

Brass and Woodwinds in Worship teams



Synopsis

Do you wish that all those brass and woodwind players in the pew were involved in the worship services of your church? What about your high school students? This workshop brings a hands on approach to discovering the approach and skills needed to involve wind players.

Workshop Premise

A valuable untapped resource can and should be accessed. Many communities have highly successful band programs but the high school players rarely play their instrument in the contemporary worship teams. Many churches have good but uninvolved adult brass or woodwind players sitting in the pews.

Although a number of practical challenges must be met before brass and woodwind players can be involved — especially in contemporary worship — the rewards far outweigh the work of meeting these challenges.

Who will benefit from this workshop?

- The uninvolved wind player of any age
- The worshipping congregation who sees the body involved and
- The worship team with new ideas and sounds
- The worship leader more opportunities to teach and disciple
- The worship team as they learn how to add the rich resource of wind players.
- The church because involved people are contagious people

Typical scenario(s) addressed by this workshop

Suppose a clarinet player shows up for a worship band rehearsal. The worship team is excited. “How cool to have a clarinet play with the team.” Introductions are made and the first song on the stand is played. While the clarinetist looks at the music, he or she is wondering, “Where is my part - all I see is the melody? What am I supposed to play? Just the melody with the singers? And when I play, it sounds out of tune as if everyone is not playing my key.” Of course they are not, since the clarinet is a transposing instrument.

At some point someone turns to the clarinetist and asks, “Is there a problem?” As the clarinetist voices her thoughts, members of the band respond in surprise.

Band members: “Of course, we don’t play the melody unless we are asked to as part of an intro or fill. Based on our role in the worship team, we use the chords and other info on the lead sheet to play our part. We make it up. We play everything by ear.”

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Clarinetist: "By ear? But I need my notes. I need to know when to play what. I need my music written out and I need it transposed. What do mean I am supposed to 'read a lead sheet?' What is a lead sheet?"

Band members: "The lead sheet is what we gave you. You play according to the style and feel of the piece. You improvise or play by ear"

And the frustration might be greater if only a chord chart was provided.

A saxophonist with improv experience in a jazz band might have a better chance of transferring skills and knowledge to the worship team environment. However, if the worship team leader does not have instrumental experience with brass and woodwinds, he or she may feel helpless to involve the instrumentalists.

Typical responses from the leader might be:

"If you want to play in the worship team you will need to learn to play by ear"

"If you want to play in the worship team, you will need to learn to transpose."

"I don't have time to write out parts for you. I don't write out parts for the guitar player or keyboard player. Figure it out yourself."

And the wind player might respond,

"How do I learn to read a chord chart and play by ear?"

WORKSHOP POSSIBILITIES

1. FOR WOODWIND OR BRASS PLAYER

- A. Learning how to read a chord chart or lead sheet as a woodwind or brass player**
- B. Learning to play by ear or improvise**
- C. Learning to understand styles and transferring knowledge to a wind instrument**

2. FOR WORSHIP LEADERS

- A. Understanding transposing instruments**
- B. Using the wonderful tools provided by CCLI**
- C. Planning for woodwind and brass players**
- D. Choosing suitable songs for wind player involvement**
- E. Transferring the essence of style to wind instruments**

3. FOR LEADERS, TEAMS AND PLAYERS

- A. Rehearsal with charts chosen for suitability for involvement of both groups**
- B. Understanding transposition**
- C. Understanding style**
- D. Understanding the soundscape of a worship team**