

Drill Team Guidelines

PURPOSE:

The purpose of organizing a drill team is to honor God, to give God praise, and to encourage the learning of scripture. Also, to teach Christian youth discipline, obedience, self control and leadership abilities. The drill teams within an individual church, district or diocese works together to represent the Christian body in their presentation and witness. The drill team seeks to teach, develop and inspire those participating and those observing such performances of style, articulation and fortitude.

Oscar Alexis (author of The Drill Team Manual) defines a drill team as, *“A drill team is a group of individuals trained in a systematic way to move and maneuver from one place to another in an orderly manner. It involves the rehearsal of prescribed movements to weld individuals into a team, and seeks to develop self-control, discipline, obedience, and leadership abilities. The drill team instills habits of precision and immediate response to the voice of the in-charge leader.”* It is an adapted military style group that performs drills consisting of marches, verbal cadence and songs. A Christian drill team becomes a witness to everyone who witnesses a performance.

MEMBERSHIP:

To become a member of the drill team one must meet the following requirements:

1. Be ten (10) years old or above. *(Depending on the church, you may set your own ages, however, abilities to withstand the training and the attention span of the children must be considered.*
2. Should be a member of the Sunday School.
3. Should be a member of the Holiness Youth Ministries.
4. Be a good witness at home, church and school.
5. Attend practices as decided by the leaders.
6. Be willing to learn the material.
7. Be cooperative.
8. Be willing to present themselves in uniform.

ORGANIZATION:

It is recommended in a local church that the guidelines be developed by those interested and who will be in charge of the drill team. The leaders must be willing to spend the time and energy necessary to make the drill team all that it can be. The leaders must be saved, love to work with young people, have vision, willing to sacrifice their time and talent for the drill team. The drill leader must be able to develop routines of precision and Christian witness. The leader must be able to discipline (see the following section entitled "Discipline") the young people that are a part of the drill team.

Once a motivated leader or director is realized, they will need the support of the pastor and the church. The director of the drill team must be a faithful member of the Sunday School and faithful to the church. A "sign-up" period is recommended in order to avoid having those that may go in and out of the drill team. If this happens you will find that you must re-teach material all of the time.

Ask for volunteers to be matrons or supervisors. This group of people will help with fund raising, transportation, maintaining uniforms, chaperoning and hosting of events for the drill team. They are not the leaders in practice however, they may help with discipline during practice.

The CAPTAIN of the drill team or the Sergeant is responsible for leading the drill team during the performance. He or she is responsible for knowing the routines well and is willing to work closely with the leader in teaching and directing and developing routines. The captain or sergeant calls the commands. Adaptation of these guidelines may be done according to the make-up of your group.

DISCIPLINE:

Each member of the drill team should be aware of the rules of discipline. The demerit system is recommended. Remember you are developing discipline and self-control among the group. They are to be a special group because of their abilities in presentation. This can only be achieved if there is control.

The following are examples of disciplinary rules that members will be penalized one strike for:

1. Excessive talking
2. Uncooperative behavior
3. Poor positioning (repeatedly)
4. Tardiness
5. Missing rehearsals
6. Failure to learn material
7. Bad attitude
8. Failure to follow directions

9. Disrespect

Each member is allowed two (2) strikes. Two (2) strikes equals one (1) demerit. Two (2) demerits equal one (1) suspension and two (2) suspensions equal dismissal from the drill team. With each discipline measure, the member should be counseled by the leader and the captain of the team, post rehearsal. All discipline rules should be reviewed in a general meeting of the parents and team members to assure all rules are understood.

THE DRILL PERFORMANCE:

The church drill team must always remember that it is a church drill team, not a dance troop or school drill team. Oscar Alexis says on this point that your drill team must be a Christ-centered team. "It witnesses as a team and it witnesses as individuals." Members begin to witness at school and with their peers because of the excitement they have and because of the enjoyment they have in discipline drilling. The teams drill should be one of precise movements, harmony of praise songs, and the coordination of Bible verses being quoted to the glory of God. This type of drilling changes lives of team members and those around who witness the presentation. That is why it is so important that each drill magnifies the Lord. A church drill team marches and performs to the glory and honor of God. All allegiance is to the name of Jesus.

ACTUAL DRILL ACTIVITIES:

Develop steps and formations according to the script being presented. Remember the steps must not reflect a worldly style of marching. You don't have to dance or clown around for a fancy presentation. Steps can be changed in all types of ways that are precise and fancy, yet honorable to the Lord!

Tips:

All members must be in step.

Make sure the band and arm movements are together.

Make sure leg and foot movements are the same.

Keep the same distance between members.

Keep the head and eyes straight to the front while marching, unless the drill calls for a change.

Learn the military basic commands (perhaps someone in the congregation who has been in the service can help with this), such as, "about face", "attention", "parade rest", "forward march", "right and left face", "halt", etc.

SCRIPTURES:

There is no limit to what can be learned by the drill team members. Each performance of the drill team should include an ample amount of Scripture memorization. Each member of the drill team should have some basic learning requirements, such as, knowing the books of the Bible, knowing other Scriptures chosen by your leaders.

PRECISION:

At all times, drill teams are to look like one, especially, in performance. Everyone must move together and on time. All movements must be precise and must coincide with the routine.

WRITING THE ROUTINE:

There might be someone in the congregation who is interested in writing the routine. The routine should be Spirit led for the greatest witness by the drill team. In writing the routine, a theme should be used. You may honor an individual (example: Bishop Charles Price Jones), or the routine may be part of a celebration such as Christmas, Black History or Church Anniversary. A song of Christian witness may be included in the routine. There is nothing wrong with being snappy, having fun or being delightful during your presentations, as long as they can be understood as a Christian witness. The Director should be well aware of the origin and of the contents of the drill before presenting it to the drill team.

UNIFORM:

Uniforms should be neat and well coordinated. Shoes should be shined. All members should wear full uniforms. Uniforms may be purchased at army surplus stores, school uniform shops, made by members of the church or purchased at other stores in the area.

It is our prayer that through these Guidelines, members will have a greater understanding of the intent of church drill teams; that more drill teams will emerge at the local level and that the value of such teams to the youth activity program in the will be realized. The discipline and Scripture taught within the well-developed spiritual drill team will long be remembered by its participants. The unique grounding and training, corrective instruction and knowledge will serve to develop Christian character and discipline.

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