

SPRING 2024



GRACELIFE
— C H U R C H —
WORSHIP

BAND HANDBOOK

GRACE LIFE CHURCH

WHY WE EXIST

One of the greatest responsibilities and privileges we have is to praise God. Some of us are fortunate to be able to use our God-given talent and time to lead His people from the platform in worship. Throughout the Psalms and Scriptures, we are called to worship God, whether by voice and shouting, cymbals and instruments or drums and trumpets. Offering ourselves is also our spiritual act of worship (Romans 12:1-2). Leading in worship is just one of the many ways that we accomplish our purpose: True Life Church guides people to take the next steps in their relationship with Jesus Christ.

Not everyone is called to serve on the platform, however. There are several things that are required to lead in this capacity:

- belief in God, saved by Jesus, baptized into the faith
- heart to serve & attitude
- musical skill & excellence
- time & commitment
- character & integrity
- teamwork & flexibility

The above list not only covers the basics of belonging to the team, they are also the steps toward removal from the team if not present. 1 Chronicles 25:7 says, “All the musicians were trained and skilled in music for the Lord.” Therein lies our responsibility as worship leaders. Before we cover these areas that define our band culture/ethos, let’s start from the beginning.

JOINING THE BAND

The process to see if you're a good fit here at Grace Life Worship is fairly simple. If you have an interest in using your talents with the team, here are the expectations:

- start with a conversation with the Worship Leader expressing your interest
- read through this Handbook and talk to the Worship Leader about any questions
- set up an account on PlanningCenter (free) for song access and scheduling
- download the MusicStand app (free) to connect to planning center for songs
- the Worship Leader will arrange for you to attend your first rehearsal
- Attend between 1-8 rehearsals (up to the discretion of the Worship Leader)
- The Worship Leader will work with you about when/if you're able to join the team

This process helps our leadership assess your musical ability, commitment and attitude over time before allowing anyone onto the platform. Anyone serving on the platform becomes a representative of both Christ and our church; therefore the heart and ability of everyone serving is supremely important.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to the Worship Leader.

DRESS CODE

The platform is the most visible place in our church, both in person and our livestream. As leaders, we need to remember that modesty is important to represent who we are and who we are in Christ.

- no t-shirts (yes, even Grace Life shirts) unless under a jacket/button down shirt
- no printed/graphic t-shirts
- no flip-flops (women's sandals with a heel are appropriate)
- no hats
- no shorts
- women - modest necklines, no visible cleavage, no short dresses/skirts (knee-length)
- no pants that are too tight/revealing
- no see-through/revealing shirts
- avoid plain white (it messes with our livestream camera settings)

EXPECTATIONS & REQUIREMENTS

BE A SAVED, BAPTIZED BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST

This is central to our leadership on the platform: How can we lead people into something we don't believe or faith that we aren't obedient to? In Matthew 28, Jesus laid out for us the "Great Commission" to make disciples of all nations and baptize them in the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism is being obedient to Christ's command, and we can make disciples even from the stage. We can raise up people in the church with worship, as well as mentor the next generation of worship leaders as they join the band. An ongoing and growing faith is desired, and regular band devotionals and discussion will also be an asset to this development.

HEART TO SERVE & ATTITUDE

Out of the overflow of our hearts, our mouths speak; that's even more important for us on the platform and behind microphones. Every member must come with a teachable spirit, ready to serve the needs of the song, the service or the team above the self. A good attitude is commendable and obvious; a bad attitude will open to doors to conversations about leaving the team or taking a break for a while.

MUSICAL SKILL & EXCELLENCE

To join Grace Life Worship, basic musical skills have to be present and practiced. To stay involved with the team, those skills must be maintained and/or improved. We are committed to excellence, giving God our best in rehearsal, on the weekend gatherings, and throughout our own practice time. Individual practice is expected, and members must know the songs at a competent and ready-to-lead level before rehearsal begins.

TIME & COMMITMENT

Your commitment level will be integral to the overall health and ability of the team. Again, practice individually throughout the week and in advance of rehearsals is expected. Also, a member will commit to making rehearsal weekly, and if not able to, *may* not play/sing/lead the following weekend, per the worship leader's request or allowance. Obviously, life happens. Not only will things sometimes come up that complicate schedules, but regular time away can be healthy. It is the expectation that 7/8 Sundays, our church sees the same team on the platform. Playing, worshiping and leading together helps develop a team dynamic and gel, helps scheduling and song planning, as well as church response in worship. Use Planning Center to block out dates you are unavailable weeks in advance as possible, preferably a month out. The Worship Leader's goal is to schedule out a month at a time with freedom for change throughout the month.

CHARACTER & INTEGRITY

A good leader has both of these qualities, and we all are leaders on the platform. Your character and integrity are shown, however, more *off* the stage than *on*. Staying active throughout our church and during the Sunday service (not checked out when off the platform), what you say and how you support the church mission/purpose are all simple ways you can exhibit this, as well as maintaining a positive outlook and genuinely trying to connect with our church on Sunday mornings. The goal is to live a life above reproach and avoid the appearance of evil; this includes things like alcohol abuse, misusing drugs or medications (legally or illegally), and social media profiles/posts inconsistent with a Christ-following lifestyle.

TEAMWORK & FLEXIBILITY

Did you know that some sharks can smell one drop of blood in the water from over a mile away? Much in the same way, our church can tell in a minute if we are in unity - or not. The teamwork, attitude and excitement we do (or do not) have for worship is immediately visible/audible, even to an untrained ear or eye. Our goal is to work well together, and adjust through rehearsal or on a Sunday as needed. This requires flexibility: things don't work out as we planned as often as they do. Being a team member with ability to adjust is integral to a healthy team dynamic.

FURTHER INFORMATION

- At no time will a band member ever be financially compensated for their involvement on a regular Sunday morning; Grace Life Worship will be a servant-only group. (Special holiday events *may* be an exception)
- Every person on the platform is considered a leader, with the Worship Leader being a leader of leaders. Whether you're behind an instrument or a microphone, your presence has the same value.
- Rehearsals will strive to begin promptly at the start time, therefore, if you have gear you have to set up, arrive early to get in place/prepared.
- Work together with the Production/Sound Tech for an orderly and productive sound check (this will usually happen at/near the beginning of each rehearsal). Think subtractively in the stage or in-ear monitors: not "what you need more of" but "what you could use less of." This will help with the stage volume balanced with the house volume, as well as not blow your eardrums out!
- Rehearsal = something the BAND does. Practice = something YOU do. A metronome is encouraged for all members for timing, as well as doing vocal warm-ups or scales/modes on your instruments prior to rehearsal.
- Start off by learning the recording & your part of the song as-is. If we all know those parts, that will give us the room to then expand and make it our own version as needed.
- You are encouraged to move & participate on the platform throughout the songs, not stay stoic or like statues; hopefully the worship & songs will get you moving anyway!
- The more band members we have on the platform, the less each is individually responsible for. We will always need to be mindful of a "less is more" approach, and filling out the sound by layering; not every instrument/vocalist will sing or play the entire time or throughout every song.
- Regularly check Planning Center throughout the week for any changes.