

WORSHIP TRAINING - WEEK 1

THE POINT OF WORSHIP TRAINING

Welcome to the first of a few sessions entitled Worship Training. We run these evenings to give people who God has gifted musically an opportunity to start getting involved with the leading worship on Sunday mornings. Over the coming weeks we hope to show you how we 'do' sung worship at Kings, so that when the time comes for you to start being involved you will be able to fit in easily, helping both you and the existing members of the worship team.

Over the next few weeks we will be doing worship training from a spiritual point of view and also from a musical point of view. It is important as 'lead' worshippers in the church (and by that I mean not only the designated leader for that Sunday, but the entire band) we know what it means to worship and that we recognise that worship is not something we just do on Sundays, but it is a way of life. To aid us in this we will be looking at the characteristics of a worshipper and exploring some thoughts on worship. We will then also be using the rest of the time to practise with our instruments to give us time to get used to playing and worshipping together.

LEADING WORSHIP AT KINGS

As mentioned above, we regard everyone playing in the band as a lead worshipper! It is an awesome privilege to be able to do this and the first thing we would urge is that you look to God for everything. Whether it is your playing, your singing, your concentration, anything – if we are a band who trust God to provide everything we need to do the job He has called us to do, it makes it so much easier for God to lead us, so that we can lead His church. It doesn't matter if you are the best musician in the world, or whether you are just average – for God is looking for our 'hearts of worship' – not our 'licks from heaven'. In some ways it is better if we are not the most incredible musicians as God loves to use our weaknesses for His glory, for when we are weak He is oh so strong. The bottom line being that God promises to direct our paths when we acknowledge Him in what we do – let us be a worship team who does this constantly, to help our church and of course, for God's glory.

There are many people who lead worship at Kings and there is a rota to determine who plays when. Each week there is a designated 'leader' and it is their responsibility to lead the practice and choose the songs. We currently have five people who lead worship and these are:

- Gareth Matthews
- Chris Greed
- Alison Rowland

If you are playing in the band you should submit to the leader, as the leaders submit to the leadership of the church. The worship team for the coming Sunday will meet on a Wednesday evening at 7:45pm to go through the songs for Sunday and then meet early on Sunday (usually at 9:45am) to practise them again. If you are not playing on Sunday, please don't attend practises on Wednesday. If you are playing, please ensure you are ready to start at the right times – this would mean that for a guitarist you are set up and in tune, for a singer you are ready and the mics are setup for you to use etc. If you are late, it only holds up everyone else who made an effort to be there on time.

We really love being free in the worship here at Kings. One of the ways we do this is by the use of signals, made by the leader to the rest of the band so that a song can be sung differently as the leader responds to the movement of God's spirit. Each leader's signals may differ slightly, so it is always best to check with a leader you have never played with before! The common signals are:

- To repeat a chorus, the leader will put his / her foot back.
- To get louder, the leader will raise the neck of their guitar or point up with their hands.
- To get quieter, the leader will lower the neck of their guitar or point down with their hands.

It is important to be vigilant while you are playing as our primary focus is to serve the church as we worship our Father in heaven. It can be really distracting if a band is not working together and playing the same parts of the song at the same time!

WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO!

Firstly realise what an awesome privilege it is to be able to lead worship and thank God for it. Ask Him to further your gifts and give you a passion for worshipping Him.

Ensure when you come to practices and to church on Sundays that you are ready to worship God! The Psalmist writes 'Who can ascend the hill of the Lord? He who has clean hands and a pure heart'. As lead worshippers in the church it is important that we act like that whether we are playing or not playing! It may look a bit fake if when we lead worship we enjoy it, get into it and press into God but when we are not leading, we sit at the side and don't engage.

Practice your gift! Wednesdays and Sundays are not times to practise your gifts; they are times to use what you have learnt. In my mind, the more practised you are at a gift from the Lord the easier it is for you to concentrate on what God is doing during the times when you are using it.

Ensure that if you have a problem, or are struggling with something you come and talk about it straight away. We want to be able to support you as you lead worship and so if there is something you are finding difficult, please don't bottle it up - come and chat with any of the leaders.

THE WORSHIP VISION

Kings has a worship vision which outlines some basic principles and long term vision for worship in the church:

1. WORSHIP LEADERS ARE HERE TO SERVE THE CHURCH AND TO SERVE GOD.

I think this is something that we are quite good at anyway, but I think it is 100% important that as worship leaders (and by that I mean everyone who takes part in the band as well as the main gruesome foursome) know what our job is. That is first to serve the church and through that give our all to God in worship.

Being involved with worship is not done:

- To get to play in a band.
- To get good on an instrument.
- To sing and play the songs that we (the band) want to sing.

As a worship team if our focus is on what we can get out of it I think we are heading for disaster. If we do it and 'forget' the church and the congregation and do what we want to do, I think we are also going to come a cropper. As such we need to be a worship team that responds to where people are and serve them out of a love to worship God. We also need to be a team that fully submits to the leadership of the church.

I want people at church to tell us (the team) if we did something that was helpful, but also un-helpful. Also, I would like to see more people getting involved with worship and coming along to things like worship training.

2. 'WORSHIP FIRST, ASK QUESTIONS LATER'.

It is great what happens when we worship God; He can bring healing, restoration, comfort.... the list is endless. He is an unfailing God who loves to look after His people.

However, that should not be our primary reason for worship. Worship is about giving to God, not always receiving from Him. It is about giving glory to God whether we need healing, restoration etc or whether we are content and do not need those things. In my mind, if the main reason for worshipping God is if we need something, then the decision about 'whether or not we bother to worship today' is dependant on us and how we feel - where it should be dependant on what Jesus did on the cross, what God has already done in our lives and just because our God is an awesome God. It is my vision for this church that we are a bunch of selfless worshippers, who are not hindered by the world in their desire to worship our God.

God loves to bless, there is no doubt about that, and He will do when we worship, but our motive should be to worship without expecting to receive anything back. Quite often we can take our ability to worship for granted too. We can focus too much on the 'come as you are' aspect, without paying any attention to 'Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? He who has clean hands and a pure heart'. My vision would see us as a church recognizing that we are not supposed to be in the holy of holies, but it is only by God's grace and by Jesus sacrifice that we can come, and treat our acts of worship with the respect they deserve.

3. LET'S BE HUNGRY.

It is our vision that each person that comes on a Sunday would be hungry to worship God and to listen to Him and act on anything He says. We believe that God wants to use every single person in each of our meetings to give words, to heal, to sing, and to pray for the building of the church. Sometimes in our meetings and it is as if everyone has fallen asleep and it is our desire to look out and see people who are completely awake and seeking the face of God – to be a church that is not satisfied with a 'tingle' but people who are committed to seeking the face of God and seeing what happens.