



## On your marks

Endings are important. For all worship it is good that we end together, clearly and positively. This is the last thing we do and so how we do it influences what we take with us and remember. Good and meaningful patterns of words used regularly for such endings become good memories to help our children pray in the future. This is why the church has spent time over the years creating particular well-loved blessings and traditional concluding prayers as part of its inherited liturgy. Why not make up a regular interactive ending a feature of your all-age worship?

## Get set

The words and actions for the ending you decide on need to be learned at some stage and put up clearly on a screen if necessary. However if you use this regularly you can soon dispense with any visual reminders or the need for a rehearsal each time.

## Go!

In keeping with the spirit of all-age worship make your ending inclusive (*use the language that talks of 'we' and 'us'*); make it Trinitarian (*link it to God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit*) and make it simple and memorable (*use uncomplicated language and some actions that are meaningful*).

It is also important to convey the idea that our worship in church is only part of our worship, which really includes all of our living. The end of a service in church is only the beginning of the service and worship that starts as we leave the church door.

There are many traditional blessings, which could be signed such as:

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (*hands reaching out ready to receive, with palms upward*) and the love of God (*hands crossed over one's heart*) and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (*hands reaching out to touch and hold those around us*) be with us all now and for evermore. Amen

Here is a simple example of an ending to inspire your own creativity:

- We thank you for keeping us in the love of God our Father (*hands reaching up to the sky*)
- We praise you for teaching us in the name of Jesus Christ (*hands reaching out to each other*)
- We go out to serve the world, in the power of the Holy Spirit (*all point towards the door*)
- You might like then to add a well-known ending after this, where the leader says:

### **And all the people said**

And everyone replies:

**Amen.**



It is worth spending time looking for and deciding upon your chosen endings for your all-age worship. Remember it is these regular and meaningful patterns that children will remember and it becomes another way in which faith is passed on.