

Creating Worship with Deep Soul

IDEAS, REFLECTIONS & RESOURCES FROM DR. MARCIA MCFEE

Marcia McFee is committed to building up the church by empowering congregations to celebrate and utilize their inherent creativity and diversity in order to worship God fully, thereby forming disciples to be the Body of Christ in the world.



A message from Marcia:

"The Advent/Christmas Cycle is always a time to birth something new..."

Greetings! I am writing this as I ride the Zephyr Express Amtrak train from the San Francisco Bay Area home to the Lake Tahoe area - over a 5 hour trip. The rocking motion of the train combined with some soaring Paul Winter Consort music on my iPod instantly creates a reflective, meditative mood for me. With no need to pay attention to traffic and no where else I ought to be, I find myself in one of those rare instances of being content to let the hours creep by. This is a real gift to me since this year has been mighty full - full of wonderful work - but full nonetheless. In fact, this train ride is a little

transition for me into the time of year that I usually stay home instead of the almost-constant travel that fills the rest of the year.

The Advent/Christmas Cycle is always a time to birth something new for me. Last year the "baby" was the Worship Design Studio pilot project that continues this year with almost 200 churches subscribed in its first month of the 2009-2010 liturgical year. Read more about joining us in this newsletter - I'd love to be your year-round personal worship consultant! This year I am looking forward to several readings and signings of my new book, *Spiritual Adventures in the Snow: Skiing and Snowboarding as Renewal for your Soul*. And then I'm going to finish that long-awaited next book about worship. At this point it is called *Think Like a*

Filmmaker! and *Other Lessons for Worship Leaders*. It will contain my latest research and teaching subjects developed over the last few years.

This is a new format for my newsletter, as those of you who have been subscribed for a while can see. Just print to make copies for the rest of your church staff or friends. Hope you enjoy the Advent, Christmas and New Year's Eve ideas. May new and wondrous things be born in your spiritual lives in this season!



If I can be of
service to you,
please contact me!

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To sign up to receive my eZine and other educational opportunity notices, click in the upper-right corner of my website home page!

Check out these internet resources

Lectionary Listings and Art
[http://
lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu](http://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu)

Videos for Worship
www.theworkofthepeople.com

Advent/Christmas alternatives to rampant consumerism:
<http://www.simpleliving.org/>



Ideas and Resources from Marcia

Advent Idea

Part of what I love to do in my newsletters is pass on ideas that I've heard that I think should get spread around. This is what I call "cross-pollinating!" One of the best ideas I've encountered this year for Advent comes from the folks at Freedom Oaks



Metropolitan Community Church in Austin, TX. Their theme for Advent is "Simple Gifts" and they will begin Advent with all the usual sanctuary splendor of the

Advent/Christmas season. But then each Sunday they will recess out parts of that abundance, poinsettias, greenery, gifts of clothing or toys for those who need them, decorations, goods for food banks, etc. until by Christmas Eve, the sanctuary is pretty much bare except for the light of Christ as evidenced by Advent wreath and Christ candle. In this way they celebrate the true spirit of giving and sharing of love and resources and will be left with the symbol of the most important and ever-present gift of all—the gift of God's presence, Emmanuel. Terrific!

Christmas Eve idea

One of the many ideas coming out of the Worship Design Studio this season (see page 4 about joining us in the Studio) was an idea concerning candle lighting at the Christmas Eve service. I think it is always a let-down at the end of the service to have to blow out those candles we just all got to light! Maybe we could extend the symbol of God's Light having come into the world just a little bit more by having people process out the doors (weather permitting) with their candles as

they sing Silent Night to place them in the snow (at least where I live we have snow) or in trays of sand deep enough to hold the candles up. Or perhaps you have more candles placed outside already and the worshipers light those with their candles, multiplying the light outside. (Now I'm headed into that brainstorming technique called "what if?ing") What if it turns into a beautiful carol sing outside that spills into the streets of the neighborhood? What if this becomes a tradition that curious onlookers begin to gravitate toward who would not normally feel comfortable going inside the church? What if worshipers take the gift of an unlit candle and thank you note to leave at the doors of people/organizations in the neighborhood, thanking them for shining their light in the world.



New Year's Eve idea

I LOVE to "party" on New Year's Eve! Actually, I love to host a party because I love the fun AND ritual that can be so meaningful and memorable on this night. My passion for New Year's Eve has to do with my strong belief that we need rituals to help us navigate the passages of our lives. There are "thresholds" that happen in people's lives—baptisms, graduations, marriages, etc. We find ways to mark these and each happens at various times for various people. But the concept of the passage of time is never more communally felt, I believe, than when the clock strikes midnight on New Year's Eve. Download my ideas for an "M-M-Good" Watch Night Party!

<http://marciamcfee.typepad.com/files/>

Worship Design Studio Tahoe '09

Great worship teams!

Sixty people gathered in Tahoe in October to dive into the liturgical year, to learn more about how to work together with more ease in worship planning, and to make worship plans for their 2009-2010 year. We shared lots of music, visual and thematic ideas that will show up across the country in these church's worship over the coming year. The liturgical year is a wonderful framework within which to plan our yearly spiritual journeys - whether or you utilize the lectionary always, sometimes or not at all. Each time of year gives us the opportunity to "steep" in a part of the Story and its theological emphases and guide our worship planning. If you'd like to explore the possibilities of deeper engagement with the liturgical year, be sure to keep an eye out for next year's retreat!

Did you know?

There are many theories about the origins of the season of Advent (not a "season" until the 4th century Roman church) and the dating of Christmas. Liturgical scholars tell us that the very early Christian church saw Epiphany as one of the most important dates for baptizing new Christians and Advent grew from a season of preparation of catechumens for those early baptismal practices. A popular notion says that the dating of the birth of Christ comes from usurping the date of the pagan solstice but other theories offer the idea that for ancient peoples, the date of death and date of conception were thought to be the same date. Since March 25 was understood by some as the death of Christ, then 9 months later would be December 25 - the birth of Jesus.

Dr. McFee's passion for helping the church to worship God fully is especially directed toward education of clergy and laity. She travels extensively in order to teach regional workshops, keynote at pastor's schools and consult with local churches. Her interactive and engaging teaching style has won awards. Check out the possibilities below and contact us to schedule your consultation or workshop.



www.marciamcfee.com

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District or Conference (Regional) Workshop

- Saturday 9am - 4pm experience
- Clergy, staff and worship teams

Regional Workshop with Local Church Consult

- same as above, plus...
- local church "hosts" the workshop and gets a personal consult with Marcia on Friday and Sunday

Pastor's Schools, Bishop's Retreats, Clergy Day-Apart

- keynote/workshop presentations that are theological and practical, equipping and training clergy in the latest in worship movements and resources
- worship design and leadership for your event, if desired

Specific Topic Workshops and Consultations (bring several churches together who have similar contexts)

- worship and music for new church starts
- emerging worship/worship arts
- starting alternative services in established churches
- enhancing small church worship
- getting a worship team started

If you have had Marcia teach at your event before, consider a follow-up with these NEW topics:

"Think Like a Filmmaker: How to Become a Worship Artist"

By learning from the art and technique of filmmakers, who are in the business of drawing people into stories in powerful ways (and don't we have a Powerful Story to share with the world?), we learn some nuts and bolts of bringing the Word alive in worship. We analyze film footage and then discover how to translate that to sensory-rich worship where all the elements of communication contribute to the Word proclaimed.

"The Politics of Change: Dealing with Diverse Worship Needs"

How do we enhance what we do in worship without making anybody mad? Well, we can't. BUT we can offer some eye-opening tools for understanding why we resonate with some worship expressions more than others and transform fear of change into radical hospitality that celebrates the multitude of ways that God is getting to us!

"Making Ritual "Rich-ual"

In worship we address some of the most important moments in people's lives. This hands-on topic equips leaders to move from "going through the motions" to confident and deeply sacramental leadership.

Study with Marcia in Tahoe

Every year Marcia teaches intensive, transforming experiences in her home town of Lake Tahoe. "Elevation" is a CEU opportunity for worship leaders of all kinds and "Worship Design Studio Tahoe" is a retreat for worship teams to go home with a year's worth of plans for worship!

Resources and Continuing Education Opportunities



Study with Marcia in Tahoe

The next "Elevation" Continuing Education and Spiritual Renewal Retreat for Worship Leaders will be on the calendar soon (probably early May)! Come study, hone your design and leadership skills AND renew your soul at Zephyr Point Conference Center on the shores of Lake Tahoe. Whether you've been with Marcia in a one-day workshop, had her consult at your church or if you've never studied with Marcia, this will reinvigorate your passion and dedication to the work of "M-M-Good" worship. And many folks say that on top of all that, the personal

renewal they experience gives them new life for ministry. Enrollment is limited! 2.5 CEU's www.marciamcfee.com/elevation.htm

Marcia's latest book

Marcia has a new book that just came out October 1 that we'd love for you to know about—even though this one is not about worship! One of Marcia's spiritual practices in Tahoe is SKIING! *Spiritual Adventures in the Snow* is a book that will turn ski/snowboard trips into spiritual adventures. Great for church ski trips! See more info at: www.spiritualadventuresinthesnow.com

Dr. McFee wants to resource you right where you are... all year long!

For the cost of a typical worship conference registration fee, your ENTIRE worship team can have access to resources that Marcia prepares for each liturgical season. \$250 gives you access to the 2009-2010 year. Besides the ideas and learning opportunities with Marcia, you also become part of an online interactive community of churches across the country. Join us and start getting ideas, help and support NOW! www.marciamcfee.com/studio.htm

Contents for EACH liturgical season:

1. Audio podcast (1.5 hours) in which Marcia teaches about the theology of the liturgical season and then brainstorms ideas with a biblical scholar, a music director and a visual artist
2. Downloadable document on the history and theology of the liturgical season for your brainstorming and links to online databases for the lectionary and related liturgy and artwork
3. Downloadable document called "More Resources" featuring links to books, music, media and on-line resource websites to boost worship libraries
4. "Marcia's Doorway" featuring one thematic idea for the upcoming season, including titles and thematic synopses for each week of the season as well as resource ideas.
5. A video learning session to train and spark conversations in worship team meetings

Need worship planning help and support? Get it!



*O, Lord is it
Sunday
Already?*