



How Can an iPod* Help Me Lead Worship?

There will never be a substitute for really good, live musicians leading worship.

But sometimes your band and singers just aren't available. Take your Thursday night home group, for instance. Or your women's Bible study, your prison outreach or your mission trip. And what about family worship?

Or maybe you're a small church that doesn't have a worship band yet. Or maybe, you're a large church and you want to give your musicians some time off from Sunday morning.

Pre-recorded worship music can work just fine, for large groups or small. Here are some ideas to help make it work.

1. Load your iPod with *congregational friendly worship songs*.

Two considerations are :

- 1) are the songs in keys that ordinary people can sing?
- 2) are the recorded arrangements too complicated to sing along with?

Much of today's worship music is recorded to feature an artist's version of the song. The arrangements are made to work for radio play, but not congregational use. As a result, songs are often recorded in keys that fit the artist's vocal range, but not ordinary people's.

Recommendation: Get the 164 songs & hymns collection called the [iPod Starter Kit](#) from WholeHearted Worship. All these recordings are

congregational friendly. (Also, a beginner to intermediate guitarists can play along with most of these songs. This will help develop your worship leading and guitarist skills.)

Create a general playlist in iTunes for all the songs that you would use for congregational worship. You might call it ***Congregational Worship Songs***. This will provide your list of songs when you get ready to plan a worship set.

Now, as you hear *congregational friendly* songs that you like, add them to the ***Congregational Worship Songs*** playlist.

If you have local songs - songs that you or someone in your church has written - that are meaningful to your congregation, that you want to add to the list, see if some of your local musicians can help you make recordings.**

2. From the general playlist, choose the songs you want to use in a particular service or gathering, then create a Playlist with those songs.

You might want to have a couple different Playlists. Maybe one for your home group and one for Sunday morning - you could call them **Thursday Night Group & Sunday AM** (or whatever). Each week, delete the songs from the Playlist and select your next set. (Deleting from the Playlist doesn't remove the songs from your player.)

3. To make it work.

To make it work, you'll need a speaker and some way to remotely control the start and stopping of

the songs. If you're using the iPod in your sanctuary, you will just need to use a headphone cable to plug into your house system. If you're using the iPod for a smaller meeting, a portable speaker will do. There is a great variety of iPod-compatible speakers to choose from with prices ranging from \$150 to \$300.

Small group or large, it will be convenient to have the ability to remotely control the songs. In your sanctuary, your sound guy can start or stop the songs. In a small group, your iPod-compatible portable speaker may be equipped with a remote controller. If not, you will need an iPod dock that you can access remotely. Apple sells one for \$49.

Now, what about presenting the words for the songs? In your larger facility, you probably already have a solution. In the smaller settings, consider using a laptop and television screen or video monitor. You could also connect your laptop to a projector to display the songs on a wall or screen. Otherwise, you'll need to create printed songs sheets.

5. Now it's time to worship.

So, your *Portable Worship Team* is ready for action. Your iPod is loaded with great worship songs, you've prayerfully chosen the songs and put them in the Playlist for today's gathering. You've passed out the song sheets (or have someone ready to project the words electronically).

It's now time to call your group to worship, start the first song... and enter into the wonderful presence of the Lord!

* Although we are using an iPod and iTunes for examples, any digital music player and software that can create and play playlists will work. Currently an 8 GB iPod costs \$149 and can hold up to 2,000 songs!

** If you need profession help to create recordings of your original songs, WholeHearted Worship can help. For more information, contact them by email at songs@wholeheartedworship.com.