

Music & Worship **7 ESSENTIALS**

Our Guiding Principles



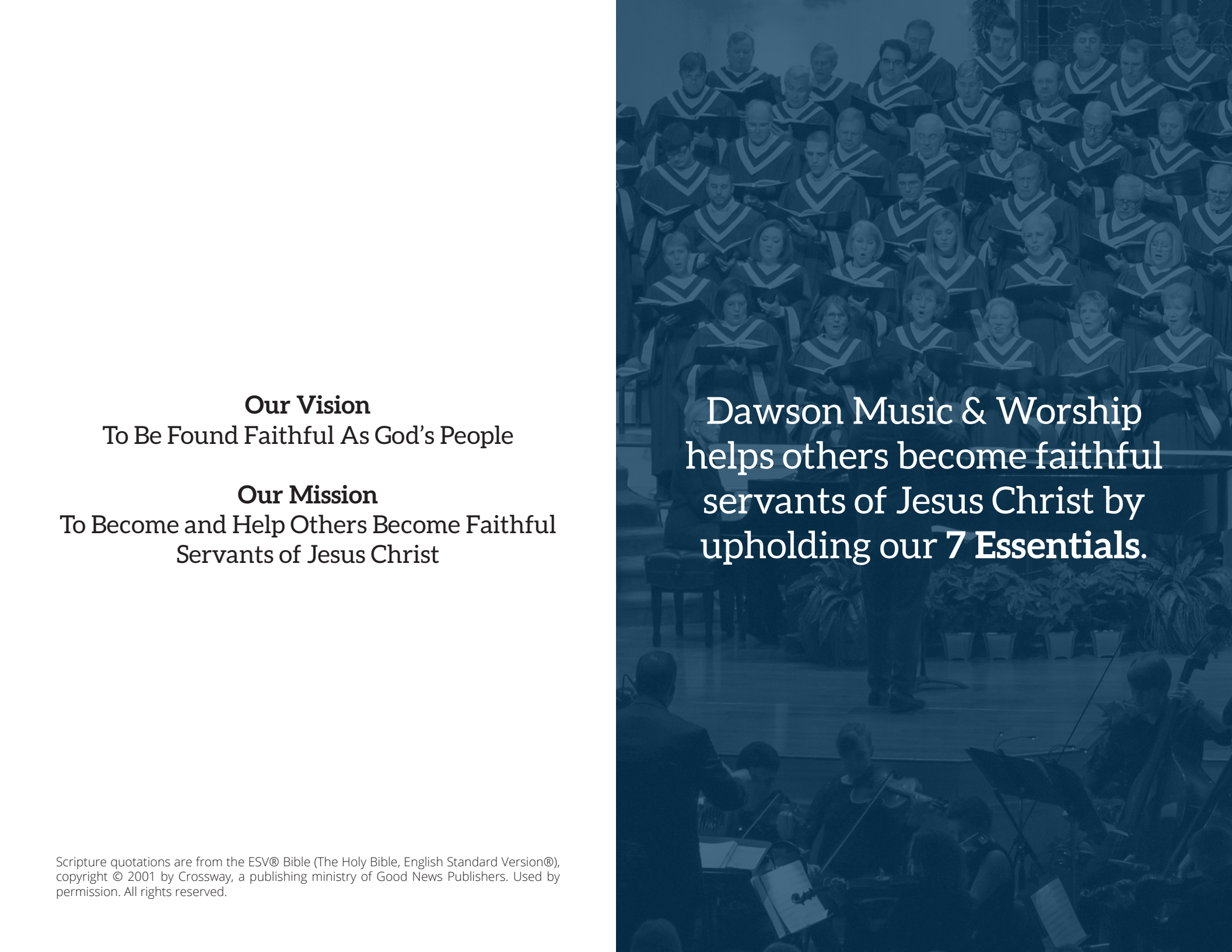
Dawson
**Music &
Worship**

Our Vision

To Be Found Faithful As God's People

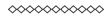
Our Mission

To Become and Help Others Become Faithful
Servants of Jesus Christ



Dawson Music & Worship
helps others become faithful
servants of Jesus Christ by
upholding our **7 Essentials**.

ALL TOGETHER



Worship is better when everyone is present. And, worship is better when everyone is actively participating. It's why Easter Sunday just feels right—the senior adult standing by the single mom, the 3rd grader standing by his dad, the college student seeing former Sunday School teachers from across the room.

That's why **we give priority to all generations engaging in worship together with full, conscious, active participation.**

Before we think about style, choirs, instruments, or music, it's essential that we think about how we can make a place for everyone of every generation to worship in unity. Worship that represents the vastness of the Kingdom of God honors the God of that Kingdom.

The story of Nehemiah and Ezra sheds some light on this essential.

"And all the people gathered as one man into the square before the Water Gate. And they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses that the Lord had commanded Israel...And he read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand. And the ears of all the people were attentive to the Book of the Law.... They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading...And all the people went their way to eat and drink and to send portions and to make great rejoicing, because they had understood the words that were declared to them."

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8, 12 (ESV)

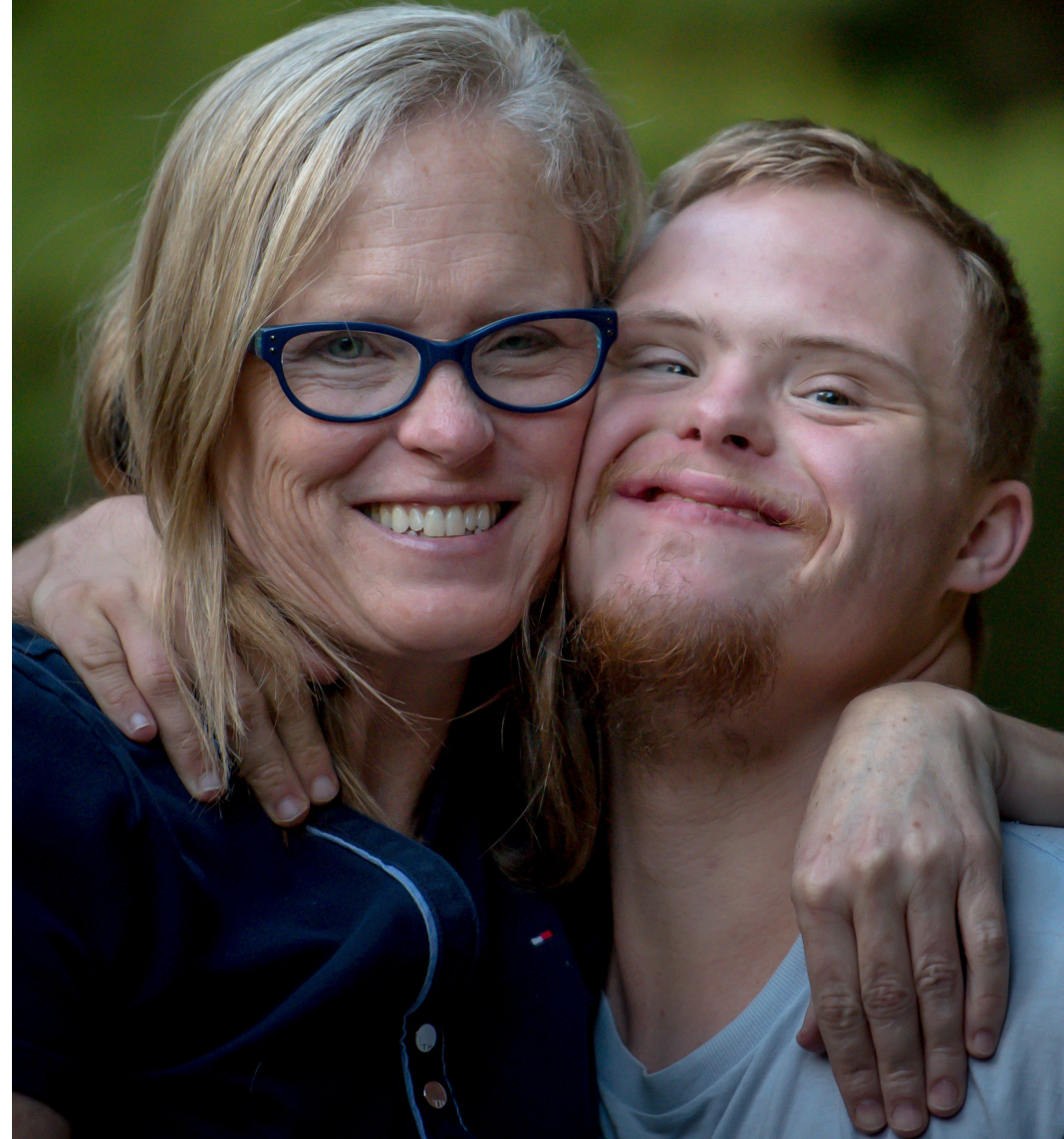
There are at least three things worth noting about this passage:

- *The people were all invited.* In a day when men would have been separated from women, and adults from children, there was something special happening—everyone was invited. Everyone was there. There were no divisions.
- *They paid attention.* The gathered people were attentive, purposefully participating in the worship of God.
- *They did something*—they left rejoicing. They participated in a way that changed them.

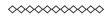
So this week as we worship, let's notice and give thanks for the many generations gathered, learn from them, and worship fully.

ESSENTIAL #1

We give priority to all generations engaging in worship together with full, conscious, active participation.



TRUE FOUNDATION



Christian worship isn't Christian without the Bible. It seems odd to say that, but the distinctive of worship for the believer is reading and hearing the sacred words of Scripture. It's why the music we sing is derived from Scripture. It's why the Bible is read and preached every time we gather. It's why we care about what the Bible says about worship. It's why **we maintain the truth of Scripture as the foundation of our music and worship practices.**

And as it turns out, the Bible says more about the *who* of worship and the *why* of worship than it does about the *what* of worship.

"Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."

Colossians 3:12-17 (ESV)

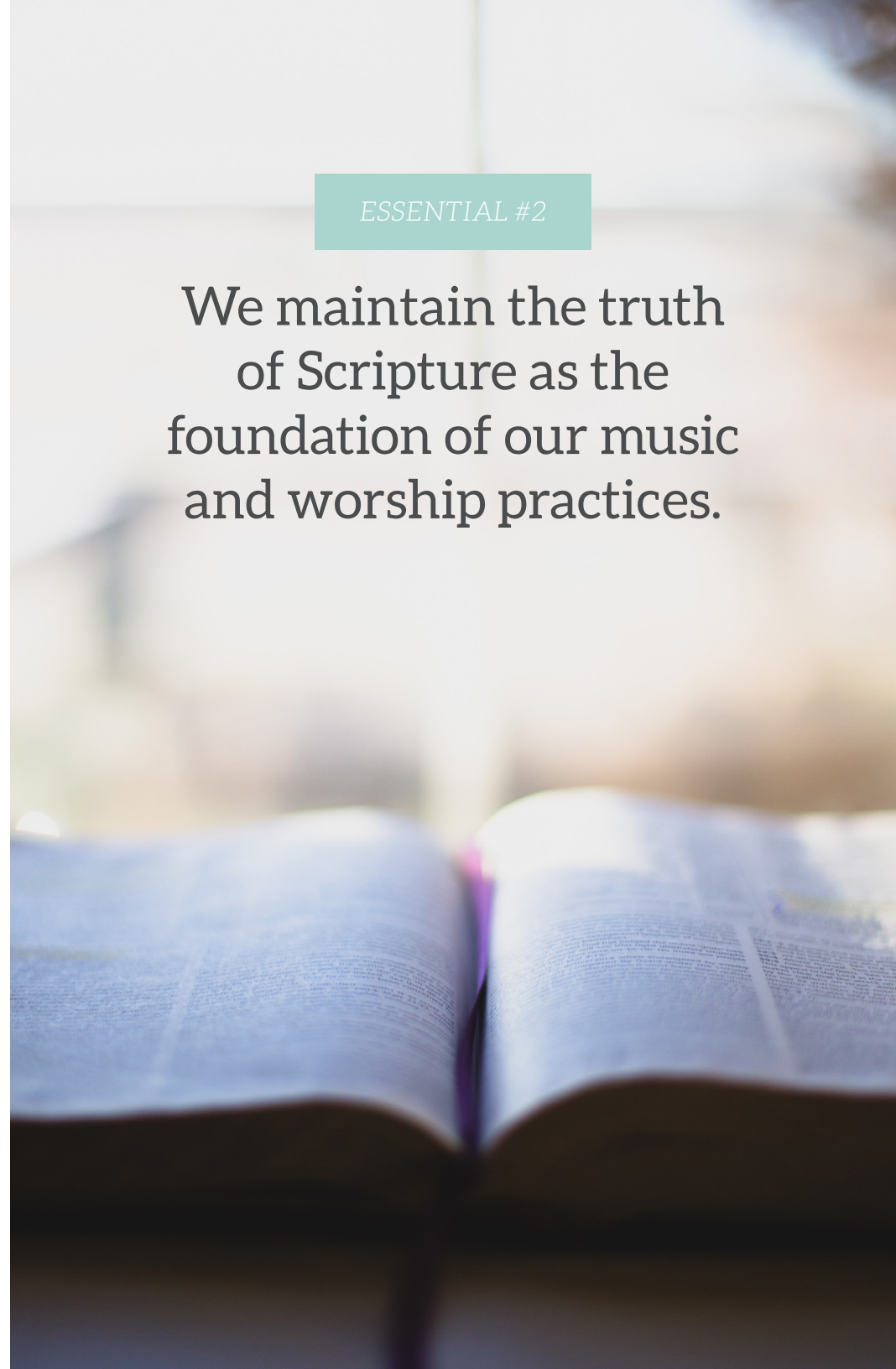
There's much we could say, but it's worth noting that

- *Gratitude matters.* The central disposition of worship should be that of gratitude. The context of worship, as scripture tells us, is gratitude.
- *We are learners and encouragers in worship.* We teach and admonish (encourage) in worship.
- *What we sing is secondary to how we sing.* While we use all the music available to us, we must do so with thankfulness in our hearts to God.
- *It's not for us.* We do this work of worship for the name of Jesus, not our own.

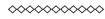
So, as we worship this week, notice the way our gratitude will enliven our worship as we listen for the ancient words of scripture both spoken and sung.

ESSENTIAL #2

We maintain the truth
of Scripture as the
foundation of our music
and worship practices.



HEADING OUT



Before the Coast Guard ever heads out to open water, they spend many hours in the swimming pool back on base. But, if they never leave the pool, they won't be fulfilling their purpose. The pool is not the goal, the open water is.

Worship is the same way. Each week, we gather to practice what we preach—to humble ourselves, to refocus on Christ, to confess our obsession with ourselves, and to intercede for the hurting—and then we head for open water to make a difference in the world. At Dawson, **we promote a lifestyle of worship by encouraging believers to worship at home, at work, and in their own local and global communities.**

Romans 12 says it like this:

"I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.


For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness."

Romans 12:1-13 (ESV)

True worship carries over into a lifestyle that reflects the way we are during that hour of worship. It requires consistency and maturity to be the same person in the Sanctuary and in the sales meeting. We give our entire lives—not just a slice of a Sunday—to God and his work around us. We allow our minds to be renewed and transformed. We humble ourselves as a part of a whole. We love others. We welcome the stranger. We engage the outcast. We worship from postlude to prelude.

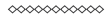
This week, let our worship in church change the world outside church.

ESSENTIAL #3



We promote a lifestyle of worship by encouraging believers to worship at home, at work, and in their own local and global communities.

UNITY IN WORSHIP



Imagine for a moment that we began worship with an invitation to the congregation to sing, and in response, each person just sang their favorite song. For 30 minutes, one after the other, each sang their song—alone. The organist played his favorite, and the pianist hers. While worship could certainly happen, this worship would amount to a room full of individuals having a musical “quiet time.”

Worship, however, is a “we” thing, not a “me” thing. That’s why **we design worship that promotes church unity by making traditional expressions fresh and contemporary expressions familiar.**

No matter what our favorites may be, we stretch ourselves each week to sing for and with one another. We put unity above preference. We don’t pretend we love a song we really dislike, but we do sacrifice our preferences for the unity of the church.

“And he who was seated on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ Also he said, ‘Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.’”

Revelation 21:5 (ESV)

This isn’t a mandate to do only things that are new. That would be exhausting! Nor is it a mandate to do only things that are known. That would be so stale! Instead, it is a reminder that both the new and the known (“all things”) are being given a breath of life from the One who sits on the throne.

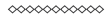
This week, let “all things” be given new life as we sing, play, and worship.



ESSENTIAL #4

We design worship that promotes church unity by making traditional expressions fresh and contemporary expressions familiar.

CREATIVE WORKS



Whether we look around the room, across the globe, or into the mirror, God's creativity is everywhere. Attention to detail, love of beauty, eclectic tastes — all are on display. Because God is the ultimate master craftsman, **we reflect the creative works of God through the skillful use of all the arts.**

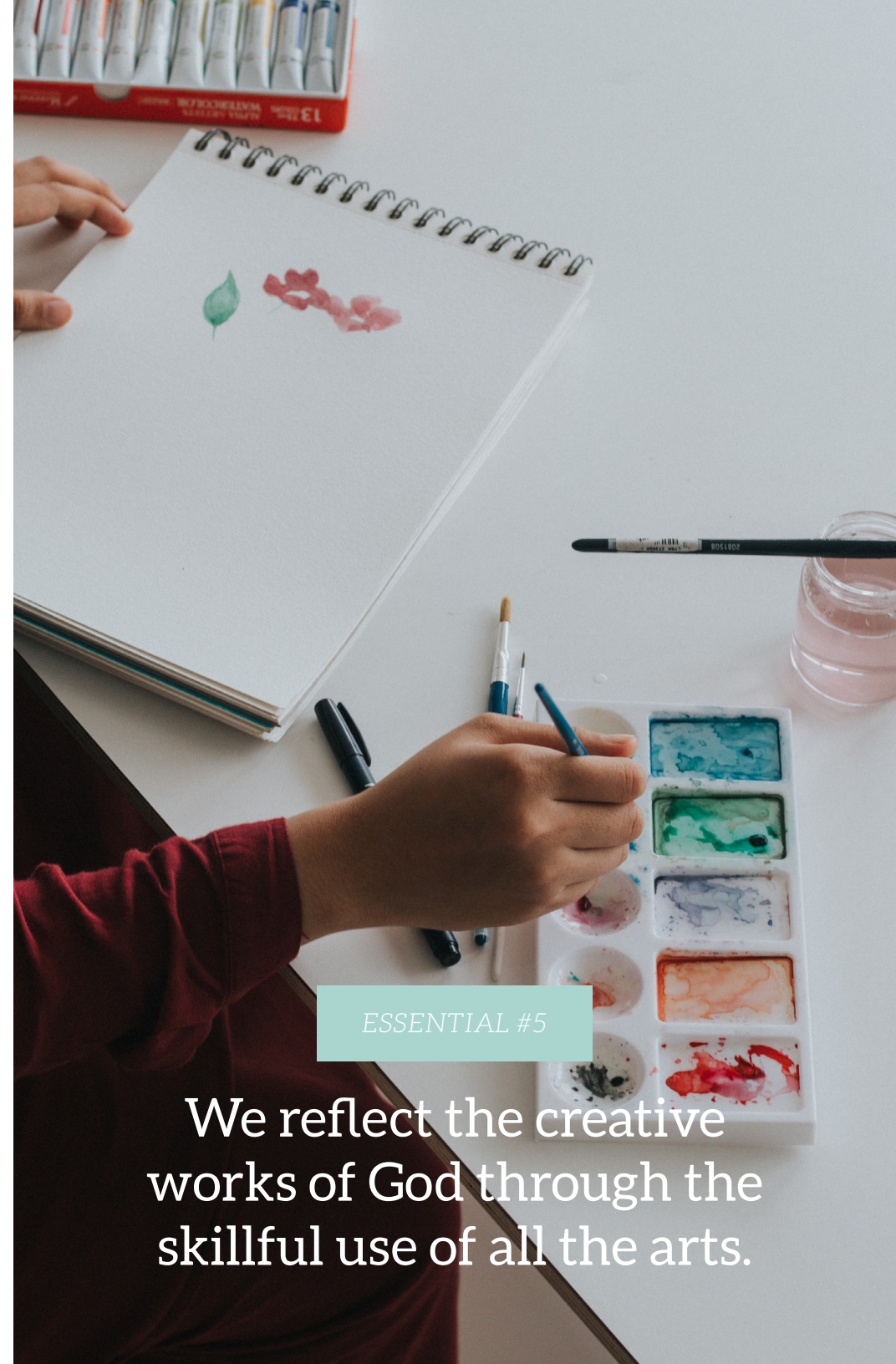
Exodus 35 recounts how much God cares about the little things.

"Then Moses said to the people of Israel, "See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold and silver and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every skilled craft. And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiab the son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan. He has filled them with skill to do every sort of work done by an engraver or by a designer or by an embroiderer in blue and purple and scarlet yarns and fine twined linen, or by a weaver—by any sort of workman or skilled designer."

Exodus 35:30-35 (ESV)

- *Our creativity and skill are gifts from God.* It was the Lord who filled these craftsmen and artists with skills, who gave them the curiosity and imagination to create. Details matter. In this, we see echoes of Genesis and creation.
- *Our gifts are worth something.* Their work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones, in carving wood, in fashioning textiles, and in creating engravings were all of immense value.
- *There are many different kinds of arts*—all to be done with skill. God spread out his beauty so that more than just a few could reflect his creativity and character.

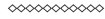
As we worship this week, let's consciously notice the diversity of the music, the broadness of the art, and the poetry in the preaching, lifting it up as an offering to the God to created first.



ESSENTIAL #5

We reflect the creative works of God through the skillful use of all the arts.

JOINTLY COMMISSIONED



One of the surprising things about Scripture is that it does not emphasize a single faith decision. Instead, it emphasizes a lifestyle of faith. Certainly, a decision is essential, but when the Bible mentions following Christ, it talks about this in the context of a lifestyle of faith, such as in the Great Commission in Matthew 28.

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:19-20 (ESV)

We find some surprising truths in this passage, especially if we look back to the original Greek language in which it was written. The commission to go and make disciples, to baptize, and to teach is given, not to a single person, but to a group. All these verbs in the Greek are plural—don't miss the significance of this! Our leader, Jesus Christ himself, is reminding us with his final words that we do this work together. That's why **we nurture friendships through a variety of musical ensembles that carry the hope of the Gospel to the church and the world.**

We do this ministry as friends, as people who care for one another and commit to minister alongside one another. We deal with the idiosyncrasies and strengths and with the sadness and surprises of each other's lives because we've been commissioned together. The Church is God's Plan A for the world. The Church is all of us. There is no Plan B.

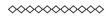
This week, let's linger a few extra minutes after worship to remember and renew the friendships we value so deeply.



ESSENTIAL #6

We nurture friendships through a variety of musical ensembles that carry the hope of the Gospel to the church and the world.

PRESENT FUTURE



There's something inspiring about seeing a child succeed. When he stands up front and sings that song with heart and gusto, we can't help but smile. When she plays harder than she's ever played before, we can't help but cheer. When he looks up from his own task to help another, we can't help but feel pride. And when she steps up and leads with focus and kindness, we can't help but give a thumbs up. These moments don't happen by accident. Each one is crafted to make room for the next generation to find their place in the Church.

At Dawson, **we purposefully choose and employ resources to raise the next generation of worshipers and worship leaders.** We repeat the good news of the gospel over and over and over again to the youngest among us, faithfully bathing their souls in the hope of Christ. Because we care about the next generation of worshipers and worship leaders, we mentor young people, invest in musical groups where they can excel, curate experiences to broaden their understanding of worship, and guide them to be flexible, lifelong worshipers who are able to worship in any style or setting. Deuteronomy 6 expresses it this way:

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 (ESV)

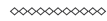
The next generation is already here, already watching, already leading. This week as we worship, let's look out and notice someone we can pray for as they grow into the leaders of the church of tomorrow. Because in fact, they are the church of right now.



ESSENTIAL #7

We purposefully choose and employ resources to raise the next generation of worshipers and worship leaders.

7 ESSENTIALS



We give priority to all generations engaging in worship together with full, conscious, active participation.

Nehemiah 8:1-12

We maintain the truth of Scripture as the foundation of our music and worship practices.

Colossians 3:12-17

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Romans 12:1-3

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Revelation 21:5

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Exodus 35:30-35

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Matthew 28:19-20

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Deuteronomy 6:5-7



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