

Worship Report, Anne Baker

A core value of the Worship Committee is to maintain our traditions while enriching them for our modern lives. Some things you may have noticed, and some things are more subtle or behind the scenes. In the worship space I'm sure you have seen the new chairs that are lighter and easier to move around. Free-standing kneelers were introduced with the chairs. We changed the location of the prayer books and hymnals from the backs of the chairs to special bookcases near the congregational seating.

We tried new things within the Sunday worship. We developed new community prayers and prayer cards for recognizing birthdays, anniversaries, and travel. We restarted Minutes for Ministry, where a person talks about their personal ministry. Parish Cycle of Prayer now focuses on individual ministries within the parish, overseen by the Stewardship liaison. We had a more traditional and solemn All Saints service where we read names of those who died this year, then everyone said their own memorial names during the Eucharist circle. Our alternative service became intergenerational but still kid friendly. (Intergenerational service happens about every 6 weeks instead of every month.) We used stick incense instead of charcoal-based incense at Christmas to see if we can inspire the feeling of the scent of a special day without the use of actual smoke. We have also been trying silence at various parts of the service with mixed results. And we've decided to say Amen instead of clapping in appreciation of special music.

Beyond Sunday worship, we tried other new ideas. We held Wednesday night Taizé services during Lent and monthly during the summer. We held a Maundy Thursday dinner with worship service at tables, including foot washing. St. Francis Feast Day Animal Blessings-to-go happened in the park across Canterbury Drive and at Seacliff State Beach.

We created themes for each week of Lent and Advent. These helped in choice of music and optional prayers and influenced the homily. Other general changes included Deacon Joan setting the table and new instructions for ushers and acolytes, with acolyte duties separated from those of chalice bearers.

We gathered more committee input on service music to familiarize our new Director of Music Ministries with our musical tastes and traditions.

It was an honor and pleasure to serve on this committee.

Respectfully submitted,

Anne Baker