

Curating and Selecting Music

for Holy Hermits Online services and spaces

Introduction

Music is a vital part of our worship at Holy Hermits Online (HHO). Our music curators are an essential part of our ministry team, prayerfully selecting songs that shape the spiritual tone of each gathering.

Choosing music for worship is a sacred task—one that deepens your own connection with God while helping others do the same.

Why Music Matters

Music has always been central to God's people:

- In the Old Testament, music shaped Israel's worship life.
- The New Testament shows how early Christians used music in temple worship and teaching.
- Throughout Church history, music has drawn people into prayer, praise, and contemplation.

At HHO, we continue this tradition—embracing a wide range of styles and digital mediums to help our online community worship together.

How to Choose Worship Music: Use Discernment

Not all music fits every service. Good selection balances theology, accessibility, and appropriateness.

Ask yourself:

- Does this music glorify God?
- Do the lyrics reflect sound theology and align with the service's message?
- Is it respectful and inclusive—even if not everyone's favourite style?
- Is it singable or reflective, depending on its purpose?

Digital Music Guidelines (YouTube)

We use YouTube videos for most music. To be suitable, a video must:

- Have clear audio quality
- Include subtitles or on-screen lyrics (big and easy to read)

- Come from a Christian community or ministry source (not profit-driven or commercial use)
- Contain safe imagery (no nudity, violence, or disturbing content)
- Preferably use calming, simple graphics, often nature- or creation-themed

Selecting for the theme or message at worship:

Each week's readings follow the Revised Common Lectionary—a 3-year Bible cycle used by churches worldwide. Each service includes:

1. First Lesson (usually Old Testament)
2. Psalm or Song
3. Second Lesson (New Testament epistles)
4. Gospel Reading (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John)

Look for recurring themes across these readings (e.g. healing, trust, the Holy Spirit). Your song choices should echo and support these messages.

Selecting for the structure and rhythm of worship:

We typically use 4 music pieces per weekly worship. Variety is welcome, but try to include at least one well-known or traditional hymn each time.

Here is a typical flow:

- Opening music or bells (1–3 minutes): gently signals the start of worship
- Gathering hymn/song: played before the ministry of the word (Singable)
- Reflection song: after the sermon, contemplative or lyrical
- Closing song: contemplative or uplifting, used to bring us out of silence after devotions

Feel free to swap or shift songs depending on the message or mood of the day. Both gentle and high-energy endings can be meaningful.

A prayer to use before a music selection session:

Loving God, thank you for the gift of music which you have bestowed on us through all generations, and the way it brings us closer to you.

Please guide me as I go about curating and selecting music for common worship in my community.

Help me to understand the theme and invitation for the day, so that the music I choose reflects this for everyone who will gather.

Thank you for inviting me to serve you in this way and I give my efforts to you for the building up of your people online.

Through Jesus Christ I pray. Amen.

Closing tips:

Music curation and selection should be a life-giving and enjoyable activity for each server to devote their gifts to ministry in God's Church.

"If in doubt, leave it out." If a piece of music doesn't feel right or isn't speaking to you, then let it go. It might come back at a future time when it is better suited or works well with the bigger picture of liturgy.

Don't forget, you aren't alone – sing out (ask for help) if you get stuck and remember pastoral care is available to all in our digital space, so you can ask a clergy person for a chat when needed.

Have fun and thank you for discerning this ministry in our community!