

The Watford Word

www.watfordchurchofchrist.org

What's on

Sunday 11 August - 10:30AM. *Malcolm speaking*
Sunday 18 August - 10:30AM. *Stefan speaking*
Sunday 25 August - 10:30AM. *Malcolm speaking*
Sunday 01st Sept - 10:30 AM service
Sunday 8th Sept: *'Thank you' service*
Saturday 14th Sept: *AIM UK&I - "Family Life"*
Sunday 15th Sept: *Congregational vision workshop*
Sunday 22nd Sept - 10:30 AM service.
Sunday 29th Sept: 10:30 AM. *Speaker Bruce Miller*
Sunday 17th Nov: 10:30 AM. *"Safeguarding Sunday"*
Saturday 7th Dec: *AIM UK&I - "World Views"*

Guidance For Those Hosting Parts of Sunday Worship - Part 3.

"The Welcome"

Today, we continue a series exploring why we do what we do at a Sunday gathering. So far, we have introduced the concept of 'hosting' to frame the role of those leading us in public worship. We examined some New Testament examples and teachings on collective worship. We also considered the aims of collective worship. Last week, we explored general guidance for leaders of worship, including context, attitude, connection, themes, overloading, and preparation.

This week, we focus on one specific part of our Sunday worship - "The Welcome".

Tradition

What we call "The Welcome" is a tradition. No one knows where, when and why it started. It's not a bad tradition, but it helps to remember that it is not commanded in Scripture nor necessary for our collective worship to be 'legitimate' or effective.

That being said, welcoming everyone to worship fits with the hosting model we explored in previous Watford Word editions.

What are we doing?

We are welcoming people to collective worship in the conscious presence of our heavenly Father. We are not "doing the welcome" as it is often phrased, but welcoming people. "The welcome" is not a thing but an action. It is an expression of love. It is an invitation. It is a call to wholehearted participation in what makes our collective worship meaningful: Worshipping God together in prayer and song, learning from God's Word together, fellowshiping together, and communing together (the Lord's Supper).

How do we welcome people?

Be welcoming. Smile. Look at people. Warmth is more important than anything else. If you are glad to see everyone (let's hope so!), let it show. The question to ask yourself is whether everyone present feels welcomed and accepted by God.

Some specific tips

1. Connect with what has just happened and what is about to happen: "That song moved me because....now the children will...."
2. If we have a visiting speaker, introduce them with enough detail to clarify why they are with us. If you do not know them, ask someone who does to introduce them.
3. Involve the children whenever possible.

Common gaffes to avoid

1. Embarrassing people. "If you are visiting for the first time, please stand up so we can welcome you." The intention is sincere, but

the experience for most first-time visitors is painful. They already feel insecure in an unfamiliar situation - now they have a crowd of strangers staring at them!

2. Over-hyping. "We're going to have a great service today!" Better to say, "I'm looking forward to our time of worship today." Sometimes, our services are not especially inspiring! Also, the service's effectiveness depends on the attendees' experience. Telling people it will be 'great' is tantamount to telling them how they ought to feel.
3. Preaching. It's not a problem to share something God taught you, but don't make it a 10-minute lesson. We have a sermon coming.
4. Jargon. Phrases like, "I was convicted...my discipler...quiet time..." are alienating for our guests. It's better to say, "I felt guilty...the person mentoring me...praying and reading the Bible..." etc.

Next time, we will consider the purpose and practice of collective prayer.

Please tell me your thoughts on these comments on welcoming people on a Sunday.

God bless, Malcolm

Watford 'Jobs'

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms." (1 Peter 4:10)

The church is getting bigger, so spreading the church 'jobs' around is essential. Let me know if you would be willing to take on one or more of the tasks below. Training is available.

1. Watford website: Keep basic information up-to-date & add a link to the latest sermon video—*estimated time commitment: 15 minutes a week.*

2. Design weekly Sunday poster. *Estimated time commitment: 15 minutes a week.*
3. Upload sermon podcasts—*estimated time commitment: 15 minutes a week.*
4. Upload sermon videos—*estimated time commitment: 20 minutes a week.*
5. Edit sermon videos. *Estimated time commitment: 30-60 minutes a week.*
6. Compile Sunday song service slide deck—*estimated time commitment: 30 minutes a week.*
7. Sunday refreshments. Help before and during church—*estimated time commitment: 30 minutes a week.*
8. Live-streaming the service on Sunday. **Gbemi has volunteered to be trained by Desmond so they can share the load. "Thanks", Gbemi!**
9. Maintain the Church socials. **Jessica is taking this on. "Thanks", Jess!**

Many thanks, Malcolm

Watford Contribution Details

Church bank account: Three Counties churches of Christ HSBC

Sort Code: 401915

Account Number: 04759613

Watford Media

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watfordchurchofchrist6708>

Podcast: <https://www.podbean.com/pu/pbblog-aiinq-raef90>

