

Music and Worship Team Guidelines:

"An effective worship leader, aided and led by the Holy Spirit, skillfully combines Biblical Truth with music to magnify the worth of God and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, thereby motivating the gathered church to join him in proclaiming and cherishing the Truth about God and seeking to live all of life for the glory of God."

Bob Kauflin

Worship Development

Sovereign Grace Ministries

I like this description of an effective worship leader. In short, it reminds us that we as worship leaders are to share the Truth we know about our Great Redeemer in order to glorify Him and to lead others to Him. Worship is all I know of me responding to all God has shown me of Himself. This response involves a choice, and the use of my mind, will, and emotions. Thus, everything a worship leader does should encourage that response in the people he is leading. God desires to bless us with His manifest presence when we gather to worship Him, and he even gives us a Biblical prescription to follow. *(excerpts from Bob Kauflin)*

God's Biblical prescription includes:

1. Salvation
2. Submission
3. Commitment
4. Humility
5. Edification
6. Holiness
7. Sincerity

SALVATION

We must first know Jesus Christ in order to worship Him and lead others to Him. It may sound elementary and assumed, but I pray everyone in our worship team has a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Only each individual and the Lord know for sure. If you do have a personal relationship with Jesus, praise the Lord! If you do not or if you are not sure, I encourage you to seek out Pastor Keith, one of the Elders or Deacons, myself or some other trusted Christian friend. We will be glad to discuss Scripture with you and pray with you so that you may KNOW for certain that you know Him.

Acts 4:12 NIV:

¹² Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

Romans 3:23 "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

We all have sin in our hearts. We all were born with sin. We were born under the power of sin's control.

- *Admit that you are a sinner.*

Romans 6:23a "...The wages of sin is death..."

Sin has an ending. It results in death. We all face physical death, which is a result of sin. But a worse death is spiritual death that alienates us from God, and will last for all eternity.

- *Understand that you deserve death for your sin.*

Romans 6:23b "...But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Salvation is a free gift from God to you! You can't earn this gift, but you must reach out and receive it.

- *Ask God to forgive you and save you.*

Romans 5:8, "God demonstrates His own love for us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us!"

Romans 10:13 "Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved!"

- Call out to God in the name of Jesus!

Romans 10:9,10 "...If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation."

Jesus said,

Revelation 3:20a "Behold I stand at the door and knock, if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him..."

SUBMISSION

In terms of submission, first and obviously foremost, we submit to God the Father. We hold firmly to Him alone and respect the responsibility He has entrusted to us to sing His Word. He is the reason for everything we do.

Secondly, we fall under the authority of our Elders. Pastor Keith serves as one of the Elders, and I am in close communication with him and follow his lead as we prepare services week-to-week. We also have an Elder who is specifically over the worship ministry: Karl Sutter. Karl is the music and worship ministry leader and the Elder who represents the music and worship ministry to the Elders as a group and to the church at large. Everything that the worship ministry does is under his guidance.

"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"
(Hebrews 13:17 NIV)

Our music and worship leadership team consists of the worship leader and assistant worship leaders, the choir, and the praise team/band. Any other groups that help lead others into worship (drama, orchestra, Gospel choir, youth worship ministry band as they participate in church-wide services) fall under this ministry too. We share the responsibilities of this ministry, and we all work together in a coordinated effort to serve under our common purpose.

COMMITMENT

"Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving." (Col. 3:23 NIV)

In order for us to fulfill our purpose, we must take this role seriously. These are not *volunteer* positions; these are *called* positions. This is not a role to fill because you simply like to sing. This is a ministry that requires your heart—a heart devoted to worship and leading others into it. Serving must be a priority in your life and, thus, requires sacrifice of your time. Your commitment to this ministry means that you agree to faithfully come to practice and sing even when you may not *feel* like it, even if you may not particularly like the song the choir or praise team is singing, or even if the practice is during your team's big game on TV. This ministry is not based on how you *feel*. It is all about being a servant who's heart is to honor God and to see the lost come to salvation.

"No one is ready to lead until he is willing to serve." - Alfred W. Martin

In addition to living out a commitment to the choir, we strongly encourage music and worship ministry members to serve in other roles in the church as your time allows. As we live out our faith through service, we add integrity to our songs and make what we sing more meaningful and real to those we are leading.

To lead effectively, our worship should be purposeful, not hit-or-miss. Worship does not just happen. We should intentionally prepare and then expect good fruit from our preparation. Romans 12:6 says that those who lead should do so diligently. This will require effort and oftentimes great effort. I read this example recently: "When we moved into our new home several years ago, my family's yard was a wasteland. But each fall I aerated, fertilized, and planted grass seed. In the spring, I applied fertilizer and weed killer. We watered. For a few years

it seemed like not much was happening. But here we are years later with a full lawn. What happened? We sowed, and tended, and then we reaped.” (Bob Kauflin, Sovereign Grace Ministries)

So it is with worship. If we want God’s people to glorify Him, we must sow to His glory. We must prepare our minds and our hearts for worship so that others can see Jesus through us. We must work to build our skills (playing instrument, using our voice, for example). We must practice and prepare our voices. We must paint a compelling, attractive, grand, Biblical picture of our great God and Savior.

HUMILITY

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.” (Philippians 2:3 NIV)

*“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart,
O God, you will not despise.” (Psalm 51:17 NIV)*

And those who walk in pride He is able to put down. (from Daniel 4:37 NKJV)

“For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. ⁴Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his ⁷faith. ⁷If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” (Romans 12:3-8 NIV)

As stated above, the worship team is under the ultimate authority of Christ alone and any music we present must be presented to glorify Him alone. Self-glorification has no part in this ministry and honestly, those in Good Hope’s worship team are very intolerant of selfishness. God will not share His glory with anyone else. The results of a ministry that is girded with pride and selfishness are sure to fail. If your singing in the choir is dependent on you singing solos, then you are in the wrong choir. While we definitely want you at Good Hope to grow and learn with us, the focus of our worship team is not on show-casing individual talent. We function as a team. Obviously if we are intent on aiming for excellence in worship leadership, we are very interested in the way we sound and some may end up singing more solos than others. But a firm foundation regarding matters of the heart and soul and a clear testimony by the fruits of our spirit are the most important to us. In other words, you may have the best solo voice around, but, if it’s all about you or if it is obvious that there are areas of pride and even pride about un-surrendered sin in your life, then it is our prayer that God would lead you (and us all) to conviction and some soul-searching before joining our team.

God is faithful to provide for this ministry’s needs when we are seeking His heart and not our own. He’s proven that over and over again. Praise God!

EDIFICATION

*¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position.
Do not be conceited.” (Romans 12: 16 NIV)*

While many times music that speaks to the worship leadership team also speaks to the larger body of believers, we recognize that it is not our priority to present music that speaks to *us* as individuals at all times. It is our role to present music and set the worship environment that, first of all, glorifies God but secondly that will lead *others*—and the corporate body of believers to a deeper worship experience with God. This means that while you may not like traditional music or hymns, you will be asked to sing them. It also means that while you may not like contemporary songs, you will be asked to sing them as well. It is very important to remember that different people worship in different ways. What may seem worshipful for one may not seem worshipful for others. We must be very attentive to the needs of the congregation and not push head-strong with our own personal agendas. We must act out of love for one another. Once again, selfishness must be left-behind. Our philosophy is that as long as the songs are Scripturally sound, it is no sacrifice at all to be given the opportunity to sing for Christ no matter what the flavor of the song. Instead, we consider it an opportunity and a blessing. It is not about us.

In addition, while this should go unsaid, the music and worship team members are expected to participate and attend worship services on a regular basis unless serving with the children or elsewhere. We are not in the church services to simply sing. We are there to lead worship through music as well as through the Word and with our actions. We do not sing and then leave or only show up to services to sing or play an instrument. We support our leadership with our attention and our time. We are there for corporate worship to love and honor the Lord and to grow together as the body of Christ.

HOLINESS AND SINCERITY

Live a life “worthy of His calling,” so that “by His power He may fulfill every good purpose of yours an every act prompted by your faith . . . so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace o four God and the Lord Jesus Christ.” (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 NIV)

But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart."

(1 Samuel 16:7)

“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^[a] act of worship. ²Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

(Romans 12: 1-2 NIV)

If we are to lead others into worship, we should display an attitude of worship ourselves both on and off the platform. This requires that we spend time privately with the Lord--in prayer, confession, repentance, Bible study and worship--throughout the week, so that our leading worship on Sundays is an out-pouring of what we have learned and experienced with God the previous six days. Each day we need to ask God to convict us of our sins and to take us a step closer to becoming like Him . We can never be satisfied with the status quo. We need to continually seek God to update our resume for Him. Live expectantly and be prepared to give an answer for what God is doing in your life. *“But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. . . .”* (1 Peter 3:15 NIV)

Serving as a worship leader calls us to be people of integrity—the same on and off the platform. We must strive to be the same people at home and at work that we are at church. It is important to remember that the further we put ourselves out there in the spotlight in worship leadership roles, the more scrutiny our lives will be under and the higher level of accountability we are held to. When we take a position in front of a group of people, we will, to one degree or another, be leading, whether intentionally or not. If we are going to be effective worship leaders, we need to strive to live lives worthy of the calling, lives of integrity, lives that make our corporate worship time believable to others.

Also, as we need to present ourselves as living sacrifices, we all should dress in a manner that would not distract from our messages in song. The typical dress code for the worship team is “dress casual.” More specifically, women should dress modestly. Simply put: No strapless or backless tops, spaghetti straps, tightly form-fitting clothes, short skirts (no more than 2 “– 3 “above the knee) or cleavage exposed. Whether we like to admit it or not, we must concern ourselves about issues such as lust in the church too.

Along those same lines, no heavy perfume (in case of allergies), modest jewelry, and hands down at the sides except when clapping or raised in praise.

What about the logistics?

Church-wide prayer time Sundays at 5:30pm. I strongly encourage all music and worship ministry members to participate in our church-wide prayer time. Prayer is the power behind all we do! I believe we miss many wonderful things God has planned for us when we do not call on Him both privately as well as corporately in prayer.

Choir practice Sundays at 6pm (as soon as church-wide prayer time is complete).

Band practice Wednesdays at 8:15pm (and Sundays at 7:30am).

Sunday AMs:

The choir often sings first in the 10:30AM service. Please leave your Sunday School class by 10:15 AM so that we can

practice in the sanctuary, pray together and gather in the choir area of the family life center by 10:28 AM.

The schedule for the various parts of the worship team for Sundays is as follows:

7:30 AM – praise team/band/sound men meet for practice in Family Life Center; Pro-Presenter personnel arrive with complete slides, etc. . . to practice with band

8:30AM – soloists for service practicing in FLC/setting sound

10AM: Prayer time (worship leaders, support prayer group). . in FLC

10:15 AM: choir and accompanists meet in sanctuary to practice choir song

10:30AM – sing in service. The choir sings every Sunday during the service either as a call to worship and/or during the offering time. The choir also sings all the congregational/band songs with the praise team.

- I will give you practice CDs for all (or nearly all) choir songs. You are expected to listen to these CDs to help yourself learn the songs. Also, it is very helpful if you can purchase an inexpensive CD case (which holds 20-25 CDs) to keep choir CDs organized and on hand.
- I typically do auditions for solos for choir songs for our choir songs. At times, when planning songs, I am familiar enough with folks' voices that I simply know they can do well with certain solos without audition. I do my very best to accommodate all and to consider all variables. Trust me. This is one of the areas that causes me most stress and lost hours of sleep. I care deeply about people's feelings. However, I do reserve the right to make those types of decisions without public explanation. If, however, you have questions regarding why I reached certain decisions, please first examine your heart. If you still have questions/concerns, please, please feel free to seek my rationale, etc. . . I am always more than open to discuss. I am the first to say that I am not without fault. While I try to do my very best and be absolutely fair, I make my share of mistakes.
- Please let me know if you will be away on particular Sundays or for extended periods of time (so I'll know how to plan). And please never say to me, "You don't need me. You have enough people in that choir." That is not something God wants to hear on a variety of levels.
- Please be as prompt as possible for practice on Sunday nights so that we can get to work on time. Choir practice typically starts as soon as folks can finish corporate prayer time and get to the FLC for practice.
- While I want you all to have a good time at practice, please try to keep talking to a minimum. With as many people as we have in the choir, it is hard to hear and very distracting if even a few people are talking. Please: No cell phone use or texting during practice unless it is with your immediate family (children or spouse). The less we fool around, the quicker we can practice and return home.
- Attend at least 75% of practices in order to participate on Sunday mornings or in special services. The choir as a whole has agreed on this number in the past and it seems to work well as a general rule. I am not going to take attendance; it is just an understanding we have. If you don't know a song and haven't been to practice, you shouldn't sing with the choir. **Again, practicing and commitment to the choir is expected.** God deserves our best.
- In order to sing in the praise team, you must have proven yourself faithful to participation in the choir as well (typically two out of three semesters of the year at a very minimum). We are intentional about considering our entire worship leadership group as one, all working together for the same purpose. Please understand that singing in the choir does not automatically mean you are the right person for the praise team or for solos. Some folks are choir singers (me, for example) and some are strong soloists (not me, for example). In addition to many other variables to consider, in order to sing on the praise team, it is very helpful if you can carry your section (sop, alto, tenor) on your own.
- We are all expected to be encouragers for one another ("Encourage one another and build each other up!").

Assistant worship leaders are asked to:

--arrive well in advance for services in order to coordinate/practice with the accompanists/band;

--oftentimes prepare the ProPresenter info for slides

--canvas the choir loft/riser/pulpit areas before services to assure that everything is in place, tidy and presentable for the

service; and

--participate in/lead 10am prayer time

--check sound and Pro-Presenter prior to the service.

I encourage you to share your suggestions for a more dynamic and worship-inspiring ministry with me. While I may not do everything suggested, I value your input and try my best to accommodate.

Also, please know that I realize that some of the guidelines I discussed may sound harsh. That is not my intention at all. My intention is to just set the record straight from the very start. I figure that if we all are informed and know where we stand from the beginning, our ministry will be more focused and efficient. We must be serious about our mission and throw off anything that would hold us back. We must set our Bible-based standards and keep our eye on the Prize.

Thank you so much for your interest in this ministry. I believe that God has BIG—HUGE!!—things planned for us! I ask you to commit this ministry to your prayers by praying that God will lead us to be all He wants us to be I am very thankful and honored that God allows me to share this awesome opportunity and responsibility with you. I look forward to serving with you!

For Christ alone,

Luanne

“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with the gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

(Colossians 3:16-17 NIV)