

1. Born in South Carolina while his father was stationed at Parris Island.
2. Became a Christian at age 4; re-dedicated his life to Christ at 21.
3. Earned a BA in Music from Texas Lutheran University in 2018; and then began graduate studies through the JFK School of Psychology the same year.
4. Worked as accompanist and/or music director for a myriad of theater companies, churches, and schools between the year 2013 and the time of his hiring at New City.
5. Hired as part-time assistant director of music for New City Fellowship in 2019; then promoted to full-time music director in the spring of 2020.
6. Worship and performance art are fantastic outlets for seeking, reflecting, and emphasizing the glory of our Heavenly Father.
7. Jake is blessed to be part of a church family and staff that passionately seek to exemplify and experience the perfect unity toward which we may be transformed through Christ and His sacrifice and ultimate victory over sin and division.

## TESTIMONY

I remember kneeling to pray for the first time when I was four years old. I had just been told of my separation from my Creator through sin, and my tiny heart couldn't wait another second to begin life as one saved by the grace and sacrifice and victory of Christ. This small being that I was grew, though, into a life full of cynicism and questions and Burquean parlors that made him feel small and unsure and doubtful of his faith. To be clear, it was my faith that I doubted, of all things. It was not my God that I doubted, but my own faith: the unshakeable hope and deep longing for a truth that was the very foundation of my existence. I began to ignore that foundation and began to drown in my sin, my materialism, and especially in my own understanding of the utterly incomprehensible. I found myself feeling quite alone in a group of friends who had no interest in pursuing truth that required acceptance of personal flaws. I spent several years running from God.

During my undergraduate studies, I discovered a course on Biblical storytelling. The specific book from which we told was the Gospel of Mark. I remember receiving the PDF file of our translation for class and thinking that I could somehow disarm this unsettling feeling of reverence and the feeling that there is something more to this book if I just dissected it as *just a story*. I was wrong. The Gospel of Mark is my favorite of the Gospels. The big entrance with miracles and healings, and the *searing* clap-backs at Pharisees, elders, and legal experts feels almost like the story of Christ is the screenplay of a Marvel movie. I dove in to my reading and memorization of the passages with a haughty intellectual fascination. As I experienced the story for itself, though, I began to feel my walls melt away. The heart that was so tired and broken and suffocated in worldly pursuits found its perfect medicine in the promise of salvation through Christ and Christ alone. I finished reading the whole Gospel sometime in the middle of the night,

and immediately I went on a long walk to process what I had just read. I had read the Gospels several times before, since my Mom had us read the Bible through in a year four times when I was a child. This latest reading was something different, though. The truth and power of Christ's very being shook me to my core. The faith that I had doubted revealed itself in the truth that deep down, I *knew* Christ came, lived, died, and was resurrected. I had never doubted the truth. I could not dispute or rebut the truth. I could only doubt *myself* and the sincerity of my defense of the truth in the face of skepticism. These doubts, this fallenness and brokenness, were the axis around which my need for Christ revolves. My understanding can be shaken, but the truth cannot. It is in this truth that I believe: In God the Father, my Creator; in Christ His Only Son, my Redeemer; and in the Holy Spirit which supports and inspires me to continue this journey toward a heart and a life that resemble my Savior's.