

# Worship Planning

From Pastor Rob Guenther, Grace, Kenai, AK - April 16, 2015

I agree with everything Steve is saying about pros and cons. I like spreadsheets because they're simple. But you can take care of the manual entry of stuff and make spreadsheets work like databases. It takes a little learning curve to make VLOOKUP formulas work, but it will look at an entry (let's say I put in "200" in one column) and go look up an item on another sheet to enter data ("A Mighty Fortress Is Our God") in the next. I've been developing my worship spreadsheet over a couple of years and it has totally evolved. Right now, I'm working on including all of the information for Planning Christian Worship into my front page for VLOOKUP. And with Google Sheets new tools where you can choose what to do with text wrapping, I've found that it can work well with longer blocks of text.

Here's my work in progress... <http://www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Worship>. (cf. also the "[This Week](#)" tab)

## Right now it will...

- Look up the hymn title when I enter the number. (Very useful for a dyslexic like me since 232 and 323 are very different hymns.) :)
- Look up copyright information for me for most hymns for ease of reporting to One License.
- Look up what's coming up this Sunday (cf. [this sheet](#)) when I have data entered. (I change the format of the date for any Sunday that's past, then I resort that column A->Z and it always puts the next Sunday at the top of the sheet for me.)
- Look up all of the Planning Christian Worship information for me for Year A, and half of Year B (I'm working on it). This includes texts and summaries and hymn suggestions. (Very useful for worship planning.)
- Look up the Verse of the Day set to the tune of a familiar hymn verse for me.
- Display what my worship plan is for when other guys in the circuit get on board with a sermon series. Then we know what's coming up and can collaborate weekly (which we're currently doing with our Easter series, meeting online via Google+ Hangouts). The friendly URL makes it very easy for them to view. My secretary, keyboardists, choir director and one or two other pastors have been invited to edit, so they can fill out information for me as well
- Import all of the data from the database into a Word template (with a Mail Merge) so my bulletin is 95% done with a few clicks.
- Keep an archived record of what I did in previous years. I create a new spreadsheet each year and then hide the tabs from the previous years, but I have at least a partial plan going back to 2008. That's useful to see what hymns I picked last time I preached on this text or "When did I do that Lord's Prayer series again?"

## On my "To-Do" List...

- Finish the PCW resource sheet for the VLOOKUP on "This Week."
- Include a volunteers list for VLOOKUP for who's serving (keyboardist, usher, counter, cleaner, etc.) this week which we put in the bulletin announcements. (Right now I still have to look that up in several different spreadsheets: e.g. [www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Cleaners](http://www.GraceLutheranKenai.com/Cleaners))

- Create a "How to Copy This" page on the spreadsheet for other guys who have made copies of my database, then edit it to make their own worship plan from it with all the VLOOKUP already done. I've had a number of guys ask for it, but this would make a walk-through so I don't have to lead the tutorial each time (at least in theory).