

MY CONGREGATION ISN'T SINGING. WHAT DO I DO?

Servant leadership means we must facilitate worship and assist others in interacting with God. Sometimes, when we feel our congregation is not singing and interacting with the music, we can get frustrated in searching for a possible answer. The truth is, we can make a number of small changes or decisions to encourage and support better congregational singing.

Keep the volume of your worship team in check.

A person in the congregation should feel they are a participant, not just an observer. They should be able to hear themselves and those around them, not just the two or three people singing into a microphone.

Choose music that your congregation sings well.

If you are only using pieces that you like, but the congregation is not engaged in worship, the song choice needs to be adjusted.

Be discerning as you introduce new music.

If you only sing the same select songs over and over again, congregations may lose interest. It is important to introduce new music at a rate that your congregation is comfortable learning.

Pick appropriate keys for congregations to sing.

Be sure to pick keys that are in a comfortable singing register for both male and female voices, as well as age range.

Be sure to make the melody clear to hear.

Limit over-embellishing the music. This distracts from the words and melody. Make it singable.

Be an encourager.

Ask yourself, am I leading the congregation into the song or just expecting them to sing it? Stop encouraging the culture of singers versus non-singers. Anyone can sing!

Use long instrumental breaks with caution.

While a well-timed instrumental solo can be effective, if it is used too often, your congregation may not be responsive and may lose interest. This may make them feel isolated from the worship time.

Have the instrumentation drop out occasionally.

Allow the congregation to hear their voices singing together. It builds unity as a worshipping community.

Give the congregation the music.

Project music onto the screen, like a lead sheet for example, or print it off and give it to them. Projecting only the words doesn't teach people how to sing. They have to guess at the melodic line and what comes next.

**While these strategies may be effective, you need to be patient.
Changing habits is a process that requires effort, time and dedication.
You can't expect success overnight.**