

MISSION AND VISION FOR WORSHIP AT FIRST CRC, LONDON

February 6, 2004

MISSION

Mission for worship of God's people, always and everywhere:

Our mission in worship is to live out our God-created communal connection to Him by our allegiance & worship of Him. Worship is the authentic God meeting his authentic people. Our access to God is through the Son and so our purpose is to discover Christ and grow in Him. Worship is Trinitarian: remembering the Father's faithfulness, celebrating the Son's sacrifice, and being empowered by the Spirit's presence. All worship is directed by the Living Word of God.

This mission is guided by the following principles.

1. Worship is, in essence, a dialogue between God and his people.
2. In the dialogue between God and his people, God initiates. God always moves first.
3. The content of worship is God's communal history. God stories. The Biblical ones of the sweep of salvation history and our own experiences in our congregation every week.
4. The whole salvation story is told over a year within the liturgical year.
5. Sin misdirects worship. We give worship to other things. We ignore God.
6. Worship is service (giving allegiance) to God: as a knight gives service to his Lord and king.
7. Worship is about sacrament: filling ordinary things with spiritual meaning: the bread, the wine, the water, but beyond that, words, notes and actions that gain spiritual depth and meaning.
8. For us to be authentic means that we give permission to worship with all of what we are: emotions and intellect, body and spirit. For us to worship an authentic God means we open ourselves to His fullness.

VISION

A vision for worship at First CRC, London

We hope to be led by God to worship Him in ways that are ancient & future, creative & expressive, and deeply owned by those who seek to discover and grow in Christ.

- *ancient* means using structures drawn from the history of the church which include:
 - the church year
 - intentional themes
 - a pattern for the worship service: welcome, greeting, call to worship, confession, the Word, response, giving, communal prayer, blessing
 - a spectrum of emotional responses
- *future* means using styles throughout the service that communicate to those living in the 21st century culture
- *creative & expressive* means that we express ourselves
 - in image: banners, displays, drama, video, movement & dance
 - in word: poetry, stories, readings
 - in music: worship teams ought to lead worship more often than not, and we should include quartets, double quartets, contemporary choirs, instrumental accompaniment
- *deeply owned* means a trust and an investment by the congregation in the worship experience created by
 - the ready use of members' gifts
 - developing a relationship with worship leaders who are consistent
 - employing the historical patterns of Christian worship