



**LEADERS GUIDE
FOR ALL**



PSALM 150:

JOIN THE

CRESCEND 



**Music and
Creative Arts**



**SEARCH FOR MUSIC AND
CREATIVE ARTS ON YOUTUBE**

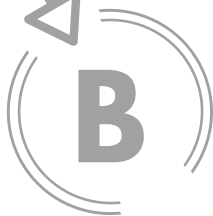


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LEADERS GUIDE FOR ALL

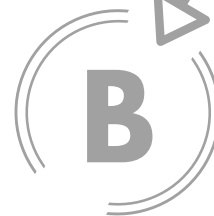


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B

SPECIFIC GUIDES



B

CONTENTS



PSALM 150: JOIN THE CRESCENDO

Introduction	3	Psalm 150
	4	What is 'Join the Crescendo'?
	5	TIDE & values
Topics	6	S piritual enrichment
	7	P astoral skills
	8	E mpowering leadership
	9	A rtistic priorities
	10	R ehearsal delivery
Review	11	Self reflection
	12	What next?
Going Deeper	15	Spiritual enrichment
	17	Pastoral skills
	20	Empowering leadership
	23	Artistic priorities
	26	Rehearsal techniques
Contact us	29	Contact details

'God doesn't want us to be shy with his gifts, but bold and loving and sensible.' - 2 Timothy 1:7 MSG

PSALM 150

Psalm 150 is the driving force behind this resource. As the psalmist depicts a sense of joy and enthusiasm, we hope that you may be able to draw from this in your ministry. God is good and we will praise him in any way possible in the hope that our efforts will join together in a crescendo of praise to the Lord.

'1 Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Praise God in his holy sanctuary!

Praise him in his stronghold in the sky!

2 Praise him for his miracles of might!

Praise him for his magnificent greatness!

3 Praise him with the trumpets blasting!

Praise him with the piano and guitar!

4-5 Praise him with drums and dancing!

Praise him with the loud, resounding clash of the cymbals!

Praise him with every instrument you can find!

*6 Let everyone everywhere **JOIN IN THE CRESCENDO**
of ecstatic praise to Yahweh!*

Hallelujah! Praise to the Lord!

(Psalm 150:1-6 The Passion Translation)



WHAT IS 'JOIN THE CRESCENDO'?

'Join the Crescendo' is an educational resource with video supplements found on YouTube designed for any current and future leaders in The Salvation Army involved in music and creative arts.

'JtC' has been inspired and informed by frontline expressions of Music and Creative Arts across the United Kingdom and Ireland Territory. This comes to you from the Music and Creative Arts team.

This is Guide 'A' which is appropriate for all leaders involved within music and the arts, to help mentor future leaders or current leaders in five themes which are relevant to all.

Ranging from brass and vocal groups to photography and flower arranging teams, this Guide 'A' is the resource to use for advice on **spiritual enrichment, pastoral skills, empowering leadership, artistic priorities** and **rehearsal delivery**.

Guide 'B' follows on from Guide 'A' with specific guidance relevant to your particular discipline.

'JtC' has been created to help enhance your ministry, to enable you and your group to experience the spiritual joy and enthusiasm that the psalmist depicts. The following five themes have been carefully considered to work in sequence so we can strive to help keep God integral to all that we do. We believe that whatever your art form, following the principles and advice that are set out in this resource will result in amazing, God-inspired work for his Kingdom!

'For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.'
(Philippians 4:13 NLT)



TIDE & VALUES

The Salvation Army has different frameworks already in place to help us understand our purpose and mission given from God. The TIDE mission statement and The Salvation Army's values have been re-worded here from a music and creative arts viewpoint.

TIDE

Transformation: Testifying through music and creative arts of the transformational power of Jesus Christ.

Integration: Using music and creative arts ability to bring together people from all backgrounds in worship, making relevant and considered contributions to worship in a way which keeps God at the centre of all we do.

Discipleship: Ensuring devotions are a focus point and emphasising spiritual aspects of our ministry, using Scripture to explore what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

Effectiveness: Putting Jesus at the centre of everything so that our faith is explicit in all we do, being ready to respond to the Holy Spirit.

The Salvation Army values

We have **Integrity** in everything we bring within our ministry, being reliable, trustworthy, transparent and honest in our leadership.

We are **Accountable** to God in every area of our lives and to those we serve alongside within our ministry.

We have **Compassion** for all people; we are inclusive and dignified towards all those within our care as leaders.

We are **Passionate** about unconditionally demonstrating God's love within our relationships, worship, outreach and presentations.

We have **Respect** for people and the planet, seeing the God-given potential in every person within our care and being considerate stewards of our resources and environment.

We are **Bold** in proclaiming the gospel throughout all we do and being readily available to engage within all areas of Salvation Army mission and expression.

SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT

Spiritual enrichment and discipleship are essential to the ministry we undertake.

'Spiritual enrichment is crucial to any group as our primary focus is to draw people closer to God through our arts. As iron sharpens iron our own journey with God inspires others to do the same.' - General John Larsson (R)

Worship: Our offering to the Lord needs to be a genuine expression of praise and thanksgiving. True worship means a natural response to our Father God, celebrating our relationship with Jesus and being open to the movement of the Holy Spirit.
For example... Sometimes there can be the distractions of practicalities, and also our 'service' can become a barrier to our worship.

Prayer: Prayer must underpin who we are and what we do in our ministry. Create a culture of prayer within the group without restriction in every situation.
For example... Create a prayer diary in the run-up to specific events, incorporating all members and providing relevant context to the engagement.

Discipleship: We can sometimes put the needs of our worship and service before the spiritual development of those within our care. Group discipleship and relationship building is helpful to individuals in their own faith journey.
For example... Prioritise retreat times for your group to focus upon spiritual enrichment.

Evangelism: The Christian faith is by definition evangelistic. So by serving our communities and being outgoing, we live out our faith in our everyday lives and reflect this within the ministry of our groups.
For example... Open up open-air ministry to the whole corps for a united 'church on the street' approach.

'Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.' (John 13:35 NLT)



PASTORAL SKILLS

Having good pastoral skills as a leader or within your leadership team is crucial. Whatever your discipline, one aim is to enable people to reach their full potential. In order for this to happen, group members need to feel valued and appreciated.

Be authentic: Be genuine role models for our ensemble to follow, both in terms of our attitude and actions concerning the group and in the compassionate way that we serve others.

For example... Being mindful of your reactions and showing reason in your response

Invest in relationships: Invest in the individuals under our care, work to build trust and confidence so that each member feels equally valued. Healthy boundaries and an awareness of self-care must be carried through.

For example... Proactively engaging with members of our group to allow honest discussion

Active listening: Providing support and understanding to those within our care is paramount. The words as well as intentions of the speaker need to be clearly discerned.

For example... Allowing space and consideration when a member is going through a challenging time whilst maintaining active, prayerful support

Awareness: Within our pastoral care, we must show an understanding of context and the dynamic of the personalities we manage. Handling the various personalities and traits to enable well-considered decisions is a careful balancing act but a necessary one.

For example... Be proactive in seeking out circumstances that may prove important in understanding a decline in commitment

Conflict management: Aligning yourself with the issue and allowing space for people to express their opinions will help to dissolve the tension. The values above should enable us to handle conflict and lead clearly with the support and trust of our members.

For example... Know which team members will work together well, as well as those who may not be so productive.

'He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others.

When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same

comfort God has given us.' (2 Corinthians 1:4 NLT)

EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP



Being a leader comes with responsibility, not only in your personal discipline, but also as you disciple, support and represent those in your care.

Servant leadership: This means personally responding to God's call with the willing, sacrificial giving of our time and talents.

For example... 'Not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.' (1 Peter 5:3 ESV)

Communication: We must listen to God, Scriptures, corps leaders, the congregation and the needs of our groups, to collaboratively enhance our ministry.

For example... Set up a worship leadership team at your corps to discuss teaching topics so that any musical or artists' contributions relate directly to the meeting's message.

Preparation: Good preparation is an essential component to providing respectful Christ-centred leadership. The benefit of diligent preparation will be seen throughout all aspects of our ministry.

For example... Send lyrics from your planned contribution ahead of worship to relevant people so that these can be displayed during worship.

Fulfil potential: We strive to be the best we can be as a group and as individuals, as a true offering of worship to God.

For example... Give everyone an opportunity to contribute, and mentor and pray for your members.

Reflect and Evaluate: Be prepared to respond through prayerful consideration and feedback to ensure we best serve God and each other.

For example... Be honest in your own self-reflection, and using the framework provided seek feedback from members of your corps and in prayer to God.

'Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.' (Acts 20:28 ESV)



ARTISTIC PRIORITIES

This section is designed to help you prioritise. Communicating the gospel message is our primary objective. Here are a few pointers that you might find helpful:

'Sing songs from your heart to Christ. Sing praises over everything, any excuse for a song to God the Father in the name of our Master, Jesus Christ.'

(Ephesians 5:19,20 MSG)

Emphasise meaning and understanding: We centre our ministry on the true meaning of the items which we present.

For example... When you are preparing a song for worship, give members of your corps the opportunity to testify why the lyrics speak to them.

Presentation: Consider the innovative possibilities which can be explored to connect with our congregations effectively.

For example... In a brass band setting, movement can help people watching to engage with the item being presented.

Intentional worship: Our focus must always be to glorify God through praise and worship, where personal preference does not cloud the true purpose of worshipping as a community.

For example... If your corps worship team only played the most modern music to a congregation of older people, this may hinder rather than help worship.

Balanced worship: Work with other corps leaders and groups to ensure a cohesive worship experience accessible to all.

For example... When was the last time your corps music and creative arts leaders met together to discuss worship?

'Your worship should reflect your congregation.' - Les Moir



REHEARSAL DELIVERY

Rehearsals/meetings are the best opportunities to impart knowledge, whatever your gifting. Here are a few pointers that will help you use this time to the fullest.

Planning: Personal preparation and setting achievable targets ensures that rehearsal time is purposeful and effective.

For example... Use your rehearsal/ meeting time to practise for your Sunday worship as well as forthcoming events.

Know your group: Our understanding of the abilities, limitations and potential of individuals within our groups will help inform suitable repertoire choices and interpretations.

For example... Think about the impact upon worship if you were to over-stretch your group.

Allow time for God: Ensure that prayers and devotional times are integral and natural parts of rehearsals, that all members are encouraged to be part of.

For example... One in four rehearsals or meetings could be spent in extended devotions.

Information and logistics: Take care to deliver all relevant information available to all members of our groups, both present and absent from rehearsals.

For example... Set up a social media page or online chat for your group members to convey information.

'Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.' (Proverbs 19:21 ESV)

SELF-REFLECTION



This short self-review comes from The Salvation Army's Missional Journal. Just like a healthy corps that regularly reviews its missional purpose, we hope that this might be a useful tool for your own regular self-reflection.

Please respond to all statements using the following options:

Disagree strongly, disagree, disagree slightly, slightly agree, agree, agree strongly.

Transformation

- The impact of God's transforming grace is clearly evident in the life of your corps/setting.
- The impact of God's transforming grace is clearly evident in the community in which we serve.

Integration

- All that we do in our corps/setting is focused on the whole person (body, mind and spirit).
- Our corps/setting enjoys a healthy integrated, intergenerational, intercultural life.
- Our worshipping and serving communities are fully integrated.
- Our corps/setting is well integrated with other expressions of The Salvation Army.
- Our corps/setting is well integrated with other corps/agencies/partners/churches.

Discipleship

- We have a clear discipleship track to help people grow and look upwards to God.
- We have a clear discipleship track to help people grow inwards toward each other.
- We have a clear discipleship track to help people grow outwards towards their communities.

Effectiveness

- In the living out of God's mission, our corps/setting is highly effective – being good stewards of all that God has given us in supporting and deploying people.

CONTACT YOUR MUSIC AND CREATIVE ARTS REGIONAL SPECIALIST

- Our team are ready and willing to respond to support you
- See page 29 for contact details

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

- 'Going Deeper' material
- SISTAD courses
- Reading material

SMALL GROUP FORUMS e.g. BAND LOCALS

- Music and Creative Arts 'Missional Music and Creative Arts Sections' resource
- Themed devotions
- USA central 'Worship Series'

CORPS FORUM e.g. PCC

- Music and Creative Arts programme serving the community
- Missional Journal process
- Natural church development

WHAT NEXT?

At the very heart of 'JtC', the intentions are for Guide A are to inspire your ministry. The Music and Creative Arts regional specialists are here to help support you to implement some of the ideas contained within this resource. Here are a set of ideas as to how you can implement the concepts contained in this guide.

'Now I'm turning you over to God, our marvelous God whose gracious Word can make you into what he wants you to be and give you everything you could possibly need in this community of holy friends.'

(Acts 20:32 MSG)

WHAT NEXT?...

Here's a description of each of the topics referred to in the chart opposite:

 **'Going Deeper'** material – a theological insight affirming the purpose of Music and Creative Arts found within this guide.

 **SISTAD Courses** – here is a list of the relevant courses on offer that relate to the areas of:

Spiritual Enrichment

1. Understanding Spiritual and Cultural Diversity
2. WBC Summer College
3. Exploring Worship

Pastoral Skills

1. Domestic Abuse Information and Awareness
2. Emotional Wellbeing and Resilience
3. Informal Mediation Skills
4. Safe Church
5. Safeguarding
6. Transforming Conflict


Artistic Priorities


1. Effective Communication
2. Presentation Advantage


Reading Material


Here are a list of books that have been recommended in relation to the theme of Empowering Leadership:


1. The 5 Levels of Leadership: Proven Steps to Maximise Your Potential by John C Maxwell
2. Developing the Leaders Around You: How to Help Others Reach Their Full Potential by John C Maxwell
3. Leadership Tool Kit by Bryn Hughes
4. Leading Me: Eight Practices for a Christian Leader's Most Important Assignment by Steve A Brown


 **Missional Music and Creative Arts Sections** leaflet – packed with easy to understand information and ideas of how to positively impact your local community.

 **Worship Series** (<https://centralusa.salvationarmy.org/gospelarts/Worship-Series>) – comprehensive, all-embracing meeting guide with selected MACA contributions for annual Christian celebrations.

 **Themed Devotions** – why not provide more direction for devotional time by suggesting they are based on a particular subject or a new piece of music that your group may be learning?

 **Music and Creative Arts groups/resources** to respond to the needs of the local community e.g. Singing by heart – an outcome from 'JtC' could be that you research and consider what groups may be of benefit to your local community.

 **Missional Journal** – a comprehensive assessment and planning resource that will breathe new life into your Corps. Contact your Divisional Mission Enablers to start this important process.

 **Natural Church Development** (<http://ncd-uk.com>) – advocated by the Mission Unit at THQ, this could be worth considering as a tool for assessing the life of your Corps.

GOING DEEPER...



In a contemporary paraphrase of the Bible we find these words in Psalm 150:6,

Let everyone everywhere join in the crescendo of ecstatic praise to Yahweh!

Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! (Psalm 150:6 The Passion Translation 2017)

In whatever group we are leading, or activity we are involved in, there is always this tremendous invitation to join the crescendo; to join those who are already embracing opportunities to praise God wherever they are and in a way that choose to do so. In attempting to summarise Psalm 150 the pastor of Lake Gregory Community Church in Crestline, California Steven Cole helpfully considers the 'Where, Why, How and Who of praise within the Psalm. He identifies

- The where of praise: everywhere (150:1)
- The why of praise: every act and attribute of God (150:2)
- The how of praise: with everything you've got (150:3-5)
- The who of praise: everything that breathes (150:6)

These are astounding statements to consider, to meditate on, and a helpful foundation on which to use the Join the Crescendo resource that has been prepared for you. The first topic we are going to look at is the meaning of spiritual enrichment. *Written by Stephen & Jo Moir*

Going deeper on... *Spiritual enrichment*

What do we mean by the word 'enrichment?' It's perhaps a word that we don't often use in our everyday conversations or language. Yet it is an idea, an approach to life, that can transform our perspective towards all that we do, how we engage with other people and with God. It is the notion that something is improved in some way.

'Riches' are usually known as valuable things and refer to money, jewels, gold. But other things can be more valuable for other reasons and not just for their monetary worth.

An alternative approach when considering enrichment is the idea of value.

You may own something that would not be deemed as being 'worth' very much in terms of the world's view, but it is the most valuable thing you own because of what it means to you. A simple example of something special to you could be a wedding ring, or even a specific scene or view of a landmark that holds many precious memories.

Perhaps another example is when we consider the notion of education and how we learn. Ideally the overall goal of education is to improve or enrich life for an individual or a group of people. Similarly, a healthy lifestyle and good food enrich our bodies.

Foundational to the Join the Crescendo resource is the understanding that music and the creative arts can enrich our lives in so many ways. In our context this is often referred to as 'worship'. Pastor John Piper refers to true worship as 'Valuing or a treasuring of God above all things' (Piper 2016, desiringGod.org).

Worship can take place in different forms. The idea of a crescendo is a helpful one as it develops the sense of a gradual increase in loudness, something greater, like a wall of sound, with God.

In considering music and creative arts it is also important to embrace the truth that lives can be enriched through specific events, as well as things that you already have of value. This can also be experienced through the simplest of things. Australian landscape artist Costa Georgiadis once stated: 'Gardening is about communication, relationships, routines and life-enrichment. Gardens are places that connect us to the seasons and the life cycle. They're a vehicle for talking about esoteric (mysterious) and alien topics such as beauty and fulfilment.'

Worship should be an enriching experience, rehearsals for Heaven, the place where we enjoy using the skills and gifts that we have.

What do we mean by spiritual enrichment?

When asked, a number of people gave the following responses:

To me, it means the self-awareness of something greater than ourselves. I think one could possibly come to this kind of thinking as early as five or six years of age.'

'The spiritual, pertaining to the spirit or soul, as distinguished from the physical nature.'

'Spiritual enrichment is when a person is one in body, mind and soul.'

'When one discovers a bit of God's love for you, you have become enriched indefinitely.'

We can connect with God in different ways. The most common way of doing this is through worship or prayer. To connect even deeper with God, Christians might also practise the spiritual disciplines of fasting, study, solitude and confession. The main purpose of the practices is to be connected with God in a meaningful way, to deepen, strengthen and grow our relationship with him.

Spiritual enrichment can be experienced on both a personal and communal level. In the area of music and the creative arts we can often be spiritually enriched as we work together around a common idea, goal or belief; something powerful and transformative can often happen during these times.

Christians believe that spiritual enrichment happens when we become aware of God, and this can result in a deepening awareness of our value in God's eyes as individuals and as a group. This understanding is a significant aspect of the Join the Crescendo resources. As we meet to enjoy what we are doing, there should be times when you feel God's presence with you in what you are doing.

There are hundreds of examples in Scripture of people experiencing God's presence that leads to them responding in different way.

In 2 Samuel 6:14-22 David, the King of Israel, dances before the Lord with all of his might whilst wearing a priestly garment (this was unheard of and a very unusual thing). David, along with all the people of Israel, brought up the Ark of the Lord with shouts of joy and the blowing of rams' horns. This must have been quite a spectacle to witness! David was dancing with literally everything he had, and worshipping without any limitations or inhibitions: 'I will celebrate before the Lord. I will become even more undignified than this...' (vv21,22 NIV).

You may be relieved to hear that spiritual enrichment can also happen in the quieter moments. Again there are a number of examples of this in the Bible:

Just picture the scene. The wise men had travelled many miles and had followed the brightest star in the sky in their search for the Saviour who had been born. They finally came to the place where the star had led them and came across Mary, Joseph, and others who had gathered to witness the event we refer to as the Nativity. Their journey and perseverance was rewarded, and their lives were about to be enriched by what they would see. In Matthew 2:9-11 we find these words:

'After the Wise Men had listened to the king, they went on their way. The star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them. It finally stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. The Wise Men went to the house. There they saw the child with his mother Mary. They bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures. They gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh.'(NIRV)

Within The Salvation Army, spiritual enrichment plays an important part in all that we endeavour to do. This includes worship and discipleship that can often be facilitated through the creative activity that you are involved in (there are additional resources available on worship and discipleship).

In 2015 The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom with the Republic of Ireland Territory introduced a concept called TIDE. This initiative provided a renewed vision for the work of the denomination in its mission to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity. It is interesting that this concept comes directly from the words of a song written by The Salvation Army's Founder General William Booth in the 1800s. The words say:

The tide is now flowing, I'm touching the wave,
I hear the loud call of the mighty to save;
My faith's growing bolder, delivered I'll be;
I plunge 'neath the waters, they roll over me.
(William Booth, SASB509)

These are amazing words and speak passionately about a personal encounter with God. It is amazing that a song which was written in the 1800s can speak so powerfully today.

The Music and Creative Arts team have adapted TIDE (Transformation, Integration, Discipleship and Effectiveness) to develop some of the values and priorities for the Join the Crescendo resource. We hope that these four aspects will enable you to consider the activities you are leading with a clear purpose.

The TIDE framework is something that we would encourage you to embrace and keep central to your planning as you consider starting up a group or any activity that you are involved in. This could be included in the goals or objectives that you discuss as part of the group in the early stages, and keep coming back to as the group develops.

Resources used in the Spiritual Enrichment section

The Passion Translation (TPT) 2017. BroadStreet® Publishing Group

Cole, S. (2013). Bible.org. Psalm 150: The Priority of Praise. <https://bible.org/seriespage/psalm-150-priority-praise>(accessed 6th April 1.30pm)

Kendrick, S. (1984) Worship. Kingsway Publications Ltd: Eastbourne

More+. Quotes About Life Enrichment. Costa Georgiadis <http://www.morefamousquotes.com/topics/quotes-about-life-enrichment/>(accessed 8th April 2.00pm)

Holy Bible: New Living Translation. (1991) Tyndale House: Illinois

Holy Bible, New International Version. (1984) International Bible Society

Booth, W. Salvation Army Song Book (2015) No.509. The General of The Salvation Army

Going deeper on... Pastoral skills

When meeting with other people it is essential that you are aware of the specific pastoral skills that are needed when leading or facilitating a group (the same skills are applicable no matter the size of the group you are leading). As a leader you will have a number of responsibilities towards the group. Some of the responsibilities will be very practical, eg, setting up chairs, ensuring people have the music or other resources that are needed, or perhaps ensuring that you stick to the rehearsal schedule that you have planned. These kinds of roles all play a part in ensuring that the activity you are leading or facilitating runs well.

Another key role is to ensure that those attending feel safe, supported, cared for and able to share how they are feeling. This can happen in a number of ways: through a welcome, by asking helpful questions during a conversation or by sharing in a meal. Ensuring people feel safe, supported and cared for is an essential element of leading a group. The Salvation Army has a broad range of resources available on this, and it is important to familiarise yourself with them (a list is at the end of this section of JtC).

What ideas come to mind when we think about pastoral skills? What do mean by a pastor, and what are some of the essential skills that are needed in leading a group as part of the Join the Crescendoresource?

Here are some common responses that you may hear people give when asked about the purpose of pastoral care:

- Looking after an individual's welfare, noticing if someone's behaviour changes
- Helping a person through a difficult situation
- Simply being available to listen

All of the responses are helpful as we consider the role of the pastoral carer and the type of skills needed to assist an individual, couple or group effectively. A helpful starting point will be to look at the origins of the word 'pastor' and then identify the most common skills you are able to use in your specific context.

'The practical expression of the Church's concern for the everyday and ultimate needs of both its members and the community.' (R.F. Hurding, *The Origins of Pastoral Care*)

The word pastor originates in the early 15th century, to refer to the way in which a shepherd would care for their sheep. Historically some flocks may have included as many as 1,000 sheep. The shepherd would graze the animals, herding them to areas of good forage, and keep a watchful eye out for poisonous plants.

David, the writer of Psalm 23, was a shepherd (and a mean harp player!). He must have known what he was talking about when it comes to looking after sheep.

There are some amazing words in this psalm about David's relationship with God in which he refers to God as being his shepherd.

God, my shepherd!
I don't need a thing.
You have bedded me down in lush meadows,
you find me quiet pools to drink from.
True to your word,
you let me catch my breath
and send me in the right direction.
(Psalm 23:1-3, MSG)

During his ministry on earth Jesus referred to himself as 'the good shepherd'. This was in reference to the sheep recognising the shepherd's voice, such was the depth and the uniqueness of the relationship. In today's farming practice a shepherd still tends the flock day and night, and may gather the sheep into a sheepfold at night for their protection.

One of the prophets in the Old Testament is Ezekiel. He was around when the Israelites were in turmoil and experiencing separation as a nation. In this moment of national crisis Ezekiel foretells of the Messiah (Jesus) who would, like a true shepherd, come to caringly keep God's people (Ezekiel 34:12). It was a loving message of the coming Christ, the good shepherd. Isaiah 40:11 carries the same message.

Historically pastoral care has been used as an ancient model of emotional and spiritual support, and this continues to be evident in many cultures and traditions. The way in which pastoral care is demonstrated will often be unique to the specific community, its structures and practices.

In our modern context, pastoral care has been described as when an individual (who is often trained) provides support to people who may be experiencing pain, loss and anxiety in their lives.

It is important to note that pastoral care can also be provided during an individual's triumphs, joys and victories. Whether you are trained or not, basic pastoral care can, in principle, be provided by anyone, of any age, when considering the five areas of

Supporting
Understanding
Listening
Communication
Awareness

Skills in the five areas listed above form the basis of any pastoral engagement with an individual, a couple or a group of people. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of pastoral care it would be helpful to place the word 'active' in front of each of them. This can often change the emphasis and objective of the pastoral skill that you are using at any one time.

Active supporting
(Being aware of the physical, social, and spiritual wellbeing of those you lead)

Active understanding
(Summarising what you hear and ask appropriate questions to check your understanding)

Active listening
(Concentrating on what is being said rather than just passively 'hearing' the words of the speaker).

Active communication
(Striving to use effective interpersonal, nonverbal, written or oral communication)

Active awareness
(Sensing things that are going on in the background and being aware of things happening around you)

The word 'active' would help describe the attributes of someone who is seeking to intently engage pastorally with others in conversation or through other forms of communication or observation.

Pastoral care may...

- Include – being a comforter/encourager, providing practical help, offering advice and guidance and offer prayer.
- Involve – listening, encouraging, comforting, helping/sustaining someone through difficulties such as trauma, loss and crisis, offering a different perspective, offering biblical truth, training/enabling, pointing people towards Jesus
- Be offered – formally by a pastoral care team or by church leadership, informally in everyday relationships, by individuals or small groups, through a particular ministry, through outreach and mission, by one church or a group of churches, in the church setting or in other settings
(Association of Christian Counsellors, Framework for Good Practice in Pastoral Care)

Offering prayer is an important thing to consider when providing pastoral care. In other contexts you also need to be mindful that the person you are caring for may not hold a Christian faith and may not want to pray with you.

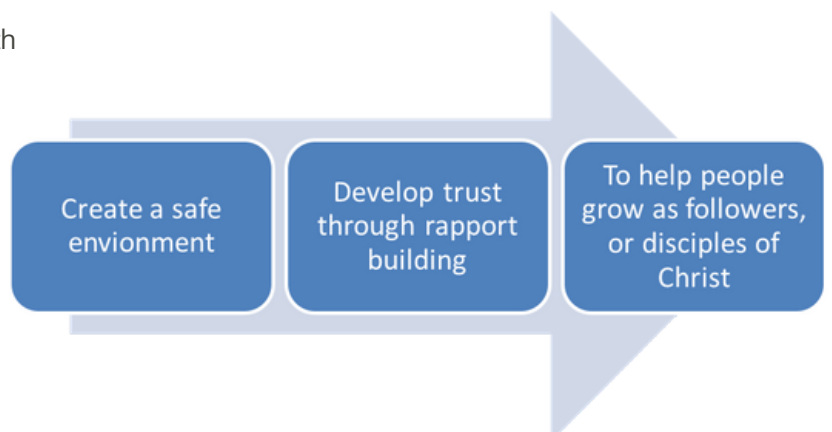
Boundaries and Self-care

Boundaries within pastoral care define the parameters of the kind of care you offer a person. The parameters may include the length of time that you meet and how often a person will be able to get in contact with you. Confidentiality is also a key consideration here in terms of the pastoral relationship you build with someone. This is particularly important when needing to share things they discuss with you with someone else, for example a corps officer or other leader, or if a safeguarding concern is raised during the pastoral care that you offer. (There are additional resources available on this.)

Self-care is also important to think about when providing pastoral care using the skills that have already been listed.

The objectives of Pastoral Care

Many arguments and perspectives exist on whether there should be any set objectives for pastoral care. Essentially the debate is around that fact that the needs of the person receiving the care will alter in each situation. However, the following three statements provide a helpful summary of the aims for pastoral care when leading or facilitating a group as part of the Join the Crescendo resource.



In this section of the resource we have already considered the need to create a safe environment and some of the skills needed to develop trust through rapport building. What makes pastoral care different from other support (counselling, coaching or mentoring) is that it ultimately seeks to help people grow as followers, or disciples of Christ. But what do we mean by a 'follower' or a 'disciple' of Christ?

Follower – can be a Christian, ie, a person that follows the teachings of Christ.

Disciple – is simply someone who believes in Jesus and seeks to follow him in his or her daily life.

Throughout the Bible Jesus' teaching was dominated by a number of words that encapsulate something of what pastoral care is striving to accomplish. These words are reconciliation, healing and wholeness. Whilst we can support someone pastorally through the knowledge and skills that have been described in the sections above, it is also important that we allow space for God to work in the life of the person we are caring for in order that spiritual reconciliation, healing and wholeness can be fully realised and experienced.

Morris Maddocks identifies Christ as the one who is able to meet with people at their 'point of need'. It is both a privilege and a huge responsibility to be a part of people's lives and to journey with people as they discover and explore this point of need. A helpful starting point to enable this to happen is to refer back to the idea of the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep, and the concern and care demonstrated by the shepherd to those under their care

Essentially, pastorally care is a response, an action and a willingness to provide support and care to people in a range of ways depending upon the setting and the need expressed. This is something we are able to provide by ourselves or as a church with a clear motive and biblical mandate.

Merrington helpfully concludes:
'Christian pastoral care is the Church's holistic action of unconditional love where individuals (and communities) are encouraged to become all that they were created to be in Christ.'
(Merrington)

Referring people on

It is vital to note that **pastoral care is not professional counselling**, and there may be occasions when you need to refer someone on for further support to a counselling team. This can be arranged through their GP or through The Salvation Army's Wellbeing Unit.

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Maddocks, M. Growing in Wholeness Course (developed by Roger Matthews). https://www.chelmsford.anglican.org/.../GIW_Participants_Notes_2019_v10.2_.do(accessed 3rd April 11.20pm)

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Additional resources for you to use

The Salvation Army Safeguarding Unit – 0207 367 4767 <https://www.salvationarmy.org.uk/safeguarding-resources>

24-7 Prayer. The Prayer Course <https://prayercourse.org/>

The Church of England. Learning to Pray <https://www.churchofengland.org/journeying-with-god/learning-pray>

Holy Trinity Brompton Road. Bible in One Year <https://www.bibleinoneyear.org/>

Going deeper on... Empowering Leadership

Leadership is a popular topic at the moment. If you were to visit a local book shop you would find a vast range of leadership titles covering areas from organisational leadership to how to manage ourselves. In browsing through the books you might think that you could never be a leader, but this is not entirely true. Whilst proven and trusted leadership skills are essential in overseeing a large corporate business, or even managing a sports team, as well as smaller enterprises, the reality is that everyone will have opportunities in life to lead others. Essentially leadership is about influence, guidance, direction, initiative and enabling others to achieve great things. Quincy-Adams states:

'If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.'

When considering empowering leadership it is vital that we begin with a clear understanding of what empowerment is and how this will impact the way in which we lead.

The Oxford English Dictionary offers two approaches to empowerment – one where authority or power is given to someone to do something, and the other is the process of becoming stronger and more confident. The second of these definitions suggests a process of empowering where people are 'encouraged to flourish'. This might be achieved through providing resources, encouraging others into leadership roles, providing opportunities for ongoing development, motivating, and holding people accountable for their actions through an agreed supportive framework.

The famous Forbes leadership magazine states that empowering leadership can be attained through

- Sharing information
- Creating clear goals and objectives
- Teaching that it's OK to make mistakes
- Creating an environment that celebrates both success and failures
- Supporting a learning environment
- Letting teams become the hierarchy

We have already identified a number of ways in which empowering leadership can be exercised – the 'how', if you like. Another key consideration is the 'why' of empowering leadership. What is our motive for empowering others as part of a leadership role? Within Scripture there are three helpful 'whys' of empowering leadership found in the Old and New Testaments, and exemplified in the life of Jesus.

An Old Testament 'why' of empowering leadership

Joshua was to take over the reins from Moses who had led the Israelites out of Egypt. This was an immense task he was to take on and huge shoes to fill. Before handing the baton over to Joshua, there were a number of strategies that Moses implemented (as directed by God) that illustrate the significant value of empowering leadership. We read in Exodus 17:14:

'Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it.'"

In Exodus 24:12-13 we read:

'The Lord said to Moses, "Come up to me on the mountain and stay here, and I will give you the tablets of stone with the law and commandments I have written for their instruction." Then Moses set out with Joshua his assistant, and Moses went up on the mountain of God. He said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you.'"

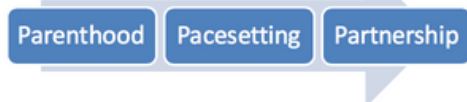
We also read in Exodus 14 of Moses helping Joshua to understand things with greater clarity. As Joshua grew in confidence, his desire was to stay in the presence of God (such was the impact of his insights and the instruction that had been provided). Moses goes on to ensure that Joshua is fully prepared and empowered for the task that he will take on once Moses had died. The empowering leadership that Moses provides to Joshua reaches its pinnacle in Numbers 27:22 where Joshua is brought to stand before Eleazar the priest and the whole assembly. On this occasion Moses lays his hands on Joshua and commissions him as the Lord has instructed Moses to do.

A New Testament 'why' of empowering leadership

Paul's relationship with Timothy is a good example of empowering leadership. As a younger leader Timothy is often referred to as Paul's protégé. The empowering relationship between the two is demonstrated in a number of ways. There is a clear process of selection, equipping, empowering and releasing that is demonstrated here. We read something of Paul's empowering leadership and his confidence in Timothy in 1 Thessalonians 3:2 where Paul describes his prodigy as

'Our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ'.

The 'why' of Paul's empowering leadership is that he identified the value in developing Timothy into a more effective minister of the gospel. Rick Warren identifies three phases in Paul's relationship with Timothy and its development over the period of time they were to spend together.



Parenthood– Paul stops off in Lystra and Timothy's apprenticeship commences:

(1 Timothy 1:2) – 'my true son in the faith'.

Pacesetting– Paul continues to be an example of what mature ministry looks like:

(2 Timothy 3:10-11) – ‘You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance...’

Partnering – Timothy goes from being a son to being a colleague and a co-labourer:

(Romans 16:21) – ‘Timothy, my co-worker, sends his greetings to you’.

Whilst this approach may not be suitable for everyone you will be empowering as a leader, it does offer a valuable insight into the relationship between Paul and Timothy. This emphasises the importance of the nature and style of empowering leadership being dependent upon your relationship with the person, as well as the context and objectives of the relationship (eg, this could be around teaching someone how to play a brass instrument or a specific dance routine).

The Life of Jesus

There are numerous occasions in the life of Jesus where empowering leadership was on display. In fact, it could be argued that the whole of Jesus’ ministry was based on the desire to empower others, whether into leadership or other aspects of their lives. You may be able to think of some as you are reading this.

Perhaps the most well-known relationship Jesus had was with his disciple Peter. Peter’s journey is from disciple to apostle. When he first met Jesus, Peter was known as Simon. He is often referred to as being unstable, impulsive and insecure. But his love for Jesus was great and this was to be the main reason for his transformation from disciple to apostle.

Jesus empowered Peter in a number of ways through his leadership, and in the simple fact of being with Jesus, through observing and listening to things that he shared with his disciples.

Peter made many mistakes in his life. He misunderstood many things and this landed him in some very difficult and challenging situations. All four Gospels describe the way in which Peter denied Jesus on three occasions before his death on the cross. In the Garden of Gethsemane Peter was one of the trusted disciples whom Jesus asked to pray for him just before his arrest. But Peter was unable to stay awake as Jesus had asked. However, Jesus saw great potential in Peter and as a result he is one of the most talked-about disciples for bravery and courage in an opportune moment. It was Peter who had the faith to get out of the boat and walk on the water towards Jesus. Jesus would go on to call Peter his ‘rock’, and said it was on his faith that he would build his Church. At Pentecost it was Peter who gave an impassioned sermon where three thousand people heard his word and were baptised. Jesus and Peter had an empowering, intimate and authentic relationship. Jesus empowered Peter by being purposeful in his engagement with him, allowing Peter to learn from his mistakes, having a mutual commitment to Peter and never giving up on him.

Leading ourselves before empowering others

In order to empower others through our leadership, there is an onus and responsibility upon ourselves to consider the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of our actions. Within the JtC resource the topics of servant leadership, communication, preparation, fulfilling potential and being able to reflect and evaluate are embraced within an understanding of what true empowering leadership is.

Servant leadership

The notion of ‘focusing on service to others’ is at the core of servant leadership. This is encapsulated in the life of Jesus who showed us what it really means to serve others lovingly, humbly and obediently. In fact, on one occasion, just before his death on the cross, Jesus astounded his disciples by insisting he washed their feet (John 13). Jesus was setting the example of how they were to serve each other. Whilst we are not obliged actually to wash the feet of those that we meet (thank goodness!) this one act of servant leadership was powerful in that it was the disciples who, culturally, should have been washing the feet of Jesus.

The well-known leadership expert John Maxwell helpfully summarises the role of the servant leader in stating:

‘True leadership must be for the benefit of the followers, not to enrich the leader.’

Within the context of leading or facilitating a group, servant leadership will often be exhibited in a response to God’s call with the willing, sacrificial giving of our time and talents. By shifting the focus on others as opposed to ourselves, we are following the example of Jesus and bringing glory to God.

Communication and Preparation

Empowering others, in whatever setting we find ourselves in, is founded upon using effective communication skills (as outlined in the introduction section). As we read Scripture, spend time in prayer and serve alongside others, there is a commonality in who we are and what we are striving to do. In responding to God’s working in our lives, there are often opportunities to empower others, whether this is part of your specific role or not. Being prepared is an essential aspect of empowering. This will enable clear direction and a focused approach to the music or craft you are involved in, as well as offering some flexibility in exploring the area you are working on.

Fulfilling potential

We all have potential, and taking the opportunities to fulfil this potential is one of the most enjoyable things in life. Whilst we get to realise who we are and the range of things we are able to attempt, and hopefully achieve, there is also the great challenge of being pushed to reach new heights whilst learning things about ourselves. Jim Rohn states:

'The big challenge is to become all that you have the possibility of becoming. You cannot believe what it does to the human spirit to maximise your human potential and stretch yourself to the limit.'

Several approaches can be adopted to set goals and to help us to realise our full potential, either by ourselves or working alongside others. A model that is often used in setting goals and realising potential is the SMART model.



Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Time-bound

Whilst the SMART approach can be used to identify and master goals that we set ourselves or as a group, the Bible draws us deeper into an understanding that we can experience and realise an even greater potential through having a relationship with Jesus. Nicky Gumbel, the founder of the Alpha Course, states:

'Your potential is not about being driven by ambition or success; it is about recognising who you are in God.'

Reflect and Evaluate

A significant part of empowering leadership is providing and receiving feedback in order to grow from the experiences we have shared. Whilst we might enjoy the actual experience of reaching our potential, in whatever pursuit or activity this might be, it is often when we take some moments to consider what we have learnt about ourselves and others that has the most impact.

The way in which feedback is given is so important here, depending upon the outcome of a specific goal that has been set. One helpful model to use is the Four F's approach:

Facts
Feelings
Findings
Future

It is also important to note the difference between reflection and evaluation. Reflecting is the term used when recounting something that someone has experienced, whereas evaluation is the process of considering and identifying key learning insights that that reflection has prompted. As Christians, personal and 'corporate' reflection and evaluation are essential within our faith journey. This is often maintained and developed through a number of spiritual disciplines where we create space for God to speak to us. This enables us to grow in our faith and develop a strong unity as we seek to serve God through serving others.

As demonstrated in the lives of Moses, Joshua, Paul, Timothy, Peter and Jesus, the 'why' of empowering leadership is often explored and grounded in the reflection and evaluation times.

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Going deeper on... Artistic priorities

The word 'artist' is often used when referring to someone having a natural creative skill who is able to use this to communicate something powerful through a variety of media (eg, a performance or during a rehearsal). Artistic priorities can be described as the thing/s that the artist sees as being important to them, over different time periods, around a specific performance, or indeed the motive for everything that they hope to achieve as a performer. Here are some of the key questions that could be asked in this instance:

What am I attempting to communicate as I am performing?
How can I ensure that I am giving of my best as I rehearse?
What are the key things that underpin all that I do?
What motivates me in my performances?
What are the motives for me as an individual and within the wider group?

As already stated, priorities can be short term as well as longer term. There may be occasions when you will need to give something particular attention and work on specific techniques contained within a piece of music. However, all of these considerations need to be rooted in the question

'Why am I doing what I am doing?'

In asking this important question, artistic priorities can begin to shift towards a desire to emphasise the meaning and understanding of what you are presenting as a an artist, as well as the way in which you choose to communicate the message you are wanting to share. This can also have a real impact upon any planning that may be involved when identifying the range of priorities dependent upon the group that you may be leading.

Building the Tabernacle

In Exodus 35 we find a detailed description of Moses overseeing the building of the tabernacle as commanded by the Lord. It is clear that many people were involved in building, furnishing and decorating the tabernacle with the specific gifts that the Spirit of the Lord had given to them. We read in verse 35:

'He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as engravers, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers – all of them skilled workers and designers.'
(Exodus 35:35)

Here we have this tremendous picture of many people using their unique skills and gifts for the same objective – the building of the tabernacle as a permanent place where the Israelites could encounter God.

Emphasise meaning and understanding

A significant feature within artistic priorities must include a consideration of the core meaning of what is being presented.

Any piece of music that is played, dance that is choreographed, painting that is carefully crafted with a brush, is trying to communicate something. This is often a story, a moral message or an attempt to connect with the audience around a specific value or belief that the artist holds. Sometimes the 'main thread' is difficult to ascertain from a story and it takes a huge amount of concentration to ascertain the point that is being made. In other instances the message is very clear and there can be no doubting what an artist is attempting to communicate with the audience.

A vast amount of the success of this communication is often in the detailed preparation of the material being presented, as well as the artist's ability to allow the music (or equivalent) to impact a performance in a particular way. As already highlighted, the music or words that you are sharing will probably have a particular story behind them. As a leader it is important that you explore this. The music you are considering to perform may come with additional notes that will add something not only to the performance but also the way the music has an impact on both yourself and the group.

In centring our message on the gospel, and as a personal witness to the work Christ is doing in our lives, the message we are attempting to get across through our performance will be clear. As Christians, the notion of performance and worship are also important to consider here, as whilst we are indeed in a sense performing, the motive for what we are doing is as an offering to God as well as to those who may be listening or observing what we are doing. This understanding also moves the performance from just a performance, towards an offering to God in response to what he has done and continues to do in your life, and a deep desire to share you experience of this with others. (This can happen during the rehearsal or whilst you are involved in a performance.)

Presentation

As we have already established, communicating the message or story you are attempting to convey is an important priority for an artist (or a worshipper). Whilst the message you have to share will be clear, the way in which it is presented needs to be based upon a number of things:

The setting and occasion for the performance
The feelings the performance will attempt to create
The innovative possibilities that can be explored within the group you are leading
The length of time you have been allocated for the performance

A strong presentation will enable you to connect with your audience, as well strengthen the unity of those involved in the performance. There also needs to be an awareness that as you are presenting there is often space to communicate with God and with others whilst telling something of your own story.

Intentional worship

A number of songwriters have attempted to describe what intentional worship looks like within their songs. Common themes in their words are around the idea of a 'posture' of worship, as well as a genuine desire to be in the presence of God in total surrender and abandonment to him. Noel Richards's words are simple, yet they encompass the imagery and longing often found in coming before God through intentional worship:

To be in your presence,
To sit at your feet,
Where your love surrounds me,
And makes me complete,
This is my desire, O Lord...
(Noel Richards)

In the well-known song 'Heart of Worship' Matt Redman identifies the need for worship to be grounded in the deep yearning to deepen our relationship with Jesus. Of course, this is something that can be experienced alone or as part of a group. Indeed, worshipping as a group of believers often deepens the sense of 'connectedness' with others as God is placed firmly at the centre of what is taking place in that moment.

Intentional worship leads to change within us, and can also help others to draw close to God in a variety of ways. This is often achieved through a deep sense of intimacy with God, something John Ortberg describes as 'giving all we have and are to God'. Tim Hughes identifies the impact of intentional worship upon our hearts and minds and the need for a Christ-centred focus, Holy Spirit led, a response to the Father that will always lead to a new vigour towards serving others and to transformation.

We are all different, and whilst working with others in planning and leading worship it is not uncommon for people to have specific preferences in styles and genres of worship. Even within Christian music there is a range of types and styles in which people might choose to worship: praise/worship music, gospel, rap, pop, blues and many more. Whilst it's common to have a personal preference in how you worship and the resources you use to facilitate this, it is also important that you are mindful of the congregation that you are preparing worship for, and that all forms for music, and many other creative arts, can be used to help others communicate with God through worship. What is crucial here is the both the motive and object of the worship.

In John 4:23-24 Jesus is talking with a Samaritan woman who had come to draw water from a well (this was an extremely radical thing to do). On recognising Jesus as a prophet, the woman asks him a question as to why the Jews had been insisting that worship took place in Jerusalem and nowhere else. Jesus replies:

'Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.'
(John 4:23-24)

Here Jesus introduces worship as something that needs to be expressed 'in the Spirit and in truth'. By referring to the Spirit, Jesus emphasises that worship is something that needs to passionately impact the whole heart of a person; that worship is a demonstration of our love for God in response to his love for us. Worshipping God 'in truth' is a reference to the need for intentional worship to be grounded in Scripture and a clear awareness and understanding of who God is.

In his encounter with the Samaritan woman, Jesus is also highlighting that worship is something that anyone can do; there are no longer boundaries placed on people through ceremonial restriction, heritage or background. Planning and preparing worship that is accessible and inclusive, through the consideration of others and their specific needs, is of paramount importance. Worshipping 'in the Spirit and in truth' is not about preference in worship styles, but enabling yourself and others to come before God in a variety of ways whilst representing something of the creative heart of our Father God.

Balanced worship

In Luke 10:38-42 we find the story of Mary and Martha. Jesus was journeying with his disciples in the Bethany area and chose to stop at the house of Martha. Martha lived with her sister Mary and their brother Lazarus. Whilst Jesus was at the house Martha remained distracted in preparing and serving a meal for the visitors, whilst Mary opted to sit at the feet of Jesus and give him her undivided attention. Feeling rather perplexed (and perhaps rightly so), Martha berates Jesus, questioning why he didn't care that she had been left alone by her sister to prepare the meal. In exasperation Martha asked Jesus to get Mary to help her with the preparations. The following words from Jesus must have been a huge surprise to her:

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "You are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed – or indeed only one. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

There are a number of themes that we can take from the visit of Jesus to Martha's house on this occasion. But what has this got to do with balanced worship and ensuring that worship is accessible for all? Prioritising time and space for God, to sit at his feet, to allow him to direct our preparation and planning for worship, is so important. Whilst the work of the hospitable Martha was of vital importance (as she had a number of hungry people to feed), Jesus reminds her that her sole need at that moment was to enjoy his presence by spending quality time with him. In preparing worship with your team, or by yourself, ensure that you spend time in God's presence, allowing the Holy Spirit to direct your music choices and lifting what you are planning to do in prayer. This will transform the way in which you worship and your relationship with others whom you plan with, and develop a strong inner desire to worship 'in the Spirit' and 'in truth'.

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Going deeper on... Rehearsal techniques

Rehearsal is vital in any aspect of life if you are truly wanting to succeed or perform to a high level. The famous golfer Tiger Woods has described the way in which he worked hard from a young age to perfect his golf swing. He states:

'People don't understand that when I grew up I was never the most talented. I was never the biggest. I was never the fastest. I was certainly never the strongest. The only thing I had was my work ethic, and that's been what has gotten me this far.'

Likewise in the music scene there are numerous artists who identify the significant role that rehearsing, and the specific techniques that they use, has upon their ongoing prominence in their particular genre of music.

Of course maximising the rehearsal time you have available to you will differ greatly depending upon the performance or specific aspect of the piece of music (or other form of creative art) you are striving to perfect. It is important that you make the most of every moment!

There are common topics that need to be considered when preparing for and leading through a rehearsal (some of these we will unpack together in a moment). Whether you are rehearsing alone or overseeing a group rehearsal, the techniques you opt to use are key. But what do we actually mean by the term 'rehearsal technique' and why is this such an important factor to consider?

Rehearsal is the word used to describe time spent in practice or a run-through prior to a public performance. Technique is the term used to describe the methods chosen in attempting to accomplish a specific aspect of the performance. This can cover a broad range of areas including having the right equipment, adequate space, ensuring that there are no distractions and that you have covered all the necessary areas in preparation of the pending performance. If possible, it is helpful to plan to rehearse in the actual venue where the performance will be taking place.

Rehearsal techniques and their objectives can broadly be categorised into three sections – practical, physical and psychological. Whilst these are helpful things to consider when leading the group (or rehearsing alone), it is also important to note that each person attending the rehearsals and performance will inevitably have their own responsibilities in ensuring these three areas are maintained.

Practical

- Time allocated for the rehearsal and having a plan as to how the time will be used
- Ensuring all those attending the rehearsal have the right equipment (including music)
- Ensuring that the venue is secure and that those attending the rehearsal are comfortable
- Ensuring all who need to attend the rehearsal are aware of the location for the rehearsal, its duration and the dates of any future rehearsals and final performance

Physical

- If needed, providing time and space for people to warm up before the rehearsal
- Ensuring that there is adequate space for the rehearsal
- You may want to consider having a break midway through the rehearsal
- Depending upon the type of performance you are rehearsing for, you may want to explore areas around the importance of breath control, physical stretches, posture, warming down and being aware of tiredness

Psychological

- Ensuring the rehearsal provides an opportunity for others to become confident in the abilities and skills of those around them
- Highlighting the importance of working as a team and the need for developing trust and reliance upon others (both in and out of the allocated rehearsal time)
- Ensuring that those attending the rehearsal are familiar with the music (or role) they are playing and have opportunity to practise specific areas that may need additional work or focus
- It may also be helpful to discuss the importance of managing nerves, to ensure that there is ample time given to rehearse before a performance, and if necessary altering the repertoire according to the abilities of the group that you are leading

The importance of rehearsing in the Bible

Within the Bible the idea of rehearsing (or remembering) is regularly used when recalling the work of the Lord. This was a regular pattern for the Israelites and some of the prophets we find in the Old Testament. This is known today as 'raising an Ebenezer' and refers back to the times when people felt the need to build an altar to remember who God is and what he had done for them.

The Psalmist musician David wrote many words and songs that enabled him to rehearse his worship to the Lord, allowing him to recall often the work and provision of the Lord in whatever circumstance he found himself in. The Voicetranslation reads:

'So that I may rehearse Your deeds, declare Your praise, and rejoice in Your rescue when I take my stand in the gates of Zion.' (Psalm 9:14)

'To speak of Your unfailing love in the morning and rehearse Your faithfulness as night begins to fall.' (Psalm 92:2)

(It's worth mentioning that most translations do not use the word 'rehearse' but prefer 'recite' or 'declare' – perhaps thereby making no distinction between rehearsal and performance.)

In the Old Testament the Ark of God was a physical demonstration that Yahweh was always with his people. Sacrifices would be offered before the Ark and it was an important place to the Israelite community, symbolising so much more to the people who would gather before it. On one occasion David appointed Asaph and his friends to give praise to God before the Ark using the following words:

'Rehearse among nations His glory, Among all the people His wonders.'
(1 Chronicles 16:24 Young's Literal Translation – again most versions use 'declare')

Here we have another example of the Israelite community, God's chosen nation, coming together in one almighty rehearsal. Time and time again in Scripture there are accounts of people gathering to rehearse, to recall and to familiarise themselves with who God is and his plan for their lives.

In considering the vital role of rehearsal techniques we can conclude that the overall objective is where something becomes familiar to us, perhaps second nature, a tendency or a skill that we take on as a characteristic or an instinct we naturally adopt. Rehearsals techniques also allow time and space to grow deeper whilst attempting to master a skill and enjoying the company of others.

As followers of Jesus we will often be aware of God's presence with us during the rehearsal and the final performance. The rehearsal can take on a whole new meaning when it is surrounded in prayer and when the Holy Spirit is invited to empower and use those attending the rehearsal and the message contained within the music or roles that are being looked at and performed.

In a similar way to the Israelite community, we too have been given words by Jesus to use when we come before him in prayer. This prayer isn't made to something physical that has been created by man, but to a Father who abides within us. On being asked by a disciple how they should pray, Jesus replies with the following words:

Our Father in Heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your Kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in Heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the Kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen

(The Lord's Prayer, The Church of England Contemporary Version)

Allowing ourselves to become familiar with these words, to recount them on a daily basis, will have a significant impact upon our own lives as well as those we encounter through rehearsals, performances and in our everyday lives.

Planning

As a leader, planning ahead of a rehearsal and performance is vital. In order to achieve this successfully it is often advisable to allocate roles to others in the group and then go on to develop a leadership team where people are given specific responsibilities. As a leader, personal preparation and setting objectives to ensure rehearsal time is effective is also of paramount importance.

As already mentioned, ensuring you have all of the music and parts available for the rehearsal and subsequent performance is also key. It is advisable to have spare copies of the music in case anyone forgets theirs. When considering the timings for the rehearsal you will need to consider if there are any specific performances coming up, looking at the time you have available to rehearse and allocating an expected amount of time to spend on each piece as needed (there may need to be some flexibility around this).

The length of the rehearsal may well vary dependent on a number of factors. However, it is good to meet at a regular time every week. As well as looking through the music ahead of the rehearsal, you may also want to print out a schedule for each rehearsal so you know the pieces that have been used from week to week. Also ensure you have a couple of pencils and erasers with you to highlight any key sections or to make notes on the music, score or script that you are using.

Know your group

Leadership is all about people. There are literally thousands of quotes on leadership and the importance of knowing your people. Bill Gates, the founder of Microsoft, states:

‘As we look ahead into the next century, leaders will be those who empower others.’

Empowering others is accomplished in many ways; we looked at this in the Empowering Leadership section. When it comes to rehearsal techniques it is important that you are aware of others’ abilities and limitations and the potential of individuals within the group. Ensuring you have a manageable repertoire, appropriate to the skills of the group, is a vital approach to working within a rehearsal context. It is also helpful to see rehearsal as a process of working towards a greater goal as opposed to an event in itself.

Building relationships of trust with those you are leading through rehearsals and performances is also a key consideration of a leader. One way you could achieve this is to draw up a list of shared values within the group and ensuring that these are adhered to by all. Good and clear communication is also key as a part of people’s healthy and strong relationships with others.

Allow time for God

This is the most important aspect of your rehearsal and performance time. Allowing time for God will take your rehearsal techniques and performances to another level. You will come to understand that what you are doing is attempting to communicate something of what God means to you through using the skills and gifts that he has given to you. The dots on the page of the music become far more than simply that; they resonate with something of God’s work in your own life and become an offering of worship and praise to God, much like the song offered by Asaph before the Ark of God.

During the rehearsal, ensure there is ample time given for prayer and Scripture. Explore the ‘story of the music’ and ask the question ‘What is God saying to you through the music?’ Following the performance, share some of the feelings you were experiencing with the rest of the group. When rehearsal techniques and performances become about an exploration of our own faith and ongoing relationship with God, we experience transformation and a deeper awareness of his presence with us and those we are rehearsing with. We read in Romans 12:2:

‘Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.’

Information and logistics

Information and logistics enable the group you are leading to function well. This is often the behind the scenes stuff but is so vital if rehearsal techniques are to be implemented well.

In regards of information, it is important that you are aware of recent legislation around keeping data on other people (GDPR – data protection) and that those whom you have information about are aware of what will happen to that information. It is often helpful to have information about those who are both present and absent from rehearsal so you are able to ensure that people are OK. As with planning, it may be helpful to identify people in the group who will be able to look after information and logistics for you. You may want to see up a Facebook page (or something similar) to enable people to keep in contact with each other and to share important information about rehearsal dates and performances.

Providing information is a practical thing, but also simply shows that you care. There may be occasions when members in the group will need to be prayed for. Supportive communication threads will enable this to happen effectively.

Logistics cover the day-to-day maintenance and managing of any procurement of music, maintenance of instruments or other resources needed for the group, and provision and moving of equipment. This is a very operational role and a key ingredient to making the most of the rehearsal techniques listed above.

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'It's better to have a partner than go it alone.

Share the work, share the wealth.' (Ecclesiastes 4:9 MSG)



CONTACT US

We pray that this resource has been helpful to you in your ministry. If you would like to know more about any of the different subjects included here, why not contact one of the Music and Creative Arts team.

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