

## **2018 Elder Vision for Musical Worship**

### **Section 1**

Rocky Bayou Baptist Church has long been known and appreciated for Christ-centered and God-honoring music during special events and Sunday morning gathered worship. The music has been an expression of the joy in the hearts of attenders and members that is resident in our lives because God has not only saved us from our sins, but given us new life in Christ. Part of this expression of the new life is that we joyously gather to celebrate God's gracious acts and encourage one another to be part of the spreading of the gospel that will eventually spread the worship of God to the nonbelievers around us.

We affirm the tenets of Reformed theology which undeniably remind us that we are wholly undeserving of God's grace, and were totally depraved to the point that we had no escape from the punishment of sin except by way of the glorious cross of Christ. We acknowledge that we are still living in a body of sinful flesh, and that the threat of sin is so real that we will sin, no matter how hard we try to walk in holiness and newness of life. But we rejoice that when we confess our sins that Christ promises to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. We understand that confession is a vital part of our daily spiritual discipline, and should be expressed in our liturgy on any given Sunday morning. We also feel that after we have confessed our sin, we are free and expected to celebrate the grace of God with overwhelming praise to His glorious grace and Name. We purpose to gather as one voice and exalt the Name of Jesus who saved us, washed us, and gives us new life! We hope and pray that our hearts sing loudly and strongly in proclaiming the new life in Christ to such an extent that the non-believers will see this inexplicable joy in our lives and question their own spiritual condition. So that the Lord Jesus Christ is glorified in all our hearts, we desire to better clarify our vision for musical worship drawing us together in unity and love each time we meet.

We affirm that the songs we sing need to be Christ-centered and the gospel needs to be sung and proclaimed. We affirm that the lyrics are of utmost importance, and that careful attention to the selection of songs that affirm our statement of faith and are truly biblical in nature is of great value. We affirm that the careful selection of musical songs can and has enhanced the word preached from the pulpit. These are aspects of musical worship that must continue into the future.

We desire for our musical worship to be a manifestation of the joy filled soul supplied to all believers, but we also understand the need in certain seasons for times of solemn prayer and confession. We affirm the need for musical worship that serves in preparation for this time in our church, and believe that this can be done with joy and reverence while drawing us together in unity and love for our Savior. We want to bring glory to God by giving all our congregation a liturgy that enforces our doctrine and our desire to see unity and love throughout the body.

### **Section 2**

We desire to see a robust worship team lead the congregation in songs that reflect the fact that we are a regenerated group of sinners who will boldly and victoriously proclaim "we are forgiven and we are redeemed and we unite our voices for the glory of God!" We desire to see more celebration though not

totally neglecting our need to beg for God's mercy to cover our sin. We further desire to see the inclusion in the worship arts of musicians and singers whom our Lord has gifted with certain talents and called to serve within our body. We value the involvement and encouragement of these men, women, and youth in weekly gathered worship. We value an exuberant and robust musical leadership team that will lead and encourage our body to praise our Good and Great God through musical worship (Psalm 95:1-2, Psalm 150). We have much to celebrate just like when Nehemiah finished the work on the wall and "sought the Levites in all their places, to bring them to Jerusalem to celebrate the dedication with gladness, with thanksgivings and with singing, with cymbals, harps, and lyres. And they offered great sacrifices that day and rejoiced, for God had made them rejoice with great joy; the women and children also rejoiced. And the joy of Jerusalem was heard far away." (Neh 12:27, 43). In other words, we value a musical leadership team that enhances and encourages the congregation to sing in an expression of the joy in their hearts because of the redemption from sins and new life we have because of the work that Christ has done and continues to do in us as believers in Him. We value songs that the congregation knows and loves, not only for the biblical truth in the lyric, but for the familiarity and ease of singing and memorizing. Our desire is that our members and attenders sing the songs they have heard on Sunday throughout their week in times of joy and in times of trial.

Approved by the Elders April 11, 2018