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Recommended Citation

Office of University Communications and Coile, Claire, "Gardner-Webb Music Major Helps Lead Worship in Online and Traditional Settings" (2020). *Gardner-Webb NewsCenter Archive*. 15.
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Gardner-Webb Music Major Helps Lead Worship in Online and Traditional Settings

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Office of University
Communications

July 28, 2020

Josh Hendley, '21, Uses Skills to Coordinate Gospel-Centered Service

By Claire Coile, '20, Intern for Office of University Communications



In this screenshot from an online service at Salem Baptist in Winston-Salem, N.C., Josh Hendley leads worship.

Church services have changed dramatically since the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic and social distancing requirements. While many church doors are closed, staff and volunteers work behind the scenes to keep services going by transitioning to an online format. Josh Hendley, '21, a worship leadership major in the Gardner-Webb University Department of Music, has been helping at his church, Salem Baptist in Winston-Salem, N.C., by co-leading the music.

Hendley intended to work at Merriwood Christian Camp in Clemmons, N.C., as the worship and volunteer coordinator. Merriwood hosts kids ranging from first to 12th grade who come for summer camp each week. Last summer, Hendley served as a counselor for middle school boys. He was excited about his new role within the organization this year, but for health and safety reasons, Merriwood camps did not take place.



While waiting to hear if camp would open for the summer, Hendley worked on building and painting projects at home. Most of his time was dedicated to practicing the piano and guitar. “I am working in around eight hours of music practice a day,” he commented about his commitment to music.

When Merriwood Christian Camp closed, Hendley was asked to help conduct the worship for online Sunday services at Salem Baptist. Currently, he is co-leading with the church’s worship pastor. They alternate leading the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. livestream services each week. The church continues to offer the online services while opening the building to attendees, who observe social distancing and face covering guidelines.

Gardner-Webb’s worship leadership program in the Department of Music prepared Hendley for his new, though unexpected position. Hendley said, “I’ve really enjoyed learning about what worship truly is and how to structure a service that is gospel-centered rather than a ‘show.’”

At Gardner-Webb, Hendley is active in Campus Ministries United (CMU), an umbrella association consisting of a variety of student ministry groups that provides opportunities for students to express and grow their faith. Last year, Hendley served as the co-coordinator of the Gathering, a weekly worship service for students.

Learn more about [Gardner-Webb’s worship leadership program](#) and [Campus Ministries United](#).

