

Bridgeway Church



Praise + Worship Ministry Music / Vocals Guide Manual

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1.0 Acknowledgments.

We give credit to many ministries and church organizations for the useage of this material. Namely: Harrisonburg First Church of the Nazarene and Church Fuel.

While no two ministries adopt and have the same protocols, we do value and appreciate their expressed written permission so that we didn't have to create an entire system from the ground up. Instead, we have utilized similar items to have a Manual that is easy to understand, clear in information, and integrated for all who are a part of the Praise and Worship Team.

If you have any questions or don't understand any part of this Manual, we encourage and invite you to contact the Lead Pastor or Worship Director/ Leader/Pastor for clarification. This Manual, while broader in scope, points to the fact that much remains very fluid. We recognize that many details and specifics may not be found here. The chief goal of this Manual is to provide a guideline of ministry operations, scope, and vision.

Thank you for being a part of our Praise and Worship Team here at Bridgeway Church. We could not do this without you, your heart and passion for God, and for your willingness to share your gifts and skills for the betterment of the church.

2.0 The Ministry of Praise + Worship, and the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor.

The Ministry of Praise + Worship is among the most essential and important ministries in the life of the church. Not only are abilities and skills usually developed over years of playing and training, but it is a front-line ministry of the church that is seen on a regular, consistent basis. That is:

- Typically, musicians and vocalists, serving in the church, have played and sung for years before activity and integration into a church Praise + Worship Team began. Thus, it is an art and a skill.
- By “front-line” we mean that the Praise + Worship Team is witnessed by all who attend and come to a church worship service. With stage presence being a major part of the experience, we cannot overstate the importance of those who participate on the team and engage the congregation week in and week out.

All who serve and work on the Praise + Worship Team must realize the critical role they play in the Sunday Worship Service experience. More importantly than keys and notes, rhythm and timing, is the attitude and heart that you bring to rehearsals, to the run-throughs, to special services and events, and to the Worship Service itself, of course.

Regardless of where people are in their belief and faith (or lack thereof, if they are unsaved), people will feed off and pick up on what is flowing through the Worship Service and through those leading it. We can't expect people to be led to the Throne of God and experience Him in a profound way if our Praise + Worship Team is distracted, experiencing issues, or is unprepared.

To be clear, and so that we have a unified understand to begin with: **Church Praise + Worship (music and song) can no longer be clearly defined.** Just 60 to 70 years ago, most church music was the same. The local churches sang many of the same hymns and most churches utilized the same type of instrumentation.

The modern church of the 21st Century has seen **incredible expansion** in its instruments, vocal pieces, and presentation. There are dozens of genres and styles. Here are a few statements and definitions, provided to help all Praise + Worship Team Members:

Music Styles

There is not one style of Praise + Worship Music. There are local churches that dedicate themselves to only one style in order to define their type of church and reach a particular target group. Others elect to be more blended, which is the inclusion of two or more styles. What matters the most is how a ministry philosophy is built on the concept of what is best for the local church setting and the community in which it ministers and serves. No one should be ostracized or bypassed, yet, in order to reach the most, following God's plan and will is necessary.

The Church Venue

There is no doubt that church venues are as diverse as Praise + Worship styles. Some churches are traditional facilities with stained glass, pews, and gorgeous pulpits. Other church venues resemble a warehouse or a coffee shop, with chairs and theatrical lighting. Still others gather and meet in homes and in people's basements.

The church venue often helps create the backdrop for the music style, but not in every setting. The Vision of the church is an important part of what style the church is engaged in, and most often, this flows from the Vision of the Lead Pastor who communicates this with the Leadership Team and Staff, and works it out with the church body. Together, with God's help and leadership, we take this to help create and sustain an atmosphere for communication, relationship with God and others, and effective ministry.

The Heart of a Worshiper

Worship is not a new idea. We find that worship was a part of the Temple in the Old Testament, and certainly with David, worship was prevalent. It continued through the earliest days of the 1st Century Church and has extended into our current setting.

John and Charles Wesley were instrumental of their inclusion of song and music in the Great Awakening. This brought a new form of singing to the church: *the modern hymn*. While we learn of hymns in the Word of God itself, even as far back as the Old Testament, there is a difference between *biblical hymns* and *the modern hymn*.

More important than the songs we play and sing is the heart of the worshiper. The word, worship, when broken down and parsed into its smallest component, literally means “worth-ship” or “to place value and work on/in something.”

In this case, it is our expression of God’s worth and value to us. True worship can never be performed. Our Worship is always played and sung to an audience of One: The God of Heaven and earth. Despite the genre or style, our Worship is always for our Lord, and it is our Lord that speaks through the Worship to build up and encourage His others. Therefore, it’s no one’s “job” or “responsibility” to “get others to worship.” Rather, we worship God and give our best to Him, and in turn, His spirit flows through the event/service/worship time and impacts others.

3.0 Training the Worship Team.

Training those who minister through instrument, song, and vocals can be done and executed on several levels. Most importantly, it is best to seek out some level of training that challenges beyond raw talent and exposes the musician or singer to a world beyond their background and comfort level. Many musicians and singers are knowledgeable and familiar with various genres, keys, cords, notes, and types of music. The world of music is broad and vast. It holds unlimited possibilities to those who will explore.

Personal Experience

Experience is always a great teacher. On some level, every person who ministers through music, song, and vocals will be giving a part of their ability and skill that has been developed through many years.

Some have been using their gifts since childhood. These experiences can produce results that time in a classroom or lab can never emulate or produce.

Conferences, Skill Summits, Workshops (Continued Development)

There are many opportunities both locally and regionally that are offered to help further your abilities, gifts, and skills as a musician and vocalist. We do hope to provide some through hosting them here at Bridgeway Church. We also hope to capitalize on others that are regional, where we can send individuals, groups, or the whole team to grow and learn together. Our Pastoral Staff and the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor will keep you posted of any opportunities we find that seem possible.

Musicians

The number and type of musicians will vary, from time to time and from week to week. These will be communicated as the needs of the ministry, the service, and the church fluctuate, and to allow for a rotation of instrumentalists and vocalists. This promotes action and activity, on the team, while also giving our musicians time off.

Our schedule for those assigned, in any given week, will be shared via Planning Center. We do ask all who are scheduled for a particular week to respond within 24 hours of schedule release, so the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor who is scheduling people, music, songs, etc. can make edits as needed based on confirmations or declines.

Musicians must be committed to attend rehearsals, run-throughs, and Worship. If there is an emergency or a scheduling difficulty that arises after a confirmation is given, please notify the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor or the Staff Member filling in as soon as possible. Based on the week and what is planned, they will make adjustments as needed to ensure a consistent, godly Worship Celebration.

Vocalists

There are many types of vocal skills and ranges in the church. Some vocalists sing more effectively with 1 or 2 others, while some sing better with a larger group that covers deeper harmonies.

One of the essential items for all vocalists is to be able to hear themselves and listen well.

The vocalists in the church project much in the Worship Service. They are front and center, on stage, and this in and of itself is a responsibility. We ask our vocalists to remember this, and to have a Christ-like, learning, teachable, team-focused attitude and demeanor.

Our schedule for those assigned, for any given week, will be shared via Planning Center. We do ask all who are scheduled for a particular week to respond within 24 hours of schedule release, so the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor who is scheduling people, music, songs, etc. can make edits as needed, based on confirmations.

Vocalists must be committed to attend rehearsals, run-throughs, and Worship. If there is an emergency or a scheduling difficulty that arises after a confirmation is given, please notify the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor as soon as possible. Based on the week and what is planned, they will make adjustments as needed to ensure a consistent, godly Worship Celebration.

Expectations for Rehearsals/Run-Throughs

- Start on time. The plan will be ready before rehearsal begins and will be available on Planning Center 48 hours prior to rehearsal.
- The goal is to be thorough in rehearsal and to be efficient in the Sunday run-through. The church is not to be stiff and stuffy, yet, we do have multiple people working on a schedule for the purpose of leading the Worship Service (or other event the church is hosting).
- Stop on time. We realize most everyone has other life and family responsibilities. To stop on time is important to us, and we will always do our best to honor it.
- Be friendly and have fun. Speaks for itself. This will carry over to the Worship Celebration or Service, and if rehearsal and run-through was hard, heavy, or hindering – it will show itself in Worship. This doesn't mean there won't be issues to work through and problems to overcome, it just means that we have to be very cautious and prayerful.

General Rules/Regulations

- If you miss rehearsal the week you are scheduled, the final decision on whether you are allowed to play or sing, that week, will be made by the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor or the Staff Member filling in.
- Have a good attitude and allow the Lord to use you. Let the Lord flow through you, and smile.
- Once rehearsal or run-through begins, please keep focused on helping us get through it, with as few distractions as possible. Please remember: the team is 12+ strong on any given week. This includes musicians, vocalists, and AVL support.
- Please treat any/all church instrumentation and equipment as if it was your own. Keep it clean and orderly, as well as your stage area.

4.0 Organizing the Worship Team

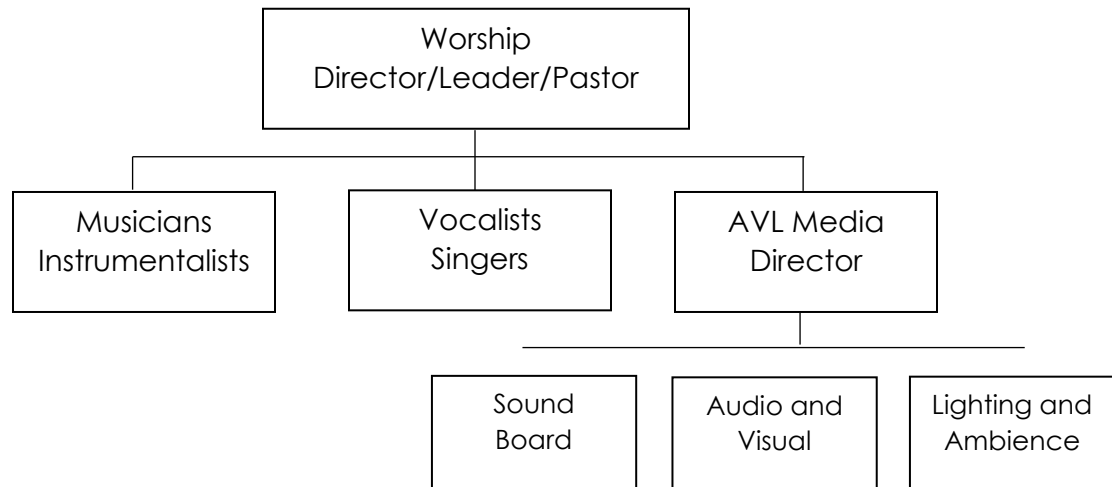
Please note: Organizing and maintaining the Praise, Worship, and AVL Team is a detailed responsibility that requires a gifted and godly leader who directs a skilled and willing team. With our belief that we are “better together” and that no one is an island to themselves, we invite your input and help on an ongoing basis. However, we also highlight the importance of having leadership that provides direction and guidance.

The Worship Director/Leader/Pastor

The responsibility and role of the Worship Director/Leader/Pastor is to recruit, train, and oversee the Praise, Worship, and AVL Areas of Bridgeway Church. He/She is directly responsible leading the song and vocal portion of the Worship Service and any additional areas assigned, such as special events that require music and song. They are also responsible for coordination of music, overall scheduling, and Planning Center notifications.

This position reports directly to the Lead Pastor and ministers and works to help us fulfill our Mission and Vision.

The Flowchart for this Ministry:



5.0 Serving and Working in the Church.

Each member of the church, including the Lead Pastor, Staff Members, Board Members, Leaders and Teachers, Members of the Praise, Worship, and AVL Team, and all others are servants who work for the betterment of the Body of Christ in the context of the local church.

This is our great honor and privilege: to be used by God to further His mission to the world.

It is one of the most solemn requirements of each and every person who is active, engaged, and involved to see themselves as a servant who uses the abilities, gifts, and passions that God has given them for the benefit of the church. The Praise, Worship, and AVL Team is no exception to this mandate. A commitment to this team is a commitment to the betterment of the team as a whole. By signing up and remaining on this team, we expect each member to put the ministry and service of the team, as a whole, ahead of any individual goals or objectives they desire to accomplish by being a member.

6.0 Miscellaneous Items and Copyright Guidelines.

In matters of copyright and expressed written permissions, we strive to always ensure we are upholding copyright law and giving credit where it is required. From time to time, you may be given tapes, CDs, file links, or other media that could be copyrighted material. In these instances, we have ensured that there is no infringement prior to your receiving of such materials.

U.S. Copyright Law prohibits the unauthorized copying of “original works of authorship” and issues fines/penalties for violations. In some documented cases, \$10,000.00 - \$25,000.00 fines have been levied. Owners and creators of copyrighted material are entitled to the royalties and fair value of their original content. There are 2 ways churches can violate this (sometimes without realizing it):

- Copying music (printed or recorded) without licensing or permission.
- Showing videos/movies without authorization.

Bridgeway Church takes our licensing very seriously, and we are registered with CCLI (Christian Copyrighting License International). Through our licensing and annual renewal, we are covered for a litany of items and functions, including:

- The usage of music and lyrics, including the access, display, and print of said music and lyrics through Song Select and any other CCLI approved lyric/song database. Through our CCLI licensing, we have access to over 150,000 songs, publishers, and writers.
- The sharing of music and lyrics, electronically, for preparation and rehearsal purposes, of those involved in the Praise and Worship Ministry.
- Video clips and Certified Movies that are covered and listed under the CVLI license. This includes production films and online media, freely accessed or paid-for content.

7.0 Music and Song Resources.

In the local church, the Praise and Worship ministry is more than just a time set aside each week as worshipers come together. It is more than printed notes on a page or a song that is sung. Many churches now have staff, part-time or full-time, to minister, teach, lead, and organize the worship ministry. Some churches have detailed Worship Arts Departments with levels of multi-media and national television ministries.

So there are some questions that you may be asking:

- How do these things impact me?
- Where can I find the time to sort through music and all the resources to become better in my gifting?

There are resources available. The Webster Dictionary defines the word, **“resources,”** as: *a source of supply or support; an available means; a natural source of wealth or revenue, a source of information or expertise.* The term comes from a root word meaning: “to relieve, to rise again.”

The ultimate resource for the Praise and Worship Ministry is God's Word. It is our life instruction manual, and it is a songbook. The Word instructs us to: **“Sing a new song to the Lord!”**

- Give a brand new song that you have prepared as a gift of praise (Psalm 33, v.3).
- The song of our heart turns from the things of the world and toward God (Psalm 40, vv.1-3).
- Be authentic. Feel free to change the ways, the wordings, the harmonies, the styles that you are familiar with. Move out of your comfort zone and explore new ways of praise directed to God (see Psalm 98, vv.1-6).
- Sing a new song of expression in your everyday life (see Psalm 149, vv.1-9)

Some recommended resources for gleaning, reading, and further study:

The Word of God (read it daily)

A Heart of Worship, by LaMar Boschman

A Worship Filled Life, by Marcos Witt

Blended Worship, by Robert E. Webber

Can We Do That?, by Andy Stanley and Ed Young

Exploring Worship, by Bob Sorge

The Air I Breathe, by Louie Giglio

The Unquenchable Worshipper, by Matt Redman

Whatever Happened to Worship, A.W. Tozer

Magazines:

Holiness Today (Church of the Nazarene, www.nazarene.org)

Outreach Magazine (www.outreach.com)