

PSALM 150:

JOIN THE CRESCENDO



(B) GUIDE

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP

Join the Crescendo is an educational resource designed for any current and future leaders in The Salvation Army involved in music and creative arts.



**Music and
Creative Arts**



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)

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WHAT IS JOIN THE CRESCENDO?

'Join the Crescendo' is an educational resource 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.

JtC starts with 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, the Guide 'A' is the resource to use for advice on **spiritual enrichment, pastoral skills, empowering leadership, artistic priorities** and **rehearsal delivery**.

This is the contemporary worship edition of Guide 'B' and 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 preceding 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)

JOIN THE CRESCENDO CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP GUIDE



INTRODUCTION

Psalm 96 tells us ‘Sing to the Lord a new song.’ The Salvation Army has a history of doing this, continually writing and using new music to praise God. Contemporary worship is one way we can use the passions and musical skills of people in our churches to bring honour to God. It is also a way to facilitate worship for the people in our congregations, many of whom may have more experience of listening to and engaging with popular music than other genres.

In this one simple verse, David has given us three distinct purposes of worship. These purposes apply whether we are part of a church of 10 or 1,000 and can be summed up in three simple words: Lord, Leader and Congregation:

- 1. Lord** – ‘Magnify the Lord.’ Any worship team will first and foremost seek to magnify the Lord to the best of their ability.
- 2. Leader** – ‘Magnify the Lord with me.’ ‘Me’ represents anyone involved in helping lead sung worship. We can’t expect the congregation to go where we are not authentically willing to go ourselves.

“**O MAGNIFY THE LORD
WITH ME, AND LET
EXALT HIS NAME
TOGETHER.**”

Psalms 34:3 NV

3. Congregation – ‘Let us exalt his name together.’ Our role is to facilitate worship so that congregations connect with God in a deeper way. We should not be satisfied with people passively watching us worship. Aim to cultivate lives of worship, individually and corporately.

The term ‘worship group’, ‘praise band’, ‘contemporary band’, or other descriptions that have been used all come with their own connotations in a Salvation Army context. Perhaps there isn’t one ideal term, but in this guide we’ll use ‘worship team’.

As contemporary worship leaders it can be easy to focus solely on facilitating corporate worship within our churches. However, it is important to remember that as Christians we are all called to play our part in God’s mission. As leaders it is our responsibility to be creative in considering ways that worship teams can use contemporary music to bring the message of God’s love into our communities and beyond. Are there performance opportunities in your local area that you could use? Could video and audio recordings on social media help to make an impact on your community?

**“IT’S MORE THAN A SONG
WE SING. IT’S OUR
HEARTFELT RESPONSE WE
GIVE TO GOD THAT PLACES
VALUE ON HIM”**

Bill Johnson

**‘OUR MAIN OBJECTIVE IS TO FACILITATE THE
INTERACTION OF GOD AND HIS PEOPLE
THROUGH MUSICAL WORSHIP’**



(Worship Together - a practical aid for worship leaders)



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

There is no 'I' in worship (except in the spelling). The worship team finds its place in a service by facilitating worship for the whole congregation. It is not about performance, recognition or self-fulfilment. Our priority as a worship team should always be to use our music gifts and skills to collectively enter into a place where we (both worship team and congregation) are able to connect with God. In order to do this we need to ensure that we build positive relationships, make good repertoire choices, pray together and keep God at the centre of all we do.

THE ROLE OF A WORSHIP/MUSIC LEADER

There are potentially two different leadership roles within a worship team - worship leader and music leader. For the purposes of this guide we will refer to worship leaders and music leaders with the understanding that both roles could be carried out by one person, and that if separated out, both roles will still have significant areas of crossover. The main roles of the worship/music leader include:

Facilitating corporate sung worship, Leading and guiding others in the worship team
Ensuring focus is maintained on God, Facilitating rehearsals
Being open to the Spirit, Encouraging the spiritual growth of the team,
Choosing repertoire, Introducing worship, Leading response and reflection time,
Encouraging the use of wide abilities, Upskilling the team

The worship leader may be the first person to engage with the congregation in the service, therefore there is a responsibility to set an appropriate atmosphere of worship. Be ready to lead the space in between songs with suitable Scripture and prayer topics; allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. The congregation may need time to process their thoughts, reflect or respond. Be sensitive to this time, ensuring that you don't rush through these moments. Be intentional in utilising your fellow musicians or members of the congregation for prayer, as a change of voice can be helpful.

PASTORAL

Unlike other Salvation Army sections where pastoral responsibility is assigned mainly to the sergeant, there is no such responsibility assigned in a worship team. It is important that the team agree a way forward of giving and receiving pastoral support, keeping each other accountable.

“FOR JUST AS EACH OF US HAS ONE BODY WITH MANY MEMBERS, AND THESE MEMBERS DO NOT ALL HAVE THE SAME FUNCTION, SO IN CHRIST WE, THOUGH MANY, FORM ONE BODY, AND EACH MEMBER BELONGS TO ALL THE OTHERS.”

Romans 12: 4-5 (NIV)

“I HAVE A SPECIAL CONCERN FOR YOU CHURCH LEADERS. I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE A LEADER, IN ON CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS AS WELL AS THE COMING GLORY. HERE'S MY CONCERN: THAT YOU CARE FOR GOD'S FLOCK WITH ALL THE DILIGENCE OF A SHEPHERD. NOT BECAUSE YOU HAVE TO, BUT BECAUSE YOU WANT TO PLEASE GOD. NOT CALCULATING WHAT YOU CAN GET OUT OF IT, BUT ACTING SPONTANEOUSLY. NOT BOSSILY TELLING OTHERS WHAT TO DO, BUT TENDERLY SHOWING THEM THE WAY.”

1 Peter 5: 1-3 (The Message)





SPECIFICS, TECHNICAL KNOW-HOW

INSTRUMENTATION

Within a worship team there will likely be common elements. Most tend to be keyboard- or guitar-led and will feature one or more singers. Below is a brief guide stating the purpose of different instruments within the team:



Vocal - Provides the lyrics, melody and harmony. (Refer to 'Role of the singer' for more in- depth information.) Main harmony instrument: keys / acoustic guitar / ukulele - Plays the notes which make up the harmonic structure. Also provides rhythmic patterns.



Drums/percussion - Provides the beat which gives the song a style and groove. Plays an important part in holding tempo, creating dynamics and marking structural points.



Bass guitar - Works closely with the drummer to provide style and groove. Reinforces the harmony by typically playing the root note of chords.



Lead instruments (electric guitar / synthesiser etc) - Used to add colour and texture. Plays lead lines, motifs and can reinforce the melody.

Instrumentalists who play primarily in other ensembles and styles will find that in a worship team setting they will have a less prescriptive role, playing more responsively to other members of the band rather than only following written notation. For example, a drummer playing for more formal groups is required to work within the structure of the music as an accompanist, whereas in a worship team they will need to be more fluid and responsive in their interpretation.

ROLE OF THE SINGER

Unlike other 'pop' style ensembles, the singer(s) in a worship team are not soloists. Rather, they act as a guide, giving confidence and encouragement to the congregation to worship. Another priority of a worship team singer should be clarity. Additional inflections and improvisations may sound impressive, but can sometimes be distracting or misleading for congregations.

This is not to say that expressive singing is prohibited – in fact the opposite is true. The more we are able to convey the message of the song the better, but this should not be done to the detriment of corporate engagement in worship.

How to make singing in worship 'singable'

Often the original recording of a song may not be in the most suitable key for congregations as these have been sung by professional singers in their own range. As the music leader, you will have to choose an appropriate key for the congregation. There is a vocal range for congregational singing that should rarely be stretched. The range is around 10-12 notes from an A to an E:



Stretching the range given above may lead to reduced engagement in worship.



Adding harmonies

On many occasions a unison vocal line serves well. However, there are times when the richness of harmony can lift a song to a new level. Here are a few pointers on adding harmony within the worship team:

- First, get a basic understanding of chord structures and harmony; this can often be found on lead sheets. With practice, pitching suitable harmonies should become second nature.
- Be clear where to use and not use harmonies. Effective ways of using them include indicating important markers, or to thicken texture.
- Harmony works well if there are unaccompanied sections. On brighter songs, percussion and/or bass can continue to provide the groove.

For more advanced harmonies, try switching on repeat of sections. For example:

	Original harmony	Flipped tune
Female		
Male		

As the example shows, flipping the harmony with the tune means both singers are now singing at a higher pitch. This flip increases the intensity and creates a different colour within the song.



HOW TO CHOOSE SONGS

Recently the contemporary worship music scene has seen an explosion of new music with many churches and expressions creating their own platform for writing and releasing new music. With songs from churches such as Bethel Music, Elevation Worship and Hillsong, plus many from artists such as Chris Tomlin, Matt Redman and Rend Collective amongst others, it is difficult to know where to begin. So, how do you choose songs for your church?(Refer to Resources for a comprehensive list.)

Most importantly, take time to listen to as many good examples as possible. This may seem obvious but it is the best way of educating yourself. Listen to Christian music on a streaming service, to songs listed in the links from our resources section and find out what songs are being used at summer schools across the Territory. This will give you a good indication of what songs are reaching and resonating with people. Here are some other suggestions for choosing songs:

The message – We have a responsibility to ensure that what we are singing is theologically sound.

Style – Ensure new songs are congregational in nature. Some worship songs can be heavily syncopated and prove difficult to sing. Know the song well and have a good reason to share it with the worshipping community.

The team – Look at what instruments you have and the experience you have within the group. This will inform style and complexity of songs as well as the arrangements.



INTRODUCING A NEW SONG

New repertoire and how it is introduced to a congregation is really important. Make a good first impression. Here are some tips on how to introduce and teach new songs:

- Share new songs in advance. Look to create an opportunity to use new material prior to teaching. Play a recording of your new song before the service or post on social media to allow engagement from the congregation before teaching it. Alternatively, present the new material as a solo or during the offering.
- Try to only introduce one new song in any given service. Too much unfamiliarity can make engaging fully in worship more difficult for the congregation.
- When introducing a new song, look to begin with the chorus or the main hook of the song. Generally this will be the most repetitive aspect and the easiest for congregations to learn and remember. If appropriate, try a 'call and response' technique.
- Repetition is important, as it will encourage familiarity and allows time to connect with the lyrics and their message. Include new songs over more than one week; don't just teach a new song and then leave it for a month. If a song can be a theme for a sermon series, then use it frequently.

“**SING TO THE LORD A NEW SONG.
SING TO THE LORD, ALL THE
EARTH. SING TO THE LORD,
PRAISE HIS NAME;
PROCLAIM HIS SALVATION
DAY AFTER DAY’.**

Psalms 96: 1-2 (NIV)



REHEARSAL TECHNIQUES

Rehearsals are essential for any music group. They are integral to growing musically and spiritually together. Your aim in rehearsals should be to create and nurture a culture in which people can support, inspire and grow together – what a privilege!

Avoid becoming a team that believe they can ‘wing it’ week by week. Running an effective worship team requires dedication and preparation just like any other MACA group. Rehearsing together is the best way of successfully and intuitively working as a team. Here is some helpful advice for your rehearsal:

- Plan. Know how much work needs to be done on your repertoire, balancing the introduction of new material with the preparation for the upcoming week’s sung worship.
- Establish a good consistent routine that works for the team.

- Rehearsals should be centred on the ensemble rather than developing individual ability. Ensemble rehearsals will be more effective if group members put in personal preparation.
- Make devotions and prayer an integral part of every rehearsal.
- Listen to the songs in advance. Know which version of the song you are choosing to model and share it with the worship team. This will allow time for the team to become familiar. Spend time in rehearsals considering the arrangement and how the team can use the chosen version. (See Arrangements.)
- Discuss with the team what the song is saying to them and how it impacts or helps them in their understanding of God.
- Know the song structure and be consistent in how you share this structure with the team. As you grow together you will develop the ability to adapt in the moment as the group is led by the spirit.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between the team and to the congregation during a song is vital in facilitating a sense of flow during sung worship. Below are a couple of methods that have proved effective:

Hand signals – These are useful for internal communication between team members and can be learnt to direct both instrumentation and structure. Below are examples of some tried and tested signals:

Vocal leading – Verbal communication directs by saying and/or singing an appropriate line of the lyric. Practise this in rehearsal so you become confident and clear to everyone. This type of communication is helpful for both team members and the congregation.



ARRANGEMENTS

Due to the nature of contemporary worship songs, each worship team will function differently in response to the instrumentation and abilities of its participants. It is the music leader's responsibility to be sensitive to these factors. Many contemporary worship songs can be simplified to be played by relative beginners or elaborated by more technically able players. Unlike more traditional forms of Salvation Army music-making, a lot of the decisions about how the songs can be arranged will be made by the players rather than the composer or conductor. This means time and care should be taken when deciding on the arrangement, interpretation and delivery of each song.

In terms of style, your arrangements can be close to the original or a very different version. Let the discussion, instrumentation and quality of players guide you on this. Varying the texture, timbre, dynamics, form and harmony, will bring contrast to the song. Consider utilising different playing techniques; for guitarists finger-picking can contrast well with strumming, or muted strumming; for drummers consider stick choices etc.



WORKING TOGETHER WITH OTHERS

We have a responsibility to create a holistic approach to our worship, an approach that will cultivate a culture of good communication and collaboration. This can be achieved through a number of ways:

1. Effective collaboration – Work with the leadership team of the church and be intentional in conversations about the direction of sung worship within the local setting. When meeting leaders, include discussing song choices, thematic planning and suitability of songs to be used in future, for example.

2. Engaging with other ensembles – Experiment with working alongside existing corps music groups. Perhaps ask the corps brass band to join the last triumphant chorus of a song, or prepare the choir to help lead when introducing new songs. When groups blend together there can be an overall enhanced worship experience. If so, make sure prior planning is involved such as giving music to group leaders in plenty of time.

3. The audio visual team – This team is crucial to the ministry of a worship team. Their support and provision is essential for streamlined and flowing experience in sung worship. The more information and time you give them will dictate the best outcome and building a good relationship is key to this. Whether an individual or a team, the AV team will help you facilitate the very best experience.



Some pointers:

- Involve your AV team in rehearsals so everyone is able to learn and work together.
- The rehearsal provides a good opportunity to get a good sound balance (if rehearsing in the same building) – balancing on a Sunday morning is often too late and can be rushed.
- Provide the structures of songs prior to the service, giving fair warning to what slides may be repeated. This will help the AV team provide correct lyrics more consistently.
- Be clear in how you and the team communicate to the AV team during worship for either lyrics or minor sound changes in the mix.
- Help with setting up and packing down. It is a team effort, not just the responsibility of the AV team.

“**AS WORSHIPPERS, WE SEEK UNITY AND CONNECTION WITH GOD. IF WE CANNOT MODEL THIS AS LEADERS SEEKING UNITY AND CONNECTION BETWEEN DIFFERING MUSICAL GROUPS, THEN WE LIMIT OUR ABILITY TO SERVE THE CONGREGATION’.**

Worship Together - A practical aid
for worship leaders



WHAT NEXT

SONG RESOURCES

Salvation Worship – International worship resource for The Salvation Army. All resources free from www.salvationworship.com

The Hallelujah Chorus Series – Lead sheets, full brass band scores, condensed horn parts. Provides the tools to encourage blended worship within the church.

TransMission – www.transMission.virb.com/charts – free lead sheets for all songs and backing accompaniment recordings for the majority.

USA Connects – www.music.saconnects.org/pwhorn-charts – free brass parts (mostly two trumpets and trombone) for many well-known contemporary worship songs.

Praise Charts – www.praisecharts.com – offers lead sheets and orchestrations – purchase individual songs and arrangements.

Worship Together – www.worshiptogether.com – offers videos, lyrics and chord sheets for free, forwards you to other sites to purchase full charts.

Song Select – www.songselect.ccli.com – a subscription-based website with access to 1000s of contemporary songs – £95 annual subscription service (requires an existing CCLI licence).

We Are Worship – www.weareworship.com – offers videos, lyrics and chord sheets for free, membership is free and individual copies of sheet music are purchasable.

Songs of Fellowship or **The Source** provide hardback books for many contemporary hymns and songs. Both come with a downloadable PDF copy.

Mission Praise – www.missionpraise.com – subscription to three full Mission Praisebooks – £60 a year, or purchase individual books.

TRAINING RESOURCES

SA Worship magazine – Published by Music and Gospel Arts Department in the Canada and Bermuda Territory, this free magazine aims to be a catalyst for conversations and communication within contemporary worship in The Salvation Army. Subscribe here – <http://eepurl.com/dN845D>

Worship Central Video Course – www.worshipcentral.org/course – an in-depth look at what it is to worship, how to be a better worship leader and practical elements for the worship team. Includes notes and video tutorials.

Worship Together with FLOW –

www.salvationarmycarolinas.org/nscmusicandarts/music/praise-and-worship – a new resource from the Music and Gospel Arts team in Canada which focuses a practical aid for worship leaders and, along with FLOW, provides a skill development tool for worship leaders.

Worship Matters by Sovereign Grace –

www.sovereigngracemusic.org/training/wmvi/ – practical guidance and useful videos and resources which help you to consider how and why you function as a worship band.

There are also various annual conferences on contemporary worship such as Mission Worship, Hillsong and Holy Trinity Brompton.

HELPFUL HINTS

DON'T Get caught up in the enjoyment of playing at the expense of worship.

DO Listen! Your ears are your greatest asset. Listen to what others are playing and only play something if you enhance the sound.

DON'T Have everyone playing everything all the time.

DO Try to vary textures and playing techniques throughout a song.

DON'T Insist on throwing in that fill or riff that you've been working on regardless of the context.

DO Try to aim for a particular style or groove in a song.

DON'T Continue with conflicting interpretations of the song at the same time.

DO Keep the lyrics of the song at the forefront of your mind.

DON'T Create elaborate or tricky arrangements which your group struggle to play, detracting from the atmosphere of worship.

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.