Emmanuel United Church

Worship & Music Experience Survey & Workshop

Background

On October 25th, a workshop was held with the congregation to discuss worship and music at Emmanuel. Prior to the workshop, the congregation was sent a survey to complete with more granular questions. Consolidated results to both the survey and the workshop questions were collected and summarized below.

Future workshops on other topics are planned to take place in the coming months. The next workshop will likely focus on our communications, including technology, advertising, social media, and outreach.

Survey Highlights

- Most people think that varied and diverse music should be a significant or substantial part of Sunday morning worship. There is an appetite to grow our music ministry and incorporate new accompanying instruments.
- Practical sermons which connect to our daily lives are appreciated, as well as sermons that inspire us or tell a story. Many people are open to other styles of presenting the message instead of a traditional sermon.
- The congregation is split on the opinion of All Together Worship Sundays, with some enjoying them, and some preferring a traditional worship or feeling that these services get too carried away.
- The majority of responses prefer the traditional Lord's Prayer, or enjoy it alongside contemporary versions.
- Most respondents attend worship outside of Sunday mornings, either for holidays and special occasions, or regularly during the week.
- Most say that the first 15 minutes of worship should be built around young families. There is support for a children's space for activities in the sanctuary.
- As we explore ways to make our worship welcoming to all, it is important that we do not neglect those who are well-served by Emmanuel's current worship structure, or change elements of the worship that are meaningful to many people.

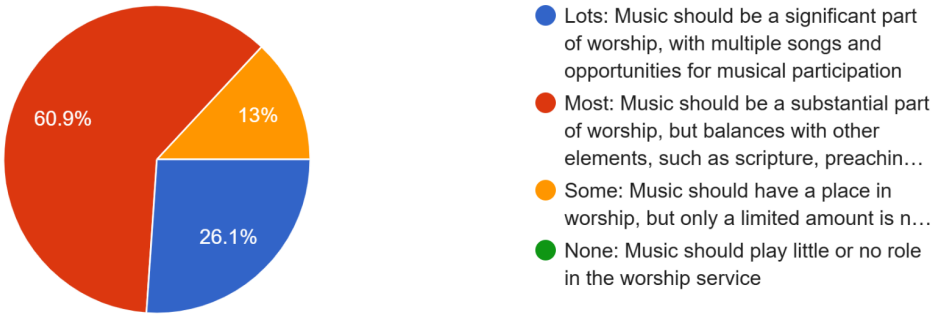
Workshop Highlights

- Community, fellowship, seeing friends, volunteering, and participating in music were cited as the main reasons our congregation attends worship on Sunday morning. Prayer, reflection, and connection with God were also noted in many responses.
- Aspects of the service that are especially meaningful to our congregation include the anthem and other music, interactive activities like the prayers of the people or All Together services, and having a quiet space to connect with the sacred. The inclusion of questioners and questioning believers in the responsive welcome is very valuable. When the overall service has a theme to tie it together, this is appreciated. Our congregation noted that a call to action linking the scripture or sermon to our daily life feels left out, along with learning about other philosophies and faith traditions, and music that is interculturally or intergenerationally focused. Specific logistics of Sunday morning were also mentioned as missing: passing the plate for collections, playing the service in the narthex, the offertory hymn, and passing out orange mugs to newcomers in the CE Hall.
- There are diverse opinions on the ideal level of formality and traditionality for Sunday services, and the level of focus that should be given to children and youth. The possibility of introducing alternate services to meet specific needs (ex. Families or those seeking a more reflective service) was raised. Suggestions were made to rearrange the layout of the sanctuary or the structure of the service. Intercultural awareness and the inclusion of neurodivergent people and non-native English speakers was discussed as an important pillar of being welcoming.
- On the topic of children and families, similar sentiment was expressed in the workshop and the survey. Discussion was had around bringing back the children's space in the lounge during services, expanding their participation in the service through music and invitations to help lead activities like the lighting of the candles. The children's time should focus on interactivity and active participation from the kids. Various ideas were discussed to rearrange the structure of the service to best fit the needs of young children.
- There is a strong desire to diversify our music at Emmanuel. Informal groups, inviting specific individuals and families to share their music, and showcasing songs that align with the values of the United Church from outside our hymnals were all suggested as paths forward. Alternative music should be introduced and linked to the theme for the service. Where Emmanuel does not have enough participants to sustain certain programs (ex. a children's choir), collaboration with other congregations could be helpful. Engagement in other parts of worship could be increased by reaching out to diverse groups to join the Worship committee, as well as spontaneous requests for participation during and after services.

Survey Questions - Music

Q1. What place should music have during the worship service?

- Most: Music should be a substantial part of worship, but balances with other elements, such as scripture, preaching, prayer, and silence (60.9%)
- Lots: Music should be a significant part of worship, with multiple songs and opportunities for musical participation (26.1%)
- Some: Music should have a place in worship, but only a limited amount is needed (13%)
- None: Music should play little or no role in the worship service (0%)



Q2. What style of music would you most like to hear during the worship service?

- Traditional: Mostly hymns and traditional church music, accompanied by piano, organ, choir, or other traditional instruments (10.9%)
- Blended: A mix of traditional hymns and contemporary worship music, drawing from both styles (43.5%)
- Contemporary: Mostly modern worship music, with contemporary arrangements and instruments (0%)
- Varied: A wide variety of musical styles, including traditional, contemporary, gospel, spirituals, and other forms of music, including secular music with a social justice theme (43.5%)



Other comments: 1 respondent said the hymns should be played at a higher tempo.

Q3. Which hymn in Voices United would you consider one of your favourite songs?

- VU 1 O come, O come, Emmanuel
- VU 43 While Shepherds Kept Their Watching
- VU 55 In the Bleak Midwinter
- VU 67 Silent Night
- VU 74 What Child is This
- VU 87 I am the Light of the World
- VU 127 Ride On Ride On In Majesty
- VU 266 Amazing Grace (3)
- VU 289 It Only Takes a Spark
- VU 296 This is God's Wondrous World
- VU 307 Touch the Earth Lightly
- VU 315 Holy Holy Holy (2)
- VU 352 I Danced in the Morning (3)
- VU 374 Come and Find the Quiet Centre
- VU 380 She Comes Sailing on the Wind
- VU 395 Come in come in and sit down
- VU 400 Lord Listen to Your Children Praying
- VU 409 Morning Has Broken
- VU 412 This is the Day, This is the Day
- VU 509 I, the Lord of Sea & Sky (2)
- VU 563 Jesus, You Have Come to the Lakeshore
- VU 567 Will You Come and Follow Me? (2)
- VU 575 I'm Gonna Live so God Can Use Me
- VU 625 I Feel the Winds of God Today
- VU 642 Be Thou My Vision
- VU 646 We Are Marching (Siyahamba)
- VU 651 Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah (2)
- VU 664 What a Friend we have in Jesus
- VU 675 We Have an Anchor
- VU 703 In the Bulb There Is a Flower
- VU 748 God Is My Shepherd
- VU 808 On Eagle's Wings
- VU 960 The Lord's Prayer

Q4. Which hymn in More Voices would you consider one of your favourite songs?

- MV 2 Come All You People (2)
- MV 18 Lord Prepare Me To Be A Sanctuary
- MV 28 God of the Bible
- MV 53 God Who Spread the Boundless Prairie
- MV 88 Over My Head
- MV 135 Called By Earth and Sky
- MV 138 My Love Colours Outside the Lines (2)
- MV 145 Draw the Circle Wide (2)
- MV 154 Deep In Our Hearts
- MV 156 Dance With the Spirit
- MV 176 Three Things I Promise
- MV 209 Go, Make a Difference (2)
- MV 221 I Am Walking a Path of Peace

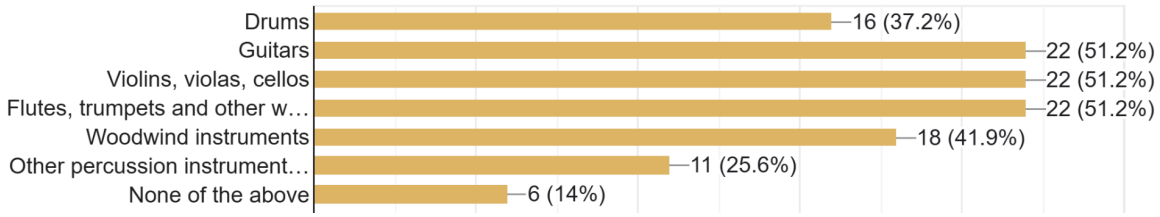
Q5. Is there another song from a different source that you would consider one of your favourite spiritual songs? If so, what is it and what is its source?

- Amina Lele
- Both Sides, Now by Joni Mitchell
- Come Unto Him by Handel
- Hallelujah by Leonard Cohen
- Image by John Lennon
- Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee by Henry van Dyke
- My Feet Are on the Rock by I Am They
- Ready Lord by Richard K. Avery
- Take My Hand, Precious Lord by Elvis Presley
- The Sound of Silence by Simon & Garfunkel
- This is the Day from the Psalter Hymnal (Grey) #241
- What a Wonderful World by Louis Armstrong

One response suggested we use Now Let Us Sing.

Q6. My enjoyment of worship music would be better if, in addition to piano and organ, music accompaniment included…

- Drums (37.2%)
- Guitars (51.2%)
- Violins, violas, cellos (51.2%)
- Flutes, trumpets and other wind instruments (51.2%)
- Woodwind instruments (41.9%)
- Other percussion instruments like claves, tambourines, maracas (25.6%)
- None of the above (14%)



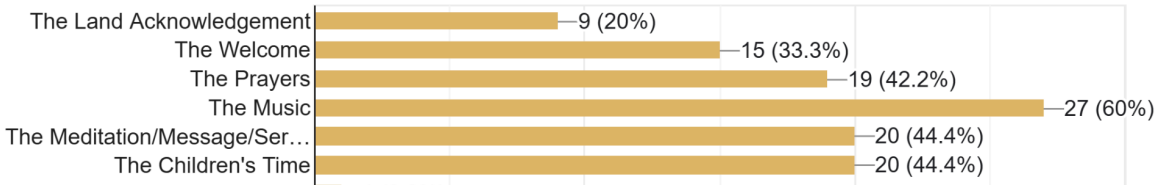
Other answers included:

- I love when the bells play
- No accompaniment
- The variety has been lovely, thank you
- Any/all of the above depending on the piece (6 responses)

Survey Questions - Worship

Q7. Which parts of the worship service are most meaningful to you?

- The Land Acknowledgement (20%)
- The Welcome (33.3%)
- The Prayers (42.2%)
- The Music (60%)
- The Meditation/Message/Sermon (44.4%)
- The Children's Time (44.4%)



Other answers included:

- What touches or resonates with me can vary from service to service
- Visuals and interactive parts of services are meaningful
- Prayers of the People
- Quiet reflection after the Sermon
- Sunday school with Ellen, announcements so we know what's coming up. Youth miss announcements now.
- The life & work of the church and minute for mission.
- Don't forget the before and after too!

Q8. What style of sermon would you most like to hear during Sunday worship?

- Teaching: Sermons should primarily explain Scripture and help us understand what it means. (2.3%)
- Practical: Sermons should focus on how Scripture connects to everyday life and help us live out our faith. (40.9%)
- Inspirational: Sermons should primarily encourage, challenge, and inspire us in our faith. (18.2%)
- Storytelling: Sermons should use stories, illustrations, and personal experiences to help communicate the message. (18.2%)

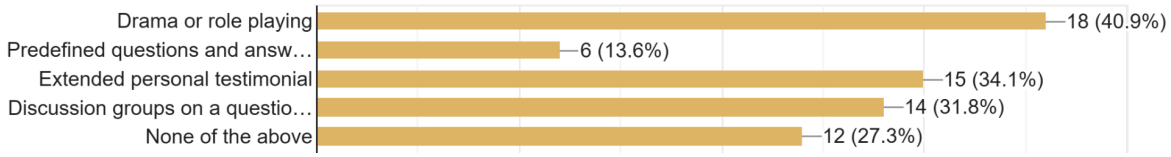


Other answers included:

- All of the above (3)
- Practical and Inspirational
- Practical and Teaching
- Not a fair question as our current minister has his own preference of preaching style just like all our other ministers in the past.
- More variety in style. They all seem very formulaic.
- Sermons should be a mix of all of the above, but with a reduced focus on theory. The message should be relatable - what does it mean to me? Why should I care?

Q9. What other styles of presenting the message would appeal to you?

- Drama or role playing (40.9%)
- Predefined questions and answers from a panel of members on a specific theme (13.6%)
- Extended personal testimonial (34.1%)
- Discussion groups on a question or theme (31.8%)
- None of the above (27.3%)

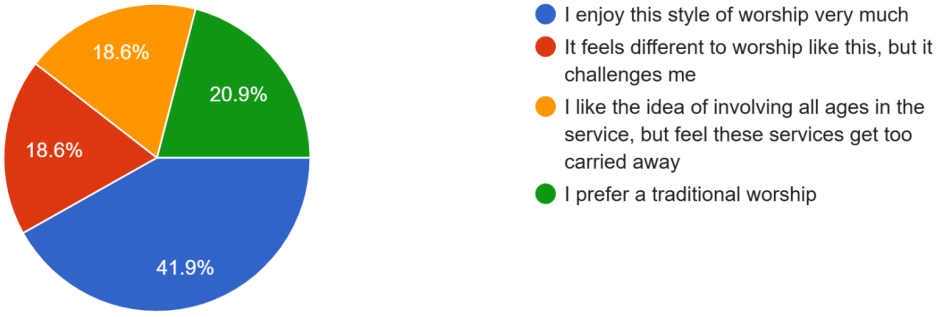


Other answers included:

- Do not turn sermons into workshops. PowerPoint's occasionally enhance the message.
- Personal testimony but I'm not sure about "Extended"
- Based off scripture meanings/Jesus' teachings
- Bring this alive - use of imagination
- Universal message
- Surprise me!

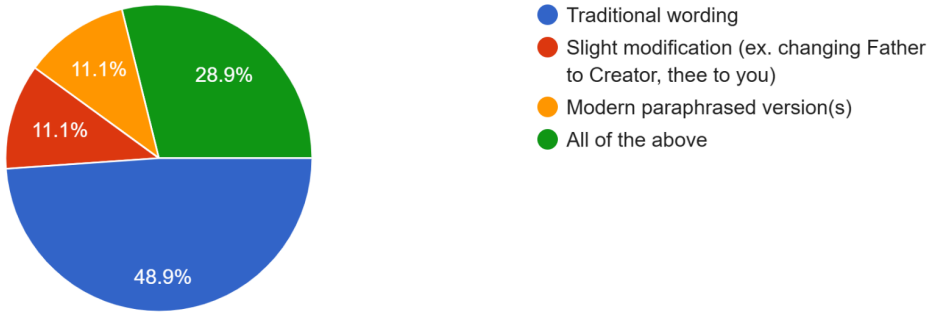
Q10. A few times a year, worship services have been introduced in a different format (All Together Worship Sundays)? How do you like these services?

- I enjoy this style of worship very much (41.9%)
- It feels different to worship like this, but it challenges me (18.6%)
- I like the idea of involving all ages in the service, but feel these services get too carried away (18.6%)
- I prefer a traditional worship (20.9%)



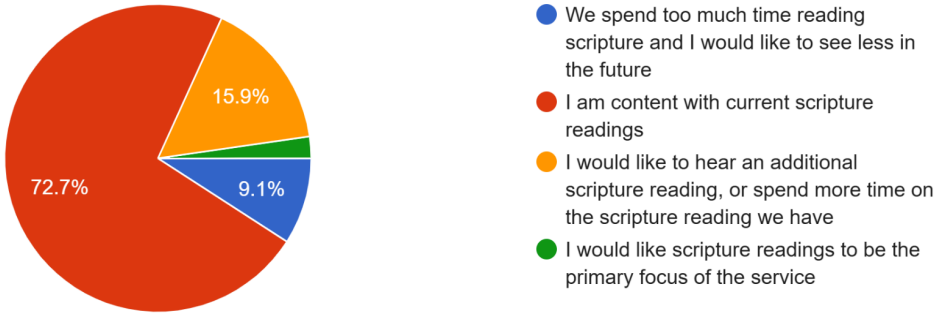
Q11. Which version of the Lord's Prayer do you prefer?

- Traditional wording (48.9%)
- Slight modification (ex. changing Father to Creator, thee to you) (11.1%)
- Modern paraphrased version(s) (11.1%)
- All of the above (28.9%)



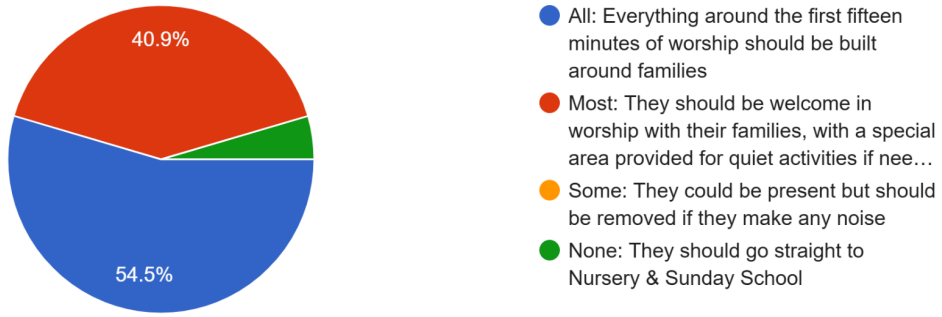
Q12. What role do scripture readings have in our service?

- We spend too much time reading scripture and I would like to see less in the future (9.1%)
- I am content with current scripture readings (72.7%)
- I would like to hear an additional scripture reading, or spend more time on the scripture reading we have (15.9%)
- I would like scripture readings to be the primary focus of the service (2.3%)



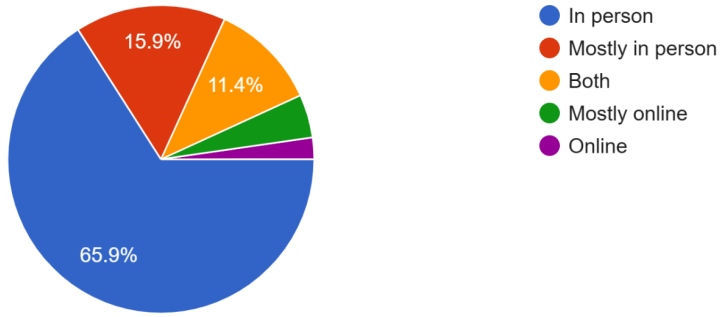
Q13. What presence should infants, young children, and older youth have in Sunday morning worship?

- All: Everything around the first fifteen minutes of worship should be built around families (54.5%)
- Most: They should be welcome in worship with their families, with a special area provided for quiet activities if needed (40.9%)
- Some: They could be present but should be removed if they make any noise (0%)
- None: They should go straight to Nursery & Sunday School (4.5%)



Q14. I attend worship…

- In person (65.9%)
- Mostly in person (15.9%)
- Both (11.4%)
- Mostly online (4.5%)
- Online (2.2%)



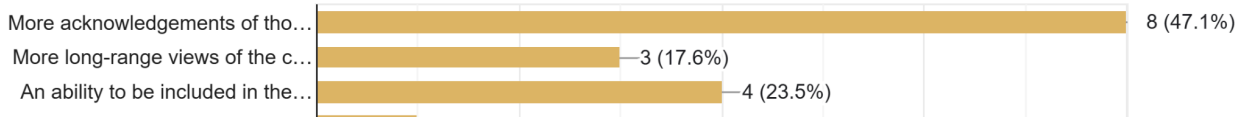
Q15. Where does worship belong in your week?

- Only on Sunday morning (23.3%)
- On Sunday morning, with occasional worship on other days for Lent, Advent, or other special occasions (62.8%)
- On Sunday morning and with regular worship (ex. small group, bible study) at another time (14%)
- Sunday morning doesn't work for me or my family. I would like to see services at another time (0%)



Q16. If you worship online, exclusively or sometimes, how can we best include you in the services?

- More acknowledgements of those worshipping online from the speakers in the service (47.6%)
- More long-range views of the congregation and sanctuary (17.6%)
- An ability to be included in the Prayers of the People (23.5%)

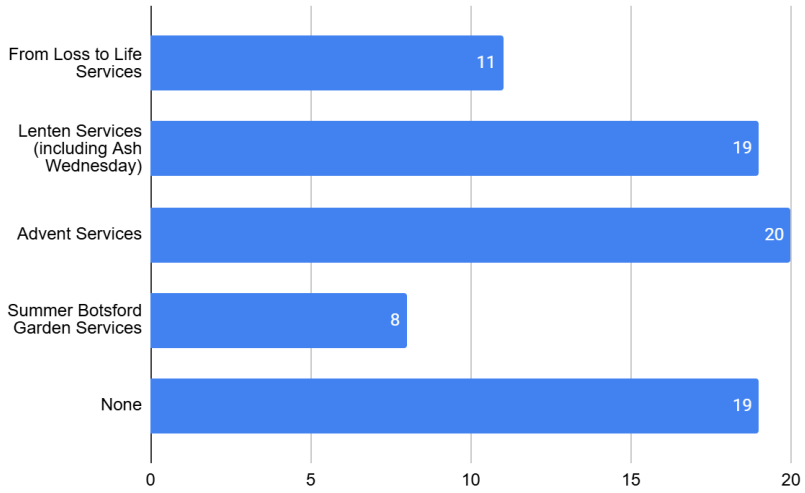


Other answers included:

- Host a Zoom Coffee Hour following the service like was done during COVID
- I want to send comments and greetings live on Sunday morning
- Making sure all parts of the service are able to be heard by those online

Q17. Do you attend any of the following special services?

- Lenten Services (including Ash Wednesday) (41.3% of all responses)
- Advent Services (43.5% of all responses)
- From Loss to Life Services (23.9% of all responses)
- Summer Botsford Garden Services (17.3% of all all responses)
- None (41.3%)



Q18. If you do attend these special services, is there something that could be added to them to make them more meaningful?

- Community service
- More bible readings and application to life experiences
- Love it when there is a variety of lay leadership each week
- Non-scriptural readings (also regular Sundays)
- Use of imagination - challenge and invite..
- More time to reflect on what is being read, rather than just reading what is written
- Make them more coordinated with each other from week to week.
- Designed to be live streamed for those who can't attend in person.

Q19. If you do not attend the above special services, why?

- I am too busy (4)
- I am unable to attend at the dates and times offered (5)
- They do not add to my worship experience (6)
- Nothing inspires me to attend them
- Usually I have conflicts with other organizations to which I belong
- I have a hard time understanding scripture and it often sounds scary to me. I need someone to explain it to me (Ellen is really good at this).
- Not usually kid friendly, can't attend with family.
- I am unable to get out especially at night
- Prefer silent worship that conflicts
- Too much conventional "God" mythology

Q20. Do you have any other feedback on the worship experience at Emmanuel?

- The church cannot be moulded to please all. We should be grateful for what we have as numbers are dwindling and a lot of this cannot change that fact. "Being faithful can be outside of a building".
- I enjoy our choir and special music and the postlude. And seeing the children up front.
- I do attend worship , but not at Emmanuel. The music lyrics at Emmanuel are often not suitable. You need to address changing lyrics but not tune. No three tiered world and no hint of substitutionary atonement. No miracles except as a story. Parables as basis for discussion as they are enigmatic . More Bible but emphasis on it as a story, not, necessarily truth or the word of God.
- Do not think it is necessary or desirable to have Lord's Prayer every service.
- I wish the language and theology were updated and more personal, the theology of praying needs to be rethought.
- Source of "What a Wonderful World", great for children. Didn't fit in the space above. Louis Armstrong - What A Wonderful World (Official Video)
- Visuals, movement are good, multi-sensory experiences enrich faith experiences and engage both children and adults. More services planned on a theme rather than based on scripture readings. Sue Longstreet does a great job of creating an atmosphere on special occasions.
- I prefer to remain seated throughout. Less scripture and more modern readings by scholars. Assume that non-Christians are probably present. Lay readers should be trained to use a mike and pause meaningfully to communicate eye-to-eye with the people. So should the preacher.
- You confine worship to Sunday Morning -- for me this lives throughout the entire week in my life. You had 40 members on June 28 for your discussions and sharing at Emmanuel. I am left to wonder how many of these used the opportunities from July to early October to visit other churches or religious experiences. What did you learn from this? If none did take advantage of this opportunity that was a big mistake. I went to services at Glebe St.James - and not for the first time to a wonderful effect for both myself and that faith community, Southminster and St.Giles Presbyterian. The last not to return to.
- Our music at present is quite diverse. But could be a lot more varied. People sometimes complain that the hymns and anthems are “too old”. This is simplistic. The age of the composition has nothing to go with the quality of the music. “New” does not mean better quality. “Old “ does not mean “bad”. If people pay attention to what the choir anthems and hymn choices actually are, they would realize how diverse the music is. We should keep moving in this direction.
- Discourage clapping after Anthem and Postlude - it is not a musical performance it is a worship service
- I think scripture readings could be projected on the screen (but not printed in the bulletin) so that the congregation could read and listen at the same time - good for people who are not auditory learners!
- Love the Emmanuel Family and activities. Thank you for trying to include everyone's likes and opinions in future services.

- I wish that more attention could be paid to current events and controversies, local and world wide. If we stick our heads in the sand by avoiding them (because some people will disagree), we are not following the way of Jesus.
- Not everything needs to be changed or fixed.
- Make changes relevant to who we are as a faith community. Don't try to be something we are not. (i.e. some videos)
- I would like to see us be a bit less concerned with the structure of Sunday worship and a bit more open to connecting with each other.
- The extended Land Acknowledgment and Welcoming are boringly repetitious. There should be variations; our bulletin should highlight these important elements but we don’t need to repeat every single time
- The music, hymns, and scripture should be complementary
- On the question about family, I think the most appropriate approach combines the first and second responses. Kids should be welcome to attend Sunday school when it's offered, or remain in the church if that is what is most appropriate for the family and the child. Before the pandemic, there was an area at the back of the church with toys for kids. To better integrate and welcome families in the church, I would like to see a return of that area to the sanctuary. I have also seen a few instances of late of the "kids should be seen, not heard" mentality. That is not how we will attract families to the church. Let's celebrate children and families, not hide them away.
- I don't like being on camera when in service

Workshop Questions

Q1: Why do you come to worship?

Summary: The answers highlight strong common themes of community and fellowship, seeing friends, participating in music and prayer, and reflection and connection with God. Habit and tradition were also cited, as well as the opportunity to volunteer.

All responses are listed below. Similar and duplicate responses are listed once, with a note for their frequency.

- An opportunity to participate in community prayers
- Because I see friends
- Because it proceeds
- Because it's close to my home
- Celebration of my faith & curiosity
- Community (10)
- Faith building
- Family
- Fellowship (4)
- Food
- Growth
- Habit (Hope springs eternal)
- Helps me through the week spiritually
- If not, I'd just sleep in and likely do nothing constructive
- Inspiration
- Inspirational music
- Music/share musical gifts (7)
- Outreach
- Peace
- Prayers and scripture
- Quiet centre in the spirit of community
- Quiet reflection
- Renew my connections to the sacred
- Seeing friends
- Sense of belonging
- Spiritual uplifting
- Sunday school
- To be energized by kids
- To connect with God
- To experience the presence of God in community
- To help me through the week
- To learn more about what it means for me this day and every day to follow Jesus
- To not give up meeting together as some are in the habit of doing
- To praise
- To pray
- To pray for those in need
- To reflect and connect with God as love
- To see friends (2)
- To sing (in the choir/sanctuary) (6)
- To start my week with believers
- To strengthen my connection to God
- To volunteer (3)
- Tradition
- Worship

Q2: Which parts of the worship service have been most meaningful for you in recent services? What feels left out?
Answers have been paraphrased and grouped for readability.

<u>Most Meaningful</u>

- The inclusion of questioners and questioning believers in the welcome. Knowing that you are welcome if you don't know all the answers.
- The anthem or musical offering. Four hymns and an anthem is ideal.
- The gathering hymn.
- The final amen.
- The postlude.
- Music here is really special. People feel a spiritual connection through music.
- The children's story is easy to understand. It is good when it ties into the service. Anything centered around the kids is meaningful.
- The service having a theme.
- Linking scripture to everyday life.
- Interactive services and prayers (ex. throwing wool, or on Christmas Eve). The intergenerational/All Together services give everyone a stake in the ministry.
- Prayers of the people.
- The scripture.
- The Lord's Prayer in different languages.
- The sermon. Some members prefer a shorter sermon.
- Young voices in church.
- One hour out of hectic life to know where I am, linking the Bible I read to how to live my life.
- Invitation to connect with the sacred. God-talk hasn't meant as much as my spiritual journey with the sacred. Walking through doors where there's a warmth - friendships here keep me here.
- Little gems: statements that resonate from prayers, often a single line that pops out.
- A quiet space. Holding up certain moments.
- The 7 Grandfathers Teachings.

Left Out

- A call to action - what is God challenging us to do? How to apply the scripture to daily life, where God fits in my life today and how to live out what He wants me to do. A summary, guidelines, or a focus to think about for next week. Set up social teachings with His perspective.
- New, simple songs. Some hymns are hard to sing, low energy songs or ones outside of most people's range.
- Testimonies.
- The prayers do not always align with the sermon.
- Passing the peace (with any words).
- Introductions to the anthem linking it to the scripture.
- Offertory hymn.
- Going between hymn books is tough for the choir.
- Creative ways to get God's message across.
- More complete prayers of the people. Instead of reading what is on the clipboard, group them and add to them.
- Passing the plate for collection or prayers.
- Exploring our connectedness with other faith-seeking people and connecting people.
- Music from other cultures.
- Interactive children's stories each week.
- Linking the children's story to what they do on a daily basis, dealing with anger, resentment, or other issues.
- Kid-friendly music at the beginning.
- Playing the service on the TV in the narthex.
- Secular philosophical readings.
- Visits from faith leaders in other religions.
- Orange mugs for newcomers.

Q3: Reflect on the current structure of Sunday service. How do you feel about how we sit, the flow of the service, our weekly welcome, the music, or any other aspect?
Answers have been paraphrased and grouped for readability.

- Different people will want different levels of formality to the service. Not everyone can be catered to in the same service, this could be an opportunity for other services with different styles.
- Some people prefer a traditional worship service. The structure can be good and comforting for some people. Some come to worship for calm and peace and louder services can be distracting. Clapping after the anthem disrupts the feeling of worship. Praise words are welcome to some and disruptive to others.
- Changing the repetitive/rote elements of the service (land acknowledgement, welcome) once and a while can keep people from tuning them out. Keeping the inclusion of questioning believers in the welcome is important if the phrasing shifts. The land acknowledgements could highlight the United Church's calls to action for reconciliation. Interactive or responsive Prayers of the People can be incorporated. We need to be open to changes of all parts, ask why we do it all the same way every time?
- Seating in sections works well. We could introduce more sections (more aisles makes movement easier) and reduce the number of overall chairs to make the sanctuary look less empty. Seats in the back of the sanctuary could be designated camera-free. A section could also be designated for family seating.
- People tend to sit in their preferred seats; they are connected to the space & each other, which is good, but we could encourage people to move around.
- The anthem could be after the sermon.
- The choir could begin the service sitting among the congregation.
- The minister should share more of the regular announcements.
- We can be family oriented without disruption and kids running around.
- The first fifteen minutes should be less structured and more adapted to children.
- The children's time could be moved to the end instead of the start.
- We could train the leaders of the children's time and lay readers, but this may also be too much to expect from volunteers, too commercial.
- We are overly dependent on text on the screen, but young children have a hard time following along, as do members whose first language is not English.
- Telling a story to children is not engaging/responsive enough for them.
- We should be more inclusive of marginalized groups. We should consider the needs of neurodivergent members of the congregation.
- We should incorporate intercultural music and music with more movement.
- We should invite leaders from other faiths to understand what we have in common.
- We are good at welcoming but not great at making people feel like they belong.
- We should make the service comfortable for those who aren't familiar with a euro-centric service, less focused on one leader at a time.
- We can put a clock at the back of the church to help with keeping things on time.
- We could introduce a prayer table to have people pray with members one-on-one for specific needs, before or after the service.

Q4: Many have said that we should make the service more accessible to young families. How do you suggest we do that?
Answers have been paraphrased and grouped for readability.

- The lounge used to be a dedicated children's space in the sanctuary before COVID. This was never brought back, but should be. Including a rubber mat/rug, toys, books or colouring sheets and crayons would be welcome. This allows children to play without disrupting those who want to worship. Some people come late so there is less time for the children to be disruptive before the children's story.
- The percussion instruments during the children's hymn are well-received, as is the gathering song before the children's story. Kids could share instruments with other members of the congregation so all can participate in more upbeat songs. Kids could be encouraged to play instruments in all of the hymns until they go to Sunday school.
- We could reduce the number of hymns at the start of the service from 2 to 1.
- We could move some of the more rigid structure (the land acknowledgement/welcome, etc) later in the service.
- We could invite children to do the welcome and the lighting of the candles. With coaching, youth can be lay readers or lead parts of the service.
- We should plan for noise in the first fifteen minutes and include children in the space.
- It can be hard for kids to warm up to Sunday school.
- The hymns at the start of the service should be kid-friendly. Upbeat songs are good, but reflective pieces with simple language are also easy for kids to sing.
- Some anthems could be kid-friendly, especially if they include movement. If an anthem is done before the kids go downstairs, other parts of the service should be moved so it isn't too much for them.
- Special events like the Seven Grandfathers' Teaching could be the children's time for those services when appropriate.
- We should be open to using different types of media.
- Lay readers could remind the congregation of the joy and energy of children before inviting us to focus on what God wants us to learn.
- Alternatively, children could go downstairs earlier/immediately. We could swap the order of service and have the children come up for the last 15 minutes.
- Youth services outside of Sunday services are working. We could do a family worship service once a month to focus completely on families. We could add more reverent/quiet Sunday evening services for those who do not enjoy the higher-energy family-focused part of the service.
- We could share the kid's artwork upstairs where everyone can see it.
- We should be continually checking in with families and making paths for change to happen. Many of these suggestions have been brought to Council/committees before and have not been implemented.
- Make sure that we are also focused on welcoming the parents, especially those who may have been pushed out of the church in the past. Ask young families who do not come to church what is missing for them.

Q5: Many have said that they would like alternate styles of worship and music. How can we empower people to participate in our music ministry or worship planning?
Answers have been paraphrased and grouped for readability.

Music

- The congregation would like to learn new pieces. We need someone who is knowledgeable about music to lead new pieces when they are first introduced.
- Simple music (ex. One person playing a guitar) is an easier way to get participation.
- We could expand our music ministry by including more instruments. A suggestion was made to include more instruments once a month.
- We can include music more aligned with what we listen to daily.
- More Voices has a lot of new songs, but many are very technically difficult and aren't easy to teach to the congregation.
- Find songs that are aligned with the values of the United Church today.
- One member offered to sing "Sunny Side of the Street" and was told no. What kind of alternate music do we want to include?
- We could invite opera singers to share their music. Songs about love can fit the service.
- Introduction might be needed to frame some alternate music if it feels out of place in a United Church service. One member noted that Ave Maria was familiar as a Catholic hymn, and did not seem right in the United Church.
- We should invite specific members with musical gifts to share their talent. Some families and individuals have shared music before. We should take steps to make it feel safe and welcoming to share music, especially from your cultural background.
- We used to have an alternate service with JAM, but the person leading it noted that there wasn't enough participation to justify it.
- A children's music group at Rideau Park is being led by a member of Emmanuel. Shared programs with other congregations in our cluster or in Ottawa could be a way to expand music ministry with children and youth.
- Are we doing outreach in the community to see if those outside Emmanuel would like to participate in a music group?
- Could there be an informal singing group?

Worship Activities

- The youth services that happen four times a year are appreciated.
- There should be an open invite to participate in the Worship Committee. If we want representation from specific groups (ex. the Congolese population), we should ask members of those groups directly.
- After church on Sunday, catch people and ask for their input.
- We can use videos to allow people to participate or as an alternative resource.
- Services at the Chipembi Congregation were described as "pure joy". We should engage with our African-Canadian families to lead us in that.
- We can ask a family to lead the lighting of the candles at the start of each service. People can be asked as they enter the sanctuary - it does not have to be planned in advance.