

## OVERVIEW

Praising God through music is an integral component of worshiping Him. When King David was young, he already understood the power of praising God and used it to appease King Saul whenever evil spirits disturbed him. Recognizing the importance of musical worship, King David later instructed the leaders of the Levites *"to appoint their brethren to be the singers accompanied by instruments of music, stringed instruments, harps, and cymbals, by raising the voice with resounding joy"* for the house of God (1 Chr 15:16). As accompanists for the church, we need to put our hearts into this holy work and pray for God's abidance and empowerment so that our playing can glorify Him as well as touch the hearts of men.

## ROLES

- Lead the congregation to sing in unison and harmony to praise God.
- Create a worshipful atmosphere through the precious gift of music from God.

## HOW TO

### PREPARATION BEFOREHAND

- Pray for the guidance and abidance of the Lord.
- Find out if the service serves a special occasion, in which case there may be a special theme for the hymns.
- Consult the hymn leader and/or sermon speaker in advance and take note of the following for each hymn:
  - Number of verses – whether the number of verses differs between the English and Chinese hymnals, how many verses to play.
  - Tempo – find out the speed of the hymn from the hymn leader.
  - Fermata – find out how long they should be held from the hymn leader.

### PREPARATION ON THE HOUR

- Accompanists are visible to the congregation, so dress appropriately and groom yourself accordingly as one serving God and representing the church.
  - Neat appearance – hair combed, facial hair neatly shaved/trimmed, shirt tucked in, and so on.
  - Appropriate attire for brothers – collared shirts, ties, slacks, dress shoes (avoid t-shirts, jeans, shorts, sneakers, sandals).
  - Appropriate attire for sisters – shirts, skirts, slacks, dress shoes (avoid excessive jewelry, jeans, shorts, sneakers, sandals).
- Arrive at least 5 minutes before the hymn-singing session.
- Discuss with the hymn leader any necessary details (such as the hymn tempo, fermata length).
- Prepare the piano/organ for playing, and give a cue to the hymn leader when ready.

## WHILE PLAYING

- During the hymn-singing session:
  - Watch the hymn leader for the tempo cue before each hymn.
  - When there is a fermata, look for hymn leader's cue on the next beat.

## ADDITIONAL POINTERS

- Be familiar with hymn numbers 1-525. Take time to practice all the hymns so that they become familiar. Strive for a good control over tempo, rhythm, and dynamics as you practice each hymn.
- For the prelude to each hymn, play the last complete phrase of the hymn (unless it is an unfamiliar hymn, in which case play the first complete phrase).
- Pause briefly between each verse and after any fermata for the congregation to catch a breath.
- Slow down at the very end of each hymn to indicate ending.
- Include an appropriate level of elaboration (but not too excessive that it draws attention away from the hymn).
- Most importantly, bring out the mood of each hymn for the praise of God.

## **APPENDICES**

Please see this [Hymnal Reference Table](#) for key signatures, time signatures, and tempo.