

Four Mile Church Pillars

Pillar 4. Praise and Adore God (praise/expressive/joy)

- a. FMC is committed to taking our next steps towards Christ together through expressive praise and adoration
- b. FMC is a church full of joy: praise opportunities must promote joy-filled expressions radiating from a grateful heart
- c. FMC is devoted to the praise and adoration of God with words, music, song, & actions as a central part of our worship
- d. FMC holds singing practice sessions to help people learn how to praise through song
- e. FMC selects songs of praise that people know & can sing;
- f. FMC selects songs tied to central messages from Scripture/sermons & fit within a Scripturally based framework
- g. FMC has strong singers dispersed throughout the congregation; strong singers join rehearsals so they are prepared
- h. FMC uses lighting wisely to promote context, mood, and focus; images complement lyrics, message, and tone
- i. FMC is focused on encouraging genuine praise by eliminating performances and individual distractions
- j. FMC ensures a high volume of air exchange: fresh, clean, fragrant - helps us associate with the joy we are expressing
- k. FMC promotes praise opportunities through formal and casual expressions using indoor & outdoor venues
- l. FMC incorporates a wide range of music expressions in its corporate worship

Relevant Scripture

1. Rom 12: 1-2 (The Message), So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

2. Acts 2:42-47, And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

3. Rom 12:3-8, For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

4. 1 Cor 12: 27-31, Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

5. Eph 4: 11-16, And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

6. John 4:24, God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.
7. Psalm 150:6, Let everything that has breath praise the Lord. Praise the Lord.
8. Psalm 103:1, Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.
9. 1 Chronicles, 29:11, Yours, Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head overall.
10. Psalm 68:4-5, Sing to God, sing in praise of his name, extol him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before him—his name is the Lord. A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.
11. Romans 11:36, For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever! Amen.
12. Psalm 105:1, Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done.
13. Psalm 47:1-2, Clap your hands, all peoples! Shout to God with loud songs of joy! For the Lord, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.

Reformed Theological Tenets

1. ECO Tenets: The triune nature of God is the first great mystery of the Christian faith. With Christians everywhere, we worship the only true God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – who is both one essence and three persons. God is infinite, eternal, immutable, impassible, and ineffable. He cannot be divided against Himself, nor is He becoming more than He has been, since there is no potential or becoming in Him. He is the source of all goodness, all truth and all beauty, of all love and all life, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. The three persons are consubstantial with one another, being both coeternal, and coequal, such that there are not three gods, nor are there three parts of God, but rather three persons within the one Godhead. The Son is eternally begotten from the Father, and the Spirit proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son. All three persons are worthy of worship and praise.
2. ECO Tenets: Living in obedience to the Word of God Progress in holiness is an expected response of gratitude to the grace of God, which is initiated, sustained, and fulfilled by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. The first response of gratitude is prayer, and the daily discipline of prayer – both individually and together – should mark the Christian life. The life of prayer includes praise to God for His nature and works, sincere confession of our sin, and intercession for the needs of those we know and for the needs of the world.
3. ECO Tenets: God further created human beings with the capacity for relationship with Him, with His law written on our hearts so that we had the ability to worship Him in love and obey Him by living holy lives. Since the fall, our natural tendency is to hate God and our neighbor, to worship idols of our own devising rather than the one true God.
4. ECO Tenets: As we practice the discipline of regular self-examination and confession, we are especially guided by the Ten Commandments. We therefore hold one another accountable to: 1. worship God alone, living all of life to His glory, renouncing all idolatry and all inordinate loves that might lead us to trust in any other help; 2. worship God in humility, being reticent in either describing or picturing God, recognizing that right worship is best supported not by our own innovative practices but through the living preaching of the Word and the faithful administration of the Sacraments; 3. eliminate from both speech and thought any blasphemy, irreverence, or impurity; 4. observe the Sabbath as a day of worship and rest, being faithful in gathering with the people of God; 5. give honor toward those set in authority over us and practice mutual submission within the community of the church; 6. eradicate a spirit of anger, resentment, callousness, violence, or bitterness, and instead cultivate a spirit of gentleness, kindness, peace, and love; recognize and honor the image of God in every human being from conception to natural death. 7. maintain chastity in thought and deed, being faithful within the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman as established by God at the creation or embracing a celibate life as established by Jesus in the new covenant; 8. practice right stewardship of the goods we have been given, showing charity to those in need and offering generous support of the Church and its ministries; 9. pursue truth, even when such pursuit is costly, and defend truth when it is challenged, recognizing that truth is in order

to goodness and that its preservation matters; 10. resist the pull of envy, greed, and acquisition, and instead cultivate a spirit of contentment with the gifts God has given us.

5. ECO Tenets: Each covenant partner shall strive to be faithful to Christ by participating in the congregation's worship, fellowship, and service on an ongoing basis. Faithfulness in Christ as a covenant partner, involves a commitment to growth into spiritual maturity as a disciple of Christ and dedication of time and talents to the congregation's mission and ministry, in accordance to the gifts that God has bestowed upon him or her.

6. Westminster Catechism Q. 104. What are the duties required in the First Commandment?

A. The duties required in the First Commandment are: the knowing and acknowledging of God to be the only true God, and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly; by thinking, meditating, remembering, highly esteeming, honoring, adoring, choosing, loving, desiring, fearing of him; believing him; trusting, hoping, delighting, rejoicing in him; being zealous for him; calling upon him, giving all praise and thanks, and yielding all obedience and submission to him with the whole man; being careful in all things to please him, and sorrowful when in anything he is offended; and walking humbly with him.

Recommended Books:

1. Peterson, David. Engaging with God: A Biblical theology of worship
2. Webber, Robert. Ancient-Future Worship: Proclaiming & Enacting God's Narrative
3. Park, Andy. To Know You More: Cultivating the Heart of the Worship Leader
4. Tozer, A.W. The Purpose of Man: Designed to Worship
5. Best, Harold. Unceasing Worship: Biblical Perspectives on Worship and the Arts
6. Millar, Stephen. Worship Leaders, We Are Not Rock Stars
7. Kauflin, Bob. Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God
8. Tomlin, Chris. Holy Roar
9. Walker, Tommy. That Why We Praise Him; Break Through; Songs from Heaven; He Knows My Name

Venues to Implement the Pillar

1. Congregational worship sessions
2. Special FMC events
3. Outdoor services

Platforms & Exercises to Develop the Pillar

1. Thursday Night Rehearsals
2. Playing as part of other bands
3. Watch how music is used to worship in other select churches: Parkside, Cleveland OH; Grace OC Washingtonville NY; Grace Ridge, Honesdale PA; FPC, Northway, Pathway - Beaver/Chippewa

4. Review stage presentation for thought-leader bands such as Elevation, Bethel, Hillsong, etc via Youtube
5. Study how churches do online music
6. Spotify Playlists released a week in advance for the Congregation