

Foundational Philosophy

CEFC's Worship Music Will Be Intentionally Scriptural

Worship music, like the rest of the worship service, should be filled with biblical quotations, imagery and allusions (Col 3:16). In some cases, that means that the hymn lyrics should essentially be thought-for-thought paraphrases of the biblical text. Even in cases when hymns pursue a biblical theme or doctrine, however, the biblical content behind the lyrics should be clear. We should be singing the Scriptures! Further, worship music can both *express* and *advance* the congregation's theological understanding. We value Scripture not merely for creativity or artistry, but for biblical and theological accuracy. The songs we sing in worship should be doctrinally rich. We want people to meditate on spiritual truths as they sing, both in public worship and in private, so we are endeavoring to provide fuel for such meditation through theologically astute texts, especially regarding the primary doctrines within which we base our teaching as a direct reflection of our Statement of Faith and Mission Statement.

CEFC's Worship Music Will Be Intentionally God-Glorifying

Worship music takes place for the glory and pleasure of God alone. Worship is NOT primarily about music, techniques, songs, or even methodologies. Music is about what and who we love more than anything else—Jesus Christ. Worship is delighting in God above everything else. Scripture teaches that just as all things were *created* by and for Christ (Col 1:16; Rev 4:11), all believers are *saved* by and for Christ (Eph 1:6, 12, 14). Therefore, we want to utilize music that encourages the Lord's people to "magnify" and "exalt" Him (Psalm 34:3) by reminding them of His majesty, glory, titles, attributes, words and deeds—by helping them see Him as He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures. Although the songs will be enjoyable and edifying for the Lord's people, chosen music's primary purpose is to assist the congregation in focusing upward so that the church might fulfill its purpose of glorifying God by singing directly of Him, for Him, and to Him (Eph 1:12; 3:20-21; Rom 11:36).

CEFC's Worship Music Will Be Intentionally Christ-Centered

Worship music should be distinctly *Christian*. Our songs should make much of Jesus Christ and the glorious Gospel. Because we believe that Christ crucified is the centerpiece of human history (1 Cor 1:23a; 2:2) to which the entire Old Testament prophesied and to which the entire New Testament bears witness (Luke 24:47), we are determined to

incorporate music that will point people Christ-ward and help them appreciate in fresh ways the glory of Jesus' Person and Work. Above all, we want to sing about Christ—His perfect life, sacrificial death, victorious resurrection, intercessory ministry, and glorious return!

CEFC's Worship Music Will Be Intentionally Congregationally Engaging

Worship music should encourage every-member ministry which directly aligns with our Mission Statement of *Making, Maturing, Multiplying for Christ*. While we appreciate purposeful and appropriate special music, we believe that God is uniquely glorified by congregational singing. Worship does not belong only to those who are specially trained or gifted, but to every believer in Jesus Christ. Further, singing praise is the *responsibility* of the entire body, not a select few (Eph 5:18; Col 3:16). These truths motivate us to choose music that is accessible, both textually and musically, seeking to assure that every single person within the congregation can sing with their whole heart.

CEFC's Worship Music Will Be Intentionally Fervent and Vibrant

Worship music should have texts and tunes that affect the entire person—mind, will, and emotions (Mat 22:37-38). There will be a range of musical choices that will allow for music from the quiet and meditative, inspiring wonder or sorrow, to musical pieces which are explicitly joyful and celebratory, inspiring a heartfelt and exuberant response! We want our choices to stir the imagination and affections, encouraging appropriate emotional responses to the grand truths being sung. We want to help congregations engage biblical truth and respond with thoughtful, whole-hearted fervency (John 4:24).

CEFC's Worship Music Will Be Intentionally Chosen to Be Excellent

Worship texts and music should reflect the character of God in His holiness, glory, weight, majesty, love, grace, joy, and other perfections (Psalm 96). Through all the possible musical styles, we will remain focused on choosing music which promotes a biblical reverence (Heb 12:28-29) and has a sound that is distinct from what is heard outside the church. We will seek to pursue excellence in the quality of our music to the best of our collective abilities while recognizing praise is accepted by God because of Christ (Heb 13:15; 1 Pet 2:5), not because of our abilities. However, we believe that one way in which we demonstrate God's glory and our esteem for Him is by offering Him that which is excellent in every aspect of our worship. By striving to give God our best, we want to choose music that is the best we can offer both artistically and doctrinally—that is "skillful" (Ps 33:3; 47:7). By choosing such music, we will point Christ's people directly to Him in each of the musical choices.