



Song Selector Quick Reference



theonize.github.io

The job in three lines

- You curate **what** we sing and **why** — theologically sound, pastorally timed, musically reachable for *this* room (Song Selector).
- The Worship Lead owns **how** — keys, forms, charts, rehearsal — published by the keys/charts deadline (Worship Lead).
- You **propose**; the Director **confirms** — silence by the confirm-by time counts as confirmed. After that only a named exception changes titles (Scope & Authority).

Success: the room recognizes enough of the diet to sing boldly; new songs are taught on purpose; Worship Lead and Media are not guessing titles the night before rehearsal. If you also wear the Worship Lead or Director hat, complete both charters.

Weekly rhythm

1. Pull series notes, calendar, pastoral themes
2. Draft the set (or a short menu) with an intentional arc — opener energy, response moment, closer
3. Review with the Director (pastor when a lyric is sensitive)
4. **Publish the proposed set by the weekly deadline**; it is fixed on confirmation (or silence past the confirm-by time); hand off to the Worship Lead for keys, forms, charts, tracks
5. Confirm Media has titles early enough to build the deck; flag anything new, track-heavy, or production-special to Worship Lead / Media / Tech Lead
6. After Sunday: keep, rework the teach, or rest — one line in the register

Rehearsal may amend keys, forms, arrangements, and cues; wholesale song replacement is an exception you or the Director lead, not a rehearsal habit (Rehearsal Standards).

Must before the Worship Lead locks rehearsal materials

- ☐ Proposed set published by the deadline and confirmed (or silence past the confirm-by time)
- ☐ Every title passes the policy and is in the rolling repertoire register
- ☐ At least one carryover from last week — or the Director exception is noted with a reason
- ☐ New-to-us songs flagged with teach intent; landmines called out (range, complex form, sensitive lyric)
- ☐ Rough flow notes if no full planner doc

Use the Setlist Worksheet; it carries the policy checklist and the repertoire count.

Six core criteria — every song passes all six

#	Criterion	Question
1	Biblically defensible theology	Faithful to Scripture in context; nothing the church must excuse or privately reinterpret?
2	Corporate-worship intent	Made for the gathered church to sing together, not to hear performed?
3	Congregational ownership	Can the gathered body truthfully say these words together?
4	Congregational singability	Can an untrained voice on row 12 sing it in the published key — melody, rhythm, range, repetition, phrasing?
5	Clear Christian confession	Unmistakably the God and gospel of the Christian faith — not generic transcendence or romance?
6	Pastoral usefulness	What work of worship and formation does it help this congregation do now?

Plus: repertoire fit (adds a function, not a duplicate) and team stewardship (this week's roster can deliver it). Source: Song Selection Policy.

What we avoid, and the rules around it

Rule	Detail
50-title rolling ceiling	No more than 50 distinct titles sung in the trailing 12 months — seasonal titles count; Rest/Archive titles count until they age out; “resting” a song does not free a slot today. A maximum, not a target

Rule	Detail
We avoid secular / generic love songs	In the worship set — a lyric that is only Christian once the leader explains it. Walk-in/transition music is a separate programming call
We avoid singing in God's voice	The room singing continuously as God ("I, the Lord, say..."). Sung Scripture with a clear speaker cue is a leadership call
Week-to-week continuity	Carry at least one song from the preceding service; meaningful repeat over token repeat; Director may waive — record why
Theology-sensitive lyrics	Go to pastoral oversight before use
Exceptions	Director may grant a one-service exception to the defaults. The two avoidances are not the Director's alone: Director with pastoral oversight may make a documented exception. Record every exception on the worksheet; if it recurs, revise the policy openly

Add your church's own "we allow / we avoid" rows in Our Congregation so the gray areas are owned locally.

Repertoire-shaping defaults

1. **One unfamiliar song at a time** per service
2. **Teach through repetition** — plan the next uses before the first; ~3 outings in 6–8 weeks
3. **Known songs carry new songs** — most of each set is already owned by the room
4. **Prefer durable** over newly released or currently popular
5. **Cover the whole Christian vocabulary** across the year — adoration, creation, incarnation, cross, resurrection and reign, Spirit, confession, assurance, thanksgiving, lament, petition, mission, communion, baptism, hope
6. **Balance pronouns** — teach the church to sing *we*, address one another, tell what God has done
7. **Let text govern treatment; rest songs on purpose; evaluate fruit, not applause**
8. **Licensing and lyric accuracy** still apply (Licensing)

New-song gate (before a title enters Trial)

Record in the Annual Repertoire Register:

- Six criteria confirmed in writing · line-by-line lyric review with Scripture references and concerns
- Fits under the 50-title ceiling · named function the repertoire lacks
- Congregation-friendly key and teach strategy agreed with the Worship Lead · second and third outings scheduled
- In the licensed catalog (or rights cleared) · Director approval; pastoral review if theology-sensitive

Lifecycle & review rhythm

Scout → Trial → Core → Rest → Archive (Song Lifecycle). You own what enters and which titles this week; Worship Lead owns arrangement/rehearsal; Media/Tech Lead owns support; keep/rework/rest is a joint call after 2–3 outings.

Cadence	Do
Per service	Carryover present or exception recorded; each title's stage known; every title in the register
Quarterly	Count titles sung in the trailing 12 months; review participation, over-repetition, neglected themes, range, season; move titles deliberately
Annually	Full repertoire review with pastoral oversight; doctrinal alignment and gaps in sung theology; publish next year's core list with room under the ceiling

Handoffs

Director — proposed set, exceptions with reasons, register count · **Worship Lead** — confirmed titles, teach intent, landmines · **Service Planner** — where songs sit · **Media** — titles and forms early · **Tech Lead** — choir, orchestra, tracks, guests.

Where to look

Need	Page
Charter, policy, lifecycle, who decides	Scope & Authority · Song Selector · Song Selection Policy · Song Lifecycle
Templates · keys, charts, licensing	Setlist Worksheet · Annual Repertoire Register · Charts, Keys & Tempos · Licensing