

VITA

Chris Smith, D.M.A.
Associate Professor of Worship Leadership
East Texas Baptist University
One Tiger Drive, Marshall, TX 75670
Jenna Guest Music Building, Room 106
csmith@etbu.edu

EDUCATION:

Doctor of Musical Arts in Worship and Hymnology, 2019-2022

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Completed courses include: Advanced Studies in Church Music History, Worship and the Task of Disciple Making, Advanced Studies in Historical Perspectives of Worship, Advanced Studies in Lyrical Theology, Contextual Dimensions in Current Worship Research, Advanced Studies in Music History

Notable research includes:

Invitation and Atmosphere: A Lyrical Analysis of Gospels Songs and Twenty-First Century Contemporary Worship Music

Guitar Through the Ages: Repertoire and Analysis

We are How We Repeatedly Worship

The Continuing Influence of Charles Finney

Case studies of Oakland Heights Baptist Church and New Beginnings Baptist Church in Longview, Texas

Dissertation: *The Lyrical Theology of Andrew Peterson*

Master of Music in Church Music, 2015

Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama

Principle Instrument: Guitar

Areas of Research: guitar pedagogy (with an emphasis on multi-genre approaches), hymnology, culture and aesthetics of worship

*Inducted in the national music honor society, Pi Kappa Lambda

Bachelor of Music in Guitar Performance, 2005

Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama

Primary Instrument: Guitar

Secondary Instrument: Percussion, Piano

Additional private training in voice, conducting, and composition

Ensembles include: A Cappella Choir, Jazz Band, Steel Drum Band, Percussion Ensemble, Marching Band, and Wind Ensemble (Band Chaplain 2002)

TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

East Texas Baptist University 2018-Present
Associate Professor of Worship Leadership

Provide instruction and program oversight in the areas of worship studies, guitar, and music technology; recruit incoming students, advise current students in course scheduling

Curriculum Development

Modern Musicianship I and II- designed for worship studies majors as replacement courses for Music Theory III and IV, this class focuses on music theory through the lens of contemporary genres such as jazz, blues, and pop. There is significant emphasis on chord progressions, improvisation, and arranging.

Lampsato Worship Band- this ensemble is an auditioned worship band that represents the department of music. This group frequently leads worship in chapel services, as well as other off campus events such as retreats, conferences, and youth events.

Music Technology- required for all music majors, this course instructs the students on various programs such as Finale, Audacity and other DAW's. Students also learn pro audio and basic recording techniques.

Worship Media Technology- as technology has become more prevalent in churches, this class prepares the student on a variety of programs common in the modern church such as Planning Center and ProPresenter. Elements of graphic design are also discussed. Considerable time is spent on live sound and mixing for various ensembles common in worship settings.

Class Guitar I and II- an elective class for any student, this class teaches basic fundamentals of guitar playing. Music notation, tablature, and chord symbols are used in student learning. Students who complete the course sequence will be able to adequately read music in first position and demonstrate a respectable chord vocabulary utilizing both open and barre chords, as well as a basic knowledge of capo transposition.

Contemporary Music Theory- this course reframes the content of the traditional music theory courses into that of modern music styles such as pop, rock, blues, and jazz. It is recommended for worship studies majors to help prepare them for the contemporary worship field.

Additional Courses Instructed

Leading Worship- emphasizes skills and strategies for leading worship services; students prepare mini-services and lead the class in worship numerous times throughout the semester

Planning Worship- a study of the history, resources, and various liturgies utilized in planning worship services

Worship of God- explores the biblical foundations of Christian worship and examines the practices of worship in both modern and historical contexts

Worship Music- this course is a study of congregational song in both contemporary and traditional styles

Practicum in Music Ministry I and II- places senior worship studies majors in a two semester internship at a local church. This class culminates with the student leading and directing all aspects of a worship service at their respective church.

Applied Guitar- private guitar lessons for music majors and elective students

Ensembles Directed

Guitar Ensemble- rehearse and perform repertoire in various genres such as classical, jazz, and world music

Worship Band- divide students into bands (usually 4-5 groups) and supervise rehearsals leading up to student-led Night of Worship

Lampsato Worship Band- see above

Events Coordinated

Great East Texas Hymn Sing- assist in scheduling song leaders and program details for annual community event involving local churches and assisted living communities

Worship Summit- plan and coordinate event details such as guest speakers and artists for annual worship conference designed for local worship leaders and music ministers. Event is expanding in 2021 to include other areas of ministry.

Night of Worship- organize student-led night of worship (one per semester) that features 3-6 worship bands from the Worship Band and Lampsato Worship ensembles.

Thrive Group Leader

Thrive is a mentorship program created through ETBU's Quality Enhancement Program. Faculty members are given the opportunity to interact and mentor students outside the normal academic environment in either group or individual settings

Committees

Admissions and Financial Aid, 2019-2020

Integration of Faith and Learning, 2020-2021

Faculty Development, 2021-2022

Safety and Security, 2022-2023

Safety and Security, 2023-2024

Promotion, 2025-2025

Samford University 2013-2018

Adjunct Professor

Class Guitar I, II Instructor

Develop curriculum to establish practical and fundamental guitar skills, evaluate incoming students to ensure proper class placement, instruct students in technique and musicality across a variety of genres, instruct students in music theory as it relates to transposition and improvisation, assess students both individually and as an ensemble

Applied Guitar Instructor

Evaluate incoming students and potential guitar majors, develop a teaching strategy for each individual student, select repertoire designed to instill proper technique and increase fretboard knowledge, provide exercises to aid in the student's weaknesses while simultaneously enhancing their strengths, adequately prepare each student for performance evaluations

Music Technology Instructor

Introduce and educate students across a wide variety of technology used in professional music settings such as notation software, digital audio workstations, studio recording, and pro audio

"Animate" Guitar Instructor

Birthing out of *Anima*, Samford's forum for worship and arts, "Animate" is essentially a summer camp for aspiring worship leaders. Instruction is given to groups of beginner and advanced students detailing practical application of the guitar in common worship settings

Guitar Instructor, 2005-2013

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church Music Academy

Hunter Street Baptist Church Arts Academy

First Baptist Church of Trussville Conservatory

Shades Crest Baptist Church Arts Academy

Provided instruction to students of all ages and skill levels, developed individualized learning strategies, instructed students on proper guitar techniques ranging from fundamental to advanced, prepared students for performances, introduced students to various genres of music

*The culmination of lessons over this period totals over 10,000 lessons given.

OTHER WORK EXPERIENCE:

Professional Musician 2001-Present

Including but not limited to church services, worship events, Christian conferences and retreats, weddings, musicals, recitals, commissions, and studio recordings

Notable musicians with which I have shared the stage:

Cleve Eaton- Bassist for Count Basie Orchestra, Ella Fitzgerald

Sonny Harris- Drummer, member of Alabama Jazz Hall of Fame

Joel Bouchillon- Keyboardist for Trisha Yearwood, Producer for Michael W. Smith

Billy and Cindy Foote- writers of “Sing to the King,” and “You are My King (Amazing Love)”

Paul Janeway- lead singer of St. Paul and the Broken Bones

Michael John Clement- Worship Leader, co-writer for “You Do All Things Well,” featured on Christ Tomlin’s album, *Arriving*

Hector Santana- Latin Grammy-nominated bassist

Associate Worship Minister, 2018-Present

Oakland Heights Baptist Church, Longview, Texas

Plan and lead worship for contemporary services, lead rehearsals for praise band, assist in other worship services as needed, lead and rehearse with youth worship band for Wednesday night services

Minister of Music and Students, 2013-2018

Cedar Grove Baptist Church, Leeds, Alabama

Music responsibilities: Plan and lead worship for traditional and contemporary services, lead and rehearse praise band, direct adult choir, oversee technical aspects of worship, organize special services such as Easter and Christmas

Youth responsibilities: Plan Sunday and Wednesday services, select curriculum for Bible studies, oversee Sunday school classes, retreat planning

Projects Overseen: Installed new sound system in contemporary worship facility, remodeled youth wing, remodeled children’s worship area, modernized church website; upgraded sound and media to digital technologies in recent sanctuary renovation

Clinician, 2006-Present

Provide expertise to various churches in areas of music and worship, and worship related technology. Common environments include student-age music camps, rehearsals and retreats for adult praise bands, and studio projects

Contracted Guitarist/ Worship Leader, 2006-2009

Hunter Street Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama

Guitarist and worship leader for weekly services and special events

Assisted in worship planning, assisted in developing student-led worship band

Led worship for middle and high school services

Contracted Guitarist/ Worship Leader, 2009-2013

Dawson Memorial Baptist Church, Birmingham, Alabama

Guitarist and worship leader for weekly services and special events

Assisted in worship planning, assisted in developing student-led worship band

Led worship for middle and high school services

Youth and Music Intern, 2002-2005

First Baptist Church of Birmingham, Alabama

Responsibilities included: leading youth praise and worship, directing youth choir, teaching Bible studies, playing in and directing orchestra, retreat planning, coordinating Wednesday night youth activities

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES:

Presenter at the Tune Our Hearts Worship Retreat with Keith and Krysten Getty
First Baptist Church of Lindale, March 24-25, 2022

PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS:

“We are How We Repeatedly Worship” published on worshipleader.com on March 2nd, 2020

<https://worshipleader.com/post/worship/we-are-how-we-repeatedly-worship/>

The Lyrical Theology of Andrew Peterson, published on Proquest:

<https://www.proquest.com/openview/6e4a3dc0cd47894c87895ab5113dff03/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

“The Idolatry of Worship Service Flow” published on LifeWay Research on August 18th, 2023.

<https://research.lifeway.com/2023/08/18/the-idolatry-of-worship-service-flow/>

“7 Things We May Wish the Bible Didn’t Say About Worship” published on LifeWay Research on April 5th, 2024

<https://research.lifeway.com/2024/04/05/7-things-we-may-wish-the-bible-didnt-say-about-worship/>

“East Texas Baptist University senior writes original worship song, performs at 2024 Texas Baptists Annual Meeting”

<https://www.texasbaptists.org/article/east-texas-baptists-university-senior-writes-original-worship-song-performs-at-2024-texas-baptist-annual-meeting>

“ETBU Students Examine What the Church Is Really Singing”

https://www.etbu.edu/etbu-now/news/2025/05/etbu-students-examine-what-church-really-singing?fbclid=IwY2xjawKYacxleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETBpMVZUQkxrb2M3MmJqTUUpUAR4E7w-ruD-fK3QovEZEeAb_e_aqo9_XlH4tN4BV9g6G8aceNZmtg3OMk5tOA_aem_ejqZDrBFwgSvcd70LIGgXg

OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION: