

# Hosting a 'Word In Song Masterclass' with Emu Music

Emu Music exists to equip and encourage the church in biblical, beautiful and transformative singing. Our flagship program is the Word In Song Conference which runs in Australia, the UK and Asia - a day of Biblical input and practical training in contemporary church music ministry. We also run smaller-scale and shorter sessions called 'Masterclasses' which usually take place on a midweek evening. In many cases we partner with a local church or organisation to help host the event. The following information is to help hosts understand our expectations of them in order to run an effective Word In Song event; and similarly what they should expect of us.

Whatever the nature of the hosting relationship, it should be understood by those attending that the event is being run by Emu Music. We appreciate that there may be local people able to offer excellent training as part of such a day. However, for the integrity and consistency of the program material we provide, we don't ask others to contribute to our conference events.

## 1. What we provide

### A. Emu Team

We normally will bring a team of 3 or 4 musicians/trainers who make up the band for main sessions and are trained in offering high quality practical workshop sessions. On occasion we may ask for help in sourcing local musicians to supplement our band - although that is normally unnecessary.

Most of our presenters have some level of theological training on top of being excellent musicians. Our key speakers have both higher degrees in theology and extensive experience in pastoral ministry.

### B. Masterclass Program

Here is a sample program designed to balance Biblical and practical input, with a thought out progression of teaching and learning objectives:

- 6:45pm** Delegate Arrival and Refreshments
- 7:00pm** Main Session (singing and Bible Talk)
- 7:30pm** Church Music Masterclass
- 8:15pm** Seminars
- 9:05pm** Q&A
- 9:30pm** Finish

## C. Seminars

Seminar availability will depend on the Emu team attending the conference, but our goal is to provide seminars that address and meet the specific needs and resources of your church and music team. You will be in communication with one of the Emu team ahead of the Masterclass to discuss these things.

*Church Music Masterclass:* This is an all-together session for everyone. We look at the essential elements of leading congregational singing for any size or style of church. As a vocalist, musician or sound person, it is critical to understand your role in the ensemble, and how we use harmonic and rhythmic layers to create musical contrast and creative arrangements.

*Song Leading:* The song leader is the single most important person in leading great congregational singing. We will look at the Biblical basis for having a song leader, as well as the practicalities of how to lead singing well - including what to say, how to engage the congregation and vocal/mic technique.

*Piano for Church:* Piano is often the key instrument in leading congregational singing. But many of us lack the skills to turn years of lessons into playing in a style that is helpful for our churches to sing to. We'll look at basic chord playing, contemporary keyboard techniques, and discuss how to leave the score behind!

*Leading from Guitar:* This session will look at how the guitar can be used most effectively in facilitating congregational singing, as part of a band but also on your own. We will look closely at the use of capos, strumming rhythms, and how to play hymns on a guitar.

*Bass & Drums:* What does it take to create a solid foundation to a rhythm section? The bass and drums are the 'engine room' of any church band. We will look at: our roles, finding a part, locking in together, time, technical skills, playing the song, groove vocabulary and more. This is a demonstration based masterclass where you will have the opportunity to observe different techniques and tips for playing drums or bass in your church band.

*Sound Mixing:* There is so much more to being a sound guy than plugging in DI boxes. Mixing the levels of a band takes time and a trained ear to get right. Come to this seminar to learn about the theories of sound and get practical tips on how you can develop as a sound engineer.

*Songwriting:* What makes a good congregational song? We'll explore how to write lyrics that are true, poetic and relevant; and what musical issues are important in writing a corporate song.

*Single-Note Instrument:* What is the role of a melody instrument in a church band, and how can it be used to best help the congregation to sing? This seminar will look at the purpose, function, and joys of being a melody instrument in a church context!

*Leading a music team:* Effective music ministry can't happen without someone in charge. But many of us land in the job of music director with little experience or knowing how to take

the ministry forward. This session will look at the role of the music director, how to shape a team culture, how to shape a culture of singing in the church, how to partner with the pastor, as well thinking about your own personal holiness and development.

*Introduction to Biblical Music Ministry:* What does the Bible say about God's purpose for the church and our singing? Every church musician needs to understand what we are doing when we sing and how that fits into God's bigger plan for his people. We'll also aim to apply the Biblical principles to your own experience and issues.

*The Ministry of Sound:* The single most important tools of the musician and sound operator are their ears. This session is about training your ears, and the practical implications of the church being called to hear God's word: spoken and sung. We will consider volume, balance, the critical mass of a space, how we play for different sized congregations, how to self-mix, ambient sound, and the complexity of relationships between musicians, sound guys and congregation.

*Music with Kids:* Ministry to children is such a key component of any church. We need to ensure that we don't fall into the trap of thinking that kids are just 'little adults'. In this workshop we'll discover how children's different needs lead to different approaches to singing together. Be prepared to get in touch with your inner-child, bring along a playful attitude and get ready for some 'hands-on' action as we consider singing with kids together.

*Music Admin & Copyright:* While often hidden and less glamorous, the role of administration, communication, and planning is nonetheless vital in effective music ministry. This workshop will explore the process of song management, planning, copyright and integrating with church leadership. Using a real-life church example we will navigate through the process, systems and tools that are easy to apply to any size church. Getting on top of the admin is often half the job!

*The Theology of the Gathering:* If church feels like we are gathering to receive information then we are doing it wrong. Because we are people, with bodies, and the things we do together at church shape who we are. This is what liturgy is all about. We participate in liturgies all the time - habits and little rituals which shape how we think of ourselves. As Christians we gather each week to celebrate a different identity. In this workshop we will consider the biblical reasons why we gather and what principles should guide how we put our services together. This workshop is for pastors, service leaders, and anyone who decides what happens in church.

*Creativity in Congregational Music:* Good ensemble playing requires understanding your place in the group and knowing what and how to play at the right time. But is there more we can do to craft our songs and services to creatively engage hearts and minds with the gospel? We'll look at the musical techniques for re-inventing songs, old and new; as well as thinking about our singing in relation to the Word, our space and visual media.

## **D. Registration**

For an in-house evening masterclass, we would ask that the host church manage the registration of delegates. If multiple churches are invited, Emu will manage registration via our website.

## **E. Marketing**

Effective marketing for these events happens when both Emu and the host work together to reach their own networks. For an in-house event, we recommend that the host church make attendance compulsory for those involved in the music ministry. We find that these events are most helpful and beneficial when most, if not all, people involved in the ministry are present.

For an open event including multiple churches, Emu will advertise through email marketing and targeted social media. The host should also aim to contact and provide marketing materials to any local churches. We will provide digital copies of posters and flyers to be printed and distributed by the host.

## **F. Merchandise**

We will provide a range of music and book resources to sell - chosen to compliment the material being taught and sung. We will normally be able to take payments in cash and card (requiring access to your WIFI).

## **G. Follow-up**

For an in-house Masterclass, we recommend that the host church organise an opportunity to debrief, clarify, plan and pray with their music team. One of the Emu team will also be in touch three months after the Masterclass to follow up.

For an open event, Emu will follow up delegates with an email including a short feedback survey, information on the songs that were sung across the day, further resources, and exclusive discounts to our online store.

# **2. Host requirements (what we need from you)**

## **A. Date**

Please do some research into any potential clashes with other conferences or church events in your area. For a mid week evening, please make sure it is an evening that doesn't clash with small groups or other ministries.

## **B. Finance**

We view our conferences as a partnership between us and you as the host. Our fee for a Masterclass is £100 per team member and any travel expenses reimbursed. We prefer the following financial models:

*Option 1:* Registrations happen through Emu, whereby the host underwrites the fee.

*Option 2:* Registrations are taken by the host, whereby the host returns to Emu the Masterclass fee. For an in-house training event, you may not wish to charge your church members, in which case this would be a ministry expense paid for by the church, and not through registration costs.

We will send an invoice after the event.

## **C. Venue Requirements**

Our expectations for the host venue include:

- a. A main meeting space with good quality PA system, microphones, good quality piano/digital piano, drum kit, bass amp, a projection system and all necessary leads, cables and stands.
- b. Suitably experienced people to operate both sound and visuals. (On occasion we may bring our own sound mixing person, although we would still require local assistance with the PA system.)
- c. 4 separate spaces (including main space) for running workshops. At least one extra keyboard available for one of these spaces is also helpful. These rooms and their capacities must be communicated to the Emu team so that the seminars can be allocated to the appropriate room size.
- d. Please could bottled water be provided.
- e. Tables for selling music and book resources, with a person available to help man the table. (see Merchandise below)
- f. WIFI

## **D. Masterclass Handouts**

Ordinarily we will print and provide a handout. There will be some cases where this is not possible and we will ask the host to organise printing and production.

## **E. Refreshments**

We ask that you provide refreshments such as tea, coffee, cold drinks/water and light snack food for delegates before the event. Please could you also provide bottled water for the Emu team.

## F. Volunteer schedule and tasks

It takes many people to run an event and we are very grateful for volunteers to help on the day. We need about 5 different people to help run the event:

- **1** person running **logistics and liaising** with the Emu team (ie. showing them where seminar rooms are, opening the building for rehearsals, helping with set up)
- **1** experienced **sound technician**
- **1** person to run **Powerpoint**
- **2** people to set up **refreshments** and be responsible for clean-up

## 3. Working together

Regular and clear communication always helps make a happy event! Normally, Liv Chapman ([liv@emumusic.com](mailto:liv@emumusic.com)) will deal with all the practical and logistical details of the Masterclass. You as the host will need to appoint a similar person. Email threads involving multiple people often mean that important details get missed. Closer to the event, we also provide a checklist to help both sides prepare for and meet the practical requirements.