

Master Song List:

Here at Community of Faith, we get to make decisions for One Church with five locations. One being the Master Song List. The purpose of the Master Song List is to keep a unified worship experience across all campuses. We are *One Church* singing with *One Voice* and the MSL (*Master Song List*) keeps us in that vein.

When making the setlist for the Sunday Morning Experience, we are pulling songs from the MSL (45-50 songs). With this requirement, there are exceptions to this:

- Tags
- COF Original Songs
- Special songs requested by your Campus Pastor

Setlist Guidelines (best practices)

- Aim for a 20-minute set on Sundays, give or take 2-3 minutes.
- 70-30 Rule: At least 70% of the set should be songs that the congregation knows and can engage with, 30% may be newer songs - all from the Master Setlist
- It's always good to include at least one "Old Faithful" song in the set – songs that are tried and true and will without a doubt engage the congregation. These songs can vary from campus to campus and even leader to leader.
- Be aware of the team – play to their strengths and choose songs that they can pull off.
- Choose songs in similar keys to keep the transitions smooth.

1. The Opener Matters.

The opening song sets the tone for the entire service. Avoid "sluggish" starts. The MSL songs are rated 1-5 based on energy level – 1 being slow and 5 being fast. *Aim for a '3-5' on a 5-point scale to open your set.* You can get creative on how to do your openers such as playing the progression of the chorus of "Who Else" before the first verse to open a set.

2. The Flow Matters.

Envision the "whole picture." Make the set as seamless as possible. Does the set feel like one continuous journey? Or a series of starts and stops? Keep in mind song keys, tempo, themes, and mood. Spend time rehearsing the transitions. If need be, attach scripture or a story to a song to elevate engagement. If possible, "sandwich" newer or less familiar songs between 2 familiar songs.

Some Best Practices

- Tie songs together with the same or related key. Use the circle of fifths as a guide.

- Be intentional about breaks or pauses.
- When jumping directly into a different key, think about ending of one and intro of the next.
- Tie songs together with common theological/spiritual themes

3. Your Team Matters

Know who they are and know their skill level. Pick and arrange songs in a way that capitalizes on their strengths and minimizes weaknesses.

4. Dynamics Matter

Think about the overarching dynamic of your set. Where are its hills and valleys? Does it stay too low or high for a long time? Is it extremely bumpy?

We all have favorite moments in songs, so what are we doing with the rest of the set to make those moments shine? How do we create anticipation for those moments?

Consider having a song on standby that your team is prepared for in the event you want to transition into an additional song.

As mentioned before, tags are a great way to articulate a response, as well as help create dramatic and dynamic moments in the set.

The two easiest places to put a tag into a set is to do something soft and intimate before your third song (this is a good place to throw in hymns or throwback songs), or something dramatic and triumphant on the back of the third song.

Circles of Fifths

- When thinking through transitions, the circle of fifths becomes very helpful when you know how to use it!
- Let's say your first song is in the key of C, your "safe keys" to transition to are the two to the left and the two to the right of C. The other keys create a spooky/wonky transition that is not musically tasteful.
- This goes for any key. Take the key of B: your safe transition keys are Gb, Db, E, and A.
- Keep this graph in consideration when building your setlist

