



OAKLAND WORSHIP

HANDBOOK





Oakland Worship exists to nourish a biblically faithful, musically skilled, and vibrantly Spirit-filled multi-generational worship culture at Oakland Church.

For more than 100 years, Oakland Church has been making passionate and compassionate followers of Jesus Christ, and as one of its ministries, Oakland Worship exists within that context. We serve the vision that God has trusted to our senior leadership, and in so doing, we glorify Jesus Christ and bring the culture of Heaven to earth.

Oakland Worship is a unified collective of worship leaders, musicians, vocalists, and audio techs. The ministry that God has assigned to us is a very public stage ministry, which requires special maturity, leadership, and accountability from an individual.

The New Testament has exactly zero verses that mention worship leading as we understand it today (which is a constant call for us to hold style loosely), but if you look back to the Old Testament, the Levites were the ones who facilitated corporate worship in the temple. They were anointed for this because of their lineage, character, and competency—the fact that they could play music was auxiliary. Because of this, our top priority for those on the team is not only high musicianship, but also deep holiness.

Notice the two-fold description of Israel's most famous worship leader in Psalm 78:72: "And David shepherded them with integrity of heart; with skillful hands he led them."

SPIRITUAL EXPECTATIONS

Pre-Audition & Interview

- Have an active relationship with Jesus (John 14:6, John 15:5)
- Have been baptized in water (Acts 2:41, Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12), or do so at the next available opportunity
- Have been regularly attending Oakland Church for at least 6 months and consider Oakland “home”

Once you complete an audition and interview, we are asking you to commit to maintain 4 major areas:
Core, Character, Community, and Craft.

CORE

- Maintain an active relationship with Jesus (John 14:6, John 15:5)
- Submit to the authority of the Bible on all matters (2 Timothy 3:14-17)
- Regularly practice personal spiritual disciplines, such as Bible study, prayer, fasting, & evangelism (Luke 18:1, Acts 17:11, Matthew 28:19)
- Participate in the life of Oakland Church by:
 - Attending weekly services (Hebrews 10:25)
 - Supporting the mission and values of Oakland Church (Acts 2:42)
 - Supporting the church with my tithe (10% of my income) and financial offerings (Malachi 3:10-12, Matthew 23:23, Acts 2:45)
 - Submitting cheerfully to and praying for the leadership of Oakland Church (Hebrews 13:17-19, Romans 13:1)

CHARACTER

- Practice the fruits of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, among others), which reflect spiritual maturity (Galatians 5:22-23)
- Earnestly seek, practice, and develop the gifts of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:1, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 1 Corinthians 12:27-31, Romans 12:6-8, 2 Timothy 1:6)
- Pursue purity of heart and mind, including:
 - Complete abstinence of any sexual activity outside a heterosexual marriage (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, Romans 1:26-27)
 - Complete fidelity within a heterosexual marriage (Hebrews 13:4, Proverbs 6:32)
 - Complete abstinence of lust, pornography, and anything else the Bible describes as destructive to me (Ephesians 5:5, Colossians 3:5)
- Cultivate emotional health (3 John 1:2)
- ‘Put off’ the toxic sins of the world, such as illegal drug use, drunkenness, and gossip (Ephesians 4:17-32)
- Seek accountability, counsel, and guidance from appropriate leadership when needed (James 5:16, Galatians 6:1)
- Ensure that your online interactions and social media presence is becoming of a spiritual leader

A person is kneeling on a wooden stage floor, holding a microphone. In the background, another person is standing and gesturing with their hands. The scene is dimly lit with stage lights.

COMMUNITY

- Belong to a small group at Oakland Church
- Engage in healthy relationships (Proverbs 13:20, John 15:12-13)
- Practice synergy (the idea that we are more effective when we work together) instead of being a lone wolf or a prima donna (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)
- Encourage others by being a fountain, not a drain (1 Thessalonians 5:11, Acts 15:32, 2 Corinthians 13:11, Colossians 2:2)
- Discipled by a trusted leader (Proverbs 1:5, Proverbs 15:22)
- Disciple someone and raise up new leaders (Titus 2:3-8, 1 Corinthians 11:1, 1 Timothy 4:12)

CRAFT

- Strive for & maintain excellence (Colossians 3:23, Ephesians 6:7-8, Proverbs 22:29)
- Intentionally develop skill (Matthew 25:14-29)

MUSICAL EXPECTATIONS

EVERYONE

Rehearsals are Thursday nights at 6:30pm. If you are scheduled to sing or play for a weekend service, you must be at rehearsal the Thursday prior. (You only need to attend rehearsal if you are scheduled that weekend.) It's expected that you arrive at rehearsal familiar with your part and prepared.

Monitor wedges are provided onstage, but in-ear monitors are available to everyone who wants a more precise and fully customizable sound. You can purchase a body pack from the church for \$175, and it is yours to personally own.

The scheduling system we use is Planning Center (accessible either via email or app), and the entire team is expected to respond to scheduling in a timely manner (ideally, at least 1 week prior to the date for which they are scheduled).

VOCALS

Vocalists are joining a team, an ensemble of singers with a shared goal of creating a cohesive sound and becoming one unified voice for congregational worship. All vocalists must be able to sing their particular part or harmony voicing (which is usually provided through Planning Center), as well as blend with other vocalists.

It is also expected that vocalists model biblical postures of worship, such as lifting of hands (Psalm 134:2), bowing down low (Psalm 95:6), and dancing or jumping (Psalm 30:11), while appearing comfortable and relaxed.

A person is kneeling on a stage, playing an acoustic guitar. In the background, another person is standing, possibly singing or playing another instrument. The scene is dimly lit, with a spotlight on the person kneeling.

GUITAR (ACOUSTIC & ELECTRIC)

The guitarist should first and foremost have a good quality guitar. The sound and style of the guitar should contribute to the diverse and dynamic style of playing expected from the player. If necessary, you must provide your own high-quality pedals. However, we are not just looking for great tone, but consistent tone and playing.

Guitarists are required to learn the actual parts of the versions of the songs we do while matching the tones and effects for each part as they are on the recordings. Occasionally we will allow room for personal expression, so please follow the guidance of the worship leader.

Currently we do not run electric guitars through an amp except on occasion, as this allows us more control over the general house mix, live stream mix, and recordings.

BASS GUITAR

Bass players are expected to have a quality instrument with excellent tone, and are required to learn the notes, patterns, and feel as they are on the recordings. Four fingers should be used on the fret board as well as at least two fingers on the right hand in plucking the strings.

Volunteers must consistently demonstrate the ability to play not only in time with a click, but to actually help create the pocket with the drummer.

DRUMS

Drummers are expected to learn groove patterns/maps from the recordings and be flexible to change parts if asked to do so. We emphasize simple, musical playing with a “high energy” approach and a large emphasis on consistency. This refers to a consistent hitting technique throughout each song, consistent groove patterns through each section, and consistent timing. Additionally, since our worship culture embraces “unscripted worship moments,” the drummer must closely follow the worship leader to create swells, builds, and the right mood for the moment.

A complete kit, hardware, throne, sticks, and brushes are provided. Minor adjustments to the kit are allowed, such as tuning and height adjustments.

PIANO/KEYS

Players are expected to learn the parts from the recordings, play the proper voicings, and be flexible to change things if/as needed while consistently working with the guitarists to occupy the right frequency ranges. If there is a piano player and a keys player, volunteers must work together to determine parts, entrances, and exits.

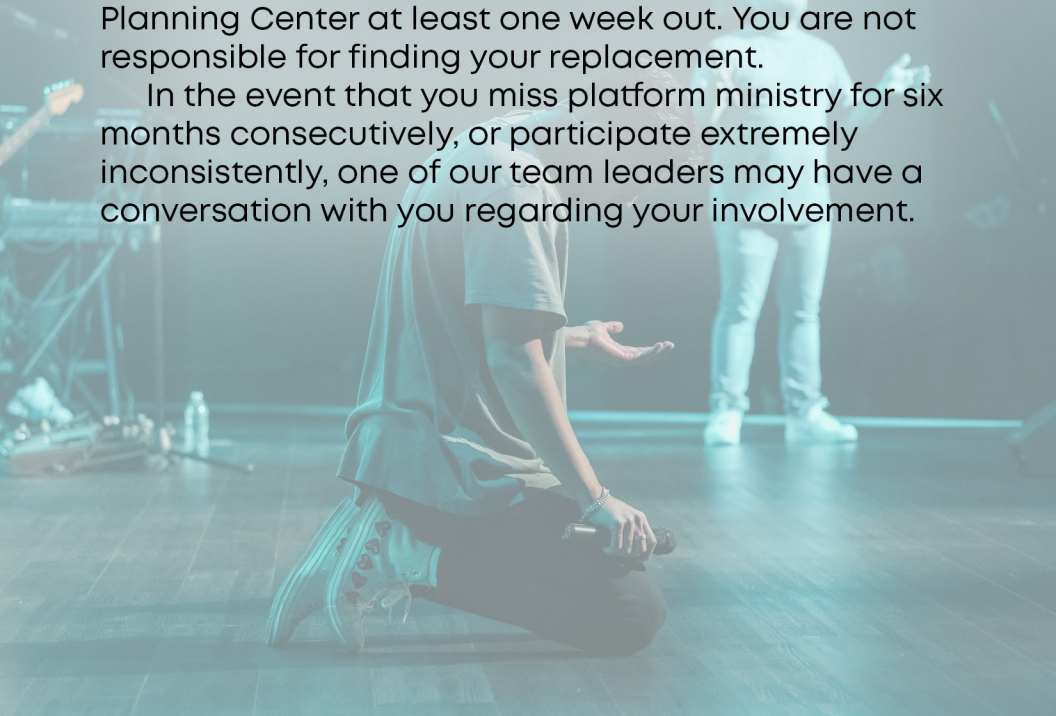
Volunteers must be proficient in reading chord charts in a variety of keys. Additionally, since our worship culture embraces “unscripted worship moments,” players must be able to improvise and must closely follow the worship leader to help create the right mood for the moment.

OTHER EXPECTATIONS

As a general rule of thumb, you will be scheduled for platform ministry at least once a month. We usually make efforts to schedule volunteers in the same monthly rotation (for example, you might be scheduled the second Sunday of every month), but volunteers are asked to be flexible during exceptions.

If you cannot play or sing the weekend you are scheduled, you must “decline” the invitation in Planning Center at least one week out. You are not responsible for finding your replacement.

In the event that you miss platform ministry for six months consecutively, or participate extremely inconsistently, one of our team leaders may have a conversation with you regarding your involvement.



DRESS EXPECTATIONS

- Avoid styles, patterns, or colors that bring attention to you and not the entire team. Think: “I need to look a part of the team.”
- Your midriff, sides, entire back, and undergarments will remain covered at all times (including when your hands are lifted or when you are bowing, etc).
- If a shirt displays a message or image, it must honor the Lord, or at least be neutral.
- Shorts (both men and women), dresses, and skirts must cover most of the thigh. Remember, you are on a platform where others are physically looking up at you.
- No strapless tops, and the straps of sleeveless tops (for both men & women) must cover the entire shoulder area.
- Ensure tops are modest with no cleavage.
- Holes & frays in pants are fine, but no see-through holes above the knee.
- Keep in mind that lace, lighter colors, and certain fabrics are not see-through until stage lights hit them.
- Avoid fabric that is clingy, and any clothing that is excessively tight or excessively baggy.
- Please use common sense. We love trendy and fashion-forward vibes, but our “look” must reflect Christ and point broken people Heavenward.

In the event that an item of clothing or general appearance doesn't meet these expectations or a “common sense rule,” please understand that you may be asked to refrain from participating in platform ministry until next time. Each circumstance will be treated on a case-by-case basis.