

LIVING ROCK CHURCH WORSHIP HANDBOOK AND COVENANT 2019

Madeline Sorensen, April 2, 2019



Philosophy of Worship

What is worship?

A. W. Tozer said, “The primary purpose of God in creation was to prepare moral beings spiritually and intellectually capable of worshipping Him”. Worship should be our natural response as those who have been saved by God and recognize our place in His creation. Jesus told us that the true worshipers would worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth (John 4:23). To worship “in the Spirit” means that it is not merely an outward action, but a spiritual reality in the hearts of believers, brought about by the Holy Spirit who dwells there. This naturally leads to an outward expression. To worship “in truth” means that the worship is genuine and based in the truth of who God is. Anything we do can be worship if we are offering God our best through it and it is done in the Spirit and in truth. Romans 12:1 (NIV) says, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”

Why/how should we worship through music?

Singing truths about God allows us to engage with them emotionally, intellectually, and physically, and also to cement them in our minds. It is of utmost importance that the words we sing are biblical and never misrepresent God. By stating these things aloud, we give Him honor and we also encourage ourselves and others in the truth. Colossians 3:16-17 (NIV) instructs us, “Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.” Being reminded of these things can and should often lead to an emotional response, but our worship is still totally worthwhile even if we do not experience an emotional “high”. We know that God has still been glorified and that He is close to us even when we do not tangibly feel His presence.

Despite division over worship styles, what matters is that the words sung are true and pleasing to Him, and that the attitudes we convey are reverent and humble. In leading worship, it is important to consider the people being led and the types of music they will best connect with. However, our attitudes as churchgoers should be focused on giving God glory through our singing, rather than the consumeristic mindset that asks to be fed the songs we like the best.

What is the role of the worship leader and team?

There have been individuals leading people in worship at least since the time of Moses. 2 Chronicles 31:2 describes how the priests and Levites were each assigned duties, including “to give thanks and to sing praises at the gates of the Lord’s dwelling” (NIV). King David was also a worship leader, encouraging his people to praise God: “Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him” (Psalm 33:1, NIV).

Probably the most difficult aspect of the “contemporary worship” format is that the worship leader and band are on display before the congregation, and this can feel like a

performance. Our prayer should always be that by watching the worship team lead the songs, the congregation is inspired by their joy and sincerity, is given an example of how to freely sing and move in worship, and is never distracted either by their skill or their lack of it. The team should create an environment where the congregation will want to join with them in worship and be just as engaged as they are.

Application

We strive for quality in each step of the worship-leading process, submitting it to God in prayer. We should come to rehearsal as prepared as possible, having learned the songs and practiced as needed. We are mindful of how we appear on stage and seek not to be a distraction in any way. The clothes we wear should not be attention-grabbing, our attitude should be humble, and we should sing and play in a way that is easy for the congregation to follow: well-rehearsed but not showy.

As worship leaders, it is vital to have a relationship with God outside of church. Our love for God will show when we lead, and we will be able to worship more genuinely because we are grateful for what He's done for us. Our role is to spur the congregation on to praise God. We can connect with them with eye contact and an open posture. Nonetheless, we should feel free to express joy and love for God without being overly concerned with what the congregation thinks of us.

Although worship can be a nuanced topic, it really comes down to this: We, God's creation, affirming in spirit and truth Who He is by bringing him our best offering.

Expectations

Mission

Living Rock Church's mission is: Making disciples that love, learn, grow, and give glory to God. We love others as God loved us (1 John 4:19). We actively seek to learn from His Word (Colossians 1:28). We allow the Spirit to work in us to cause us to grow (1 Peter 2:2). We give generously with the recognition that everything we have belongs to God (Acts 20:35).

Those who serve on the worship team are acting as disciples and are expected to pursue this mission in their own lives. They should demonstrate a genuine and personal relationship with Jesus.

Values

The songs we sing should be: biblical, humble, and God-glorifying.

Our attitude as we lead worship and work together as a team should be: authentic, humble, mindful of our roles as leaders, and striving for excellence.

Commitment

Church attendance: Team members are not required to be members of Living Rock Church. However, it is important that Living Rock is their church home and that they attend regularly even when they are not serving on the worship team. An exception is made for contract musicians who fill in on needed positions.

Scheduling: Each team member plays once a month on a designated team. Those who are willing may be scheduled to play twice a month, or to fill in as needed.

Cancellations: If you are unable to play on a given week, advance notice of at least a week is appreciated. Last-minute cancellations should only occur in case of emergency or sickness.

Flexibility: With changes in schedule sometimes necessary, your willingness to play on a different week than usual is appreciated, though not required.

Capability: Vocalist must demonstrate accurate pitch, a pleasant tone, ability to differentiate between a solo voice and a blending voice, and must be able to sing a harmony part, preferably by ear. Instrumentalists must demonstrate ability to read and play from chord charts and/or lead sheets, to play in multiple keys and have diverse knowledge of chords, and to play in different time signatures with varying rhythmic patterns.

Before You Serve

Audition Process: Those interested in joining the worship team must attend an audition. Auditions will be held with Maddie and at least one other experienced music leader in

attendance, to determine if the placement is a good fit. If there are no current openings, you may schedule an audition and be considered as a substitute or in the future when an opening becomes available. Come to your audition ready to sing or play some prepared and unprepared music and share about your relationship with Jesus.

Covenant Signing: Existing and new team members will be required to sign the covenant on the following page annually.

While You Serve

Preparation: Vocalists and instrumentalists are expected to come to rehearsal familiar with the songs. Please practice songs at least once (or more if needed in order to be as prepared as possible) before rehearsal. This allows rehearsal to be much shorter and respects everyone else's time.

Resources: Songs will be posted to Planning Center at least 4-6 days before rehearsal. Each weekly plan includes links to YouTube videos of each song and chord charts to enable you to prepare. Please communicate with Maddie if you are unable to access Planning Center or don't know how to use it. Maddie also makes a Spotify playlist of each week's songs for those who use Spotify.

Punctuality: Please arrive at Saturday rehearsal at 6:30 pm, and on Sunday mornings at 8:00 am. Drummers should arrive on Saturdays at 5:45 pm to set up drums.

Song choices: Many factors are taken into consideration when choosing songs. If you have a concern with a song choice, please come to Maddie privately. If you have been asked to choose songs, resources are available to help you find song options.

Attire: Casual attire is permitted, but please avoid wearing ripped jeans, shorts, or t-shirts with questionable words or images. Keep modesty in mind.

Stage presence: Keep a relaxed posture and try to look at the congregation and not just your music stand if possible. We are up front to engage with the church as we lead them. Feel free to smile and raise your hands or move in a natural way (being mindful of avoiding being showy or distracting). Avoid making faces or saying anything if you make a mistake.

Worship Arts Covenant

1. I believe in and follow Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior and am actively pursuing Him.
2. I affirm the truth of the Bible as the Word of God.
3. I commit to attending Living Rock Church regularly (contract musicians excluded).
4. I commit to serving monthly (or as often as I have agreed with Maddie to serve) and being mindful of limiting cancellations and communicating in a timely manner.
5. I will prepare for rehearsals by listening to songs and practicing ahead of time. I will be on-time for rehearsals and Sunday morning.
6. I will strive for excellence in my singing or playing.
7. I will be a team player and act kindly and respectfully to all others on the team. In case of conflict, I will do my best to communicate directly and privately with the person I have been offended by/have offended. I will avoid gossip.
8. I will respect those leading rehearsals/services and listen to instruction.
9. I will do my best to lead the congregation by being an example of genuine worship and avoiding causing distractions during service.
10. I will cultivate an attitude of worship in all of my life and take seriously my role as a leader and example of Jesus.

Signature

Date