

## MUSIC MINISTRY APPRECIATION BANQUET

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We require a LOT from our music ministry teams....weekly rehearsals, long hours on Sunday, seasonal rehearsals and performances, learning music at home..... and one of the BEST ways to say “THANK YOU” is to host an annual appreciation banquet. Here are some thoughts to assist in facilitating this important event.

### **BUDGET**

While it is certainly possible to charge a per/person amount for an appreciation banquet, it seems a bit paradoxical...almost like asking someone to pay for their own Christmas present! Because this type of event is designed to say “Thank you”, I always requested enough in my music budget to cover the cost. Some items you will want to consider include:

- Food (including preparation and clean up)
- decorations, especially table centerpieces
- entertainment
- awards or certificates

### **FOOD**

If your church has a kitchen and fellowship hall, the least expensive meal will be prepared by your food service staff. Lasagna or spaghetti are good menu choices, as they can be prepared without meat (as that is a health issue to some), and the meal should include a salad with a choice of dressings, bread, a vegetable and a dessert. Other food options include full or partial catering...Bar b que is a good option, but whatever food you choose, make sure it is special and well-done, not pizza or fast food.

The meal should be SERVED, NOT cafeteria style, and it is a great ministry opportunity to have a 6<sup>th</sup> grade SS class, or the Middle School SS department serve the food and refill water, tea and coffee during the meal. It is very effective if they all

dress the same: white shirts or tops, maybe red aprons, black slacks or skirts...Then this same team cleans off the tables and serves dessert.

### **DECORATIONS AND CENTERPIECES**

If a THEME is to be chosen, then the centerpieces will match the theme. We have used ITALIAN, with red and white checked table clothes, and WESTERN, with hay bales and western dress....whatever theme is chosen, the centerpieces should not only reflect the theme but should also have a musical motif...be creative here. If your church has a drama department, involve them in designing and creating the centerpieces. A special ticket can be taped to the bottom of ONE of the chairs around each table, and the person who sits in that chair can take the centerpiece home with them.

Remember, you want to have your musicians do as little as possible, so include other church departments in the planning and implementation of both the room decorations and table centerpieces.

### **DOOR PRIZES**

Several weeks prior to the event, I visit local restaurants, ice cream shops, oil change places and other local businesses, explain what we were doing, and ask for a gift certificate to be given away at the banquet. I have YET to have anyone refuse that request. It is great PR for each business that is mentioned at the banquet, and these can be distributed at various times through the evening, by calling out ticket numbers....make sure that you have distributed door prize tickets as people enter the room!!! I ALWAYS invite my pastor to attend, and let him pull tickets out of the hat. This should be done several times through out the evening.

### **ENTERTAINMENT**

If you choose to have entertainment, it should be from outside your music ministry folks. We have used:

- Dan Oxley –trumpet (then he stayed over to play in Sunday services)

- Bruce and Lisa-violin and flute (they also stayed for Sunday)
- Dennis Agajanian (worlds fastest guitar picker—great spirit and testimony)
- Dick and Mel Tunney
- Rodrigo Rodriguez (phenomenal Christian classical guitarist)

If you choose to go lower budget, a local gospel quartet, or praise team from another church are good options. Whatever you choose, the criteria should be:

- quality
- affordable
- NOT out of your music ministry

### **AWARDS OR CERTIFICATES**

I like to give everyone a certificate of appreciation, signed by the pastor and the Minister of Music. These are very inexpensive but show tangible proof that the efforts of our ministry teams is appreciated by both pastoral leadership and music leadership. I like to have the names of each individual written in *calligraphy* on each certificate...the rest can be computer generated, with the exception of the signatures, which would be in an ink color that is DIFFERENT than the color of the certificate. This displays effort and fore thought.

### **OTHER AWARDS**

This idea requires some discernment and discretion, but with a smaller group it is possible to give EVERYONE a special award that signifies their contribution to the group. Some awards I have given include:

- BARANABAS award (for the spirit of encouragement)
- DANIEL award (for battling a disease or overcoming great adversity)
- PAUL AND SILAS award (for being a part of a mission trip the previous year)
- SECTION LEADER CERTIFICATE
- OFFICER CERTIFICATE
- LIBRARIAN CERTIFICATE

- TIMOTHY award (for significant spiritual leadership)
- NEWEST MEMBER award
- LONGEST MINISTRY award

Be creative, and include everyone in your group. This will make them feel individually appreciated and special. Just make sure each award is POSITIVE and SPECIAL, and accurately demonstrates a specific contribution to the ministry of your ensemble. This works well with groups of 40 or less....after that it becomes cumbersome and difficult.

Whatever you choose to do, it is very important that our teams feel appreciated and valued. They give a lot, mostly without asking for recognition, but we need to let them know that their contribution is significant and important. I Peter 4:10 instructs us to “use whatever gifts ‘we’ have received to serve others.” This is a great opportunity to serve the servants and to let them know that their ministry contribution is appreciated.

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