



Introducing New Songs

by Pastor Steve

Introducing new worship songs to your congregation can be a catalyst for fresh worship responses. Singing new songs often revives the worship experience that has gone stale or has found itself in a rut. There is no exact science in how and when to introduce new worship songs. Here are some tips that might be helpful.

To get started you should have a core group of songs. The number of songs in a core group can vary. I keep a list of 100 songs of which about 60 are in my core group. When new songs are introduced I eliminate a song that has been used for a long period of time or didn't work well with the congregation. That doesn't necessarily mean I never use the song again, it has just been removed from my core group. Choosing a core group of songs depends on the worship philosophy of the church and the style of music your congregation responds to. Before choosing songs the worship leader needs to have a clear understanding of the church's vision for worship. The worship leader also needs to know his/her skill level and the skill level of the worship team members.

Depending on how much time you have set aside for worship you will want to use 4 to 6 of your core songs during each worship set. In addition you might add 2 to 3 new songs each month. When adding new songs it is beneficial to use them for 4 or 5 weeks in a row. This will give the congregation time to get familiar with the lyrics and melody. Sometimes once a new song is played for a month there is a tendency to drop it from the worship set for a month. It might be more effective to use the song again after a week or two. Doing so will give the congregation the opportunity to really make the song their own. They will take the step from learning the song to worshipping with it.

If a particular song seems to have a significant anointing you might continue to use it for a long period of time. Be sensitive to the Holy Spirit in determining how long you use a song. You don't want to turn off the anointing nor do you want to continue using the song after the anointing is gone. If the song just doesn't seem to facilitate worship in your church by all means "can" it.

As a general rule I place new songs either first or last in the worship set. Usually if the song has an up-beat tempo it is the first song. If the song is more intimate I put it at the end. Putting a new song in the middle of the worship set can be distracting. You don't want your congregation to stop worshipping to learn a new song. Another good time to introduce new songs is during the offering or during the ministry time or invitation. If you introduce a new song during the ministry time you will want to make sure it fits in that context. Even though the congregation may not fully participate during those times they will hear the song and will readily recognize it when used during the regular worship time.

Finally, you need to a plan for scheduling new music and you need to work the plan. If nothing is planned, nothing will happen. This will include having learned the song yourself, having music and lyrics available for the worship team, adequate rehearsal time and having the lyrics available for the congregation.

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