

Worship Arts Ministry Handbook

We are pleased that you have expressed interest in the Worship Arts Ministry. We believe that worship is one of the primary responsibilities of a believer in Christ. Therefore we treat God's *requirement* to worship Him as a priority in our lives and lifestyles.

Why Do People Get Involved In Worship Arts Ministry?

Some people get involved because that is where their abilities are found. They are skilled musicians, tech savvy, or have been blessed as gifted vocalists. It seems like a natural place to minister. Others just have a desire to serve and are looking for a place to "plug in." We believe that the basis for involvement should begin with a *sense of God's calling*. Do you believe that, at this point in your life, God wants you to be involved in Worship Arts Ministry? Once that question is addressed, then your spiritual giftedness, natural talents, and developed abilities will help clarify your role.

How Does The Worship Arts Ministry Approach Worship?

The Worship Arts Ministry seeks a *balanced* approach. We are concerned about *both* the spiritual development of the ministry participants as well as the art form and skills they contribute. Therefore we make no apologies about the *expectations* we have for our Team members. Those expectations are communicated in both realms. If you decide to pursue involvement in this ministry, please do not be surprised by the standards for your spiritual preparation and development as well as the quality of your contribution.

Ministry Purpose

The Lord desires His people to be *focused on Him, experiencing Him, and responding to Him*. The Worship Arts ministry will be used by the Holy Spirit to (1) foster relevant, biblical, Spirit-led worship within the Worship Arts Ministry and the congregation, while (2) supporting the overall direction and vision of the church as revealed to church leadership.

Strategy to achieve ministry purpose – Create Worship experiences where people connect with God and are eager to praise and encounter the living God.

- Offer worship that targets all ages, demographics and spiritual temperaments.
- Engage all the senses through dynamic, creative, and inspiring music and environmental textures (lighting/stage design/etc.)
- Create worship experiences that present the entire Word of God, reflect excellence, and are culturally relevant. We want to demonstrate to unchurched attenders that there is a difference between their experience with music, whether at a concert or on the radio and what they will experience in a live worship

service. While we will strive for quality, we will also strive to not allow “performance” to be the standard by which we measure success. While we are not in the business of competing with the world, we are competing with the culture that both church and un-church people are surrounded by. The secular culture can see a “show” but they may not know what biblical response to worship looks like. We want to accomplish the goal of heartfelt, biblical expression to God during the musical part of our worship service (...musical worship)

Biblical Principles in Our Approach to Worship

First and foremost, music is NOT worship and worship is NOT music. Music is only a tool in worship. We can conclude that if we violate biblical principles, music can be destructive and divisive. We must be committed, prepared, orderly, and skilled, to *avoid obstacles and stumbling blocks* in our worship and fellowship. Examine the following principles:

MAKE AN OFFERING: Worship is an offering to the Lord and our sacrifice of worship needs to be the best we can offer. Such an offering requires commitment, preparation, and order. (*1 Peter 2:5 “You also...are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 14:33 “...For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.”*)

BE RELEVANT: Paul knew the importance of relevance in the church when he wrote, “...I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some.” (*1 Cor. 9:2*) We don’t want to be responsible in causing others to stumble by blindly insisting on man’s traditions as in Mark 7:7-9, “*They worship me in vain...You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.*” Therefore, our *worship* must be relevant to today’s Christian and an example to today’s non-Christian. (Also see Isaiah 29:13.)

SING TO HIM A NEW SONG: Psalm 33:3, “*Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy,*” reminds us that our worship is to be fresh. We are not to fall into non-thinking habit, letting our worship become stagnate. Therefore we will introduce both new music and sing songs we already know in ways we have not done before.

DEVELOP A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF WORSHIP: It is our desire in the Worship Arts Ministry for participants to grow and unify as a team in the understanding and biblical principles of worship. Developing our understanding of biblical worship will help us be the kind of worshippers He desires. (*John 4:23 “Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks.”*)

FOSTER POSITIVE ATTITUDES: The Worship Arts ministry is a place where we are vulnerable as we give all we are to the Lord as evidenced by Romans 12:1: *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.”* So we must always seek humility and give praise to Him who enables us. 1 Peter 5:5 instructs *“...All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ‘God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.’”* Because those involved in a worship ministry possess different levels of musical expertise and skill, it is important to always foster an atmosphere of positive attitudes whenever we gather. *(Romans 12:10 “Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.”)*

GROWTH AND ENCOURAGEMENT: As you grow in your skills, spiritual walk, and ministry (individually and as a team), expect to be encouraged and raised-up in new ways and areas. *(Hebrews 10:24 “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”)*

BE ACCOUNTABLE AS AN EXAMPLE: Everyone on the platform is responsibly accountable, which is one of the main reasons we have developed methods to be accountable to God and the body of Christ. Others look to our lives and behavior as examples. Therefore, we have established specific qualifications and guidelines for participation in the Worship Ministry.

What Opportunities Exist?

The worship ministry will facilitate worship each week using a Worship Arts Team comprised of instrumentalists, audio/visual teams, and vocalists. There will be weekly mid-week rehearsals with warm-up rehearsals on Sunday mornings. Attendance for rehearsal is a non-negotiable. Obviously, life happens and there will be times when someone scheduled can’t make it, but that would be the exception and not the rule.

How Do I Join The Worship Arts Team? The Worship Ministry Interview

In addition to reading this handbook, you will need to participate in a *Worship Ministry Interview* with the Worship Leadership Team. Before this interview, you will be given a one page document that you will need to fill out before hand so we can have a focus to the interview and address any issues that may be present and for you to ask questions that you may have. Once you have made a commitment to the ministry, you will be assigned a Ministry Liaison. This person will assist you with all you need to know to be an effective team player. He/she will introduce you to Planning Center, the in-ear monitor system and accompany you to your first rehearsal so you will get a feel for how rehearsal goes and can ask any questions you may have. Your Ministry Liaison is your GO TO person...they want to help and are happy to do so.

Song Selection and Use of Vocalists/Instrumentalists

The process of selecting songs is based on what will best support the Pastor's message, the unique culture of the church, and what will evoke the greatest Worship experience, participation, interaction, and community. The Worship Planning Team works to select Worship service components, including song sets, at least two weeks out, with vocalists and instrumentalists being selected who will best support that week's particular song set. However, this is always subject to change.

What Qualifications Must I Possess To Join The Worship Team?

In any area we use our God-given gifts and abilities, there can be defined a number of *characteristics* that will help us excel under that particular role in the Body of Christ. The following characteristics could be considered *qualifications* that we look for in Worship Team members. You may possess these qualifications in varying degrees, but we ask you to *closely examine yourself* to see if the Worship Ministry is the *appropriate area* in which to use your gifts. In doing this, consider Romans 12:4 *"Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body."* and, 1 Cor. 12:18, *"But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be."*

DEMONSTRATED INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT

You must be a *faithful participant* in the life of this congregation as demonstrated by your *attendance and involvement*, regularly attending Sunday morning services, and special all-church events. (*Hebrews 10:24-25 "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching."*) We further encourage you to *consider membership* if you are not already an active member. You must have the ability to *cooperate with others*, serving for the greater good of our church, sensitive to the will of God, and supportive of the church community and leadership. (*Ephesians 4:3 "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace."*) This means demonstrating a *willingness* to hold this ministry with an "open hand," leaving up to the Lord and the leadership all questions regarding the scope of your involvement. We want you to feel ownership, but not possessiveness.

A LEVEL OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

A Worship Team member, with the help of the Holy Spirit, leads the congregation in worship. For these reasons, the Worship Team is ordinarily NOT a place for new or immature Christians. or non-believers. To serve on the Worship Team you *must* have accepted Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior (John 1:12, *"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God."*) Also, if you have not been *baptized* as a believer in Jesus Christ,

we *strongly encourage* you to follow through on this act of obedience and public witness for Christ. (*Acts 10:47-48, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.' So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ..."*)

AN INTEREST IN BECOMING PART OF THE CHURCH OR CURIOUS ABOUT CHRISTIANITY

From time to time, under the authority of the church leadership, there may be someone who is playing in the band or helping in the audio/visual team who are simply interested in becoming a member or may even be on a spiritual journey towards inviting Christ in their lives. We want to allow the Worship Arts ministry to be a front door to people in our community. After an interview, and under the approval of church leadership, there may be occasions when someone is playing or serving that would not necessarily meet all of the qualifications mentioned so far. This kind of scenario would have a set time limit with only one outcome in mind; moving that person closer toward a meaningful relationship with Christ and His church.

MUSICAL OR TECHNICAL ABILITY

As a Worship Team instrumentalist, a/v specialist, or vocalist, you need to be *skilled enough* to follow a service "flow." We don't want to limit what God will do simply because we can't handle it musically or technically. You must also be *comfortable* being seen and heard as you contribute to leading worship.

Consider the following basic abilities:

Instrumentalists need to be able to:

- Perform well with others
- Learn new material quickly
- Demonstrate suitable ability on an instrument
- Play from sheet music, chord sheets, or by ear
- Be involved in the worship service by singing along or otherwise engaged at a high level instead of looking down at a chart. People watch the band too!
- Follow a click/backing track

Vocalists need to be able to:

- Perform well with others
- Be engaging or learn how to be an engaging singer
- Learn new material quickly
- Demonstrate suitable range, blend-ability, and accurate pitch
- Sing from sheet music, chord sheets, or by ear
- Memorize music
- Follow a click/backing track

Audio/Visual Team members need to be able to:

- Know how to operate their assigned medium with skill and taste.
- Have the unique ability to know what “just happened,” “what is happening,” and “what’s about to happen.”
- Be VERY flexible to changes that may occur before the service begins or even during the service
- Be teachable and reachable.

We need to work at our music and technical abilities to become the very best we can be. (Colossians 3:23-24 says, *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men...”*) This can mean a great deal of individual practice as well as with the team. Keep in mind that the team will only be as proficient as the individuals that make it up.

SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

Worship Team members must have a *cooperative spirit*. Remember Colossians 2:12-13: *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another...”* Encourage and support other members of the team and those with whom you serve. We should build up one another and have the responsibility of eliminating any word or action that is not constructive to our team. Therefore, think twice before speaking. Don’t overemphasize skill, but rather, humility and a servant’s heart.

In Worship Ministry, there is always the specific temptation of *“the lure of the stage”* – the need to be out front. We need to look at our team as not just a collection of separate musicians but as a single unit with a single purpose. You must maintain a teachable spirit, open to insight and constructive criticism from others. Our heart attitude should not be to show off our own skills and opinions, but to enhance the team as a whole.

This includes maintaining an attitude of positive encouragement and embracing the overall direction and vision of the church as revealed to church leadership. We are to submit to each other and to our leadership, out of respect for each other as fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. (Hebrews 13:17, *“Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.”*)

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

As a Christian example, you need to engage a commitment to continued maturing in your spiritual walk by growing in grace and knowledge of the truth. This is usually referred to as discipleship, or, becoming a disciple. This is as important on an individual basis as it is with the team. Nurture your growth through the Word, through prayer, through faith, and through fellowship.