

Worship Arts Auditions

Our Process

Thank you for your interest in Living Word's worship ministry. We have created the following document to help you understand the prerequisites for auditioning, the audition process itself, and our expectations for team members.

I. Prerequisites

The following list of practical requirements will help you determine if this is the right time for you to apply for an audition.

1. A growing personal relationship with Jesus Christ
2. Regular attendance at Living Word for at least 6 months
3. At least 18 years of age

If you meet these criteria, please visit lwccyork.com/audition to fill out an application. Upon receiving your application, our Admin will be in touch with you with next steps.

II. The Audition Process

We have two steps to our audition. We try to make the process as casual and comfortable as it can be for you. We recognize that an audition can be a source of stress and nervousness, sometimes even for seasoned musicians. Do your best to be informed from these documents, be prepared, and most of all be YOU.

1. The Interview

Once we have received your application, our Admin will be in touch with you to schedule an interview with Jay Baer, our Worship & Production Pastor, and Eunhee Lorah, our Worship Arts Lead. The purpose of this time is to get to know you on a heart level. We will ask several questions and be looking for you to articulate your faith journey. We are not asking for textbook answers, so much as we are looking to get to know you, your heart, and your faith. Either prior to or during the interview, we may ask you to casually sing or play a short section of your song in choosing. This is just to gauge your musical abilities in a casual setting rather than on the stage. Please be informed that an interview does not guarantee an audition. Within two weeks of your interview, we will reach out to you with next steps.

2. The Audition

Upon scheduling your audition, you will be sent two songs to prepare for. We will provide you with a mp3 file and a chord chart as your resources.

We typically hold our auditions on the stage in our Main Auditorium. We will orient you to surroundings: we will have the instruments/equipment you'll need to audition (except we

ask guitarists to bring your own), as well as a music stand. We take a minute to make sure you can hear what you need in your monitors, click (metronome), yourself, and any accompaniment.

Once you're situated, you'll be asked to perform the two songs you have prepared.

III. After the Audition

After your audition, you will hear a response within 1-2 weeks. You'll receive one of the following responses:

1. You will be extended an invitation to serve on the worship team.

Once or twice a month is the standard rotation for team members. We also may invite you to be an auxiliary team member (a backup or fill-in). You'll be sent our worship team covenant to read and sign.

Before you are scheduled, we will have a personalized training process. The goal of this training is to get you accustomed to our system and to set you up well for weeks to come.

Along with all invitations, we reserve a three-month trial period to make sure you are the right fit for us and vice versa. We also check in with members once or twice a year over dinner to see how you're doing, give our thoughts on your performance (generally positive), and provide a venue for feedback to us.

2. Your skill and spiritual maturity make you a strong candidate for the worship team; however, currently we do not have an opening for you. We will keep your name on file and contact you if/when a spot becomes available.

3. A decision, with explanation, to refrain from invitation.

While this can be difficult to hear, we need to honor our ministry. As much as we may like you as a person, or enjoy your skill, we have been charged with the leadership and stewardship of a specific worship ministry. We will often offer encouragement to continue developing your skill or maybe point you towards other ministry opportunities.

Don't let this response do unnecessary damage! "No" can be difficult, but it also helps to guide you towards God's plan for you and your personal ministry in his kingdom.

We always follow up. Don't listen to lies from the enemy that are contrary to what the Lord says about you. We recognize the sensitivity that musicians and creatives possess over their skill and craft, and we do our best to treat each candidate with reasonable care and tact.

Skills Required

The following document is meant to help you understand both the culture and the expectations of the Living Word worship ministry. It is not meant to deter or discourage you from applying for our worship ministry; rather it is a tool to help you walk into an audition informed about the specifics of our ministry.

I. General Skills

1. Familiarity with our style.

Living Word has a distinct style of worship music rooted in the songs and sounds of worship houses such as Hillsong, Bethel, and Elevation. As a musician, you should have a working knowledge of the values of this style and what that means for your instrument.

2. The ability to play with a click (metronome)

We perform to a click, which enables us to predictably determine the tempo, energy, and the length of songs in our services. It also serves as a reference to keep the band in sync. We will also play with tracks, which are pre-recorded auxiliary parts that supplement our live musicians. These tracks also require a click track to keep everything synchronized.

3. A knowledge of the part(s) played by your instrument on a given song

We expect our team members to learn parts, not just a basic chord structure. We desire to capitalize on the creative energy that goes into the quality recordings we reference. Of course, playing in a band setting will require you to be flexible based on what is needed to create a desired sound or arrangement. But coming into a rehearsal, you should be prepared to play the parts from a specified recording.

4. Comfortability playing with in-ear monitors

We do not have any reference speakers sitting on stage. This allows us to create clean music for our sound engineers to mix. It also enables us to play with a click track, and for us to receive feedback and guidance from our sound engineer or a music director. We do not expect team members to provide their own in-ear monitors. At your audition, we will have a pair of over-the-ear headphones for you to use.

II. Specific Skills

Guitar

For lead guitar:

We expect you to know the chord structure, riffs, lead lines, and sounds associated with a given song. We also expect you to have a practical knowledge of (at least) overdrive, delay, and reverb, to create specific tones. It will also be necessary to have some rhythm skill as

well, as you may or may not be paired with a rhythm guitarist. For a given service, a worship leader may choose to drop or change a part at his or her discretion.

For rhythm guitar:

We expect you to know the chord structure of a song, as well as the dynamics – when and how much to play. As well as a variety of shapes for playing them: triads, diads, barre chords, open (‘cowboy’) chords. You’ll need to be comfortable on both acoustic and electric guitars. The ability to play simple leads is a plus but not required.

We provide a quality house rig for our electric guitarists: a Fractal Axe-FX II XL+. We create patches, often working with each guitarist, according to our desired sound. We ask you to use your own instrument of professional or respectable quality. If you prefer to use your own gear, we can accommodate most rigs, subject to our approval.

Bass

You’ll need to know the chord structure of a specific song and when to play or rest. You’ll need to play at the appropriate octave and with the appropriate rhythm. We’ll be looking to see how you lock with the drum pattern. You will need to have a practical understanding of bass tone and EQ (as well as how to adjust your instrument’s tone). The ability to add runs or riffs to complement instrumentation is a plus but not required.

We provide a quality house rig of a tuner, compressor, and preamp, along with a few optional effects. If you prefer to use your own gear, we can accommodate most rigs, subject to our approval.

Keys

You will need to have a general understanding of the role of a keyboard in the style of worship houses referenced above. You will need to know the various keys parts in each song and be able to choose which part will provide the best sound with the band. You’ll need to adapt to various patches that have been created based on the selected worship songs. The ability to create patches is a plus but is not required.

We provide a quality house rig of SundayKeys on the Mainstage platform. We do not require previous knowledge of the software currently. We will be providing training on this software as part of your personalized training process. Also currently, we are not allowing use of personal rigs.

Drums

We expect you to follow the drum patterns on selected recordings with reasonable accuracy. We also would expect you to be able to be flexible to adapt to a given band setting, or a worship leader’s request. Pay attention to groove and dynamics as you prepare. We expect you to learn and follow our worship leaders’ nonverbal cues, and then

confidently play accordingly, as most of the band will be referencing your interpretation and dynamic for their own parts.

We provide a quality house kit with a full complement of toms, cymbals, and percussive accessories. When the need demands, we also provide a cajón, djembe, and other hand percussion typically associated with acoustic worship settings. Drummers generally bring their own sticks, brushes, and mallets, but we also have some basic options.

Vocals

Lead Vocals:

You'll need to have proper vocal/breath technique, great stage presence, and compatibility with our style. You'll need to exhibit authenticity in your personality and your delivery. We discourage our lead vocalists from over-styling, which can often lead to the congregation's reluctance to participate. Depending on the changing needs of the ministry, lead vocalists may also be asked to serve as background vocalists— sometimes on a regular basis.

Background Vocals:

Background vocalists are expected to have good pitch and timbre, and the ability to harmonize. Supportive stage presence is also a big part of a background vocalist, as your level of engagement is often reflected by the congregation.

Vocalists have the added responsibility of being featured regularly on camera. This requires good stage presence: worshipful engagement with both the congregation (eye contact, smiling, occasional verbal encouragement), and with the Lord through the music (eyes closed, hands raised, rhythmic participation).

Being on camera also means you'll have a mild celebrity status within our community (recognition, praise, etc.), and we expect our vocalists to handle that status with an extra measure of character, humility, and grace.

III. Intangible Skills

Humility

The Living Word worship ministry has a beautiful culture of humility. Each of our ministry partners are open to feedback from worship leaders, sound engineers, and peers. This stems from a common desire for the glory of God in everything we do as a ministry. Being willing to flex, adjust, receive constructive criticism, or even drop something that you had prepared is essential to a healthy team player.

Excellence

We recognize that excellence, by nature, is always chased but never fully caught. Our culture is one of life-long learning, where we are all committed to getting better in our respective skills. However, we balance this with an understanding that our primary responsibility is to create environments

where people can worship and experience the triune God. No pursuit of excellence or technical greatness should ever overshadow our collective reflection of the glory of God. This is a tension that we live in as a worship arts staff, and a line we prayerfully walk.

Service

Along with our value of humility, Living Word worship ministry partners view themselves as servants. Members have a strong commitment to rehearsal attendance, to being fully prepared, to actively participating in extra events, and to adjusting both their frequency and quality of service according to changing needs in the ministry. In response to these gifts given, our worship arts staff works hard to honor the time and talent given in this way.

Character

Collectively, our worship arts staff has a strong sense of discernment shaped by the Word of God and his spirit. As a part of joining our worship team we have members enter into a covenant we have thoughtfully and prayerfully developed. This is meant to be an above-reproach standard to which we all align and adhere. And when real-life situations exceed the scope of that covenant, team members take their cues from church leadership on matters of public behavior and conduct.