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PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC MINISTRY

“PRAISE TO THE LORD, THE ALMIGHTY”

I believe that the ultimate purpose of music is to bring glory to God. From grand choral performances with orchestras to the simplest of solos sung by a child, music in the church should be a gift to God, offered in thanksgiving and praise. While music brings both the listener and the performer a sense of fulfillment, music is also a means through which believers can examine and express their devotion to God. Music provides an outlet for our emotions and can convey our deepest sadness and our most profound joy. Music is the language of the soul, and its connection to our faith is forever linked. As a result, I believe music in the church should always be viewed through the lens of worship and never approached as a type of performance.

“BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS”

I believe that music ministries should provide a place for individuals to share their God-given talents while being encouraged through fellowship with other believers. Small groups in the church are essential for support and provide wonderful outlets for teamwork. Many choirs are like a family, and such relationships are an important aspect of ministry, especially in larger churches. Music is also an effective tool for attracting potential members to a church, and can even be a channel through which people come to know God. Most significantly, choir families can be tremendous support systems for those who are suffering pain or loss. Music binds people together, and as a result, ensemble participation can bring about hope and healing.

“ORDER MY STEPS”

I believe that in order for a music ministry to function to its full ability, it must be well organized. Music for worship should be planned in a long-range fashion and rehearsed weeks out. Calendars and schedules should be published well in advance and in coordination with other church and community activities. Music libraries and equipment should be properly maintained, and choir rosters and contact information should be updated often in order to ensure accurate communication with ensemble members. Music budgets should be used in a responsible way, and programs should be evaluated on a yearly basis in order to achieve maximum effectiveness. Policies and procedures should be adhered to, and the workings of committees within the ministry should function in a way that brings about true progress and change.

“MANY GIFTS, ONE SPIRIT”

I believe that music in the church should be diverse and that an effective music ministry should not be defined by any one particular style of music. Diversity of style is necessary for true ecumenical worship, and more accurately reflects the diversity found within the body of Christ. A good music program in today's culture should be able to present a wide range of repertoire, including but not limited to Classical masterworks, hymn arrangements, spirituals, gospel music, and even tasteful arrangements of contemporary Christian music. While music in worship should never be dictated by our own musical desires, fresh and eclectic music in worship ensures active participation by members of the congregation.

“WONDERFUL WORDS OF LIFE”

Rather than be defined by style, I believe that music should be defined by quality. Musical texts should contain sound theology that mirrors that of the congregation or denomination, and the texts of hymns and anthems should always point worshippers toward the Scripture texts used in the worship service. Music should also feature beautiful melodies and harmonies that are not only of the finest compositional integrity but also pleasing to the ear. More importantly, I believe that music should be executed to the best abilities of the conductor and those under his charge, reflecting not only the beauty of the composition but also the utmost and fervent spirituality on behalf of the musicians. The devotion we put forth in our music reflects our devotion to God.

“TAKE MY LIFE AND LET IT BE”

I believe that music in the church is a tool through which musicians and parishioners alike can be educated about their faith. In this way, music ministry provides an outlet for growth in many areas of our spiritual lives. Music conveys theology, music celebrates and learns from the past, and music challenges and inspires us toward the future. Ensemble participation provides musicians with numerous opportunities for discipline, accountability, and commitment, all of which reflect and support our relationship with God. Finally, I believe that a music ministry should empower musicians to reach their full potential and inspire total participation in the life of the church and its ministries. Responsibilities should be shared by all involved, with musicians working together to carry out the essential functions of ministry.