

# THE VERY IMPORTANT JOB OF CHURCH ACCOMPANIST

## DEFINITION OF “ACCOMPANY”

- To supplement something
- To provide musical backing
- “. . . In honor preferring one another.” Romans 12:10

## WHO’S THE LEADER?

The soloist is the “boss”

- “Where he or she leads, you must follow.”
- Tempo
- Dynamics
- Introduction/Interlude
  - Communicate planned introduction and interlude with the soloist

## STYLE

- Don’t let the accompaniment detract from the soloist
- What determines the accompaniment?
  - The soloist or leader
  - The message
  - The purpose
  - The service (Prelude, Last Special, etc.)
- Make sure the accompaniment matches the style of the song
- A little improvising is better than more
- Don’t “mess” with the written accompaniment (i.e. “The Holy City”)
- Keep your accompaniment going even if the soloist stumbles
- Include the organ or keyboard when it is appropriate.
- Communicate before the service concerning who is doing the walk-up music, prelude, interlude

## ENHANCE THE MESSAGE

- “Do you express the composer’s thought and mode?”
- “Do you express what you feel or wish?” (Listen to a recording of the service)

- “Whatever it is, by all means express something!”
  - “Develop your weak points, the strong points will take care of themselves” – *Joseph Lhevinne*

#### COMMUNICATION

- Communicate walk-up music, prelude and interlude prior to service.
- Don’t “surprise” your pastor/director. Communicate the plan ahead of time, i.e. preludes, specials
- Discuss expectations for the upcoming service/program with pastor/director
- Schedule practice times with the soloists/ensembles if you are a beginner or require more time than is available before service
- Ask for the music ahead of time . . . encourage them to decide earlier
- Just say “no” when you cannot properly prepare

#### PRAY

- “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.”  
Ecclesiastes 9:10
- “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”  
James 5:16