

FISH HOEK BAPTIST CHURCH WORSHIP DIRECTIVES

Worship is a ministry that has always been held in high regard, even by God Himself. In the Old Testament the musicians led God's people into battle. The New Testament tells us that God is looking for worshippers who will worship Him in spirit and in truth, for God is Spirit. [John 4:7-24] The worship ministry is important to us because it is important to God and the worshippers are important to us for the same reason. Whilst worship encompasses far more than the praise and worship time during a church service time, for the purposes of this document we will be looking at worship in terms of praising, worshiping, singing and the music ministry during the service.

It is easy to confuse **WORSHIPPING** with **BEING A WORSHIPPER**. Just because someone worships, it does not necessarily follow that he or she is a worshipper. Virtually anyone can worship as the occasion might demand, but relatively few seem to manifest the life-style of a worshipper. When God asks us to be worshippers every day, He is not asking us to do nothing but sing songs all week. He knows we must do other things besides vocalize our worship. But God does ask us to live a life consistent with that of a worshipper **seven days a week**. Once we adopt that life-style, we will inevitably find a song of praise frequently welling up from within. We will begin to realize that everything we do truly constitutes an act of worship unto the Lord, for our daily activities are but an expression of our dedication to God.

It is important for those who participate in this vital ministry to recognize the wonderful privilege that they have of leading God's people into spiritual battle and into that place where God meets with them – on a deep personal level where they are free to express themselves to God fully.

For this reason, we have a very high regard for the practical function of worship in church services and therefore these directives for the Worship Team will assist you in understanding the high standard that has been set as we aspire to fulfill this high calling. The three issues that this document speaks to are: -

1. The Worship Committee & Worship Oversight...
2. The appropriate preparation of the Worship Team member...
3. The required facilitation of the congregational worship.

In addressing these issues we are seeking to effectively co-ordinate and further the worship ministry of Fish Hoek Baptist.

1: THE WORSHIP COMMITTEE & WORSHIP OVERSIGHT

The Worship Committee is appointed by the Executive to co-ordinate all aspects of the worship ministry and as such the Worship Committee is subject to the Overseers. The Worship Committee (Michelle Shaw, Neil Smith, Richard Anderson & Mathew Philips) have been recognized and appointed by the church to co-ordinate the worship ministry for this year. All who participate in this ministry need to realize that they do so under their leadership. Participation in the worship ministry is never a right. Rather it is always an honor and a privilege and should continually be regarded as such. It is the function and prerogative of the Worship Committee to direct the ministry, under God, according to the leading of the Holy Spirit and the directives of the Pastors and Overseers of the church. It is also the function of the Worship Committee to ensure that each of the members of the Worship Teams complies on all of the points discussed in this document. If, at their discretion, any of these points are

not being complied with, they may ask that particular member to stand down. This may on occasion be in discussion with the church oversight.

It is one of the functions of the Pastors and the worship committee to ensure the theological correctness of all songs that we sing. They will be held accountable to ensure a very high standard in this regard. All new songs must first be approved by the Pastors, prior to being taught to the congregation. It is their function to change the words or veto the use of any song if it does not meet this high standard. It is also mandatory that the worship leaders of each team are members of the church.

2. THE APPROPRIATE PREPARATION OF THE WORSHIP TEAM MEMBER

2.1. Personal Prayer / Spiritual Life

It is important that those who serve on the Worship Team demonstrate a strong commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ in their personal lives. Jesus is to be Lord of every area of your life. This strong commitment needs to translate in a commitment to practical holiness as well as to the life and ministry of the Fish Hoek Baptist Church. A worshipper must become holy to continue worshipping a holy God, for holiness and ungodliness cannot fellowship together, since one of the prime manifestations of holiness is a hatred of sin. *“Worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness” (1 Chronicles 16:29)*. The One who is worshipped is holy, the channel through which we worship is holy and we must become holy in order to be involved in true worship. Because the worship ministry is a public ministry, it needs to be understood that those who stand before the congregation during the church meetings, become publicly associated with the name of the Fish Hoek Baptist Church. It goes without saying therefore, that their life outside the church, whether it is at home, work, school, college, entertainment or any other area of life, needs to be consistent with the high standards held by the church. There is a real sense in which the Worship Team’s lives become ‘public property’ and those who participate in this ministry need to be aware of this sacrifice.

The personal preparation of each person on the Worship Team cannot be emphasized enough. Your participation in the Worship Team should play a part of your devotions through the week so that when you come to the practice or to the meetings, you are spiritually equipped. A weekly practice of the songs is hopelessly inadequate in terms of your personal preparation. Your ministry should be the subject of your prayer and you should expect God to speak to you in your readings in His Word. It is also a requirement that each person on a team attends services on weekends when they are not on duty. To only attend when you are on duty is not consistent with the life of a worshipper.

Having worshipped with the congregation, we are responsible to go out and live a life consistent with our confession at church. Someone has said, ***“Don’t lip it unless you live it”***. However, this statement is not intended to discourage you in any way as each one of us is in the process called ‘sanctification’. May the intimacy of our worship before God so affect our lives that the change is evident throughout the week! ***Walk your talk, and talk your walk, but remember that your walk talks further than your talk walks!!***

Three imperatives for effective worship:

Submit to God - This means loving His Word and walking in obedience to His commandment.

Draw near to God - In prayer and by being continually filled by the Spirit of God.

Cleansing and Purifying - Allowing your heart and hands to be washed by the water of the Word - ***“for who may ascend the hill of the Lord but he who has clean hands and a pure heart”***.

Remember, serving on the Worship Team is not the right of the talented but the privilege extended to the committed and the teachable.

3. THE REQUIRED FACILITATION OF THE CONGREGATIONAL WORSHIP

3.1. The Worship Leading Team

The worship is one of the early experiences that a visitor encounters in our services. If the worship does not hang together, the impression the visitor has of the Body will be negatively affected. Worship that is badly co-ordinated and presented will easily cause a church to dwindle into effective stagnation. Conversely, if the worship ministry is good there is a strong chance that the visitor will meet with God in the powerful reality of praise and worship. It is for this reason that church growth experts say that one of the common factors amongst growing churches is a healthy, warm and vibrant worship ministry. It is as we meet God in worship that we prepare to meet with God in His Word. When the team appropriately facilitate worship, the congregation is effectively prepared to meet God in the Word. If our experience of worship is negative, we become analytically critical and no longer meet God in worship. Also, if we become negatively critical of the worship, we will be negatively critical of the preaching and instead of receiving in both the worship and the preaching, we will be robbed of the blessing that God has for us. In a nutshell, the duty of the worship leading team is to provide the best opportunity possible for the people to worship. If we have done our part in providing an excellent opportunity for the people to worship, it is then their choice to take advantage of that opportunity.

Because of the important role of worship in the meetings, it is absolutely necessary that each person who participates in the worship ministry is teachable. It is, therefore, anticipated that those who participate in the worship ministry do so with ALL the directives in mind.

3.2. The Ability to Function as a Team

The worship leading team is comprised of six general classifications: a] the worship leader, b] the musicians, c] the singers, d] the dancers, e] the sound system operator and d] the screen operator. The team **must** share the vision of the pastor and the leadership for the church and God's purpose. Team ministry also enhances the effectiveness of the leader. There will be times when the leader does not flow in the fullest anointing of the Holy Spirit 100 percent of the time. In those weaker moments, the team members should be sensitive and pick up the slack. There is power and unity in team effort. The Bible speaks of one putting a thousand to flight and two putting ten thousand to flight. That's quite a jump!! What about three or four or even fifty all working together in a common vision??

One of the primary needs to serve on the Worship Team is to be able to function on a team with a team spirit. A highly talented musician or vocalist may be completely unsuitable for this ministry if they are not able to recognize and submit to the dynamics of a team ministry. There must be a firm commitment to the team ministry with an attitude of enthusiasm and co-operation. As part of a team it is necessary to understand submission, teachability and responsibility. A team member must sustain an openness to receive correction and instruction. How we value a teachable spirit!

There will be times also when a team member might himself/herself need ministry. It is better then that the team member step down from team for that particular meeting than step down during ministry time to either be prayed for or to pray for somebody else. There are appointed people to pray for those who respond - we are called to minister and not to desert the team to pray for somebody else. A team member may not leave their position without the consent of the Worship Leader.

It is the function of the worship leader to arrange the instruments and vocals for each song, as he would like them to be for each particular song. It is important that musicians and vocalists understand this so as not to take it personally when changes are made under different worship leaders. Remember that participation in the worship ministry is a privilege and not a right. Enjoy the changes and use them to see your normal role from a different perspective to accommodate the entire team. Each musician or singer must be flexible musically

Musicians - A worshipping musician is not concerned with 'grandstanding' his or her ability on a Sunday morning, but instead is pre-occupied with contributing meaningfully to the flow of worship. The musicians should feel the freedom **NOT** to play occasionally, in order to stand and worship with hands up-raised. If musicians have 'the itch' to play an instrument, they should 'scratch the itch' on Saturday so that when they come on Sunday to lead on the team, they are able to participate or refrain according to the prompting of the Holy Spirit through the leader.

When the worship leader is speaking to the congregation or somebody is reading from the Word of God or sharing a word of testimony, the rest of the team should look at that person. This will help the congregation to concentrate on what that person is saying. Conversely, if team members are focussed elsewhere, the congregation will be distracted and tempted to focus on what that team member is focussed on. The Worship Team should take their lead at all times from the Worship Leader. Despite careful preparation and much practice, he may change the order of songs or the songs that are sung at his discretion, should he sense the Holy Spirit leading him in that way. The Worship Team should, therefore, keep close watch for his lead all the way through the singing.

3.3. Facilitating the Worship

The primary function of the Worship Team is to facilitate the worship of the congregation during the various services. The team must start where the people are and bring them **'up to the mountain of the Lord'**. The team does not **"do its own thing"** but reaches out to identify with the people, and then reaches out to the Lord, and by God's grace, brings the two together. The Worship Team is called of God to lead His people through the **"gates of praise"** (Is 60:18) **"and into His presence."**

Each member needs to find the balance between spontaneous worship and congregational facilitation. Although your worship should be spontaneous, you are not there to primarily to worship, but rather to facilitate the worship of the congregation. Therefore, the facilitation of the congregation must take precedence over their own worship. Unless the members of the Worship Team are willing to and enthusiastically participate in facilitating the worship of the congregation, and lay their own preferences and likes aside, they will not be able to play a meaningful role on the Worship Team.

3.4. Choice of songs / material

The choice of songs, which are sung, is critical. This often determines how the rest of the service flows. The person choosing the songs should:

- Always check with the pastors as to what is being preached on and in the choice of the songs seek to align the choice of songs to this theme.
- Always check what time is available for the praise and worship. The praise and worship needs to be aligned with the rest of the service. We do not want to be cutting songs on

- Sundays just before the service to fit the time or the rest of the service.
- Choosing songs is not an opportunity to choose ones own favorites.
- The worship service should always begin with a well-known song that is easily singable and rouses the congregation to high praise.
- New songs should never be introduced at the beginning of a service.
- An ideal place to introduce new songs is during the offering.
- New songs should preferably be introduced as a ministry song and the congregation be allowed to be ministered to – giving them the opportunity to sit or kneel and be ministered to.
- New songs must always be well practiced and come across well – if a team has not got it right, drop it for that week.
- No more than one new song per service. It impacts negatively on the worship to have many unfamiliar songs. This is probably the most criticized area of our worship. With four team doing various songs, the congregation feels they are being bombarded by new songs.
- New songs are generally first introduced in the evening service.
- We cannot go wrong using familiar songs, but we can go wrong by having too many new songs.
- The morning worship, while contemporary, is definitely more conservative in style, and in length of standing. A hymn should generally be part of the morning worship.
- Certain songs are ministry only songs.

3.5. Clapping and Demonstrative Actions

The Holy Spirit and the song determine when the team does what actions. Normally, if the song speaks of lifting hands, then all those not holding instruments should lift their hands. The same is true of clapping. A gentle suggestion or bowing or bending knees where the words speak of that is also visually encouraging for the congregation.

Singers - The main function of the singers on the Worship Team is to stand before the congregation as a visual inspiration to worship. Everything about their countenance should say, ***“The River of God’s Spirit is so gentle and refreshing today - jump in!”*** Singers are to radiate the joy and peace of Christ. The singers should also be free in their praise and worship, with the liberty to raise their hands, to dance, to kneel or to express other forms of worship. They serve as an example of worship and their example will be followed. The singers are there to support and encourage the congregation, inspiring the people to release their hearts and voices unto the Lord. Vocalists should give special attention to starting to sing when the team starts singing. It is not good enough if they miss some words or take a break or get lost in worship. They are there to present a well-polished presentation of worship facilitation.

If there are those who are not free to willingly participate in this way then perhaps this ministry is not for them at this stage.

3.6. When Mistakes are made

Mistakes will be made from time to time and these may sometimes put others in awkward positions. For instance, if the Worship Leader starts on the wrong song, the overhead projector operator and the entire team may be caught off guard. It is the function of the team when mistakes are made to follow the lead of the Worship Leader and do not look at the person who has made the mistake. You do not need to indicate to the congregation that it is not your fault. Do not even smile (unless you cannot help it); just continue as if nothing is wrong. Whenever there has been a change, get in touch with the Worship Leader and catch up with him. What does scripture say? “I will bless the LORD at all times” Psalm 34:1 - even when the Worship Leader goes off key, the pianist does not know the song, and the drummer

is too harsh! We must not allow ourselves to become distracted by the sincere but faltering efforts of the musicians or leaders. Be ready for some 'rocky' worship services, but remember that things are always turbulent when we are jarred out of our comfort zones and that they will improve!

3.6. Time Commitment

It is imperative that those who wish to play on Sunday are at the practice for that Sunday. "NO PRACTICE - NO PLAY" is the motto. If, for some reason, you are not able to make the practice please do not simply fail to be there. It is common courtesy to let the Worship Leader know in advance so that he can make alternative arrangements if necessary. Those who commit themselves to this ministry should also be available for team meetings and occasional workshops or seminars. Family members of participants need to recognize the time commitment required by each Family member, and be willing to release their family member for these commitments. All team members need to understand clearly, that to obtain excellence in the area of praise and worship, they will need to sacrifice time for both prayer and practice.

3.7. Punctuality

You are to ensure that you are punctual for all practices and meetings. You should be ready to sing or take up your instrument and play when the practice or service is meant to commence. A good rule of thumb is to be at the venue at least 10 minutes prior to the commencement of a practice. It is also imperative that as a member of the Worship Team as well as a worshipper, you set a good example by attending the Sunday services when you are not on team. You are expected to attend services other than when "on duty". You need to be a worshipper by nature. If you only attend services when you are "on duty", you may be asked to step down. What is equally important is that you arrive on time to participate in the corporate worship. If you cannot worship in and with the congregation, then maybe careful consideration to being on team should be given.

3.8. The Sound Desk

It is the function of the desk driver to carefully mix the sound ensuring correct balances and volumes. Church sound is peculiar in that, unlike concert mixing, the vocals have a little more throat than the instruments. However, the singers should not be heard too loudly over the sound system. We do not want to replace the sound of the congregation with the amplified voices of a chosen few.

The desk driver should also speak to the blends and variations during the practices making suggestions to the Worship Leader about the instrument and vocal arrangements. As he / she has the advantage of listening to the sound that comes through the sound system objectively they are able to pick up things that the Worship Leader will sometimes miss. It is their job to make appropriate suggestions from time to time as and when the need arises. His / her comments should be made to the Worship Leader or to the Worship Committee. The desk driver should not simply be fiddling with the desk settings and continually changing them during the service. It is imperative that the sound desk operator arrives earlier for practices and meetings to do the necessary set up in order for the team/ministry to begin punctually. Much commitment is required for this.

The responsibility for recording the message also falls to the desk driver. He / she must ensure that he / she has tapes available at all times and that such tapes are ready for recording. It is also his / her responsibility to ensure that the service is recorded onto a mini disk.

3.9. Dress Guidelines

Although it is not necessary for the Worship Team to dress formally for each meeting, dress must look good and contribute to the function as worship facilitators. Any sort of dress that takes the focus off of God and onto members of the team is inappropriate. They should not over dress or under dress. The dress code is smart, clean and tidy at all times (although not always formal). The following clothes should be avoided: -

Tight fitting jeans (unless a blouse / top worn hang over the crutch line)

Low cleavage lines and dress / skirt lines above the knees

No open Midriffs

No dress / apparel should ever draw attention to yourself

If the Worship Team leaders wish to use uniforms or common dress patterns for a particular week or for a period of time, then it is anticipated that each member of the team will follow the dress pattern. Overlooking any of the above criteria may result in a team member being asked to go home and change or else stand down from the worship team for that particular evening.

Lastly, and of tremendous importance in any ministry, in order to serve on the Worship Team there are certain rights that need to be surrendered as we bring our talents and lay them before the throne of God. We surrender: -

The right to be offended
The right to self promotion
The right to self pity
The right to self justification
The right to be understood
The right to criticize
The right to having my own way

Failure to surrender these rights is the outward expression of inward **PRIDE**, the fruit of an unclean heart. Mark 7:22-23 tells us that pride is a sinful thing that resides in the heart of man. Being proud is the opposite of being **SELFLESS**, and contrary to the example of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who was completely humble despite enjoying a ministry of immense power.

Indeed, our response needs to be,

***‘ALL TO JESUS I SURRENDER
ALL TO HIM I FREELY GIVE
I WILL EVER LOVE AND TRUST HIM
IN HIS PRESENCE DAILY LIVE’***

***“Holiness, holiness is what I long for
Holiness is what I need
Holiness, holiness is what You want from me***

***Take my heart and form it
Take my mind transform it
Take my will conform it
To Yours, To Yours Oh Lord”***

We trust that these encouragement's will ensure that the best opportunity is given for the

highest use of the musical gift that God has entrusted to the our Church. It is with a commitment that we: -

Honor God

Make praise and worship a continuous way of life each day - seven days a week!

Be constantly prepared to pay the price, whatever it takes

Refuse to be mediocre but constantly striving to break through into new ground

Totally commit to each member of the team in love, respect and prayer

Ensure the highest possible standard of worship for the congregation and that we get to know the congregation well with regard to their problems, needs, strengths and weaknesses so that we can minister to their needs accordingly

Seek to evangelize the lost bringing glory to God.

It is only as we bring our best to the altar that we can expect the richest anointing of God to fall. It is our prayer that such will be your experience both in terms of your private life and as well as your public ministry.

Thank you for your tremendous sacrifice in this regard and may it be that as you uphold these standards set in your ministry, that you discover the joy and privilege of soaring on wings as eagles.