Theatre in Worship: A Curriculum for Teaching Theatre in the Local Church Music Ministry

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Abstract
Music has been a part of church worship for many ages, and no doubt, music education programs can produce leaders within the church who are capable and effective within music ministry. Even so, many are expected to not just lead worship and music, but to develop a program and direct seasonal productions. Many worship leaders have been trained through music programs, but may not have extensive experience in theatre. Typically, part of a worship leader’s weekly duties entail preparing orders of worship, music rehearsals, staff meetings, visiting members of the congregation, studying, reading, writing music, communicating with the pastor, scheduling music events around the church calendar, making budgetary considerations, and allocating time to practice their own craft. Special seasons throughout the year require the music director to lead rehearsals for preparing a presentation around these times. Oftentimes, theatrical elements are a part of these events. Because of this, the worship leader is forced to lead not just music, but anything to do with acting, staging, rehearsals, lighting and sound. In efforts to assist the worship leader or music director with a basic understanding of theatrical techniques, ideas and leadership, the created theatre curriculum entails basic acting techniques. The curriculum was created as an extension of the music education major’s previous coursework, and captures the elements of rehearsal, production, and praxial learning activities to connect previous education experiences common within the music education. The beginner-friendly workbook allows a music director with no theatre training to be able to know the basic framework of directing any type of scene associated with theatre. Keywords: theatre curriculum for the worship leader, music and theatre