



Petra for Pastors — Framework Highlights



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What Petra is

Petra is the worship team's runbook — the **mundane framework** (schedules, rehearsal rules, charts, patches, slides, gear care) settled once so musicians and tech are free to lead worship. "Petra is not a box, it is a skeleton" (Scope & Authority). It is generic: every church-specific value (names, clocks, tools, safeguarding links) lives in one fill-in page, Our Congregation.

Everything in it serves one sentence:

└ **Encourage the congregation to sing.** (Mission & Vision)

The service gives people an hour to attend to Someone besides themselves. Musical worship may be a distraction **from the world**; it must never be a distraction **from God**, and it is not about the people on the platform. If the room is watching a show, the team's instruction is: simplify, turn down, step back, re-center the lyric (Values). Craft removes avoidable obstacles; it does not manufacture God's presence.

What it governs — and what it does not

Petra governs	Petra does not govern
Team culture and expectations	Church employee handbook / HR
Musician, vocalist, tech procedures	Facility master calendar
Scheduling norms and swap rules	Doctrine — owned by pastors/elders
Rehearsal and service run-of-show standards	Protection / safeguarding policy — Petra adheres to yours and states a worship-ministry baseline
Music library, song selection, licensing awareness, chart conventions	Budget approval authority — follows church finance process
Equipment care owned by the worship/tech ministry	Artistic calling in the moment — dynamics, prayer, spontaneous response within the plan and pastoral covering
Onboarding paths; shared language	

Five habits that make it work

1. **Sunday starts midweek** — personal practice before rehearsal; a 90-minute group rehearsal that works every song and transition and ends with a full run
 2. **No prior rehearsal → no serve** (default) — band, vocals, **and** tech; exceptions are granted in advance, not assumed
 3. **Rehearse the way we serve** — house lyrics and confidence monitors run at midweek rehearsal, not only Sunday
 4. **One plan, published early** — the Song Selector proposes the set by a weekly deadline; the Director confirms (silence counts); the Worship Lead publishes keys and charts by a second deadline
 5. **Eyes up** — confidence monitors are the default, music stands the exception
- (Playbook · Rehearsal Standards · Lyrics & Stage Displays)

How songs are chosen

The Song Selection Policy is the part of Petra most directly under pastoral interest.

- **Six core criteria — every song passes all six:** biblically defensible theology · corporate-worship intent · congregational ownership · congregational singability · clear Christian confession · pastoral usefulness
- **We avoid** secular or generic love songs in the worship set, and the congregation singing in God's first-person voice. These are avoidances, not bans: **leadership — Director with pastoral oversight — may make a documented exception** (e.g. a Scripture chorus with a speaker cue). A **50-title rolling 12-month ceiling** keeps the repertoire deep rather than wide
- **Continuity and teaching:** at least one song carries over each week; one unfamiliar song per service, ~3 outings in 6–8 weeks; across the year the diet covers the whole Christian vocabulary (adoration to lament to hope)
- **Pastoral touchpoints:** theology-sensitive or disputed lyrics go to pastoral oversight before use; the new-song gate requires a line-by-line lyric review; the **annual repertoire review is done with pastoral oversight** to confirm doctrinal alignment and find gaps in the church's sung theology
- **Lifecycle:** Scout → Trial → Core → Rest → Archive (Song Lifecycle); register kept in the Annual Repertoire Register

Who owns what

Role	In one line
Director	Owns the ministry under the pastor; appoints the team leads; approves policy; accountable for the congregation's worship and the team's health (≈ worship pastor)
Worship Lead	Owns how it is played — keys, forms, charts, rehearsal, musical calls on Sunday (≈ music director); usually the Platform lead the band watches
Song Selector	Chooses what we sing and why; proposes the set; hands off to the Worship Lead
Tech Lead	Owns production standards and tech roster health
Band, vocals, FOH, monitors, media, lights, stream, stage	Each has a one-page charter in Roles

One person may wear several hats; each hat's must-dos still apply.

Where pastors are in the loop

Decision	Propose	Decide
Songs / setlist titles for a service	Song Selector (proposed set by deadline)	Director confirms; silence by the confirm-by time = confirmed
Keys, tempos, forms, arrangements	Worship Lead	Worship Lead (Director if sensitive)
Appoint the Director	Pastor	Pastor
Appoint Worship Lead, Song Selector, or Tech Lead	Director	Director (pastor consulted)
Change call times permanently	Director	Director + pastor (or delegate)
Exception to a song-selection avoidance	Song Selector / Director	Director with pastoral oversight , recorded
Major gear purchase	Tech Lead	Church finance / pastor process
One-week exception to a policy · edit a policy	Role owner · anyone	Director (or delegate) — logged in the changelog

Line of authority: Pastor → Director → team leads. The pastor has final say; responsibility and accountability for the congregation's worship rest with the Director. **Escalation:** section lead → Worship Lead / Tech Lead → Director → **pastor**; care and safety issues skip the chain (Scope & Authority).

On a Sunday: the Platform lead listens to the pastor for deviations; if the sermon or prayer extends, the band watches the Platform lead rather than inventing a concert. **Safety:** people first — any lead may stop the music for a person; the team adheres to your protection policy and has the designated reporter's name before serving (Safety & Protection · Incidents & Contingencies). Series notes and pastoral themes are the first input to each week's set.

The biblical baseline

Freedom in Form study (Jacob, the Levites, Ephesians 5 / Colossians 3) supplies the conviction behind the framework — a teaching draft, not doctrine; pastoral leadership owns final doctrinal language and is asked to review its citations.

Order does not manufacture spiritual freedom. Christ gives freedom, and the Spirit gives life. Faithful order can protect that freedom by removing avoidable confusion, distributing service, guarding the church's shared confession, and making room for the congregation to sing.

Safeguards the study places on Petra itself: Christ, not competence, gives access to God · Scripture judges the system · love governs freedom · order serves edification · **pastoral authority and operational authority are distinct** · exceptions must be possible and owned · the congregation's voice is evidence, not an idol.

Signals of health vs drift

Healthy: the congregation sings (primary signal) · transitions feel calm, Sunday feels shepherded · teammates know the plan before Sunday · new volunteers onboard without tribal knowledge. **Drifting:** the room is watching a show · only the platform sounds full · complexity only three people can run · policies that control rather than free.

How to ask for a change

Anyone may propose (open an issue or tell the Director); the Director decides; changes are logged in the Changelog (Contributing to Petra). **Where to look:** Playbook · Foundation · Music Library · Culture & Care · handouts for musicians, tech, and the song selector.