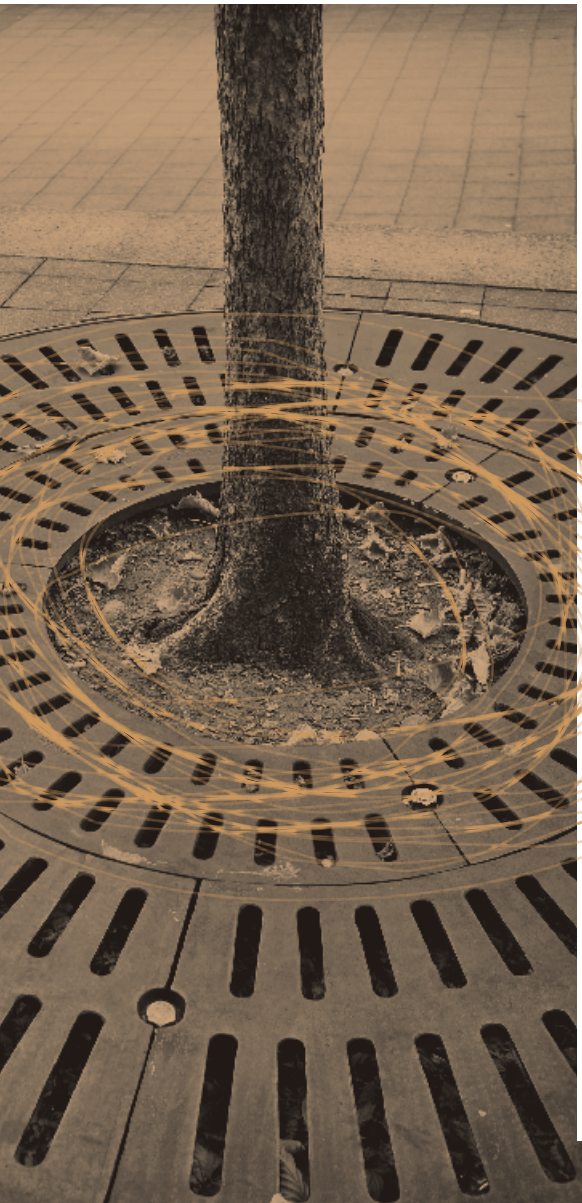
For Worship Leaders Only is a straight-talking, heart-to-heart formation section specifically written by worship leaders for worship leaders. Each guest author has an open forum to share their passion on a topic, and to challenge their peer worship leaders with an important idea.



Editor's note: Brandon McCoy is the drummer of Autumn In Repair, and had this to say to both musicians and worship leaders.

Every Saturday night Garrison Keillor, famed radio host and storyteller, invites us into a world where "all the women are strong, all the men are good looking and all the children are above average." This town, affectionately named Lake Wobegon, is an archetype of small town in America, filled with proud residents who raise their children in church, work hard, and enjoy their beautiful surroundings in perfect harmony with the world. It's a place where things seem to always work out, no matter how convoluted any situation may be in the process.

I often think a worship team would run much more smoothly in Lake Wobegon. No guitar players shredding. No drummers' "interpretation" of a worship song throwing off the bass player, which throws off the keyboard player, which makes the guitar player's head explode, which train-wrecks the final song of the service, which makes the parking lot a grid-lock, which makes your Monday meeting with the Senior Pastor a barrel of laughs.

In Lake Wobegon, you see, none of that happens. The musicians show up early on Sunday morning because they want to run the new song an extra time before service. The guitar players are okay with not taking a solo on every song. The bass player is always locked in with the kick drum. The drummer always plays under control, even on the fast songs. The whole band plays to a click track,



For Worship Leaders Only: Leading In Lake Wobegon

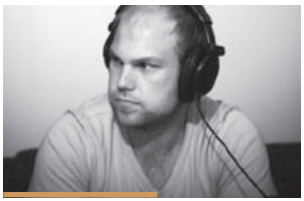
BRANDON MCCOY

and they all thank you for your excellent leadership.

The Lake Wobegon scenario may not be as far off as it seems. It is possible for you to have a smoothly run worship team. For some of you, you already have that and are happy as clams. As a drummer on a worship team, in both volunteer and paid positions, I can say with certainty that if you stick to your guns, we'll give in eventually. Keep in mind that in most cases, we spend our entire youth and young adulthood getting as good as we can at what I call "useless drums." We then come to church ready to impress only to find out that we will be using approximately 25% of our skill to best serve the song. That's a hard pill for us to swallow!

We need to be convinced and constantly reminded that we are in a servant role in the church. We need to be praised for what we bring to the table, but corralled by our heart to serve. As a worship leader, you can gently and lovingly navigate the waters of affirming our out-of-control playing and telling us it's not needed – simply by instilling the spirit of servanthood. Remind us of, and model for us, the main point of leading worship: to serve others. You'll be surprised at how much more you can do with a mediocre drummer whose heart is to serve both you and the church, than an excellent drummer whose main objective is to "wow" the room with his chops.

The key to a worship team in Lake Wobegon? Servant heart first; musical ability second.



BRANDON MCCOY is the drummer and one of the songwriters for Autumn In Repair. He has also toured extensively with Jeremy Riddle and for various Vineyard Music USA worship events. Brandon, his wife Amanda and son Ewan live in Kansas City, MO and serve locally at the Vineyard Church.