

VARI-LITE

VARI-LITE DELIVERS THE MESSAGE FOR CHASE OAKS CHURCH

Plano, TX, USA – Chase Oaks Church, a modern, multi-campus community church in Plano, Texas, recently completed a stage lighting upgrade. To ensure maximum engagement for its services, with improved versatility and on-camera performance, while simultaneously reducing power consumption and maintenance, they chose the latest LED technology from Vari-Lite.

Chase Oaks hosts a range of dynamic worship services at its main location, and live-streams the content to congregations at sites across the city of Plano, so dynamic content with great on-camera looks is an absolute priority.

“We wanted to improve the overall look of worship services and make them more intimate,” says Production Technology Director, Paul Mitchell. “From a performance standpoint, we wanted to bring in a moving profile front light, which was a must to allow us to close out any unwanted wash. We also needed a high CRI with an LED front light, to be as accurate as possible for camera.”

The other key requirement was versatility in both effects and performance. “We wanted the system to be flexible, to provide a variety of looks in our set,” says Mitchell. “I had some specific visuals in mind when I picked out the fixtures. I was looking for medium source lights in a visible pattern on the washes, so we could do pixel control effects and make sense of those on camera. I also wanted full spots with big lenses as a visual for the cameras.”

To meet these requirements, they chose a total of 85 moving head luminaires from the Vari-Lite catalogue. These comprise 40 VL800 EVENTWASH, Vari-Lite’s mid-sized LED wash unit, and 45

fixtures from the compact, LED-based VL2600 range, including 30 VL2600 SPOT and 15 VL2600 PROFILE luminaires.

The VL800 EVENTWASH fixtures are mostly rigged above stage to provide wash and beam looks, but also used on vertical pipes between the panels of the upstage LED wall. “I really wanted the physical arrangement of the light sources to look like this,” Mitchell says. “It’s great for sets when you point it right out at the audience, and the individual pixel control is also great for subtle visual changes. The zoom range was surprising too - at its tightest, you’d think it was a good-sized beam, or we can pull them back out for a wide, smooth wash, while the pixel effects give a bit of eye candy for the cameras.”

The VL2600 luminaires met a variety of requirements, not least the high quality of light, and the flexibility of the CTO adjustment. “High CRI was a big requirement,” confirms Mitchell, “and we’re able to push in the CTO to match our LED wall. They look great on camera.”

Mitchell also praises the gobo packages available in both the VL2600 PROFILE and SPOT models, as well as the impressive output, low-noise performance, and the renowned Vari-Lite color mixing capability. “We demoed everything to make sure they had enough punch,” he says. “On all of them, I like the VL colors, the blue being my favorite. That deep blue others are doing just doesn’t work for me: blue is so hard to saturate and not clip on camera.”

With the VL2600 PROFILE used primarily for front light, the framing system also impressed. “Clean shutters were important,”



says Mitchell. "I've seen some shoddy framing fixtures when it comes to the focal plane, but the VL2600 PROFILE met our standards. In fact, when it comes to the VL2600s, I don't think I could ask for much more. Out of the box, the front light is accurate, and the VL2600 PROFILE blades allow us to slice out small parts of the stage to focus on vocalists. The gobos are great too: I love the way they break up mid-air, which again is great for camera."

The church is also benefiting from the new LED technology in practical terms. Mitchell says, "We can run so much more from our lighting circuits now - we're able to do everything we used to, and more. And LED was key, because my team doesn't have a bunch of time to change lamps."

For Mitchell, the new rig delivers everything he and his team were looking for. He concludes, "It has given us a much more modern look. Before, we were pretty much washing the entire stage: just about everything was lit. Now we can punch in on just a single person, no matter where they are, and still get a great look."

"The worship is also way more dynamic. I'm big on visuals that translate to camera; the subtle things tend to mean more on camera and these fixtures give us options for that. And the in-room experience has exploded with movement. We don't swing the fixtures around constantly, but we can create a lot more impact whenever we do start moving them!" ■

PRODUCTS FEATURED:
VL800 EVENTWASH
VL2600 SPOT
VL2600 PROFILE

PHOTO CREDITS: © Chase Oaks Church

CONSULTANT/INSTALLER: Paul Mitchel

LIGHTING APPLICATION: HOUSE OF WORSHIP