

Doxa Ministry Overview

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Doxa @ Paramount
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The following speech was presented at “Before the Throne” – a worship celebration service and Doxa’s first performance opportunity. The text provides an overview of the ministry’s activities and services for the inaugural year of operation, from June 2009 through May 2010, as well as a description of the philosophy and vision behind the ministry’s inception.

Doxa means, in Greek, “the glory to God” or “all glory is God’s.” It is the root of the word doxology, the reverent prayer sung in churches offering all praises to God. It is our prayer that Doxa becomes a ministry through which the freedom of worship through movement is celebrated and the name of Jesus glorified.

The mission of the Doxa Ministry is to equip dancers through instruction and performance opportunities with the ability to use their God-given talent as an avenue for worshipping God, sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, and growing in their faith, and to thereby bless Paramount and the larger Amarillo community with a visual and artistic witness for Christ.

Doxa is the product of several years of praying and months of active planning. The vision for this ministry came over time, in pieces, as I've often noticed God does as he reveals opportunities in our lives. I can trace back over the years significant events that, although they seemed isolated and independent at the time, string together to lead to the birth of this project. A godly role model in an older dancer, a two-week summer dance program at a Christian professional ballet company, a children's book about "dancing for the Father" given to me by a favorite Paramount Sunday School teacher as a high school graduation gift, an idea in college, a marriage that brought me home, a job for my spouse, a leader with a vision, an opportunity. These are just a few of the reasons I can undoubtedly tell you this ministry was orchestrated by God, and no man or woman can take the credit.

Doxa was a new ministry this year at Paramount. A storage room in the Music Suite in Building B was transformed through a true labor of love into a beautiful studio, complete with mirrors, handcrafted barres, and storage cubbies for little shoes and bags. We started offering ballet classes in the summer of 2009 with 25 students, ages 3 to 15, in 3 classes. That in and of itself seemed a remarkable number for a dance program in a Baptist church, but in its inaugural year, the ministry has nearly doubled, and now includes 45 students in 6 classes – and has expanded to include a Beginning Ballet class for adults.

Each student that participates in Doxa receives a unique dance training experience, a melding of classical ballet technique with a worship emphasis. Just as we discuss the proper execution of the tendu and the pirouette, we examine the emotive quality of the movements, how they can be used to express gratitude, humility, reliance, submission, praise, repentance, acceptance, change. With the younger students, we focus on how God has made us, in his image, and how we can use the bodies he created to offer a gift of our thankfulness. We explore rhythm, the qualities in the music that mimic those in creation, the ebbs and flows, patterns, perfection, intention. You will see tonight a dance by the Daisies class that explores the hand of God that is evident in every season, the process of life, death, and rebirth, as autumn surrenders to winter, and as spring bursts forth anew. With the older students we explore the creative properties of dance that lend to storytelling, and how to choose or modify movements to echo an emotion or convey a truth. And ultimately, we experience dance as an outlet or avenue for our personal worship of God, exploring the gifts we have been given and should cultivate, seeking ways to use them to express what is inside and to direct our praise to Him.

Tonight is an experiment in that pursuit. It is an opportunity to showcase the ministry and share what we have learned, but ultimately, and far more importantly, it is a chance for us together to collectively, corporately, worship our King and Savior. We hope that you will participate with us in this experience – that you would feel free to meet with your King, to express your praise to Him.”