

Three weeks ahead, the worship leader will receive the planning guide from the Lead Pastor that includes names of the preacher, song leader, prelude/offertory musicians and sound technicians as well as any special music or focus for the service. Also, materials from CMCL, Seasons of the Spirit and/or MC USA regarding theme for the service.

WORSHIP PLANNING GUIDE

Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster

Updated list of worship participants can be found online: www.communitymennonite.org. Follow path: Congregational Life/Worship/Worship Planner.

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|---|-----------------------|
| 1. Worship Leader _____ | A. Date _____ |
| 2. Song Leader _____ | B. Theme _____ |
| 3. Preacher _____ | C. Scripture _____ |
| 4. Prelude/Off _____ | _____ |
| 5. Children’s Time _____ | D. Sermon Title _____ |
| (Check with Preacher first to see if they would like to do Children's Time) | |
| 6. Environment _____ | E. Other _____ |
| 7. Special Music _____ | |
| 8. Sound Tech _____ | |

Planning the Service—“who does what”

The preacher chooses scriptures and communicates those to the worship leader. The lectionary scriptures are a starting place but can be replaced with other scripture.

The worship leader contacts the preacher and song leader 1-3 weeks before the service to facilitate collaboration. A face-to-face meeting is encouraged to read through the Sunday scriptures and discuss the worship theme. The worship leader prepares the worship order.

The song leader chooses songs in conversation with the worship leader and preacher.

The environment person/s usually work with a series of worship services.

*Planning and leading a worship service is an opportunity for personal nurture and growth. Praying for the congregation and “living with” the scriptures and songs are part of the experience and preparation.
Planning the service is a collaborative venture with the worship leader at the helm*

Length of Service

Our worship service is 70 minutes long—which allows Christian Ed classes their full time from 10:00 to 10:50 a.m. *Let all service participants know their time constraints.* If there are special components to the service (e.g., communion, baptisms, dedications), cut back in other areas as needed to stay within the 70-minute time frame. At the same time, try to allow an extra moment—“breath”—of time between elements of the service when possible, to create a worshipful relaxed feel rather than a rushed feel to the service.

Unusual Events

Let the sound technician and/or ushers (via Darlis Myer, Lead Usher) know at least a few days in advance if something out of the ordinary is planned.

Worship Resource Materials

Check the list of materials available from church library as well as the hymnal and songbooks. Use the Parish Resource Center, 633 Community Way, 299-1113; Congregational Resource Center, 2160 Lincoln Highway East, 293-5246. The ministers may have materials that may be helpful as well. Also feel comfortable to pull from your own resources.

Bulletin Information cmcl@communitymennonite.org

The order of worship for the bulletin should be sent via e-mail to the church office each Wednesday or before. Be in contact with Rod if there will be unusual formatting or timing.

Pre-service Meeting

The worship leader leads a brief meeting Sunday from 8:00 to 8:10 a.m. in the storytelling room (old library). Notify all participants about the meeting. Clarify any questions at the meeting and take time to pray together.

Songbook Sign Place the correct sign on the songbook cart so people know what to pick up (one or both).

Elements of Worship with Suggested/Approximate Times

*Responsibility of the worship leader

The following represents a typical order but the order is flexible. Use your ideas and imagination to create your worship service. Silence can be a meaningful element in worship. Let your own style shine through and enjoy leading the congregation in an experience of worship and celebration!

Prelude 3 minutes

Arrange with musicians when to begin. Offer a sentence of welcome, a line from the call to worship or psalm to help people become quiet.

* Lighting of the Peace Candle 1 minute

Can be lit along with a prayer or lit silently. Feel comfortable to have members of congregation do this as well.

***Call to Worship & Invocation** 2 minutes

Consider using scripture as the first words of the service to invite God's presence into our worship. Frequently the Psalm could be used here or a reading from the hymnal, or some other spoken word.

Singing 3-5 minutes

The worship leader may decide how many hymns will be sung and where they will fall in the order of service. 3-5 hymns can be included in most services. Hymns are chosen by the song leader in collaboration with the worship leader. It's strongly suggested that no more than two song books are used.

***Offering/Offertory** 3 minutes

Invite ushers forward "to prepare" for offering. You may preface the offering with lifting up a specific place our offering goes; offer a brief prayer. Ushers may choose to come forward after prayer.

Children's time 5 minutes

The worship leader and preacher decide whether there is a children's time and who is doing it. This is a child-centered time that should reflect on the day's theme when possible.

***Children's Dismissal/activity bulletin**

Include a place in the bulletin for dismissing children for childcare, and announce it during the service. It should be no later than 15-20 minutes after the start of worship.

***Scripture Reading** 3-5 minutes

Reading the scriptures is an important part of the worship service. You may read this yourself or ask someone else. This is an excellent way to include children or others who do not usually participate in the service. Consider the need for inclusive language and seek resources in the church library or through the pastor that are more inclusive. The back of the hymnal contains many scriptures arranged for responsive or congregational reading. If asking another to read the scripture, insure that they have adequate time to prepare for reading aloud. Unless you specify, NRSV will be used. You are encouraged to be creative with the scripture.

Sermon 15-20 min.

Communion Sundays: The first Sunday of the month Communion is usually served. The pastors organize this with pastoral team. Pastors will plan the music component as well. Be in communication with the pastors to know when to insert communion in the order of service.

***Sharing & Prayer** 5-10 min.

Pastors are willing to lead this if requested. Invite people to give their name and share reflections on the sermon, concerns, requests for prayer or support and good news. The worship leader stays at podium to provide a focus for the sharing and to keep sharing within time limits. You may include specific requests in your prayer or use a more general prayer. It is okay to use pre-written prayer if you prefer. The prayer can refer to unspoken prayers as well as things shared.

***Announcements and Introduction of Visitors** 1 minute

Refer people to the bulletin and ask if there are any announcements that need to be spoken. Also provide an opportunity for visitors to introduce themselves or be introduced by others *IF THEY CHOOSE*.

Benediction 1 minute

May be spoken by worship leader or pastors or sung. Not to be forgotten. This is a sending, a blessing.