

HCC WORSHIP — Ideal Qualities & Best Practices

Electric Guitar

Overview

The electric guitarist adds texture, color, and dynamic energy to the worship team. They complement the rhythm section and acoustic instruments while enhancing the overall sound with riffs, chordal support, or ambient effects. The electric guitar should serve the song, staying tasteful and supporting the congregation's worship experience rather than drawing attention to itself.

Sound Quality

Tone Expectations: Clear and balanced, able to sit well in the mix without overpowering vocals or keys. Use of overdrive, delay, reverb, or modulation pedals should be intentional, controlled, and dynamic. Tone should match the energy of the song—clean for intimate sections, textured or driven for higher-energy moments. While a 1 to 1 tone match for each song is not required, if you can pull it off go for it! Certain songs have clear parts that should be played, while other songs have more freedom to play whatever is needed.

Gear & Settings: Pedals/Multieffect boards that run directly into a di box are preferred, however we can mic amps if needed. Mic'ed amps need to play under a certain volume level since we run a quiet stage. Songs vary in tone and style, but should keep a consistent volume limit; the loudest part of each song should be around the same volume.

Volume & Dynamics: Adjust playing intensity to support the song's dynamics. Layer chords, riffs, and lead lines subtly; avoid competing with vocals or key melodic elements. Swells and ambient playing during quiet parts help fill the sound. Full chords should be played in the biggest dynamic moments.

Playing Style

Musical Approach: Follow chord charts, arrangements, and song dynamics. Use clean chordal support, light riffs, or ambient textures during verses. Lead lines and solos should be tasteful, sparing, and harmonically appropriate. Use effects strategically to enhance the song rather than dominate it. Electric guitar fills a lot of sonic space, and tends to be a more prominent instrument, so what you play matters. Use discretion and taste!

Consistency: Play parts reliably from rehearsal to service. Keep pedal settings the same for each service and play the same as much as you can.

Adaptability: Be ready to adjust chord voicings, pedal settings, or lead lines to better fit the song if needed. Rehearsal is the time to make any needed changes if what you practiced isn't working out.

Team Behaviors

Preparation: Electric players are expected to show up to rehearsal with all of their gear they plan to use on Sunday. They should know their parts well and be aware of what is needed for their role that week (i.e. capos, pedals, slides, ect.). They should know when to switch settings and plan out their transitions.

Rehearsals: Electric players should pay attention to song structures and make notes when changes are made. Playing between songs is discouraged and fills the stage with unnecessary noise.

Watching tutorials, and/or using Worship Online to dial in tones and parts is highly recommended.