

WORSHIP AT COTRH

The following document is intended to describe and explain the corporate worship environment at Church on the Rock Homer. Each of the variables below represent a dynamic choice that we have intentionally made using our best understanding of scripture, our church, and ourselves. We will be the first to acknowledge that our self-assessment is based on our own experiences and that your assessment of where we fall on each variable may be different based on your experiences... and that is okay!

LOUD

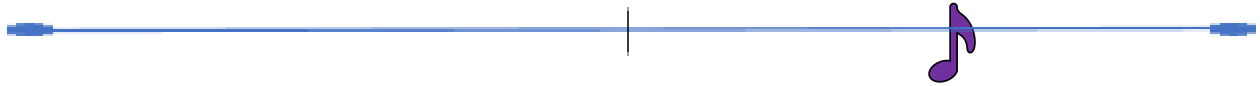
QUIET



Our Sunday worship music tends to be loud. Praise Him with loud cymbals; praise Him with resounding cymbals (Ps 150:5), Shout joyfully to the God of Jacob (Ps 81:1), So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, and with the sound of the horn, with trumpets, with loud-sounding cymbals, with harps, and lyres (1 Ch 15:28), and Clap your hands, all you peoples; Shout to God with a voice of joy. (Ps 47:1) We value quiet, contemplative worship but lean toward loud celebratory music on Sunday mornings.

TRADITIONAL

CONTEMPORARY



Our Sunday worship music tends to be contemporary. Sing to the LORD a new song (Ps 33:3, Ps 96:1, Is 42:10), and they sang a new song before the throne (Rev 14:3). And yet some things do not change! I shall remember the deeds of the LORD; I will certainly remember Your wonders of old (Ps 77:11) and Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other (Is 46:9). We love finding new songs that accurately convey old truths and we love the songs from our Christian heritage. On Sundays, we tend to lean toward newer music.

DECLARATIVE

PETITIONARY



Our Sunday worship music is both declarative and petitionary. Declarative music states what is true about God: *HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS THE LORD GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, who was and who is and who is to come* (Rev 4:8), *The LORD is a warrior; The LORD is His name* (Ex 15:3) *His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, And His dominion is from generation to generation* (Dan 4:3). Petitionary music talks about our need for God: *One thing I have asked from the LORD, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life* (Ps 27:4), *How blessed is a person whose guilt the LORD does not take into account* (Ps 32:2), *The LORD of armies is with us* (Ps 46:7), *Restore to me the joy of Your salvation* (Ps 51:12). On Sundays, we like to SAY and PRAY in our worship music.

LINEAR



REPETITIVE

Our Sunday worship music tends toward linear development. There is a place in worship for repetition as a way of emphasis: The line *His faithfulness is everlasting* is used 26 times in Psalm 136, Psalm 150 commands *Praise!* thirteen times in six verses and Revelation 4:8 says the angels repeat *Holy, holy, holy* forever. But repetition seems to be the exception rather than the rule. We are even warned about its overuse, *Do not use thoughtless repetition* (Mt 6:7). On Sundays, we lean toward linear movement through our songs but we understand that some repetition serves to help us focus on a particular truth or thought.

SIMPLICITY



PRODUCTION

Our Sunday worship music tends to be more produced. The distinction here is between an orchestral band (produced) and a single instrument or voice (simple). Simple worship expressions are so important: *and after singing a hymn* (Mr 14:26), *speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your hearts to the Lord* (Eph 5:19). Yet we see ample evidence of a more orchestrated large gathering for worshipful celebration in II Sam 6:5, I Chr 23:5, II Chr 5:12, Ezra 3:10 & Nehemiah 12:27. On Sundays, we lean more toward exuberant multi-instrument production of worship music. However, for Sunday evening chapels the atmosphere is more intimate and simple.

A few other considerations:

Our Words v. God's Words: Our Sunday worship music often incorporates lyrics taken directly from scripture, but we do not regard "Scripture Songs" or those songs written as transliterations of segments of scripture, as a superior form of worship. We want our worship to be theologically accurate and a true reflection of our own lived experience of dependence on Him and love for Him.

Alignment with the Song Writer: Some of our Sunday worship music is written and produced by ministries that we may not be entirely aligned with from a theological perspective. We select songs based on the merit of the song, not necessarily the songwriter. Kings David's later years were marred by disobedience to God and yet his early songs are kept as scripture. We do not feel a strong obligation to stay current on a particular songwriter's current stance.

Defining what we mean by Loud: It is commonly understood that prolonged exposure to sounds exceeding 85 decibels will cause hearing damage. On Sunday mornings, our music volume peaks at around 90 decibels. Exposure to 90 decibel volumes begins to harm hearing after 2 – 4 hours. So when we say "loud" we mean loud without the long-term damage!