



Presbyterian Youth Victoria

Music Policy

Aim:

To bring glory to God through musical worship, by aiding in the choice of songs and musical styles at PYV camps and events.

Introduction / Explanation:

We are commanded to 'sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs' when we come together and to make 'music in our hearts to God,' [1] One of the highlights of PYV camps has always been the singing. However, due to a number of factors, including the evolution of popular praise and worship styles, it is becoming increasingly difficult to choose songs that are both lyrically and musically appropriate.

The aim of this document is to guide those involved in the planning and implementation of corporate musical praise, so that it is both God honouring and edifying.

Principles for Lyrical Content:

- We hold that all lyrics must be:
 - God honouring and
 - Consistent with the bible
- Some examples of exclusion criteria include:
 - Lyrics that are man honouring, or make claims about our experience that are untrue due to our sinful nature
 - Lyrics that make commitments that are unrealistic due to our sinful nature.
 - Lyrics that use romantic sentiment towards God.
 - Lyrics that are about us praising God, but say nothing about Him.
 - Lyrics that are about, or call for, a tangible experience of the Holy Spirit or the 'presence of God'.
 - Lyrics that contain phrases that a significant number will not understand.
- We hold that we are called to love God with our heart, soul, mind and strength, and to sing with the spirit, but also sing with the mind. [2] [3] Thus, while it is good to include songs that encourage a deep appreciation of the fundamental truths about God's character, it is also good to include songs that focus on a wide variety of the attributes of God. This may or may not include the use of traditional hymns.
- We believe that although it is good to sing psalms, we are also commanded to sing 'hymns and spiritual songs' [4] and sing new songs to God. [5]
- We acknowledge that our man-made songs of praise may be imperfect as are our prayers, but both, when presented to God, are refined by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- As per biblical instruction, [5] we also encourage the production and use of original music and lyrics.



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Principles for Musical Content:

- We do not favour any particular musical styles or genres. This will vary according to circumstances, resources and personal preferences.
- Whilst singing *a capella* can be good, we follow the biblical example of the use of musical instruments along with our voices. [6] [7] [8] [9]
- We acknowledge that both music and praise, by their nature and design, evoke emotion, and that musical praise therefore, by its nature and design, will, and should, be emotional.
 - Our aim shouldn't be to try and heighten people's emotions through music and then 'direct' this emotion to God, but for the emotion that is derived from our appreciation of truths about God to be expressed through the music.
 - We therefore do not encourage overly showy music and stage presentation, or long instrumental passages, as these will inevitably become the source of 'worshipful feelings.'
- We encourage musicians to seriously examine themselves, to be sure that they are aiming to bring glory to God rather than to themselves. If they feel compromised, they should talk to the music team leader, or a spiritual mentor, who will work through the issue with them. If they still feel compromised, they should consider temporarily excusing themselves from playing/singing.
- To aid with this, we would encourage the Sessions Coordinator to consider, when possible, placing musicians in an inconspicuous position.

Scripture References:

1. Eph 5:19 **2.** Luke 10:27 **3.** 1 Cor 14:15 **4.** Eph 5:19 **5.** Ps 96:1 **6.** Ex 15:20, 21 **7.** 2 Sam 6:5 **8.** Ps 33 **9.** Ps 149:1-5