

# Millersville Bible Church

## MUSIC POLICY

The following policy has been established to give clarity and direction to the music of Millersville Bible Church.

### **PURPOSE OF MUSIC AT MILLERSVILLE BIBLE CHURCH**

The purpose of music at Millersville Bible Church (MBC) is to promote the overall purpose of the Church as stated in the Constitution (Article II). More specifically, it is to promote both corporate and individual worship toward God as well as to encourage the saints in their personal walk and service to God (Ephesians 5:18-20; Col. 3:16-17).

### **MUSIC COORDINATOR**

#### **Qualifications:**

*The Music Coordinator must ...*

1. Be a member of MBC who demonstrates agreement with the constitution, statement of faith, and by-laws of this Church, and specifically the Church covenant.
2. Work in a Christ-like manner with people of all ages and abilities, demonstrating teaching, communication, organizational and administrative skills with a true servant's heart.
3. Have a working knowledge of music and music theory spanning a broad base of musical styles used in the Church today.
4. Be able to evaluate an individual's musical level and ability and assign them to areas of service consistent with that ability or level of commitment.
5. Be able to lead both congregational and special groups through voice and accompaniment.
6. Have a conceptual knowledge of the sound board and equipment, useful for planning and communication with the sound technicians.
7. Be approved by the Board of Elders.

#### **Responsibilities:**

*The Music Coordinator will ...*

1. Oversee and coordinate all aspects of the music within the Church.
2. Schedule lead teams, instrumentalists, special music, and audio/video people for all worship and special services, with consideration given to each person's unique abilities and skill levels and service requirements.
3. Preview, select and/or approve all music used in the worship service and provide direction when necessary in both selection and performance, seeking to maintain a blended worship genre.
4. Submit Order of Services weekly to the Church secretary.
5. Provide detailed platform layouts for audio technicians.
6. Create and provide for video technicians a CD and printed version of each service's power point presentation, with appropriate song words, titles and graphics.
7. Be watchful for individuals gifted in areas of music leadership for mentoring and integrating into the overall music program.

### **LAY MUSICIANS (includes vocalists and instrumentalists)**

*The Lay Musician must ...*

1. Have regularly attended MBC for a period of at least three months. (*This rule does not apply to college students.*) This allows time for the individual to become acquainted with the ministry of the Church and the Church to become familiar with the individual. Membership is not required for participation, but movement toward membership is strongly encouraged if involvement continues.
2. Demonstrate adequate talent in the area of music.
3. Be able to attend scheduled practices.
4. Demonstrate a willingness and ability to participate in various styles of music, in keeping with the blended worship service concept.
5. Complete an application form to be reviewed by the Music Coordinator and the Board of Elders.

- Applications are obtainable from the Music Coordinator or the MBC website.
6. Sign a written statement of agreement and commitment to MBC's Music Policy.

**Responsibilities:**

*The Lay Musician should ...*

1. Live a life separated from sinful habits of the flesh and worldliness.
2. Be committed to fulfill scheduled practices and scheduled services or inform the Music Coordinator in a timely manner if obligations cannot be met.
3. Be able to practice at home outside of scheduled practices, using either printed music or practice tapes to learn the song(s), in order to come to scheduled practices and/or sound checks adequately prepared.

**Lead Team Members & Regularly Scheduled Instrumentalists:**

*Lead Team Members & Regularly Scheduled Instrumentalists ...*

1. Are a selected group of lay musicians (already approved under the "Lay Musician" Guidelines) with appropriate and usable musical skills who are selected and approved by the Music Coordinator and Board of Elders to lead singing in the worship services on a regular rotation each month covering both morning services. Evening services may also be assigned on occasion but not as a rule.
2. Are the *core-group* from which "Ministry of Music" assignments are made as well as solos for special services. (See "Guidelines for Selecting Appropriate Music" for further instruction.)
3. Will adhere to further training and instruction in microphone handling to enhance overall presentation for the benefit of the congregation.
4. Will attend sound checks and practices as scheduled and will inform the Music Coordinator in a timely manner if conflicts arise.

**GUEST MUSICIANS**

A guest musician is anyone who takes part in any formal musical ministry of MBC who normally attends Church elsewhere. Guest musicians must complete an application form to be reviewed by the Music Coordinator and Board of Elders prior to being scheduled. If the guest is a group larger than four members, the leader or director of the group will complete the form. Applications are available from the Music Coordinator.

**GUIDELINES FOR SELECTING APPROPRIATE MUSIC**

In order to fulfill the purpose of music at MBC, the following guidelines and comments should be adhered to in selecting music for services, whether for prelude, worship in giving, ministry in music or other assignments.

1. Songs should lead the listener in worship or praise toward God or encourage the listener in his or her personal walk with God. The primary purpose of the musical performance is not entertainment.
2. The words or message of the song must be doctrinally sound. Avoid using songs that have ambiguous or abstract meaning. If the song needs to be explained to the listener, it probably is not an appropriate selection.
3. The music must be in agreement with the message and mood of the song. Give thought to the words and message of the song to determine the mood and then determine if the music reflects that message and mood. The music in a vocal selection is meant to accompany or compliment the song and should not be the primary focus.
4. When selecting an instrumental piece, try to select familiar songs or an arrangement thereof. Ideally the listener should be able to think upon the message of the song as the instrumentalist is playing. The exception to this would be, under the direction of the Music Coordinator, the playing of a new song intended to be introduced to the congregation at some point. The purpose would be to have the congregation become familiar with the melody prior to the singing of the song in that service and/or services to follow.
5. When assigned for "Ministry of Music" or a special "Worship in Giving" presentation, the title of the selection should be submitted to the Music Coordinator at least one week in advance to be approved and entered into the bulletin.

## PERFORMANCE AND PLATFORM PRESENTATION

The ultimate desire and goal is to be able to lead in the worship service in a way that does not distract from the congregation's focus on God. Practical guidelines are simply one of the many ways to help us toward that goal. It is not about the music or musicians. It is all about Him. Since the primary purpose of the music lies in the message of the song(s), participants should avoid distractions from that message.

1. Unless a spoken introduction will enhance the song, it is probably not necessary. Therefore, spoken introductions are strongly discouraged. Please talk to the Music Coordinator for further instruction on this matter as time in the service may also be a consideration. Instrumentalists may want to let the listeners know what is being played and encourage them to follow along if the words are in the hymnal.
2. Bear in mind that well-timed, meaningful gestures can add to a song, but additional movement only distracts.

It is understood there are areas where Christians differ and that the Bible does not specifically command or condemn. These are left to the discretion of the individual Christian. Dress is one of those areas. While it is not required that every church member have the same convictions concerning this area, we do require, based on the need for unity (Romans 14), and a clear, uniform standard, a willingness for those who participate in the music ministry at MBC to graciously adhere to the following policy concerning dress:

1. Modest dress clothes are required for all persons on the platform.
  - a. Men should wear a tie and jacket unless otherwise noted by the Music Coordinator. A jacket does not have to be worn if the wearing of it impairs the ability or restricts necessary movement when playing instruments such as guitars, drums and the piano, etc.
  - b. Women should wear dresses, skirts or dress slacks that meet the following specified criteria: Dresses and skirts are to be long enough that when sitting in a chair, the dress or skirt does not rise up and over the knees, simply because the music is presented from an elevated platform. Dress slacks are required to fit comfortably and hang naturally.
2. Further explanation.

The following should be avoided: muscle shirts, spaghetti straps, halter tops, tube tops, etc.), clothing that bares midriffs (i.e. low rise pants with shorter shirts, etc.), cleavage revealing clothing (i.e. plunging necklines, etc.), see-through clothing, excessively short dresses or skirts, and slits in skirts or dresses that are thigh-revealing or inappropriately placed.

If a musician is uncertain as to whether an outfit is appropriate under the above guidelines, wear it on an off Sunday and ask the Music Coordinator. It will be to everyone's benefit to *not* wait until the time of performance to ask.

An outfit that may be acceptable in other settings may or may *not* be appropriate on the platform; again, simply because the music is presented from an elevated platform. That fact alone presents challenges that do not always occur in everyday activities. If you are uncertain, always ask or wear something else until you are sure.