

Worship Jigsaw

1: Liturgical Worship

From the Ancient Greek idea of *leitourgia*; 'service'. Rich people had a duty to support the poor; this is their 'service'. In return they were accorded honour.

In religious terms, this form of worship refers to God's service to humanity as well as humanity's duties to honour God. For example, Jesus asked his followers to 'do this in remembrance of me' at the Last Supper. At the Eucharist Christians honour Jesus but also call on Jesus to support and guide them.

Liturgical worship enable the congregation to connect with God. Liturgy may include praise, thanksgiving, repentance, or mark life events such as birth, marriage and death.

Examples: Catholic Mass, Eastern Orthodox Divine Liturgy, Anglican Book of Common Prayer

2: Informal Worship

Informal worship in Christianity has its origins in the 20th century Protestant charismatic evangelical churches. Today many churches have some elements of informal worship, involving modern music, a relaxed and joyous style of singing, praying or movement in contrast to more traditional forms.

The set or formalised elements are kept to a minimum, there is singing and music and the sermon is delivered in an informal style.

Some Christians feel that the use of modern music brings a worldly element into what should be a sacred space, and informal worship is little more than entertainment. However informal worship is popular and is on the increase, in an era of shrinking congregations.

3: Private Worship

Although worship is communal and often involves a set pattern, the actual connection with God is made internally to each worshipper. This means that Christians can worship individually, or privately, anywhere and at any time

Christianity has a long tradition of mystics and hermits. St Teresa of Avila (1515-1582, founder of the Carmelite order, wrote about the 4 stages of prayer ascending to spiritual union with God. Ignatius of Loyola (1491- 1556), founder of the Jesuits, designed a set of spiritual exercises to bring the Christian into closer union with God and strengthen their will to do God's work.

The World Community for Christian Meditation is a contemporary organisation which offers mindfulness, meditative walks and meditation classes.

