

Music Ministry Plan for 2010

Through prayer and counsel with others, I have come up with a plan for the TABC music ministry I believe to be pleasing to God for various reasons:

- a. it focuses on God and not ourselves
- b. it gives us more time and opportunity to achieve excellence
- c. it involves more people in a more meaningful way, though sometimes not as frequently

I am excited about this new direction. If we are successful in implementing these ideas, I believe that we will more fully realize God's vision for the church by improving musically and hopefully spiritually. There are many aspects that I believe will be exciting for us as musicians and as members of the church at large.

That said, I realize that certain changes may need to be made as we discover together what works and what doesn't work. Still, God has given me a peace about these ideas even though I realize that there may be some concern and even disappointment. Still, the intention of this new plan is to discover what God is doing in our midst and design our music ministry to fit His vision, even if it stretches us as Christians and musicians.

I am open to suggestions and concerns and am willing to listen and even change as needed, but I really want to encourage you to stick with this plan even if it is difficult. I'm sure there will be details we will need to tweak as we go, but this plan is based on the vision God has given me and I want to implement it and see what God does with it.

The Plan

1. Resuming special music—reintroducing solos and ensembles to Sunday morning worship with greater frequency

We will resume using solos and ensembles, both vocal and instrumental, in the worship service and in special services. We will not follow a schedule where certain people or groups are assigned to a certain day; instead, anyone who is interested will pray about and select songs to learn and play or sing and I will utilize you in the service when the timing is right. You also can help determine the timing, and I'll address that later. Additionally, I may sometimes request that you sing and/or play it for me before I schedule it. This will give me the opportunity to work with you to better achieve excellence in the song and make sure the selection fits with your strengths as a musician.

2. Praise Team—adding singers to the praise team to lead Sunday morning worship on a semi-regular basis

We will begin to incorporate singers on a more regular basis as a part of the praise band for Sunday morning worship. The praise team singers may not be utilized every week, but the default will be that we will have singers with the band on Sunday mornings. The plan will be to use 1 to 3 singers with the praise team on a given week according to a schedule that I will make. They will be selected from a pool of singers to be determined by audition on a date to be determined, and I will try to enlist at least one person outside of TABC to help me make those tough decisions.

Qualifications are as follows:

- a. relationship with the Lord
- b. ability to stay on pitch and blend with other singers
- c. possession of a good sense of rhythm
- d. ability to sing a harmony part if needed
- e. good stage presence—not overly dramatic but pleasant, confident demeanor
- f. ability and willingness to model gestures like clapping, raising hands, smiling, etc.
- g. presence at weekly discipleship class (currently Sun eve at 7:30pm)

Currently, we meet on Wednesday nights, but we are considering changing to Thursday nights in order to accommodate other music ministry needs on Wednesday night and to better accommodate the schedules of the current praise team.

3. The role of the choir—increasing our focus on anthems for special music and decreasing the choir's presence on Sunday mornings

The role of the choir will change in that we will focus more on special music. Because we will begin regularly using singers in the praise band, we will no longer have the choir on stage in the morning worship services on a regular basis, though I may decide to occasionally utilize the choir in a morning service along with the praise band. Instead, the focus of the choir will be geared more toward special music to be sung in morning worship probably about once a quarter. This is likely to be in addition to special events we will work toward. So from now on, the default is to *not* have a choir in the loft on Sunday mornings, but I will give you advance notice if it changes. However, we will still be meeting as a choir weekly to work toward the accomplishment of other

musical goals. The hope is that this will not only maintain the unity of our fellowship, but will also help us to grow musically.

4. Ensembles—incorporating vocal and instrumental ensembles for special music

We will begin to incorporate ensembles for special music throughout the year

- a. Ladies' ensemble (Linda, Jeanene, Jackie & Brenda)
- b. Handbells (William, Brenda W., Lynn, Della Goings, Kali Hewitt, Sandy Dudley & myself) which will practice on Sundays at 330pm.
- c. Other ensembles—if you want to sing in a duet or trio, or have an idea for another type of ensemble, let me know. After assessing it, I will let you know if and when we can put it on the schedule.

5. Music Theory—teaching sightreading and basic music theory to improve the singing and musicianship of the choir and others who are interested

We will begin teaching music theory to the choir and anyone else who is interested. (I plan to open this up to the church). My primary goal is to teach you to read music, but this will also help develop sense of pitch, rhythm, tempo, etc., and will just make you all feel a lot smarter! ☺ The time will probably be right after prayer meeting on Wednesday nights, from 7:45 to 8:00, or longer if we have time and want to continue. On evenings when we have a scheduled rehearsal for choir or another ensemble, the rehearsal will begin at 8:00 immediately following the music theory time.

6. Calendar—dates to look forward to: 6/27/10 and 12/19/10

I have looked at the calendar for the rest of the year and have planned two special events that will involve solos and ensembles at times other than Sunday morning worship:

- a. 6/27/10 – Evening of Music. This will be like a Christian talent show, so to speak. I would like to utilize at least one choir piece, one song from each other ensemble, some congregational singing, and several solos and ensembles, very similar to last year's Christmas program. However, there will not be a particular theme, so subject matter will not be as much of an issue, as long as it is Christian in nature and not secular.
- b. 12/19/10 – Christmas cantata to be determined. I hope to find a good cantata that will utilize as many aspects of our music ministry as

possible. If I can't find one, I'll use different sources and compile them into a cantata myself.

Notes about selecting music for special music

Generally, I will know a week or two ahead what Rudy or the guest preacher is preaching on, so I won't have much advance notice of the sermon text and topics. Thus, if there is a song you really want to sing, you can submit it to me, but it may be a while before we can fit it unless its content is pretty generic (like general praises to God or Jesus, or a song about God's love, etc.)

However, there are two things you can do to help you decide what songs to do based on theme:

1. Read the book of Romans, starting at Romans 9. Rudy has been in Romans for several months and is likely to be in Romans for some time. If you read Romans 10, for example, and a song comes to mind, you might consider that one and let me know so we can watch for it to fit when Rudy gets to that passage. It could be a couple of weeks or it might be months, but at least we would have the knowledge of it coming up eventually.
2. Consider the calendar. Even though Rudy will likely not plan his sermons based on the calendar, doing a special song for a special day could work even if Rudy is preaching on something completely different. This includes days like Mother's Day (5/9), Pentecost (5/23), Memorial Day (5/30), Father's Day (6/20), Thanksgiving (11/21), and Advent/Christmas (11/28 plus the Sundays in December). You may also notice other spiritual days like National Day of Prayer or a Missions Focus Day in which particular songs might be applicable.