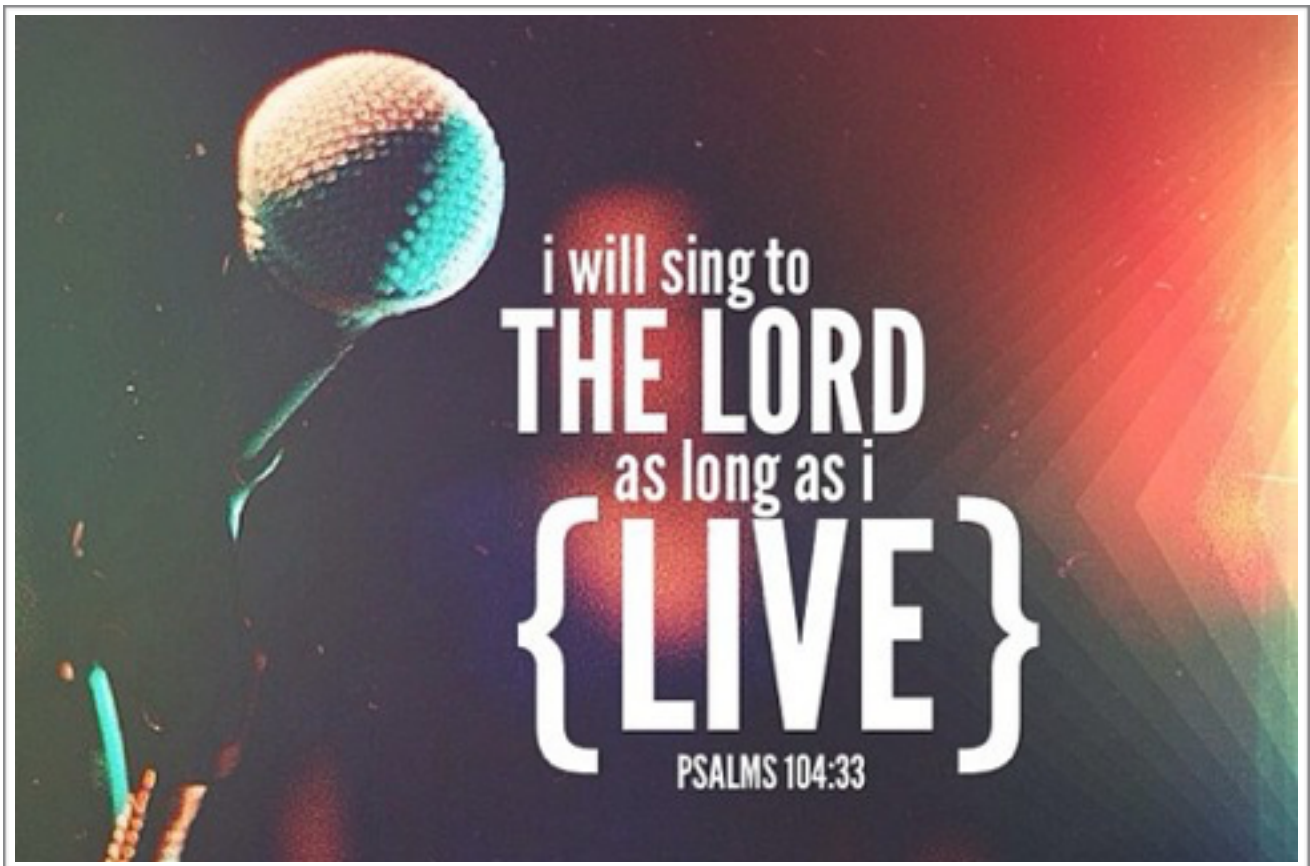


Ministry Description:



Music Ministry Team

Last updated: Thursday, 14 May 2015

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Introduction

This guide sketches out the purpose and practice of our Music Ministry Teams at Grace Christian Church Buderim. Each person serving in the music ministry team is expected to read this guide and be familiar with the GCCB's approach to music ministry.

Why do we sing?

Singing praise together to God is a vital part of our gathering together as Christians, and is a valuable expression of worship in our lives.

In the Bible, singing is commanded for God's people.

"Sing praises to the LORD, who sits enthroned in Zion! Tell among the peoples his deeds!" (Psalms 9:11 ESV)

"...addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart," (Ephesians 5:19 ESV)

*"Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing praise."
(James 5:13 ESV)*

But this is command that's a joy to obey.

"It is good to give thanks to the LORD, to sing praises to your name, O Most High;" (Psalms 92:1 ESV)

"I will sing to the LORD as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have being." (Psalms 104:33 ESV)

Even Jesus and his disciples sang together (Matthew 26:30). The early gospel pioneers sang together (Acts 16:25). The early church sang alongside their prayers when they gathered (1 Corinthians 14:15). It's something we definitely should be doing in our church services.



Why do we need a music ministry team?

To lead

The primary purpose of a music ministry team is a practical one. Their purpose is to **lead** the rest of congregation in sung worship.

Of course, music teams leading aren't essential to our ability to worship. We could just get everyone together in church, count to three and start singing. But what would probably happen is that we'd end up with different tempos, different keys, different words, and (worst-case scenario) different songs!

This would hardly be the model of unity and order that God expects for his church, the body of the Lord Jesus Christ! (see 1 Corinthians 14:40, Colossians 3:14-17)



A music ministry team (which may take many different forms) is able to set the key and tempo, create a meaningful progression through songs and between songs, and provide musical leadership for others to follow. This helps us to be united in our worship.

Interestingly, God's people in the Old Testament set aside certain particularly gifted musicians to serve the congregation in an intentional and ordered way.

"They were all under the direction of their father in the music in the house of the LORD with cymbals, harps, and lyres for the service of the house of God. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the order of the king. The number of them along with their brothers, who were trained in singing to the LORD, all who were skilful, was 288. And they cast lots for their duties, small and great, teacher and pupil alike."

(1 Chronicles 25:6–8 ESV)

Of course, these guys were also put at the front of the army when Israel went into battle. To sing. I'm glad we've moved on a little from back then!

To model

Related to leading, the secondary purpose of a music ministry team is to **model** what united, worshipping Christians look like.

Mike Raiter (director of the Centre for Biblical Preaching in Melbourne, formerly principal of Melbourne School of Theology) opened an article on singing in the April 2008 edition of *The Briefing* with this recollection:

"I was at a convention recently, seated near the rear of the auditorium. The music team at the front were 'leading' (and I use that word advisedly) and we were singing. Well, we were meant to be singing. And so I did what I've done quite often lately: I closed my eyes and listened to the singing. The song leaders with their microphones were clear and distinct. I could identify each of the several instruments accompanying the singers. But if you blocked out the 'worship team', all that was left around the building was a barely audible murmur. I opened my eyes and looked around. Most folk were either standing silently, not even making a pretence of singing, or were little engaged in the activity.

*I turned to a friend next to me and commented, "No-one's singing". He looked at me as if I'd just observed that no-one was flying. Of course they're not singing; we haven't really sung here for years."*¹

Our culture is not a singing culture. Unless you count sports matches. And ANZAC Day. And 80's band reunion concerts.

Some churches in Australia have experimented recently with tossing out singing altogether, because they have thought it might be alienating for newcomers. They quickly realised that the whole church experience was far poorer without singing, even for those who are coming to church for the first time. It just goes to show God knows what he's doing when he gives us commands!



But a which doesn't make singing a normal experience for most people, will have a knock-on effect in our church, resulting in unenthusiastic, very self-conscious, and unengaged times of sung worship. This is where a music ministry team can help to transform our culture by how they model Christian sung worship.

¹ <http://matthiasmedia.com/briefing/2008/04/the-slow-death-of-congregational-singing-4/>

This isn't about being showy. It's not about raising our hands in the right places. It's not about having our heads inclined upwards so the optimal amount of throat is seen by the congregation.

It's about being genuine. It's about being obviously glad to be singing praise to our God and and King Jesus Christ. It's being obviously reverent before our great God and Saviour. It's about not being embarrassed about what we're doing. It's about thinking far more of Jesus than we do of ourselves.

We want people to think two things when they look at the kind of sung worship our music ministry team models:

1. "Wow. They really love Jesus. I want that too."
2. "Those are ordinary people worshipping their Father God. I think I could do that too."

Mission for our Ministry

In order to achieve this purpose, we need to set certain goals for our ministry. We call this our mission.

- To select songs for congregational worship that reflect the truth of the Bible, and allow our congregation to sing praise to God in an authentic and meaningful way
- To present these songs in a way which is conducive to corporate singing
- In all that we do, to seek to serve others and bring God glory, rather than seeking our own good and glory.

Songs

Choosing songs is tricky, because while you may please some of the people some of the time, you'll never please all the people, all of the time!

But let's remember, our goal is "to select songs for congregational worship that reflect the truth of the Bible, and allow our congregation to sing praise to God in an authentic and meaningful way."

This means that our songs must meet certain criteria. They must be

- **Biblical:** Our songs must be true to what God has revealed of himself in his Word. Our worship in song is a response to what God has revealed of himself in the Bible and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

- **Singable:** We will never have a congregation of trained musicians. Our songs must therefore be musically simple enough that ordinary people can sing them, and enjoy singing them in a meaningful way, rather than getting tongue-tied and self-conscious
- **Meaningful:** Finally, different songs may be meaningful for different people; for some, an old hymn, with the reverent language of ‘Thees and Thous’ is a meaningful way to address the Sovereign God in praise. For others, more simple, modern language is what is meaningful. For some a song rich in content is meaningful, for others, a song that repeats a simple idea is meaningful. We need to recognise this dynamic and seek to serve it in the songs we sing, avoiding the confusion and insincere worship that results from singing meaningless songs.

At Grace, we aim to reflect these points in our song selection each Sunday. The guideline for song selection at each service is therefore:

7.45am	9.30am	6.00pm
One hymn	Two modern songs	Two modern songs
One modern song	One kids’ song	Two hymns (one of which may be a modern rearrangement, or a modern hymn)
	Two hymns (one of which may be a modern rearrangement, or a modern hymn)	

There is an official database of all songs available from the church office to assist in selecting songs.

A Note on Flow

It is usually impractical to ensure that every song in a worship service reflects the theme of the preacher’s message. The pressures of ministry mean that sermons sometimes only get finished on a Saturday night, and it can also be overly simplistic to structure a service this way.

While the teaching of the Word is primary in our services, it is one of many elements in a service. Our services should therefore have a **flow** that leads towards the Bible teaching in preparation, and away from it in response.

For instance, an example song choice for a 9.30am service may look like this (placing of the kids’ song may differ depending on service order):

Stops along the journey	Song
Declaration of God's character and response in praise	<i>Crown Him with Many Crowns</i>
Reflection on God's holiness, and our place before him, confession of sin	<i>You Alone Can Rescue</i> (Matt Redman)
Response of thanks for his grace	<i>Come Near to God</i> (Colin Buchanan - kids' song)
Preparation for hearing the Word	<i>Speak O Lord</i> (Getty/Townend, <u>note</u> : this is a 'modern hymn')
Response to the Bible message/declaration of commitment to God	<i>Cornerstone</i> (Jonas Myrin)

Presentation

Once we've selected our songs, we need to think about what we actually do with them.

Our role as serving musicians is not to perform a song for an audience, but to lead our brothers and sisters as we all worship together.

There are a few basic things that fall under this heading

- **Singable key** Usually, this means that a song goes no higher than a D above middle C on the piano. Size of gathering also plays a role, and it may be useful to drop the key of a song down even further when the congregation is smaller. Also be wary of songs with a big range (very low notes and very high notes). All songs have a standard key detailed in the Song Database
- **Singable tempo** Nerves make us play faster. We might also fear boring people if a song is too slow. But when a song is too fast, it can be difficult to focus on the words, much less to sing them with any meaning. Work out the right tempo at rehearsal, and always err on the slower side when actually presenting a song in worship.
- **Intros, outros and cues** Part of leading is a like being a conductor for a large choir. This means that we need to direct the congregation as to where to sing. There is a saying that if your intro and outro are done well, you'll be forgiven anything in the middle! Make time at rehearsal to focus on getting intros, outro and cues within a song clear and tight.
- **Arrangement** Part of serving the congregation by leading them in worship is making sure the sound we make, as a whole, is conducive to worship. As a music team, we need to think very carefully about what each person's contribution is to the whole sound. No one needs to play all the time, and usually, the bigger the band, the less each person plays. The music needs to be arranged at rehearsals in such a way as to let the song breathe and to let the singing have pride-of-place.

Music Ministry Team Members

We want to do our ministry well, serving God's glory and serving his people. This is why it's important to have a good idea of what is required of someone wanting to join this ministry, and what being part of this ministry will involve.



Requirements for being part of this ministry

Music Ministry Team Members at Grace will

- ▶ have a sense of God's calling to this ministry,
- ▶ be committed to the direction and the Biblical teaching of our church
- ▶ be working towards formal church membership, where Grace Church endorses their confession of faith in Jesus Christ, and they commit publicly to the ministry of our church
- ▶ be living a life of obvious personal, ongoing discipleship to Jesus Christ
- ▶ demonstrate gifting in music and worship leading
- ▶ be available for regular weekly rehearsals, pre-service sound checks and for serving at services
- ▶ have the support of their family in committing to this ministry
- ▶ be able to serve in a ministry team with others, and submit to leadership, both in the music team (i.e. team leaders) and in the church generally (i.e. pastors and elders)

Responsibilities of those serving

Music Ministry Team Members at Grace are expected to

- ▶ conduct themselves, both inside and outside of the church, in a way that brings honour to Jesus to Christ and to his people

- ▶ be realistic about their ability to commit to the time-requirements of this ministry:
 - prioritise faithful attendance at Grace Church services, especially when not serving
 - prioritise faithful attendance at weekly music team rehearsals
 - ensure that other ministry commitments don't negatively affect your commitment to the music ministry (don't spread yourself too thinly!)
- ▶ be growing in their relationship with Jesus through regular personal devotions
- ▶ be growing in their relationships, in Christ, with other church members by regularly attending a Grace Community Group
- ▶ be developing as a musician through private rehearsal and practice
- ▶ to prepare for rehearsal by reviewing the songs privately, and to bring the correct music in the correct key to the rehearsal (downloaded from SongSelect at au.songselect.com)
- ▶ particularly when serving, to dress modestly and present themselves in way that is respectful toward God and towards his people (if unsure, please ask a team leader)
- ▶ to defer and submit to the leadership of the team leader, and the church leadership
- ▶ be committed to regularly praying for the music ministry, those who serve alongside them, and the church
- ▶ attend annual ministry training programs
- ▶ regularly review these guidelines to ensure they are commitment to this ministry

Music Team Leadership

At present, each team has a leader who is responsible for managing that team.

Their responsibilities are

- ▶ organise team rehearsals, including times and dates, correct sheet music, and devotional time at rehearsals
- ▶ manage decision-making at rehearsals
- ▶ liaise between the pastoral staff member responsible for the Music Ministry, and the music ministry team members themselves
- ▶ regularly review

At present, Ps Clint Lombard is responsible for church services at Grace, with the Music Ministry falling within this portfolio.

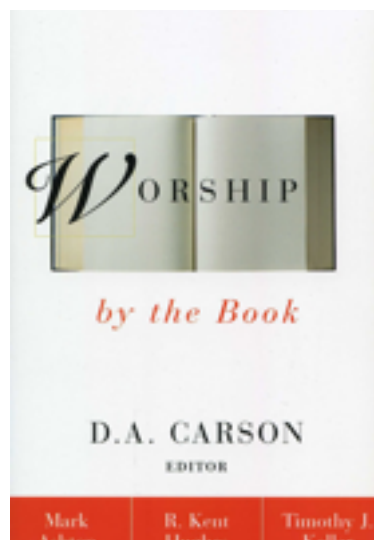
Recommended Resources:

Keep training!

Books



Worship Matters. Nothing is more essential than knowing how to worship the God who created us. This book focuses readers on the essentials of God-honouring worship, combining biblical foundations with practical application in a way that works in the real world. Bob Kauflin, a pastor and noted songwriter, skilfully instructs pastors, musicians, and church leaders so that they can root their congregational worship in unchanging scriptural principles, not divisive cultural trends.



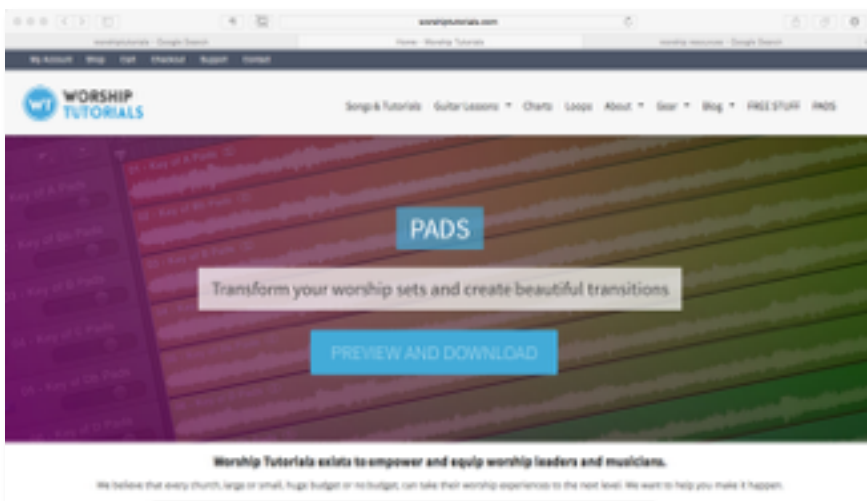
Worship is a hot topic, but the ways that Christians from different traditions view it vary greatly. What is worship? More important, what does it look like in action, both in our corporate gatherings and in our daily lives? These concerns—the blending of principle and practice—are what **Worship by the Book** addresses.

From the editor: *“What is at stake is authenticity. . . . Sooner or later Christians tire of public meetings that are profoundly inauthentic, regardless of how well (or poorly) arranged, directed, performed. We long to meet, corporately, with the living and majestic God and to offer him the praise that is his due.”*

Websites



www.worshiptogether.com



www.worshiptutorials.com



au.songselect.com

(Contact Clint Lombard to open a free account using the church login details)

Music



Hymns Ancient & Modern
Passion



*30: Three Decades of Song
for the Church*
Sovereign Grace Music



Forever Reign
Hillsong Chapel



The Worship Initiative
Shane & Shane



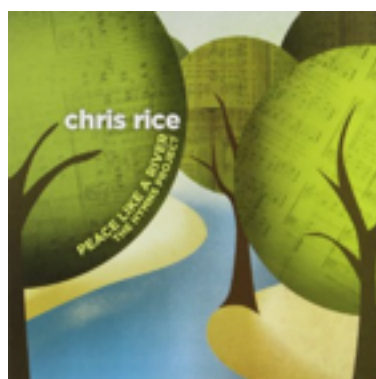
Colin's Favourites
Colin Buchanan



Come Hear the Angels Sing
EMU Music



Campfire
Rend Collective



*Peace Like A River: The
Hymns Project*
Chris Rice



The Ultimate Collection
Stuart Townend

