WITH ONE ACCORD
A Team Approach to Worship Planning
Session 1 Agenda
How to Design a Worship Service

"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed." (Proverbs 15:22)

In Session 1, we will:
★ Design a worship service
★ Learn Challenge/Response concepts
★ Learn congregation song concepts
★ Review the worship planning schedule for the chosen worship series
★ Plan week one of the chosen worship series as a group using Challenge/Response concepts

Materials needed:
1. Corps Worship Assessment forms
2. Week 1 agendas
3. Fundamentals material handouts
4. Worship planning schedule
5. Worship Series – week 1
6. White board, markers
7. Pencils
8. DVD

🎯 Getting Started (5 minutes)
★ State the purpose of the committee: To help your corps form a team of individuals into a functioning worship committee that can creatively plan and participate in worship that is relevant and vibrant.
★ Prayer
★ Show Introductory Video

🔍 Evaluate: Ask everyone present to complete the Corps Worship Assessment form (30 minutes)
Discussion: As we look over responses to the assessment form, ask:
• What picture are you getting of our corps?
• What do you see as our strengths and weaknesses?
• Were there any surprises?
• Collect assessment forms for later tabulation and summary.

🎯 Focus: How to Design a Worship Service (35 minutes)
Goal: Plan week one of the chosen worship series as a group using Challenge/Response concepts
On the white board, ask committee members to list the typical order of a Sunday worship service at their corps.
Review:
- Introduce the **Challenge/Response Concepts** on how to design a worship service (see pages 3-5 below)
- Show Challenge/Response Video
- Review **Congregation Song Concepts** (see page 6-7 below)
- Compare your typical service above to challenge/response concepts
- Review worship schedule
- Plan week 1 of the worship series using challenge/response concepts

Follow-up (5 minutes)
- Identify and recruit service participants for week 1

Fundamentals (5 minutes)
- To reinforce the concepts taught in Session 1, distribute and read before Session 2: **The Beat Goes On** – Chapter 2: Sunday Morning: A Lifeline to the Church materials containing the following themes:
  - What Word, What song?
  - What plan?
  - What offering?
  - Who makes this happen?
  - How to make this work?
- Looking ahead, distribute and ask committee to read before Session 2: Weeks two and three worship outlines from the chosen worship series

Close with a season of prayer (10 minutes)
CHALLENGE/RESPONSE CONCEPTS

Definition of Christian worship:
Worship is the expression of a relationship in which God the Father reveals himself and his love in Christ and by his Holy Spirit administers grace, to which we respond in faith, gratitude, and obedience. (Robert Schaper, In His Presence)

Ways to Approach the Ordering of Worship

- The Random Approach – list of items to be included and planner simply assigns them an order without thought.
- The Blank Slate Approach – planner attempts to do something fresh and creative every week. Creativity is the object.
- The Thematic Approach – a certain word or theme is selected and all worship components reinforce the theme.
- Fill-in-the-Blank Approach – the order of service remains unchanged from week to week except for a few variables: the sermon title, the hymns/choruses to be sung, and the date at the top of the page of the bulletin.
- The Dialog Approach – Challenge/Response – God Speaks/We Respond – the order is the gospel.
  • God approaches.
  • God speaks.
  • The person responds.
  • God sends.

Discussion: Does your corps worship services reflect any of the above styles?

The Thematic Approach – Typical Salvation Army worship services are usually thematic in nature. There are two initial problems with thematic worship:

1. The theme can unknowingly overtake some more important priorities of worship.

2. Thematic worship can become more concerned with getting all the ideas for interpreting the theme into the service than with considering the ways in which the worship acts are related.

As themes are developed, it is advantageous to use the Dialog Approach as well, following a fourfold order or progression. Worship is a journey—

1. A journey into God’s presence (Gathering)
2. Of hearing from God (Word)
3. That celebrates Christ (Response)
4. That sends us into the world changed by our encounter with God (Sending).

To accomplish this, each movement flows into its neighboring movement(s) in such a way as to impel the progression forward. In the end, we find that though we started out as distracted individuals gathered from various life situations, by God’s grace, we are transformed into a community eager to reach the world. Through having been gathered and addressed by the Word, we respond and are sent.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Typical Worship Components</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| **The Gathering**<sup>4</sup> | 1. To unite our spirits in God’s presence  
2. To prepare us to hear the word of God. | Call to worship, songs, prayers, greeting one another, doxology, offerings/gifts, prayers of the people, testimonies of praise, musical selection, dance (interpretive prayer, song, scripture), drama, announcements |
| **The Word**<sup>5</sup> | 1. People may be addressed by God through the Holy Scriptures.  
2. The Word is revelation—God reveals His truth through the readings and the sermon. | Scripture, sermon, prayers for the Holy Spirit to illuminate the scripture, silence, video clips that comment on the word, solo that reflects the text, drama |
| **Response** | | |
| **The Response**<sup>6</sup> | 1. God reveals; we respond.  
2. Response may be celebrative or reflective. | Time to respond and ways to respond – silence, extended congregational singing (vertical and horizontal), solo that reflects the text, Invitation to conversion or discipleship/holiness, meditation, intercessory prayer, spontaneous prayer, testimonies, the offering |
| **The Sending**<sup>7</sup> | 1. Worshipers are empowered by a blessing (benediction) to do God’s will (charge). | Scriptural benediction, prayer, challenge/charge, congregational hymn/chorus, announcements, postlude |
Typical Salvation Army worship service order:

- Praise Band – 3 songs – **Gathering/Response** (10 minutes)
- Announcements and Offering – **Gathering/Response** (7 minutes)
- Welcome/Call to Worship – **Gathering/Word** (3 minutes)
- Prayer – **Gathering/Response** (2 minutes)
- Song – **Response** (3 minutes)
- Scripture – **Word** (3 minutes)
- Drama/testimony – **Word/Response** (5 minutes)
- Songsters/Band/Solo – **Response** (4 minutes)
- Sermon – **Word** (20 minutes)
- Invitation/song – **Response** (5 minutes)
- Benediction – **Sending** (2 minutes)

The problem with the above order is the gathering section is too long and the response time is too short. While the Gathering time is prolonged (23 minutes), a further imbalance of elements is seen in the minimal opportunity for congregational response at the end of the service. (5 minutes)

An alternative worship service order using the challenge/response principals:

- **Challenge**
  - Call to Worship – **Gathering or Word** (3 minutes)
  - Praise Band – 1 song – **Gathering/Response** (3 minutes)
  - Prayer – **Response/Invocation** (2 minutes)
  - Drama/responsive scripture – **Word** (5 minutes)
  - Song – **Response** (3 minutes)
  - Prayer – **Response** (2 minutes)
  - Songsters/Band/Solo – **Response/Word** (4 minutes)
  - Sermon – **Word** (20 minutes)

- **Response**
  - 2-3 songs – **Response** (7 minutes)
  - Offering – **Response** (4 minutes)
  - Benediction – **Sending** (1 minute)
  - Benediction song – **Sending** (3 minutes)

The most important principal in the above plan is that whenever the **Word** is presented, whether it is drama, scripture or the sermon, there needs to be appropriate **response** time immediately following.
CONGREGATIONAL SONG CONCEPTS

Necessity of Congregational Song – Christians singing their faith is a necessity for engaging in biblical worship. There are at least six excellent reasons to believe that congregational song is indispensable to Christian worship.

1. We sing because the church was born in song.
   Scripture options:
   * Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises to our King, sing praises. (Psalm 47:6, NIV)
   * Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. (Psalm 95:1, NIV)

2. We sing because there is a biblical mandate for corporate singing in worship. (use one of the above)

3. We sing because it is a primary communal activity. It breaks down individualism and builds up a sense of togetherness.

4. We sing because it is inclusive. Singing is suitable for everyone, regardless of qualification.
   * Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD. (Psalm 150:6, NIV)

5. We sing because it is a vehicle for expressing our faith. The songs we sing testify to what we believe as Christians; they assert the doctrines of our belief and practice.

6. We sing because it provides much inspiration for the community. Inspiration comes through meaningful texts, beautiful melodies, and the sound of a variety of voices combining to empower the message of the songs.

**Song Flow** – Sustain momentum by arranging the music flow that takes worshipers on a journey from one song to the next, rather than jerking them with starts and stops between every piece. The two examples below contain two contrasting song orders. Some songs are upbeat with a horizontal theme (meaning the song texts are about God). Some songs are more meditative and vertical (meaning the songs are directed to God). Whenever a vertical song is sung, it is important not to follow it with a horizontal song, or any other item that would detract from the ‘moment’ of worship to God.

**Song Medley**

- **Vertical (to God) versus Horizontal (about God)**
  - **Sample #1**
    - HC# 161 – My Great Redeemer’s Praise (Horizontal)
    - HC#219 – King of Kings, Majesty (Vertical)
    - HC#164 – Before the Throne of God Above (Horizontal) Prayer
Sample #1 above starts with an upbeat horizontal song “My Great Redeemer’s Praise”, then goes to a meditative vertical song, “King of Kings, Majesty,” but this ‘moment’ is lost by returning immediately to the horizontal theme of “Before the Throne of God Above.” It is better to follow a vertical song with another vertical song or a prayer to complete this worship moment.

The order of the same three songs in Sample #2 improves the flow of this series of songs:

**Song Medley**

**Vertical (to God) versus Horizontal (about God)**

Sample #2

HC#161 – My Great Redeemer’s Praise  
(Horizontal)

HC#164 – Before the Throne of God Above  
(Horizontal)

HC#219 – King of Kings, Majesty  
(Vertical)

Prayer