



first baptist
WORSHIP MINISTRY

Worship Ministry Handbook

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First Baptist Worship Ministry Handbook

Version 1.3

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Welcome to the Worship Ministry

Thank You!

We are pleased and grateful that you have expressed an interest in the Worship Ministry here at First Baptist Church. We believe that worship is one of the primary responsibilities, if not the defining characteristic, of a believer in Christ. Therefore, we treat God's requirement to worship Him as a *priority* in our lives and lifestyles.

Why Do People Get Involved In Worship Ministry?

Some people get involved in the Worship Ministry because that is where their abilities are found. They are skilled musicians and technicians or have been blessed with quality singing voices. It seems like a natural place to minister. Others just have a desire to serve and are looking for a place to "plug in."

We believe that the basis for involvement should begin with a sense of God's *calling*. Do you believe that at this point in your life, God has called you to lead others into worship through your involvement in the Worship Ministry? Once that question is addressed, then your spiritual giftedness, natural talents and developed abilities will help clarify your role in the Worship Ministry.

What Worship Opportunities Exist?

The Worship Ministry facilitates worship each week using a variety of musicians and singers, as well as technical artists for sound, media, lights and camera.

Worship Choir

The Worship Choir is the central focus of our Worship Ministry. As the largest and most diverse group, it is a powerful testimony to how God uses people of various talents, backgrounds and ages to exalt His name in worship and praise.

Praise Band

The Praise Band is an auditioned group of musicians that primarily leads worship at the 9:30 Contemporary Service as well as plays with the choir and orchestra as needed in all of the services.

Praise Team

The Praise Team is an auditioned group of Worship Choir members that helps lead worship at the 9:30 Contemporary Service.

Orchestra

The Orchestra leads in worship on Sunday mornings and joins the Worship Choir for special music and events. Moderate ability helpful.

Production Team

The Production Team creatively utilizes multi-media in our weekly services. Areas include Audio, Computer/Video, Lighting, Camera and Staging. Serving on the team requires an interview with the Associate Minister of Worship.

Featured Music

At some services we will be privileged to have featured music provided by individuals or groups. Featured singers and musicians will be asked to "sound check" before the day of their special. ***It is necessary*** to be a member of the Worship Ministry in some way to be placed on the *Featured Music*

Rotation List. Interviews may be required of those who have not already been through the interview process. When placed on the *Featured Music Rotation List*, you will receive a notice to share on a specific day. You will also receive instructions and guidelines for preparation of your special. Those *not* on the special music rotation may also share by informing and scheduling an interview through the Worship Pastor.

Expanded Worship Arts

The Worship Ministry is also open to other forms of fine art and technical talents such as painting, sculpting, interpretive dance, drama, film & video production and more. If you have ideas or know someone with special gifts and talents to be used by the Lord, please contact the Worship Ministry office to discuss the possibility of worship involvement.

Discovering Your Call – Are You Called to Worship Ministry?

The worship ministry is one of the most vital ministries in the local church and should be viewed as a sacred office. Discovering your call begins with a *desire* to be used by God to impact the local church *and* the community around you. To examine your ministry calling, refer to the following four “voices” that can help provide a level of guidance.

1) THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT (inward impression)

You always know when God is speaking to you because His prompting will burn within you.

Galatians 5:25, *“Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.”*

2) THE VOICE OF REASON (common sense)

We do not always use common sense when making decisions. For example, commonsense would involve looking at your skills relative to the area of ministry you are interested in.

3) THE VOICE OF FRIENDS (trusted friends)

If you surround yourself with believers that have your best interests at heart, they will provide the necessary guidance you need.

Proverbs 11:14, *“For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure;”*

Proverbs 12:15, *“The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice;”*

Proverbs 15:22, *“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.”*

4) THE VOICE OF OPPORTUNITY (circumstances)

Be aware of the doors the Lord will open for you. He specializes in orchestrating circumstances around you so that you can see His provision. Paul writes of opportunity in 1 Corinthians 16:9, *“because a great door for effective work has opened to me...”* and Colossians 4:3, *“And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ.”* Remember that vision precedes provision!

Purpose of the Worship Ministry

Our primary purpose is to give glory to our Lord, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. He is the Alpha and Omega, the God of the Universe who is to be the whole purpose of our lives. He is worthy of all of our worship, and at First Baptist, the responsibility lies with the Worship Ministry to ***create an atmosphere in which people can be led by the Holy Spirit into an encounter with God.*** In short, we should be a place that allows for ***Transformation***, which is the purpose of First Baptist. Working as a whole, the Worship Ministry brings several elements to our service of worship including music, but also reinforcement of the spoken message, scripture reading, drama, visual arts and media. This should not be a responsibility that is taken lightly, nor with mediocrity. We want to bring God the best we have – that is what we call

excellence. In the context of the Worship Ministry, our best would include all of the talents and skills He has blessed us with, time devoted to rehearsals, practicing and learning at home, and leading worship services with a genuine heart to glorify God.

Worship Philosophy

Music is an essential part of worship. Psalm 81:1-4 says, “*Sing praises to God, our strength. Sing to the God of Jacob. Sing! Beat the tambourine. Play the sweet lyre and the harp. Blow the ram’s horn at new moon, and again at full moon to call a festival! For this is required by the decrees of Israel; it is a regulation of the God of Jacob*” (NLT). Music is something that is not only encouraged for worship in the Bible, but it is commanded. It is a very valuable tool for leading people into worship. But worship *music* should never be thought of as the entirety of worship itself. Worship is to be an expression of love and praise toward God that comes out from our entire lives, not just our songs. “*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 act of worship*” (Romans 12:1 NIV). We are to live our lives for the glory of God – this is true worship. Someone once said, “Everything we do is either an act of worship or an act of idolatry.” The truth is, many people tend to view music as the only form of worship we offer to God. We sing songs and worship God, and then we go home and live our lives like normal. But this is not what God has commanded. Everything we do can be worship. If we wash the dishes or walk the dog to the glory of God, even that is our offering of worship.

But our purpose as a Worship Ministry in the wide spectrum of worship is to glorify God in our gatherings and events to *create an atmosphere in which people can be led by the Holy Spirit into an encounter with God*. At the same time, our worship is not just during worship gatherings. The very acts of submitting our talents to God, serving others in worship and practicing at home are worship.

How Do I Join The Worship Ministry?

If you are reading this handbook, then you may have already begun the process of joining the group of musicians, singers, artists and technicians that make up the First Baptist Worship Ministry! The *Worship Ministry Handbook* and the *Worship Ministry Interview* (for Praise Team/Band/Production) are important steps that fit into the process of becoming a Worship Ministry member. Those desiring to serve as sound, video, lighting or camera technicians will also need to read and familiarize themselves with the concepts and information in their appropriate materials as well.

This handbook provides you with *qualifications* with which to examine yourself, gives you a basic look at *how we approach worship*, and provides you with the *procedures we follow* as we strive for order and excellence in serving and worshipping the Lord. It also lays out the *scriptural foundations* of your role and performance in the Worship Ministry.

Non-Auditioned Ministry Areas

Worship Choir

There is no audition to join. The Worship Choir is open to any adult. Even high school students in grades 10 and up can sing as long as they are actively involved with our Youth Arts Ministry. All participants are expected to adhere to the philosophy and scriptural directives set forth in this handbook and to sign the *Worship Ministry Commitment Form*. A short “get-acquainted” interview may be requested as well.

Orchestra

There is no audition to join. However, a moderate ability on your instrument is expected. All participants are expected to adhere to the philosophy and scriptural directives set forth in this

handbook and to sign the Worship Ministry Commitment Form. A short “get-acquainted” interview may be requested as well.

Auditioned Ministry Areas

Praise Team

This is an auditioned, small group of singers that helps to lead worship in our 9:30 Contemporary Service. Please see the requirements listed in this handbook.

Praise Band

This is an auditioned group that helps to lead worship in our 9:30 Contemporary Service and plays for various other special music. Please see the requirements listed in this handbook.

Production Team

Hands-on Training for the Production Team will involve *observing* a mentor technician during services for several weeks. When you are ready, you will begin running sound, media, lights, or camera *under supervision* of a mentor technician for several more weeks. After such time it will be up to the discretion of the Worship Pastor as to when individuals will begin to participate during services. Eventually, you will be placed on a regular rotation schedule.

Worship Choir

Welcome to the Worship Choir and more importantly, welcome to the world of being a “lead worshipper.” We believe that God has a specific purpose for your life and how He has gifted you. Ephesians 4 teaches us that God has redeemed us and gifted us to serve within the Body of Christ. What could be more fun than fulfilling the purpose that God has set you apart to do?

If you have not read the previous pages related to the purpose and philosophy of the Worship Ministry, then stop now and read that section first, then come back here.

“What is the Worship Leading Choir?”

We are a growing, constantly transitioning and emerging 21st century choir. In other words, this is not your father’s choir (or Oldsmobile). The form of today's choirs is a departure from much of the "traditional" aspects we have come to recognize.

- The emerging choir is not primarily about performance; it is primarily about worship.
- It's not about being slick; it is about passion.
- It's not about acquaintanceship; it is about family.
- It's not about momentary emotion; it is about eternal significance.
- It's not about competition; it is about servanthood.
- It doesn't view talent as primary; it does view character and faithfulness as primary.

The “Worship Leading Choir” stands before a congregation as a well-schooled, unified battalion, locking arms to humbly and boldly enter God's presence, realizing that every word that enthrones Jesus dethrones the enemy. When it sings, it is not to impress, but to inspire. Its audience is not the congregation; their joint audience is God Himself.

Expectations of a Worship Choir Member

Lifestyle

As a worship leader, it is important that you have a growing walk with Christ. Realizing each person is at a different point in their spiritual life, we all are called to become more like Christ each day and to “grow up” in the things of Christ. We must be careful in all areas of our lives because we serve in a very “high profile” ministry. Whether you know it or not, just by leading in worship each week, you represent this ministry, the congregation of First Baptist Church, and most importantly, the Lord Jesus in all aspects of your life and the way you conduct yourself. You are expected to live a life that brings honor to the name of Christ; after all, this is what worship is all about.

Personal Worship

You cannot lead someone to a place you have never been. It is also very difficult to lead someone to a place that you haven’t been in a while. The point here is that “personal worship precedes corporate worship”. It is very difficult to worship corporately if you never worship privately. You are encouraged to spend time during the week in personal worship.

Rehearsal Attendance

We must be accountable to each other regarding rehearsals. To not come to rehearsals and then expect to be fully prepared to lead in worship on Sunday morning or for a production makes little sense. We

value rehearsal attendance. As a member of the Worship Choir, you are expected to be at all rehearsals, performances, worship services, etc. Realizing situations will arise that will keep you away; we simply ask that you contact the Worship Ministry office so we can know how to minister and pray for you. You can contact us at worship@fbchnc.org or by calling 828.693.3493.

Worship Service Attendance

As stated above, it doesn't make much sense to say you feel called to a ministry and then not to carry out that calling. Understanding that situations do arise that could keep you from serving on a particular Sunday, you are expected to lead in worship every Sunday that you are able to serve. The church was created and designed by the Lord Jesus Christ to be a place of service for Christians. It's not a place to serve whenever it's convenient or "feels" right. If there is a Sunday you know you will be gone or unable to serve, just contact the Worship Ministry office and let us know. Again, we would love to know how to pray for you and minister to you, as you are away or sick.

Musical Ability

While being a great singer is not a prerequisite to be in the Worship Choir, there still must be a degree of musical ability to serve in this ministry. Nowhere in scripture does God call a person to serve in a specific area without first equipping them with the talents and resources they need. An ability to read music is not required. It helps but is in no way a necessity. You should be able to sing in key with the rest of the choir. You should be able to blend your voice with the rest of the choir. Don't worry, if this ever becomes a problem, we will tell you.

Passion for Worship

Possibly the most important requirement for you to be involved in this ministry is your passion for worship. You should have a heart for drawing near to God and leading others to do this as you practice it yourself. Music is such a small part of worship but can be so effective in impacting our overall worship experience. It is a very expressive, transparent, heartfelt way to express what our hearts want to say to the "Lover of our soul".

Servanthood

One of the most unique things about the Body of Christ is that it's the only organization in the world that encourages its members to think of others more highly than themselves. We can never know the full joy of Christ until we have begun to give ourselves away to others, just as Christ did for you and me. You are expected to serve others in this ministry. Jesus said whoever desires to be first must become last!

Team Player

This is an important aspect of leadership. You should be able to support, follow and trust the leadership of this church and this ministry. Part of being a team player means that if you ever come to a point of "mistrust" or have a question about a decision or action, you should discuss it with the leadership of that ministry. This does not mean that you should always agree with every decision that is made. However, the important thing is how you handle your disagreeing. Discussing it with other Worship Ministry members is never a good thing and ultimately hurts the entire group. The best thing to do is always bring any issue of disagreement to the leadership of the ministry.

Commitment to Excellence

Excellence is doing the very best you can with what you have. This is what we are committed to do. While we do not seek perfection, we are to be totally committed to excellence. Why would we bring

anything less before God than our very best? This commitment will affect the way we rehearse, lead, serve, love and live! As a member of this ministry, you should be committed to excellence!

Two-Service Commitment

We have three worship services on Sunday morning with two different styles and the Worship Ministry is unified in facilitating great worship in all of them. We do not let our own musical preferences affect our participation in a service that is not necessarily to our liking in style and form. Every Worship Choir member is asked to sing in two of the worship services on Sundays. Generally, most people will sing and stay for one and then sing and leave for the other. There are several different ways to work your Sunday morning schedule to effectively accomplish this. Just ask any veteran choir member and they will tell you how it can be done. Believe it or not, several of our members sing in all three of our Sunday morning services. If for some reason you cannot commit to two services, this *does not* automatically mean you cannot be in the Worship Choir. Please speak with the Worship Pastor if this is an issue.

Rehearsals for the Worship Choir

Rehearsals are held on Wednesday evenings in the Choir Room and/or Worship Center. They begin at 7:30p.m. and last until approximately 9:00p.m. Childcare is available for birth to grade 5.

Sunday Schedule

Prior to the 8:15 & 11:00 worship services on Sunday morning, we meet in the Choir Room to quickly run through any songs for that morning and prepare ourselves for worship.

Meeting times for Sunday Worship

8:00 a.m. for the 8:15 a.m. service in the Choir Room

9:25 a.m. for the 9:30 a.m. service in the Choir Loft/Worship Center

10:50 a.m. for the 11:00 a.m. service in the Choir Room

What To Wear

In the traditional services (8:15, 11:00) robes are worn. In the contemporary service (9:30) robes ARE NOT worn. Therefore, we should still be dressed appropriately to lead worship in this service.

Ladies

Knee length or longer skirts

No sleeveless outfits

Conservative jewelry

Pants are acceptable

No perfume or scented lotion (deodorant IS permitted) 😊

Men

Nice shirt (no t-shirts)

Slacks

No tie is necessary

No cologne or scented lotion (deodorant IS permitted) 😊

Orchestra

Welcome to the First Baptist Orchestra and congratulation! You are now a “lead worshipper.” We believe that God has a specific purpose for your life using the gifts He has given you. Ephesians 4 teaches us that God has redeemed us and gifted us to serve within the Body of Christ. What could be more fun than fulfilling the purpose that God has set you apart to do?

If you have not read the previous pages related to the purpose and philosophy of the Worship Ministry, then stop now and read that section first, then come back here.

The Worship Leading Orchestra stands before a congregation as a well-schooled, unified battalion, locking arms to both humbly and boldly enter into God's presence, realizing that every note that enthrones Jesus dethrones the enemy. When it plays, it is not to impress, but to inspire. Its audience is not the congregation but God Himself.

Expectations of an Orchestra Member

Lifestyle

As a worship leader, it is important that you have a growing walk with Christ. Realizing each person is at a different point in their spiritual life, we all are called to become more like Christ each day and to “grow up” in the things of Christ. We must be careful in all areas of our lives because we serve in a very “high profile” ministry. Whether you know it or not, just by leading in worship each week, you represent this ministry, the congregation of First Baptist Church, and most importantly, the Lord Jesus in all aspects of your life by the way you conduct yourself. You are expected to live a life that brings honor to the name of Christ; after all, this is what worship is all about.

Personal Worship

You cannot lead someone to a place you have never been. It is also very difficult to lead someone to a place that you haven't been in a while. The point here is that “personal worship precedes corporate worship”. It is very difficult to worship corporately if you never worship privately. You are encouraged to spend time during the week in personal worship.

Rehearsal Attendance

We must be accountable to each other regarding rehearsals. To not come to rehearsals and then expect to be fully prepared to lead in worship on Sunday morning or for a production make little sense. We value rehearsal attendance. As a member of the Orchestra, you are expected to be at all rehearsals, performances, worship services, etc. Realizing situations will arise that will keep you away; we simply ask that you contact the Worship Ministry office so we can know how to minister and pray for you. You can contact us at worship@fbchnc.org or by calling 828.693.3493.

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Musical Ability

Because of the requirements of each week's music, members of the band and orchestra should have an ability to read music and play at a strong high school level. If you have any questions please contact the Worship Ministry office. We will be glad to assist you.

Passion for Worship

Possibly the most important requirement for you to be involved in this ministry is your passion for worship. You should have a heart for drawing near to God and leading others to do this as you practice it yourself. Music is such a small part of worship but can be so effective in impacting our overall worship experience. It is a very expressive, transparent, heartfelt way to express what our hearts want to say to the "Lover of our soul".

Servanthood

One of the most unique things about the Body of Christ is that it's the only organization in the world that encourages its members to think of others more highly than themselves. We can never know the full joy of Christ until we have begun to give ourselves away to others, just as Christ did for you and me. You are expected to serve others in this ministry. Jesus said whoever desires to be first must become last!

Team Player

This is an important aspect of leadership. You should be able to support, follow and trust the leadership of this church and this ministry. Part of being a team player means if you ever come to a point of "mistrust" or have a question about a decision or action, you should take it to the leadership of that ministry. This does not mean that you should always agree with every decision that is made. However, the important thing is how you handle your "disagreeing." Discussing it with other Worship Ministry members is never a good thing and it ultimately hurts the entire group when handled in this way. The best thing to do is always bring any issue of "disagreement" to the leadership of the ministry.

Commitment to Excellence

The definition of excellence is "doing the very best you can with what you have." This is what we are committed to do. While we are not after perfection, we are to be totally committed to excellence. Why would we want to bring anything less before God than the very best we can do? This commitment will affect the way we rehearse, lead, serve, love and live! As a member of this ministry, you should be committed to excellence!

Rehearsals for the Orchestra

As a general rule, the orchestra plays in our services on the first, third and fifth Sundays of the month. We rehearse on the Wednesdays before each of those Sundays at 7:15pm in the Worship Center.

Sunday Schedule

Prior to the worship services on Sunday morning we will meet in the Worship Center to quickly run through any songs for that morning and have a time of prayer together to prepare ourselves for worship.

Meeting times for Sunday Worship

8:00 a.m. for the 8:15 a.m. service in the Worship Center

9:25 a.m. for the 9:30 a.m. service in the Worship Center

10:50 a.m. for the 11:00 a.m. service in the Worship Center

What To Wear

Even though we are not generally standing as we play, we should still be dressed appropriately to lead worship in the services.

Ladies

Knee length or longer skirts

No sleeveless outfits

Conservative jewelry

Pants are fine also

Men

Nice shirt (no t-shirts)

Slacks

No tie is necessary

Praise Team, Praise Band & Production Team

Worship Ministry Interview

To serve on the Praise Team or Band, you will need to participate in a *Worship Ministry Interview*. During the interview we will explore your *calling, background* and *leadership role* as part of the Worship Ministry. We will highlight the *requirements* and *other considerations* defined in this handbook as well as the purpose and vision of the Worship Ministry. The interview is also important to the Worship Pastor in exploring your spiritual gifts as well as your musical or technical experience and skills.

Your interview will incorporate the following components:

- A discussion of the *Worship Ministry Handbook*. Bring your handbook to your interview.
- A discussion of the *Worship Ministry Information & Commitment Form*. (See Appendix A)

Please fill out this form and bring it to your interview.

- A discussion regarding your ministry calling, spiritual walk, and background.
- A demonstration of vocal, instrumental or technical ability and suitability. (See Appendix B, C or D)

Musicians are expected to bring their instrument. Vocalist should prepare one song to sing without accompaniment. Along with God's leading, the information gathered from the interview enables the Worship Pastor to determine how you might fit into the ministry.

Praise Team/Band/Production Team Requirements

In any area we use our God-given gifts and abilities, there are certain requirements that help us excel under that particular role in the Body of Christ. We ask you to *closely examine yourself* to see if the Praise Team/Band is the *appropriate area* in which to use your gifts. You must...

1. Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
2. Demonstrate an honest, authentic desire to live a life that is honoring to Jesus.
3. Be a member of First Baptist.
4. Regularly attend weekend services at First Baptist.
5. Demonstrate appropriate musical or technical ability and fit.
6. For the Praise Team, be an active member of the Worship Ministry.

A Personal Relationship With Jesus Christ

It is impossible for us to lead others in worship if we are not worshipers ourselves. Since Praise Team members provide an example of and create an atmosphere for worship, one must know Christ to participate.

Demonstrate a Life That Is Honoring To Jesus

The Praise Team is a leadership-type ministry – not more important than other ministries, but certainly more visible. Because of this, we are more *accountable* in our life and behavior. We approach our ministry involvement as leaders, knowing that our way of life will be “considered by others.” This involves a commitment to being an example and a witness in your attitude, appearance, and behavior. *Ephesians 4:1 “As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.”*

If at any time during your Praise Team involvement, should you feel that your life is not reflecting well on Christ or His church, we ask that you *voluntarily step down* from the Praise Team. At the same time,

you must know that the Worship Pastor will not hesitate to ask you to step down in such situations. We do this for your benefit and encourage you to seek council with a member of the First Baptist pastoral staff or other believer in working to *restore your fellowship* with Christ, the Worship Ministry and the church body. Our goal is restoration, not condemnation. We all go through times when we need to work through issues and find a place where we can be restored back into ministry.

Regularly Attend First Baptist Church

You must be a *faithful participant* in the life of this congregation as demonstrated by your *attendance and involvement*, regularly attending worship gatherings and other church events. (*Hebrews 10:24-25* “*And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*”) You must also be a member of First Baptist Church. As one serving in ministry at First Baptist, you also must support and be in general agreement with the First Baptist doctrinal statement, which is the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. If you need a copy of this, let the church staff know.

Appropriate Musical or Technical Ability and Fit

As a Praise Team or Band member, you need to be skilled and talented enough to follow along at the level of the other participants. In addition, you must be good fit in style, blend, personality and skills as determined by the Worship Pastor. While you can review the personal evaluation forms at the back of this handbook, here are some general guidelines:

Musicians need to be able to:

- Perform well with others
- Learn new material quickly
- Demonstrate suitable ability and style on an instrument
- Follow lead sheets and chord charts
- Be a team player at all times

Singers need to be able to:

- Perform well with others
- Learn new material quickly
- Demonstrate suitable style, range, blend and accurate pitch
- Learn from lyric sheets and memorize words
- Be a team player at all times

Sound/Video Technicians need to be able to:

- Cooperate well with others on a team
- Learn new information quickly
- Demonstrate suitable ability to run appropriate equipment

Other Considerations & Ongoing Expectations

As mentioned, this is a *leadership* ministry and others look to our lives and behavior as examples. Everyone on the stage and in the tech booth serves an important part in *leading worship*, and is therefore *accountable* for their actions in doing so. (1 Corinthians 4:2 “Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.” and James 3:1). In addition to the qualifying characteristics previously outlined, consider the following:

Submitting To God

One thing that honors God within a praise team is submitting the talents He has given you to Him, to the other team members and to the congregation. As musicians and singers, we are not called to be rock stars, but to humbly submit ourselves. Sometimes this is hard on the ego. While leading worship, how often can we fall into the trap of thinking about how people are looking at us? We might say to ourselves that they are thinking, “Man, he’s got a good voice,” or “She’s really passionate about worship, she must be a really great Christian.” This is not submitting to God. In these cases, we are seeking to glorify ourselves instead of Him. When we do this, it is cheating God, cheating the congregation and cheating ourselves of true worship. Another act of submission that honors God is to submit ourselves to the overall sound or mix of the music. A lot of times we will want to play all the time, be loud and be heard by the congregation. But playing and singing like that can ruin the overall sound of worship. We have to realize that balance is what makes a good sound, and many times less is more. Sometimes the best thing for us to do as musicians and singers during a song is to *not play or sing* during a certain section. As an individual, you are one *part of a group* whose goal is to worship God. We all need to find out how we can work together as a team to create the best possible sound for our worship. It is never about one person.

Personal Worship

Our worship needs to be an expression of our hearts as well. If we are not worshipping God through our music or art, but only singing the words and playing the notes, it will show through to the congregation. But if we are genuine and our hearts are focused on God, it will be evident to the congregation, and it can inspire them in their own worship. We need to make sure we are worshipping God only because He deserves it. Spend time with God throughout the week so that He is not a stranger when we come together in our weekly worship gatherings. Make room for music in your own time of personal worship and devotions. When we minister to a large group of people in a worship setting, our worship will be an overflow of what we are doing privately.

Leading Worship

A big part about leading worship is creating flow – no matter what your role on the Worship Team (sound, video, lights, camera, and other arts included). This is the process where we illustrate a journey for worshipers to enter into the gates of God’s throne room. It is accomplished by merging all the elements of a worship gathering into one message and flow with minimal distractions or interruptions. By eliminating distractions and most interruptions, we keep the focus on God and off the other things that might distract us and the congregation.

While wrong notes, loud instruments and off-key singers can be a distraction in worship, so can the sound reinforcement, lighting and media. We need to make sure that the lighting is set so that it will reflect and help the mood of the worship atmosphere. Errors and delays in the media presentation can also be a big distraction. The technical artists (sound, light, media, and camera) have the responsibility to always be alert and ready.

Group Dynamics and Your Role

Working in a team can be tough, especially if you have clashing personalities within the group. As with any group, being on the Worship Team takes patience, understanding and most of all, humility. 1 Peter 5:5 instructs, *"...All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"* Pride causes some big problems within a team. God can sometimes put us in group situations in order to check our pride. In a group, we come across ideas different from our own, and we can learn to see the situations from the perspective of another. We may come to realize that we are not always right. It is important to hold your role in ministry *"with a loose hand,"* giving God and those you serve under the ability to use your gifts as they best serve First Baptist. (Hebrews 13:17 *"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."*) The fact is, in a worship team, each member needs to serve one another. When we are serving, we are loving and building unity within the group. *"Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace"* (Ephesians 4:3 NLT).

There needs to be mutual respect and love among the members. We should all have the attitude that everyone has their place, and no one else could fill it in the same way. A fantastic way to build unity is to set aside time together outside our gatherings and rehearsals. So as a group, the Worship Ministry not only worships God together, but we occasionally meet for fellowship and training. As we grow together technically AND spiritually, it will show through our ministry.

Your Involvement in Ministry

Remember that whether you participate in the Praise Team as a musician, singer, or technician, it is your *ministry*. You are there to serve others and minister to them. It is the task of the Worship Ministry to make it easy for them to get into a mode of worship.

Group Rehearsals (Praise Team/Band)

Remember, our rehearsals are the time when you sharpen your sound and technical cues for the glory of God. It is a *group* rehearsal APART from our *personal* rehearsal time and learning of songs. You are expected to listen to your rehearsal CDs and be able to capture the musical style (or recognize song cues for techs). Then we can come together to bring our individual roles together in a group rehearsal. Make sure you are ready to work as a team, take notes, and most of all, use the practice time as an act of worship. Psalm 33:3 says, *"Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and sing with joy"* (NIV). We are to be joyful in our worship, but at the same time, play skillfully, because God deserves our best. Rehearsal is the time when we can practice both.

In Our Weekly Services

Worship is not about us; it is about God. In worship, the congregation will feed off of you. So make sure that your heart is focused on God. It will show through to the listeners, and if you are passionately worshipping, it can inspire them to do so as well. It goes the other way, too. If you look dead and show no emotion at all, it could de-energize the congregation. Remember, our weekly gatherings are the culmination of our expression of worship. Above all, make sure this is the time where you are completely submissive to God and the moving of the Holy Spirit. Sometimes, we may have something planned out from rehearsal, but the Holy Spirit might spur the leader to play that bridge one more time at the end of a song or to just vamp on a chord progression for a while, creating a contemplative atmosphere. Be flexible and allow room for the Spirit to work in your hearts and the hearts of the people in the congregation.

One-On-One Meetings

Part of creating order, clarity and excellence in ministry requires finding ways to continually spur one another forward. That's what One-On-One Meetings are all about. Once or twice a year, you can expect to meet with the Worship Pastor to give and receive feedback regarding your experiences and your role on the Praise Team. One-On-One Meetings are a two-way opportunity for you to let the Worship Pastor know what's working for you and for the Worship Pastor to challenge you to move beyond your present place and skill level. Many churches have difficulty implementing any evaluation of their ministries, but worship is a high and holy calling and so prayerful consideration should be given to how we lead worship. Evaluating people's gifts and hearts is not easy, but when we commit to it we find that it causes people to place a higher value on their participation in the ministry; it encourages them to make a higher quality commitment; and it forces them to face their fears and overcome their tendency toward comparison and insecurity.

Ministry Details

Listed below are important details and processes. These details are is subject to change.

PRAISE TEAM ROTATION

As the Praise Team grows in number and skill, a rotation of singers will be used as deemed necessary. Rotations will be scheduled several weeks in advance. If you are not able to be there for a worship service, please inform the Worship Ministry office as soon as possible so that other arrangements can be made.

REHEARSAL ATTENDANCE

Praise Team members are required to be faithful and punctual in their attendance of rehearsals, services and other events for which they are scheduled. Again, if you are not able to make a rehearsal or be present for the worship service, please inform the Worship Ministry office as soon as possible so that other arrangements can be made.

REHEARSAL TIMES

The Praise Team generally meets for a rehearsal on the first Monday of the month and for a warm-up rehearsal on Sundays. It is expected that musicians and singers, as well as sound and video technicians attend rehearsals as they are called.

DRESS CODE

As mentioned before, this is a leadership ministry and we are all leaders – we have an example to set. Our dress code is casual, but *modest and presentable*. For instance, men should avoid wearing clothing that is excessively worn or very casual. Women should avoid wearing revealing clothing such as low cut blouses or short skirts. Remember this tip when making decisions on your clothing, “*if you are unsure if it is acceptable, you probably shouldn’t wear it.*”

Examples That Are Acceptable:

- Dresses
- Pants
- Dockers or Slacks
- Nice Colored Jeans
- Knit, Button-Up or Polo Shirts

Examples That Are Not Acceptable:

- Tank, Tube, or Halter Tops & other Strapless Shirts
- Denim Blue Jeans
- Excessively Worn or Torn Clothing
- Exercise Pants or Sweats
- T-shirts
- Exposed Belly Buttons or Midriffs
- Shorts
- Short Skirts
- Dresses with High Slits
- T-shirts with Logos/Writing
- No cologne/perfume or scented lotion (deodorant IS permitted) 😊

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MUSIC

We periodically distribute new music CDs, lyrics, and/or music charts. These *new music packages* include new songs that the Praise Team may incorporate into our services in the future. The packages are distributed for you to get familiar with them before they are introduced.

Final Thoughts

Worshipping our Lord is what we were created to do. It is how we connect with our Creator and honor Him. What a privilege it is to be able to facilitate corporate worship. Pray that we will never lose sight of our mission. Pray that God will give us the strength, the resources and the abilities to praise Him. And pray that our focus will never be taken off of Christ as the object of our worship. We appreciate your dedication and service and recognize the sacrifice you are making in serving the Lord in this way. Keep lifting up the name of Christ!

Appendix A: Worship Ministry Information & Commitment Form

Contact Information: *Please print clearly and fill out the following information for your interview.*

Name: _____

Mailing Address/City/Zip: _____

Home Phone: (____) _____

Work Phone: (____) _____

Cell Phone: (____) _____

Email: _____

Do you have weekly access to the Internet & email to check Praise Team updates? _____

Identify your three favorite ways of spending free time (e.g., hobbies, interests, etc.)

Why would you like to be involved in the Worship Ministry?

Have you made a decision to receive Jesus Christ as your personal savior? _____ Yes _____ No

How long have you been a Christian? (Give a brief description of your relationship with Jesus Christ)

How long have you been attending First Baptist Church _____ Are you a member? _____
Are you currently serving in any other areas of ministry at First Baptist? If so, please list:

VOCALISTS: What vocal part do you sing? _____ Do you read music? _____

Can you sing by ear? _____ Can you pick out harmony part by ear? _____

What style(s) of music do you have experience singing? (worship, jazz, rock, etc.) _____

MUSICIANS: What instrument(s) are you interested in playing? _____

Do you read music? _____ Can you play by chord charts/lead sheets? _____

What style(s) of music do you have experience playing? (worship, jazz, rock, etc.) _____

ALL: What musical, technical or arts experience have you had? (professional, church, school, garage band) _____

Worship Ministry Commitment Statement: . *If you have questions regarding any of the Worship Ministry Handbook, please first discuss them with the Worship Pastor. Otherwise, please read & sign below.*

I have read through the *Worship Ministry Handbook* and I understand that by participating in the First Baptist Worship Ministry I agree with the vision and purpose of the First Baptist Worship Ministry, and agree with the ongoing *expectations* for participants as outlined in the handbook.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B: Personal Evaluation Sheet – Vocal (for Praise Team)

Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Rate yourself from 1-5 on the following characteristics; 5 being best...

_____ FAITHFUL: Speaks to the exposure, understanding, and devotion to the Worship Ministry purpose, vision, and values. Is worship evident throughout the week in the form of prayer, devotions and accountability? Are new songs and styles studied and practiced outside of rehearsal time?

_____ AVAILABLE: Speaks to the mere availability of the person. Are they able to commit time and availability to the Worship Ministry?

_____ TEACHABLE: Speaks to two aspects. 1) the potential and openness for new ideas and teaching (regarding vocal skills and concepts) as well as the actual ability to achieve new goals; and 2) when new goals are required, are they within the scope of what *can* be taught or what *should* be taught inside the ministry – or should the instruction come from outside the ministry?

_____ OVERALL: Speaks to the overall evaluation of one's fit with the worship ministry when examining the direction of the ministry and its goals – as well as the technical skill and willingness to achieve those goals.

Rate yourself from 1-5 in the following technical areas; 5 = all the time; 1= seldom...

_____ ACCURATE PITCH: Speaks to the ability to learn and sing the accurate notes at the appropriate times. It means listening to oneself, the other singers, and the instruments, and self-correcting any sharp or flat tendencies in a particular song. It also speaks to one's use of vibrato (which itself is a variation of pitch).

_____ RHYTHMIC PRECISION: Speaks to one's ability to render sung phrases correctly as they are rhythmically intended. Are you dragging? Are you cutting off too early or holding on too late? Is your use of vibrato preventing you from doing so?

_____ APPROPRIATE TONE: Speaks to the vocal tone or timbre in which one sings in particular sections of songs. Is it appropriate for the song? Should it be strong? Should it be tender? Should it be loose? Should it be precise?

_____ BLEND: Speaks to the blend of one's voice with the other singers. Are you listening to the other singers? Does your voice stick out? Is it too loud? Are you singing too softly?

_____ ENCOURAGING PRESENTATION: Speaks to how you appear as a lead worshipper. Are you connecting with the congregation through eye contact and facial expression? Do you encourage clapping or other outward forms of worship? Do you have a sourpuss face with your eyes glued to the music stand?

_____ MUSIC STYLE: Speaks to the *exposure*, understanding, and experience with different musical styles, especially today's praise and worship genre. Do you have the ability to express that style with your voice?

_____ EAR: Speaks to the ability to hear and respond to vocal strengths and weaknesses. Can you self-correct? Are you able to ad lib or sing in harmony? Can you tell when you are succeeding or failing in the previous mentioned areas?

We will consider your involvement based on these rating levels...

4-5 RATING: This is the new level of expectation for regular Praise Team and Featured Music involvement. High ratings in pitch, rhythm, tone, blend, presentation, musical styles, and ear are required.

3 RATING: Individuals at this level will need to pursue improvement in their weakness areas through methods discussed in personal feedback meetings. Some individuals may be asked to step back from active Praise Team involvement during a probationary improvement period. Methods of improvement may include outside vocal lessons.

1-2 RATING: This level suggests that your gifts may be best utilized in other ministries at First Baptist. Although technical skills are not the only aspect of worship ministry, they are essential to effectively leading others in worship in accordance with our vision, purpose and values.

Appendix C: Personal Evaluation Sheet – Instrumental (for Praise Band)

Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Rate yourself from 1-5 on the following characteristics; 5 being best...

_____ FAITHFUL: Speaks to the exposure, understanding, and devotion to the Worship Ministry purpose, vision, and values. Is worship evident throughout the week in the form of prayer, devotions, and accountability? Are new songs and styles studied and practiced outside of rehearsal time?

_____ AVAILABLE: Speaks to the mere availability of the person. Are they able to commit time and availability to the Worship Ministry?

_____ TEACHABLE: Speaks to two aspects. 1) the potential and openness for new ideas and teaching (regarding instrument skills and concepts) as well as the actual ability to achieve new goals; 2) when new goals are required, are they within the scope of what *can* be taught or what *should* be taught inside the ministry – or should the instruction come from outside the ministry?

_____ OVERALL: Speaks to the overall evaluation of one's fit with the worship ministry when examining the direction of the ministry and its goals – as well as the technical skill and willingness to achieve those goals.

Rate yourself from 1-5 in the following technical areas; 5 = all the time; 1= seldom...

_____ CHART READING: Speaks to the ability and experience to read and follow chord charts and lead sheets, (without full orchestral and rhythm section scores. Are specific passages, structures, or changes in songs written and remembered for actual worship time. Are you making notations on your charts?

_____ RHYTHMIC PRECISION: Speaks to the ability to play accurate rhythms in a precise manner with the other players and singers and as the particular song dictates.

_____ MUSICALITY: Speaks to the accuracy and exposure of certain rhythms, chords structures, and moods of certain song styles. Does the instrumentation fight or enhance other aspects of the worship presentation? Is it in sync with and is it sensitive to the other players and singers?

_____ GEAR: Speaks to whether an individual has access to the appropriate gear in order to participate.

_____ MUSIC STYLE: Speaks to the exposure, understanding, and experience with different musical styles, especially today's praise and worship genre. Do you have the ability to express that style with your instrument?

We will consider your involvement based on these rating levels...

4-5 RATING: This is the new level of expectation for regular Praise Team and Featured Music involvement. High ratings in all areas are required.

3 RATING: Individuals at this level will need to pursue improvement in their weakness areas through methods discussed in personal feedback meetings. Some individuals may be asked to step back from active Praise Team involvement during a probationary improvement period. Methods of improvement may include outside instrument lessons.

1-2 RATING: This level suggests that your gifts may be best utilized in other ministries at First Baptist. Although technical skills are not the only aspect of worship ministry, they are essential to effectively leading others in worship in accordance with our vision, purpose and values.

Appendix D: *Personal Evaluation Sheet – Technical*

Name: _____ Date/Time: _____

Rate yourself from 1-5 on the following characteristics; 5 being best...

_____ FAITHFUL: Speaks to the exposure, understanding, and devotion to the Worship Ministry purpose, vision, and values. Is worship evident throughout the week in the form of prayer, devotions, and accountability? Are new songs and styles studied and practiced outside of rehearsal time?

_____ AVAILABLE: Speaks to the mere availability of the person. Are they able to commit time and availability to the Worship Ministry?

_____ TEACHABLE: Speaks to two aspects. 1) the potential and openness for new ideas and teaching (regarding technical skills and concepts) as well as the actual ability to achieve new goals; 2) when new goals are required, are they within the scope of what *can* be taught or what *should* be taught inside the ministry – or should the instruction come from outside the ministry?

_____ OVERALL: Speaks to the overall evaluation of one's fit with the worship ministry when examining the direction of the ministry and its goals – as well as the technical skill and willingness to achieve those goals.

Rate yourself from 1-5 in the following technical areas; 5 = all the time; 1= seldom...

_____ KNOWLEDGE OF EQUIPMENT: Speaks to the overall knowledge and/or quick learning of new equipment and procedures.

_____ DEMONSTRATED OPERATION: Speaks to one's demonstrated ability to run sound or visual elements in smooth flow without sacrificing the message.

_____ TECHNICAL CONCEPTS: Speaks to one's learning and understanding of particular concepts involved in using the equipment to achieve a conceptual goal. (i.e. monitor spill, prelude music, attentiveness in the techbooth, etc.)

_____ ARTISTRY: Speaks to one's internal artistry of their craft. This means a familiarity with and study of the styles of music, or visual elements and presentation that will be presented.

We will consider your involvement based on these rating levels...

4-5 RATING: This is the new level of expectation for regular Praise Team and Featured Music involvement. It means being prepared and on-time. It means being available for rehearsals in order to get things right the first time during our worship gatherings. High ratings in all areas are required.

3 RATING: Individuals at this level will need to pursue improvement in their weakness areas through methods discussed in personal feedback meetings. Some individuals may be asked to step back from active Praise Team involvement during a probationary improvement period or serve as a backup technician. Methods of improvement may include additional study, training, and hand-on practice & experience.

1-2 RATING: This level suggests that your gifts may be best utilized in other ministries at First Baptist. Although technical skills are not the only aspect of worship ministry, they are essential to effectively leading others in worship in accordance with our vision, purpose and values.