

Refuge Ministries Praise and Worship Team Handbook

Welcome,

Thank you for your interest in the Praise Team Ministry here at Refuge Ministries! This growing outreach is in need of committed, Jesus-seeking individuals who are feeling the call to be a leader in our church; leaders who can stand tall on the platform or in the audio/video booth, and leaders who can know when to kneel. This handbook serves as an introduction to the powerful ministry that we are asking God to help us build together.

Vision

At Refuge Ministries, we seek to provide:

- *Refuge* - to those who are seeking a place to learn about God
- *Renewal* - for those who are seeking to build a relationship with God
- *Release* - for those who are excited to spread the joy that comes with God's light. In the Praise and Worship Ministry, we aim to uphold these values by helping to create an atmosphere in which people can be led by the Holy Spirit into an encounter with God.

Philosophy and Purpose

Music is an essential part of worship to God.

Psalm 150: 1-6 says "Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heaven! ² Praise him for his mighty works; praise his unequalled greatness! ³ Praise him with a blast of the ram's horn; praise him with the lyre and harp! ⁴ Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with strings and flutes!

⁵ Praise him with a clash of cymbals; praise him with loud clanging cymbals. ⁶ Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord!" (NLT)

Music is not only encouraged but commanded and is a very valuable tool for leading people into worship.

The mission of music and worship is threefold:

- Ministry to the Lord (Worship)
- Ministry to the Church (Nurture)
- Ministry to the World (Outreach)

The Worship Ministry team member ministers to the Lord by presenting to Him the highest quality Music and Worship in each worship celebration. We also minister to Him through our sacrifice of time as we rehearse each week. The most important way that we minister to Him is done in private. It is impossible for us to be effective lead worshippers if we do not spend time worshipping alone on a regular basis. This is vital to the success of the ministry because He is the object of everything we do.

The second part of our mission is ministry to the church. We minister to the body by leading His people in praise and worship. All throughout the bible we see the importance of corporate worship. This is illustrated so well in the Last Supper. Before Jesus went out to face the sin of the world, He and the disciples sang together (Matt 26:30). Ministry to the church goes beyond corporate worship and can extend to such things as musical training, fellowship times, and many other types of events that serve to strengthen the body.

The last part of our mission is ministry to the world. Music is a medium that relates to all ethnic and cultural groups. It can accompany the gospel message in ways that no other ministry can. Each week we have the opportunity to help the “seeker” find Jesus through the music we present. Our goal is to become an ensemble of worshippers and leaders that bring the people of God’s church into His presence, and that draws men and women into a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps the best way to summarize it is this...the worship ministry exists to:

- Exalt God (Refuge)
- Edify the Body of Christ (Renewal)
- Evangelize the Lost (Release)

Why should I get involved in Worship Ministry?

Some people get involved because that is where their abilities are found. They are skilled musicians or have been blessed as gifted vocalists. It seems like a natural place to minister. Others just have a desire to serve and are looking for a place to “plug in.” We believe that the basis for involvement should begin with a sense of God’s calling. Do you believe that at this point in your life, God wants you to be involved in Worship Ministry? Once that question is addressed, then your spiritual giftedness, natural talents, and developed abilities will help clarify your role in the Worship Ministry. The worship ministry is one of the most vital ministries in the local church and should be viewed as a sacred office. Discovering your call begins with a desire to be used by GOD to impact the local church and the community about you. To examine your ministry calling, consider speaking with a pastor about the resources and tools that we have available to help you find out about your gifts. Most importantly, pray about your calling and God’s purpose for you in church.

What can I do in Worship Ministry and How do I Join?

This ministry is about serving God and serving others. You can use your gifts as a singer, an instrumentalist, or as a technician to serve our congregation and community. The technical arts team includes sound, lights, platform prep, and camera work.

We do not require a formal audition, but we use a 4-6 week Introductory Process to discover your technical abilities, your dedication to this time requirement, and to give you time to pray about this new commitment in your life. This is a hands-on training that will require you to participate in practices and get to know other praise team members. At the end of the Introductory Period we, the praise team leader and the pastor, will discuss how you can serve with this ministry.

Worship Team Expectations

Lifestyle

As a worship leader, it is important that you have a growing walk with Christ. Realizing that each person is at a different place along the journey, we are all called to become more like Christ. We must be careful in all areas of our lives because we serve in a very “high profile” ministry. Whether you realize it or not, in leading worship each week you represent the ministry, the congregation of Refuge Ministries, and our Lord. You are expected to live a life that brings honor to the name of Christ.

Personal Worship

You can’t lead someone to a place you have never been. It is also difficult to lead someone to a place you have not been in a while. The point here is that “personal worship precedes corporate worship.” It is difficult to lead corporately if you have not worshipped privately. You are encouraged to spend time during the week in personal

worship; a time of reading God's word, praising Him for all He's done, petitioning Him for your needs, etc.... This is vital for the success of the ministry.

Rehearsal Attendance

We must be accountable to each other regarding rehearsals. It doesn't make sense to not participate in rehearsals and then expect to be fully prepared to lead in worship on Sunday. We value rehearsal attendance. As a member of the Worship ministry we are expected to be at all rehearsals. Realizing that situations arise, we simply ask you to contact the worship ministry leader so that we, as a team, can know how to minister and pray for you.

Abilities

There must be a degree of musical or technical ability to serve in this ministry. Nowhere in scripture does God call a person to serve in a specific area and then not equip them with the resources and talents required. You should be able to sing in tune with the songs and play without having to routinely ask how to form chords.

Passion for Worship

Perhaps the most important requirement for your involvement with this ministry is your passion for worship. You should have a heart for drawing near to God and leading others to Him as well. Music is an integral, expressive, and, transparent way to express what our hearts want to say to the Lord.

Servanthood

One of the most unique things about the body of Christ is that it is the only organization in the world that encourages its members to think of others more highly than themselves. We can never know the full joy of Christ until we have begun to give ourselves away to others, just as Christ did for you and me. You are expected to serve others in this ministry. Jesus said whoever desires to be first must become last!

Team Player

This is an important aspect of leadership. You should be able to support, follow, and trust the leadership of this church and this ministry. Part of you being a team member means that if you ever come to a point of mistrust or have a question about a decision or action, you should take it to the leadership of that ministry. This does not mean that you should always agree with every decision that is made. It does mean that we need to agree that God's glory is ultimately at stake, and not our own personal interests. Discussing disagreements with other ministry members is never a good thing and ultimately hurts the entire group when handled this way. The best thing to do is always to bring an issue to the worship pastor and discuss it.

Worship Team Requirements

It is important that all members of the worship ministry show a commitment to Refuge Ministries by attending regular worship services and be apart of a small group. We must always strive to grow in our knowledge and skills. Membership is always open to those who feel the Lord calling them to this ministry.

Rehearsals

There are two rehearsals each week for the worship and technical arts teams. The rehearsal schedule is subject to change as schedules change periodically.

Worship team rehearsals will typically be 1 hour - 1 and 1/2 hours in length. Weekly sound checks begin 45 minutes prior to the start of the first service. Worship ministry members should follow this rehearsal discipline:

1. Exhibit a positive attitude
2. BE ON TIME! Come early so that you can prepare yourself (tuning/collecting music).
3. Concentrate on all activities.
4. Be prepared to stay for the whole rehearsal so that distractions can be minimal.
5. Notification of absence should be made as soon as possible to the praise team leader.
6. Each member is to act in a professional manner and must have a servant attitude.

Preparation

Each member is expected to do their best to prepare for each rehearsal and worship service by:

1. Listening, rehearsing and learning songs provided by worship leader.
2. Each member is responsible for his or her own musical equipment, unless it is owned by the church. The church will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items.

3. Each member is to be under the leadership of the pastoral staff and church discipline will be taken if any member acts against biblical principles.
4. All members must maintain the musical needs of the ongoing worship ministry. Practice, practice, practice!
5. Members are encouraged to have a daily personal time with God including a daily devotional and prayer time as well as be involved in a small group bible study.

Platform Discipline

1. Remain alert.
2. Enter into praise and worship freely, but in consideration of those standing next to you.
3. If two members must converse, they should do so with a minimum of expression.
4. Be aware of your body language. Eyes, facial expression, hands, feet, everything conveys a message to the congregation.
5. Remain on the platform during ALL worship activities.

This platform discipline might seem excessively detailed, but details are important. We only have one chance to make a first impression.

Dress Code

We do not want our appearance to become a distraction while leading worship. Our church dress code is generally relaxed, but we have some exceptions for the Praise Team. We ask that your outfits consist of:

Women:

- Clothing that is clean, well-fitted (not overly tight), and intact
- Dresses, skirts, slacks, jeans, or capris; please no shorts (if jeans or slacks or worn a blouse or a jacket should be worn to cover back side)
- Blouses, collared shirts, or church appropriate T-shirts
- Solids or minimal prints
- Appropriate footwear: something safe and comfortable to move in

Men:

- Clothing that is clean, well-fitted (not overly tight), and intact
- Collard shirts, button-ups, or T-shirts
- Solids or minimal prints
- Jeans or Slacks; no shorts

We want to present a ministry that is accepting and approachable to our congregation. Occasionally, we will lead worship at events outside of our church. At those events, we may require a "team" outfit like wearing a specific color scheme or a particular clothing item. If this occurs, we will give prior notice and can help provide the necessary clothing.

A Last Word

We know that for many of us, the Praise Team Ministry is not the only ministry or activity in our schedule. We want ministry members to be able to utilize the fullest extent of their gifts and abilities in all areas of the church and the community; but the Praise Team must be a priority in your schedule. What we do every Sunday is something that will last into eternity. We have the honor of leading people into the presence of the Living God! Thank you for your interest, we hope to include you in this ministry!

Praise Team Information and Contact Sheet

Name

Phone Number

Email

Mailing Address

In what area would you like to serve on the praise and worship team?

If you play an instrument what instrument(s) do you play?

Birthday:

Hobbies/ Interests:

I agree to and will support the views of the Refuge Ministries Praise & Worship Handbook

Signature: _____ Date: _____

"My ministry in the product of my relationship with Christ." - Rory Noland

A personal vision for your role in the praise team ministry is vital to the team's strength and growth. An open heart and an ever-developing faith are the keys to a ministry that is after God's heart. Your personal development in faith is important. Write some goals that can help you realize your vision for your role in this praise team. Keep those goals close to you and reflect on your progress frequently.