

Saturday 22nd September



Passionate Worship

At our district synod today, we heard all about passionate worship. Maybe you hear those words and think about lively music, with a worship band and arms in the air. Maybe you think of quiet, reflective worship with traditional hymns and prayers. Whatever you think of different styles of worship, at Synod we were asked to consider that passionate worship had nothing to do with the music, the style of prayers, the sermon or even how long the worship was!

Passionate worship, according to the speaker Bob Bartindale, is worship that focuses on God, bringing the awe and wonder of being in God's presence. It is also worship grounded in very real human experience, our own experiences of God in our daily lives. Passionate worship welcomes all people, is clear and accessible for all. It is also empowered by the Holy Spirit. There is an expectation that the Holy Spirit will be present, will speak and work in the lives of those gathered to worship.

There are many hymns that demonstrate this idea of reflective, passionate worship. *When the Music Fades*, also known as *The Heart of Worship* (Matt Redman), is a modern worship song which speaks of taking away the music and focusing upon the heart of worship, on God alone. A hymn that inspires that sense of awe and wonder in God's presence is *Be Still for the Presence of the Lord* (David Evans), which helps to prepare heart and mind for worship. Alternatively, there is *To be in your Presence* (Noel Richards), a hymn about personally sitting in the presence of God and how that can make us feel.

*Holy and awesome God
As we come before you in prayer,
help us to do so in Spirit and in truth.
As we worship you,
let us come full of expectation that we will hear your words to us.
We praise for the glorious things that you have done
in creation, in the history of the people of the world.
We thank you for all that you are doing today in your world,
in your church, in our lives.
We look forward in anticipation for all that you will do
in the days, weeks, months and years to come.
Holy and awesome God, we offer our lives to you.
Amen.*