

Challenges and Solutions in Contemporary Worship

Fusion Plenary 3

Led by the Institute for Modern Worship

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

This plenary invites leaders serving smaller, rural, and/or under-resourced churches into an honest conversation about the real challenges of contemporary worship — and the contextual, not formulaic, solutions available to them. Rather than presenting a single model to imitate, this session equips participants with questions, principles, and practical tools to discern what faithful, authentic worship looks like in their own context. Participants will leave with a reframed understanding of "contemporary" worship (from style to contextualization), a concrete next step for their congregation, and a shared conviction that there are multiple faithful paths forward because every church's people, resources, and story are different.

OBJECTIVES

1. Participants will be able to reframe "contemporary worship" from a stylistic checklist to a question of authentic contextualization — worship that fits the people, resources, and culture of their specific congregation.
2. Participants will identify their own leadership posture (learn / lead / reimagine) based on tenure, and name one concrete way that posture should shape their next step.
3. Participants will leave with a specific, faithful next experiment for their congregation — something to preserve, something to reconsider, and something to try.

OUTLINE

1. **Naming the Challenge**
 - a. Explore what "contemporary" actually means (style vs. contextualization)
 - b. the shift from resource deficits to assets
 - c. Bi-lingual metaphor for congregations that participate differently than expected.
2. **Applying the Challenge**
 - a. Leadership posture by tenure
 - i. New leaders learn
 - ii. Established leaders lead
 - iii. Long-term leaders reimagine
 - b. Discussion Exercise
3. **Preserving, Reconsidering, and Trying** (Contemporary → Contextual)