

## Prelude: Some Foundational Principles

Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, “I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation... The Lord will reign forever and ever.” ... Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women went out after her with tambourines and dancing. And Miriam sang to them, “Sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea.” –Exodus 15:1-2a, 18, 20-21 (see also Psalm 118:14)

Worship is...

1. focused on (or directed toward) God, not on us;
2. communal, recounting the shared experience of God’s people;
3. participatory, not simply a performance of one or a few;
4. language-based and culturally intelligible;
5. didactic (see Deuteronomy 32:44-47, The Song of Moses).

## I. Psalm 150: A Biblical Model for Worship

Praise the Lord...

Where?	In God’s sanctuary—wherever Christians gather (v. 1)
Why?	Because of who God is and what God has done (v. 2)
How?	With a variety of musical expression (vv. 3-5)
Who?	Everything that has breath (v. 6)

## II. The Progression of Worship: Two Complementary Narratives

We gather in God’s name	Creation
We remember God’s work in our lives	Fall
We listen to God’s Word	Redemption
We answer God’s call	Restoration

## III. Music Used in Worship: Practical Considerations

1. Texts should be doctrinally sound, reflecting the theology of the church.
2. Text and music should be well-suited for each other.
3. Music used in worship should be rooted in the Church’s vast repertoire of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Modern worship is able to incorporate music and worship rituals from the present day to the distant past.

4. Musical selections should fit the season of the liturgical year and should relate to the scripture readings, sermon theme, and other elements of the worship service.
5. Each musical selection should be well-suited to its place in the worship service (see “II. The Progression of Worship” above).
6. Music used in worship should be culturally intelligible.
7. Music used in worship should be within the performing capabilities of the participants. (However, there is always room for growth!)
8. Music used in worship should foster participation by the congregation—familiarity, performance style, key/range, tempo, and dynamic threshold are critical factors to consider when preparing corporate worship music.
9. The entirety of music used in a worship service should, ideally, exhibit both variety (of key, tempo, mood, instrumentation, etc.) and continuity (nothing should seem jarring or out of place).
10. Not all music need be language-based. Instrumental music free of any textual association can be an effective means of grace to God’s people.

## IV. The Worship Leader as Servant Leader

What does it mean to be a worship leader? It means we must lead and serve simultaneously, as we provide a worship service’s linguistic and musical fabric. Having prayerfully planned, prepared, and practiced, we want to speak, sing, and play with skill and conviction, thus enabling the congregation to be drawn into the Lord’s presence and lift their voices heartily to the Lord. We also want to speak, sing, and play with grace and humility, never distracting the congregation or calling attention to ourselves. As in all aspects of life, the Lord Jesus Christ is our perfect example; the true Servant Leader exemplifies sacrificial service to others, for he “came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45). May we, likewise, “put on compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience... And above all these [may we] put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony,” (Colossians 3:12, 14) and covers our myriad mistakes.

## Postlude: An Eternal Calling

“Worship is the highest calling, and guiding a congregation through worship is one of your greatest privileges. What happens in corporate worship is a foretaste of and preparation for eternity as we join with all the saints surrounding the Lamb’s throne to sing his glory!” –Introduction to the *Trinity Hymnal*, 1990

“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!” And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying, “To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!” –Revelation 5:12-13