



RENEWING
Ministry

The MMA Inauguration Events



Diocese
of Derby



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

THE MMA INAUGURATION EVENTS

When the member churches of the MMA feel the time is right, an event can be planned at which the MMA is officially inaugurated. The following notes have been prepared by the Diocesan Worship Advisory Group and provide some suggestions for this event. They are only guidelines as every MMA will want to prepare the kind of event that best suits its particular vision. These notes are primarily addressed to those MMAs that are bringing together gatherings of parishes that are working together for the first time.

The purpose of this event is:

- To bring together the partner churches and acknowledge that the life of the MMA has started.
- To pray for God's blessing on the MMA
- To pray for the Area Vicar, the Ministry Team and the Council
- To articulate and own the vision of the MMA.

This toolkit paper is deliberately not using the word 'service', so as not to prescribe the type of event that MMAs should have. The following notes will make clear that there is opportunity here for imaginative thinking and the hope is that there will be a rich variety of events across the Diocese.

Preparation

The Ministry Team needs to establish a small Planning Group that is able to

- listen to the life and witness of each member church
- grasp the vision that God is giving to this MMA
- practically put together the inauguration event

This may be the same group of people as the Steering Group (see *Getting Started*) or it can be a different group. It may be best to avoid getting together a representative group (eg. ensuring all organists, choir leaders, worship group leaders etc. are present), as this could mean that the planning descends into a 'we want our bit represented' mentality. People who can listen will make sure vital parts of the ministry and mission of each church are included. As with all such groups, there is benefit in it being a relatively small task group that can meet easily for several planning sessions.

Location and Time

One of the first things to decide is where the event should take place. Possibilities are:

- In one of the churches
- In a non-church location, giving the clear message that this is about mission not 'churchiness'. One MMA has been considering hiring a sports centre where people can be invited to swim together before and after the event!
- In more than one location – starting the event in one place and then moving to another. This could be the form of a pilgrimage from church to church, or locality to locality etc.

When you think about the time to hold this event, consider the time when you are likely to get most people to attend, including children and young people.

The Community

The leading focus of the MMA is mission, so in the planning of this inaugural event it will be important to give thought to how the local community can be involved. Such involvement needs to be communicated that we are working *with* the community, and that this MMA is not just for the benefit of Christians.

Ecumenical

Some MMAs have a significant ecumenical element. Whether this is the case or not, representatives of partner churches in the Area involved can be invited and preferably given a role in the event, especially our Methodist Covenant partners. Above all, the occasion needs to be a celebration. The event signals the effective beginning of the MMA, even if some of the finer details have still not fallen into place.

Articulation of the vision

MMAs are being encouraged to clarify their vision statement, which is essentially a response to the fundamental question: 'What do we feel God wants us to achieve through this partnership of Christian people'. Where MMAs are bringing together new groupings of churches, members of those churches need to know clearly what is the 'value added' in this new grouping. Furthermore, there needs to be a clear indication of what the 'value added' will be for the community(ies) that the MMA serves. So at some point in the event this vision for churches and community needs to be clearly stated.

Refreshments

The provision of food and drink communicates a powerful message about hospitality. Often church events end up with a 'bun fight' after a event, but there's much to be said for having food before or even during the event.

Be creative!

There are many things you can do in this event, and it is an opportunity to be imaginative and creative. In the liturgy that is provided, you will find a number of footnotes giving some ideas. You may find it helpful to consider these guidelines:

- It is better to have a few strong images rather than too many.
- Do give guides to use, but don't be too prescriptive. If you want people to do things, writing them by side of images is helpful, so is having a few key people primed who will go first and show what needs to happen.
- You need to give permission for people who do not want to take part to do so.
- Bible verses can be useful prompts for people to help them root the images in faith, particularly if this style of worship is unusual to them.
- This is a great way to include young people and they can have great ideas to help
- Remember some people work differently than others. You need to include stuff to suit more than just your personality type.
- Look at the lay out of your worship space and consider what works there.
- Remember practicalities of time, money, space, people, cost and importantly safety.
- Consider disabled people being able to do activities.

- Work together with others rather than do it yourself as then you can bounce ideas of each other and enrich the worship. It also helps you incorporate other worship ideas.

Remember different spiritual traditions in MMA so that you consider the images from all angles.

Symbols of the churches and their communities

As part of the event, each church may want to include something symbolic from their church or parish that communicates something distinctive about their parish and/or ministry in that parish. This could be included at any point during the event.

Children and young people

The event needs to be children and young people friendly! Some ideas are included in the notes, but you will want to involve your children's leaders to get their thoughts.

Worship Resources

What follows are some worship resources for an event to inaugurate an MMA. A sample 'order' is set out to indicate the kind of things (and some of the texts) that this event might or should contain. But maximum encouragement is given to local communities to adapt and alter the material provided here.

The appendices contain a range of suggestions, including additional texts, suggested patterns of readings, and suggestions for music and hymns.



Let us know

When you have decided when you are holding your MMA event, could you let us know by returning this short reply slip.

MMA

Date of Event

Place of Event

Description

.....

Contact person

Email (or phone)

Return to:

Revd Michael Mitton
Derby Church House, Full Street, Derby DE1 3DR
email: mmitton@fish.co.uk



Worship Resources
to celebrate the
Inauguration of an
MMA

Reverend

¶ **The Gathering**¹

Opening Hymn²

Welcome and Introduction

The Officiant says

All The Lord be with you.
 and also with you.

Words of welcome and introduction are said.

A call to worship or acclamation may follow [for examples see APPENDIX 1]

The Story of the churches³

Prayers of Penitence may follow [see APPENDIX 2]⁴

¹ **Tree of Hope:** The theme of hope needs to be very clear in the celebration. We are hoping for new life to flow from this new gathering of churches working together in mission.

- See Isaiah 40 v 31 'Those who put their hope in the Lord will renew their strength'. Write this out and place it by something that symbolizes a tree.
- Another idea is to have a large branch with several little branches going from it planted in container. Have various coloured paper leaves hole punched and attached to green wire/plastic garden ties. Write prayers of hope on the leaves and attach to the tree with the garden tie.

² **Music:** This needs to reflect the style of all the churches, which means in some cases there will be a real variety of style. Also, what styles are relevant to the local community?

³ **Story:** This event provides an excellent opportunity for each church to find a way to tell its story – how it started, key features of its life, important moments in its history, its vision statement, how God has led them etc. Each church could be invited to bring a symbol of its life to place on the altar. The story of each church may include both **confession** and **celebration**. Within every church's history there are events that can be remembered and celebrated, and others that are best forgotten! However, it is not always easy to forget, and wounded history has a habit of not only being remembered, but also adversely affecting the church's life and witness. Starting a new venture such as joining a MMA is an opportunity consciously to let go of old wounds and offering them to God. This will be especially important if part of that wounded history is to do with the relationship of the churches to the community the MMA is serving, or relationship between the member churches of the MMA. If this is the case, then some act of acknowledgement, confession and healing could form part of the inaugural event of the MMA. The Story section could happen at any point in the event. If there is a confession element, then it makes sense to do this in connection with the penitence section that follows.

⁴ When it comes to the **Prayers of Penitence** you might like to use of some visual imagery. Here are some suggestions. The one with balloons would particularly appeal to children:

Stones

- Use bowl of water to drop stones in and consider ripples of water as you think about the effects of the MMA positive and negative. Consider your part in these ripples. What do you need to do/change/ repent of?
- Use stones to build a cairn as a sign of your commitment hope to work together.

Water of life

Use small fountain obtained from Garden centre/ DIY store, place scriptures about God being the living water around it and invite people do any of the following. (*continued on page 2*)

The Officiant says

Blessed are you,
the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
for you have blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing.
You chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world
and destined us for adoption as your children.
In Christ we have the forgiveness of our sins,
an inheritance in your kingdom, the seal of your Spirit,
and in him we live for the praise of your glory
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

Boundless, O God, is your saving power;
your harvest reaches to the ends of the earth.
Fill our hearts with zeal for your kingdom
and place on our lips the tidings of peace.
Grant us perseverance as heralds of the gospel
and joy as disciples of your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

continued from page 1...

- to wash their hands in the living water as a mark of forgiveness
- to write on silver paper in felt tip pen things they want forgiveness for and wash them in the water just as our sins are washed away from us.
- to use glass beads as a sign of tears and pain over MMA's and drop them in water to be healed by God power.
- To sign themselves with water as a sign of their baptism promises to journey with Christ and follow him.

Balloons

- Try using dark coloured blown up balloons to represent sorrow, write things we are sorry for on the balloons with permanent felt/OHP pens. Read 1 John 1 verse 9. Burst the balloons together. (may they be things that are gone)
- Use brightly coloured balloons as a sign of hope/moving forward. Each person could write a prayer of hope for the MMA on a luggage tag, attach to a coloured balloon. Let the coloured balloons go outside while reading a passage such as Ephesians 3 verses 20.21 or tie them somewhere in the church/place of worship as a symbol of our unity and hope, or take them home as a reminder during the week ahead.

At the foot of the cross

Another idea for confession is to have enough large pebbles for each person to have one. Hold a stone while quiet reflective music playing, encourage people to think about things for which they want to repent. The stone is heavy and would weigh us down if we were to carry it with us, so our sin weighs us down and makes it difficult for us to move forward. We need to take it to God and ask for his forgiveness, to leave it at the foot of the cross. When people are ready they can take their stone and leave it at the foot of the cross (either one that is already part of the church furniture, or make one for the occasion). Say a prayer of absolution together

Change colours

May be as a sign of the resurrection you may want to change the vestments from purple to white during the event

¶ **The Liturgy of the Word⁵**

For suggested readings, see APPENDIX 3

The First Reading⁶

At the end of the reading, the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

A Psalm

A psalm or reflective song or hymn may be said or sung.

The Second Reading

At the end of the reading, the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.
All **Thanks be to God.**

(If the event is a Eucharist, the second reading must be from the Gospels, and should be accompanied by the normal acclamations.)

A Hymn, Song or Chant

The Sermon⁷

⁵ This is the section that most readily lends itself to articulating the vision of the MMA. This can be done through the choice of readings, the sermon and other imaginative means of communication. It doesn't matter if the vision is not perfectly formed at this stage.

⁶ **The readings:** thought and prayer will need to be given to the bible passages used for this event. At an early stage, people can be encouraged to give time to listening to God for bible passages that might be particularly relevant at the start of the life and witness of this MMA. Consideration also needs to be given to the kind of preaching that is required at this sort of event.

⁷ **The Sermon:** This may include less formal exposition, the use of drama, interviews, discussion, audio-visuals and other forms of presentation. Why not an imaginative co-operative presentation by all the preachers in the MMA!

¶ **Commissioning⁸**

Local communities are encouraged to adapt these texts and suggestions to their own contexts.

The Area Vicar moves to stand before the officiant.

The officiant says

N., today we inaugurate your new ministry as Area Vicar.

The task before you is to work with the Christian communities across this Mission and Ministry Area to develop a new vision of mission and ministry. You begin this work at a time of fresh challenges and new opportunities in this diocese and beyond. A core part of your work is to move beyond traditional boundaries and be a model of new possibilities.

Therefore I ask:

Will you strive to work always in collaboration with others, to listen as much as to speak, and to be a person of wise counsel among your colleagues?

Answer **With the help of God, I will.**

Will you be diligent in study,
and seek always to lay your work before God in prayer?

Answer **With the help of God, I will.**

Will you seek always to hold before those with whom
and for whom you work the person of Christ
and the message of the Gospel as the well-spring of your calling?

Answer **With the help of God, I will.**

N., I commission you for this work.

The Area Vicar kneels. The officiant blesses him

N.,
may the Lord lead you in his love,
empower you by his Spirit,
and equip you with his gifts;
may he give you a heart full of love for his people,
a mind open to the signs of the times,
and the wisdom to know how to respond
to the voice of his calling;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
rest up on you and remain with you, now and always.

All **Amen.**

⁸ **Commissioning:** this event is the appropriate place for the **Area Vicar** to be commissioned and this will normally be done by the Rural Dean. Where the Area Vicar is the Rural Dean, the Archdeacon may be invited to do the act of commissioning.

Prayers of Intercession⁹

At the end of the prayers, all say together

**Reveal in us your glory, Lord;
stir in us your power.
Renew in us your kingdom, Lord;
strengthen in us your hope.
Work in us your miracles, Lord;
abide in us yourself.**

All O Christ, remember us in your kingdom,
and teach us to pray:
**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever. Amen.**

O Christ, remember us in your kingdom,
and teach us to pray:
**Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come;
thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Stand

⁹ **Intercessions:** A time of prayer follows. Local communities are invited to use this in an imaginative way, involving a wide range of people from across the MMA. The prayers can be focussed on the needs of the local community, and prayers that God will use the MMA to be a means of bringing his life and healing to the places of need in the community. Here a couple of other ideas that you might use:

Cross

- Place a large cross with crown of thorns (barb wire works for this!) on it in visible place. Provide paper and pens and invite people to write prayers or things they wish to give to God and place on crown.
- Place cross on floor lying flat and invite people to place night lights on it as a sign of the resurrection hope.
- Project a cross of nails on to a white notice board by placing nails in cross shape on OHP and projecting shadows. Invite people to pin prayers on board. The cross cannot be obscured when you do this and provides a powerful way of saying that despite all the change the cross of Christ is constant.

Maps of area

Place map of the area of MMA on Board and do some of the following

- Place pins in places that need particular prayer.
- Write prayers round the edge.
- Place pictures of key buildings round edge as focus for particular prayers
- Use post-it notes to put prayers on map.
- Find local statistics and put up near by as a focus for prayer e.g. crime, number of young people etc.

Lining paper graffiti wall.

- Have a graffiti wall by covering a wall with lining paper (use blue tack to stick to the wall) and then write out some scripture passages that are appropriate to your context.
- Then encourage people to write their prayers etc on the wall using marker pens.

The Peace

The officiant says

To crown all things there must be love,
to bind all together and complete the whole.
Let the peace of Christ rule in our hearts.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Another minister says

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All are invited to exchange a sign of peace.

Hymn

¶ **The Sending Out**

Anointing for New Ministry¹⁰

The Area Vicar, the Ministry Team and the Council move to kneel / stand before the Officiant, who says

Let us ask God to bless NNN...
in their ministry together,
and to renew within them the gifts of his Spirit.

The whole congregation prays in silence.

The Officiant anoints the Area Vicar, the Ministry Team and the Council with the Oil of Chrism, and says

Heavenly Father, giver of all good things,
may your blessing rest upon them.
Where there is much change, transition and variety,
may your peace be known;
in Christian service may your joy be found;
and at all times may your love bring unity and strength;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Lord bless you and watch over you;
the Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord look kindly on you
and give you peace.

All **Amen.**

Acclamation

Another minister leads this closing Acclamation

There are varieties of gifts:
All **but the same Spirit.**
There are varieties of service:
All **but the same Lord.**
There are different kinds of working:
All **but the same God is at work in all.**
There is one body, one Spirit, one hope in God's call:
All **one Lord, one faith, one baptism.**
There is one God, Father of all, over all and in all:
All **to whom Christ ascended on high.**
And through his Spirit he gives us gifts:
All **some are apostles, some are prophets;**
evangelists, pastors and teachers he gives us:
All **so that we can minister together**
to build up his body:
All **to be mature in the fullness of Christ.**

¹⁰ The event provides a good opportunity to publicly identify and commission the **Ministry Team**, that is those who will be responsible for serving as ministers in the MMA and this will include clergy, readers and others authorised to minister in the churches. Also, there is opportunity to commission the **MMA Council**.

Hymn

The Blessing

The Officiant blesses the congregation

Almighty God,
who for the salvation of the world
gives his people many gifts and ministries
to the advancement of his glory,
stir up in you the gifts of his grace,
sustain each one of you in your own ministry;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

The Dismissal¹¹

Go in the peace of Christ.

All **Thanks be to God!**

¹¹ **The ending of the event:** you'll need to give thought to how to end the event, so that people know that this marks the beginning of a new ministry. Here's some ideas that involve seeds that can be used either here or during the event.

- Use seeds and provide pot and compost in which to bury seeds as you think about what is dying in order for new thing to grow in the MMA
- Invite people to take a seed away as sign of hope for the future and plant at home to watch it grow.
- Put the same number of seeds as people in MMA in bottles and pour out during the event as sign of how many people there are to share the gospel with in the MMA.

Here's another idea:

Rainbow

Construct a large rainbow near the exit of the church as people leave they could write messages of hope on post-its and stick on rainbow.

And another:

God's message to you

Many will be feeling anxious about changes/future etc and need reassurance from God. Type out helpful verses of scripture promises etc on small brightly coloured paper, roll up and secure with ribbon. Have in a basket for people to take one as they leave. Or, type on bookmark shaped cards. Perhaps the children could decorate pre cut typed bookmarks for the congregation.

Appendices

I Call to Worship

Option 1:

I desire steadfast love, not sacrifice;
the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.

Come to the Lord,
who is mercy and love.
All **Come, let us worship!**

Come to the Lord,
who is healing and forgiveness.
All **Come, let us worship!**

Come to the Lord,
who is always waiting
to give us his gifts.
All **Come, let us worship!**

Come to the Lord,
whose love is without limit.
All **Come, let us worship!**

Let us press on to know the Lord;
his appearing is as sure as the dawn;
All **Come, let us worship!**

he will come to us like showers,
like the spring rains that water the earth.
All **Come, let us worship!**

Option 2:

Come, let us worship the Lord!
All **Shout to our saviour, our rock!**
Put these words in your heart and soul.

All **Shout to our saviour, our rock!**
Bind them as a sign on your hand,
as an emblem on your forehead.

All **Shout to our saviour, our rock!**
Teach them to your children.

All **Shout to our saviour, our rock!**
Write them on the doorposts of your house.

All **Shout to our saviour, our rock!**
As long as the heavens are above the earth.

All **Shout to our saviour, our rock!**
Come, let us worship the Lord!

All **Shout to our saviour, our rock!**

(based on Deuteronomy 10:18-21 & Psalm 95)

Option 3:

All Blessed are you, Sovereign God, creator of the universe
to you be praise and glory for ever!

Your Spirit brooded over the face of the waters
at the beginning of creation,
bringing light out of darkness
and order out of chaos;

All **to you be praise and glory for ever!**

You created us in your own image;
you blessed us with memory, reason and skill;
you made us stewards of your creation;

All **to you be praise and glory for ever!**

Though we rebelled against you,
you became one of us in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to establish your kingdom of justice and peace,
and lead us back to you.

All **to you be praise and glory for ever!**

And so we glory in your presence,
God our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer,
and lift our voices to proclaim your praise:

All **Blessed be God, now and for ever. Amen.**

2 Prayers of Penitence

Option 1:

*This is introduced and concluded by the leader.
The sentences are spoken by two voices.*

Leader Moses calls the nation
to choose life, not death;
to choose blessing, not curse.

As we seek to fashion our lives
on the firm foundation of God's word
let us lay before the Lord now
the ways in which we have ignored his commands
and walked in the paths of our own choosing.

Voice 1 In a world of plenty,
Voice 2 our choices have condemned millions
to poverty and death.

1 & 2 Holy God:
All **forgive our sins.**

1 In a world of great need,
2 we have chosen to keep what we have.

1 & 2 Holy God:
All **forgive our sins.**

1 In a world where so much is fragile
2 we have trusted in our own strength.

1 & 2 Holy God:
All **forgive our sins.**

1 In a world crying out for peace
2 we have made war.

1 & 2 Holy God:
All **forgive our sins.**

1 In a world which needs to hear your word
2 we have kept silent.

1 & 2 Holy God:
All **forgive our sins.**

Leader May God our rock,
who leads us into life,
grant us his healing and forgiveness,
now and for ever.

All **Amen.**

*[As part of the Prayer of Confession – either before or after it – you could get two people to read Psalm 31,
slowly and reflectively.]*

Option 2:

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal:
have mercy on us.**

Voice 1 Holy God,
we bring to you our need and pain,
asking for your mercy.

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal:
have mercy on us.**

Voice 2 **Holy God,**
we bring to you our wounds,
asking for your healing.

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal:
have mercy on us.**

Voice 1 Holy God,
we bring to you our broken world,
asking for your justice.

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal:
have mercy on us.**

Voice 2 Holy God,
we bring to you all our sin,
asking for your forgiveness.

All **Holy God,
holy and strong,
holy and immortal:
have mercy on us.**

Voice 1 Let us live in peace,
and the God of love and peace will be with us.

All **Amen.**

[The prayer "Holy God..." has a very important place in the Orthodox churches, and its threefold form is linked with the Holy Trinity. There are various ways in which this can be sung]

3 Readings

A huge range of readings may be appropriate depending on the style and theme of the celebration. The following are simply noted as readings worth looking at in your planning, and which may also suggest hymns and scriptural songs.

Old Testament Readings

Genesis 22.15-18 (*Promise to Abraham*)
Genesis 32.22-31 (*Jacob wrestles with God*)
Exodus 19.3-8 (*I bore you on eagle's wings*)
Exodus 33.12-30 (*Show me your glory*)
Isaiah 9.2, 6-7 (*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light*)
Isaiah 42.5-8 (*I have given you as a covenant to the people*)
Isaiah 43.1-7 (*Do not fear: I have redeemed you*)
Isaiah 44.1-5 (*I will pour out water on thirsty land*)
Isaiah 49.1-6 (*I will give you as a light to the nations*)
Isaiah 61.1-3 (*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*)
Isaiah 62.1-7 (*You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord*)
Isaiah 63.15-16 & 64.1-4 (*No eye has seen any God besides you*)
Jeremiah 31.31-34 (*A new covenant*)
Jeremiah 33.6-9a (*I am going to bring Jerusalem recovery and healing*)
Ezekiel 36.24-28 (*A new heart I will give you*)
Ezekiel 37.1-14 (*The valley of dry bones*)
Ezekiel 47 (*Their fruit shall be for food and their leaves for healing*)
Hosea 14.4-8 (*I will love them freely*)
Micah 4.1-5 (*We will walk in the name of the Lord our God*)
Zephaniah 3.16-end (*Do not fear, O Zion*)

Psalms (see also hymns and music)

Psalm 25
Psalm 46.1-7
Psalm 66.5-12
Psalm 67
Psalm 119 (*various section*)
Psalm 139.7-18

New Testament Readings (Acts, Epistles & Revelation)

Romans 5.6-11 (*Through Christ we have now received reconciliation*)
Romans 8.1-11 (*There is no condemnation*)
1 Corinthians 12.4-13 (*Varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit*)
2 Corinthians 3.12 – 4.6 (*Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom*)
2 Corinthians 5.14 – 6.2 (*The love of Christ urges us on*)
Galatians 3.27 – 4.7 (*Abba! Father!*)
Galatians 5.22 – 6.2 (*The fruit of the Spirit*)
Ephesians 2.13-end (*Brought near by the blood of Christ*)
Ephesians 4.1-7 (*Lead a life worthy of your calling*)
Ephesians 6.10-20 (*Be strong in the Lord*)
Colossians 3.12-17 (*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts*)
Titus 3.3-7 (*Heirs according to the hope of eternal life*)
1 Peter 2.1-5, 9-10 (*Living stones*)
1 Peter 3.18-end (*Baptism now saves you*)
1 John 2.12-14 (*I am writing to you...*)
1 John 4.9-15 (*God's love was revealed among us*)
Revelation 22.1-5 (*The river of the water of life*)

Gospel Readings

Matthew 5.1-12 (*The Beatitudes*)
Matthew 7.24-27 (*Build your house on rock*)
Matthew 28.16-end (*Go, make disciples*)
Mark 1.1-11 (*John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus*)

Luke 4.14-19 (*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me*)
Luke 22.25-27 (*I am among you as one who serves*)
Luke 24.44-49 (*Clothed with power from on high*)
John 1.14-18 (*The Word became flesh*)
John 3.1-8 (*Born again*)
John 7.37-39 (*Let anyone who is thirsty come to me*)
John 12.24-26 (*Unless a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die*)
John 15.1-11 (*I am the true vine*)

4 Hymns & Music

The following are simply some very general suggestions for hymns and music, covering a very broad section of traditions.

All my hope on God is founded
All praise to thee
Alleluia, sing to Jesus
And can it be
As the deer
Be still
Be thou my vision
Because the Lord is my shepherd
(*Psalm 23*)
Breathe on me, breath of God
Broken for me
Christ is made the sure foundation
Come down, O Love divine
Come, Holy Ghost
Come, Holy Spirit, come (t: Diademata)
Crown him with many crowns
Dear Lord and Father of mankind
Deep within I will plant my law
Father, Lord of all creation
Flow, river, flow
For all the saints
Forth in thy name
From heaven you came
Gather us in
Gathered by a greater purpose (see below)
Glorious things of thee are spoken (five verse version)
Glory and praise to our God
Go forth and tell
Go forth and tell (CP 437; t: 186)
God beyond all names
Gracious Spirit
Heaven shall not wait
Holy Spirit, ever dwelling
I the Lord of sea and sky
In Christ alone
In the Lord I'll be ever thankful
Let all the world
Light of the world
Lord for the years
Lord of all power
Lord, you give the great commission (t: Abbot's Leigh)
Love is his word, love is his way
Love of the Father
My song is love unknown
O for a thousand tongues to sing
O Lord, hear my prayer
O Lord, your tenderness
O thou who camest
O worship the Lord
Purify my heart
Restore, O Lord
Seek ye first
Sing of the Lord's goodness

Spirit of the living God
Such love
Take my life
The Lord's my shepherd (Townend)
There is a redeemer
Ubi caritas
Unless a grain of wheat shall fall
Wait for the Lord
We have a gospel to proclaim
We have been told
Will you come and follow me
Will you let me be your servant
Ye that know the Lord is gracious
Ye watchers and ye holy ones
You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord
(*Palm 91*)

Hymn written for *A Better Way*:

Gathered by a Greater Purpose

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Gathered by a greater purpose,
higher than our highest aims,
wider than the far horizon,
deeper than all other claims.
Christ our Saviour, as we gather
power and blessing to receive,
may our worship tell with gladness
what we inwardly believe.

Long ago your loving purpose
entered and embraced this land.
Saints and martyrs, sing around us;
on their rock of faith we stand.
Help us, from our great tradition,
timely wisdom to retrieve,
till our life and work embody
what we inwardly believe.

Give us now your living Spirit,
finding, waking in this place,
unpredicted, unsuspected
gifts and ministries of grace.
Called and cherished, each believer
bears the seed of life divine.
Tend our growth and make us faithful,
branches of your living vine.

Through the landscape of the future,
guide us on a hopeful road.
Feed us, Bread of life, and nurture
strength to ease our neighbour's load.
May the world that hears our witness
see the pattern that you weave
and, in us, your thankful people,
feel your presence, and believe.

Brian Wren, November 1998 © Stainer and Bell Limited