds up our common life.  
The peace of the Lord be always with you....

**PE3** We are the body of Christ.  
**By one Spirit we were baptized into one body.**  
Keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.  
**We are bound by the love of Christ.**  
The peace of the Lord be always with you....

### **Prefaces**

**P1** And now we give you thanks  
that we are your people and you are our God  
in times of fruitfulness and times of need;  
in times of opportunity and times of challenge.

**P2** And now we give you thanks  
because you have redeemed our time  
and have given us this year of grace to proclaim your  
favour and celebrate your steadfast love.

**P3** And now we give you thanks  
because he breathed upon his disciples  
the power of your Spirit  
to proclaim the good news to all peoples.

**P4** And now we give you thanks  
because by the Holy Spirit you lead us into all truth,  
and give us power to proclaim your gospel to the nations  
and to serve you as a royal priesthood.

**P5** And now we give you thanks  
because he is the true vine, your chosen one,  
in whom we are joined to bear fruit in plenty.

**An extended preface for Eucharistic Prayers A, B and E (Order One)**, replacing the text  
between the opening dialogue and the Sanctus.

Father, we give you thanks and praise  
through Jesus Christ our Lord  
because you are God almighty,  
creator of the world and everything in it.  
Lord of heaven and earth,  
you made the whole human race.

You have shown to us in Christ the mystery  
of your purpose:

You chose us all in Christ  
**to praise his glory.**

You will bring all things together under Christ,  
all things in heaven, all things on earth,  
under him as head:  
You chose us all in Christ  
**to praise his glory.**

We have heard the word of truth,  
the good news of salvation,  
You have stamped us with the seal of your

Spirit of promise:

You choose us all in Christ

**To praise his glory.**

We who once were far away  
have been brought near by the blood of Christ:

You chose us all in Christ

**to praise his glory.**

He is the peace between us,  
and has broken down the barrier of hostility.

He has made us one new humanity  
and reconciled us to you by the cross:

You chose us all in Christ

**to praise his glory.**

He killed hostility and brought peace,  
peace to all near at hand, peace to all far away:

You chose us all in Christ

**to praise his glory.**

Through him we come, by the Spirit,  
to you, our Father in heaven, *singing*:

### **Post Communion Prayer**

**PC1**            Eternal God, giver of love and power,  
                    your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world  
                    to preach the gospel of his kingdom:  
                    Confirm us in this mission,  
                    and help us to live the good news we proclaim;

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**PC<sub>2</sub>** Fill us, good Lord, with your Spirit of love;  
and as you have fed us with the one bread of heaven,  
so make us one in heart and mind,  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

**PC<sub>3</sub>** Eternal God and Father,  
whose Son at supper prayed that his disciples might be one,  
as he is one with you:  
Draw us closer to him,  
that in common love and obedience to you  
we may be united to one another  
in the fellowship of the one Spirit,  
that the world may believe that he is Lord,  
to your eternal glory;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Blessing**

May God the Father set us free from fear, surround us with love and strengthen us in faith. **Amen.**

May God the Son guide us in the way, lead us in truth and bring us to life eternal. **Amen.**

May God the Holy Spirit give us grace to meet whatever comes, with fortitude, patience and joy. **Amen.**

And the blessing .....

### **Endings and prayers of commissioning**

**EC<sub>1</sub>** To a troubled world: **Peace from Christ**  
To a searching world: **Love from Christ.**  
To a dying world: **Hope from Christ.**

**EC<sub>3</sub>** Jesus, Lord of all time, **hold us in your eternity.**  
Jesus, image of God, **travel with us the life of faith.**

Jesus, friend of sinners, **heal the brokenness of our world.**

Jesus, Lord of tomorrow, **draw us into your future. Amen.**

**EC4** We now accept together:

The call to gratitude

**for the gift of the world.**

The call to compassion

**for the pain of the world.**

The call to joy

**in the gladness of the world.**

The call to peace

**for the healing of the world.**

The call to love

**for the life of the world.**

The call to hope

**for the salvation of the world.**

**EC5** We pledge for the future before us to respect the fragile earth and all who are weak; to promote the ways of peace and heal the wounds of conflict: To make the sacrifice of service and honour all that is good: To build a safer future for our children and reverence the gift of life. This we pledge in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

**EC6** O God who gave us life, and in whose arms we die, you know us as we are, understand what we have been, and see what we shall become. We give you back our lives that you may make them new: generous, committed to hope, and fearless to do your will; that your whole creation may live to praise your name, now and for ever. Amen.

### **Acclamations and responses**

**AR1** As we hold before you our past  
**we give thanks for all that has been.**

As we hold before you our present  
**we give you thanks for all that is.**

As we hold before you our future  
**we thank you for what is to come.**

Your faithfulness has always sustained us,  
strengthens and encourages us now,  
and will guide us in hope to the end of time.  
**For you are the same yesterday, today and for ever.**

**AR2** A thousand years in God's sight are like a single day.  
**Like an evening that has already gone.**  
Christ is the first and the last  
**the beginning and the end.**

### **Short Passages of Scripture**

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today and for ever.

Hebrews 13.8

We have waited on your loving kindness, O God, in the midst of your temple.

Ps 48.9

Live living stones, let yourselves be built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood,  
to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2.5

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are  
new every morning; great is his faithfulness.

Lamentations 3. 22,23

The Lord your God is God, the faithful God who maintains covenant loyalty with those  
who love him and keep his commandments to a thousand generations.

Deuteronomy 7.9

I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of  
Jacob...This is my name for ever, and my title for all generations.

Exodus 3.6, 15b

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.

Ps 67.3

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures for ever.

Ps 107.1

Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory.

Revelation 19.7

## Outlines for informal acts of worship

### Theme: Sharing in God's Mission – Holy Ground

**You will need:** A map of the area of your mission, candles for all participants or other suitable symbols to place on the map at the intercessions.

#### Greeting

The peace of Christ be with you.

**And also with you.**

#### Opening Sentences

The field of mission: **is the holy ground of God.**

We tread this way with awe: **in the mystery of grace.**

For walk we must, even in the silences: **following the call of Christ.**

#### Confession

Voice 1:

We hear your voice, O Christ, saying 'Whom will I send?' and there is a longing in our hearts to say 'Send us'. But we have made so many mistakes in our ignorance, in our dividedness, even in our enthusiasm and we wonder whether we should stand in silence on this, your holy ground.

*Silent reflection*

Voice 2:

We have been saying so many things for so many years, without much changing and we wonder whether we should stand in silence, on this, your holy ground and stop our speaking and our writing and our meetings.

*Silent reflection*

Voice 3:

We have been working so hard, for so long with small energies and few resources and, when others rush past us without speaking as though they will carry the gospel beyond us and without us, we wonder whether we should stand in silence, on this, your holy ground and close our circle behind them.

*Silent reflection*

Jesus remember us and forgive us.

Sing twice 'Jesus, remember us' (Taize)

#### Assurance of pardon

Hear the word of God for us: 'I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness and will hold your hand. I will keep you and give you as a covenant to the people. Behold, the former things have come to pass and new things I declare. Before they spring forth, I announced them to you'.

Thanks be to God!

Taize Chant or hymn

## Readings

### Address or quiet reflection on the Word

#### Affirmation of Faith

In response to the word, let us stand and affirm our faith:

**We believe in light beyond our seeing, flowing forth from the flame of life in God who goes on creating in us down through the ages of ages.**

**We believe in healing beyond our knowing from Christ whose robe stands close to the reach of our hand and the pain of our struggle beyond the end of time.**

**We believe in the energy of God's Spirit, stirring in our being with a rhythm of courage and passion, moving our feet to risk Christ's way again as those who are always called to be humble, human witnesses to the faithfulness of God.**

#### Intercession

Mission belongs to you, O God.

You have traced upon this world the outline of your Kingdom and have granted us the hope that we shall be reshaped in its likeness. Hear us as we pray for our community, its institutions, its places and its people – those whom it has nurtured, those who have come to call it home, and those who have moved away, but love it dearly.

*(use a large map of the area concerned and invite people to come forward and place a candle or symbol on the map at the location that is special to them)*

The ground is holy because you are already there. All we are and all we do in faith is dependent on you and the victory already won. We place ourselves in your hands again and ask for all that we need to do the task.

Into our emptiness: **breathe your fullness.**

Into our tiredness: **pour your energy.**

If we are discouraged: **bring us your hope.**

If we are afraid: **bring us your courage.**

If we do not know the way: **give to us your wisdom.**

**For we are your people and you are our God, forever and forever. Amen.**

#### Ely 900 Collect

And now we pray your prayer as one:

**Our Father....**

#### Blessing

Go into this day, with a lifting of the heart. And may the Triune God be in our beginnings, and endings, and on the journey in between. Amen.

## **Theme: Giving thanks for our past – Waymarks and Saints**

### **You will need:**

A cleared space or table, covered with cloth to represent the story of the Christian church. Strips of coloured paper for everyone and plenty spare strips (lengthways half of A4 is ideal). A long strip of paper about half the length of the table or space (if necessary stick/staple pieces together) to represent the story of the diocese. Felt tip pens. A symbol of Christ (cross, icon, rock, Bible etc.) A symbol of the Heavenly City (something gold, a painting (e.g. William Blake's The River of Life) or a Bible open at Revelation 21:22. You might like to also use smiley face stickers (or equivalent) to represent people, blank stickers to represent waymarks and another strip of paper that represents the history of your faith community.

### **Setting up:**

Prepare the table or space. Place the symbol of Christ on the far left of the space. Keep the symbol of the Heavenly City, the strips that represent your faith community and the diocese on one side.

### **Opening:**

From God's creation of the Universe: **This is our story**

God with us each day: **This is our story**

With God for ever: **This is our story**

### **Scripture Readings:**

These are the things we learned  
from our ancestors,  
and we will tell them  
to the next generation.  
We won't keep secret  
the glorious deeds  
and the mighty miracles  
of the LORD.

Ps. 78. 3-4 (CEV)

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever.

Hebrews 13. 8 NRSV

And you show that you are a letter from Christ delivered by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.

2 Corinth 3.3 ESV

### **Example Introduction:**

God has cared for his people since the beginning of time, and will care for us for all eternity. Now we remember part of that Story. The Story of our lives and faith.

You are all invited to take a strip of paper and draw your journey of faith. You could draw a line that rises and falls with the ups and downs of your Christian life. But remember God was with us long before we knew him, and sometimes the harder times are when we grow the most.

On your line mark (using stickers or another means) the people who have inspired you in your faith at different times. They could be friends, teachers, ministers or anyone who has encouraged you in your walk with Christ.

Also mark moments in your life, waymarks (using stickers or another means) where you have met with God. They could be times like baptism, confirmation, a moment of conversion, your marriage, or any other time that is precious to you.

*Allow people some time to prepare their stories. Be ready to help and guide people who are struggling. Some background music might be helpful (e.g. Michael Card's 'Poiema' album which focuses on 'The Story of our Life'. Hymns such as 'Blessed Assurance' or appropriate choruses).*

### **Response:**

Please gather around the table or space.

God guides us and walks with us through our lives. People and places, times and seasons, meetings and occasions come together to tell the story of our Christian life. But we are just a small part of God's story, even though each of us is important and precious in the sight of God. This table/space represents the Story of God's Church. Here (*gesture or touch the symbol of Christ*) is Christ the foundation of our faith, who lived and died and rose again for us. Here are we (*gesture or touch the right hand side of the table/space*), part of that on-going story. I invite you now to bring your story and prayerfully place it here.

*Allow people some time to bring their story strips to the prepared space and place them on the right hand side. Again some background music may be helpful. When everyone has placed their story strip take the blank spare strips.*

Each of us has brought our Story before God. Each of us has been inspired by other people of faith in their lives lived with God.

*Place a blank strip just overlapping to the left of the people's story strips. Then as you continue speaking place more strips to the left.*

And each of those people were inspired by others who shared their faith with them, and others before them, and others even before them, back through 2000 years to the time of Jesus Christ.

*Place strips to the left until you reach the symbol of Christ. Move back to the far right of the table or space. Take the strip representing the story of the diocese and of your own local faith community (if you are using it).*

Each of us has brought our story before God. Each of us has had times and moments of change and transformation, waymarks in our journey of faith. This year we celebrate 900 years of our wider community of faith, a waymark in the life of the diocese.

*(If you are using the local faith community strip)* This symbolizes the story of this Church, this faith community, as part of the story of God's people.

*Place the strip on the table/space from the right hand side reaching back into the past.*

This symbolizes the story of the diocese, our wider faith community as part of the story of God's people.

*Place the diocese strip on the table/space from the right hand side reaching back to the past.*

Let us take a few moments to reflect on those who have gone before us in the faith; who have walked with God, loved one another, and witnessed to the truth of the Gospel.

*Give people some time to reflect in silence. Then take the symbol of the Heavenly City. Stand on the far right of the table/space.*

But God is not God of present and past alone. God is God of the future, when all peoples shall be united in love in the Heavenly City. We are not the end of the Story, we are just part of the eternal story of God's love, who was, and is, and is to come. Amen.

### **Prayer**

A time for open prayer, or prayers from the selected material such as the **Ely 900 Collect**.

The prayers can be brought to a close with **The Lord's Prayer**.

### **Ending**

**The Grace** may be said or:

**God beyond time, who was and is and is to come, write in our hearts the eternal story of your love, grace and forgiveness. Empower us by the Spirit to share that story with others; the Gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## **Theme: Giving thanks for our past – a Gathering of Repentance**

### **You will need:**

A cleared space/table, covered with cloth, a glass bowl, decorated as you wish, a large jug filled with water, 3 pieces of glossy card or acetate for everyone, enough pieces of card for everyone with the Gloria printed on one side, water soluble felt tip pens, and a large white cloth that can cover the bowl.

### **Setting up:**

Prepare the table/space. Place the bowl in the centre. If it is glass you can light it with candles and decorate it by placing glass beads or smooth stones inside, although this is purely aesthetic. Place the jug and cloth next to the bowl. Distribute the pieces of acetate, the Gloria pieces, and pens to all participants.

### **Opening:**

From the moment of our birth: **we have fallen short of God's Glory**

Throughout human history: **we have fallen short of God's Glory**

By accident and desire: **we have fallen short of God's Glory**

### **Suggested Scripture Readings:**

A person who gets ahead by oppressing the poor or by showering gifts on the rich will end in poverty. Proverbs 22.16 NRSV

And since we have a great priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. Hebrews 10.21-23 ESV

God treats everyone alike. He accepts people only because they have faith in Jesus Christ. All of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory. But God treats us much better than we deserve, and because of Christ Jesus, he freely accepts us and sets us free from our sins. God sent Christ to be our sacrifice. Christ offered his life's blood, so that by faith in him we could come to God. Romans 3. 23-35 CEV

### **Example Introduction**

'I have never done anything to hurt anyone – I have never sinned'. Have you ever heard that said? Whoever said it must have been born miraculously if their mother didn't feel a thing! And what of those unkind words and spiteful things that we say as children? Sometimes as adults! The times we are selfish, careless and uncaring? Even the way we live our lives in the Western nations is only possible because others in the world have less than us, and work for far less than us. We have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory, as individuals, as a church and as a nation.

Today we are invited to bring before God our sins.

You have three pieces of acetate.

On one of them we can seek forgiveness for how we have fallen short as individuals.

On another we can offer to God how we as a nation have fallen short of God's Kingdom principles of justice and equality.

As we celebrate 900 years of this diocese, on the third we can bring before God ways in which we as a Church have fallen short – it could be something in the distant past, or something more recent.

Don't worry if you find it hard to write on the acetate, what you put down is between you and God only. It could be one word, it could be a sentence.

You also have one piece of card with the words of the ancient Christian hymn 'The Gloria' printed on it. As we say sorry for what we get wrong we also celebrate God's grace. On the back of this card write something you wish to give thanks for in the life of the diocese or church over the last 900 years that you are willing to share in this gathering.

*Allow time for people to prepare their four pieces. Appropriate background music may be helpful. Be available for people if they struggle with the task.*

### **Response**

Please gather round the table/space

God forgives our sins, and sets us free from them. He changes the way we live through his Son, Jesus Christ. We must let go of our sins and ask God to work in us.

So I would ask you to bring your pieces forward and prayerfully place them in the bowl.

*Give people time to come forward. Again, music may be helpful. When everyone has come forward, take the jug of water.*

God, through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ washes us pure again. As we seek to be changed he transforms our lives [*pour the water into the bowl rapidly*].

*Leave some time for reflection.*

For his sake he blots out our failings. He remembers our sin no more [*take the white cloth and place it over the bowl so it is covered*].

*Leave some time for reflection.*

May God forgive us and set us free from our sins, wash us pure and transform our lives by the power of his Spirit. Giving us new life in Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

We move from sorrow to the glory of God. I invite you all in turn to read your thanksgiving for the life of our Diocese and/or your Church.

*Leave space for all to read their thanksgiving.*

Giving thanks to God we join our voices together in the words of the Gloria:

**Glory to God in the highest and peace to his people on earth.**

**Lord God, heavenly King, Almighty God and Father,**

**we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.**

**Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,**

**You take away the sin of the world: have mercy on us;**

**you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,**

**you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,**

**with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

### **Prayers**

*Allow some time for open prayer if desired. And/or the Ely 900 Collect.*

*The prayers can be brought to a close with the Lord's Prayer.*

### **Ending**

*The gathering can end with the Grace, or a shared ending such as:*

**God of wonder and joy**

**you have washed us clean**

**and changed our lives**

**by your spirit help us transform the world in which we live**

**with the good news of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

## **Theme: Celebrating our community of faith – Living Stones**

### **Notes:**

This outline service focuses on church buildings and is particularly appropriate for worship around a dedication festival, or when your community of faith is considering how to use the church/chapel/hall more effectively or when your community is thinking about our mother church: Ely Cathedral.

### **You will need:**

A cleared space or table, covered with cloth. A selection of stones, enough for all participants (ideally some Church masonry). Some pieces of paper and pens for suggestions.

### **Setting up:**

Prepare the table/space. Place the stones upon the table with the suggestion papers to one side. The story could have been recorded and read through a PA system or could be read by an unseen narrator for dramatic effect. The story supplied relates to Ely Cathedral, but you could write one for your own Church/chapel.

### **Opening:**

We are living stones: **Built into a spiritual house**

Set on Christ our cornerstone: **Built into a spiritual house**

Prepared as the Bride of Christ: **Built into a spiritual house**

### **Suggested Scripture readings:**

Come to Jesus Christ. He is the living stone that people have rejected, but which God has chosen and highly honoured. And now you are living stones that are being used to build a spiritual house. You are also a group of holy priests, and with the help of Jesus Christ you will offer sacrifices that please God.  
1 Peter 2.4-5 CEV

I saw a new heaven and a new earth. The first heaven and the first earth had disappeared and so had the sea. Then I saw New Jerusalem, that holy city, coming down from God in heaven. It was like a bride dressed in her wedding gown and ready to meet her husband. I heard a loud voice shout from the throne: God's home is now with his people. He will live with them, and they will be his own. Yes, God will make his home among his people.  
Revelation 21. 1-3 CEV

You are like light for the whole world. A city built on top of a hill cannot be hidden, and no one would light a lamp and put it under a clay pot. A lamp is placed on a lampstand, where it can give light to everyone in the house.  
Matthew 5. 14-15 CEV

### **Example Introduction:**

The Bible teaches us that Church is not a building or a place, but a community of people, called by God. And yet our buildings do seem to take up a huge amount of our time. Churches with buildings seem to spend a lot of time fund raising to keep them running, and plenty of churches without buildings seem to spend a lot of time fundraising just to get one.

But our church buildings are not just stone, mortar, lead and brick – just like our houses are more than the materials of which they are made. We sometimes call church buildings 'the House of God', as if God needed a roof over his head! But in the same way our houses become

homes; places of refreshment, encouragement and refuge, our church buildings should be homes for the people of God; places of refreshment, encouragement and refuge.

But what if these buildings could speak to us? I invite you now to take a stone and listen to what follows.

Allow time for people to choose a stone and sit comfortably.

Well you will have to excuse me if I don't remember things too well. After all I am very old indeed. Not as old as the Ancient of Days I sing my silent praise to, but I have seen rather a lot.

Once upon a time, not quite 1400 years ago, there lived a Princess. All the best stories have a princess, but this Princess wasn't in need of rescuing by a handsome Prince. This one knew where her heart was. It belonged to God and she wouldn't give it to any man. Her name was Etheldreda.

So that's where I started out. She built me, a special place for men and women who wanted to serve God. A monastery. Now it wasn't all prayers. There was work to do, the poor to help, people to teach, the good news to proclaim.

But nothing lasts for ever.

Men of violence came; Danes. The people who served God were killed and scattered and I was reduced to ruins.

But the time of violence passed and soon new people came to serve God. To rebuild me and to build anew.

As you see me now, that was started by a man named Simeon, and soon I wasn't just a monastery, I was a Cathedral. A seat for a Bishop, a chief shepherd who cared for a wide flock across a new Diocese of Ely. And just as he looked across the Fens to his flock; the people he served, I stood tall and looked across the Fens to my flock, the many other smaller churches built to give glory to the Ancient of Days, filled with people worshipping God.

Not that there haven't been some bad folk amongst the good in my time. I have seen them all. Some men and women of God, like Etheldreda. But then there were some who were more people of violence and fear like the Danes before.

Many good people came to visit me, to pray and to remember Etheldreda. People in need and trouble and I know God was with them. I have always been filled with songs and prayers of praise to the Ancient of Days which have been soaked up by my stones.

Not that my stones have always stayed the same. Half of my west front collapsed at one point, and the only reason I have an octagon rather than a central tower at my crossing is that the tower fell down!

I have never quite understood people though. One moment they are decorating me and putting up statues, the next moment they are pulling them down again and whitewashing me. About 450 years ago it was particularly bad. God, however, always looks to the heart not to the decoration, and I continued singing my silent song of praise.

Not that I am ready to retire! Every year countless people visit me, and I know that many leave with a sense of wonder at the One for whom I was built. I have seen so many different ways of worshipping God. Singing, dancing, clapping, painting, in noise and in silence. And just like in Etheldreda's time, I have seen men and women of God commissioned and ordained for his service.

Some think Stone eternal, and that diamonds are for ever. But I know that all this, even I, will one day crumble to dust and pass away. But I also know that part of me will live on in Eternity, in the hearts of those who prayerfully built me to the Glory of God, in the hearts of those who

have prayed within my walls, and in the hearts of those who have been sent out from within me with the message of God's love for the world.

Until I fall I continue singing my silent song of praise to the Ancient of Days.

*Leave some time for people to reflect.*

### **Response:**

Our church buildings are a way of worshipping God. Just like our songs and all of our lives. But they should also be Homes, not just Houses. How can we make better use of our built heritage in this community, to serve God, to serve his Church, and to serve the people of a needy world?

Take a few moments to reflect. How can we use this great gift from previous generations better? When you have an idea I invite you to prayerfully bring your stone back to the table/space and write your suggestion on a piece of paper and place it with the stone.

*Allow people some time to bring their stones and their suggestions. It may be worth mentioning what will be done with the suggestions. Recycling is not an option! Expect God to speak afresh to your community with ideas about how to best use its building.*

### **Prayer**

Allow time for open prayer or one of the prayers from the selected material, such as the **Ely 900 Collect**.

The prayers can be brought to a close with **The Lord's Prayer**

### **Ending**

The gathering can end with **The Grace** or

**Eternal Father, Architect of the Universe build us together as your people and empower us by your Spirit to proclaim your love to all. That we may come at the last to the Holy City with Jesus Christ, the Cornerstone.**

**Amen.**

**Theme: Looking Forward to our Future – The dance of life!**

**You will need:** a large candle

Call to worship

The years, the centuries, the millennia,

Are but your small moments, O God: **moments in which your life always lives and journeys on.**

This life passed from heart to heart, soul to soul, life to life: **affirming its presence in each recreation.**

You, O God, will never leave us, nor forsake us. **The music of your truth will echo among us forever. We will join the dance of life!**

**Hymn/worship song/chant**

**Facing the Unknown**

We may bring some vulnerable things to the dance of life:

Fear of the unknown, a sense of inadequacy, loneliness in a community, anxieties about coping with what lies ahead, perhaps tiredness or unreadiness.

Let us, in faith and trust, share those things with each other and be joined in our humanness:

The people either name out loud or write on a post-it the more vulnerable things they bring to the dance.

Jesus remember us, as we take up the responsibility of being mission people in your Church.

Sing three times: 'Jesus remember us, when you come into your kingdom' (Taize)

**Assurance of pardon**

Hear the word of Christ to us:

Nothing in all creation can separate us from the love of God. Rise up and walk in faith. Amen.

**Hymn/worship song or chant**

**Example Readings**

2 Sam 6. 1-5, 12b-19

Ps 24

Ephesians 1. 3-14

Mark 6. 14-29

**Address or silent reflection on the Word.**

**Affirmation of Faith**

Let us respond to the word by affirming our faith:

**We believe in God who created us from nothing and goes on bringing to birth new things beyond our imagining.**

**We believe in Jesus Christ who entered our unknown journey and experienced all our living, who walked in our earthiness and can still be discovered in our midst.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit who calls us on to truth in light beyond our seeing, who stirs within our being like a melody of possible music, who dances on before us in the freedom of passionate life.**

### **Sharing our hopes before God**

As we begin this new dance together, in praise of 900 years of God's faithfulness to the people of the diocese let us share our hopes and light this candle as a sign that the light of Christ dances with us in these hopes:

*Each person names a hope or expectation for the coming year of mission as they hold the candle and then passes it on.*

*Then the candle is placed on the altar/stand and the time of sharing ends with the following prayer:*

O God, we place this our life in your hands.

**Take all that we bring, our gifts and talents, our longings and our faith and add your power for life, for we ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

### **Hymn/worship song or chant**

#### **Commitment to each other**

As we are able, let us make our commitment to dance together:

**We will dance together with Jesus Christ in our midst. Our hands are open to receive, our hearts are open to give, our minds long to learn and our souls reach out to each other. This time is eternal time for us and God will be our blessing. Amen.**

#### **Benediction**

Go in peace to live among the signs of God. And may Christ Jesus break bread at your table, the Creator spread a cloth for the feast and the Spirit dance in the centre of your gathering. **Amen.**

## A Service of the Word to celebrate the 900<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Diocese of Ely and the place of our community within it.

### We gather in God's presence

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and for ever.

Hebrews 13.8

### Hymn

### Bidding

We come here today as disciples of Jesus, called to bring others to him. We are heirs to the apostles, saints and martyrs, travellers and merchants through whose witness in word and deed the gospel of Jesus Christ was first made eloquent.

We are also messengers of God's kingdom calling people to new relationships; we are custodians of the faith that will help shape and heal, bring peace to its people and envision the people of the world for a new start.

Like others before us we come seeking light for ourselves that we may light the way for others, renewing our faith, so that wherever trust is dimmed and fear casts a shadow, we may reflect Christ's light of love amongst those with whom we live.

### We confess our sins

Let us call to mind all that prevents us shining with the light of Christ, and seek God's forgiveness for our sins.

You have been faithful to us through many generations but we have not always kept faith with you.

Lord have mercy. **Lord, have mercy.**

You have given us a glimpse of your kingdom, but we have failed to seek it with our whole heart.

Christ have mercy. **Christ have mercy.**

You have promised us a future that is bright and full of purpose, but we have too often lost ourselves in the glories of the past.

Lord have mercy. **Lord have mercy.**

May the God of love and power forgive us and free us from our sins. Heal and strengthen us by his Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord, who is the same, yesterday, today and for ever. **Amen.**

### The Collect

Faithful God, we give you thanks that we are your people and you are our God, in times of fruitfulness and times of need; in times of opportunity and times of challenge. As you have been faithful to us, may we continue in faithfulness to you, in witness of your love and in expectation of your promises, by the power of your Spirit and through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## We hear God's Word

### Reading

At the end of the reading the reader says:

For the gift of his holy Word: **Thanks be to God.**

### Hymn

### Reading

At the end of the reading the reader says:

For the gift of his holy Word: **Thanks be to God.**

### Sermon

#### We respond to the Word by affirming our faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him.**

This is our faith, the faith of Christians before us. By their faithfulness we have received the Gospel.

**This is our faith, the faith we offer to others, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

**Hymn** (during which a collection may be taken)

#### We pray

O God, in whom time and eternity are united in Jesus Christ, we recall our past; our histories of triumph and tragedy. As the stories of our people entwine with the earthly life of your Son, we give thanks that you came among us to set us free, and to lead us to yourself. And so we rejoice as we pray...

For all people who with sincerity and sacrifice have led us, inspired us and urged us in our journeys of faith:

Gracious God, **hear our prayer**

For all people who with courage and commitment have drawn us to wonder at the glory of your creation:

Gracious God, **hear our prayer**

For all people who with vision and energy have challenged us to explore new worlds and further horizons:

Gracious God, **hear our prayer**

For all people who with clarity and compassion have longed to heal our divisions, and hold us in our pain:

Gracious God, **hear our prayer**

Gently speak to us of the reality of our story, and through the honest exchange of love and judgement help us to remember without fantasy and to redeem within our power. So that even memories paved with gold can beckon a way towards the future. This we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever. **Amen.**

**The Lord's Prayer** is said

### **We ask God's blessing on our community**

God of all people, you have traced upon this world the outline of your Kingdom and have granted us the hope that we shall be reshaped in its likeness. Hear us as we pray for our community, its institutions, its places and its people – those whom it has nurtured, those who have come to call it home, and those who have moved away, but love it dearly.

*The congregation are invited to come forward and place a candle or other symbol to mark a particular place which is special to them on the map of the area which the community is concerned with.*

### **We are sent out**

Eternal God, our history and our hopes are held in the wounded hands of your risen Son. As we look into time unknown, we pray for the people and the tasks that will weave the pattern of our future days.

To people we have yet to love, and answers we have yet to find:

Loving God, **guide us and lead us.**

Through challenges we have yet to face and to courage we have yet to need:

Loving God, **guide us and lead us.**

Through sufferings we have yet to endure and pain we have yet to know:

Loving God, **guide us and lead us.**

In the renewing of this faith community and the inspiration of new life:

Loving God, **guide us and lead us.**

In the freedom of hope and the promise of all creation:

Loving God, **guide us and lead us.**

Hymn

### **Blessing**

May God the Father set us free from fear, surround us with love and strengthen us in faith. **Amen.**

May God the Son guide us in the way, lead us in truth and bring us to life eternal. **Amen.**

May God the Holy Spirit give us grace to meet whatever comes with fortitude, patience and joy. **Amen.** And the blessing....

*All people turn to face the open doors*

### **Dismissal**

To a searching world: **Love from Christ.**

To a troubled world: **Peace from Christ.**

To a dying world: **Hope from Christ. Amen.**

## Suggested music resources for the Anniversary

The Bishop's Adviser for Music, Jan Payne, would like to encourage every worshipping community across the diocese to include some new music in the context of the usual pattern of worship during 2009. If at all possible try to explore music in a very different style to the music the community would normally choose for services.

A list of suggested music will be updated throughout 2009 on the Ely RSCM website [www.rscmely.com](http://www.rscmely.com).

Suggestions for this ongoing list should be sent to [janmpayne@googlemail.com](mailto:janmpayne@googlemail.com).

## Traditional music for organ and choir

The following hymns are readily available in mainstream hymn and worship song books:

- Be thou my vision
- Brother, sister, let me serve you
- Christ is made the sure foundation
- Faithful one, so unchanging
- God is working his purpose out
- Great is thy faithfulness
- I the Lord of sea and sky
- Lord, for the years
- Lord of all hopefulness
- Now thank we all our God
- Christ the same
- God our help in ages past
- Jesus, I have promised
- Praise, my soul the king of heaven
- The church's one foundation
- Through all the changing scenes of life
- Thy hand, O God, has guided
- We have a gospel to proclaim
- Forth in the peace of Christ we go
- Go forth and tell
- Lord of all power I give you my will
- Lord thy church on earth is seeking
- Lord you give the great commission

See also:

[www.rscm.com](http://www.rscm.com) **Voice for Life** songbook and John Barnard's two resources: **RSCM Carol Book and Season by Season**.

[www.kevinmayhew.com/Shop/Categories/238/Kevin\\_Mayhew\\_Publishers/Music\\_Resources/Choral.aspx](http://www.kevinmayhew.com/Shop/Categories/238/Kevin_Mayhew_Publishers/Music_Resources/Choral.aspx)

The following two hymns are not widely available, but are reproduced with the authors' kind permission and may be copied freely:

**Hope of our calling: hope through courage won;**  
by those who dared to share all Christ had done.  
Saints of today, Christ's banner now unfurled,  
we bring his gospel to a waiting world.

Hope of our calling: hope with strength empowered,  
inspired by all that we have seen and heard;  
this call is ours, for we are chosen too,  
to live for God in all we say and do.

Hope of our calling: hope with grace outpoured,  
from death's despair the gift of life restored;  
our call to serve, to wash each other's feet,  
to bring Christ's healing touch to all we meet.

Hope of our calling: hope by faith made bold;  
to sow God's righteousness throughout the world;  
bring peace from conflict, fruitfulness from weeds,  
the kingdom's harvest from a mustard seed.

Hope of our calling: Spirit-filled, unbound,  
old joys remembered and new purpose found,  
our call refreshed by sacrament and word,  
we go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Words: A Barrett© 2005. Reproduced by permission

Tune: 'Woodlands', W Greatorex (1877-1949)

## **Hidden at every moment's heart**

the pulse of God is felt,  
God who keeps vigil tirelessly  
while mountains rise and melt.  
Patient and passionate, O Lord,  
teach us to change, to grow,  
to walk in time, to look for dawn  
and your great day to know.

Yours is the breath that calls to life  
our emptiness and dust,  
and in the endless void of chance  
you are the ground of trust.  
Turn us from nothing into love:  
enable us to trace  
in wilderness and pain and cross  
the body of your grace.

Strangers and sojourners, we are  
the citizens of hope;  
pilgrims far off, we know the way,  
its width, its depth, its scope:  
the Father's love, the Spirit's life,  
the promise of the Son,  
the work of God who calls us here  
in Christ to make us one.

Words: Elizabeth Thomson©2005, written for the Ely Diocese 2006 Clergy Conference, music 'Coe Fen', K Naylor (1931-1991)

## Contemporary Music

### Taize

There is nothing new about Taize music but its flexible style makes it a good choice for quieter and more reflective worship. Some of the more jubilant chants can also be used in a contemporary manner accompanied by guitar and drums.

- *For live performance:*

There are many suppliers of Taize resources (which require a Calamus Licence available from Decani Music [<http://www.decanimusic.co.uk/>] CCL does not cover Taize songs). A good starting point is:

[http://www.taize.fr/en\\_rebrique12.html](http://www.taize.fr/en_rebrique12.html)

At this site you can hear extracts of the chant, see the music and even get tuition in the individual voice parts.

See also the music of Margaret Rizza – a style not unlike Taize. Kevin Mayhew is a leading supplier of this music.

- *For pre-recorded music:*

‘Songs from Taize’ boxed sets of CDs. Widely available from a selection of suppliers on-line.

### Iona

Greatly influenced by its Celtic origins, Iona music retains a distinctive character and has the great advantage that many of the songs can be performed without instruments or even needing a 4-part vocal line-up. John Bell and Graham Maule have been key writers for the material published and recorded under the ‘Wild Goose’ name but new names are being added all the time. See this website for details of books and CDs:

<http://www.ionabooks.com/newsite/sections/bookshop/bookshop.asp?cat=3>

- *For live performance*

Visit the Wild Goose website: [www.ionabooks.com](http://www.ionabooks.com)

There are now three small books of prayer chants and short songs:

- **Come all you people**
- **There is one among us**
- **We walk his way**

For a broader glimpse at the type of material which can be found across the range of Wild Goose publications, try the Iona Abbey Music Book.

- *For pre-recorded material:*

Many of the resources from Iona can now also be heard on CDs available from the above website.

### Song Suggestions:

- Jesus Christ is waiting
- Take this moment
- Will you come and follow me
- One is the body

## World Music

- **Lambeth Praise 2008:** The official book used for all the worship at the 2008 Conference. A wide-ranging collection which represents music from many traditions, most of it written in the last 40 years. Available from Church House Publishing, SCM-Canterbury Press and Amazon. Limited edition book – just 3000 copies printed of which 1500 went to delegates!
- **In every corner sing:** RSCM, by Geoff Weaver. This comes with permission to photocopy music and text. Also includes a CD of backing tracks for those seeking pre-recorded material.
- **Sent by the Lord and Many and Great:** Wild Goose publications also available on CD for pre-recorded needs.

### Song Suggestions (all available in Lambeth Praise and In every corner sing):

- He came singing love
- I'll follow my Lord
- Lord, you have come to the seashore
- Sent by the Lord am I
- Saranam
- We are on the Lord's road (Sizohamba naye)
- Thuma mina
- Give us light

## Renewal/Worship Songs

In the fast-moving, contemporary style of worship any book you buy is likely to be out of date before you have opened it! So, if you wish to keep abreast of the latest songs and developments there are various ways to do this.

To obtain copies of single songs and MP3 downloads (for teaching purposes or to use to lead congregational singing [check copyright] see the following:

<http://www.kingsway.co.uk/Shop/>

Many of the leading writers have their music available here including Chris Tomlin, Stuart Townend, Matt Redman, Brenton Brown, Tim Hughes, Louie Giglio. Depending on your copyright permission, you can buy a single copy rather than the whole book.

Also try out the Spring Harvest and New Wine sites. Both these organizations regularly produce songbooks and CDs almost on an annual basis and are a good source of really new material.

For those just beginning to explore this type of music, one of the best compilations for 50 of the songs now regarded as 'standards' remains the Spring Harvest publication: **Worship Today**. This doesn't include anything written since 2002, so songs like 'In Christ Alone' and 'Light of the World' can't be found here but these songs can be purchased online as downloads or can be found in books like **'Songs of Fellowship'**.

*For pre-recorded material:*

For songs in the Soul Survivor style: Hope 2008 has 20 tracks around the theme of mission. The early Heart of Worship CDs have significant numbers of well-known songs on them. If you are wanting MP3 tracks go to [www.worship-downloads.com](http://www.worship-downloads.com).

**Song Suggestions:**

- Lord I come to you (Geoff Bullock)
- One shall tell another (Graham Kendrick)
- We'll walk the land with hearts on fire (Graham Kendrick)
- Go do something wonderful (Graham Kendrick)
- Great is the darkness (Noel Richards)
- There is a hope (Stuart Townend)
- Speak to this heart (Neil Bennetts)
- We want to see Jesus lifted high (Doug Horley)
- Hosanna (Paul Baloche and Brenton Brown)
- Shine (Matt Redman)
- Mission's Flame (Matt Redman)
- Today (Brian Doerksen)

**Acknowledgements:**

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