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DEVELOPING A MUSIC ACADEMY FOR GOD'S GLORY

I. Biblical basis for training others musically

- A. Old Testament example of the Levites (1 Chron. 25:1-8)
- B. A means of transferring the gospel to the next generation (Ps. 145:4-7)
- C. The importance of songs for God's people throughout scripture (Ps. 47:6; Col. 3:16-17)
- D. Singing as a fundamental way of remembering the gospel (Col 3:16-17)

II. Questions about priority

- A. What do we believe the church proper is called to do? What aspects of musical training are this the responsibility of the church, school, or individual Christians/families?
- B. Will our music plans in any way diminish the centrality of the gospel in our church?
 - 1. We have limited resources
 - 2. How are we using them (preaching, teaching, discipleship, evangelism, and mission)
- C. Who will this serve (families in your church, families from other churches, community outreach)
- D. What will our plans require of staff time, building usage, money, thought, and effort?

III. Our story

- A. History of Covenant Life
 - 1. 1977 – a love for congregational singing
 - 2. 1979 – Christian school started
 - 3. 1980's, 1990's, - songwriting, dramatic crew (adults)
 - 4. Starting 1997 – more intentional setting of biblical foundations. Bob Kauflin comes on staff

5. Wanting to do it, but not the right person/time
6. 2000's – youth ministry musicals grow
7. 2002 – youth choir (7th-12th grades)
8. 2002-2006 – choir expands into several levels
9. 2004 – staff member given time to invest
10. 2005 – first summer violin camp
11. 2005 – clarification of the need
 - a. Future of music ministry
 - b. Day school (Covenant Life School)
 - c. Large number of homeschooling families
12. 2006 – elder-level approval to officially expand
13. 2007 – Music Academy formally launched
14. 2008-2009 – increased programming, tons of tweaking
15. 2009 – school involvement

B. Current Programming

1. Ensembles
 - a. Choirs (five choirs, divided by age level)
 - b. Strings (beginning, intermediate, advanced)
 - c. Band (beginning and advanced)
2. Private Lessons
3. Special Events
 - a. Concerts
 - b. Recitals
 - c. Solo and Ensemble Competition
 - d. Songwriting Competition
 - e. Summer Musical
 - f. Rock Band Training

C. How we tried to build

1. Ask for God's help
2. Look at existing resources
3. Picture the type of musician you're trying to build, for God's glory
4. You need to choose specific or broad
5. "Throw lots at the wall and see what sticks"
6. Do first runs of things, before officially naming and promoting them

IV. Practical Strategies and Considerations

- A. Use short-term, low cost programs to launch interest for long-term goals
 - 1. Violin camp
 - 2. Summer musicals (a somewhat different circumstance)
 - 3. Keep in mind that short-term efforts can produce limited fruit and communicate that skills are easily obtained

- B. Take advantage of the different types of Instructors available
 - 1. Classical musicians
 - 2. By ear/band musicians
 - 3. Musicians who play well but work
 - 4. People who teach vocationally
 - 5. Junior teachers (mentoring)

- C. Start training at a young age
 - 1. Learning window
 - 2. Attrition rate is higher in high school (competing priorities)

- D. Administrative Expense
 - 1. Lessons – heavy admin
 - 2. Rock Bands – mid
 - 3. Ensembles – depends (student to teacher ratio)
 - a. Choirs
 - b. Strings
 - c. Band
 - 4. Parent volunteers
 - 5. Determine what is volunteer and what is not (don't make things paid unnecessarily). It can actually diminish the motivation or participation.

- E. Pricing
 - 1. Serve families, yet still adequate compensation for people who do it professionally. Ask tons of questions to get an adequate read of your existing culture. For us, a good comparison was cost of other homeschool classes. Art classes from local organizations were way more.
 - 2. Scholarships (have people contribute)

3. Get advice from a businessman or woman in your church. The more you offer, the more it involves staff, the more it involves money, you need a business plan

F. Other observations

1. Give a biblical and/or musical rationale for new things you are introducing (i.e. competitions)
2. The value of arranging
3. Balance service, performance, and practice.

V. Leading others

A. Regularly give the biblical basis for what you are doing.

1. This will last, regardless of whether your program is a success or a failure. God's word never changes and never fails.
2. We want to encourage people to do this for biblical reasons. Educational reasons are good, but are secondary. This is what serves people, and helps them direct their music-making toward God.
3. We are the church!

B. Set clear goals for students for the future

1. Use these specific skills for the Sunday meeting
2. Church plants
3. Small groups
4. Family worship
5. A lifetime of using music for God's glory
 - a. More thoughtful understanding of it and engagement with it
 - b. Creation of it (as opposed to consumption)
 - c. Skills can be adapted for other areas of service
 - 1) Keyboard player ends up a stronger singer
 - 2) Violinist keeps playing violin, or becomes a better guitar player

WORSHIP BAND TRAINING			
	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>EFFECT</i>	<i>REQUIREMENTS</i>
Worship Leader Discipleship	Twice monthly discipleship meetings Lead for one another, and provide critique/feedback. Study biblical worship together. Invest in those with potential for leading or making a significant contribution in the future.	Long-term shared values. Opportunity to work on what affects Sunday mornings the most.	Worship leader who understands and models what you want to replicate in others.
Existing Band Contexts ("Youth Group" Band, Children's Ministry)	Intentional training within existing contexts. Examples: -an adult helping a youth band -putting less experienced players with more experienced players -adding a coach or vocal trainer to a band Involving regular feedback and critique to help all grow	Musicians learn "on the job," which is the best way to learn.	Worship band instrumentalist who understands how a band works, and is able to lead others.
Seminar-type classes	Training for specific instruments, skills, or roles. Anywhere from 1-6 sessions.	Musicians connect with people sharing their skill set and take steps forward	Skilled musicians who can teach

LONGER-TERM OR CLASSICAL TRAINING ("MUSIC ACADEMY" MODEL)			
	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>EFFECT</i>	<i>REQUIREMENTS</i>
Choirs	Choral experience	Learn good vocal skill, musical concepts, ear training	Younger grades: good classroom management, with musical skill. Older grades: vocal/choral skills
String Ensemble	Violins, Violas, Cellos, or some grouping thereof	Growth in musicality.	String instructor. Also helpful if someone can arrange. We require students to take private lessons.
Band (Winds, Brass, etc.)	Traditional band experience	Students learn a variety of instruments.	Band instructor. Ideally, meeting 2-3x per week including sectionals.
Private Lessons	One-on-one lessons.	Varied, depending on instrument and type of training	Instructors. Administration.
Student Recitals	Students perform individual pieces	Motivates students to polish their pieces. Creates a community aspect.	Event coordination.
Solo and Ensemble Competition	Students compete in solo and group divisions for awards	Pushes students to work hard.	Instructors, Judges.

OTHER IDEAS			
<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>DESCRIPTION</i>	<i>EFFECT</i>	<i>REQUIREMENTS</i>
One-time groups	Groups assembled just for a specific Sunday or event (a choir, string group, etc).	Contributes to the event or service; gives you a measurable "trial run"	Appropriate leader, appropriate music (purchased or arranged)
Songwriting Competition	Songs are submitted and awards are chosen.	Songs are produced. New writers show themselves. The value of this work is highlighted.	Someone who can accurately judge songs and provide helpful feedback
Battle of the Bands	Bands compete against each other	Younger bands created and musicians trained and/or identified	Judges, and potentially trainers
Band Training	students learn either independently or together; then present a final "concert"	Musicians gain band skills	Worship band instrumentalist who understands how a band works, and is able to lead others.
Musical Productions	Children's choir musical, or a fuller dramatic production	A great project to work toward together. Outreach potential.	A good script and music; directors
Recordings	Recordings of songs by students or congregation members. Scripture memory songs.	Musicians play more effectively, and write more music. People get familiar with the studio.	Good musicians, and studio availability or equivalent
Other opportunities for public performance and outreach	Nursing home, senior saints, mall, private parties, church banquets/parties	Music is performed publicly; musicians connect the dots between their own craft and serving others	Planning
Placing people in related roles	Have musicians serve on sound team or related ministries	They learn related skills which broaden their serving capacity	Someone to train them