



The Worship Priority Summary Page

Dan Wagner
Director of Worship
May 17, 2022

The Session Mandate to Articulate a Theology of Worship

“The session understands and declares that worship is at the center of the Christian life and therefore foundational to all other priorities. The Session directs our pastoral staff to “Articulate a theology of worship that allows all generations of our congregation to move toward the larger goal of experiencing worship as the center of Christian life.”

Overview of Current Status of Worship at FPC

Staff turnover - Covid Recovery -Time for a fresh look

Worship Theology Summary

Our life is centered on the worship of God who is revealed in creation, in Christ and through His word. In our worship we hear and respond to the Good News that by faith we are being transformed into God’s Covenant Community. God’s redeeming plan shapes the way we worship, renewing us so that we may live gospel-shaped lives throughout the week. (Theology of Worship, FPC)

The Hallmarks of Flourishing Worship

A descriptive vision of a worship culture that has been affected and changed by the implementation of the strategies. The hallmarks represent **both** a corporate ideal of flourishing worship ministry, and the fruitful life of the Christian who has matured into a life of worship.

Four Strategies

1. Theologically Rich Worship in Context of FPC Priorities
 - Discover and employ strategies of interaction with Covenant Partners.
 - Implement a new Sunday morning worship service.
2. Disciple the Congregation in our Theology of Worship
 - Create teaching and inspiring content.
 - Design bulletin and projection with intent to guide the worship experience.
3. Expand Worship Beyond Sunday Morning Services
 - Provide leadership for classes, groups and the public.
 - Create diverse and purposeful worship and arts events.
4. Engage, Grow, Mentor
 - Increase entry points to worship participation and leadership,
 - Include and train children, youth, and young adults.
 - Offer and elevate mentoring within the church and outside the church.

Flourishing in Faithful Worship

May 11, 2022 | Dan Wagner

The Mandate

“The session understands and declares that worship is at the center of Christian life and therefore foundational to all other priorities. The Session directs our pastoral staff to “Articulate a theology of worship that allows all generations of our congregation to move toward the larger goal of experiencing worship as the center of Christian life.”

Overview of Current State

- Staff rebuild
- Post-Covid recovery
- An opportunity to assess and move forward anew
 - What have we forgotten?
 - What have we not considered or imagined?

Statement of Worship Theology

Our life is centered on the worship of God who is revealed in Christ, through His word, and in creation. In our worship we hear and respond to the Good News that by faith we are being transformed into God’s Covenant Community. God’s redeeming plan shapes the way we worship, renewing us so that we may live gospel-shaped lives throughout the week.

***We need a vision for worship
that is animated by theology and intentionality.***

What are the Hallmarks of Flourishing Worship?

These are indications of a maturing worship culture, leadership, and individual worshipers

Theology of Virtues

- Moving from “values” (like, dislike, performance, style, consuming) to “virtues” (True, Good, Beautiful, Loving, Honest, Courageous, etc.)
- Care for intricate details with freedom of spontaneity
- Artistry with “heartistry” (Sanctified craftsmanship)
- Appreciation for talents greater or lesser than our own and worship services different from the one we choose

Ethic of Unity, Room for Expression, Honor for Uniqueness

- Strong unity with freely-flowing expressions of gifts and talents
- A culture of growth; inviting
- Develops ascending responsibility and leadership
- Maturity to see past preferences and demographics, looking for what God is saying
- A church less divided by age and demographics
- Generations worship together because we glorify God, nothing less.
- Worship rooted in time and perspective... Can we tell we belong to something and someone GREATER?

Contextual Vision

- Enthusiastic plans for the future and what can be accomplished
- Anchored in the satisfaction of serving the ever-present weekly rhythms and relationships of corporate worship
- Conscious connection with the mission and priorities of FPC
- Leaders and worshipers display strong commitment motivated by a high calling
- Desire to live what we sing
- Growing commitment to our calling to be shaped by, to sing, to preach, to share and to live the Gospel¹.

¹ What is the Gospel?

The gospel is the good news that God's kingdom has come through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, in fulfillment of God's promises to Israel and for the salvation of all those who would repent of their sins and believe in Christ. (Dr. Lukas Stamps, Chair, Hobbs School of Theology)

Four Strategies

1. Theologically Rich Worship in Context of FPC Priorities

Prioritizing worship with awareness that we have a shared mission, and the mutual priorities will change lives and glorify God.

- **Encouragement Teams and Staff Review of Services**

- Teach our theology of worship.
- Establish response and evaluation criteria based on theology.
- Weekly online feedback/input
- Monthly in-person conversations

Outcome, connection with other priorities, and what's different.

- Shared language and perspective inform our regular evaluations.
- Regular principle-based feedback with Lay Encouragement Teams and Staff
- Leaders develop a clearer sense of how the congregation is formed through worship.
- Leaders become better equipped to serve, teach and challenge through worship.
- Interaction with Covenant Partners helps us to identify faith formation in worship.
- We will faithfully engage in ways to grow past opinions and personal preference to a model of worship as an offering. (*leitourgia/liturgy - work of the people*)

- **Envision and Create a Third Worship Service**

- Proposed 8:15 AM in the sanctuary.
- An *eclectic* mix of music and liturgical elements.
- Between the two current styles, but with flexibility to flow from hymns to worship songs to anthems.
- Varied instrumental support, piano, organ, choral ensemble, worship leader.

Outcome, connection with other priorities, and what's different.

- A service model that is driven more by message than by a single musical style.
- This approach to worship can be a teaching model—not to change music in other services, but to become more responsive to the “why and Who” than the “brand.”
- This service time can facilitate increased community and discipleship through the faith formation hour.
- An eclectic service is often well-received by guests, offering an additional choice for Covenant Partners to invite others into life in Christ (***outreach***).

2. Disciple the Congregation in our Theology of Worship

- **Create Worship Discipleship Resources**
 - Inspiring and educational online, video, written, spoken worship content
 - Build a library of our own creative content (i.e. video, podcasts)
- **Enhance purposeful use of printed and projected media in worship**
 - Provide more context, purpose, ease of response, and meaning.
 - Enhance what people see on screens or hold in their hands with a concise purposefulness.
 - Help worshipers to realize what they are doing and why, and give context when it is helpful.

Outcome, connection with other priorities, and what's different.

- Access to online worship resources will begin to create a more unified *community* of enthusiastic engagement and mutual support in worship.
- Interpretive tools will increase connection for *guests and new believers*, and at the same time *grow* the congregation as worshipers.
- Make better use of our extensive technology and media staff and equipment in supporting and teaching a vision for worship.
- Post-Covid response - to continue to create assets out of what was a necessity.

3. Expand Worship Beyond Sunday Morning Services

- Offer worship programming/content for classes, small-groups.
- Assist and advise in worship leadership with ministries outside the worship spaces or times.
- Create a season of events for worship, music and the arts.

Outcome, connection with other priorities, and what's different.

- Worship education and enhancement will begin to integrate worship into the lives of Covenant Partners and will motivate them to a more meaningful life of worship in the congregation, in smaller communities, and in private devotion.
- We will erode the wall that tends to exist between the “worship hour” and the act of worshipping God.²
- We will establish new relationships among Covenant Partners and leaders by our increasing availability to bring worship to them at various times and occasions.
- A cohesive and well-rounded season of worship and arts events will
 - Expand our receptivity and celebration of diverse worship experiences
 - Reflect our rich diversity

² This wall is comprised of at least two cultural forces. The first is a poor understanding of “all of life worship” that leads to forsaking of the assembling together, exaggerating a spirituality of individualism, and the second is an inoculation or dulling of our spiritual sensitivity and receptiveness to God’s voice, at times made worse by a rote reliance on the limits of a perfunctory hour of assumption of familiarity and entitlement. Both of these conditions of the spirit build walls around the soul that, without God’s sovereign intervention, lead to spiritual lethargy.

- Resonate with our location and resources
- Model worship for us through guests and our own leaders
- Give us a greater vocabulary of worship
- Connect us to the wider Christian community
- Draw people into our church and its music and worship
- Engage the world of the arts and the mind

4. Engage, Grow, Mentor

- Create more entry points for Covenant Partners and attendees to participate in worship and music leadership.
- Include and train frequent and meaningful opportunities for children, youth and collegiate participation.
- Implement opportunities for our professional and experienced worship musicians and leaders to mentor and train others.
- Update, promote, enhance and maintain mission with the choral scholars' program.
- Create Artists-in-Residence projects with opportunities for traditional (organists, conductors) and contemporary musicians and visual artists.
- Establish training and internships in worship theology and practice.
- Pursue partnerships with colleges and seminaries.

Outcome, connection with other priorities, and what's different.

- Enhanced, clearer, more plentiful, skill and age-appropriate ways for Covenant Partners and other worshipers to become active in music and worship leadership.
- Increased interaction with youth, children, and young adults, (and their leaders) mentoring and preparing them for the responsibilities of worship leadership.
- Renewed vision for our skilled leaders to intentionally encourage and build on the gifts of developing leaders.
- We grow a community of collegiate worship participants who respond to the challenge of excellence and the vision of worship.
- As we gather a community of collegiate participants who respond to the challenge of excellence, (paid and unpaid), God will develop a new generation of worshipers, addressing the challenge of Christian collegiates and young adults becoming "unchurched".
- Employing the gift of our location and resources, we will encourage and train promising worship musicians and leaders for the future.
- We will accept our mission to engage in the arts and the world of the mind by nurturing and encouraging the creative gifts that God designed for offerings of worship.