



Worship at Carmel

During the past year Carmel's pastors, staff and elders have developed a direction for the future of our worship. From multiple worship styles we will move to a unified worship experience. To help Carmel members understand more about this change, this document was created to provide answers to frequently asked questions.

1. What is the vision for worship at Carmel?

The vision is for a unified worship experience on Sunday morning for the Carmel Family. This means that on Sunday morning we will have the same worship service offered multiple times.

We envision Carmel Family members of all ages participating in congregational, intergenerational worship, each contributing to the other. We will come together as a body of believers and worship together. We will learn what it means to worship from others. We will learn to show deference to others. We will focus on the object of our worship, not ourselves and our preferences, but our God.

We believe this worship will touch the hearts of our members and people in our community.

2. What is unified worship?

Unified worship is a congregational worship philosophy that encourages the Carmel Family to worship together intergenerationally so that we can appreciate, learn from, and impact one another in a setting where all the elements of worship, including music, are uniquely Carmel.

Unified worship is one worship service with the same sermon and the same elements of worship done multiple times. Worship elements include the preaching of God's Word, the ordinances of baptism and Lord's Supper, scripture reading, prayer, the offering, responsive reading, silent reflection, storytelling, visual lessons, and vocal and instrumental music.

3. Why have we decided to move to unified worship?

We will move to unified worship because we desire

- *unity that God can bless*

The early church grew because of its unity (Acts 2:43-47). Jesus prayed that his disciples would be one, so that the world would believe in Him (John 17:20-21). This unity positions us to be used to reach people for Christ.

- *intergenerational worship*

We want Sunday morning to be the time the Carmel Family comes together to worship the audience of One. We want to create a place of worship where adults, students and children engage in worship, grow in the Word, and invite friends to join them.

- *increased excellence in worship*

We believe that bringing all our resources, gifting, and personnel availability together for one unified worship service will bring a new level of excellence to our efforts to honor God. In the past, we divided our resources as well as our people by using different styles of worship music in different rooms.

4. What will unified worship look like?

Worship leadership that you will see from week to week as the norm will include a choir, vocal team, band and orchestra. It will be similar to what you saw on May 31 or on Easter Sunday in the Worship Center. In the course of a year, we may use different musical worship elements from time to time, but a choir, vocal team, band and orchestra leading worship with the same songs in every service will be the norm. To achieve this goal of worship leadership in all services, we will need more people serving in the worship ministry, particularly in the choir. Because of this need, initially a vocal team and band, not the choir and orchestra, will lead the 8:15am service. The songs, message and other worship elements will be the same in all services. A choir and orchestra will be added to the 8:15 service as soon as there are enough people serving in those worship ministry groups.

5. When will unified worship begin?

We are now and will continue moving in the direction of unified worship. We will continue planning, preparing and taking practical steps to achieve as much similarity as possible in all the services in September. Once we are all together, unified in our worship style, we will continue to move ahead together as the Lord leads us.

6. Will we sing hymns? Will we sing contemporary worship songs?

We will sing older hymns and new hymns. Often, the older hymns will be sung with newer musical arrangements. We will sing modern music as well. We all will defer to one another in regard to our preferences for the sake of congregational, intergenerational, God-centered worship. The guiding principle of our song selection is to choose songs that are biblical and that lead people to connect with God in worship.

7. Will we use the organ?

On special occasions we will. Historically, organs were introduced as a way to create a full instrumental sound in the absence of other musical instruments in congregational worship. We prefer to have a full, live orchestra and band for instrumental music and to accompany congregational singing.

8. Will the choir wear robes?

Choir robes are not a necessity. As we look to our future when we add more members to the choir, robes will not be a priority in our spending.

9. Will we have a pulpit and chairs on the platform?

We are presently seeking a new pulpit design and chairs that can be used when needed.

10. Are we going to eliminate the choir, orchestra, band or vocal team?

No. Please see the answer to question 4, 'What will unified worship look like?'

11. How will unified worship impact those of different generations at Carmel?

Change brings challenges. We understand that. We are asking everyone, those in each generation, to focus on the God of our worship. We are asking everyone to sing songs that are familiar along with a 'new song' in praise to Him. In doing this we will share our faith by example as we worship with other generations. To see an example of generations coming together in a similar transition Dr. Poplin recommends the book, [Who Stole My Church](#). Copies are available in the Media Center.

A Word from Dr. Poplin

It is my desire that each one in the Carmel Family worship. This is a challenging, but exciting time for all of us. My prayer is that we will be patient and be gracious; ask God to teach us through this process; consider the elements of true, biblical worship; and move together in this new direction.