

What Worship Should Be

By Elizabeth Yoder



What does the perfect worship service look like, sound like, and focus on in the body of Christ? Two years ago I stood among hundreds of youth as the popular worship leader Chris Tomlin led his newly released song, "How Great is Our God." The outdoor concert ushered perfect harmonies and skilled melodies over the countryside. I was moved. It was a powerful time of focusing on who God is. I was also recently in Kentucky for a funeral. After the third bluegrass song accompanied by a lone guitar crackled its message about heaven over the small sound system, I leaned over and whispered to Steph Sharp, "You can tell by the music we are not at an Ohio funeral." And, once again I was moved. The truth of God was being declared through music, and it touched my heart.

There are key elements that need to be a part of worship for the body of Christ: speaking and hearing truth, giving praise to God, and coming with hearts ready to listen to God's voice. We can speak and hear truth in a variety of ways. Scripture is God's heart in writing for his church. As scripture is read and heard, God is receiving glory and we are reminding our own hearts of the correct view of God. Words of truth set to music are also a powerful way of declaring truth to God and ourselves.

A couple of years ago I stood in a worship service with tears streaming down my face. A 17-year-old friend had just died and the words of the song being led were, "With a strength like no other, and a heart of a Father, how majestic your whispers, what a wonderful God." I didn't feel it, I wasn't seeing it, and I didn't want to sing it. But God was worthy of those words of truth. He does have a strength like no other. He does have a heart of a Father and he is a wonderful God. And I could give God a sacrifice of praise because he is worthy of it. When we declare truthful praise to God he is glorified in that.

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As a student at Rosedale Bible College I led worship one night and incorporated a time of silent reflection. I encouraged people to bow their heads, listen to God's voice and open their hearts to God's direction. I too bowed my head, closed my eyes and tried to think of the last bad thing I had done so I could repent of it. As I opened my heart I sensed God gently saying, "I'm proud of you and I love you for who you are, Elizabeth." I wept. The words took me off my guard and my heart welled full of gratitude for his grace. A heart that comes



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Springtime

A Message from the Pastor

By Rob Swartz



I am loving springtime this year! I love it every year, but this year seems extra special. After all the snow and cold weather this past winter, I have been more than ready for spring to come, and it came with a flourish. Suddenly we went from 20 and 30 degree weather and gray, somber skies to 60 and 70 and even 80 degree weather with brilliant sunshine. Our backyard began to erupt with new growth. Crocuses, daffodils, and tulips appeared as if from nowhere. The forsythia bushes burst into vibrant yellow. Trees and bushes quickly formed buds which transformed into new, perfectly formed green leaves. It seemed you could stand at the back window and watch the growth, so quickly did things change.

People seemed to change as well. The sunshine brightened everyone's outlook on life. They were all glad to be outside after being penned up all winter. The children were riding bikes and playing basketball. The adults were taking walks and working in the yard. Neighbors were hanging out socializing with each other.



I'm amazed by the explosion of light and life that comes with spring. I think it is one of the best reminders of what Jesus brings—he embodies an explosion of light and life. Those two words are often used to describe him throughout the New Testament. John 1:4 says, "In him was *life*, and that *life* was the *light* of men." Jesus said, "I am the *light* of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the *light of life*." Jesus is the light in a world of spiritual darkness. He offers life to a world that is spiritually dead.

So just like in the spring, I love looking around and seeing the impact that Jesus has on this world. I have seen the excitement of those who have come to know him for the first time. I have seen the commitment and maturity of those who have walked with him for years. I have seen the zeal and enthusiasm of those who are just discovering the joy of ministry and using their gifts. I have seen the transformation of those who have fallen away as Jesus restores them and draws them back to himself. I have seen the love and compassion of Jesus being expressed for each other in the body of believers. All these things are truly amazing to me.

Oh, I'm well aware that not everything is a bed of roses. Life is hard. There are many valleys we must go through. Just like this past winter, life for many of us this past year has had its share of bleak overcast days and treacherous snow-covered roads. But spring has come and with it, light and life. Jesus has come and with him also comes spiritual light and life. Like I said...I love springtime!

Word of the Month

By Reuben Sairs

"Lucifer"

What is the devil's first name? The traditional answer is "Lucifer," of course. But actually, the name Lucifer appears only one time in the King James Bible, in Isaiah 14:12 during a discussion about the king of Babylon. Often this passage is assumed to describe Satan's fall from heaven, based in part on comparing it with Jesus' comment in Luke 10:18, "I watched Satan fall from heaven..." Personally, I'm not sold on that interpretation, even though it is commonly taught.

Modern translations of Isaiah 14:12, excepting the New King James Version, don't use the name Lucifer but will mention the "morning star" (NIV), "bright morning star" (CEV), or the "shining star" (NLT). The Hebrew word is *haylale*. "It derives its name in other ancient languages from its striking brilliancy, and is here called *ben-shachar* (sun of the dawn)..." *

How did we get Lucifer from that? We got it through the Latin translation of the Bible, which lived on in the King James in this case for reasons unknown. In Latin, Lucifer is said to be the name for the planet Venus, which stargazers will tell you is often the brightest object in the morning or evening sky. The word also may refer to a character in pagan myths.

Whether Isaiah 14 referred to Satan or an ancient pagan king, or both, someone with a very big ego and a lot of pride is being mocked. That person only thought he was a bright morning star.

As for the devil, I don't think we really know his personal name, if he has one. But most people know you're referring to *Ole Slewfoote*, aka *Old Scratch* if you use the name "Lucifer."

*Keil & Delitzsch Commentaries on the Old Testament, Isaiah, Vol. 1.

Getting to Know... *Sharon Hazen*

Sharon is married to LCF's overseer, Roger Hazen, who was featured in last month's interview. They live in Vassar, Michigan.

Where did you grow up?

I was born and raised in Pryor, Oklahoma on a farm, in the same house as Keith [Scheffel]. What a pest he was! We had pigs, beef cattle and chickens. The one cow we milked, we rode to and from the pasture. We raised sweet corn and sold it so that at the end of the summer, before school started, we could go on vacation.

What do you like to do when you have spare time?

I like to ride bike with Roger. I enjoy cooking and trying new recipes, playing piano, and skiing. And I really enjoy producing videos on computer.

Do you have any favorite Easter traditions?

One of the things I look forward to is making unleavened bread for communion. I like communion to be a worship experience, thinking about what Christ had to endure to pay the price for our sins.

What do you like best about spring?

My favorite thing about spring is getting outside and working in the yard and riding bike. I'm really hoping we can do the RMM Ride for Missions this year, if my bum knee will let me.



Is there anything you have never done but would like to do someday?

Some things I would love to do are whitewater rafting, parasailing or hot air ballooning.

What kind of jobs have you had? What do you do now?

I have been a Registered Nurse for 28 years. I have worked mostly in intensive care, ER, and cardiac areas. I love the way the heart works; it's so intriguing. Last August I moved to an IV team and I really enjoy it.

Soda or Pop? Or a different word?

Pop, of course.

What do you do to relax?

I like to sit down and play the piano and sing at the top of my lungs. I only do this when I'm alone. I also like to play Spider Solitaire. Someday I think I will like to read books, but for now I'm too busy and just don't sit still long enough.

Church Events and Activities this Past Month

- Samuel Montrose and Erin Day were married at LCF on Saturday, March 6.
- Many volunteers repainted the church interior a warm beige color.
- The post-high small group led us in a meaningful communion service on Maundy Thursday.
- On March 28, families and individuals brought in money they had been collecting for the building fund, kicking off the Family Giving Can fundraiser.

Looking Ahead...

April 16-18 Men's whitewater rafting trip in West Virginia
May 9 Child Dedication and Mother's Day potluck



Elders' Notes

Ideas and thoughts from recent meetings

The ballot vote for the 2010 budget was passed unanimously. There were a few comments added that will be passed along to the finance team.

Phil and Becky Hostettler are willing to take on the job of treasurer after they move into their new house, which should be sometime in the next couple of months.

Ryan and Reuben presented the elders with feedback about associate pastor compensation, and the amount of time they typically put in and could commit to. The elders' team feels that the current job descriptions for associate pastors do not need any adjustments. Lay elders Richard Troyer and Keith Scheffel, with overseer Roger Hazen, will continue to work on the process of coming up with compensation options and presenting them to the congregation. They hope to get feedback from the congregation in the coming months and present a final proposal in October for a vote.

Shannon Scheffel has asked to be replaced as Sunday school coordinator so that she can devote time to children's church this summer and possibly to the 2010 Christmas program. Molly Rosati is going to be looking for a new Sunday school coordinator. If anyone has suggestions of someone they think would do well at this, please let Molly know.

There are various people in the church who could use some financial help. The elders will stay closely tuned to each of these situations and do what they can to give help and support. Rob has been working at forming a benevolence team to better handle these situations. The team will help with urgent and emergency needs inside and outside of the congregation. It will not be assigned to work with chronic needy situations. So far, Bob Zachrich has agreed to be on the team. Rob is trying to find a few more people to join and hopes to have this team together soon.

The elders' team wants to continue to find ways to make prayer a priority at LCF. One suggestion from the feedback they received in January was to have prayer partners. Rob will preach on prayer sometime soon, and people who do not currently have a prayer partner will be encouraged to put their names in a box, so they can be randomly matched with a prayer partner. These people would pray for each other for 6-12 months.

A new leader is needed for the fundraising team, as Richard Troyer is stepping down because of other responsibilities.

The elders' team is praying specifically for the following people this month:

Hans Stutzman (Ryan and Kris)
Steve and Phyllis Swartz (Richard and Robin)
Denny and Lisa Wilt (Reuben and Vicki)
Dave and Colleen Wolford (Keith and Shannon)
Preston and Elizabeth Yoder (Rob and Doris)

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ready and open before God will hear what He wants to say.

God is glorified in his people listening to him. Once we hear truth from God's heart, our lives are in deeper communion with him.

As the worship coordinator at LCF I have a desire to see truth in scripture and song being declared to God. I love seeing God being praised and magnified in songs, speech, and silence. I hope that as each of us come to worship on Sunday morning we will open our hearts to hear God's voice.



"My sheep
listen to my voice;
I know them
and they follow me."

John 10:27

The LCF Connection

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If you'd like to make comments on any of the stories or "LCF Connection" in general, email us at: connection@lcfweb.org.

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