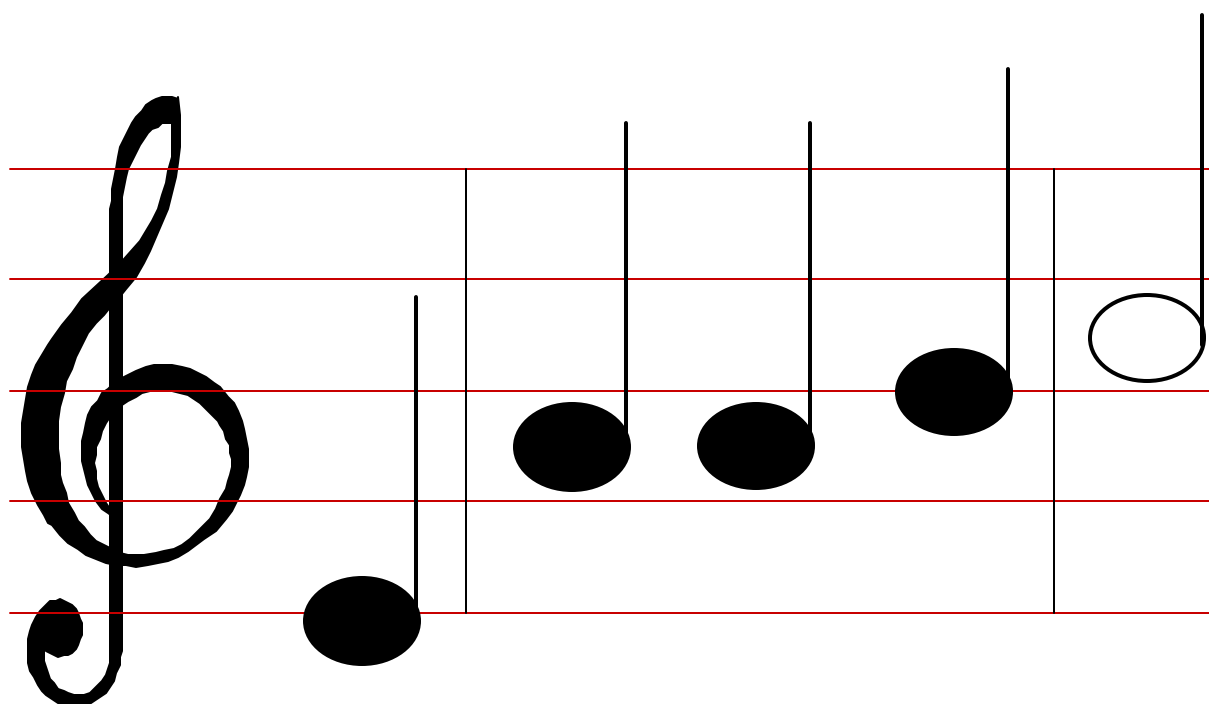


Songleading

for Anyone



Mark Varney, Crystal Lake, Illinois, Church of Christ
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Biblical Basis for Singing

- Ephesians 5:19
 - "Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord"
- Colossians 3:16
 - "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."
- Songleader authorized by necessary inference
 - To sing we must have someone to start the song

Singing in the Bible

- After crossing the Red Sea (Ex. 15:1-21)
- After defeating oppressive enemies
 - Song of Deborah (Judges 5:1-31)
- Songs of David (Psalms)
- Dedication of the Temple (2 Chr. 5:12-13)
- Last Supper (Mark 14:26)
- Paul and Silas in prison (Acts 16:25)
- The New Song in Heaven (Rev. 14:3)



Qualities of a Songleader

- Faithful Christian
- Knowledge of the Bible
- Desire to serve
- Ability to sing
 - Not off key
 - Medium range
 - Sense of tempo
 - Great voice not necessary
- Some knowledge of music
- Pleasing personality
- Humble
 - Draw attention to God, not to yourself

Preparation

- Prayer
- Don't select songs at last minute
- Song selection methods
 - 1. Theme
 - ▶ Examples: Redemption, Faith, Cross, Heaven, etc.
 - 2. Coordinate with lesson
 - 3. Miscellaneous
- Songs should reinforce the rest of the worship service



Selecting Songs

- Opening Song
 - Lively song
 - Song of praise to God
 - Call to worship song

- Songs Before Prayer
 - Generally slower, quieter
 - Could be about prayer

- Song before Lesson
 - Lively song
 - Have congregation stand
 - ▶ Standing is appropriate at other times also
 - ▶ Should generally stand for songs about "standing"

Selecting Songs

- Invitation song
 - Should encourage response; use index
 - Some songs are not appropriate here
 - ▶ Don't sing "Oh Why not Tonight?" in the morning worship
 - ▶ Complicated songs may distract from the message

- Song before Lord's Supper
 - Focus on Christ and our response to Him; use index on "Lord's Supper", "Cross", "Atonement", "Calvary", etc.

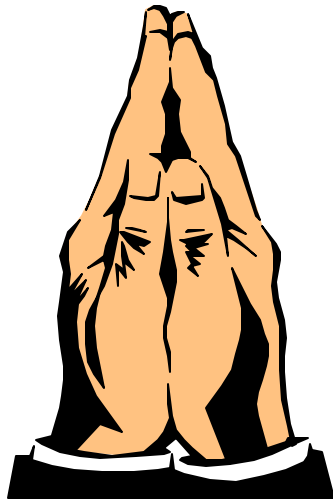
- Song before Contribution
 - Blessings, thankfulness

- Closing Song
 - Encouraging song; use index

Before services start

- Post Numbers
 - Check them after posting them
- Verify who is leading prayers
 - Write it down!
 - Write down any other special events in the order of worship
- Get a drink of water / use restroom

- Pray!



Conducting the Song Service

- Announce numbers twice
- Be sure to announce the song of encouragement before the sermon
- Start the invitation song as soon as possible after the preacher is done
- Sing Out!
- Indicate on your fingers if a verse is to be skipped
 - May announce prior to song also
- Clearly announce prayers, Lord's supper, introduce preacher, etc.,
 - Speak up!

Conducting the Worship and Song Service

- Stay at the pulpit
 1. Pulpit presence may avoid potential problems

- Say "Be Seated, Please"

- If you goof up...
 1. Keep on going; skip verse/verses if it's really bad
 2. Restart song - tough for inexperienced songleader
 3. Stop and go on to the next song
 4. Remember, the congregation is rooting for you and loves you! Also, it's the meaning of the song that's important.

Responses to the Invitation

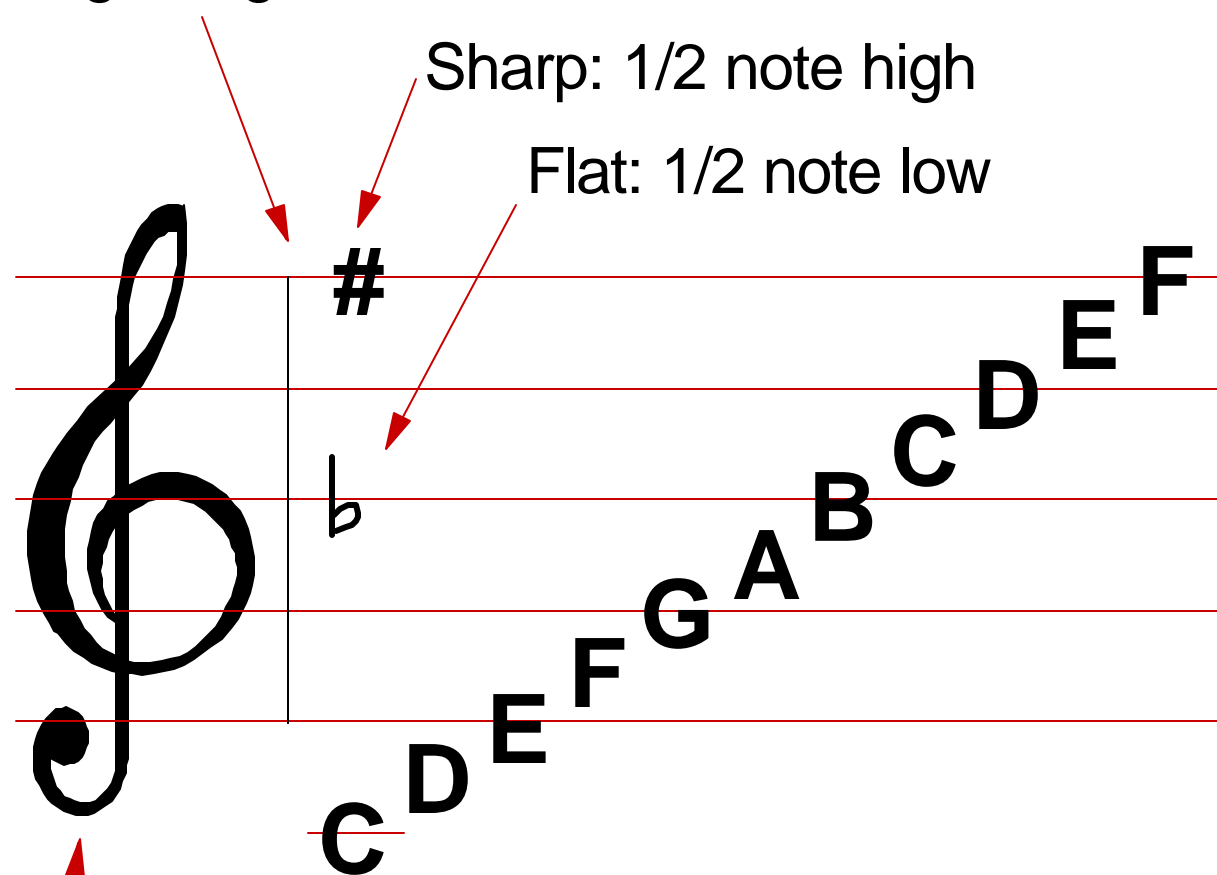
- The songleader is generally "in charge" during a baptism
- Sing until ready for the baptism
 - Have someone in the front cue you when ready for the baptism
 - Finish just the verse you're on
- Sing until the new Christian returns to the assembly
- Ideally, have songs written down ahead of time
 - Appropriate songs about Baptism, Faith, Trust, etc.
 - Use index under "Baptism", "Faith", "Consecration", etc.

Technical Aspects of Songleading

- Technical ability is secondary
 - God wants men that love Him, obey Him, and who understand and mean what they're singing
- Pitch
- Tempo
- Hand Beats
 - Not essential, but helps songleader and congregation stay together
 - Practice!
 - Distracting if not done in correct tempo
 - You can be a good songleader without hand beats if you're uncomfortable with beating time

Music Fundamentals

Beginning of measure; hand downbeat



Clef

Spaces: FACE

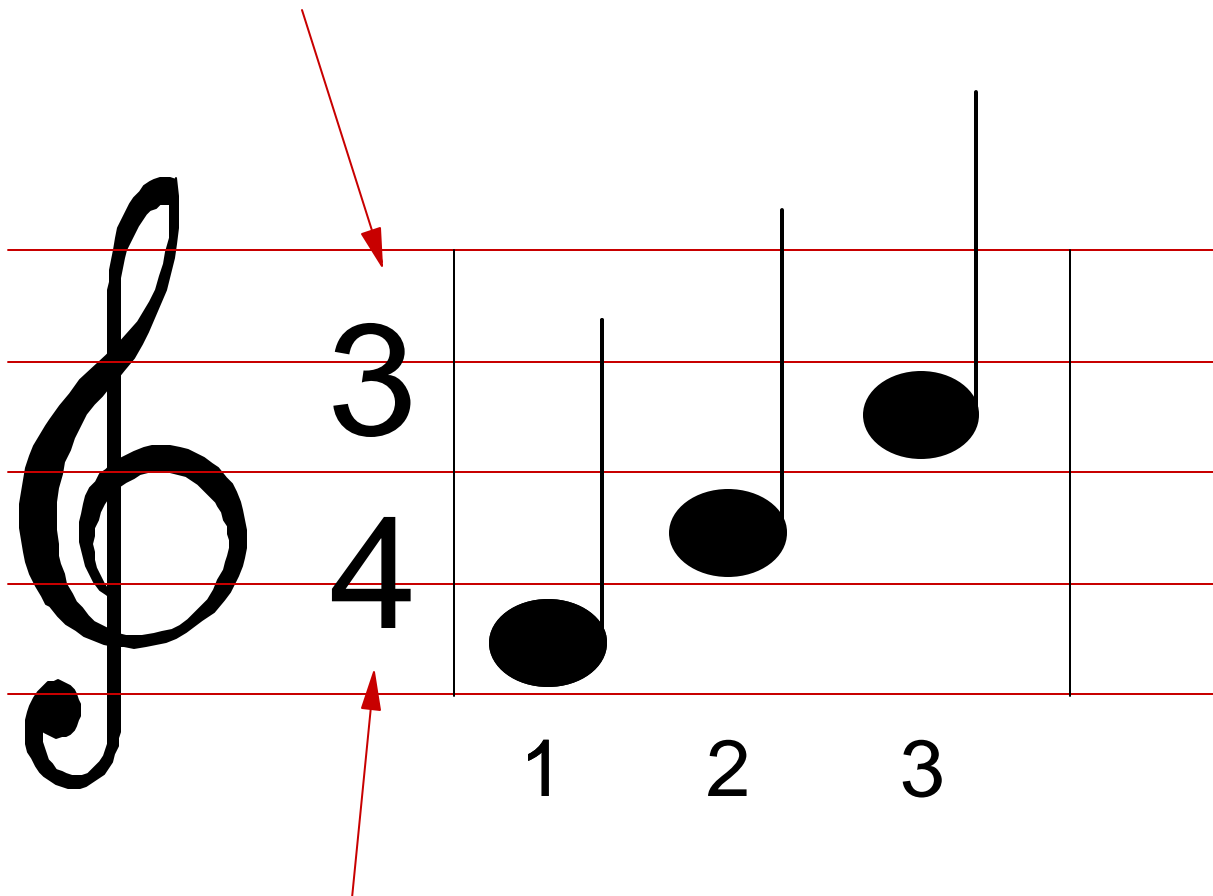
Lines: EGBDF

(Every Good Boy Deserves Favor) or

(Every Good Boy Does Fine)

Music Fundamentals

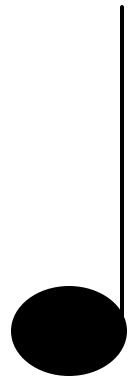
beats to a measure



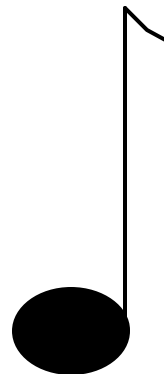
Type of note that gets one beat
(quarter note in this case)

Music Fundamentals

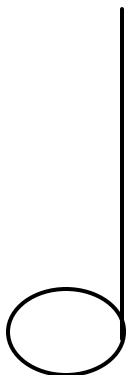
Common Notes



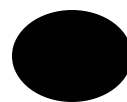
Quarter note
1 beat



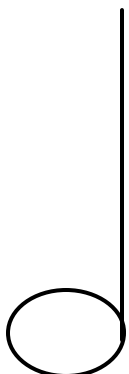
Eighth note
1/2 beat



Half note
2 beats



Whole note
4 beats



- Dotted note**
 - Adds 1/2 of the note's value
3 beats = 2 + 1/2 times 2 for half note

Getting the right pitch



- A pitch pipe is recommended
 - Find the first note of the song
 - Blow the first note *softly*
 - If necessary, *quietly* hum the first note or several notes, then start song
 - Alternate method: find key of song
- Without a pitch pipe
 - 1. High first note, start high; low first note, start low
 - 2. Hum a few notes, raise or lower
 - 3. Find highest part of song, hum as high as is comfortable for a few notes, start
 - Most men lead too low w/o a pitchpipe
- Consider leading the song 1/2 note low if there is a high E or F
 - Most people complain the song is too high if the right pitch is used

Getting the right tempo

- Don't drag songs
- Congregation tends to slow down
 - Strong voice can keep tempo up
 - Pick up tempo at start of next verse
 - Sometimes the congregation will "win"; don't fight it too much. It's the words and thoughts of the heart that are really important, and trying to win a losing tempo battle will distract from the worship taking place
- Don't sing so fast that the congregation can't keep up
- Some songs should be sung slowly
 - "'Tis Midnight and on Olive's Brow"
- Some songs should be sung faster
 - "I Know that my Redeemer Lives"

Using Your Hands



- Hand beats not required, but they help the leader and congregation maintain the same tempo
- Use a preliminary beat
- Hand goes down at the beginning of a measure line
- End the song and a "hold" (☺) with a hand cutoff
- Indicate the verse number
 - Be sure to indicate the verse number if you're skipping a verse
 - ▶ May also announce before song
 - Some songleaders prefer to indicate every verse number

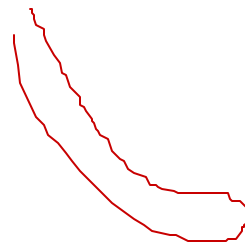
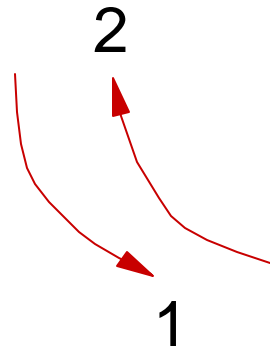
Hand Beats

Time

Hand
Movement

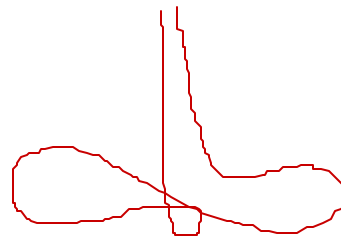
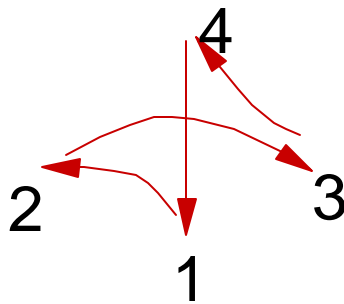
Actual Smoothed
Motion (from
leader's view)

2 2 6 6
2, 4, 8, 4



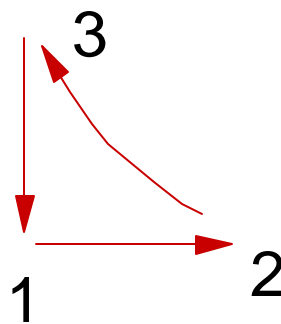
down and out,
up and in

4 4 12
4, 2, 8



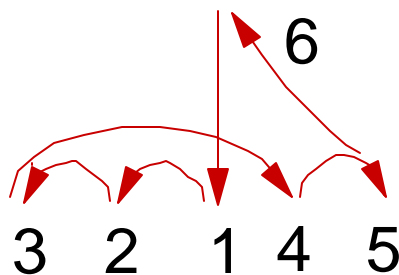
down, in,
out, up

3 3 9 6 6
4, 8, 8 8, 4



down,
out, up

6 6
8, 4



(seldom used)

Miscellaneous

- Maintain some eye contact
 - Don't stare at book all of the time
- Limit "ad-libbing"
 - Singing chorus twice, different tunes, changing tempo, all verses then chorus
 - Some variety is refreshing; too much is distracting
 - Clearly announce ahead of time if possible
 - Discuss anything really different well ahead of time with the elders

Miscellaneous

- Limit comments
 - An occasional brief comment is fine, but let the preacher do the preaching

- Save new songs for Sunday p.m., Wednesday, informal singing
 - Get a core group to know the song first
 - May have to briefly explain difficult songs, but don't make it a clinic

- Don't skip too many verses of the invitation song

- Draw attention to God, not to your singing, leading, or speaking