

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Press Releases

Office of Communication and Marketing

4-6-2024

Equipped, called and capable (Thoughts on the worship studies program)

Michael Pasman

Office of Communications & Marketing

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/press_releases



Part of the [Higher Education Commons](#), [Organizational Communication Commons](#), and the [Public Relations and Advertising Commons](#)



Lead photo: Michael Paskan leads worship on campus. Photo by Emma Mayes

For immediate release

Equipped, called and capable (Thoughts on the worship studies program)

By Michael Paskan

April 06, 2024

For more information, contact Ouachita's Office of Communications & Marketing at comm-mark@obu.edu or (870) 245-5206.

Ouachita's worship studies degree has been, to me, a beautifully answered prayer. I first answered a call to ministry at my home church, Summit Church of Little Rock. Although we don't know each other personally, Bill Elliff – the founding pastor of that church – served as one of my biggest motivators for ministry. Seeing his authentic reverence and passion for God helped spark that same fire in myself.

At the time I decided on ministry, I didn't know it was something you could go to college for. I had already dropped out of college once; my chances of returning were incredibly slim. The timing of the creation of the worship studies degree and God's substantial provision to get me to Ouachita could not have been more perfectly laid out. This was my first indicator there is something of great value here, because I've seen God do miraculous things to make a way for people to be a part of it. I didn't know yet what that would look like, since the degree had just been put into place.

Over time, I would see all the fruits, growing pains, relationships built, pathways created and so many other things that have been a part of the initial years of this major.

The first thing I noticed with worship studies is its community. Very quickly the major became the biggest in the music department, and a sense of family was forged among those of us in the program. I'm

privileged and blessed to be surrounded by such a strong group of believers and leaders. In my time with this degree, I've found so many mentors, accountability partners, teachers and even people for myself to disciple. It's a community noticed by many as being very unified and strong. Of course, everything comes with its growing pains. But this group has met most every challenge head on and come out stronger because of it.

Through Ouachita's worship studies major and the network of worship pastors who came together to help form it, I've been given opportunities I would never have gotten otherwise. I've been offered connections to great leaders in ministry to teach me along the way, and I've been blessed to serve in and learn from churches in several states, of many different sizes, representing lots of styles of worship. I completed my senior internship at Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, Texas, where I served alongside two Ouachita alumni, Rick Briscoe and Blake Johnson. Since then, I've even been offered jobs and other internships as an extension of that one.

I've also gained valuable experience as part of the Jones Performing Arts Center Work-Study crew, taken lots of classes that teach about technology and media involved in music ministry and greatly developed technical skills that will enable me to better serve the church.

Worship studies has equipped me to have a proper understanding and strong theology of what worship truly is; it goes far beyond music as an offering of our entire lives to our Lord. It permeates many other areas: teaching, preaching, discipling, community. Although the degree is music-centric, it doesn't just train church musicians. It addresses all aspects of being in a shepherding role as a minister of the Gospel. An essential aspect of this is recognizing one of the dangers in worship ministry leadership: that it can be attractive to people purely for the sake of having the platform or just being in the spotlight of a stage.

This is something we give a great amount of consideration to within the major. We're quickly challenged to find a much deeper purpose and calling. The depth to which we're taught the reality and weight of our calling serves to protect the church. In my experience, there have been many church leaders who have ripped apart their flock because they were put in or assumed a position of leadership without being trained to lead. Ouachita's worship studies major is an excellent doorway to make sure its students are equipped, called and capable of dealing with every aspect of God's ministry and all the sacrifice it requires. The end goal is to teach a lifestyle of authentic and biblical worship and how to lead others in that, and our main vehicle for doing this is through worshipful music.

In short, everything in my life – my sense of calling, my understanding of God and how to rightly worship him, and my leadership ability in a spiritual and administrative context – has grown in surreal ways since I have been a part of the worship studies program at Ouachita. I'm soon to be finished with it, but I have full confidence it will continue to grow and thrive, as rightly trained worship leaders are raised up and sent out to lead and shepherd God's people and bring glory to his kingdom.



Michael Pasman is a senior worship studies and christian studies double major from Little Rock, Ark.