



What is a Worship Leader?

Worship in Methodist Churches has always included participation from a wide variety of people. People are encouraged to take part by reading scripture, leading prayers, sharing testimony, playing music and in countless other ways, all of which contribute to worship. You don't have to be a designated Worship Leader to do any of these things.

Standing Orders (Section 68) defines a Worship Leader as ***“a person appointed...to take a significant role in the conduct of worship within the life of a Local Church.”*** Every church is different, and the role of different Worship Leaders may differ significantly. One may lead worship week by week from a guitar or keyboard, another may co-ordinate a team of people providing prayer before, during and after worship, and another may assist the preacher by shaping the act of worship around a pre-planned theme or Bible text.

The quality and consistency of our public worship matters because it is central to our mission, and to the spiritual life of the church. For this reason, we take the training and formation of Worship Leaders seriously, and provide a range of training options to prepare Worship Leaders for their vital contribution.

In 2018, the Ministries Committee of the Methodist Church clarified the training requirements for Worship Leaders. For more information on the options for training, see Guidance Note 2 in this series. It can be found and downloaded at www.methodist.org.uk/wl.

What do Worship Leaders do?

Worship leaders are appointed, trained and commissioned by their Church Council to take a leading and significant role in public worship in their church. They work alongside the minister or local preacher appointed to lead an act of worship. Their role may include choosing and leading music and prayers, reading Bible passages or other readings, facilitating dance or drama and any other aspect of worship other than preaching and presiding at Holy Communion.

Increasing numbers of Methodist Churches are realising the benefits that worship leaders bring. They often know their local congregation well and can introduce new creative insights and gifts into worship which are grounded in their local community and shaped by local mission priorities.

Whilst worship leaders usually work within their own church, they can lead worship at another church in their circuit, subject to agreement between the worship leader, the Superintendent Minister and the churches concerned.

Worship leaders can lead or participate in Local Arrangement services, but churches should not assume that worship leaders will always do so. Local Arrangements are opportunities for the whole church family to share their gifts and ideas in worship.

Who can be a Worship Leader?

Worship leaders must be members of the Methodist Church, and are appointed to serve in this role within their local church. The Church Council is responsible for considering prospective worship leaders and assessing their call, for arranging training, for providing them with opportunities to



Worship Leaders 1: INTRODUCTION

develop their skill and competency and for appointing them to their role. They do this with the support of the circuit Local Preachers' Meeting. Worship leaders serve for a period of three years, following which their appointment can be renewed by their Church Council based on the recommendation of the local preachers' meeting.

How are Worship Leaders trained?

The authorised training course for worship leaders is the **Worship: Leading & Preaching (WLP)** course, which is also followed by local preachers.

The training for worship leaders is flexible and modular. Two items are required as a minimum. *Worship: Foundations*, is a practical workbook for worship, which students use with their Mentor. Worship leaders are also required to learn from Module 2 of the WLP course.

The level of training required is set by the Church Council in consultation with the circuit Local Preachers Meeting. Students need a mentor and a tutor to accompany them through the training.

More information is on the website at www.methodist.org.uk/wl, where Guidance Note 2 on worship leader training can be downloaded.

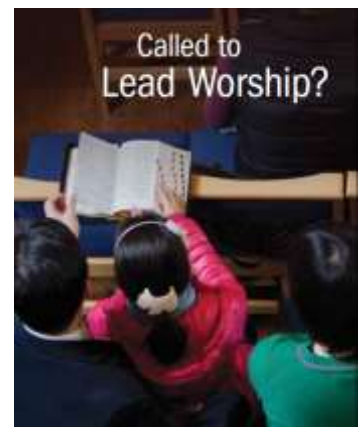
What to do next...

Would you like to explore being a Worship Leader, or do you know someone else who has the skills and gifts to get involved?

If you know someone who is a worship leader already, have a word with them to find out what is involved. You could also volunteer to lead prayers or do Bible reading in your church to gain some experience.

It's always a good idea to speak to your Minister, who will be able to help you work through whether this is something for you, and will be able to advise on next steps.

You may find [this booklet](#) helpful. It includes testimonies, Bible passages and practical guidance to encourage reflection, prayer and talking things through with others.



More Information

The Worship Leader page on the Methodist Church website at www.methodist.org.uk/wl contains more information about Worship Leaders.

Section 68 of Standing Orders applies to Worship Leaders. These can be downloaded at <http://www.methodist.org.uk/for-ministers-and-office-holders/governance/cpd/>. An extract covering section 68 can be downloaded [here](#).

For any further information, please contact the Local Preachers' Office at localpreachers@methodistchurch.org.uk or ring 0207 467 3774.