

- Pastors
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CHOIRS: The Original Worship Band

THE ASSOCIATION OF song or singing with the praise and worship of The Holy is an eternal thing for sure. From the dateless past when only angelic beings sang God's praise, to its formation upon the lips of God's supreme creation, i.e., humanity, the song of the Lord is part of our spiritual DNA (*Psalms 8:2*). From warfare to Temple dedications, and just about everything in between, the worshiping choir was a vital part of the life and liturgy of God's people. After decades of decline, primarily due to their lack of use in modern recorded worship music, the choir is making a comeback as worship leaders discover afresh the power of utilizing this original Levitical resource. If you're not using a choir as part of your worship service, here are some thoughts that may jumpstart something new:

1) Choirs provide a place of ministry. Not everyone has a solo voice, so the choir becomes the perfect place to blend in and "let the redeemed of the Lord say so." The choir is real team ministry and the perfect place for people of all skill levels to be stretched and challenged musically. People want to serve and be used in the ministry—this is an important place for that to happen.

2) Choirs provide a special song. There is something about a "choir number" in a worship service. The congregation can be seated and receive as the choir ministers and testifies of God's greatness. Let's face it – sometimes its nice to just listen...to have the Word of God sung over you is powerful. This can become a key point of ministry

during your service. A choir number can be memorable.

3) Choirs can minister different types of music. A choir can minister a song that may not be the genre of music your congregation would sing. For instance, everyone loves a great gospel number, although it may not be your congregation's cup of tea to sing one, but that doesn't mean they wouldn't enjoy hearing one. A choir could sing a motet or a more liturgical piece that would be meaningful to the hearers. This also helps to expand the breadth of your music program and palette. Don't ever allow your congregation to think that God only likes one style of music.

4) Choirs can be multi-generational. While children's choirs and youth choirs are great, adult choirs are multi-generational. From youth to senior citizens, they can all participate and what a visual for those in the congregation to see the mix of ages. This also helps keep that generational divide from becoming a chasm of misunderstanding.

The worshiping choir is still en vogue—always has been—and can become a great source of blessing. *"The two choirs that gave thanks then took their places in the house of God; so did I" (Nehemiah 12:40).*

BEST PRACTICE

Tony Guerrero, Music Director at Saddleback Church tells me that they like to use choirs in the following ways: "We have two main adult choirs. Our Praise Choir handles our gospel music and plays two services a week and our Worship Choir does one weekend per month in the main services. They both do special events and are called on for various other services or worship nights. Once or twice per year, we do a men's choir, which is just a come-one-come-all thing."

DAVID M. EDWARDS (davidmedwards.com) is an award-winning songwriter, worship artist, author, and adjunct professor of worship at Regent University, School of Divinity. His new Christmas musical, *Gift of Love: A Contemporary Christmas Worship Experience* is available at Consumingworship.com.