



*Worship
Handbook*

A NOTE FROM OUR PASTOR

To Worship Leaders:

I'm a worshipper. I know you are too, or else you wouldn't be reading this. You've decided to become part of this team because you want to lead people into God's presence. What an amazing opportunity we have each time we set foot on the platform of the church! What a responsibility God has laid before us, in service to lead people to "taste" the goodness of God!

Our church exists to help people follow Jesus and respond to Him. Imagine the impact you can have on someone's life on a given Sunday, or any other worship encounter. You have the potential to lead someone into the life-changing power of God. We can't change anyone, but when someone encounters the loving Father, their lives are never the same.

TOUR GUIDE

You're a tour guide, not a travel agent. Travel agents sit behind a desk with beautiful pictures of exotic destinations, but most have never even visited those destinations. Tour guides, however, show people the destination firsthand. They go with you, and more importantly, they've been there before. As a worship leader, your role is to go into God's presence before the people. Then when you stand on that platform, you'll be able to lead people to a place you've already been. See, worship doesn't just happen on the platform. For you, it's your life. Respect this platform by preparing yourself before you set foot on it.

AUTHORITY

We all have authority because we are under authority. The minute we become prideful, thinking it's about us, we lose our authority. We don't stand alone. Our ability to lead is solely based on our ability to submit. You have been given authority as you stand and lead. Always remember that.

I want you to know that I believe in you as your pastor. We stand together facing the enemy in the name of Jesus. I'm praying for you, and you can lead with confidence when you stand on that platform.

Stay on mission!

Paul Crouthamel

SEVEN MARK'S MISSION

Our mission at Seven Marks is simple: to practice the way of Jesus. We believe this happens when people begin to embrace an all-of-life perspective on worship and discipleship. The intersection of worship and discipleship is a critical one. In fact, the very backdrop of The Great Commission is worship. Matthew 28:17 says, "And when they [his disciples] saw him they worshiped him . . ." The text goes on to explain the essential mission of every believer: to make disciples of all nations. At Seven Marks we believe worship, mission, and discipleship are all critically linked. As we live a lifestyle of worship, a missional lifestyle naturally results and disciples are made along the way.

THE 7 MARKS

At the end of 2016 and into the beginning of 2017, some of our staff were part of a learning cohort with several other churches from around the country. The task that was given was for them to wrestle through what the Scriptures taught concerning the radical minimums for a follower of Jesus. In other words, of all the characteristics of a follower of Jesus, which ones would be considered fundamental? Which ones should characterize all followers of Jesus? After weeks of back-and-forth conversations and months of rewrites, they settled on seven. There are undoubtedly more characteristics of followers of Jesus, and one may even debate the seven selected. However, we have chosen to focus our attention on these, knowing that if we got these right it couldn't help but make a difference in everyone who called Seven Marks home

1. FINDS IDENTITY IN JESUS

A follower of Jesus finds their identity in Him which gives focus and meaning to life.

2. PURSUES THE LIFESTYLE OF JESUS

Healthy things grow, and in order for that to happen spiritually, it involves intentionally pursuing spiritual practices or habits.

3. RESPONDS TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

Living a surrendered life entails recognizing and responding to the voice of the Holy Spirit within you.

4. ENGAGES IN BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

Growing always involves being connected to and engaged with others in accountable relationships.

5. SERVES OTHERS

Followers of Jesus love deeply by being aware of the needs around them and extending grace to meet those needs.

6. PROCLAIMS JESUS

A follower of Jesus knows how to confidently speak and demonstrate the gospel.

7. MAKES DISCIPLES

A sure sign of a follower of Jesus is that they replicate themselves and help others to do the same.

OBJECTIVE

Seven Marks Worship exists to guide worshipers into an intimate encounter with God in the corporate gathering, and then launch them as worshipping missionaries back into their spheres of influence. We seek to produce quality music and creative elements that enhance and never distract from a person's worship experience. We believe that when a person experiences God's presence and power in their life, not only are they forever changed, but also, they can't help but tell people! We are committed to continually lead, equip, and resource the body of Christ to be worshipping missionaries wherever they live.

GOALS

We strive for what John Piper calls, "undistracting excellence." We define excellence as "doing things in a God-honoring manner." Henry Blackaby says "excellence generally describes tasks and tasks are usually a means to an end. People are the end." Because people are the end, we are committed to continually lead and equip the body of Christ so that people might connect with Jesus in a real and personal way.

SEVEN PILLARS OF A HEALTHY TEAM CULTURE

#1 - INTEGRITY

Integrity is the first major pillar of our team culture. It is important that we live in a way that displays Christ, not only on Sundays, but also throughout the week. Our personal lives off the stage will either lift up or tear down the vision of the church, as well as our personal reputations. You represent Christ and Seven Marks Church everywhere you go.

1 Timothy 3:2 says, "Therefore an overseer must be above reproach." Tim Challies explains "above reproach" in the following way: "Your life is so consistent that your reputation is credible, you are an example worth following, and you do not make the gospel look fake by teaching one thing while doing another." By application, this standard applies to all believers, but particularly those who hold a place of leadership in the church. That's us!

Perhaps the biggest area of stumbling for many followers of Jesus pertains to their voice and activity on social media. Please, please, please, be careful with your social media posts. Think before you post. Our rule of thumb is this: If Jesus wouldn't post it, don't post it! In sum, all team members are held accountable in the following areas: relational purity, healthy communication, and spiritual maturity.

#2 - SUBMISSION TO LEADERSHIP

We recognize that the leaders of Seven Marks have been positioned to direct, lead, challenge and nurture the church. Just as our leaders embrace and strive to serve the vision of our lead pastor, and ultimately God's plan, so do we submit to the leadership over us. If there is any disagreement or conflict, it should be handled directly with the appropriate people involved and at the appropriate time.

PAUL CROUTHAMEL // LEAD PASTOR
paul@sevenmarkschurch.com

JOSH VIA // WORSHIP PASTOR
josh@sevenmarkschurch.com
919-270-9305

MATT KEITH // CREATIVE DIRECTOR
matt@sevenmarkschurch.com
919-334-8687

JEREMY COURTRIGHT // TECH ASST.
jeremy@sevenmarkschurch.com
828-639-1537

#3 - RESPECT

Respect among peers is the third pillar of our team culture. We support each other in our conversations, actions, and preparation. If someone arrives unprepared or late, don't throw them under the bus or disrespect them. Your leader knows about it and will personally attend to the situation at the right time. DO feel free to challenge each other to consistently raise the standard, individually. Remember the Proverbs 27:17 model ("iron sharpens iron"). Additionally, inappropriate comments to teammates of the opposite sex IS sexual harassment and WILL be handled swiftly.

#4 - UNITY

"Keep your ledger short." In other words, if you are at odds with another person, team member or not, go to them face to face at your earliest and most appropriate opportunity and seek to be unified once again. As a team of worship leaders, we must strive to protect unity both on and off the platform. Ephesians 4:3 says, "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." Reject slander and uphold the reputations of those in leadership and of those with whom you serve.

#5 - RELATIONAL INTENTIONALITY

We desire to create a culture on and off the platform that is rich in relational connectivity. The worship team is a family. We do life together. We often eat together. We love and serve one another. Equally important is our off-stage relationships with other church members. These relationships strongly influence how our platform leadership is received. So, let's strive to be leaders off the stage through intentionally meeting people between services, engaging new people, following up with new acquaintances, etc. Your influence on the stage

will be magnified by your relationships off the stage.

#6 - GROWTH

The sixth pillar for a healthy culture is growth. Growth comes in two forms: spiritual growth and musical growth. As a member of this team, you are committing to pursue personal growth in both of these areas.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Spiritually, there are at least three arenas you should attend to:

1. Personal time with Jesus. Make sure you're spending time in God's Word and in prayer daily. This is your life source. Again, what happens on our platform should be an overflow of what God has been doing in our hearts all week long.

For help learning how to spend time with God each day, we have put together a 15-week spiritual preparation guide called *The Worship Playbook*. This is free for your benefit. We encourage you to take advantage of this resource.

2. Corporate time with Jesus. Additionally, let's not get so wrapped up in doing God's work on Sunday morning that God can't do His work in us! Sit in the congregation during the message and bring a Bible and notebook to take notes. We are very fortunate to have such great teaching pastors at Seven Marks. Don't miss out on what God could be saying to you.

3. Community time with Jesus. At Seven Marks, our smaller clusters of biblical community are our Community Groups, made up of people seeking to practice the way of Jesus together through loving God (UP), loving each other (IN), and loving the lost (OUT). Community Groups seek to surrender to and worship Jesus in all of life. We view these groups as a vital part of every member's spiritual growth. We ask that each team member find, commit to, and regularly attend a Community Group.

MUSICAL GROWTH

Musical growth is important as well. Challenge yourself to continue expanding your musical knowledge, taste, and skill. Never get complacent or set yourself on "auto-pilot." Ask questions. Watch YouTube videos. Take lessons. Learn from your teammates. In short, be a musical learner for life.

#7 - PREPARATION

Finally, preparation is the seventh pillar we pursue for a healthy culture. One of our mantra verses for the Arts area at Seven Marks is Proverbs 21:31 that says, "The horse is made ready for battle, but the victory belongs to the Lord." We believe one of the best things we can do to combat our enemy is to prepare ourselves for battle. We prepare, we plan, we strategize, all with the help of the Holy Spirit, then we leave the results up the Lord. It's not our job to win the battle. It's our job to prepare for battle and leave the results up to Him. Here are some practical ways we prepare:

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

While we emphasize and require musical excellence, spiritual preparedness is our FIRST priority. How can we lead where we've not gone ourselves? What does this look like? Here are some ideas:

- Take the song list and worship with it!
- Worship at home on your instrument.
- Pray for the team, the worship gathering, the pastor, and all that God has planned.
- Consider fasting on Saturday, the day before you take the platform.

PLANNING CENTER

Seven Marks uses Planning Center Online (PCO) to schedule musicians and make the MP3s, charts, and lyrics available to you in a timely fashion. One of the first items you will receive is a "Welcome Email" from PCO asking you to choose your password and set up your account. Whenever you are scheduled for a particular weekend, you will receive an additional email as well. Please promptly accept or decline any requests sent to you. Also, as soon as possible, block off any dates that you know you are not available. If you have any questions on how to use PCO, please contact us.

Unless otherwise posted, please learn your parts EXACTLY like the MP3. As a team, we rely on you to play your part accordingly. While we absolutely encourage creativity, additional/alternative parts must be communicated with the Worship Pastor or the band leader prior to rehearsal. We also ask that musicians learn the lyrics so you can sing along, engage the congregation, and lead from your instrument.

TRANSITIONS

Nothing keeps an experience moving like transitions, and the band plays a big role in this. Think through your transitions BEFORE rehearsal. Think about the tempo changes and key of each song, how one song ends and how another begins, and how the band can make it feel seamless.

OTHER ISSUES

PUNCTUALITY

Punctuality is vital for maintaining a culture of excellence and mutual respect. Arriving early is always a great idea. We are very serious about being punctual. Being on time is a respect issue. Being tardy tells us you don't respect your peers, the Seven Marks leadership, or the mission entrusted to us. If you consistently arrive late for rehearsals or worship gatherings, you will be asked to step down for a season until you are able to commit fully to the team. Obviously, emergencies do happen. Traffic happens. Even the most organized person can forget to set an alarm. If you are running late, please communicate with the Worship Pastor or the weekend band leader as soon as possible so he/she can plan accordingly.

DRESS CODE

Every person who sets foot on the platform automatically becomes a representation of Seven Marks Church. Keeping this in mind, we want to ensure our appearance is consistent with biblical principles and our church culture.

NO

- Shorts, skirts
- Revealing attire. The bottom line is, clothing that is too form-fitting or too low-cut is distracting in a worship service. Don't be afraid to ask someone you trust if what you're wearing might be viewed as a distraction on the platform.
- Dirty/sloppy/wrinkled clothing
- Hats that cover your eyes

YES

- Anything that does not distract people from the real reason they are there.
- Modern style.
- While everyone has their own personalities and unique styles and expression, we as a team must do our best to look cohesive and consistent

with our church culture and the culture at large. The missional principle is contextualization.

SAFETY

Safety in the building is something we take very seriously on Sunday mornings. Our Safety Team goes through routine training and exercises to ensure they have the tools and expertise they need to keep everyone in the building safe, especially our little ones. Because we share a hallway with the children's ministry, it's important that you wear your Worship Team ID badge anytime you leave the Green Room. If you forget your badge and you are stopped by a safety team member, please don't take it personally. They are simply doing their job.

GREEN ROOM

We are thankful to have a Green Room (Studio 5) and Hospitality Team that serves us each weekend. That is a privilege, and with it comes responsibility.

The Hospitality Team sets out wonderful snacks and finger foods for us to share with the other Seven Marks volunteers. Please keep food in this designated area only. When guests see people walking around with plates of food, it sends the wrong message.

We **MUST** clean up after ourselves. Throw away plates, napkins, etc. after each use. Do not leave the Green Room with trash still on the table tops.

The staff and volunteers regularly use the Green Room to recharge and review between services. Remember to keep conversation at a low volume level. Sunday can be a tiresome day, so make sure the Green Room remains a relaxing environment.

The Green Room is reserved for active volunteers. If you are not scheduled for a weekend then please remain out of the Green Room. Please be considerate of others regarding having your children in the Green Room. Try to keep noise volume and rowdiness under control.

Though we want you to take full advantage of the Green Room, please be sure not to seclude yourself. Make efforts to get out of the Green Room between the gatherings to mingle in the lobby, meet new guests, and be available to pray with people. Additionally, please make sure you sit in at least one gathering to hear, engage with, and respond to the Word of God.

REHEARSALS

Weekly rehearsals happen on Thursday nights from 6:00pm until 8:45pm unless otherwise directed by the Worship Pastor. Call time is 6pm. Vocal mini-rehearsal is from 6:00 to 6:30 while the band warms up and sound checks. Prayer/devotional time begins at 6:30. On Sunday mornings, call time is typically 7:15am unless otherwise directed by the Worship Pastor.

DO

- Come early enough to set up, tune, and be ready to go by the down beat.
- Keep your ears open. It's important that we are not only confident in our individual parts, but are also listening to the band as a whole. Listen to what each player is playing. Is it blending well with the rest of the team? Think "big picture" during rehearsal.
- Only use the confidence monitors as back up. The lyrics should be memorized, not read.
- Adjust ME1s (your personal mixer) to a level where you won't have to "fiddle" between songs. Set it. Leave it. If you need help learning how to use the ME1s, feel free to ask. There are plenty of YouTube tutorials as well. Don't forget to save your settings after making an adjustment.
- If you need something from the sound engineer, communicate that through the Worship Pastor or the band leader. If there is an issue, clearly communicate the problem and be patient. We are on the same team!
- Rehearse with energy and passion! Don't "save up for the weekend." The energy and excitement you bring to rehearsal is just as important as your musical preparedness!
- Tidy up! Make sure water bottles, coffee cups, personal items etc. are off the stage after rehearsal on Thursday night and after run-through on Sunday morning.

DO NOT

- No noodling! If someone is speaking with a team member or a sound engineer, keep instruments and voices quiet.

- No complaining. If there are technical, musical or miscellaneous complications, keep attitudes positive and morale high. You are the one responsible for the atmosphere created at a rehearsal. If you notice another member being negative or complaining, don't feed into it. Instead, speak positively and redirect the negative attitude.
- No music stands, chord charts, or staring at the confidence monitors. This will only weaken you as a musician. Don't be the weakest link. Constantly push yourself to be the best musician you can be.

STAGE PRESENCE/HOSPITALITY

So much is communicated through our eyes, face and body language. Look alive! Smile! Be joyful! If you don't look free and excited about worshipping our great God, neither will the people we're leading. What an honor it is to be the ones to teach people how fun, expressive, and life changing worship is!

Make eye contact with the congregation or the focus of the moment (i.e. a pastor leading the invitation or giving announcements). If there is a video playing, make sure your attention is focused on the screens and you are not being a distraction.

It's okay to close your eyes and lose yourself in the moment at times, but don't forget that you're also leading people. You are a host in a worship experience, so don't leave your guests in the dust. Be hospitable! Engage the congregation through good eye contact and appropriate body language. Smile, clap, and move. Make motions and gestures BIG! Every movement and facial expression appears less dramatic to the congregation than it feels to you on stage. Become comfortable with being on stage and leading with confidence and boldness!

GO TIME

Make sure you are in Studio 5 (backstage) 15 minutes before the 1st service for prayer time, and no later than 5 minutes before each additional service. Be on stage no later than 2 minutes before the start of the service. Quickly get ear buds plugged in and make sure your instrument is ready for the first song.

If you are returning onstage following the pastor's message, make sure ear buds are in prior to walking on stage, and your extension cable is readily accessible.

A lot of time can be wasted waiting for others to get ready, and that can create awkward dead space. Be as quiet as possible and be sensitive to the mood of the moment and what the Holy Spirit might be doing in the room.

INDIVIDUAL ROLES

BASS

1. As the bass player, you are the backbone of the rhythm section. It's imperative that you focus on consistency in your playing. Your number-one job is to be tight with the drummer's kick and snare pattern.
2. Don't play "all over the place," playing unnecessary extra runs and scales. Focus instead on playing simple, and playing the songs as they were recorded.
3. Make sure you're moving and getting into the music. It's important for us to show energy and passion in our playing!
4. Tone is an important part of our sound at Seven Marks. Listen closely to the tone of the bass player on the recording. Match the tone as closely as possible, whether it be by using a pedal, or even playing with a pick.

DRUMS

1. Let your facial expressions and singing show your passion for worship.
2. Have lots of energy, but don't play uncontrollably.
3. Focus on consistency and be intentional with your playing.
4. Know and be prepared to play all the parts on the record, but be prepared to be flexible with your playing during worship.
5. You may be asked to run the Ableton computer that houses all of the click tracks and backing tracks. Make sure you familiarize yourself with the software and the control keys assigned for each song.

ELECTRIC GUITARS

1. Electric guitars are normally labeled EG1 and EG2 in Planning Center. Typically, the EG1 parts will include most of the primary lead lines. EG2 contains mostly the rhythm parts. However, this is not always cut and dry. They can change from song to song. Many of our modern worship songs use interchangeable electric parts that don't necessarily fit easily into a 'lead' or 'rhythm' category.
2. We prefer all of our electric players to be comfortable with both lead and

rhythm parts so that we can share the load of responsibility and move interchangeably and seamlessly from song to song.

3. Check the notes in PCO under each song to see whether you have been scheduled for EG1 or EG2.
4. If an older song is scheduled without specific EG1 and EG2 parts, you may need to have a discussion with the other guitar player(s) to avoid playing the same parts. In fact, this is an expectation from week to week. Open communication between guitar players prior to rehearsal will ensure that everyone is on the same page.
5. Check with the Worship Pastor or another band leader if you need the contact information for another player.

LEAD GUITAR (NORMALLY 'EG1')

1. If you're using effects for a song, please come prepared with the equipment needed to get the correct sound. Please don't experiment during rehearsal or the run through.
2. Have excellent tone. Your sound doesn't have to match the original, but you shouldn't play with three overdrives during a song that calls for only a first stage. Tone doesn't just come from your gear! Half of a guitarist's tone comes from the hands:
 - Good hand-to-hand coordination.
 - Dexterity of fingers, which comes from doing finger movement and finger strength exercises.
3. Play with finesse. Less is more. Play with confidence and sensitivity to what the part requires.
4. Your parts need to rise above and cut through the mix. Make sure your tone is conducive to that.
5. Unless it is specified otherwise, know the parts in the original track. If you feel you have something that might work better than the original, make sure you are still prepared for both and consult the Worship Pastor or the band leader regarding your proposed changes.
6. Know your role. If you are a lead player, play lead. No need for lead and rhythm guitars to overlap parts.
7. Make a conscious effort to keep your parts solid with the tempo of the song.

RHYTHM GUITAR (NORMALLY 'EG2')

1. Know your role. If you're playing rhythm for a certain weekend or even just on a song, then play rhythm.

2. Do NOT underestimate the role of a rhythm player. This role supports the song, fills space, and drives the song.
3. When learning/practicing parts, don't just hear a chord or riff and play it the way you want. Sometimes artists use certain chord "voicing" or play things at certain spots on the fret board to achieve the best sound for that song. Those parts and placements are crucial to playing the song correctly.
4. A rhythm player's tone should be tailored to that role. Make sure your sound doesn't have too much high-end and is thicker than a lead player's, without sacrificing clarity.
5. A rhythm player should be perfectly in sync with both the click and drummer's patterns. Like a bass player, a rhythm player can make the foundation of a song excellent, or they can make it messy by not locking in with the drummer and click.

KEYBOARD

1. You are the icing on the cake! The pads and lead lines that a piano creates really bring our music to a new level. Pay close attention to the tones of the pads and synths that the keyboard players use on recordings. Tone is crucial for this role!
2. Pads, organs and other patches may seem simple, but they do wonders when you fill the holes that the rest of the band cannot.
3. Get creative with your playing and equipment! Spend time searching out new patches that would fit well in songs that might not have a defined keyboard part. Check with the Worship Pastor or the band leader to see if it works well with the song.
4. Don't overplay! With so many instruments playing at once, keep all parts tasteful and limited.
5. You may be asked to run the Ableton computer that houses all of the click tracks and backing tracks. Make sure you familiarize yourself with the software and the control keys assigned for each song.

VOCALS

Your voice is your instrument! Similar to all other instruments on the stage, your voice has its own place within a song.

1. As soon as you confirm and receive the song list on PCO, check to see if you are leading a song. If so, immediately rehearse with the track to make sure the key is appropriate for your vocal range. Please let the Worship Pastor or the band leader know as soon as possible if you need to adjust

the key.

2. Memorize ALL lyrics to ALL songs. Although we use confidence monitors in case of a memory lapse, we should never be forced to rely on them.
3. Pay attention to the timing of the lyrics and where phrases begin and end in relation to the beat/click. Be intentional not only in intonation, but also the cadence or rhythmic pattern in which the melody line follows.
4. Watch your tone! This isn't limited to just pitch. Make sure you don't narrow out your tone by becoming too nasally. Many vocalists make this mistake by not opening their mouths wide enough and by singing words the same way they would say them. By not opening your mouth wide enough, you are forcing more air to be released through your nose, thus causing the unwanted nasal sound.
5. Take control. Many vocalists have been trained classically (which uses big vibrato) or have just let their vibrato develop naturally without learning how to control it. Vibrato is simply a bend in pitch. This can cause big problems on a stage where we have multiple vocalists. When using multiple vocals, each vocalist must align themselves with the other vocalists in regards to: pitch, vibrato, timing, etc. If people deviate from a streamlined sound (even a vibrato tempo), the pitch of the whole song can be thrown off.
6. If you are not leading the song, listen to the track's background vocalists, their parts, and when they sing. Your vocal part is meant to support the leader. This happens through timing and specific parts.
7. Sing! Regardless of whether or not you're leading the song, make sure you are always singing. Even if you're not directly singing into the mic. At all times during the song, keep singing!



sevenmarkschurch.com | 919-275-0202