

# Team Philosophy of Church Music

## Christian Life Community Church

*Leading our Congregation in Corporate Worship: Utilizing the Visual and Performing Arts to the Glory of God.*

As a worshipping community in the Pentecostal tradition we believe that we can experience God in our worship services. While much of our spirituality is derived from knowing God and His word and believing in His son, there is also a valid place in the Christian life for experiencing His presence. Corporate worship is one of those places.

Public worship is an opportunity for our spirituality to move beyond an intellectual understanding of His character and work to a life changing experience of His presence. One of the ways we experience God in worship is through other believers who allow themselves to be instruments of His grace to us. We believe that through the gifts (charismata) of the Holy Spirit, God strengthens us for His service (1 Cor. 12-14)

### **We believe that church music should produce:**

- **Awe-Producing Worship**—Music is a medium of praise to God. There is no more wonderful experience than joining with other believers to praise the name of the Lord—His name is great and He is greatly to be praised! When we gather in the presence of the Spirit, we express our love for our loving Father, who has sent Jesus, His son, to be our Saviour (Eph.5:19).
- **Growth-Producing Edification**—The Scripture teaches that music is a powerful channel for teaching and encouragement of the body of Christ. As we sing the word of God together, our hearts are refreshed, our spirits are renewed and our faith is strengthened (Col.3:16). Spiritual gifts are to be a means by which Jesus builds up His church (1 Cor. 14:3).
- **Birth-Producing Evangelism**—Worship can also be a witness. When unbelieving guests see and hear the people of God in heartfelt worship, they sense something of the love, grace, and convicting power that is found in the presence of God (1 Cor. 14:29).

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## Expectations

1. **Character**—We must develop our own life of worship. Nothing can happen through us that is not happening in us. While the temptation of worship leaders is to be connoisseurs and critics of worship we must endeavour to enter into worship and model participation when our team is not leading. Worship Team ministry is simply the overflow of our own private worship life. It is expected that members will have integrity, seeking to live a consistent Christian life, remembering that worship is a whole life orientation; we seek to please and honour God in every aspect of our lives.
1. **Commitment**—God looks for faithfulness in his servants. This ministry demands a high degree of commitment. Practice and growth in your specific instrument/skills are essential. Members who are lax in their dedication greatly limit not only their effectiveness in ministry but the whole group's as well.
1. **Community**—We are all members of a team. This means that we support and encourage one another. Each music team should function as a care group. Team members should care for each other, remembering that it is through their unity that the Holy Spirit is able to powerfully work through them. Strife and backbiting grieve the Holy Spirit and rob us our joy in ministry.

This also includes the area of appropriate dress. Team members must take extra caution in dressing modestly when serving on the stage. Any type of clothing that is sexually distracting or provocative is not permitted. Also any kind of clothing that advertises what may be perceived to promote ungodly living should not be worn. The music Pastor will have the final word on what is appropriate for the situation.

1. **Co-operation**—There cannot be more than one leader at a given time. Members must be willing to abide by the decisions of the worship leader. S/he is responsible before God for directing any given service. While team members are free to offer suggestions about various aspects of the music, ultimately the worship leader has the “final word” on what songs are to be sung and how they are to be performed. This means that we must put aside our private agendas and work together. Team members must be open to correction from within the worship team and resilient to criticism from outside the worship team.
1. **Care**—Team members will take seriously the requirement to be on time for practices. They should arrive early, set up their instrument, prepare their music, and write down any specific instructions about how songs are to be performed. Team members will pay particular attention to maintaining their music folio. Music should be sorted before arriving at the practice, and taken back home again at the end. Musicians should always leave the stage better than they found it.

## **Guidelines For Team Members**

### **New Members Process**

1. Must be a regular attendee of CLCC for at least 3 months
2. Express interest to the Worship Pastor
3. Receive the volunteer application package and submit to the Worship Pastor
4. Interview/audition with a small group (Worship Pastor & pastor from other campus, or other team member)
5. They will either be: a) asked to begin practicing with one of our teams until the team leader decides they are ready to lead during a main gathering b) asked to serve as a substitute, or c) told that they don't fit in with the present needs of the music department
6. Begin ministry on a 2 month probationary basis

### **Present Members: Vocalists, Musicians, Sound Techs, Projectionists**

As our worship teams grow and the number of people involved increases we need to have guidelines in order to encourage as many people as possible to use their gifts and yet at the same time maintain the quality of our ministry.

- If team member is a member of more than one team, they may be asked to step down from one role in order for a new team member to participate. In this we adhere to Paul's instructions to "look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Phi 2:1-4)
- Some members may need a Sabbatical (a break of more than one rotation) from their team. This should be worked out with the Worship Pastor so s/he can find a replacement.
- Members who feel they are not able to meet the commitments of being on a team should be able to excuse themselves from ministry until they feel able to return. This should be done in consultation with the Worship Pastor. Time pressure and personal issues, including spiritual apathy, are good reasons why members may need a break from this type of ministry.
- The Worship Pastor may ask a team member to re-evaluate his or her involvement and step off a team if s/he is unable or unwilling to meet the standards of this philosophy of ministry.
- Team members who have been full-time may want to seek a substitute role in order to focus on some other area of ministry. This should be discussed with the Worship Pastor so that the appropriate plans can be made.

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- Team members who are unable to take their turn are responsible to find a substitute from the list of substitutes. This should be done several days in advance and the team leader must be informed so that any changes in practice times or schedule can be relayed to the substitute.

## **Interviews**

New members please submit your completed application form to the Worship Pastor and you will be contacted for an interview. Please take note of the music selection included in this application package and have it prepared to sing/play for your interview. Please also bring *another song of your choice* with which you feel most comfortable singing/playing. Depending on your instrument of choice, you may also need to bring your instrument along. After your interview you will be contacted by the Worship Pastor.

## **Worship team structure**

Our structure is dependent on the depth of our available musicians. We will have a list of team members, and a list of substitute members that will determine the type of team structure that is used. Ideally we will operate with three bands that will be assembled at the discretion of the music Pastor. These teams will be led 2 out of 3 weeks by the music Pastor, and the remaining weeks of the year by other capable lead worshipers from within the church. The other lead worshipers will be chosen by the Worship Pastor.

## **Commitment**

The duration of the required commitment for team members is from September – June. New members joining mid-year will commit until June of that school calendar year. Over the summer months, team structure will adjust to include whoever is available during that time. A new school-year commitment will be required after the summer months until the following June. This goes for team members as well as substitutes.

## **Substitute team members**

Some people may only feel they can commit to playing a “fill-in” role within the music ministry. Others may be working on their skills and developing them to the point where they are more capable to be on a team full-time. Others may need time to renew their spiritual energy in order to serve fully, and may wish to serve as a substitute for a temporary basis. Some applicants will be asked to serve as a substitute until either more space is freed up on a team or their skills are developed further.

## **New song selection process**

We all love incorporating new songs into the repertoire of the church! A new song can bring so many positive elements to the life of our church. That being said, not every new

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song that comes out should be sung in our main gatherings. (see guidelines for choosing music) New songs can be suggested to the Worship Pastor and will be chosen by the Worship Pastor and the other worship leader(s). Please email song suggestions including the title of song and the songwriter/performer. (see contact info on welcome page for email address)

### **Expectations for conflict resolution**

With any team there are times when conflict arises. Misunderstandings and miscommunication are bound to happen. It is important for those on a team, especially a team that influences the entire church, to be careful to handle conflict properly. Please take care of any interpersonal conflict quickly and sensitively, following the instructions of scripture to “make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace” (Eph 4:3) If, after effort has been made to resolve the situation, and the conflict is still unresolved, follow the instructions of Matthew 18:15-17 and include the Worship Pastor in the resolution process. If you have a concern or question about the direction of leadership decisions please contact the Worship Pastor before talking with others. Ensure that conversation is for the benefit of our church ministry and does not undermine the leadership or direction that has been taken.

*If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. (Philippians 2:1-4)*

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## Guidelines For Worship Leaders

1. **Worship leaders must attend all leaders' meetings organized by the Worship Pastor.** This is our huddle – new songs, encouragement, vision.
2. **Worship plans should be submitted by Monday of the week of leading, and approved by the worship pastor.** This allows time for the slideshows to be developed and the songs to be sorted by the various musicians. This also allows time for the Worship Pastor to suggest changes to the worship leader.
3. **Worship leaders need to keep track of the worship song-lists from the previous few weeks.** This helps to prevent the overuse of some songs, while ensuring that we are repeating them enough to allow the congregation to become familiar with them, freeing them up to worship. Please refer to the intentional short list of songs for each rotation.
4. **We should limit introducing new songs to a maximum of one every month. These will be introduced at the discretion of the Worship Pastor.** It is advisable to practice the song at least one week before performing it.
5. **Any persons brought on to fill in for a team member must be taken from the list of substitutes.**
6. **All new songs must be approved by the worship pastor prior to congregational use.** The songs will be evaluated according to the following principles:
  - a. **Music should be excellent in quality.** This does not mean that only the most talented musicians can participate. It does mean that whatever we do must have our best effort attached to it. Worship is primarily for God and we should strive to give our “best” musical gift in worship.
  - b. **Music should facilitate congregational singing and worship.** Music must draw the congregation into worship. Worship is not to be mere entertainment or performance. The congregation must participate. Therefore the music chosen must be singable: within the vocal range of the congregation, at a feasible tempo, and not too complex rhythmically.
  - c. **Music should be solid in its content.** It matters what we sing. The words must have substance. The lyrics should be thoroughly biblical, theologically sound, and faithful to our church's distinctives.

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- d. **Music should be meaningful.** It should communicate with modern people in language and forms that they recognise and understand. Music must be relevant, not only to believers but also to unbelieving guests.
- e. **Music should be balanced and healthy.** We recognize the strengths and limitations of both the traditional hymns and the contemporary choruses. Therefore we seek to achieve a blend of styles and genres of music (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs). Healthy worship has a respect for our rich musical tradition but is open to the fresh winds of the Spirit who gives new songs to the church as well.
- f. **Music should be Spirit-filled and Spirit-led.** The bottom line of music ministry is not musical style or technical perfection, it is the quality of being marked by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in it and upon those who lead it.

→ **A word about timing:** New songs should be introduced when they best fit the needs of the church at the time. For example, introducing a song that fits well with the Church Wide Initiative, or introducing more upbeat songs, if we notice that category is lacking.

## Key areas of worship planning:

### 1. Choice of music:

**Content-**The key consideration is not musical style, but lyrical substance. The theological content must be carefully analysed and assessed. Are the messages of the songs clear and understandable, Biblically accurate and theologically sound?

**Appropriateness-**Do the message, musical feel, instrumentation, vocals, and volume of songs suit the general setting of the service and/or specific situations in the service?

**Balance-**Is there musical variety? For Example: We can make use of hymns, old and new choruses, key modulations, musical interludes, quiet times, and singing in the Spirit (improvised songs in tongues or English). Is there tempo variety? Is there a good balance of singing to and singing about God, and singing about our response to Him? Is there a good number of well known songs to balance out any less familiar ones?

- 2. **Selecting a theme:** Does the music contribute to the overarching focus and purpose of each service? Is there a focus or theme to the music? Do the songs logically connect with each other?
- 3. **Progression:** Does the worship move the worshippers to a conclusion? Is there a definable goal? Does the music take the worshippers somewhere? Does it jump from place to place without a sense of purpose? Is there an awareness of the overall purpose of the service?
- 4. **Achieving flow:** Are there smooth musical and/or thematic transitions between songs and other service elements and events? Are there awkward pauses? At the same time, is there breathing room, space for God to speak in silence or for the Spirit to be manifested in spiritual gifts?

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5. **Sensitivity:** Is there a clear understanding that worship should be people-focused not platform focused. It is the people's worship, not a private experience of worship leaders or a performance of worship by the worship team. Is there a willingness to yield to others who are also prepared to preach or teach the word of God? Is there a submission to spiritual leaders in observing reasonable time limits?
  
6. **Spiritual preparation:** Is there concerted prayer to prepare for the task and challenge of leading others into worship? Musicians in general and worship leaders in particular are prone to ego-projection. Care must be taken that self is not exalted. All those in prominent places of ministry need to maintain a humble attitude. Dependent prayer reminds us we can accomplish nothing without the enabling power of God. Worship is of and by the Spirit of God.