

USING DANCE IN WORSHIP SERVICES - By Rev. Peggy Konkel

Think about how important music is to the overall theme and heightened acceptance of the universal message of Truth that we teach every time we get together in praise and worship to transform in spirit. Music sets the mood. Its time, its tempo, the melody, its flourishes, the instruments used, and the vocalizations: each play a part in creating an audio entrance into an expanded awareness of the greater whole, a leap into higher consciousness.

Now, think of what can further enhance the power and the presence: creative movement or dance, the breath of Spirit in combination with the sound of Spirit. Liturgical dance is not a new form of worship expression. It is an old form that in the last few years has returned to vogue in many traditional churches. But why limit it to traditional? That is like the difference between ballet and modern dance. One is highly structured in what to expect, the other is open for interpretation. Interpretation is exactly what we are about in new thought. Each is a unique expression, the dancer and the dance.

As members of a worship team, we can look at how the use of dance can enhance our theme of the service. Certainly, dance is not something that will be a good addition for all services but here are a few ways that I have either participated in or seen dance used that have produced results that have made lasting impressions and triggered transformational moments:

- Interpretive dance used to enhance a specific musical presentation
- To set the mood for meditation
- In processions and/or recessions to accent the theme of the worship
- As a story telling piece such as dancing a parable or part of a lesson based on one of the many stories in the Bible
- As a visual meditation
- As prayer in motion done by the congregation
- As part of a ritual expression

When you discern the use of dance in your worship service, be open and receptive to allowing Spirit to bring forth creative visions. Sometimes the result will call for a solo dancer, sometimes a team, sometimes experienced dancers, or sometimes simply members of the congregation. Sometimes props or specific costuming will enhance the activity, sometimes not. Sometimes creative movement is appropriate only during part of a musical expression. Each worship experience is unique. Our opportunities to bring creativity into expression are unlimited. Consider using Spirit in motion to deepen the expression and connection with the Infinite.

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