

# RYAN JOHNSTON

972-965-0205

ryanjohnston@lavondrive.org

ryanandsarahjohnston.com

WORSHIP PASTOR



Dear Pastor Brett and team at Valley Fellowship,

I am grateful for the opportunity to submit my resume for the position of Worship Pastor. I have been serving the past 15 years at Lavon Drive Baptist Church, a wonderful, God-honoring Baptist church in Garland, TX. Shortly after my joining the staff, God began walking us through a major revitalization process as our long-tenured pastor of 50 years retired, a difficult time of transition followed, and God faithfully protected His church and saw us through. I serve on the Executive Team with our Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor, and together we developed and implemented the strategies that God blessed to turn the church around and position us for an exciting future. Today, we are a thriving, growing church with weekly attendance approaching 1000, and my heart is so full and thankful for all that God has done. With the pastoral transition a success; a multi-year, \$10,000,000 campus renovation complete, and the staff in the healthiest place it's been in decades, my wife Sarah and I are sensing that God may be ready to transition us into a new season of life.

Sarah and I both grew up in Longmont and are passionate about the active, outdoor lifestyle, something we've missed living in the Dallas suburbs. Buena Vista is part of our heritage, as Sarah's Swedish ancestors were among the founding families of BV. I have led our church's Winter Camp numerous times to Spring Canyon, and we are drawn to this part of the state. Having just been in BV in March, we were checking out churches in the area, discovered your web site and saw the opening for this position.

I am intrigued to learn more about the opportunity at Valley Fellowship. From what we have gleaned from your live stream, the Vision Sunday 2022 presentation, and your web / social media presence, there are some exciting things happening there. In the job description you mention that Valley Fellowship is experiencing "renewal and a fresh start." In my current ministry, God allowed me to play an integral role in revitalizing the church, and I'm curious whether my unique skill-set, passions, and experience might be something that would help carry out your God-given vision at this unique time. So much noted in the job description fits the way I have led ministry: team-building, collaborative, entrepreneurial, visionary, etc., and the opportunity to leverage my experience in a new environment is very appealing. More than anything, I want God's will for you and for our family, so I am committed to pray over this position. I would cherish the opportunity to have a deeper conversation following your perusal of this packet and my web site. Please visit [ryanandsarahjohnston.com](http://ryanandsarahjohnston.com), where I have posted numerous videos that will help you learn more about my experience and capabilities. Please contact me with any questions you may have!

In Christ,

Ryan Johnston

Scan to jump straight to  
[ryanandsarahjohnston.com](http://ryanandsarahjohnston.com)



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## EDUCATION

### Master of Church Music

(Combines a Master of Music & Master of Divinity, without Hebrew and Greek)

Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, TX

2007

### Bachelor of Vocal Performance

Wheaton College, Wheaton, IL

2004

### Ordination and Licensing

Pleasant Glade Baptist Church, Colleyville, TX

2006

## CORE STRENGTHS

Leadership



Interpersonal



Teaching



Creativity



## PERSONAL

**Me:** Age 40  
DISC: I/D  
Myers-Briggs: ENFJ-A

**Wife:** Sarah (Age 41)  
Married 18 years  
6th grade sweethearts

**Kids:** Kristjana, age 12 (7th Grade)  
Jachin, age 10 (4th Grade)  
Ethan, age 7 (1st Grade)

## PASTORAL LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE



### MUSIC PASTOR

2008 - Present

Lavon Drive Baptist Church, Garland, Texas

During my 15-year tenure at Lavon Drive, God has taken us on an amazing journey of church revitalization, completing a \$10,000,000 renovation in 2020, adding a second English service, and launching a Spanish service. Weekly Sunday attendance is hovering around 1000, up from just 500 a few years ago. When I came on staff, I had one staff member and a small volunteer team under my direction. I built a large orchestra, expanded children and youth music programs, produced two albums with the choir, performed with the choir at Carnegie Hall, and hosted numerous concerts with well-known artists. The Lord blessed our team with a Dove-award nominated composer as our pianist, and at another time one of the nation's top church music composers. Today, I lead 100+ volunteers and 10 paid staff across the Music, Communications, and Awaken Coffee House teams, having developed and launched the latter two departments. In its first two years of operation, Awaken Coffee House has booked over \$290,000 in revenue, supports a staff of four, and has provided over 40,000 meals to poor kids in Nicaragua and hundreds of bags of supplies for foster care agencies in North Texas. I am passionate about missions and camp ministry, have led 14 trips to Colorado, Nicaragua, and Mexico, and serve on the administrative team for our Children's Camp that ministers to over 300 kids annually. During our years of revitalization, I served as Interim Executive Pastor and twice as Interim Student pastor, seeing growth in the youth department during that time and establishing a robust student leadership team. As a current member of the executive team, I partner with our Senior Pastor and Executive Pastor on many of the strategic decisions that God has used to navigate the revitalization process, and today I'm able to share that experience with other ministers as I speak at conferences nationwide.



### MUSIC PASTOR

2004 - 2007

Pleasant Glade Baptist Church, Colleyville, Texas

I served Pleasant Glade part-time during my time in Seminary, developing my love for multi-gen worship by launching a children's choir, expanding the adult choir, and developing a love of missions by participating in and leading numerous mission trips both domestically and internationally.

## I MUSIC MINISTRY COMPETENCIES

- Adept at leading teams and developing musicians and ensembles across many musical styles
- Passionate about developing multi-gen worship, utilizing children and teens alongside adults in leading the Sunday worship experience
- Musically gifted as a vocalist, pianist, rhythm guitarist, and saxophonist
- Capable composer and arranger, having written numerous songs for children and adults
- Highly skilled at leveraging technology for worship, both hardware and software. Specific competencies include Planning Center, ProPresenter, Multitracks/In-Ear Monitors, Digital Audio Workstations (DAWs), Adobe Creative Suite, Sibelius, theatrical lightings systems (Jands/Chroma-Q Vista), digital and analog sound systems, and video production tools for both broadcast and film work. I oversaw the development and implementation of a \$500,000 Audio, Video, and Lighting installation as part of our campus renovation in 2020
- Experienced in developing a quality live stream that showcases both music and spoken word, resulting in greater conversion from online viewer to in-person attender

## I OTHER MINISTRY COMPETENCIES

- Creative visionary responsible for developing many of the successful events, strategies, and projects that have effectively reached thousands of people at Lavon Drive
- Driven leader, easily multi-tasking and managing numerous departments, staff, and projects
- Team builder who launched two new departments within our church and led the Technical Arts leadership to quadruple their team. Nothing thrills me more than raising up teams to share in the victory.
- Accomplished videographer, video editor, and graphic designer, both as a creator and leader, equipping teams of volunteers and paid staff to regularly produce creative material for ministry
- Proficient in marketing, leveraging my business experience to implement complex strategies using print and electronic media, including websites, email, social media, and texting
- Compelling speaker, handling Sunday morning pulpit duties several times annually as well as speaking for national conferences, camps, and children/student functions

## I OTHER EXPERIENCE

- Past President and current officer (2010 - present) with the Singing Men of Texas, planning and executing international mission strategies that have led to over 30,000 commitments to follow Christ, primarily in Ukraine
- Music Track Leader (2022) for the Idea Network, providing oversight for the Network's numerous annual events around the country that reach multiplied hundreds of ministry leaders
- FAA-licensed drone pilot, skilled at operating both traditional DJI-style drones and FPV (First Person View) drones, particularly with cinematic video in mind
- Experienced real estate investor, business owner, and entrepreneur, partnered with my wife Sarah in house flipping, long-term rental property, wholesaling, and property management since 2013. This experience proved invaluable during the church's renovation, as I was well-versed in the construction process and served as the main pastoral liaison with the contractors. See our web site, [crestonepm.com](http://crestonepm.com)
- Founded Great Adventures RVs, a short-term RV rental company. See our web site, [greatadventuresrvs.com](http://greatadventuresrvs.com)
- Fluent computer programmer, web developer, and database architect having owned an online marketing business at one time, developed dozens of websites, and developed numerous apps and web-based software tools as a freelancer and also for Lavon Drive Baptist Church
- Founder of Design Forge 3D, a small business where I produce architectural 3D models and 3D printed components. See my web site, [designforge3d.com](http://designforge3d.com)

## I PERSONAL INTERESTS

Any and all mountain activities, but skiing is my biggest passion. I also love camping, mountain biking, hiking, Jeeping, and fishing. A lot of that I can't do in Texas, so here I fill my time doing film, flying drones, cooking, reading, building stuff, 3D printing stuff, and anything that involves playing with our kids and puppy, Willow!

## I SALVATION AND CALL TO MINISTRY

I grew up outside Longmont, Colorado in a Christian home where God was an ever-present and welcome part of our family. At the age of nine, I made a sincere decision to follow Christ, confessing my sin and inadequacy and calling upon God for His grace, forgiveness, and salvation. While I had my ups and downs through high school, I never departed from my belief and commitment to follow Christ.

My parents both served in music ministry at Rocky Mountain Christian Church in Niwot, where my mom also worked several years on staff. I participated in and later led the student worship team and served in numerous student leadership capacities. It was in that context that God called me to full-time music ministry, and I surrendered to that call as a high school senior, having previously planned to follow in my father's footsteps as an I/T professional. Providentially, God has used my aptitude and passion for computer science and technology to serve the Church in many unique ways ever since, and I'm grateful for the unique but exciting journey He's prepared for my life.

My wife, Sarah, was also saved at a young age. We dated off and on from 6th grade through high school, with things turning steady as we dated through college. We both graduated from Wheaton in 2004 after which we were married. Sarah is passionate about student ministry and has served in that capacity at Lavon Drive for most of our tenure there.

## I PHILOSOPHY OF WORSHIP MINISTRY

Worship is a central feature of God's plan for the church, and that plan involves much more than music. Worship is in fact the act of ascribing supreme worth to God, something that should be a feature of all that we do. But throughout Scripture, music is the single-most common method by which the people of God join together in corporate worship. In the Old Testament, hundreds of Levites were set apart by God for the sole purpose of worship in song that continued both day and night (1 Chronicles 9:33). In Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16, Paul exhorts us to worship with "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." In Isaiah 6:3 and in Revelation 4:8, angels come before God singing continually of His holiness. There can be no doubt of the centrality of music in corporate worship. What we see in Scripture is that music is a tool not only for ascribing to God the worth He is due, but it is a tool for unifying the congregation, multiplying the proclamation of God's greatness, demonstrating to all in attendance our devotion to God, as well as reinforcing great, Biblical truths through the memorization that comes through careful planning of quality, doctrinally-sound worship music. Music connects the facts of the faith with our feelings, and by internalizing our core doctrines, God becomes very real and very personal. Songs experienced as a congregation not only establish the Word in the hearts of the people, but they enhance the church's sense of community and collective heritage.

Music itself is an art form and is deeply specific to particular demographics and cultures. As such, it is always important to tailor a church's musical identity to the identity of its people. Some churches thrive on restrained, traditional hymnody that tends toward the majestic while others worship more expressively, connecting with styles and texts that feel more organic and personal. Neither is better than the other, but it's important for any musical leader to tailor the music to the church, not vice versa. I personally have a deep appreciation for both ancient hymnody and modern music. I connect the most with the more organic, personal nature of modern worship music, but as an intellectual I also value and love the hymns and the many great "modern hymns" that are being produced by people like Keith and Kristyn Getty, CityAlight, etc. Regardless of my personal tastes, however, the selection of style for any church I serve would only begin to take shape once I understand the culture and heart language of that church. My musical experience is such that I can fit easily into just about any context.

## I REFERENCES

As we are still exploring the possibility of beginning this new journey, we are not yet prepared to have the Valley Fellowship team reach out to our references, who would primarily be the leadership of Lavon Drive Baptist Church. If the Holy Spirit begins to move this process forward, then we will have those conversations and provide references. If you need a few references before moving further, please advise, and I can provide some outside of Lavon Drive's leadership.