



Transforming Worship conference

(Two sessions about growing disciples through worship)

Connecting Worship Learning Mission

Dr Deidre Palmer, Christian Education SA

A comprehensive 4-page handout was distributed – see pdf copy

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Three dot points: #2 – that’s the story as we tell it; but how much do we actually promote discipleship?

Christian education is transformative of people, not domesticating of the Gospel.

Lower down

Dot point #1 we need to invite people to reflect on their gifts

#2 ALL members engaged in mission; we participate in worship; we are not there to be entertained.

#3 the Councils of the church – they DO work and they DO achieve.

#4 being expectant – the benefit and the challenge

#6 that’s the big question

#7 growing into maturity as a community

If you’ve been formed in the way of Jesus for 70 or 80 years, how can you be mean and grumpy?

Refer to the Barth quote – we come to worship as we are, and our needs and interests shape our worship.

Expectation Encounter Response

Page 2

Groome’s description of Christian education as “Information Formation Transformation” Case Study – emerging from a debate at the 2012 Assembly came a move to march at lunch time from the Assembly venue in city centre Adelaide to the steps of SA Parliament House to stage a silent vigil, half an hour or so, in protest against “The Intervention” then taking place in NT Aboriginal communities. It was followed in March 2014 by a gathering on the lawns of Parliament House, Canberra.

“Seasons of the Spirit” provides a curriculum for integrated resources.

“Beyond (domestic) violence” tells the stories of what is being done at UnitingCare and Uniting Communities, at both Synod and Assembly level. People are encouraged to join in: lots of congregations are supporting people in distress.

Worship in such a context must deliver “accountable theology” and mutual and life-giving relationships.

Worship as a communal event

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Taking each other seriously and caring for each other means we DO take note of the things listed:

Inclusive language – not just words, but also the “language” of colour, eg black to describe something evil – in the presence of Indigenous people.

Four functions of worship

Pages 3-4

1 we belong to God – we MUST all be included

Come and worship with us and you will see who we are [but will we like what you see?]

2 we need to remember the history of our church

3 that’s what education does

Preaching Gospel Sense

Stu Cameron, Newlife Church, Gold Coast QLD

The church's motto is "Honour God and inspire people".

- They use a modified version of the Revised Common Lectionary – they use it for seasonal High Days but not a lot else.
- Planning is done way, way ahead, especially for the high days.
- Stu preaches for 30 minutes minimum: it takes a minimum 15 hours' preparation.

Things he's learned about preaching:

- It's an enormous privilege
- It can have a catalytic impact – there is power in proclamation
- It can also have a limited impact – it's only one part of discipleship
- Preparation – Spirit-inspired, text discipline, personal insight
- Performance – every preacher must find his/her own voice
- Interpretation of Bible and local context are equally important
- Story telling – including our own story
- Poetry: crafting the words – political dictatorships know full well: destroy the artists, destroy the people; that's why artists are always the first to be taken away.
- Multi-sensory is essential, including the stories; and good stories take a long time to find.
- It's transformative
- It requires a student heart – a preacher must be always learning, reading, filled with curiosity
- Learning from mentors is essential
- Keep notes etc of useful stories
- Observe everything every moment of every day through a preacher's perspective
- Borrow / steal / adapt and ALWAYS ACKNOWLEDGE
- Whose name is honoured: God's or the preacher's?
- And when it's all done – what then? What comes next? There must always be this question – what am I supposed to do about this?
- Obedience to God – including to doing things we are not comfortable with
- Be aware of personal foibles and mannerisms
- Always point to Jesus Christ who speaks for himself whenever he is spoken of
- Articulates the Gospel
- Soaked in God's word
- Soaked in prayer
- Expect / assume "the same number of take-offs as landings".
- Be creative in the call for response
- Each preacher has a unique anointing – we are all different
- The authority comes from God

Preaching to the unchurched

- Assume there are some in the room – and frame the message accordingly
- Choose a text and stick to it – KISS
- Give people permission to make their own response
- Avoid, "The Bible says ..."; refer instead to the specific author being quoted
- Acknowledge reality – the Bible sometimes is odd / bad / confusing / etc. Don't pretend it's not.