

A Philosophy of Music in Worship and Ministry (Summer 2009)

Overview

We believe: “By the works of His hands, and the word of His mouth, God calls all mankind to worship and serve Him. In His being and works God is most worthy of worship. He is the creator and sustainer of all who live; therefore, every person should honor Him as God and give Him thanks (Ps. 95,96; Rom. 1:18-23). Indeed, whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). By the mercies shown to them, those redeemed in Christ are especially called to worship and serve God (Rom. 12:1-2).”¹

We believe: “Each moment of every day belongs to God and is to be lived before His presence, in submission to His lordship, and to His honor and glory. It is also necessary that a due proportion of time be set apart for offering to God that worship which He has commanded all people to give (Psalms 95-100). Such worship is to be given individually, in families, and in corporate gatherings of public worship.”²

We believe: “From the creation of the world God has set apart one day in seven as holy to Himself (Gen. 2:1-3, Exodus 20:8, COF XXI.VII). It is therefore imperative for all people, especially the people of God redeemed in Christ, to gather together in public assemblies for offering to God the worship He is pleased to receive and has revealed to us in His Holy Word (Deut. 12:29-32, Matt.15:8-9, John 4:23-24, 2 Tim. 3:16-17, COF XXI.I-II).”³

Music in Worship

We believe that music is a vital and essential part of the true worship we seek to offer to God each Lord’s Day, as well as through other occasional or seasonal worship opportunities (1 Chron. 23:5; 25:7-31). We believe that music should be utilized to communicate the Word of God and to give the congregation opportunity to joyfully praise the Lord. The music in our worship services should consist of congregational singing (psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, see Eph. 5:19) as well as instrumental, choral, ensemble, and solo pieces where these are liturgically appropriate (Psalm 150).

We believe that the music in our worship should be of excellent quality, beautifully arranged, and liturgically significant in order to communicate God’s transcendence (see Ex. 31:1-11 for insight on how excellence in art is a gift of God’s Spirit). It should also be culturally relevant, theologically sound, and reasonably accessible to worshipers in order to communicate the immanence of Christ Jesus.

Given the preeminence of worship in the Church we believe it is essential that our musical and worship leaders be mature, Reformed believers who sincerely strive to lead others into true worship of the triune God. Our musicians, liturgists, and choir “must guard their hearts to see

that their music be offered to the glory of God and the edification of His people (1 Cor. 10:31; 14:26).”⁴

Music in Ministry

In addition to our belief in the vital connection between true worship and music, we also believe that music is an integral part of the ministries of discipleship, evangelism, and fellowship. We believe that music can and should minister to believers individually, within families, and corporately. We believe that our covenant children should be taught the joy of singing praises to our God from an early age (Deut. 6:5-9). Music should be a vital part of the discipleship ministry of our children, youth, and adults.

We believe that music has a great appeal to others in our community and that God desires for us to utilize our talents, facilities, and resources to provide concerts and services that are glorifying to God and outreach oriented.

We believe that the music leaders of our church should have a pastoral affection for members of the congregation and should be a part of the fellowship of the body of Christ on a regular basis. We believe the music staff is a vital part of the professional ministry team and should work with other staff members, and through church committees, to integrate music appropriately into the various ministries of the First Presbyterian Church of Lake Wales.