

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MUSIC

**PRINCIPLES FOR CREATING ORIGINAL CONTENT
FOR THE WORSHIP SERVICE**

Submitted to Dr. Keith Currie, in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the completion of the course

WMUS 687

Music and Worship Ministry Project

by

Ian Black

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Approval Page

WORSHIP EP FOR EAGLE CHURCH

by Ian Schumacher Black

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APPROVED BY:

Dr. Keith A. Currie, Ed D, Advisor/Committee Chair

Dr. Jerry L. Newman, D.W.S., Committee Member/Reader

Dr. Sean Beavers, Ph D, Dean of the School of Music, Online

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PART ONE: PURPOSE

With the approval of Dr. Keith Currie and Pastor Eric Simpson, I have decided to complete the Music & Worship Ministry Project as the Final Thesis for the Master of Arts in Music and Worship. The objective of this project is to produce an Extended Play Record (EP) that contains seven original resources for the local church. While these seven compositions were written specifically for the current local church context in which I serve, the compositions could be taken in full or in part for use by other churches. The project as a whole demonstrates the importance and value of church leaders creating original works for the worshipping life of the church.

The components of this project include: songwriting, liturgical writing, arranging, collaborating, performing, recording, and producing. The project will achieve several purposes. The first is that the songs/liturgies in this EP are intended for use in my local church – Eagle Church (Whitestown, IN). The second is that it will afford me an opportunity to stretch my own songwriting ability and musicianship throughout the project. And lastly, this EP is meant to encourage any worship leader or pastor to embrace the process of creating original content for their church, maximizing the worship leader’s ability to shepherd and guide, and returning the church to the place it has held throughout history as an originator of beautiful and theologically accurate art.

This project attempts to identify some of the foundational principles needed for creating original content for the worship service. By working through the various steps of preparing this EP, I was able to identify five guiding principles on which any church can create original worship songs, hymns, and liturgical elements. The table below presents the five principles and their application to the worship leader/pastor/team, etc.

Principles for Creating Original Content

Lyrics Before Melody and Creativity

Embrace the Context of the Local Church

Collaboration is Critical

Strive for Excellence as an Artist

Worship in Spirit and in Truth

Application to the Leader/Team

Be a student of God's Word

Be a learner of people and setting

Be a part of teams

Be an artist that reflects the triune God

Be a worshipper first

This paper will discuss these five guiding principles both within the context of this project and the broader context of local church ministry. However, before exploring these principles and their application, it is important to introduce this EP project by describing the background of this project and its creator. After the introduction and the presentation of the principles and the findings of this project, the conclusion will summarize key take-aways, discuss the reception of the EP, and predict future goals within the realm of creating original content for the worship service.

PART TWO: INTRODUCTION

Start

My post-undergrad education journey has been a lengthy one. After graduating from Moody Bible Institute in 2011, I was hired full-time as the Worship Director at a church in the south suburbs of Chicago. Grad school was on my radar, so in the fall of 2013 I began an MA in Counseling Ministries at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. At the time I thought training in counseling would be an invaluable skillset in church ministry. However, after a year of attending class on a part-time basis, I recognized the degree would be difficult to put into practice at the local church level because the classes I was taking were geared toward a professional counseling setting. As I was thoroughly enjoying worship ministry, I decided to

switch to an MA of Music and Worship at Liberty University Online. At that time, I never imagined pursuing an EP project, given that I had no background in songwriting or recording.

Shortly after beginning this new program, the Lord called me to Eagle Church. I stepped out of worship ministry and into student ministry. This was an unexpected and significant transition for which I am profoundly grateful. I found myself in a setting where my leadership was being developed, I was able to perform professionally at equity theatres around Indianapolis, and I joined a staff/worship team full of songwriters, composers, and professional musicians. Even though my official role at Eagle did not include worship, my online schooling was aligning with the opportunities the Lord provided.

In early 2019 I commissioned a close friend to write a song for our student ministry's annual summer camp. I did not expect to be involved in the songwriting, but one night when he played the chorus, I had an idea to shift the melody to increase musical contrast and sing-ability. While he was hesitant at first, we eventually went that route. Months later, as we were leading worship together at camp, I was surprised by how rewarding and meaningful it was to sing a song tied specifically to the theme of OUR camp, for OUR students, by OUR worship team. I did not know it at the time, but that would be the "birth" of this EP. Concurrently I had started to write different liturgical elements for our church, by invitation of our lead pastor, and found joy in the process and fruitfulness from those elements. Additionally, our worship pastor, another close friend who is an excellent musician and songwriter, had been writing songs with members of the worship team for special services throughout the year. I could not help but recognize the value of creating original content by and for the local church.

With the support and blessing of our worship pastor, worship team members, lead pastor, and tech director, I decided to move forward with this EP Project. Pursuing this endeavor was

exciting but daunting. I am a performer and a pastor, but I have never considered myself a songwriter. The process of recording an album felt completely foreign to me. I also knew I was putting myself in a place that would require dependence on others, which is something that does not come naturally. However, the Lord had provided the foundation, and I wanted to pursue something that would stretch me in new ways, putting my leadership, creativity, and discipline to the test.

Goals

The goals of this worship project are multi-faceted: personal and corporate, tangible and intangible. The worship project includes seven recorded original elements: five written by me alone and two written in collaboration (Tracks #3 and #7):

1. *Receive* | Advent Creed
2. *Psalm 40* | Modern Hymn
3. *A New Day* | Contemporary Chorus
4. *Forgive Us* | Corporate Confession
5. *Dear Lord and Father of Mankind* | Hymn Arrangement
6. *Speak (a lament)* | Solo Worship
7. *Now and Forever* | Contemporary Chorus

The audio recordings are semi-professionally recorded in a small group room at Eagle Church. Along with seven audio files, there are guitar charts, lead sheets, and texts, allowing any of these resources to be used by other local churches.¹

Corporately, the goal was for Eagle Church to be edified and encouraged in its worshipping life through the listening of the EP at home, as well as the use of these elements

¹See Appendix A.

during worship services. Additionally, there was the shared goal of the worship team growing in confidence throughout the process.

Personally, there were many growth curves for me in pursuing this project. Tackling something of this magnitude without songwriting or producing experience gave me an increased understanding of everything that is involved, as well as direction for future projects both in and out of the church.

Plan

My hope was to keep this project as “in-house” as possible. I had high expectations, but knew I needed to temper them in light of how new all of this was to me. I was hoping that the in-house approach would allow me to learn as much as I could. I decided that instead of renting out studio space, we would use one of our small group rooms. Instead of paying a stranger to mix and master the tracks, I asked our part-time Tech Director if he would be willing to participate, and he was thrilled to be a part of it!

Another reason I decided to do it in-house was limited personal resources. I did not ask for funding from the worship budget (which I do not oversee, as I am our Student Pastor), but decided to pay out-of-pocket for our Tech Director’s time. By virtue of the worship team’s involvement, I was spared the costs of paying musicians/vocalists. Lastly, I wanted this project to be in-house simply because it maintained the integrity of creating an EP *by* and *for* Eagle Church.

In the fall of 2019, I laid out an approximate schedule for this process. The original plan was as follows:

1. December 2019-Develop specific timeline, begin writing and arranging music, select musicians, line up studio and rehearsal space, talk with onsite evaluator for theme development
2. January 2020-Finish writing and arranging music, notate charts and music, work through feedback from different sources
3. February 2020-Rehearsal, notating charts and music, begin recording
4. March 2020-Continue recording, production and mastering
5. April 2020-Create CD's (including artwork), misc. work to finish up project, publishing, notes for CD
6. May 2020-Reflections

When it comes to planning and preparation of this project, I made personal requests of several musicians, developed the timeline, and spent time reflecting on what my onsite supervisor (Lead Pastor) was looking for from this endeavor. Simultaneously, I started jotting down different notes and ideas for songs. "The Advent Creed: Receive" needed to be finished by Advent 2019, so it was the first element to be completed.

In the songwriting and arranging stage, I would tend to start with lyrics, followed by a chord progression and the melody. However, one song, "Now and Forever," was written bouncing back and forth between music and lyrics. I used Voice Memo and Garage Band to create rough demos to get feedback and to allow musicians/vocalists to start rehearsing. Many times I would simply have friends over to my house or invite my Lead Pastor to the piano on stage at church to hear something live. After getting input, I would revise, while beginning to tackle the next piece.

Of the seven tracks for this EP, two are non-musical liturgical elements. While I would not call myself a writer, my comfort level with writing liturgical texts was greater than with songwriting, so I started with these texts. Of the remaining five tracks, one was an arrangement of a pre-existing hymn. That became the first arrangement: piano and 3-part vocal harmony. For the remaining four musical tracks (minus the solo worship), I decided to begin by producing a chord chart, lead sheet, and rough demo recording. We do not use lead sheets in my current church setting. Charts and aural learning are the norm. However, I decided to create lead sheets so that anyone wanting to use notated music could be set up for success.

I decided to title this EP: “New Beginnings.” I did not land there immediately, as I wanted the songwriting process to direct the name. After considering the overlapping themes, as well as the direction my onsite supervisor gave, it became obvious. Little did I know that the Coronavirus pandemic would come to give even more meaning to this title, as new beginnings would mark the way we were doing ministry right in the middle of this project.

In the recording process, it was a blessing to use the space at Eagle Church. Using the church’s space required advanced planning at times, but also allowed for impromptu recordings. I hoped to be able to record as a group, but anticipated it would probably be more one-on-one, one stem at a time.

When we recorded, we recorded in Logic but mixed and mastered in ProTools. I cannot say it enough: I would not have been able to complete this project without the help of our Tech Director. The editing and mixing process re-iterated to me how different people’s approaches can be when editing and mixing... what they are looking for, how they mix, what should be centered, and what is or is not a distraction in the music.

After recording, it was time for post-production: mixing and mastering the tracks. When all of that was concluded, I worked with two of our graphic designers at church to create cover art for the album.

As the budget for the project was out-of-pocket, I wanted to keep the overall cost as low as possible. The advantage of using equipment at church (and equipment I already own) was that it eliminated equipment and studio space costs. The only cost I needed to account for was people’s time, principally the cost of the Tech Director to record, mix, and master the tracks. We agreed to \$100 per track. In the future, I would probably request funds out of our church’s worship budget to allow us to do more and feel less constrained.

The time commitment for a project of this nature is significant. I thought I had a decent idea, but my naiveté as to the process led me to underestimate the time demands. Below are two tables that represent the time commitment. The first is the number of hours, in total, per stage in the process. The second indicates the hours per track.

Stage of the Process	Hours (approx.)
Composing	50+
Arranging	15+
Rehearsal	10+
Recording	25+
Production and Mixing	20+

Title	Composing	Arranging	Rehearsing	Recording	Production
Speak	5 hours	3 hours	2 hours	2 hours	3 hours
Dear Lord...	N/A	6 hours	2 hours	4 hours	4 hours
Psalms 40	5 hours	4 hours	6 hours	4 hours	4 hours
A New Day	4 hours	4 hours	8 hours	8 hours	5 hours
Now and Forever	5 hours	4 hours	10 hours	8 hours	5 hours
Creed/Confession	4 hours	N/A	1 hour	2 hours	2 hours

The hours represented in these charts are approximations, given the fluidity of the process. I imagine someone more comfortable with songwriting, arranging, or recording could accomplish these steps more quickly. However, the goal all along was to challenge myself by

stepping into unfamiliar space. Any local church that is interested in creating original elements for the service needs to account for the time it will take. Some churches may simply not have the margin and/or manpower. However, considering the significant amount of time put into the back half of this process, worship leaders can and should embrace original elements for the worship service. They could easily be developed in shorter time than a typical sermon.

It was only natural that the personnel involved were from Eagle Church. I invited worship team members to be a part of this project, some of whom are professional musicians. For a mid-sized church, we have a significant amount of musical talent on our worship team. This gave me comfort, especially in areas in which I was dependent on others. Below is a list of personnel who were involved in this EP:

Vocalist (*Speak (a lament)*): Ian Black

Vocalists (*Dear Lord and Father of Mankind*): Ian Black

Vocalists (*A New Day*): Bryce Langebartels, Ian Black

Vocalists (*Psalm 40*): Shayla Kenworthy, Ian Black

Vocalists (*Now and Forever*): Justin Langebartels, Janna Langebartels, Ian Black

Keys: Ian Black

Pads: Ian Black

Electric Guitarist: Justin Langebartels, Ethan Ehrstine

Acoustic Guitarist: Justin Langebartels, Ethan Ehrstine

Drummer: Justin Langebartels, Bryce Langebartels

Bassist: Justin Langebartels, Ian Black

Confession: Brad Janiszewski, Julia Davis, Ian Black

Creed: Julia Davis

Recording, Production, and Mixing: Ben Newsom

Cover Art: Keith Harshbarger and Delynn Harmon

I am more grateful to these people than they will ever know. I simply would not have been able to accomplish this project without them. It was a true team effort and a test of my leadership and administration. The 5 months of working on this EP have been challenging but rewarding. I am not one hundred percent satisfied with the final outcome, but I have gained exactly what I hoped to: greater confidence as a songwriter, more experience in recording and production, and a firmer belief in the importance of the local church creating its own content for worship services.

PART THREE:

FIVE PRINCIPLES | CREATING ORIGINAL

CONTENT FOR THE WORSHIP SERVICE

According to pastor and teacher Kevin Navarro, “The worship service is the most important event in the local church, and the engine that drives all programming... When all is said and done, dynamic worship services produce dynamic churches.”² Had Navarro claimed the worship service to be the most important *element* in the church, I might disagree. Instead, his decision to elevate the service as the most important *event* is difficult to dispute. Small group ministries, youth ministries, tech ministries, recovery ministries, and a host of other church activities are important, valuable and strategic. They each have a role to play. However, the worship service, comprised of sermons, liturgies, the sacraments, worship sets, prayers, offerings, etc., is the single most important *event* in the local church. It is the engine that drives

²Kevin Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2001), 13.

all programming, the space in which vision is cast, and the locale of the largest spiritual gathering for the church.

Scripture has much to say about the importance and priority of the worship service. The author of Hebrews writes, “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another...”³ The meeting together of believers, which the early church would have modeled from synagogue patterns of worship, is described as crucial. 1 Corinthians 14 gives significant attention to the process in which worship is carried out. In this letter, Paul expressly states that everything must be done for the edification of the church. Whether it is a hymn, prophecy, or speaking in tongues, the purpose is to build up the church. Paul concludes this section with a word about organization: “But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”⁴ If he were writing in the 21st century, it might have read: *But everything should be carefully planned two months in advance on Planning Center Online*. While partially tongue-in-cheek, there is much to be said for the planning, organization, and creativity that can and should go into worship.

Lest one think only the New Testament speaks to principles for the worship service, the Old Testament also provides instructions and paradigms. Entire books are written about the religious cultic practices of ancient Israel and what can be learned. The psalms that Paul refers to in Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5 had been and continued to be a part of Christian worship, as demonstrated by their being quoted over 100 times in the New Testament. In Genesis 4 the writer mentions Jubal, the father of all who play stringed instruments and pipes, introducing and

³Heb 10:24-25 (NIV)

⁴1 Cor 14:40 (NIV)

cementing the role that music would play in worship across the centuries. Music has continually played a significant role in worship (though instruments have at times been removed from worship throughout history) but it is by no means the *only* element for worship.

Throughout history, the worship service has walked the paradoxical line of being ever-changing and static, growing and consistent. Some liturgies and traditions have simple services. Other times within history, or in certain denominations, there are complex orders of service that bare the descriptor "*liturgical*." (Throughout the rest of this paper, unless otherwise noted, the word *liturgy* will be used to refer to an "order of service"). While it has been fairly common for the pastor (minister, priest, reverend) to compose his own sermons (as opposed to borrowing from another source), worship songs, music, confessions, creeds and benedictions are often shared across churches and denominations. In the evangelical world, many of those elements may seem foreign to someone without a high church background.

There is nothing wrong with using pre-written materials. In fact, this author would argue that written prayers, historic creeds, and classic hymns should have a greater presence in contemporary evangelicalism. The notion that the best materials for worship have only been created within the past fifty years is nonsense. It ignores the value of materials that have stood the test of time and rejects the sharpening rod that the historic church can be. The historic church, with all *its* faults, has different blind spots than the contemporary church. It is always worthwhile to learn from the past.

With that being said, the impetus for these five principles stemmed from restlessness this author felt regarding original content, or lack thereof, within the local church. The ever-growing number of churches writing their own worship music is commendable. What a gift it is to the

universal church! But my fear is that the way the hymnal may have quenched songwriting in the local church in the past, that same quenching is happening today, only via the radio or Spotify.

Those observations pertain to music, but at least there are more and more songwriters today...what about the other elements of the service? Original sermons are written, and prayers are extemporaneous....what about other original content for the service? Where are the new confessions? Where are the contemporary takes on Advent and Lent? How can the church take what Robert Webber and others have offered in the Convergence movement and help it flourish?

It is an exciting time in the life of the church. There is much to look back on, but also much left to step into as a church. We all need to be reminded of the common refrain found in psalms: Sing to the LORD a *new* song. There is a place for beloved songs AND space for content that has yet to be created or dreamt up. If the church were to pursue creating original content for the worship service, how should it be done? The following five principles aim to answer that question.

Lyrics Before Melody and Creativity

The songwriter's goal is to proclaim the entirety of who God is and what our response should be. The songwriter's role is much like that of a facilitator, as songs either invite or discourage engagement/participation. In worship-writing circles, the concept of "musical excellence" quickly comes up, and rightly so. Unfortunately, artistic expression or musical excellence sometimes takes priority over *words*. It is often unintentional. It can be the result of elevating gifted musicians or artists into church leadership without the proper biblical background and training. The content (i.e. the words) must first be biblical, true, and God-honoring. As Robert Webber stated so clearly, "The primary factor in worship concerns not the

structure, nor the style, but the content.”⁵ The ideal would be poetic, true, beautiful lyrics with equally poetic, relevant, and beautiful melodies and progressions. But if forced to elevate one over the other, words should win every time. Churches can recover much more easily from a poorly written melody than they can from poor theology.

Kevin Navarro once said, “Every worship leader must become a theologian.”⁶ In reality, every Christian, indeed every person, is *already* a theologian. Everyone has thoughts about God. Those thoughts may not be accurate, but they are present nonetheless. The goal of the worship leader is to embody a *good* theologian. “Theology is the study of God. What we believe about God shapes and forms everything we believe... as we spend more time in worship of God, He reveals more and more about Himself.”⁷ A good theologian writes lyrics that reflect God’s attributes, what the church is, what sin is, and direct the people’s response to God in worship. Good theology in worship leads people to encounter the living God and be transformed more and more into the likeness of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit.

In *The Complete Worship Leader*, Navarro critiques modern evangelicalism for being too human-centered. One need not look far into songwriting of the last twenty to thirty years to see a plethora of first-person singular-driven lyrics. Navarro pushes songwriters to be Christocentric.⁸ When this happens, Bryan Chappell describes the result: “Worship that follows the gospel

⁵Robert Webber, *Worship: Old and New* (Grand Rapids, MI Zondervan, 1994), 149.

⁶Kevin Navarro, 17.

⁷David Wheeler and Vernon Whaley, *The Great Commission to Worship* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2011), 73.

⁸Kevin Navarro, 37.

pattern of Christ's grace in our lives will have his priorities."⁹ Christ-centered lyrics must come before and above human-centered lyrics.

Words sung in church are powerful. They are more likely to be remembered and repeated throughout the week because of musical imprinting. The power that music holds is why it matters so much what is being sung. David Wheeler and Vernon M. Whaley explain it well in *The Great Commission to Worship*. They write, "Our twenty-first century worship leaders teach biblical theology just as much as they teach music. Often, they are in the position to shape a congregation's concept of God, Christian service, evangelism, Christian graces, and discipleship – all through worship."¹⁰ Worship leaders and worship songwriters hold significant influence. Worship leaders teach biblical theology one way or another. Since music is one of the best avenues to absorb words, those charged to create original content must make sure the lyrics are true, sound, and biblically accurate.

Singing God's own words back to Him is one way to keep sound lyrics at the forefront. Granted, without a proper hermeneutic, even a song written using God's words could become unbiblical. However, using the Scriptures themselves remains a tried-and-true method of writing lyrics that are God-honoring and empowered. Navarro writes, "We have to get beyond the criteria that only asks whether or not this is an inspiring tune, whether it has a great beat, or whether the arrangement will work... as we evaluate worship musically, we need to be asking if it is Scriptural."¹¹ A song could be written without a specific verse in mind, using the

⁹Bryan Chappell, *Christ-Centered Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 136.

¹⁰David Wheeler and Vernon Whaley, 42.

¹¹Kevin Navarro, 41.

accumulation of one's own systematic and biblical theologies, but when Scripture itself is used, there is unarguable grounded-ness to the lyric.

In Warren Wiersbe's book, *Real Worship*, he offers five standards to help evaluate Christian music, the first of which pertains directly to lyrics. He gives clear parameters, including orthodoxy and writing in a distinctly Christian "voice" (vs. songs in which a person's name or a different deity could be inserted and the song still function). But he also includes accessibility: "The biblical message in the song must be understandable and presented in a way that can be understood."¹² If the lyrics are over the head of the congregation, or written in such a way that the truth is confused, revision is needed. It is not enough to be theologically accurate, just as it is not enough to be artistically excellent. Original content must be accessible and understandable. It can borrow vernacular from days gone by but cannot have an over-abundance of jargon.

When creating original content for the worship service, Constance M. Cherry offers six foundational themes of worship from Scripture that can help to guide songwriting for the church: centered in God's acts of salvation, following the pattern of revelation and response, enacting covenantal relationship, corporate in nature, Trinitarian in essence, and a journey of transformation.¹³ A singular song might not represent each theme, but the six themes provide a helpful framework. Similarly, Pastor Douglas Sean O'Donnell develops four themes traced from different canonical songs: 1. The Lord is at the center; 2. His mighty acts in salvation history are

¹²Warren Weirsbe, *Real Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 138.

¹³Constance Cherry, *The Worship Architect* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010), 17.

recounted; 3. His acts of judgment are rejoiced in; and 4. His ways of living are encouraged.¹⁴ If these themes become guardrails, the writer can be assured of lyrics, poems, confessions, and prayers that will be a gift to the local church.

Embrace the Context of the Local Church

A benefit of creating original content is the writer's opportunity to focus on a particular community – the writer can create materials unique to the local setting. The creator need not cast as wide of a net, so to speak. When musicians write commercial worship music, with the intent of resourcing churches and distributing nationwide, they have a large audience. They may use their local context for inspiration and feedback, but the intent is broad distribution.

When someone writes for a local church, he/she can embrace *context*. Scripture is still Scripture, God's truth is still God's truth, but structure, style, and verbiage can fluctuate depending on the needs of the individual body. Bryan Chapell describes it this way: "...contemporary believers can exercise their right and responsibility to shape their own churches' worship based on Christ's ministry to and through them."¹⁵ Writing for the local church is a gift to the church. It should be maximized in the discipleship, teaching, and worship ministries of every church.

In order to do this well, one has to become a student of his/her context. There are obvious data points to look at: urban/suburban/rural, demographics, socio-economic status, age, etc. For example, the average age matters. Pastor and Professor Robb Redman writes, "Differences between generations are real; understanding them help us think more clearly about worship."¹⁶ If

¹⁴Douglas Sean O'Donnell, *God's Lyrics* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2010), 113.

¹⁵Bryan Chapell, 154.

the congregation is primarily baby boomers, it would not make sense to create original content that is strictly emergent. There is always room to stretch people's worship experiences, but to serve well, writing *for* the most prevalent generation is a good direction to go.

Questions such as: "What is the tradition of the church?" and "What communal stories have been shared and experienced?" need to be asked. In *The Worship Phenomenon*, Robert Webber writes about worship renewal. When it comes to local context, shared experiences and traditions matter. His goal was not to convince a church to adopt a certain style or liturgy, but rather to have "participatory worship that engaged the whole person..."¹⁷ Creating original content for local contexts is perhaps the greatest opportunity for participatory worship. Leaders *know* their people. They have shared in the experiences themselves and can guide content to serve the needs of their church.

Embracing the context of the local church must go further than surface-level questions. It should evaluate the worshipping heart of the church. It asks, "How might the Lord be wanting to stretch us as worshippers?" "What are some of the signature sins of our body that could be addressed?" In these realms there can be significant victory and blessing through original content. Kevin Navarro writes, "Repentance is fundamental to worship."¹⁸ How might original content help the local church repent? Content with specificity could bring about worship renewal via specific confession and repentance.

¹⁶ Robb Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 12.

¹⁷ Robert Webber, *The Worship Phenomenon* (Nashville, TN: Abbott Martyn 1994), 27.

¹⁸ Kevin Navarro, 27.

In the book *11 Innovations in the Local Church*, the authors discuss the importance of knowing when to contend and when to contextualize.¹⁹ Some things do not change and are worth fighting for, but other things can be contextualized, or even innovated, so that the church continues to grow in worship. Bryan Chappell writes, "... the varieties of people and circumstances we address will necessitate judgment about how best to present those truths. The witness of the gospel requires some structure, but it requires some freedom too."²⁰ Freedom and innovation, when bound by Scripture and local context, can bring about incredible expressions of worship. It helps to meet the felt needs of the congregation.

This principle necessitates strong leadership. In John Maxwell's book, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, he describes "The Law of Connection." This law of leadership states: "Good leaders work at connecting with others all of the time... the stronger the relationship you form with followers, the greater the connection you forge..."²¹ When it comes to writing for a local context, the content-creator needs to connect with the people. It is only through connection that one knows how best to serve, lead, and create. Maxwell goes on to describe how this law includes connecting with yourself, living your message, going to where the people are, and knowing your audience.²² Creating original content for the local church includes learning names,

¹⁹Elmer Towns, Ed Stetzer, and Warren Bird, *11 Innovations in the Local Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal, 2007), 238.

²⁰Bryan Chapell, 137.

²¹John Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership* (New York City, NY: Harper Collins, 2007), 116.

²²John Maxwell, 118.

exploring the community, and asking about people’s dreams. Only then can one create personal and relevant materials. The ability to do so is a direct reflection of a leader’s leadership.

Spectatorship is an issue in many churches. Navarro believes one of the best ways to combat spectatorship is to “mobilize all the participants in our worship services.”²³ Guiding the church through original worship elements increases participation. It reminds the congregation that they are a part of the redemptive story.

There is also a human-connection dynamic with original content. If the church knows *their* worship pastor took the time to write a new song or poem for worship, they are inclined to give it extra engagement simply because it came from one of their own. Creating original content helps combat spectatorship while simultaneously guiding the church’s worshipping life.

Collaboration is Critical

Ecclesiastes 4:9 says, “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor.” Any worship leader can create original content. Two worship leaders, or a team or staff, can probably do it even better. Navarro asks the question, “Are you honoring God by giving your best... Let us strive to give our people the best music, the best preaching, the best drama – the best overall aesthetic experience – so that they can appreciate and participate in dynamic worship services that glorify the King of the universe.”²⁴ In order to give the church the best, collaboration is key.

In *Designing Worship Together*, the authors write, “Solo worship planning is no longer the norm; it has given way to the team approach, both to enrich the planning process and to

²³Kevin Navarro, 150.

²⁴Ibid., 86.

create healthy and broad ownership of worship leadership.”²⁵ Dan Kimball confirms this by elevating the importance of worship planning done not by the solo pastor, but in community or as a staff.²⁶ Anyone who insists on doing it alone misses out on valuable contributions.

“*Collaboration* is the word that best captures this experience of working together to craft worship liturgies. Collaborators are ‘co-laborers.’”²⁷ From planning worship sets of pre-existing music to creating entirely original productions, collaboration is critical. There is biblical precedence for collaboration in both the Old and New Testaments, ranging from Aaron and the Levites to Paul’s description of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. The church benefits from the different gifts, experiences, and skills of the broader church through collaboration.

One of the greatest obstacles to collaboration is lack of planning. It is *easier* to plan a worship service alone. It is *difficult* to get a group of people in the same room at the same time. However, it is worth the difficulty. Norma Malefyt and Howard Vanderwell point out that planners experience increased creativity, benefit from a wide range of insight, knowledge, and skills, experience greater ownership, and offer each other a helpful corrective.²⁸ Planning and collaboration is the way to go.

Everyone has blind spots. No one person has every spiritual gift. Collaboration overcomes the issues that often arise when only one person is at the helm. Collaboration is truly the church being the church, the saints carrying out the ministry. Once collaboration starts to take

²⁵Norma Malefyt and Howard Vanderwell, *Designing Worship Together* (Herndon, VA: The Alban Institute, 2005), 3.

²⁶Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 104.

²⁷Norma Malefyt and Howard Vanderwell, 3.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 6.

place, other obstacles such as pride, competition, and separate agendas can come into play, but a healthy collaborative spirit is worth fighting for. It is the key to success when creating original content.

There are different settings for collaboration. Some churches will collaborate well as a staff. Other church settings may require a solo pastor to collaborate with his/her volunteers. In mega-church settings, worship departments and tech teams collaborate regularly. In his book, *Emerging Worship*, Dan Kimball gives a helpful list of different teams that can either be created or co-exist as worship services are designed. His list includes the sacred space team, artists team, music team, prayer team, digital arts team, video team, tech team, and teaching team.²⁹ Not every church will want or need all of those, but his list demonstrates two factors: 1. the importance of team; and 2. the large variety of teams that can exist under the banner of designing worship services.

There are side benefits to collaborating. In his book on spiritual leadership, J. Oswald Sanders discusses the importance of leaders reproducing themselves.³⁰ It is the leaders' responsibility to train others to lead. A by-product of collaboration is training. Bringing younger leaders into the collaborative process helps leaders reproduce themselves, as the younger person is exposed to the process, the values, and the necessary character traits.

Collaboration can also help strengthen unity. Dave Williamson writes, "It is freeing, and powerful, to lead worship with people you know well, who love and care about you."³¹ Equally

²⁹Dan Kimball, 109.

³⁰J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), 149.

³¹Dave Williamson, *God's Singers* (Nashville, TN: in:cite media, 2010), 74.

powerful is the experience of writing and creating worship elements with people you know and love. Despite the difficulties, the relationships in the room often grow through the process and delivery of new content, and greater unity is achieved.

Collaboration reflects the “unity in diversity” of the church. Team is always better. Harold Best states it brilliantly: “. . . the more diversity there is, the more spiritual color and texture there can be.”³² In a sense, collaboration is one outworking of what Solomon describes in Proverbs: “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”³³ It provides a built-in litmus test for the piece (be it a song, confession, drama, or dance). From sermon writing all the way to planning out a church’s Holy Week experience, creating new content collaboratively makes it better.

Strive for Excellence as an Artist

Apart from the topic of lyrics, worship artistry seems to get the largest amount of attention in worship literature. Creating original content for the worship service should prompt the creator to strive for excellence artistically. As has already been discussed, if forced to choose between the two, solid theology takes priority. That is why Robert Webber explains, “The churches most sensitive to the arts are churches that give the arts a servant role in worship. Worship is never to be arts-driven, but arts-enhanced.” Original worship content is not a slave to art. Thankfully, there is no reason to not have both: God-honoring content and a God-honoring medium.

What exactly is art? Irwin Edman said, “Art is the name for that whole process of intelligence which life, understanding its own conditions, turn them [statues, pictures, and

³²Harold Best, *Unceasing Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2003), 64.

³³Prov 27:17 (NIV)

symphonies] to the most interesting or exquisite account.”³⁴ More simply, art takes an aspect of life and makes it compelling. Hence, art is powerful in worship. Warren Wiersbe says, “Christian artists receive what they have as the gift of God and create what they do to the glory of God.”³⁵ He goes on to say, “Christian art must be more than imitation and instruction; it must also be interpretation.”³⁶ In and out of the church, imitative art is forgettable. And in the church, far too much content is strictly didactic. Art in the worship service must be compelling, helping people understand who God is, who they are in light of Him, and how they can live. That is what makes art in worship excellent: art that interprets and forces a response.

Art: music, paintings, poetry, drama, dance, spoken word... has power. Art in the church should not be a performance, but a vehicle for worship to take place. The power of art needs to be harnessed appropriately for worship. It is something to be celebrated. Harold Best states, “Instead of depending on the power of the arts to enhance their worship or bring it about, faithful worshipers can actually enhance the power of the arts by the faith-driven force of their worship.”³⁷ Art has power, and the ability to craft it in new and original ways is a gift to the church. This is why anyone charged to design worship services must not only be a disciple and theologian, but also an artist.

³⁴Robb Redman, *The Great Worship Awakening* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2002), 12.

³⁵Warren Weirsbe, 131.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 133.

³⁷Harold Best, 122.

When striving for excellence, the artist must “have the ability to appreciate beauty... If the artist cannot articulate what constitutes good art, then creating art will be difficult.”³⁸ This is true across artistic spectrums, be it drama or dance, music or poetry. When creating original content for a local church, it is necessary to account for the artistic experiences and preferences of that context (see Principle #2). It is not because art is subjective (although it is), but that people with certain backgrounds will understand and appreciate certain types of art more than others. If a goal of art in worship is to increase the church’s wonder, that art must be relevant to the people of the church.

Beauty in art directly reflects our Creator God. The world in which people live and move and have their being is a testimony to the infinite creativity and brilliance of the King of Kings. Art that reflects Him and points people to Him *is* worship in every way. In 1963, The Roman Catholic Church put into its Constitution, “These arts, by their very nature, are oriented toward the infinite beauty of God, which they attempt in some way to portray by the work of human hands. They are dedicated to advancing God’s praise and glory to the degree that they center on the single aim of turning the human spirit devoutly toward God.”³⁹ Original art in worship should stir the human spirit toward God. According to Robert Webber, “The church is in the process of rediscovering that the arts are a gift from God and meant for worship.”⁴⁰ A back-and-forth has taken place throughout church history (the likes of which cannot be adequately explained in this

³⁸Kevin Navarro, 95.

³⁹Robert Webber, *Old and New*, 205.

⁴⁰*Ibid.*, 215.

paper), but twenty years into the 21st century, the church is longing for excellent art that points to Jesus.

Music is one of, if not *the most*, frequently utilized artistic expression for worship. Dan Wilt says, “Music has a way of giving us fresh language with which to interact with God. Music has inherent power and demands our attention both inside and outside of the church.”⁴¹ As such, it is important to strive for excellence in music: the melodies, chord progressions, harmonies, sing-ability, genre-appropriate instrumentation, etc. Webber once said, “The arts are the wheels upon which the text of worship moves. They lift worship from an enslavement to words and set worship free to happen through action and symbolism.”⁴² 1500 hundred years earlier, John Chrysostom wrote something similar. When writing his homily on Psalm 42, he wrote, “Nothing, in fact, nothing so uplifts the soul, gives it wings, liberates it from the earth, looses the shackles of the body, promotes its values and its scorn for everything in this world as harmonious music and a divine song rhythmically composed.”⁴³ Music of substance has tremendous ability to stir our affections toward the triune God.

While music is the primary worship expression of 21st century evangelicalism, emerging worship movements are leading the comeback for a variety of art forms. As long as art is the servant, not the master, this movement should be celebrated. It would be a return to the historic role of the arts in the church. Martin Luther once said, “God gave us five senses with which to

⁴¹J. Matthew Pinson, ed. *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2009), 146.

⁴²Robert Webber, *The Worship Phenomenon*, 90.

⁴³Douglas Sean O’Donnell, 109.

worship Him and that it would be a sheer ingratitude for us to use less.”⁴⁴ It is an exciting time in church history, specifically regarding worship, as those creating original content strive to account for all five senses in worship: sight, smell, touch, taste, and feel. Weirsbe sums it up well: “I believe that worship needs the arts and the arts need worship.”⁴⁵

There are warnings to be heeded regarding art in worship. Perhaps the greatest warning is of idolatry. Harold M. Best says, “Idolatry is the chief enemy of the most fervently worshiping Christians, even to the extent that some of us may end up worshipping worship.”⁴⁶ While this type of idolatry can happen intellectually or within the worship leader him/herself, it is perhaps most alluring when creating art for worship. Best perceptively observes, “Whenever we assume that art mediates God’s presence or causes him to be tangible, we have begun the trek into idol territory.”⁴⁷ Excellence can become an idol. Beauty can become an idol. One could also “easily make an idol out of the results we want our art to produce.”⁴⁸ If people are moved by the art, one can easily mistake it as genuine worship while the response might not have been *in spirit and in truth* at all. Idolatry of the artistic process, of the art itself, or of a certain response must be continually guarded against when creating new art for the worship service. The warnings in Proverbs are still relevant: “Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.”⁴⁹

⁴⁴Warren Weirsbe, 129.

⁴⁵*Ibid.*, 130.

⁴⁶Harold Best, 163.

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, 166.

⁴⁸Harold Best, 168.

⁴⁹Proverbs 18:18 (NIV)

Striving for excellence as an artist is a tireless journey. The artist is never fully satisfied. Art itself is a direct reflection of human beings made in the image of God. It is a gift that needs to be stewarded well. The church will always need a new song, a new expression, a new piece to help people respond to the God who created heaven and earth. Excellence in art is how the church can work toward that goal.

Worship in Spirit and Truth

During his earthly ministry, Jesus had a conversation with a woman at Jacob's well. After he told her about living water, revealing he knew more about her than humanly possible, she finally asked him where she (a Samaritan) should worship. Jesus responded, "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the spirit and in truth."⁵⁰ This verse is no stranger to discussions on worship. There are countless worship ramifications of Jesus' statement. However, it is less often included in the creative process, although creating in spirit and in truth is an indispensable part *of* the process. It would be difficult to create content that facilitates worshipping in spirit and in truth if the creator was not creating in the spirit. In Ephesians, Paul writes, "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord..."⁵¹ Any person whose goal it is to create in spirit and in truth should strive to be filled with the Spirit.

Warren Wiersbe describes the worshipful, creative process by saying that "true worship has both objective and subjective aspects, and we must maintain this balance."⁵² When creating

⁵⁰John 4:24 (NIV)

⁵¹Eph 5:18-19 (NIV)

⁵²Warren Weirsbe, 23.

original content, there will be a subjective worship experience, as well as an objective one. The latter is tied to the objective revelation of the Word of God, while the former represents what is going on in the soul of those united with Christ. Knowing Jesus is a prerequisite to creating in spirit and in truth. Navarro writes, "...for one to be a worshiper of the living God, one must be born again and controlled by the Spirit of God."⁵³ Creating original content for the worship service is a process reserved for Christ-followers who know truth and have the Spirit.

Worshipping in spirit happens in our spirit through union with Christ, at the soul level. Rory Noland describes it this way: "Because God is spirit, he is not confined to time, place, or other physical limitations. Therefore, we must worship him in spirit, we must connect with him on a soul level."⁵⁴ Connecting with the Lord on that level in the creative process is the best precursor to creating fruitful content for the life of the church.

It is worth clarifying how 'spirit' and 'truth' should be understood in John 4. The spirit being referred to is the human spirit. Dr. John MacArthur states it this way: "The word 'spirit' does not refer to the Holy Spirit but to the human spirit. Jesus' point here {John 4:23-24} is that a person must worship not simply by external conformity to religious rituals and places (outwardly) but inwardly 'in spirit' with the proper heart attitude. The reference to 'truth' refers to worship of God consistent with revealed Scripture and centered on the 'Word made flesh' who ultimately revealed His father."⁵⁵ The location of where one worships is insignificant in comparison to the state in which a person worships.

⁵³Kevin Navarro, 58.

⁵⁴Rory Noland, *The Worshiping Artist* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007), 13.

⁵⁵John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2006), 149.

Worshipping in spirit happens in relationship. The way the Spirit moves in one person may be different from how He moves in another. Michael Lawrence and Mark Dever affirm this when they write, “In rejecting the subjectivism and experientialism that run rampant in modern evangelical worship, one does not have to abandon the legitimately subjective aspects of the gospel.” The subjective aspects of the Gospel’s power can be the space for creating beautiful art. For example, it can prompt someone to write a powerful song about how Jesus gives victory over a life-long sin struggle. Worshipping in spirit is a posture of the heart, the overflow of a life dedicated to God.

Worshipping in truth means being grounded in who God is, what He has asked for in His Word, and who we are as created beings. Noland writes, “Worshipping in truth means that we worship God for who he truly is.” Knowing who God is and His attributes is the starting place of worship. Ligon Duncan argues that worshipping in truth implies Scriptural, simple, spiritual, God-centered, historic, Christ-based, and corporate expressions.⁵⁶ The truth is informed by: God’s Word, church history, and Jesus’ death and resurrection. What worshippers think about God matters. Constance Cherry writes, “What we establish at the outset is that our understanding of God and the way we engage in worship are infinitely connected.”⁵⁷ In support, she quotes A.W. Tozer, who famously said, “What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important think about us.” What one thinks about God drastically affects what they create to help bring people before Him.

⁵⁶J. Matthew Pinson, ed. *Perspectives on Christian Worship: 5 Views* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2009), 114.

⁵⁷Constance Cherry, 5.

Worship in truth necessitates not focusing on only one of God's attributes, e.g. love, while ignoring His holiness, wrath, justice, power, omniscience, and omnipresence. Perhaps the most common way this occurs in worship is when God's love is highlighted, while his holiness, wrath, and justice is under-emphasized. The opportunity to create original content can help correct the pitfalls (intentional or unintentional) over worshipping God from a place of who we *want* Him to be, versus who He truly is. The original content-creator does not want to inadvertently provide a skewed picture of who God is, by limiting Him to only one of His attributes.

Prayerfulness, obedience, and sensitivity to the Spirit are ingredients for creating original content in spirit and in truth. Abiding in Christ gives a sure footing to the creative process. John 4:24 demonstrates that creating original content requires both worshipping in spirit and worship in truth. Eliminating either is not an option. In some local contexts, it may be hard to worship in truth. The cause may be as innocent as simply a lack of training and biblical understanding of worship, or it could be an intentional choice to water down the truth to get people through the door. Similarly, some may struggle to worship in spirit if they have no experience or concept of letting the Spirit guide and direct their steps. Or there may be sin patterns stunting the person's worship experience. No matter the impediment, original content for the worship service should be birthed by people who are serious about worshipping God in spirit and in truth.

PART FOUR: CONCLUSION

What's Next?

Currently (as of 5/8/20) Eagle Church has used three of the seven elements created for this project in corporate worship. The *Advent Creed: Receive* was released during the 2019 Advent Season. The *Confession* was used during the 2020 Ash Wednesday Service. And in a

truly *God-going-before-us* way, we introduced the song *Now and Forever* on April 1, 2020, during a Wednesday Night Worship and Prayer service. Our Wednesday evening services had begun two weeks prior, at the start of the shelter-in-place order due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It was received incredibly well.

My plan is to introduce the remaining songs in live worship service settings. I still hope to make the EP available to the church via Spotify and/or Itunes, but I would rather introduce the songs live first and then point the church to the final mixes. Judging from my Lead Pastor's response to the music so far, I am hopeful that we will be able to introduce the songs throughout the 2020 year. He has been incredibly supportive throughout this process.

The title for the EP is *New Beginnings*, and quite literally, the world is looking at a year of new beginnings. I could have never imagined back in December 2019, when I first sat down to discuss this with our Lead Pastor, that the themes of faithfulness, looking back to look ahead, new beginnings, and staying anchored in the Lord would be so needed. But God knew. Nothing has surprised Him, and it has been encouraging and peace-giving to be a part of blessing our local church with this content through a chaotic and fearful time.

I look forward to continuing to walk out the principles outlined in this paper in my own ministry. I will have more opportunity to do so now than I would have before Covid-19. Not only did the Lord orchestrate a timely EP for Eagle Church and all that we are facing as a result of the pandemic, but he also orchestrated the conclusion of my MA in Music and Worship with my transition into a new role at church: Pastor of Students and Worship. This role, which is a dual role in worship and a team leading role with student ministry, has been over a year in the making. It has been surreal to step into a significant leadership position that this degree and

capstone project have been preparing me for all along. I am humbled. I am grateful. And we as a church, a worship team, and worship leaders, are looking to the Lord for what's next.

Reflection

When I chose to do a project like this, I approached it knowing that at times it would be overwhelming but would also afford me an opportunity to be stretched in new ways. That is exactly how it played out. There were many days I felt out my element. Songwriting was new to me. Recording and mixing was new to me. My hope all along was to grow in confidence as a songwriter, as a worship leader, and as a worship pastor. By God's grace, I have experienced all of those things.

When I look back to my initial proposal, it is interesting to see what shifted. Some songs became more simple while others became more complex. I ended up using less people than I had hoped to from my church, but that was in large part a result of the Coronavirus pandemic. I learned about my own work style: how I get tasks accomplished, what can be done quickly vs slowly, and how rewarding it is to be involved in a long-term project. I think back fondly on the writing sessions in Starbucks, and jam sessions in our worship center. I started leaning away early on from providing a physical CD in favor of streaming, only to have the CD option removed for me by Covid-19. Some plans remained the same throughout the process, while others shifted significantly.

The EP grew in track number from what I initially planned. That was the right call. It was never going to be a good idea to put an Advent Creed and a Confession on the same track. I am thankful for that shift. I also gained an appreciation for people who regularly create lead sheets and charts. It is an enjoyable process, but I will show a lot more grace to errors that I see come

across my desk (e.g. from a company like SongSelect), knowing now how difficult it is to capture a song in that format.

Covid-19 presented completely unforeseen challenges. I was always planning on using musicians and recording space at Eagle Church. However, I did not foresee having to ask musicians to record individually at their homes. When I had to make the decision to either postpone my project or move forward, I was tempted to postpone, but after encouragement from Dr. Keith Currie, my mentor at Liberty University, I decided to push ahead and try to finish up the recordings, even though it was no longer going to look (or sound) exactly how I had hoped it would.

The process of compiling different tracks, having not been there for all of the original recordings, was daunting. Also, it is quite different sitting down with someone in person to listen to tracks on ProTools than being forced to listen in isolation and then email reactions and feedback. Through working with our Tech Director, we were able to do a decent job at post-production. I am mostly satisfied with the final mixes, but there are still things that I notice here and there that I would love to keep adjusting.

If I were to do this project again, I would collaborate with even *more* musicians. I had to cut back on the number of people involved and that was disappointing. I would also want to introduce more of the songs to my church before having to submit it, so as to be able to share more feedback.

I could not prepare myself for the warm and encouraging reception I received to the song “Now and Forever.” It has prompted me to do more songwriting and has been a blessing to our entire church during this chaotic and ever-changing time. I am excited for the opportunity to share more of the music written for this EP with my church in live worship settings. I know that

they may not be received as strongly, but even if not, I want to be a feedback junkie. I will be curious what stands out most to people and why.

This type of project came at the perfect time in my life: personally, vocationally, and musically. Personally, I found myself returning to the texts I'd written when I would feel discouraged or would simply need to set my heart and mind on truth. In ministry, being able to grow in these areas right as I am stepping into a new worship role at my church has been beneficial. My increased familiarity with sound, recording, mixing, and songwriting will all be helpful down the road as a musician. And perhaps most importantly, the five principles discussed in this paper will not only guide my own worship leadership but will also be passed on to our worship team members. I look forward to continuing to facilitate worship for Eagle Church with original content for as long as the Lord would have me do so. Soli Deo Gloria.

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Appendix A - Links to EP Files

Link to Ministry Project Root Folder:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/16RaWbIH8Gs8xg_AQ8O6lWoHkiTNaspQq

Link to Lyrics & Charts:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FPBd8Gi6pOSlc7bhGzj3vtimsF8IuJVu>

Link to Lead Sheets:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11sj7fNyeqRru55HqdFHsF3NdqSON-kDh>

Link to Rough Demos:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1upjWvYeeMUzuEfjHomDsz8bPpffNnDws>

Link to Final Mixes:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UB3_hTVsEOrj3cVE_YDGqfcVmg0JKLFY

Link to Worship Leading:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1wAMWoOeizuGhiHzEPNioaJhxIgrJfVGz>

Link to Cover Art:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1i8QM0IFrMqWM8S8h0eKdRm4Ssy5O-vGw>

Link to Pictures from the Process:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1AwfhWQ4ii16oQD_UsIbSWtrXtkbL65gl

Link to Planning Documents:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/176dWaCdINZbzmd-ceT5KT_hxHzuHEq36

Appendix B - Principles for Creating Original Content for the Worship Service

Principles for Creating Original Content	Application to the Leader/Team
Lyrics Before Melody and Creativity	Be a student of God's word
Embrace the Context of the Local Church	Be a learner of people and setting
Collaboration is Critical	Be a part of teams
Strive for Excellence as an Artist	Be an artist that reflects the triune God
Worship in Spirit and in Truth	Be a worshipper first

Appendix C - Affirmation from Collaborative Partners and Church Members

“Well church family, I think you would agree with me, there’s a phrase for a song in season, right? Ecclesiastes says, ‘A word in season.’ I think that is like a song for this season {beginning of the pandemic}. I think the Lord has given us something there that’s powerful. And I think the timing of how the Lord brought all of that together {*Now and Forever*} ...”

– Eric Simpson | Lead Pastor/Onsite Supervisor

“Co-writing and recording *A New Day*, as well as giving feedback and thoughts on Ian’s project, was a very positive experience. Collaborating with Ian was easy, which allowed it to be fun! He was organized, had a good plan and stayed on top of each step. And listening to the resulting product has been a joy!”

– Bryce Langebartels | Friend and Collaborator

“Keep forgetting to tell you; your song {*Now and Forever*} is absolutely amazing and I love it so much!”

– Isaac Smith | Eagle Church Attender