

Congregational Singing

We sing congregationally because of what we believe about God and about the church.

We believe this about God.

We believe this about the church.

The singing that best embodies these truths and forms a godly congregation will be biblical, historic, corporate and pastoral.

We sing biblical songs.

- Teaches the congregation a biblical truth accurately, not just has a biblical theme.
- Enables the congregation to enter a full range of biblical emotion: thanks, lament, etc.

We sing historic songs.

- Connects the congregation to the best of 2000 years of song.
- Leads the congregation to sing with the believing dead, the “communion of saints.”
- Brings to the congregation the best of modern songs that embody these principles.
- Upholds historic standards of music as well as lyric.

We sing corporate songs.

- **Text & Rhythm**
 - Poetry / Rhyme Scheme
 - We choose songs with lyrics that follow a clear and intentional poetic structure that flows naturally when sung.
 - We do not choose songs that sacrifice lyrical depth in order to follow a predictable rhyme scheme.
 - Meter / Phrasing
 - We choose songs with an orderly balance of lyrics sung melodically and syllabically, and that place emphasized syllables more often on strong beats than weak beats.
 - We do not choose songs with lyrical phrases that consistently require more than one breath to sing at a comfortable tempo.
- **Melody & Harmony**
 - Range / Motion
 - We choose songs with captivating melodies that do not expand beyond a low register A and a high register D, and do not contain large leaps or leaps of augmented or diminished intervals.
 - We do not choose songs with monotonous melodies of little movement or melodies with excessively more disjunct movement than conjunct.

- Voicing / Chord Progressions
 - We choose songs with melodies that are well supported chordally – with melodic notes that are chord members unless a passing tone found rarely on a downbeat.
 - We do not choose songs with harmonic progressions of retrogression or of frequent deviance from basic practices of classical music theory and composition.
- **Accompaniment & Arrangement**
 - Instruments / Dynamics
 - We choose songs that have the potential to be sung a cappella, with minimal instrumentation, or with full ensemble, and that can be supported with both acoustic and electric instruments.
 - We do not choose songs that have little dynamic range or variance or that require instrumentation to be at a higher dynamic than voices.
 - Structure / Form
 - We choose songs that are sectional in organization with repeatable and similar parts, heavily leaning toward types of simple binary or ternary forms, most often strophic, with repeated verses and refrains.
 - We do not choose songs that are through-composed (unless there is a clear explanation for intentional use), or that contain excessive modulation between sections.

We sing pastoral songs.

- Leads the congregation emotionally to the cross of Christ.
- Strengthens the congregation to have confidence in God's love for us in Christ.
- Ministers to the particular place of this congregation on this Lord's Day.