

MILESTONE WORSHIP

HANDBOOK + DEV GUIDE



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01 TEAM

COMMITMENT

Our Lives

- We desire to honor and worship God with our lives.
- We are committed followers of Jesus Christ.
- We are committed to His mission.
- We are committed to grow through the study of the Bible, personal worship, and prayer.
- We are committed to participating with our local church through weekend services, the Growth Track, and Small Groups.
- We are committed to being generous givers, because we follow the example of Jesus.

Our Service

- We are honored to serve God using the gifts and talents He has given us.
- We are committed to giving God our BEST, because He has given us everything.
- We are committed to preparation, both spiritually and musically.
- We are committed to having a teachable spirit and humble heart.
- We are committed to having a positive attitude.

Team Culture

- We are better together. It's WE, not me.
- We value, honor, and respect each other.
- We build up and encourage each other.
- We choose unity because the Lord blesses it. (Psalm 133:1-3 ESV)
- We walk in accountability because we need each other.
- We choose to work through offenses quickly with forgiveness and reconciliation.
- We love to have fun!

02 WORSHIP OPERATIONS

We will communicate to you primarily through Planning Center Online. It is important that you check your email and your Planning Center account in order to stay informed of important information.

Availability + Block-Out Dates

We want to accommodate your schedule as best we can, so please utilize the Planning Center block-out dates feature. We schedule several weeks in advance, so please update your block-out dates monthly.

NOTE: The fewer dates you are available, the more difficult it is to fit you in the schedule.

Scheduling Rotation

Because of the size of our team and our desire to include you, we must stay on a rotation for all musicians and vocalists. We will do our best to make sure you are scheduled on a regular basis.

NOTE: Occasionally, there are unforeseen circumstances that require us to rearrange the team for any given service. Please note that this is never personal. Please reach out if you have any questions. We are happy to talk about it!

Confirmations

Once you are scheduled for a service, you will automatically receive an email from Planning Center. In a timely manner, click “Accept” or “Decline”. In the event that you have to decline, please give a brief description with your response. Keep in mind that since we ask for your block-out dates in advance, a decline should not happen frequently.

Participating in Services

If you're scheduled to serve on a weekend, we ask that you attend at least one sermon. If you're not scheduled on a particular weekend, come to church anyway. You are a part of this spiritual family!

03 DRESS CODE

General Guidelines for All Services

Modesty is key.

We want the focus to be God, not us. Modesty helps to prevent distraction.

Always do a final “worship check.”

Before you finalize an outfit for service, raise your arms as high as you can and swing them in all directions. Look in the mirror and check yourself from all angles. Kneel down, and lean forward to make sure your pants don't slide too low. If anything is revealed during this process, adjust your outfit accordingly.

Look your best.

We lead multiple generations in worship and want to be relatable to all. If you're ever unsure about an item, always err on the dressier side. Leading congregational worship is not about our own personal artistic expression—it's inclusive to everyone. If your outfit does not meet the guidelines set in this handbook, you may be asked to change.

Make personal hygiene a priority.

Spend the appropriate amount of time getting ready for service. Always be clean, have your hair fixed, and facial hair groomed appropriately. Women need to apply make-up for stage lighting. All clothing must be clean and pressed.

Be platform-ready when you arrive for rehearsal.

There are weekends that we capture photos and video during rehearsal, so please arrive fully dressed and platform ready.

Seasonal Color Palette

This can be found in the 'Notes' section of the Planning Center plan you are scheduled on for weekend services.

GUIDELINES FOR MEN

Top Half

1. Dress shirts or nice pullovers with blazers, nice casual (denim-type) jackets or shackets, pressed neatly.
2. T-shirts are acceptable under a jacket or shacket. No t-shirts with words.
3. Wear an undershirt of an appropriate color if needed. Undershirts should not be seen.
4. Make sure your shirt is buttoned at an appropriate place. No chest hair should be seen.
5. Make sure your shirt isn't too tight, and that it is appropriate in length (doesn't show your stomach or undergarments if you raise your hands).
6. Avoid tight checked patterned shirts. It creates a weird moving pattern on the screen.

Bottom Half

1. Jeans are acceptable. Modern dressier styles, no holes.
2. No "too-tight" pants. Make sure that pants don't cup or conform too much in the front, or that they are too tight in the rear area.
3. No joggers, casual pants, or shorts.

Shoes + Hats

1. No flip-flops, sandals, athletic, or casual shoes. Wear dress shoes or boots of a matching or complimentary color to your outfit.
2. Hats must be approved by the worship staff. No caps or beanies.

GUIDELINES FOR WOMEN

Top Half

1. No cleavage. Be very conscientious about this. The more you have, the more modest the neckline must be. Your neckline should be no more than the span of a 4-finger width from your collarbone.
2. Bras must be inconspicuous and serve you well. Your bra cannot be seen under any circumstances. The thickness of your bra must protect for all room temperatures.
3. No shirts or jackets that bring focus to the chest. No shirts that are tight and tightly cup under the chest.
4. If wearing a shirt without a jacket, it must be cut in a modest way.
5. No sleeveless tops. The sleeve length must be appropriate for your arms, keeping in mind that all arms are different. We suggest the length to be halfway to your elbow or lower. If you shake your arms and there is a lot of movement, adjust your sleeve length closer to your elbow.
6. No t-shirts, unless they are dressy and paired with a jacket.
7. No skin showing around the midriff/waistline. Raise your arms straight up to ensure your top doesn't show any skin. If ever in doubt, wear a tank top underneath your top to make sure that when you jump, there isn't a lot of movement.
8. No see-through tops. If it's see-through stylistically, make sure that the undershirt still meets the guidelines and is not nude in color.
9. If you wear skinny jeans, the top must cover the crotch and bottom when hands are raised, or must have a tank top underneath that is the appropriate length.

Bottom Half

1. Skirts and dresses should extend below knee or lower.
2. Skirts + dresses must not be see-through. Wear a slip or pants underneath if there's any chance of light showing through.
3. No holes in jeans.
4. No "too-tight" pants. No pants that cup around your rear or bring focus to your rear.
5. No pants that focus on your front. Some pants are too tight in this area or have stylistic stitching or coloring that draws the eye there.
6. No leggings.

Shoes + Jewelry

1. Shoes should be appropriate to the outfit. Make sure that you are able to move freely in worship. We suggest breaking in heels before a weekend service.
2. No flip-flops or everyday casual sandals.
3. Keep jewelry simple. Make sure the pieces don't cause unnecessary noise or unusual movement when leading.



GUIDELINES FOR WEEKDAY + SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Weekday Services

1. Attire is more casual depending on the service (i.e. Youth can look more “youthy”).
2. There is no color palette.
3. Same rules as weekend services apply with the following exceptions:

Top Half

- T-shirts are acceptable. Make sure that wording and design placement is appropriate and the shirt isn't too tight.
- Stay away from character or band shirts.

Bottom Half

- Jeans are acceptable, but must not be too tight.

Other

- Hats are acceptable for youth services, but must be approved by worship staff in other environments.
- Casual shoes are acceptable. No flip-flops.

Special Events

Easter, Christmas, Women's Events, etc.

1. Generally, attire is more dressy than casual.
2. You may be asked to bring your clothing for a dress rehearsal check prior to the day of the service to make sure all team clothing is holistically cohesive.

04 PREPARATION + REHEARSALS

Preparation makes way for God's presence.

Preparation

1. Prepare Spiritually

Spend time with God. Pray for the people who will be attending services. A practical way to prepare your heart is by worshiping the Lord with the worship set you are listening to for rehearsal.

2. Practice

Memorize your lyrics and chords to the best of your ability before rehearsal.

3. Planning Center

Check throughout the week for updates. From time to time songs will change later in the week.

Rehearsal

1. Be early

If you're on time, you're late. Be ready to rehearse and in position before all scheduled rehearsal and service times begin. Official rehearsal and service times are listed on Planning Center.

2. Be flexible

Be prepared to make any changes to the arrangements and production of all songs on the set list. Be willing to work with music/vocal directors while exhibiting a positive attitude.

05 PLATFORM PRESENCE

Your platform presence is as important as your skill.

1. Use appropriate body language.

Body language is a huge form of communication. We all know what it is like to say one thing with our mouths while our body language is actually saying another. When you are on the platform, your presence is as important as your skill. Your platform presence is simply an outward expression of what is happening on the inside of your heart. Determine to communicate your heart effectively through your body.

2. Smile and be joyful!

We're taking people somewhere in worship, and we want to look like we're happy to go there. It's not mandatory to always smile, but a "lit up" face goes a long way from the platform.

3. Seek out and welcome coaching from your leaders.

Our team is a coaching team. Your leader may ask you to adjust something with your platform presence. For instance, you may be asked to open your eyes more during worship or move around your area a bit more. When you are asked to modify something, please do so. Your leaders care about you and want you to lead others well.

4. Watch yourself on an online service.

There is always room for growth, and one of the best ways to grow is by observing yourself.

5. Make appropriate eye contact.

Always make an effort to look at people as you lead. Sometimes we get insecure or uncomfortable on the platform and we close our eyes to check out. Be aware of this. It's good to see and engage with people while you worship. Don't stare at the confidence monitor because it hinders engagement.

6. Be a tone-setter.

Do not let the perceived engagement level of the congregation determine your level of expression. Sometimes they will not appear engaged in worship. As leaders, we stay engaged anyway. Show them an example of how to express worship. Most of the time, they simply need to see worship in order to learn how to express it on their own. Also, God is at work whether we see it or not.

7. Be sincere.

Worship from your heart. We are leading people from all different circumstances, so remember that a genuine spirit ministers more than you realize.

8. Use proper microphone etiquette.

- When there is an extended period of time in which you're not singing into your microphone, move it away from your face but still continue to sing and worship.
- When you're singing into your microphone, keep it within two inches of your mouth. Trust the audio tech to adjust your volume level in the house mix.
- We are a spirit-filled church, but the platform is not the appropriate place to pray in tongues out loud because we lead both believers and non-believers in worship. Stay in an attitude of prayer and connection to God throughout worship.

9. Express worship.

Move around your area and use your space to the fullest. When there is no movement, the platform can look stagnant. Whether you're singing or playing an instrument, sing along.

10. Be aware of your facial expressions.

Be aware of your "listening face" and "resting face" on the platform. When someone is speaking on the microphone, be sure to watch them and agree with what's being communicated, staying authentic and engaged in the moment.

06 MORAL + PUBLIC GUIDELINES

This is not to be considered a complete rulebook for all personal activity of our team members. It is, however, a document that provides specific guidelines and communication items that we address.

Alcohol + Drug Policy

Team members should not be involved with the unlawful use, possession, sale, or transfer of drugs or narcotics. While alcohol consumption and tobacco use are not prohibited, consumption/use must fall in line with the biblical standard of Christian living. Consuming alcohol in excess is strictly prohibited. Always expect that you are being observed in public and have a “live above reproach” attitude toward alcohol and tobacco.

Sexual Purity

The Word of God is clear that any sexual relationship outside the biblical covenant of marriage between a man and a woman is strictly forbidden. We believe that God has called us to a standard of high accountability when it comes to the relationships we are involved in with other members of the team and with people outside of our team. This high standard requires us to set forth certain guidelines that will ensure that we avoid immorality and the appearance of immorality. For clarification, here are several standards we are committed to:

- We commit to keep our eyes pure and will not allow pornography, inappropriate media, etc, to contaminate our hearts and spirits. (Psalm 101:3)
- We acknowledge that romantic relationships glorify God, and we commit to being accountable to those around us, not engaging in sexual activity that is reserved for the institution of marriage between a man and a woman, and not being behind closed doors with someone of the opposite sex.

Social Media

As someone on the platform at Milestone Church, please keep the following in mind when using social media and interacting with the public on your personal time:

- You are a representative of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God.
- You are a representative of Milestone Church.
- What you post online has the potential to unite or divide, lead or destroy, encourage or discourage.
- Expect everyone to see what you post or comment on.

Milestone Worship Team Members are expected to adhere to our social media policies:

- No nudity or inappropriate pictures.
- No posts that compromise your Christian witness.
- No posts with profanity or comments that contradict Biblical truths.
- No controversial opinions. If it causes conflict or could be a stumbling block, it's not worth posting.
- Be mindful of your followers and who you follow.
- Don't post or say something in the heat of the moment "to make a point".
- Don't engage in political one-sidedness.
- Don't criticize others.
- Don't post negative or embarrassing stories about your spouse or children. Honor your family.
- Don't engage in debates that can be destructive, divisive, hurtful, etc.

You may be asked to take down a questionable post by our worship staff, knowing that they are looking out for your best interest.

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COME AND CHANGE US

Week 1

MILESTONE WORSHIP TEAM GROUND RULES / EXPECTATIONS

Need-to-knows for your Dev process.

DEV

- Dev is a 4-week development process created to help you take next steps in your worship leadership and skills. It does not guarantee that you will be onboarded to an active team after you complete Dev.
- If you need to miss more than 1 session of Dev, we will ask you to reschedule for the next round, so that you can get the most out of our intentional 4-week process.
- Bring your handbook to each session so you can take notes during Team Time.

GROWTH TRACK

- We require everyone on the Milestone Worship Team to complete all 3 steps in our Growth Track process. (Discovery 101, Serve Team 201, Values 301) The Growth Track is essential for aligning all of us with the heart and vision of Milestone Church. This creates unity and ensures that we all believe and are building towards the same thing.
- We are happy to help you take your next step in the Growth Track. Just ask any of our staff team and we can get you started.

HANDBOOK HIGHLIGHTS

- Moral/Public Guidelines (p. 13)
- Preparation (p. 10)
- Team Commitment (p. 3)

Week 2

TEAM CULTURE

WHO WE ARE

- We are One Team with One Vision. That vision is Reaching People, Building Lives.
- Our team gets to serve that vision by creating moments to point people to Jesus in worship environments all over this house!
- There are a few things that we do on our team to make sure we can keep moving that vision forward in a healthy, God-honoring way.

HOW WE KEEP AND CREATE OUR TEAM'S CULTURE

1. We fight for _____.

Psalm 133:1,3 (ESV)

Behold, how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity! ...For there the Lord has commanded the blessing, life forevermore.

We want God's commanded blessing on our team, (it's also more fun to serve on a unified team than a divided one!) so we make the choice to fight for unity—no matter what it takes!

Some ways we do this:

Choosing to be hard to offend.

- We tend to our souls and choose not to let offense take root in our hearts.
- We call ourselves a *spiritual family*, not a community. In families, people offend each other from time to time. It just happens! It's important to work through it quickly.
- We forgive quickly, as God forgave us.

“Putting trust in the gap” and believing the best about our teammates.

- The enemy is the accuser of the brethren, always looking for ways to bring division in a team.
- It's easy to be suspicious, but we actively fight against the enemy's schemes by *choosing trust over suspicion*.
- If you are ever unsure about something, seek clarity by having a needed conversation.

Not allowing gossip.

- **Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)**

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

- We as a team squash a gossip spirit anytime we see it.

Processing through the right channels.

- “Processing” can easily become gossip—process with the right people. (Someone who can actually help solve what you’re processing or dealing with.)

Building relationships with each other.

- This isn’t a team of gigging musicians! This is a team made up of like-minded people, planted in the same spiritual family. We want to know and love each other accordingly!

2. We encourage and _____ to everyone.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (MSG)

So speak encouraging words to one another. Build up hope so you’ll all be together in this, no one left out, no one left behind.

There are so many negative voices in the world telling us what we AREN’T, so we want our team to be a place where you hear who God says you ARE.

Adding value and encouraging doesn’t cost you anything, it just takes intentionality.

Some practical ways we do this:

- Give someone a hug or a high five.
- Ask someone about their week.
- If you see it, say it. If you see a teammate winning in an area, tell them. It’s not an encouragement until you say it out loud!
- Talk to someone on the team you haven’t met before.
- Pray for a teammate when you serve together.

3. We are always _____ and _____.

Psalm 92:13 (NLT)

They are planted in the house of the Lord; they flourish in the courts of our God.

Here's what it looks like to be planted and growing in the house of the Lord:

- You attend weekend services when you aren't scheduled on the worship team.
- You serve on other teams within the church. Worship rotation can be broad, so it's important that you have other ways that you contribute to the body!
- You participate with our spiritual family in serving the community through events like Serve Day.
- You are involved in small groups.
- You are accountable to a pastor or leader in your life.
- You're taking next steps. (Baptism, joining a small group, leading a small group, completing 301, etc.)

4. We clothe ourselves in _____.

Colossians 3:12-14 (MSG)

So, chosen by God for this new life of love, dress in the wardrobe God picked out for you: compassion, kindness, humility, quiet strength, discipline. Be even-tempered, content with second place, quick to forgive an offense. Forgive as quickly and completely as the Master forgave you.

- We make a choice daily to **PUT ON** kindness and humility.
- We want the posture of our hearts to honor and please God when we step on the platform to lead.
- We recognize that hearts and lives aren't changed or moved by our gifts, but by God's presence.
- Our prayer is always that the eyes of people will be deflected **off of us** and **onto Jesus**.

5. We ask for, receive, and lead in God's _____ of the Holy Spirit.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (NIV)

Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Luke 4:18 (NIV)

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

- There's a difference between being talented and anointed.
- We can't rely on our gifting and talents to lead people in worship.
- We desire God's anointing because we know we can't change hearts and lives—only God can do that.
- You receive anointing as you consecrate yourself to God. Consecration means a willing choice to be set apart and honor God with your heart, mind, body, and soul.

Week 3

WORSHIP LEADING 101

There's a difference between being a lead singer/musician and being a lead worshiper.

Worship leading is all about service.
Serving God, and serving the people that are in our congregation.

It is less about us and our giftings, and all about pointing attention and honor to Jesus.
Worship is FOR God.

As worship leaders, we need to ask ourselves some questions:

- Am I more about performance or presence?
- Am I more into style or spirit?
- Am I leading FOR acceptance or FROM acceptance?

<p>PERFORMANCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Stage -Lights -“Doing my thing” -Showing my talent -How I sound and look -Leading people to yourself 	<p>PRESENCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -“I don’t know why God put me here, but I’m going to steward this with humility and God-confidence” -Knowing where you’re leading people - ushering people into God’s presence -Giving your gifts, that GOD GAVE YOU, back to Him in service and worship to Him -Leading people to something greater than yourself -“The perfect worship service was the one you were most unaware of.” –CS Lewis
<p>STYLE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Only interested in playing and leading according to your preferences -More concerned about the latest style/ expression of worship than leading the people of your congregation with you 	<p>SPIRIT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Worship isn’t a trend, it’s eternal. -Be more about the spirit of worship than the latest style of worship. -More concerned about bringing EVERYONE along in the worship journey - meeting people where they’re at instead of playing what you think is cool and hoping people come along.

FOR ACCEPTANCE:

- Insecure
- What can I get from this?
- Does everyone like me?
- How did I sound?

FROM ACCEPTANCE:

- Knowing you are a loved son or daughter of God
- For some reason, God placed me here—so I will lead with God-confidence
- Not worried about what people think
- More concerned with what God thinks about the posture of your heart in worship

As worship leaders, we carry an incredible weight and privilege. We want to always steward this well and with humility.

No matter if you're a vocalist leading out on a song, or if you're a drummer who is in the cage...there are few principles we like to be reminded of when stewarding this calling and weight:

1. When leading worship, we worship _____ while we bring _____ with us.

Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV)

Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Deuteronomy 10:8 (NIV)

At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and to bless the people in his Name, as they still do today.

As worship leaders, we are called to be carriers of the presence of God, minister to the Lord and speak blessings over people.

Worship leadership is the unique balance of worshipping God and leading/serving people.

If we have both eyes on God, we can easily get lost in "our moment" and we leave people behind. If we have both eyes on people, we can get stuck in performance.

2. You can't lead people to a place you _____.

Whatever you cultivate in private is what you will bring each time you lead on the worship team. It will be out of an overflow of that closeness.

The path to God's presence should be well-worn in our personal lives so we can lead people there.

We are called to worship Jesus both on and off the platform, the seen and unseen of our lives. It's what we were created to do!

3. The best worship leaders are those who lead well _____ the platform.

Being a worship leader is much more about who we are when we are not on a platform than what we do for 20 minutes during a service.

It's the way we steward relationships, the way we handle conflict, the way we live when no one is looking, It's our personal walk with Jesus behind closed doors.

4. We understand that worship is more than just music in a service. Worship is _____.

We worship things that we value.

We value things that we love.

When you love something, you make sacrifices for that thing.

Sacrifice is a giving of something that costs something.

In the Old Testament, you had to make a sacrifice at the bronze altar before you could enter the temple...that was foreshadowing of the need for the atonement of sin so that peace could be made and relationship restored with God.

Sacrifice is woven all throughout the Bible, but the best picture is Jesus' atoning sacrifice for us.

Hebrews 10:4 (NIV)

It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.

Those other sacrifices would never have been enough. That's why we needed Christ. Jesus' sacrifice is meant to inspire us to the same kind of sacrifice in our lives.

Romans 12:1 (NIV)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.

It's important as worshipers to ask ourselves regularly—when was the last time I sacrificed to honor God?

5. The talent you've been given is a _____ designed to be used for the Kingdom of God.

Our musical talents are merely gifts which we can glorify God and serve others.

They are FROM Him, and now we turn around and use them FOR Him.

Week 4

NEXT STEPS / RECAP

At the end of our time, each of you will sync up with a staff member to discuss what your best next steps will be.

- This could be going through Dev again to continue developing in a skill, being placed on a next gen team, or being placed on an active weekend team.
- It's important to note that if you are placed on our active weekend team, you may be asked to serve at any/all of our local campuses.

What were your takeaways from Dev?



KEEP GROWING

Words of Praise

In the original text of the Bible, there are several words that each translate to English as “praise”, but they each have specific meanings when you trace them back. All of these are ways we express praise to God.

YADAH

To revere or worship with extended hands. To hold out the hands. To throw a stone or arrow.

Psalm 67:3 (NIV)

May all the peoples praise (yadah) You, God; may all the peoples praise (yadah) You.

Psalm 138:2 (NIV)

I will bow down toward your holy temple, and will praise (yadah) your name for your unfailing love and your faithfulness, for you have so exalted your solemn decree that it surpasses your fame.

Important details:

- Yad-ah is found 111 times in Scripture.
- Explained those times when the Hebrew people were so overcome by the glory of the Lord that their hands shot up in praise.

Questions:

- Did you grow up in a tradition where the lifting of the hands was normal?
- Remember the first time you raised your hands in worship. What was it like?
- What is a song that represents this form of praise well?

HALAL

To praise the Lord by celebrating, by dancing and shining forth, by acting clamorously foolish.

Psalm 150:1-2 (NIV)

Praise (halal) the Lord. Praise (halal) God in his sanctuary; praise (halal) him in his mighty heavens. Praise (halal) him for his acts of power; praise (halal) him for his surpassing greatness.

Psalm 149:3 (NIV)

Let them praise (halal) His name with dancing and make music to Him with timbrel and harp.

Important details:

- Halal occurs 99 times in Scripture.
- Word from which we get Hallelujah
- True halal contemplates laying aside your inhibitions and killing your self-consciousness
- “The most valuable thing the psalms do for me is to express the same delight in God which made David dance.” –C.S. Lewis

Questions:

- Why do you think some people are hesitant to express their celebration in a church gathering?
- When you praise God in a public setting, how conscious are you of others around you?
- What are some songs that fit this form of praise?

ZAMAR

To make music. To praise the Lord with the playing of an instrument.

Psalm 108:1 (NIV)

My heart, O God, is steadfast; I will (zamar) sing and make music with all my soul.

Psalm 144:9 (NIV)

I will sing a new song to you, my God; on a harp of ten-strings I will (zamar) make music to you...

Important details:

- Zamar appears 41 times in Scripture.
- Music is powerful – reaches places in the human soul mere words can't reach.
- Music calmed Saul's tormented soul.
- 2 Kings 3:15-16 - Elisha asks for a harpist before he spoke his message.

Questions:

- When was the last time I simply played my instrument for God alone?
- When was the last time I felt the power of God in my music, even when no words were sung?
- What song comes to mind that fits this form of praise?
- What role has music played in your walk with God?

“Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world. Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul; it is one of the most magnificent and delightful presents God has given us.” – Martin Luther

TOWDAH

Thanksgiving. A confession. A sacrifice of praise. Thanksgiving for things not yet received. A choir of worshippers.

It also means an extension of the hand.

However, the difference between YADAH and TOWDAH is: YADAH is a reaction to God's glory, TOWDAH is a response to what He has done or we believe He will do.

Psalm 50:23 (NIV)

Those who sacrifice thank offerings (offer towdah) honor me, and to the blameless I will show my salvation.

Psalm 56:11-12 (NIV)

In God I trust and am not afraid. What can man do to me? I am under vows to you, my God; I will present my thank offerings (offer towdah) to you.

Important Details:

- To thank God for what He has done, but to also offer a sacrifice of praise for things not yet received.
- Praising God with expectation – a way to convey trust in the goodness of God.
- We must remember to have a heart of thanksgiving but also a heart of expectation in worship.

“True worship that is pleasing to God creates within the human heart a spirit of expectation and insatiable longing.” – Tozer

Questions:

- What song comes to mind in relation to this form of praise?
- Think about and discuss a time when you have seen God answer a specific prayer or need that you had.
- Is there something that you are currently asking God for? Have you offered praise (towdah) in faith that He would answer you?

BARAK

To kneel. To bless God (as an act of adoration and humility). To praise. To salute. To thank.

Psalm 95:6 (NIV)

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before (barak) the Lord our Maker.

Psalm 72:11,15 (NIV)

May all kings bow down to him (barak) and all nations serve him.; Long may he live! May gold from Sheba be given him. May people ever pray for him and bless him all day long.

Important Details:

- Barak embodies the notion of recognizing one’s position in relation to God. It’s the moment when we see God for who He truly is...in all of His splendor and glory. This is a word demonstrating humility. This is also when we must see ourselves in the correct light: sinners in need of a Savior.
- Used 289 times in the Psalms.
- On each occurrence, it’s used to describe worshippers falling on their faces before God in reverence, adoration, and thanks
- Scholars believe this Hebrew word in its original context did not simply mean to bow down. Instead, it carried the connotation of bending low while keeping one’s eyes fixed on the king.
- It means to be transfixed.
- Psalm 103:1-2 - Bless the LORD, O my soul; all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all His kind deeds.
- Psalm 103:20-22 - Bless the LORD, O my soul, and do not forget all His kind deeds—; Bless the LORD, all His angels mighty in strength who carry out His word, who hearken to the voice of His command.
- David uses the word as a repetitive hook.
- He commands all things to “barak” the King.

Questions:

- Do you remember the last time you “baraked” before the Lord?

TEHILLAH

A hymn. A song of praise. A new song. A spontaneous song.

Psalm 22:3

But You are holy, Enthroned in the praises (tehillah) of Israel.

Important Details:

- God loves your new song of praise- the song that comes from your inmost being.
- A new song is evangelistic:
- Psalm 40:3 - He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear and put their trust in the Lord.

Questions:

- Have you ever sang out loud your own song to God?
- What are some examples of this form of worship that you have heard before?

SHABACH

To address in a loud tone. To shout. To commend, glory, and triumph.

Psalm 145:4

One generation shall praise (shabach) Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts.

Important Details:

- A shout of praise is also connected to breakthrough- a triumph.
- The Bible instructs us to shout joyfully. It also expresses exuberance and excitement.

Questions:

- What events have you shouted at and who was it for?
- Have you ever shouted in church?

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