

Worship Practicum Evaluation

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The worship practicum project was a wonderful experience. Often, I find myself weary of group projects because I do not particularly enjoy when my productivity relies on others' efficiency. However, this was a surprisingly smooth experience in which everyone was fully present to fulfill the role or responsibility they were given. It was easy during our first zoom meeting because everyone except one student was present. Everyone's attitudes were also very humble, so there was never any friction and we did not run into any issues with who would do what role. Everyone was positive, willing, and it was a very productive meeting. Towards the end, after we got the feedback, it was hard for us to find a time to regroup altogether and decide how to take our project in a specific direction. I appreciated the number of people per group, with the spirit of collaboration, but it may have been easier to coordinate with a slightly smaller group. We overcame this with a long thread of emails and we all tried to prioritize communication and respond in a timely manner. Otherwise, there were no major challenges in the planning and execution. Thankfully, it felt like we were individually all puzzle pieces that fit together and the diversity of giftings displayed itself in each of us.

For planning, I believe I contributed greatly to the responsiveness of email threads and during our zoom meeting. At first, because seven heads are coming together to come up with a cohesive idea, we were all very slow to discuss. However, I tried to always respond to Isabella, who took point on this project, and although it took me out of my comfort zone sometimes, I always express my opinions and affirmed other's ideas to help us make productive decisions. I also updated our conversation in the zoom chat constantly with notes on the timeline to keep our thoughts organized and everyone on the same page. As for the execution, my responsibility was the song of worship and doxology. What was easy about this for me is that I have a lot of experience with worship leading for the last 15 years, so it was my joy and pleasure to fulfill this

role. However, the challenges came with going through the actual recording process. I usually have my production team to lean on, but I figured I have a baseline capacity to record and mix the audio and visual. The audio recording was fairly seamless and did not take much time, but I realized very quickly that it would be extremely difficult to match the audio with a video recording of myself. I did not play the exact same piano parts and I was unable to fully match the vocals. After many takes, I decided I did the best that I could with what I had recorded. However, now I have learned that it is always best to just record both the audio and video together so that I can overlay it seamlessly.

For how the service was executed through planning and meeting on zoom and with sending large computer files via internet, I believe the worship experience was great. My group and I agreed that we wished there was maybe one more song of praise either in the beginning or at the end of the service. Justin reused the doxology to help conclude worship, but I wish we could have added a more purposeful response song of praise at the end to emphasize the message of the sermon and seal the theme of the service together. Speaking of themes, I also wish that we could have had a more specified theme to model our service around. We loosely agreed that we were producing a service based around the theme of Lent and Easter, but I am not sure we really displayed that intentionally in each of the elements of service. Having viewed another group's video and how it was specifically about lamenting, it opened my mind to new ideas that we did not think of in the moment. I wish that we could have centered our worship experience around a more specific and intentional theme. I believe we needed more cohesion in that aspect. Practically speaking, perhaps it could have been useful to have had different background music in the beginning and during slides that had no audio.

Overall, the practicum was valuable for me to learn about the depth of certain elements we can participate in. I think it was important to even understand the significance of what makes up a worship service and the many different elements that can be utilized to serve the needs of ministering to God and ministering to His people. I learned the ways in which different liturgies, ones that I have never personally practiced before, can add powerful dynamics of purpose and reflection. I would likely seek to add these new elements into my future worship services more, as this practicum has opened my eyes to new possibilities. The greatest takeaway for me from this was that I came to a greater appreciation of how the infinitely diverse giftings of each individual contributes so beautifully to create a tapestry of God's church and people.