

WORSHIP PLAN

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Introduction

Healing Service in a Chapel or Christian Retreat Setting.

The context of this worship service is an ecumenical healing encounter for those from more orthodox backgrounds. I want to create a 'faith expectancy' in seeking physical, emotional or spiritual restoration. Common elements like confession, scripture readings, and intercessions provide structural integrity and a pathway to healing through anointed prayer ministry. Imagine an ornate hall or chapel with seating for, say, 80, a worship team, piano & small choir, a prayer ministry team of 5-6, an altar to one side for communion lite, and an area out front for prayer space.

Contemporary chorus worship has recently come under greater scrutiny, particularly as Hillsong and Bethel ministries continue to unravel (Divine Truth Exposed, 2025). Orthodox Christendom might well, therefore, justify historical reticence to shift its Overton window of worship. Also, not all Christians are comfortable with closer proximity to God, or even with the notion of his healing power. Therefore, to circumnavigate intrapersonal objections, I am including familiar liturgical themes that blend prayer, scripture, and symbolic gestures associated with sacraments and communion, including candles, the cross, sacraments, and anointing oil - hopefully to familiarise the engagement.

Key worship themes include God's presence, Christ as healer and forgiveness as precursor to the miraculous. The reflective homily and testimony propose personal vulnerability to God and a pathway to triune encounter. In the event of evidenced healing, this might also provide further impetus for follow-on worship, even after the formal meeting has ended.

Assuming PRS is in place.

Structure and Timings	Media <i>What specific song / prayer / idea / art / scripture / movement, etc</i>	Rationale
Gathering & Welcome (3 minutes)	Welcome to all, reminding us of our oneness and union in Christ from many denominations, yet present with diverse and varying individual needs. Opening prayer for God's protection and blessing over the venue and service. (Seated)	Wimber states, "...Christians can be affected and even controlled by evil spirits if they live in unconfessed and serious sin" (1987, p.116). It is therefore important to take authority over the service and venue setting from the outset to mitigate actual or existential spiritual threats that might seek to impede the direction of worship, disrupt the prayer ministry or detrimentally impact healing outcomes.
Opening Hymn, Repeated Chorus Style (7 minutes)	"Be still, My Soul" by Katherine von Schlegel, The United Methodist Hymnal, No. 534, set to the tune FINLANDIA, which symbolises hope and resolution, an inoffensive hymn designed to gently tease open the likely reticent heart with a touch of silver. (Standing)	Given the ecumenical and intended-orthodox attendees, this hymn is wonderfully serene and resonates with German Pietism, similar in spirit to the Wesleyan revival and period in England. Schlegel was born in 1697 and was probably from an aristocratic family. The text has travelled well down the years. The USP is its puritan undertones, which consider emotional or mental pressures rooted in spiritual causes, requiring acknowledgement and prayerful action by legacy-minded worshippers who might also appreciate Wesley's views (Maddox, 2007, p. 12).
Confession & Absolution (3 mins)	Engage the ecumenical worshippers with a general Confession, followed by a priestly-phrased pronouncement of opening our hearts to receive the word of God. (Remain standing)	Self-examination before communion means individuals are expected to examine their conscience, repent and resolve to live righteously, as evidenced in 1 Cor 11:28. Orthodoxy would recognise this stage. Still, as a healing service, we tailor the prayer, in advance of the Scriptures being read aloud, so that listeners will be cognizant that something more is about to happen.

<p>Scripture Readings & Background Music (5 mins)</p>	<p>Scriptures are slowly read aloud, set to “Gabriel’s Oboe” from The Mission <i>or</i> Jill’s theme from Once upon a time in the west, both by Ennio Morricone. (Applause redacted from mix)</p> <p>In this order:</p> <p>James 5:14,15</p> <p>Psalm 61:1-4</p> <p>Psalm 146:7-8</p> <p>Matt 10:8</p> <p>(Seated)</p>	<p>Building trust to allow the audience’s ability to conceive that legacy promises of healing belong to the scriptures and are trustworthy. Track 1: Oboe cuts to the heart every time and metaphorically ‘pierces the religious leather skin to pour the honey in’. Track 2: Sweeping strings and angelic voice elevate listeners to heavenly places with soprano vulnerability.</p> <p>In emphasising prayer by church elders, anointing with oil for healing and forgiveness, we link spiritual and physical well-being with God’s power to restore the sick.</p> <p>These verses aren’t just about praying; they’re about actively performing these acts of healing as a demonstration of God’s Kingdom.</p>
<p>Homily/Reflection</p> <p>Invited Testimony (5+5 = 10 mins)</p>	<p>A five-minute address on how predominant healings by Jesus were, outside any community of faith.</p> <p>A five-minute testimony of a colleague who God healed despite the failings of the local church, and how God bypassed orthodoxy to reach the individual with a miraculous breakthrough.</p> <p>(Seated)</p>	<p>There seems to be a myth circulating in Churches today that people are more likely to be healed as believers than otherwise. Yet in my experience, healing outcomes in orthodoxy remain poor or patchy, highlighting that juxtapositions become a useful pivot to show contrasting environments for healing.</p> <p>“Frequently, those who claim to be healed already possess significant social, moral or religious status, whereas the healings of Jesus seem to be directed at people who are exactly the opposite” (Percy, 1998, pp.27-28)</p> <p>Rev 12:11 implies that the gold standard of testimony is as crucial as the redemptive blood of the Lamb.</p>
<p>Hymn (3 mins)</p>	<p>Give Thanks (With a grateful heart) (1978), Henry Smith ‘Old school’ hymn but cuts to the heart due to its simplicity.</p> <p>(Standing)</p>	<p>This is a very unassuming Chorus Hymn made more accessible when Integrity Music published it on their Hosanna audio cassette in 1986. I first heard it sung at Festival 1987, and probes deeply, precisely the antidote to proceed prayer ministry. Redman would likely agree that the second stanza catches “...a vision of the whole Christ, it commands a response from the very depths of our being” (2004, p.57).</p>
<p>Intercessory Petition (3 mins)</p>	<p>The Leader or delegated prayer team leader specifically prioritises the time for prayers for healing, intercedes with petitions to God on behalf of the attendees, identifies various groupings of ailments or needs, and prewarns people that it is ok to come forward for prayer ministry.</p> <p>(Seated)</p>	<p>It is essential to demarcate this part of the service for introducing intercession on behalf of the people and for access to the prayer ministry team in an orderly fashion. Cocksworth implies that “Petitionary prayer is levelling. Anyone can call out to God, irrespective of spiritual maturity...Aquinas cites good authority for prioritising petition...as Augustine says, prayer is petition” (2018, p.144). Typically, orthodox congregations will be familiar with procession to the front, kneeling and/or awaiting anointing, prayer or blessing.</p>
<p>Anointing/Laying on of Hands (10 mins)</p> <p>Pianist Playing and Singing</p>	<p>Altar Call is an opportunity for people to come forward for prayer for healing and receive an impartation or baptism of the Holy Spirit, as anointing allows.</p> <p>“My Wounds Cry Alleluia.” By Clay Mclean.</p>	<p>This orthodox demographic might well have missed what it is to be fully open, as Payne would say, to the “...sweet unction of the Holy Spirit...the infilling that comes through an effective laying on of hands and anointing (chrism) 1 Cor 3:16” (1994, p.144).</p> <p>This is a powerful song to accompany ministry time because it provides a civilised channel to our personal</p>

Closing Blessing (1 min) (TOTAL 45 min)	Closing prayer of Blessing (Seated or standing)	vulnerabilities, either while watching or waiting in line for prayer. A closing blessing prayer for a worship service sends the congregation out with God's presence, asking for guidance and strength to live out their faith, often invoking the Trinity (Father, Son, Holy Spirit) and blessing them with peace, love, and purpose to serve the world, as seen in classic forms like the Benediction (Num 6: 24-26).
Communion Service LITE	Optional Eucharist Service	For those who did not respond to the invitation for prayer but would appreciate a prayer team member facilitating an informal Eucharist. It's the adage that no one should leave empty-handed, and often people's wounds lead them to deny, self-deprecate, or exclude themselves. A Eucharist is a safety net to counter pride or any number of other human machinations or layers we construct to protect our hearts yet ultimately trap us from within.

Conclusion

Every component in my service is designed to honour orthodoxy while framing therapeutic movement. Throughout my Christian life, I have retained suspicions that regimentation can still be moved so long as they think it's their idea. Additionally, if people witness evidence of favourable group dynamics, it can reacquaint them with treasures that were once liturgically theirs but had lost their power over time.

Worship in *or because* of a healing meeting surely relies on some degree of intimacy. Luke 11:1-4 offers insight into how the disciples grappled with Jesus' intimate relationship with his father. Betts indicates that "No Jew had ever called God' father' in a personal intimate way...this pursuit was no doubt why the disciples asked Jesus: 'Lord, teach us to pray'...in answer, Jesus did not issue a creed-like statement to recite" (2010, p. 60).

God's presence is *his* presence - regardless of how we interpret it. But we must still approach it or form an agreement allowing it *to approach us*. Subsequently, the worship and musical choices are designed to coax people into the notion of healing gently. Isn't it the case that some people often remain trapped in their orthodoxy precisely because they believe their orthodoxy is the encounter? This plan attempts to address dissonance and offer workarounds for those who might otherwise disqualify themselves from accessing God's healing power simply because of acquired prejudices.

Bibliography

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Appendix

(In order they appear in the service)

Welcome For General Safety and God's Presence:

“...Heavenly Father, we thank You for the opportunity to gather here in Your name. We ask that You surround this place with Your divine protection, just as the mountains surround Jerusalem (Psalm 125:2). Be a wall of fire around us (Zechariah 2:5), guarding us from any physical, emotional, or spiritual harm. We trust in Your promise that where two or three gather, You are with them (Matthew 18:20). May Your presence fill this room, assuring us of Your constant care. Amen.”

Opening Hymn

<https://youtu.be/hsTwongYTig?si=q4FhQ5-0s3lIFmNy>

“Be Still, My Soul”

*Katherine von Schlegel; trans. Jane Borthwick;
The United Methodist Hymnal, No. 534*

*“Be still, my soul: the Lord is on your side.
Bear patiently the cross of grief and pain;
leave to your God to order and provide;
in every change God faithful will remain.
Be still, my soul: your best, your heavenly friend
through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.*

*Be still, my soul: when dearest friends depart,
and all is darkened in the vale of tears,
then shalt thou better know his love, his heart,
who come to soothe thy sorrow and thy fears.
Be still, my soul: thy Jesus can repay
from his own fondness all he takes away.*

*Be still, my soul: begin the song of praise
on earth, be leaving, to thy Lord on high;
acknowledge him in all thy words and ways,
so shall he view thee with a well-pleased eye.
Be still, my soul: the Sun of life divine
through passing clouds shall but more brightly shine.*

Scripture Readings

James 5:14,15

"Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church, and let them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise them up. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven,"

Psalm 61:1-4

1 Hear my cry, O God;
listen to my prayer.
2 From the ends of the earth I call to You,
I call as my heart grows faint;
lead me to the rock that is higher than I.
3 For You have been my refuge,
a strong tower against the foe.
4 I long to dwell in Your tent forever
and take refuge in the shelter of Your wings.

Psalm 146:7-8

7 He upholds the cause of the oppressed
and gives food to the hungry.
The Lord sets prisoners free,
8 the Lord gives sight to the blind,
the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down,
the Lord loves the righteous.

Matt 10:8

"Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons; freely you have received, freely give,"

'Gabriel's Oboe' from The Mission 1986, Ennio Morricone

<https://youtu.be/2WJhax7Jmxs?si=eyqDqFDz9uoNzMqn>

'Jill's theme' from Once upon a time in the West, 1971, Ennio Morricone

https://youtu.be/_1e9Mtyqzgk?si=M6AdAjvxHcnC-LCJ

Give Thanks, (With a grateful heart) (1978), Henry Smith

https://youtu.be/LjIOmuAkM8c?si=U_JlfBSUmgaVjvKN

"My Wounds Cry Alleluia" Clay Mclean 1991, from the album 'Against the Night'.

<https://youtu.be/xJXEVkYYtb4?si=rqnTn-odQSvToKy6>