

## **Music and Worship Ministry Guidelines –September 2015:**

*“An effective worship leader, aided and led by the Holy Spirit, skillfully combines Biblical Truth with music to magnify the worth of God and the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, thereby motivating the gathered church to join him in proclaiming and cherishing the Truth about God and seeking to live all of life for the glory of God.”*

*Bob Kauflin*

*Worship Development*

*Sovereign Grace Ministries*

I like this description of an effective worship leader. In short, it reminds us that we as worship leaders are to share the Truth we know about our Great Redeemer in order to glorify Him and to lead others to Him. Worship is all I know of me responding to all God has shown me of Himself. This response involves a choice, and the use of my mind, will, and emotions. Thus, everything a worship leader does should encourage that response in the people he is leading. God desires to bless us with His manifest presence when we gather to worship Him, and he even gives us a Biblical prescription to follow. *(excerpts from Bob Kauflin)*

God’s Biblical prescription includes:

1. Salvation
2. Submission
3. Commitment
4. Humility
5. Edification
6. Holiness
7. Sincerity
8. Prayer

### **SALVATION**

We must first know Jesus Christ in order to worship Him and lead others to Him.

*There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to people, and we must be saved by it.” Acts 4:12 HCSB*

*(Romans 10:9-10, Matt 10:32)*

### **LOVE**

**We are commanded to love each other as Christ loved us.**

1 Corinthians 13:1-7 HCSB: *If I speak human or angelic languages but do not have love, I am a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal.*

**2** *If I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith*

*so that I can move mountains but do not have love, I am nothing.*

**3** *And if I donate all my goods to feed the poor, and if I give my body in order to boast but do not have love, I gain nothing.*

**4** *Love is patient, love is kind. Love does not envy, is not boastful, is not conceited,*

**5** *does not act improperly, is not selfish, is not provoked, and does not keep a record of wrongs.*

**6** *Love finds no joy in unrighteousness but rejoices in the truth.*

**7** *It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

## **SUBMISSION**

In terms of submission, first and obviously foremost, we submit to God the Father. We hold firmly to Him alone and respect the responsibility He has entrusted to us to sing His Word. He is the reason for everything we do.

Secondly, we fall under the authority of our Elders. I am in close communication with them and follow their lead as we prepare services week-to-week.

*Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they keep watch over your souls as those who will give an account, so that they can do this with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you. Hebrews 13:17 HCSB*

Our music and worship leadership team consists of the worship leader and assistant worship leaders, the choirs, and the praise team/band, drama team, AV, youth worship ministry and any other music related groups as they participate in church-wide services. We share the responsibilities of this ministry, and we all work together in a coordinated effort to serve under our common purpose.

Often folks will join the choir to get to better know the church and to begin building relationships as they use their talents. Church membership is not required to participate in the music ministry. However, whether one plans to join the church or not, we invite those in this ministry who are not members to attend our Membership Matters classes in order to know exactly what Good Hope as a church whole believes, since serving in the music and worship team signifies one is standing in agreement with Good Hope 's theology.

## COMMITMENT

*“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.” Whatever you do, do it enthusiastically, as something done for the Lord and not for men, ( Col. 3:23 HCSB)*

In order for us to fulfill our purpose, we must take this role seriously. **These are not volunteer positions; these are called positions.** This is not a role to fill because you simply like to sing. This is a ministry that requires your heart—a heart devoted to worship and leading others into it. Serving must be a priority in your life and, thus, requires sacrifice of your time. Your commitment to this ministry means that you agree to faithfully come to practice and sing even when you may not *feel* like it, even if you may not particularly like the song the choir or praise team is singing, or even if the practice is during your team’s big game on TV. This ministry is not based on how you *feel*. It is all about being a servant who’s heart is to honor God and to see the lost come to salvation.

“No one is ready to lead until he is willing to serve.” - Alfred W. Martin

In addition to living out a commitment to the choir, we strongly encourage music and worship ministry members to serve in other roles in the church as your time allows. As we live out our faith through service, we add integrity to our songs and make what we sing more meaningful and real to those we are leading.

To lead effectively, our worship should be purposeful, not hit-or-miss. Worship does not just happen. We should intentionally prepare and then expect good fruit from our preparation. Romans 12:6 says that those who lead should do so diligently. This will require effort and oftentimes great effort. I read this example recently: “When we moved into our new home several years ago, my family’s yard was a wasteland. But each fall I aerated, fertilized, and planted grass seed. In the spring, I applied fertilizer and weed killer. We watered. For a few years it seemed like not much was happening. But here we are years later with a full lawn. What happened? We sowed, and tended, and then we reaped.” (Bob Kauflin, Sovereign Grace Ministries)

So it is with worship. If we want God’s people to glorify Him, we must sow to His glory. We must prepare our minds and our hearts for worship so that others can see Jesus through us, worshiping throughout the week as well as on Sunday mornings. We must work to build our skills (playing instrument, using our voice, for example). Much of the time we will be “weary yet pursuing” as was Gideon in His service to the Lord. We must practice and prepare our voices. We must paint a compelling, attractive, grand, Biblical picture of our great God and Savior. We should bring our best offering to the Lord. (1 Corinthians 4:2, Proverbs 20:13)

## HUMILITY

*“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.” Do nothing out of rivalry or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. (Philippians 2:3 HCSB)*

*The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. God, You will not despise a broken and humbled heart.  
(Psalm 51:17 HCSB)*

*And those who walk in pride He is able to put down. (from Daniel 4:37 NKJV)*

*For by the grace (given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one. 4 Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, 5 in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ (and individually members of one another. 6 According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts:*

*If prophecy, use it according to the standard of one’s faith; 7 if service, in service; if teaching, in teaching; 8 if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness (Romans 12:3-8 HCSB)*

As stated above, the worship team is under the ultimate authority of Christ alone and any music we present must be presented to glorify Him alone. Self-glorification has no part in this ministry and honestly, those in Good Hope’s worship team are very intolerant of selfishness.

God will not share His glory with anyone else. The results of a ministry that is girded with pride and selfishness are sure to fail. If your singing in the choir is dependent on you singing solos, then you are in the wrong choir. While we definitely want you at Good Hope to grow and learn with us, the focus of our worship team is not on show-casing individual talent. We function as a team. Obviously if we are intent on aiming for excellence in worship leadership, we are very interested in the way we sound and some may end up singing more solos than others. But a firm foundation regarding matters of the heart and soul and a clear testimony by the fruits of our spirit are the most important to us. In other words, you may have the best solo voice around, but, if it’s all about you or if it is obvious that there are areas of pride and even pride about un-surrendered sin in your life, then it is our prayer that God would lead you (and us all) to conviction and some soul-searching before joining our team.

God is faithful to provide for this ministry’s needs when we are seeking His heart and not our own. He’s proven that over and over again. Praise God!

## EDIFICATION

*Be in agreement with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation. (Romans 12: 16 HCSB)*

While many times music that speaks to the worship leadership team also speaks to the larger body of believers, we recognize that it is not our priority to present music that speaks to *us* as individuals at all times. It is our role to present music and set the worship environment that, first of all, glorifies God but secondly that will lead *others*—and the corporate body of believers to a deeper worship experience with God. This means that while you may not like traditional music or hymns, you will be asked to sing them. It also means that while you may not like contemporary songs, you will be asked to sing them as well. It is very important to remember that different people worship in different ways. What may seem worshipful for one may not

seem worshipful for others. We must be very attentive to the needs of the congregation and not push head-strong with our own personal agendas. We must act out of love for one another. Once again, selfishness must be left-behind. Our philosophy is that as long as the songs are Scripturally sound, it is no sacrifice at all to be given the opportunity to sing for Christ no matter what the flavor of the song. Instead, we consider it an opportunity and a blessing. It is not about us.

In addition, while this should go unsaid, the music and worship team members are expected to participate and attend worship services on a regular basis unless serving with the children or elsewhere. We are not in the church services to simply sing. We are there to lead worship through music as well as through the Word and with our actions. We do not sing and then leave or only show up to services to sing or play an instrument. We support our leadership with our attention and our time. We are there for corporate worship to love and honor the Lord and to grow together as the body of Christ.

*(Matt 23:22, 2 Corinthians 9:7)*

### **HOLINESS AND SINCERITY**

*Live a life “worthy of His calling, and will, by His power, fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith,12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified by you, and you by Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ. (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 HCSB)*

*But the LORD said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or his stature, because I have rejected him. Man does not see what the LORD sees,[ or man sees what is visible, but the LORD sees the heart.” (1 Samuel 16:7 HCSB)*

*Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,(so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God. (Romans 12: 1-2 HCSB)*

If we are to lead others into worship, we should display an attitude of worship ourselves both on and off the platform. This requires that we spend time privately with the Lord--in prayer, confession, repentance, Bible study and worship-- throughout the week, so that our leading worship on Sundays is an out-pouring of what we have learned and experienced with God the previous six days. Each day we need to ask God to convict us of our sins and to take us a step closer to becoming like Him . We can never be satisfied with the status quo. We need to continually seek God to update our resume for Him. Live expectantly and be prepared to give an answer for what God is doing in your life. *“but honor the Messiah as Lord in your hearts. Always be ready to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. (1 Peter 3:15 HCSB)*

Serving as a worship leader calls us to be people of integrity—the same on and off the platform. We must strive to be the same people at home and at work that we are at church. It is important to remember that the further we put ourselves out there in the spotlight in worship leadership roles, the more scrutiny our lives will be under and the higher level of accountability we are held to. When we take a position in front of a group of people, we will, to one degree or another, be leading, whether intentionally or

not. If we are going to be effective worship leaders, we need to strive to live lives worthy of the calling, lives of integrity, lives that make our corporate worship time believable to others.

*Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much,*

*they will demand the more. (from Luke 12:48 ESV)*

*(Ephesians 4:1, 12-13, Galatians 5:19-25, James 1:22; Psalm 24:4-5, Psalm 51:2; Hebrews 10:22-25)*

This includes conducting ourselves in a Christ-like manner on social media (i.e. Facebook, for example).

Also, as we need to present ourselves as living sacrifices, we all should dress in a manner that would not distract from our messages in song. The typical dress code for the worship team is “dress casual.” More specifically, women should dress modestly. Simply put: No strapless or backless tops, spaghetti straps, tightly form-fitting clothes, short skirts (no more than 2 “– 3 “above the knee) or cleavage exposed. Whether we like to admit it or not, we must concern ourselves about issues such as lust in the church too.

Along those same lines, no heavy perfume (in case of allergies), modest jewelry, and hands down at the sides except when clapping or raised in praise.

## **PRAYER**

*Pray constantly. (1 Thessalonians 5:17 HCSB)*

Let me simply say: We need to pray, pray, pray. All the time.

Church-wide prayer time Sundays at 5:30pm. I strongly encourage all music and worship ministry members to participate in our church-wide prayer time. Prayer is the power behind all we do! We miss many wonderful things God has planned for us when we do not call on Him both privately as well as corporately in prayer.