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3 serving in our music ministry

At WHPC we're praying that our church will continue to grow as we share the good news about Jesus, and follow him together. Our goal is summed up in our church's "Vision Statement":

"In prayerful dependence on the Holy Spirit and being guided by the unchanging truth of the Bible, our vision is to be a vibrant, intergenerational, multicultural community where the good news about Jesus Christ drives us into loving relationships, spiritual growth, willing service and clear witness - that the church might grow and God be glorified."

For God's glory we want the gospel to shape everything we do. The gospel should be the driving force as we form loving relationships, seek spiritual growth, engage in willing service, and witness to the world about Jesus.

The music ministry of our church is a key part of our church's life. As we gather corporately our music should encourage us, inspire us, teach us, and draw us into moments where our hearts and voices join together in joyous adoration of our Maker – the one who gathers us by his gospel.

Here are some points to consider about our growing music ministry. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask.

WHY WE PLAY

- 1. The music ministry is about pointing people to the glorious God revealed in Jesus.** It's not about the glorification of the musicians, but playing and singing well in order to serve the church and bring glory to God. We play because of God is worthy of our praise, and has demonstrated the glory of his love and grace in the death and resurrection of Jesus. It's not about us.
- 2. Playing an instrument or song-leading in church is not about 'being on a roster', but being involved in the gospel work of our church.** Our music ministry is a ministry of God's word which can help people understand the gospel better, and love and serve Jesus more. As musicians and song-leaders, we want to use our gifts for these aims. We will use a roster simply as a tool to share this responsibility fairly.
- 3. Our job is to facilitate the singing of the congregation.** We play the music in such a way that helps the congregation sing heartily. The measure of our success as church musicians is not primarily how good we think we sound, but how well the congregation sings together.
- 4. Music is an important, but not the dominant, element of our church meetings.** Music is designed to complement, rather than overshadow, the other 'word' ministries of preaching, prayer, and the reading of the Bible. This will be reflected in the amount of time we devote to music within the service, and choosing songs that are consistent with the teachings of the Bible.

WHAT WE PLAY

- 5. Just like in a family, we think there should be something for everyone in our song selection.** Church isn't just about pleasing the musical tastes of one age-group of people. We seek a 'blended' service which contains both contemporary and traditional elements. To this end, we hope to sing songs that will resonate with the key demographics in our church while reinforcing our unity in the gospel. Expect the old, the new, and everything in between.
- 6. We value variety within our music.** We will aim for a range of *styles* (reflective and upbeat, contemporary and traditional); *responses* that our songs evoke (praise, humility, confession, thankfulness, etc); and *themes* (e.g. God's character, the implications of Jesus' death for us (forgiveness, hope), godly living (trusting in Jesus through difficulty, asking God to bring about change in us).

- 7. We don't just sing or play whatever we like.** We look for songs and hymns that the average person (who probably can't sing that well, and knows it) can learn quickly and sing confidently. That means nothing overly complex, and nothing in a key too high or low for the average person to sing. We also focus on songs that are biblically faithful, and have 'theological depth' – words that explain the deep truths of the Bible and the Christian life. Furthermore, we don't consider highly repetitive songs to be of great value in being able to unlock and express these deep truths very effectively.

HOW WE PLAY

- 8. We'll value welcoming newcomers to our music ministry team.** We'll work hard to include and involve others. What a privilege to use our gifts together to glorify our great God! Let's be excited about seeing people join the music team and be patient as people find their feet and develop their gifts. Music is a long-term team ministry.
- 9. Patience will be needed.** It will take time to incorporate new musicians and new ideas. If you're willing to sing or play, please bear with us as we seek to gradually develop and expand our music team. Rome wasn't built in a day!
- 10. We strive for undistracting excellence in our music.** We do not want to impede people's ability to focus on Christ because of our poor musicianship, nor aim to shift the glory from God to us. To the best of our ability we'll use our gifts to encourage our church family and bring honour to God. We'll work hard at learning the songs, practising them together, and seek to develop our musical gifts.
- 11. Matt will remain the key contact for the music ministry.** In the Presbyterian Church of Queensland the ordained Minister of a church is responsible for the worship service, and as such has general oversight over the music played. If you have any questions or concerns about the music, please ask him. Working alongside Matt are our *Music Team Coordinators*, Narelle Milliken and Mary Jarrott. They will assist Matt in organising, expanding, and improving the music ministry in our church.
- 12. Music ministry doesn't happen in a vacuum, but in a wider church context.** We are aware that music is but one ministry in the wider life of our church family, and that many others in the church generously serve and contribute in other ways. As we consider how we serve in this music ministry, we will need to bear in mind how it works alongside other ministries such as the KidzClub ministry.
- 13. The music sheet is servant, not master.** We choose the key, the introduction, the tempo and the arrangement that suits our church family. We work hard at developing our musical skills so that we can adjust quickly to changes in style and key.
- 14. Practice doesn't make perfect—but it does make sense.** Because we want to do the best we can, we'll practice the songs we plan to play. Genuine effort will be needed to organise and participate in music team practice sessions.
- 15. We need God's help to serve well, so we ask for it.** In our practicing at home and at church, we pray that God would enable us to use the gifts He has given us to play well together for His glory and for the encouragement of his people. 'Players' should be prayers!

Thank you for your interest in our music ministry. Please consider the points outlined here seriously, and if you have any questions feel free to contact us. Please also pray our music ministry would continue to develop and improve, for the good of God's people and the greater glory of God.