**WORSHIP TEAM MANUAL**

****

**WHY WE SERVE?**

As a church located in the North East, VAST exists in the most unchurched region in America. Every Sunday we encounter people who have never been to church and have negative expectations about the church experience. The Worship Team plays a critical role in changing the expectations of our guests and engaging people to worship our savior. Just as John the Baptist prepared the way for Jesus, we do this because hearts need preparation to be receptive to the Gospel. People enter the service from a secular culture that is spiritually unaware. Worship is the door to the heart. As we lead people to worship they are prepared to meet with Jesus. As a church in a heavily unchurched region, the worship experience can be the difference that allows an unchurched guest to come a second time and ultimately become a follower of Jesus.

**MISSION**

The Worship Team exists to lead people to Jesus through the musical expression of worship that prepares hearts for the word of God and facilitates the response to the word of God.

**IDENTIFYING THE WIN**

* We win when our guests are engaged and participate in worshipping God.
* We win when people are ready to take the next step to be receptive to the gospel message.
* We win when our guests leave desiring to worship again the following week.

**VALUES**

**SKILLFUL MUSCIANSHIP**

* We will offer our best to God as we create a distraction free environment where our mistakes don’t hinder people from worshiping our Savior. We believe skill matters to God, and it matters to us.
* We will only use skilled musicians who excel at their talent. We believe God commends skill and uses it for His glory. In 1 Chronicles 15:22 David chose Kenaniah to lead singing he did so because “ he was skillful at it”. Also, David writes in Psalm 33:3 that musicians are to “play skillfully on their strings”. And, in the New Testament Paul refers to himself as “ a skilled master builder”. With our musicians we believe that our skills are a gift from God that are to be developed and used for His Glory (1 Corinthians 4:7).
* Musicians who are skilled at their talent are able to focus more so on God during the worship set because they know their instrument well, plus, they are able to serve the church by offering their talents to enable the people of the church to worship through singing.

**GOSPEL CENTERED, SEEKER AWARE**

* We will ensure VAST is a place where Jesus is the focus of our worship. Song lyrics should help us learn about Jesus and glorify what he has done for us. Because we are gospel centered we will not compromise anything. Because we are seeker aware we will explain everything. Our hope is to worship in a way where people will be more impressed with our Savior than our sound.

**PERSONAL** ENGAGEMENT

* We will consistently create worship opportunities that engage every guest to participate in singing simple/singable songs, raising hands, clapping, etc. We value engagement over creativity. The goal of creativity is to help create engagement. We value engagement over production value

**HOLY SPIRIT EMPOWERED**

* We do not neglect the Holy Spirit by planning in advance. We know God sent his Spirit to help us, and through personal and group prayer we rely on the Spirit to help guide us in our planning process (Ephesians 6:18, Romans 8:26). Also, during a specific weekend we may choose to replace a song or not play a song based of our feelings of what God is saying to us through his Spirit. We are constantly relying on the Holy Spirit to speak to us and we are not locked in to songs since they are already planned for a service.

**PASSIONATE CELEBRATION**

* We believe it’s our responsibility to lead people in celebration of what God has done and is doing, and in response to what Jesus through his death and resurrection and the fact that He is alive today.
* Many times we seem to forget how “big” God is, and that the only way to God is through Jesus. Part of the role of the worship music experience is to remind the people of what God has done, and what He is doing. David writes in Psalm 145:3,” Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable.” David’s starting point in worship begins with thinking about, magnifying, and responding to the greatness of God.
* We try to follow this example by beginning our worship set with upbeat, celebratory songs that express the greatness of God. For example, we will sing songs which invite the people to sing out in response to what God has done for us by sending His son to receive our punishment, therefore, creating a way to the Father through Jesus. These songs also help to draw attention to the need of God in our lives.
* Upbeat songs excite people and stir up emotions of love for a God Who is worthy of our praise. Bob Kauflin writes,” While it’s simplistic to say that worship is love, it’s a fact that what we love most will determine what we genuinely worship.” We want to stir up and encourage emotions for our God.

**WORSHIP MUSIC PHILOSOPHY**

Every weekend service includes 15-20 minutes of corporate singing led by a worship band and 10 minutes of music to facilitate a response to the preaching of the word of God. All throughout the Bible we see that music is used in many ways to respond to God for the many things He has done for His people. We believe worship matters. We believe worship matters to God because ultimately He is the One worthy of all our worship, and it matters to us because worshiping God is the reason for which we were created.

* At VAST.Church, we plan a worship music experience that is focused on magnifying the greatness of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. We do this by skillfully combining Scripture with music to motivate the people of the church to respond to God through singing (or turn their attention to God).
* We prefer upbeat and celebration over intimate and thoughtful. There is nothing wrong with those kind of songs but they should be reserved for special moments and not ﬁll the majority of the worship time.
* We prefer to end the service with something loud and memorable. Whether it be a song or other performance element, we prefer people leaving on a high note.
* We prefer to open the service with a high energy song.
* We prefer to program with the unchurched in mind.
* We prefer to ﬁlter the lyrics and song choices through the eyes and ears of unchurched men. If a line or phrase is confusing or “Christianese,” it should be explained.
* We prefer music and service elements that are attractive to men over women.
* We prefer the music styles within the digital/top40 genre and prefer the audio level to be loud. When we choose to sing familiar hymns, they should also resemble this style and genre.
* We prefer a mix of songs that people will sing and enjoy with only one new or newer tune each week.
* We prefer to plan all spoken elements during the music set and do not like long spoken transitions. Short intros or verses quoted are great but should be rehearsed and planned ahead of time.
* We prefer the worship leader to work on transitions as much as on the songs themselves. Transitions make a set clean and more professional.
* We prefer the worship leader to lead people in worship and not just worship personally, or vice versa. Both attitudes are critically important and should not exist without the other.
* We prefer the singer and musicians to make eye-contact and engage the audience. The leader’s eyes should be open 80% of the time.
* We prefer to connect all of our elements with the current theme and message but that is not always possible. Some songs are just awesome to sing. The song right before the message and right after the message should ﬁt the best. Other songs may just be great songs. If they all ﬁt the theme, it is a big win but an unsingable song that ﬁts the theme will not fulﬁll our bigger purpose

**SERVING DETAILS**

What is the most important thing I do?

It is of utmost importance that you authentically pursue a relationship with Jesus as a worshipper. Be sure to prepare your heart each week prior to leading in worship. You are responsible to meet with Jesus not just lead others to Jesus.

When do I show up and how long do I serve?

If you have been approved for Sunday worship, team members on should arrive by the call time given by your Location Worship Leader for sound check and transitions practice.

You should take your position 3 minutes prior to the start of the next experience and remain in place until the announcement video. During the message you should be seated with the rest of the crowd. Return upon the request of the pastor.

You will be scheduled to serve through an online management tool called Planning Center and via direct communication with the worship coordinators.

How much time will this take?

1-2 hours of individual practice will be followed by 2 hours of team practice. (3-4 hours of preparation)

Every team member will serve during all VAST experiences. You should plan for 5 hours of commitment on what ever day you serve.

Who do I contact if I have a question?

Pastor Brenton

Brenton.Johnson@Vast.Church

4173798821

What is the length of my commitment?

Once you have completed the Next Steps process and join the team we recommend a 1-year commitment.

You will be assessed to determine your skill level. A skill development plan will be created to help you understand your weaknesses and how you can improve in order to be allowed to participate in leading during an experience. You will be allowed to attend worship practice, as you are developing the necessary skills to reach the defined level appropriate to play in an experience. The lead worship coordinator will determine when you are ready for participation.

**What should I wear?**

You have heard the old saying that you only get one chance to make a first impression. Make sure to wear clothing that does not draw attention to yourself; but instead, points to the bigger conversation happening in the worship environment.