

# How to Lead Congregational Singing

Colossians 3:16-17, “*Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.*”

1. Choose appropriate songs to coincide with the different parts of worship (e.g. a song about the crucifixion before the Lord’s Supper). You may even ask the preacher if there are any songs that would go along with the sermon.
2. Make sure you know a song well before you lead it.
3. If using songbooks, announce the number clearly and with confidence. Repeat the number using individual digits and maybe announce the song title. If using a screen, it is appropriate to begin the song as soon as it is visible.
4. Stand up straight but try to look comfortable and at ease before the congregation. Keep a joyful face and use eye contact if possible.
5. Do not be a comedian or a clown. Nor try to use it as an opportunity to show off how well you can sing. The focus needs to be on God, not on you.
6. Normally you should lead with the soprano part. It can be confusing if the song leader sings alto, tenor, or base.
7. Keep a strong voice throughout—unless a song calls for a quiet section (“*pp*”). A congregation will usually never sing louder than the song leader. If you are quiet, they will be quiet. If you want them to sing out, you need to set the standard.
8. If there is a microphone, do not put your mouth too close to it (which can end up being too loud and/or causing sound distortion).
9. Do not be afraid to stop the song and change the pitch if you need to. While not what you want, it is better than making everyone suffer through a whole song that is way too high/low.
10. It can be helpful to use your hand to keep time. If using songbooks, you may want to put up the number of the next verse on your fingers.