# Magazines September 2025: Worship, what is it?

I wonder what you imagine you are doing when you go to church, when you gather together with others to worship God?

Some of us think that we have come to experience an intimate encounter with God. We come to hear in the words and experience in the actions a connection with God that is both personal and emotional. This may be through songs, through music, through the poetry of the liturgy, the drama of a shared eucharistic meal.

Others of us come because we recognised our desire and our need to be edified. We want to hear the Bible come to life and made relevant to our lives. We may be a bit suspicious of emotion, of heartfelt praise and thanks to God.

Others of us worship as a duty and a service to God and to one another and to the world. It is our duty, because we need it, we need to gather together to give praise to God, to hear God’s word, to share God’s sacraments and to go out and serve in the world.

For yet others worship is an ongoing offering to God, part of the continuous offering of worship offered to God at different times and different places. When we gather, we enter into that flow of worship, day and night that is being offered in this world and the next. Worship is for God’s sake, so it does not matter who is or is not present. Some understand their worship to be on behalf of those who cannot or do not come.

When you come away from a church service thinking: “That was good!” I wonder what it was about your experience which made it ‘good’? Was it because you connected personally and emotionally with God? Was it because you felt you learned something and you were moved, satisfied by the preaching particularly? Was it because you felt you had done your duty, with joy? Was it because you understood that you were entering into a flow of worship that has been happening forever, and this was meaningful and satisfying?

I wonder which of these assumptions underlie your expectations when you gather in worship of God with the church?

I wonder which of these assumptions underlie the way our particular church understands worship?

On the 7 September at 10.45am Canon Roger Spiller will be giving a running commentary on the significance of the each part of the Holy Communion Liturgy as it unfolds. Many of us have commented how we would appreciate such an explanation of Anglican Liturgy, the thinking behind it and its intended effects. Do come along, whether you’re a regular church goer or not.

Yours sincerely,

Rev’d Katryn