

## Be Thou My Vision

This song began life as a celtic folk tune. Remember that the first beat of the bar is the strong one, and leave the other beats some grace and you can feel the dance steps. We ought not forget where our 'traditional' hymn tunes came from - when a song was best sung over a large pint of Guinness, we are saved from taking ourselves too seriously, eh?

Well, perhaps not in church, but it's a song that begs for movement. The words seek the vision of God, to have our eyes opened in the Spirit, so try leaving some breaks between the lines...with a little improvisation, celtic style...and invite the entire community to turn around slowly on the spot. To do a full 360° with our eyes open, taking in the vision of God is not a bad way to worship.

## Hear Our Praises

The focus of this song is on the revelation of God's Kingdom within our own streets and homes and neighbourhoods. To externalise this vision, provide some cardboard 'street signs' and markers and sticky tape. Invite each person or household, during the singing of the song, to make a street sign for their street and to attach it to a 'signpost'. Depending on the size of your gathering, you may want to have a few signposts. The signposts are not necessarily best placed at the front - down the aisles and in the midst of the gathering is the best place for this action.

A further variation on this idea is to provide cardboard boxes (a wine-box or shoebox is about the right size) and markers and coloured paper and invite people to make a replica of their own house, and to place it along a 'street' down the aisle or across the front or back of your space.

## All of My Days

### ***The week that was:***

Pick a time and day of the week and ask people to tell their neighbour what they were doing at that time. Offer a response 'and God was there in the midst of it all'.

### ***The week to come:***

Invite everyone to sit down. Consider quietly the week ahead. Slowly work through each day of the week. Invite people to stand for any particular day in the coming week in which they especially seek the presence and action of God. They do not need to say what it is for (a test, a meeting, a situation, an opportunity, a celebration).

Pre-arrange 7 different people to pray simply for each of the 7 days. They may include prayer for aspects of the community life - Monday playgroup, Tuesday Bible study, Wednesday Council meeting, Thursday ESL conversation hour, Friday Youth Group, Saturday Working Bee... as well as praying more generally for those who are standing in their daily life.

\* See Appendix for copyright details for these songs.

## Indescribable

Often this song is accompanied by stunning slide shows. There is something awe-inspiring about standing still watching these, but there are some other ways that engage us differently.

Collect an assortment of photographs of nature from old National Geographic magazines. Back them with coloured card frames and display them around the walls of your space, or mount them on music stands. After singing through this song, invite everyone to take their time wandering around viewing the photography. Encourage people to feel free to share their thoughts with others who are standing with them looking into a scene. Be aware of those who are not easily or comfortably mobile and make sure some people bring a picture to them to view.

## Great in Power

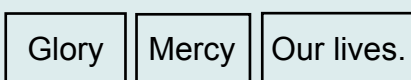
The chorus of this song declares the greatness of God seen in various arenas:

*Great in Power*  
*Great in Glory*  
*Great in Mercy*  
*King of Heaven*

*Great in Battle*  
*Great in Wonder*  
*Great in Zion/Our lives\**  
*King over all the earth*

Pre-arrange three people to share briefly an experience of seeing the greatness of God in one of each of 'power' 'battle' and 'wonder'. Sing a verse and a chorus and then invite the three people to share their story. Keep singing.

Invite the entire gathering to choose a corner from the following:



based on what it is that makes God's greatness most compelling for them. Invite people to move to that corner. Give some time for people in those groups to talk with each other and share their examples.

\*Note that I change 'Great in Zion' to 'Great in our lives' to recapture the immediacy and accessibility that was in the original Psalm, sung by those who were in Zion.

## Let Everything that has Breath

I have it on good authority that this song is a big hit with the 3 year olds! The big idea is that God gives us breath and we use that breath in turn to praise God. Breath is one of those invisible things that is not easy to visualise.

**Our little ones find it helpful when we externalise some of the internal reality and truth that comprises so much of the business of church.**

An easy and colourful way to make this tangible is to hand out coloured balloons, not blown up, to the youngest participants in your gathering. Ask them to take the balloons to the grownups. The grownups are to oblige by inflating the balloon and tying it off, and patting it back to the child who brought it to them. You can probably imagine what happens next!

A tip to mention, (perhaps even on the screen): a little less air in the balloon means it is less likely to burst.

\* See Appendix for copyright details for these songs.

## Open the Eyes of My Heart Lord

This is a wonderful call to worship.

Invite everyone under the age of 18 to stand either in their seats or on their seats. They are going to begin singing the song.

Charge those who are over 18, who are sitting down, with the task of praying for the people standing around them: the people under 18 who are asking God to open the eyes of their hearts. After singing the chorus once like this, everyone swaps: those who are over 18 can now stand and sing, and those under 18 are invited to pray for those around them.

Depending on the culture of your community, judge whether to ask people to pray silently or to pray out loud, all at once, making a symphony of prayer.

Creating access points for our children in the music chosen by and for adults in worship is one way of keeping us tracking together.

An alternate strategy is to take what might be ordinarily thought of as a 'kid's song' and add dimensions that make adult participants more welcome.

Example: Colin Buchanan

## The One and Only God

This is a basic country rock song that celebrates the different landscapes of Australia in which the creative genius of God is evident. It is commonly done with basic 'point up' (God) and 'big circle arms' (all) actions.

On a connecting level, it works well to ask those people who have visited any of the places mentioned in the song to give a wave when the place is mentioned. Usually adults (and this particularly applies to our boomer generation) are far more widely travelled than the kids.



Secondly, we can take the 'Every Mountain, Every River, Every Waterfall' motif and develop it into a prayer space with a different timbre. Pull the intensity of the music right back and be led by three different voices in these prayers.

## PRAYER

*One and Only God,  
This week,  
this month,  
this year,  
Life seems like a  
mountain...  
Hard going  
and a struggle to climb...  
A risk, an adventure.*

*One and Only God,  
Yesterday, last month,  
years gone by,  
Life was a river...  
Gushing and swirling  
and washing over me  
Grinding smooth and  
shaping me into  
what I am becoming.*

*Tomorrow,  
next week,  
future days  
The rest of my life  
appears before me  
as a waterfall....  
Tumbling out of control,  
Chaos,  
not knowing  
when I'll hit the bottom  
and what will happen  
then.*

*But we can surely say:  
Every Mountain,  
Every River,  
Every Water fall,  
the One and Only God  
made them all.*

\* See Appendix for copyright details for these songs.



## Music References:

*All of my days:* **Mark Stevens**  
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