

**Top Tips for
strong congregational singing**

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Top tips for strong congregational singing

If the singing in your church isn't quite what you'd like it to be, how do you make a change for the better? Firstly, set aside the worry and frustration just for a moment, step back and listen with a dispassionate ear ... is it really the case that absolutely no-one sings? Are there signs of life out there? Maybe not during every song (!) but notice whenever the volume lifts, even slightly. To make significant improvements, you'll probably have to implement both practical and cultural changes, since congregations are creatures of habit and may have slipped into the habit of not singing despite your hopes and expectations. The following are initial suggestions – if you'd like more detailed advice tailored to your church, contact a consultant.

Who sings? NO-ONE

Practical: Give out hymn-books so everyone is at least in possession of the means to participate

Cultural: Start a rumour that this is a singing church <http://www.singingthejourney.com/?tag=john-bell> and http://www.wrgc.co.uk/pages.php?page=free_downloads_approaches 10 Golden Rules

Who sings? THE LEADERS

Practical: Choose simpler well-known songs

http://www.musicademy.com/2015/06/biggest-reason-why-people-dont-sing-in-church/?utm_source=is_news&utm_medium=is_news_1506c&utm_campaign=is_news_1506c_notsinging&inf_contact_key=b4d9d9340ec681a90efc3aef285ff9b5d39bbb4b6bcdfb1220cb7d5c482bbb59

Cultural: Ensure the leaders ask the congregation which songs they love singing and use these

Who sings? THE CHOIR

Practical: Invite the congregation to sing whenever they are expected to, using an inclusive phrase such as: 'We sing together ...'

Cultural: Ask the music director to conduct hymns facing the congregation not the choir

Who sings? THE ADULTS

Practical: Visit the local school and find out which songs the children know

Cultural: Offer to lead hymn-singing sessions and accompany music in assemblies so you can introduce hymns from the church's repertoire to the school

Who sings? THE CHILDREN

Practical: Sing the prayer at the start of any church meeting and repeat that song in Sunday worship

Cultural: Invite the older generations to share with the children songs they want to pass on <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00zwnty> Inheritance Tracks

What's sung? HYMNS

Practical: Have a fully-sung service including no hymns, only liturgical music – try this in Lent

Cultural: Preach on the integration of music into liturgy and its function helping worship flow

What's sung? OLD FAVOURITES

Practical: Use the metrical index in the hymnal to find familiar tunes to new words

Cultural: Promote the Psalmist's exhortation that all should 'Sing a new song to the Lord' (96:1)

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