

# Best Practices in Ministry

Each pastor has a passion for something they do that is unique, cutting edge, and successful in bringing people to Christ. This is the section of the newsletter where we share resources, experiences, stories, practices and ways of addressing recurring issues and problems. There is always something new to learn and bring into our pastoral ministry that is effective, life-changing and draws in new disciples.

## Worship Design



BY REV. LISA BOSWORTH  
*Pastor at Seymour UMC in CT*

*Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering, and come before him:  
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.*

There's a tweedy old preacher by the name of A. W. Tozer who wrote a book entitled, *Whatever Happened to Worship*, a book I took to heart as 2019 began. He emphasizes, "Worship becomes a completely personal love experience between God and the worshipper." Worship design ~ what a privilege, what a challenge! Design of worship is an endeavor to stir a sense of God's open arms in a setting captivating enough to invite the deeper soul within each of us to speak the truest truth to ourselves: the unsurpassable greatness of our God! Worship is the best way to push the clear-button on life's woes that can tend to bunch together into weights too heavy for humans to handle. Worship can dissolve the brambles that obstruct the human path to joy.

The years have brought me to realize that worship can't be taught, it can only be experienced. Although strict formality and I don't get along well, still, worship and adoration, reverence of our Creator in the beauty of holiness is our primary reason for living; so that is my objective.

Because we believe with far more conviction what we ourselves say than anything we hear, repeating Scripture, telling the whole story of Jesus, is life-giving; so in worship we speak the truest truth before our God who delights in what we proclaim. Our United Methodist pattern of worship and the Revised Common Lectionary of course provide dependable structure. I recently discovered and downloaded to my Nook a resource called *Feasting on the Word Worship Companion*, edited by Kimberly Bracken Long ~ a rich resource for years A through C. I use our Hymnal and

our Book of Worship, our Discipleship Ministries online site, Constance Cherry's *The Worship Architect*, the tried-and-true *Africana Worship* guides from Discipleship Resources, many seasonal guides, scores of music sources, and lots more, always beginning with the Bible.

I admit my preparation in prayer can take some unexpected roundabouts before the lightbulb comes on. I feel a little like a kid in a room full of clay, trying out shapes and textures, looking back to God for approval – not to produce a perfect product, but to give a wide enough opportunity within our theme for as many worshipers as possible to find a place to commune with our Lord within the hour ~ and to take that deeper connection into the week.

When I construct the weekly "lead sheet," setting the pattern for our bulletin, PowerPoint, worship leaders and Liturgist, I imagine a flow among the components ~ prayers, readings, music....Oh, the flow isn't always what I'd imagined. Flexibility and a sense of humor are very necessary – but even then, worship puts our "me" stuff into perspective, opening channels for the difference God's supernatural activity can make toward life and exceeding joy!

Rev. Lisa Bosworth is the Pastor of the Seymour United Methodist Church