

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

The Ancient-Future of Worship Education:
The Evangelical-Sacramental Movement's Effect on Modern Worship Education

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Music Education

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by

Jordan Miles Covarelli

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APPROVED BY:

Keith A. Currie, Ed D, Committee Chair

Rodney D. Whaley, D Min, Committee Member

ABSTRACT

This thesis looks at developments in evangelical/Pentecostal contemporary Christian worship music (CWM) in response to its theological critiques and analyzes the effects they are having on what training worship leaders will need. CWM has grown into a global phenomenon that largely either disregards or is ignorant of its theological critics. The rapid rate of churches adopting CWM practices in their services has led to numerous universities creating post-secondary degrees in Worship Leadership focused specifically on modern expressions of worship. This thesis uses a convergent parallel mixed methods research model to analyze how worship practices are changing in key evangelical-turned-sacramental churches to determine the worship education needs of worship leaders in similar churches. The research results can be used by universities to adapt or create Worship Leadership degrees that properly equip students for careers in the current and future church job marketplace. Churches can use these findings to help them navigate similar transitions in their worship practices. This research showed that evangelical-sacramental churches still use contemporary and modern musical genres but also use traditional songs. The research shows that these churches require worship leaders to be proficient in modern and traditional music styles, historical worship practices, songwriting, and pastoral care.

To Nicole.

Thank you for your support and care in this season.

Your sacrifices and love made this paper possible.

To Cas.

May you love God and represent His Kingdom

in a rich and profound way.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The twentieth and twenty-first centuries have seen a development and then rapid adoption of contemporary worship music (CWM) and modern worship music (MWM) styles in Christian churches of all denominations in the west. This progression is chronicled by many including Stephen Marini as well as Kate Bowler and Wen Reagan.¹ Bowler and Reagan explain that this modern music movement had roots in Pentecostal-Charismatic “prosperity gospel” churches, such as Australia’s Hillsong Church.² The prosperity gospel leaders, along with leaders of the evangelical and fundamentalist movements, had been embracing a marketing-minded, visitor-sensitive model of church liturgy since the 1960s, and the pop-influenced worship music was a natural extension of this model.³ In the 1990s, many churches using CWM in their services had grown so large (earning the moniker “megachurch”) that Bowler and Reagan claim that “their influence rivaled seminaries, publishing houses, and entire denominations.”⁴

As Pentecostal as CWM’s roots are, they are even more so evangelical. American evangelicalism can be traced back to at least the First Great Awakening,⁵ and the 1970s saw a fresh renewal of evangelicalism following the impact of the revivalist Billy Graham on popular

¹ Stephen A. Marini, "Sacred music," *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002225462>. (Accessed July 1, 2018)

² Kate Bowler and Wen Reagan, "Bigger, Better, Louder: The Prosperity Gospel’s Impact on Contemporary Christian Worship," *Religion and American Culture: A Journal of Interpretation* 24, no. 2 (2014), doi:10.1525/rac.2014.24.2.186, 197-198. (Accessed June 23, 2018)

³ *Ibid.*, 192.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 184.

⁵ Stephen Marini, "Hymnody as History: Early Evangelical Hymns and the Recovery of American Popular Religion," *Church History* 71, no. 2, 06, 2002, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/217494320?accountid=12085>, 273. (Accessed July 9, 2018)

culture.⁶ From that time, an evangelical (evangelistic) desire to reach non-believers led self-identified evangelicals to use “the forms but not the substance, of popular culture in order to spread their message of salvation.”⁷

The exponential growth of new churches adopting this musical style and liturgical accoutrements left a lack of qualified personnel to serve as worship leaders in these churches.⁸ This also led to a steep enrollment decline in college-level Sacred Music programs that prepared students for more traditional church services.⁹ In a slow response, by the early twenty-first century, many universities created new more modernized worship leadership degrees to augment or supplant their classical sacred music and music performance degrees.¹⁰ These worship leadership degrees were aimed at preparing students to be music ministers or worship pastors at churches—mostly evangelical and mostly non-denominational—that had “contemporary” or “modern” worship experiences that called for contemporary or “pop” music techniques, rather than classical methods.¹¹

⁶ Marini, “Sacred Music.”

⁷ Stewart Hoover, *Religion in the Media Age*, Qtd. in April Vega, “Music Sacred and Profane: Exploring the Use of Popular Music in Evangelical Worship Services,” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 24, no. 3 (2012): *Academic OneFile*, 367. (accessed July 5, 2018)

⁸ Randall L. Sheeks, “Skills Necessary for Evangelical Church Music Ministry: A Comparative Study of Perceptions by Selected University Programs and Church Leaders,” New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016, in ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1883897399?accountid=12085>, 23-24. (accessed May 31, 2018)

⁹ Allen S. Hendricks, “A Renewed Approach to Undergraduate Worship Leader Education,” Available from Social Science Premium Collection, (1651838297; ED546293), Lynchburg, VA: Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012, in <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1651838297?accountid=12085>, 3-5. (accessed May 31, 2018)

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 5-6.

However, beginning in 1977 with Robert E. Webber’s “Chicago Call,” and reflected in 21st century research, there are signs of another shift in Christian worship music practices.^{12,13} A growing number of churches are reforming from the now well-established evangelical/Pentecostal-based CWM and MWM experience to a more sacramental and ancient-influenced liturgy. Influenced either directly or indirectly by theologians such as Webber, these churches and pastors are exploring a new frontier of corporate worship that includes a return to historical worship practices.¹⁴

Statement of the Problem

As this sacramental renewal movement continues to gain momentum, there may be another worship war on the horizon. Universities with worship leadership collegiate programs should be aware of the potential ramifications of such a war and the ensuing shift in practices towards a sacramental worship practice. Even if there is not another worship war and only some churches make this sacramental, neo-liturgical shift, appropriate training programs will need to be developed to specifically equip new worship leaders for the unique needs of neo-liturgical, sacramental-evangelical churches. In the same way that Sacred Music degrees were increasingly obsolete for preparing graduates to serve churches as worship clergy, so too will Worship Leadership degrees become inadequate if they are not broad enough in preparation and adaptive enough to marketplace trends.

¹² Robert E. Webber et al, “The Chicago Call: An Appeal to Evangelicals,” 1977. <https://www.ancientfuturefaithnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/TheChicagoCall-1977.pdf>. (accessed July 8, 2018)

¹³ David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church, and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011)

¹⁴ Robert E. Webber, *Common Roots: A Call to Evangelical Maturity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1978), 45.

Need for the Study

The concern with regards to music education is how this sacramental renewal movement is modifying the musical elements of their worship services as they reform the rest of the liturgy. The greater the change, the more quickly students that currently are graduating from contemporary worship leadership degrees will need to pursue continuing education opportunities to learn new skills necessary for the new worship idioms. Likewise, music departments will need to consider how to modify their degree plans so as to not so closely mirror the current modern models of worship leading. Researchers such as Sheeks, Hendricks and Cooper have done much work to document what modern worship leadership degrees teach in their programs.^{15,16,17} Schools may soon need to equip students with a broader worship and music praxis that grows with their experiences. However, if this movement is reforming only the theology of the liturgy but retaining the modern musical elements, then the current contemporary/pop style techniques music schools are increasingly turning to may still suffice for the next Christian worship movement.

Research Questions

This study aims to ask the following question:

¹⁵ Hendricks, "Renewed Approach."

¹⁶ Sheeks, "Skills Necessary,"

¹⁷ James Cooper, "Does College Prepare the Worship Pastor?" Order No. 10257533, Lynchburg, VA: Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, (accessed May 31, 2018) <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1881841921?accountid=12085>.

- What skills and training are most important for worship leaders in evangelical sacramental churches, and how are they utilized?

Sub-questions for this research will include:

- How varied or monolithic are the musical genres and sounds in the worship of sacramental evangelical churches?
- How does the variety of songs in these churches compare to that of the modern worship music of early 21st century evangelical churches?
- What orders, practices, and disciplines, if any, have changed in the worship services of churches that have shifted to a more sacramental faith?
- What changes, if any, has the role of the worship pastor undergone in the Evangelical church and since the emergence of the Evangelical Sacramental movement?
- What kind of songs and how many songs are performed in sacramental evangelical churches?

Analyzing what skills and education are most important for early-adopter churches in this sacramental, neo-liturgical movement will provide an initial target for worship educators since these early adopters will likely serve as examples for future churches joining the movement.

Defining Terms

Evangelical: Evangelicalism is hard to define because, as Elliott describes, it is not merely a denomination or church: it is a movement that has historically resisted the

establishment.¹⁸ Noll, Bebbington, and Rawlyk define “evangelicalism” as: “biblical, conversionism, activism, and crucicentrism.”¹⁹ Robert E. Webber gives a wonderful overview of the history and complexity of evangelical Christianity in his book *Common Roots*. Therein he links evangelicalism at least as far back as Martin Luther’s concerns over *sola gratia, sola fide, sola scriptura, sola Christus*, connecting this to the 20th century fundamentalist movement birthed from the book series *The Fundamentals* published from 1910 to 1915.²⁰ Webber then details the nuanced factions of evangelicalism, identifying fourteen different streams including Fundamentalist Evangelicalism, Non-Denominational Evangelicalism and Main-line Evangelicalism, Pentecostal and Charismatic Evangelicalism, and Conservative and Progressive Evangelicalism.²¹ Several of these streams interweave with one another throughout history. I myself grew up in several different streams on Webber’s list without knowing they were categorically different. Unless otherwise noted, throughout this thesis, evangelical or evangelicalism can be assumed to be associated with the interconnected conservative, fundamentalist, non-denominational and charismatic streams rather than other streams such as the main-line or progressive.

Gordon T. Smith describes Evangelicals as those that claim “the Scriptures play an animating role in the life of the church...as a primary means by which God is present to the church and a primary means by which the church appropriates and lives in the grace” of Jesus

¹⁸ Dennis D. Elliott, "Reappropriating Sacramental Thinking within Protestant Evangelicalism: A Move Towards Systemic Awareness," *In Die Skriflig* 51, no. 1, 2017, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1977401888?accountid=12085>, 1. (accessed June 23, 2018)

¹⁹ Marini, “Hymnody as History,” 285.

²⁰ Webber, *Common Roots*, 26.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 32.

Christ.²² However, Kenneth Kantzer's summary of evangelical Christianity as found in Webber's *Common Roots* is perhaps the simplest and clearest definition: those that believe in 1) "the authority of Scripture in matters of faith and practice," and 2) "the good news of how man can be rightly related to God."²³

It is worth noting that the evangelicals exploring a neo-liturgical or sacramental renewal would qualify as what Webber calls "The Younger Evangelicals" in his work by the same title. These are those that are of a newer mindset that emphasize against their preceding generations' infatuation with rational certainty in their faith. The Younger Evangelicals see "Christianity as a community of faith:" an intercultural, intergenerational, social-justice, missional, urban church expression, that seeks an embodied and communal faith.²⁴

Pentecostal: Pentecostal Christians are primarily evangelicals who hold a theology and a tradition tracing back to the Azusa Street Revival of 1906 that experienced the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit" with the "manifestation of speaking in tongues." They are opposed to cessationists that hold that the miraculous works and "Gifts of the Spirit" depicted at the day of Pentecost and throughout the New Testament are no longer active and available to the Christian today. Pentecostals believe all gifts and manifestations of the spirit are available for all believers today. While self-professing Pentecostals may not agree with his description, Richard Griggs describes Pentecostals as those who desire "to experience their God within the ritual space of the

²² Gordon T. Smith, *Evangelical, Sacramental, and Pentecostal: Why the Church Should Be All Three*, (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2017), 53.

²³ Kenneth Kantzer as cited in Webber, *Common Roots*, 27.

²⁴ Robert E. Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2002), 18.

sanctuary,” valuing experience and encounter above—but not exclusively in place of—the teaching of the Scriptures.²⁵

Charismatic: The Charismatic Renewal Movement began at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, PA, in 1967, as an off-shoot from Pentecostalism. Charismatic theology values the expression of the various gifts of the Holy Spirit and has been a source of various revivals like The Toronto Blessing. Amongst other things, the Charismatic movement is the birthplace of prosperity gospel theology.²⁶

Sacrament: Augustine described a sacrament as “the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.”²⁷ Various denominations recognize different numbers of formal sacraments. There is a near universal recognition of two sacraments—Baptism and Holy Communion/the Eucharist—but there is not agreement on what exact purpose they serve in the life of a Christian or even if they are mandatory. Many non-denominational churches do not even use the word sacrament and instead just observe these practices as expressions of the faith. The Catholic, Orthodox, and Anglican churches all recognize seven sacraments: Baptism, the Eucharist, Confirmation, Penance, Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders/Ordination, and

²⁵ Richard I. Griggs, "Musical Worship as a Pentecostal Sacrament: Toward a Soteriological Liturgy," (2017), Selected Honors Theses, <http://firescholars.seu.edu/honors/64>, 41. (accessed July 9, 2018)

²⁶ Bowler and Reagan, “Bigger, Better, Louder,” 186-190.

²⁷ St. Augustine of Hippo, as quoted in Robert B. Lee, "The Sacrament of Music." *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 4, no. 2, January 1949, *ATLASerials, Religion Collection, EBSCOhost*, 19. (accessed July 5, 2018)

Matrimony.^{28,29,30} However, some Anglican churches tend to emphasize the first three sacraments over the others.³¹

Sacramentalism will refer to a stronger view of sacraments that names specific actions as distinct and holy ordinances, like the Roman Catholic view. For the purposes of this thesis, Sacramentality refers to a belief that certain physical actions and objects can be signs of greater spiritual truths and existences. However, sacramentality does not go so far as to institutionalize a list of specific sacraments or recognize the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church. Instead, sacramentality holds a less formal interpretation of St. Augustine's definition of sacraments. Furthermore, this paper will not address the different theological convictions within the Christian traditions about how the sacraments operate. This is a very valuable and powerful topic, but it is beyond the scope of this paper.

Contemporary Worship Music (CWM): CWM is often used for any songs with sacred texts sets to pop-rock or alternative music, however, for this thesis, it will be used to specifically address the songs that carry the “adult contemporary” sound developed in the 1980s and 1990s.³² This is distinct from more traditional hymnal-based songs or choruses predating the Charismatic Movement and from newer more youthful “arena rock” sounds of the 21st Century worship artists.

²⁸ Catholic Online, “Sacraments of the Catholic Church,” <https://www.catholic.org/prayers/sacrament.php>. (accessed September 7, 2018)

²⁹ Thomas Fitzgerald, “Understanding the Sacraments of the Orthodox Church,” <https://www.goarch.org/-/the-sacraments>. (accessed September 7, 2018)

³⁰ Diocèse Anglican Montreal, “Sacraments,” <http://www.montreal.anglican.ca/sacraments/>. (accessed Sept 20, 2018)

³¹ Christ Church Anglican, “Sacraments,” <http://christchurchanglican.org/anglican-faith/sacraments/>. (accessed Sept 20, 2018)

³²Bowler and Reagan, “Bigger, Better, Louder,” 197-198.

Modern Worship Music (MWM): MWM will identify musical styles used in the church and worship artists in the 21st century that are derived from more youthful origins. MWM artists like Hillsong UNITED utilize minimally-lit sanctuaries and a rock-concert feel complete with smoke and moving lights during their worship services.^{33,34} Additionally, MWM and CWM tend to be soloist-heavy in vocal blend, with only one or a few voices providing harmonies (normally only 1 or 2 harmonies).

Traditional Worship Music (TWM): TWM will identify songs that have several stylistic differences from CWM and MWM. These differences include a larger blended vocal ensemble (either a choir or congregation-heavy vocal strength), instrumental emphasis on the piano or organ or orchestra, more strophic song forms with a didactic vocal delivery. Vocal styles also tend to use more vibrato because TWM is more influenced by traditional/classical music than by contemporary pop music.

Worship Song & Hymn: For the purposes of this thesis, a “worship song” is a sacred song written in a contemporary or modern musical style. While there is much musical diversity within the vast repertoire of sacred songs throughout church history, for this thesis, the term “hymn” will refer to songs that tend to not have contemporary pop music idioms. These songs in contemporary expressions tend to be strophic in form, have a more didactic melodic rhythm, feature choral vocal blends with chordal harmonies, and is often much older than an MWM or CWM song. It should be acknowledged that there are modern hymns, such as “In Christ Alone,” that can either sound more traditional or modern like a worship song. Additionally, there are

³³ Monique Marie Ingalls, "Awesome in this Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship," University of Pennsylvania, 2008 in ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/304494371?accountid=12085>, 157. (accessed June 11, 2018)

³⁴ Bowler and Reagan, “Bigger, Better, Louder,” 198-199.

many modern worship songs that re-harmonize or re-melodize the lyrics of older hymns, such as Hillsong's "Cornerstone."

Liturgy: Liturgy comes from the Greek work *leitourgia* which means "the work of the people" and, in a church context, refers to the order of any worship service. Therefore, technically, every church has a liturgy even if they do not think about it or use the term. However, colloquially, "liturgy" is often used more narrowly to refer to service orders that are more traditional in form and often follow a church calendar to determine the themes of the Sunday services. In this thesis, I will use this narrower meaning to distinguish between traditional liturgies and the "service flows" of contemporary services. However, it is worth noting that I acknowledge that these "services flows" are indeed liturgies, even if not titled as such. Additionally, I will at times use the word "liturgical" in the same narrower sense, referring to more traditional liturgies that are anchored in more historical practices. I will also use the word neo-liturgical as a synonym for churches that are increasingly sacramental. These churches use both labels to describe themselves and it is helpful to remember that both sacramental practices and other liturgical elements are being re-introduced to modernized church services.

Sacred Music: In the most general and true sense, any music played in a church for the purpose of corporate worship is considered "sacred music." However, as a means of distinction between genres styles, "sacred music" in this thesis will refer to the more traditional, classical-technique sounds characterized as hymns, chants, choirs, organs, and pianos.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Contemporary Worship Music

Ingalls notes that in the 1970's, in the wake of the Jesus Movement and Billy Graham crusades, evangelicals began to borrow the genres and settings of rock concerts and music festivals to create a sectarian "alternative" Christian music scene.¹ This scene flowed into both the music industry as Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) and into the church, becoming the controversial "Praise & Worship Music" that threatened to invade the space of hymns and psalms. Ingalls further documents that somewhere in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the "praise" was dropped from the title, creating the title "worship music."² Ingalls shows that "Modern worship" is truly ecumenical, despite arising from churches that are mostly associated with the often ostracized and criticized "prosperity gospel."³

As discussed in the introduction, although CCM became prominent in the 1970s, it was not until the global success of "prosperity gospel" churches in the early 1990s that CWM became a permanent fixture. Griggs documents that Christian thinkers Bonhoeffer and Barth hold that music has an ability to "orient participants toward God and Christ."⁴ Music is participatory and therefore invitational. He then goes on to show that this framework, and much of Pentecostalism's experiential theology should already be viewed as sacramental, although

¹ Monique Marie Ingalls, "Awesome in this Place: Sound, Space, and Identity in Contemporary North American Evangelical Worship," University of Pennsylvania, 2008 in ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/304494371?accountid=12085>, 181. (accessed June 11, 2018)

² Ibid., 167-168.

³ Ibid., 157.

⁴ Griggs, "Musical Worship as Pentecostal Sacrament," 42.

Pentecostals have a strong aversion to that word itself.⁵ In fact, Griggs states that early Pentecostal theology was very effective at being sacramental, “incorporating the body into worshipful routines.”⁶ Griggs cites the support of many more additional scholars that have also linked Pentecostal spirituality with the spirituality of the Eastern Orthodox tradition, which also practices sacramentality and even iconography.⁷

Marini identifies evangelical veins of worship songs as “more mythic than systematic, more aligned with exhortation, mediation, and testimony than with [indoctrination].”⁸

One Pentecostal/evangelical church at the forefront of the Modern Worship movement and has been qualitatively studied is Bethel Church of Redding, CA. Lepinski was able to conduct a case study of the local church that has become a primary “brand” in 21st century worship music. Lepinski largely found that this church retained a strong millennial demographic presence in its congregation through what was perceived as authenticity in how the worship leaders worshiped. She says the church was “very intentional about being authentic and therefore employ appropriate techniques for accomplishing that goal.”⁹ Ingalls also clarifies that in many modern worship circles, “the biblical basis of worship, theological implications, and practical concerns of balancing traditional and contemporary styles, were eclipsed by the discourse of authenticity.”¹⁰ This authenticity is a feeling the millennial congregant desires to feel internally. Ingalls documents: “by raising their hands, closing their eyes, lifting their faces heavenward,

⁵ Griggs, “Musical Worship as Pentecostal Sacrament,” 33.

⁶ Ibid., 34.

⁷ Ibid., 38.

⁸ Marini, “Hymnody,” 286.

⁹ Lepinski, “Engaging Postmoderns in Worship,” 57.

¹⁰ Ingalls, “Awesome in this Place,” 168.

or bowing their heads in a prayerful posture, audience members' bodily bearing inscribes the God-ward focus of worship."¹¹ However, it is also something the millennial congregant desires to perceive from the worship leader. In the modern worship staff culture, the words "performance" and "performer" are intentionally avoided when talking about worship music setlists.¹² Bethel worship leader Steffany Gretzinger says, in explaining why she does not face the congregation while she is singing, "I don't treat the audience like an audience...I go after God."¹³ This activity, though abnormal to an outsider, reads as authentic to the Bethel congregants. Gretzinger's statement reflects a common behavior and disposition of Modern Worship leaders: increasingly, modern worship leaders lead by example. There are moments where they beckon the congregation to perform specific actions (often the lifting of the hands or singing aloud) but the worship leader is increasingly disengaged from the congregation with regards to physical gestures and direct non-verbal communication.¹⁴

Lepinski includes in these methods for allowing authenticity within the congregants the act of dimming the sanctuary lighting to a bare minimum to allow for anonymity between congregants, which she claims is "conducive to postmodern worship."¹⁵ The anonymity allows congregants to feel safe to express themselves without judgment from others.¹⁶ This practice

¹¹ Ingalls, "Awesome in this Place," 180.

¹² Ibid., 203-204.

¹³ Lepinski, "Engaging Postmoderns in Worship," 84-85.

¹⁴ The common behaviors of contemporary and modern worship leaders are detailed and examined in Kevin R. Kurian's Dissertation "The Person of the Worship Leader: A Qualitative Study of Communal Worship," Fuller Theological Seminary, School of Psychology, 2016, in ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1767788750?accountid=12085>, 17. (accessed June 28, 2018)

¹⁵ Ibid., 53.

¹⁶ Ibid., 54.

mirrors Ingalls's finding that there has been a "continued tendency to view worship as primarily an individual expression" even when it is in a corporate setting.¹⁷ However, Ingalls holds that this is "linked intrinsically to the commodification of the music," and by association, the worship expression itself.¹⁸ By increasing the anonymity of the congregant during these worship rituals, another consequence of this anonymity is that it has allowed musical expressions of worship to be something primarily experienced by congregants rather than expressed and participated in by the congregants.

David Lemley holds that this is due to MWM and CWM being a derivative of pop music, which "defines people ultimately as consumers rather than creators."¹⁹ By making this claim, Lemley challenges the validity of contemporary worship practices as viable forms of worship and formation. Additionally, if the congregant is the consumer of worship music, he or she is the recipient of such musical performances rather than the Christian God being the recipient of the musical worship expression. Therefore, Lemley's definition of modern worship practices is of grave concern and should be thoughtfully considered and interacted with by Christian worship theologians and practitioners alike. If evangelical sacramental church pastors and worship pastors are moving more sacramental in their doxology because they agree Lemley's assessment, they will markedly change the musical trappings of the worship services they lead. The motivations and convictions behind this sacramental movement will heavily influence how

¹⁷ Ingalls, "Awesome in this Place," 168.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ David Aaron Lemley, "Liturgies of Word and Turntable: Social and Sacramental Effectiveness of Contemporary Worship Music," Fuller Theological Seminary, Center for Advanced Theological Study, 2013 in ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/1424790835?accountid=12085,245>. (accessed July 1, 2018)

different a modern sacramental worship leadership education needs to look from a current modern worship leader education.

The consumerist connections with CWM and MWM connect back to their “prosperity gospel” origins. Bowler and Reagan document that the prosperity gospel valued church growth as part of their ethos of *more*. If you were in God’s will, you were increasing in good things. So for churches, if you were in God’s will, you would be growing in attendance of financial offerings, and these same pastors had realized the positive impact the quality and style of the worship music had on the size of the congregation.²⁰ Prosperity gospel pastors very quickly sought an in-house singer/songwriter to shape and perform a complementary musical vision for the church.²¹ They desired to provide a product that the congregation would primarily want to receive and experience rather than participate in creating. This tactic has expanded to all denominations, so that in a 2006 research study including a wide variety of church denominations, “100% of pastors’ surveyed associated church growth with the use of praise music and expression from individuals in the worship service”²² This shows a competitive or market-based motivation to use pop music style worship music in order to attract and retain congregants. However, this is not a mindset just among pastors. Cooke adds that, “studies also show that 69% of adults rank music as one of the top 10 factors when choosing a particular church to attend.”²³ Bethel has added additional methods of appealing to particularly younger

²⁰ Bowler and Reagan, “Bigger, Better, Louder,” 192-193.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Penni E. Cooke, "The Characteristics of Quality Worship Music and Church Size, a Qualitative Phenomenological Study," University of Phoenix, 2010, in ProQuest Central; ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/744523616?accountid=12085>, 49. (accessed July 1, 2018)

²³ Ibid.

demographics by intentionally allowing people on the platform to dress in jeans and t-shirts,²⁴ and by incorporating a variety of arts into their forms of worship.²⁵

To provide additional clarity or simplicity to the concept of authenticity in worship, Kurian categorizes authenticity in worship leading as “the genuine expression of an emotional state.”²⁶ Kurian found seven key themes of modern worship leading: “God-centric engagement in worship, performance orientation in worship, authenticity, facilitation of worship, bodily signals, worship leader’s mood, embodied expressions of worship, and emotional expressions.”²⁷ “Performance orientation” and “authenticity” are not contradictory terms in Kurian’s research because for the worship leaders Kurian observed, “authenticity is to be practiced judiciously” and not expressed freely.²⁸ The expressions of authenticity are measured and filtered as to whether they are God-centric. In this way, even authenticity is performed. Kurian also found that many worship leaders valued “the importance of worship as an active congregational experience rather than a passive spectator concert” and selected songs that “invited the congregation to worship.”²⁹

Lemley and his critique of contemporary worship would object to this claim that inviting active participation ensures true worship. Lemley critiques pop contemporary worship music as a consuming economy as he recommends instead a composing one.³⁰ Merely performing motions

²⁴ Lepinski, “Engaging Postmoderns in Worship,” 55

²⁵ Ibid., 57.

²⁶ Kurian, “Person of the Worship Leader,” 17.

²⁷ Ibid., 16.

²⁸ Ibid., 30.

²⁹ Ibid., 32.

³⁰ Lemley, “Liturgies of Word and Turntable,” 245-247.

called for within a song is not enough to override the consumerist model of the concert-like experience. One simple major problem with MWM and CWM is that congregants cannot hear one another above the band and sound system. Lemley holds that true corporate worship must hold an element of interaction and shared impact for the congregants. However, defendants of CWM and MWM would hold that these are all “authentic” cultural expressions of their sincere faith. They are not marketing schemes. Some would also argue that the development of the CCM industry is a modern secular hijacking of sacred practices for materialistic gain. However, Marini identifies the CCM industry as a direct descendent of an uninterrupted history of American sacred music publishing and commerce: “Sacred Music is a quintessential American enterprise, as well as the chief expression of the nation’s soul.”³¹

The main genre of the sacred music industry has changed repeatedly throughout American history, mirroring how musical trends have changed both in the public culture and in the church communities. As musical tastes changed over time, social tensions repeatedly arise between different factions. These tensions tend to be drawn along similar lines throughout history. Magomero identifies four areas of discourse in churches going through worship change: intergenerational differences, cultural differences, style of music, and style of worship.³² There are clear overlaps between the four areas, but the distinctions are helpful when a worship leader or pastor is guiding a church through a transition, such as when leading a church back into a more sacramental expression. Lepinski provides an example of these discourses happening even in the “posterchild” Bethel Church. Bill Johnson, the founding pastor of what Bethel has become

³¹ Marini, “Sacred Music.”

³² F. B. Magomero, "Transforming Worship: The Training of Worship Team for Worship Design," University, 201, in ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?url=https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/docview/879050258?accountid=12085>, 105. (accessed June 20, 2018)

today, “asked congregants to leave the church as a result of their unwillingness to sing contemporary choruses. These individuals held to the strong belief that only hymns were appropriate.”³³

Cooke offers the advice that “congregants must learn to hear music with spiritual understanding as opposed to artistic evaluation.”³⁴ However, Cooke neglects the neurological discoveries, such as those shared by Ronald Devere that suggest the music we listen to in our adolescence and early adulthood triggers brain activity that causes enhanced mental activity, increased joy and reaffirming one’s identity.³⁵ This suggests that it is a very normal human reaction to desire to keep worshipping with the music one grew up singing in church. It is human to resist changes in worship styles. And it is the responsibility of pastors and worship leaders to tenderly guide their congregations through these changes.

Worship Leadership Education

The earliest research one can find regarding worship leadership degree plans was that of Allen Hendricks from 2012. Hendricks analyzed the course names and content of the worship leadership degrees of thirteen different schools, comparing their curricula strengths and differences.³⁶ Additionally, Hendricks collected surveys from worship pastors and lead pastors about how valuable they assessed various worship-related skills to be.³⁷

³³ Lepinski, “Engaging Postmoderns in Worship,” 43.

³⁴ Cooke, “Characteristics of a Quality Worship Leader,” 40.

³⁵ Ronald Devere, “Music and Dementia: An Overview,” *Practical Neurology*, July 2017, <http://practicalneurology.com/2017/06/music-and-dementia-an-overview¢er=37>. (accessed July 11, 2018)

³⁶ Hendricks, “Renewed Approach,” 78-80.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 73-74.

Hendricks works from the evidence that sacred music degrees no longer interest incoming students, judging from the steep decline in graduation rates for those degrees.³⁸ For this proof, Hendricks cites the decline of a single degree program at a single school, offering it as an accurate sample of a national trend. Hendricks states that in 2011, there were eighty-four accredited worship leadership degree programs in various universities in America.³⁹ Hendricks then offers four key new areas of emphasis for worship leadership degrees in comparison to pre-existing sacred music degrees: “(1) concepts of creative worship; (2) the use of technology in worship; (3) contemporary worship literature; and (4) contemporary popular music vocal pedagogy.”⁴⁰ He is curiously silent with regards to theological training and leadership training. One would assume this means that Hendricks holds that these areas of study would remain unchanged between the sacred music and worship leadership degrees.

Building off of Hendricks’ work, Randall Sheeks investigates the professional practicality of the courses being taught in the newer worship leadership degrees in various evangelical universities.⁴¹ He also conducted surveys with professors from the participant schools as well as various worship pastors and senior pastors to determine what was the felt need regarding training and qualifications of a worship leader.⁴² The standout results from the research is that while pastors and worship pastors in the ministry held soft-skills such as “integrity,” “teamwork,” “leading ministry teams,” and “communication,” as most valued, professors held “foundational (classical) music theory,” “worship planning/design,” “leading ministry teams,”

³⁸ Hendricks, “Renewed Approach,” 4-5.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 77.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁴¹ Sheeks, “Skills Necessary,” 29-31.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 32-33.

and “biblical/theological worship” as the most important.⁴³ While thirteen of the top twenty items on the lists were shared, “Music Theory” did not even make the top twenty most important skills, according to practicing worship leaders and pastors. A short-coming of Sheeks’s research is that he did not make a distinction between “church music” degrees that prepared students for modern worship contexts and those that prepared students for traditional/classical contexts.⁴⁴

James Anthony Cooper, Sr. conducted research simultaneously to Sheeks at another university, providing a similar analysis of worship degree plans, but of schools mostly different than those analyzed by Hendricks or Sheeks. Additionally, instead of performing a survey alongside the degree plan auditing of a few schools, Cooper analyzed the course offerings of worship-related degrees from sixty-one universities that are connected with various evangelical denominations.⁴⁵ Cooper categorizes worship leadership curriculum into three areas of study: 1) Musical Training including music theory, music history, vocal/instrument lessons, ensembles, and arranging; 2) Ministry training including church history, role of the pastor, practicums, leadership development, and teaching/preaching; and 3) Theological training, including systematic theology and biblical literature courses.⁴⁶ Like Sheeks, Cooper does not differentiate between “sacred music” and more contemporary-oriented degree plans. Curiously, one conclusion Cooper gives is that becoming a “well-rounded worship pastor doesn’t require time spent on a college campus.”⁴⁷ Other than from the literature review, it remains unclear how that result was determined from the research methodology used since this seems to be a qualitative

⁴³ Sheeks, “Skills Necessary,” 98.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 43-47.

⁴⁵ Cooper, “Does School Prepare,” 10.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 9-10.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 63.

finding gathered from a quantitative/statistical research method. Cooper quotes Scott Carlson from his article “Should everyone go to college?”: “Competencies, not bachelor’s degrees, may become the more valuable currency in the job market.”⁴⁸

The churches that participated in each of these three research projects fully embraced contemporary music as a primary means of corporate worship expression. The participant universities had developed these newer degrees to replace rapidly declining Sacred Music degrees that feature more classical and liturgical training. The churches in both Hendricks’s and Sheeks’s studies presented results that corroborate with each other and point to an emphasis on popular music techniques and modern technology over classical techniques and disciplines.^{49, 50} One can deduce that these participants favored popular music genres themselves for corporate worship over more classical genres.

It would seem that it is the responsibility and necessity of college faculty and administration to maintain degrees that are professionally and financially beneficial to the students and the workforce in order to remain solvent institutions. The job of keeping a college degree professionally beneficial is dependent upon remaining aware of the “market trends” in the industry that the degree is preparing students to enter. With a growing collection of voices calling for sacramental renewal in evangelical theology and evangelical worship practices and with a growing number of churches heeding this call, a re-evaluation of worship degree content is necessary.

⁴⁸ Scott Carlson, qtd. in Cooper, “Does School Prepare,” 63.

⁴⁹ Sheeks, “Skills Necessary,” 87.

⁵⁰ Hendricks, “Renewed Approach,” 73-74.

Call for Evangelical Renewal

The call for evangelical renewal or maturity can be traced back to at least the “Chicago Call of 1977.” The Chicago Call was a public document written to evangelicals by self-professed evangelical pastors and theologians, calling for a return to “historic roots” in the faith.⁵¹ The Call affirms an evangelical view of “Biblical Fidelity,” holding that “the Scriptures, as the infallible Word of God, are the basis of authority in the church.”⁵² It then goes on to call for other more historical items be introduced into the evangelical tradition such as “Creedal Identity” and “Sacramental Identity.”⁵³ Here, Webber and others use the word “sacramental” to refer to the specific sacramentalism of the historic and Catholic Church, rather than a broader “sacramentality.” The Chicago Call is, however, silent on artistic expression in services.

Many scholars would consider CWM and MWM a part of the church’s tradition of welcoming culturally informed artistic expression in their worship services. For instance, April Vega claims that the Western church traditions of using “music that straddled the sacred/secular worlds dates back at least to the sixteenth century in Europe.”⁵⁴ Vega continues by calling CWM and MWM recent additions to a long history of “folk hymnody” which she defines as “a musical vernacular expression of sacred truths.”⁵⁵ If pop music is a vernacular music style, than it deserves a place in Christian worship services as part of a historical tradition of Christians singing to their God in the art forms native to their culture.

⁵¹ Webber et al, “Chicago Call,” 1.

⁵² Ibid., 2.

⁵³ Ibid., 2-3.

⁵⁴ Vega, “Music Sacred and Profane,” 367.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

However, David Lemley provides a strong argument against the informing worldview of popular culture that shaped contemporary rock/pop music and therefore CWM and MWM. Lemley indicts pop music culture with the inferior nature of presenting “an ideal that *allows encounter without lived commitment*.”⁵⁶ Lemley argues that for a musical ethos to serve as effective sacrament and worship, the worshipers must mobilize “beyond the act of presentational performance” in a worship service.⁵⁷ Congregants must put into action the values expressed in their gatherings. He holds that, unfortunately, pop music conversely “offers an ideal that can only be further realized in commitment to consumption” rather than a commitment to what he calls “the church’s participation in the geography of the kingdom.”^{58, 59} He points to the shallow, unfulfilling, and quickly obsolete nature of current popular culture and concludes that pop music “defines people ultimately as consumers rather than creators.”⁶⁰ These claims implicate the “authentic worship” music experienced at churches like Bethel in Redding—as observed by Lepinski—as inadequate for spiritual formation and in contradiction with the prevailing Christian doctrine of worship that is concisely summarized by Ingalls: “You do not consume worship. You offer it.”⁶¹

These mis-alignments may be a root cause for a mass exodus of millennials from the church, as documented by David Kinnaman and the Barna Group, despite churches shifting to

⁵⁶ Lemley, “Liturgies of Word and Turntable,” 245. *Emphasis added*.

⁵⁷ Ibid. Lemley does not mean “performance” in the same way that Bethel means when they “outlaw” that word. Instead, he would call even the behaviors of the congregation performances: they are performing an act of worship.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 6.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 245.

⁶¹ Ingalls, “Awesome in this Place,” 171.

use in worship the music popular among Millennials.⁶² Lemley challenges the church and pastors to ask themselves if current worship music is truly “inviting people into a personally and socially re-orienting encounter with God” or if it is merely an encounter that does not lead to meaningful change.⁶³ Lemley’s claims suggest that CWM and MWM are turning God-worshippers into worship-worshippers, Christ-followers into artist-followers, congregants into consumers, and communion-partakers into music-partakers.

Paradoxically, Lemley returns to the music industry for an example of a way forward for the church. He references a trend of artists breaking from traditional institutionalized studios and record labels and opting for more democratic means of song creation and distribution to the fans. Artists are allowing the fans to be part of the music-making and meaning-making processes. He calls this music production shifting from “control to connectivity, from product to service, and from professional to amateur.”⁶⁴ It is akin to—and feeds a possibility for—a new “shared Christian praxis in their participation with music” and worship.⁶⁵ The congregation would become more participatory than they currently are in the rock-concert environment of modern worship services. He goes on to say that “the values that might threaten the music industry model sustaining Contemporary Worship Music could also promise an enrichment of song as a sacramental symbol.”⁶⁶ Lemley’s call for reduced institutionalization resonates with Webber’s

⁶² Kinnaman, *You Lost Me*.

⁶³ Lemley, “Liturgies of Word and Turntable,” 256.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 254.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 257.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 256.

findings regarding the “Younger Evangelicals” who view the church as a community rather than an institution.⁶⁷ Industry and marketing are not the future for music or the church.

Lemley notes that historical Christian worship has centered around the “receiving of the word” (an idiom familiar to evangelicals) and “gathering at the table” (an idiom less common with evangelicals) but CWM has replaced this “word and table” with “word and song.”⁶⁸ Griggs uses Sarah Koenig’s language that “music is the defining liturgical activity for evangelical churches and plays a role along the soteriological ordo.”⁶⁹ Griggs then cites Albrecht’s view of sound as icon, as it “creates sacred space (what [Albrecht] calls ‘ritual fields’) for Pentecostal/Charismatic communities.”⁷⁰ Compared to Lemley, this is a far more accepting view of Pentecostal theology and worship practices using sound and music. This would qualify as sacramentality, while Lemley and Webber call for a stronger renewal to sacramentalism, returning the focus from “word and song” back to “word and table.”

The church has always had song in its worship, even being commanded in the Scriptures: “addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart.”⁷¹ However, song was not the primary means of ministry, encounter, and formation throughout history. Indeed, neither was the sermon. Aaron Niequist, an

⁶⁷ Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals*, 16.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 7-8.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 42.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁷¹ Eph 5:19 (ESV).

evangelical-sacramental pastor, shares his story of learning that the table or the Eucharist has in been the crowning center of Christian worship services for most of church history.⁷²

While Niequist shares his story of discovering traditional sacramentality, Griggs claims that many Pentecostal/Evangelical worship practices are already sacramental. Much of their current theology around their worship elements mirrors modern Catholic language about sacrament, in which sacraments “facilitate meaningful participation with the divine in an almost ‘theophanic’ way, beyond the capacity of human thought or language.”⁷³

It will be up to the practicing pastors in churches shifting from evangelical to more sacramental practices to determine whether it is fitting to incorporate a more inclusive sacramentality or if a full reformation back to sacramentalism is needed for the next worship culture shift. That will heavily influence how much these church services do or do not change, and by association, how much the worship education curriculum needs to change.

A few pastors that have made this expansion from evangelical contemporary church services to include more ancient practices have written books about their convictions and experiences. Aaron Niequist’s work *The Eternal Current* is part memoir and part instructional guide about the pastoral journey beyond the “small pond” of the local or current tradition he was raised in and into a larger, deeper current of the historically and ecumenically broader, welcoming current of the entire Kingdom of God. Likewise, Dr. Glenn Packiam’s book *Discover the Mystery of Faith* chronicles his own journey from being a celebrity modern worship artist to a pastor that incorporates ancient practices into the worship services of the evangelical

⁷² Aaron Niequist, *The Eternal Current: How a Practice-Based Faith Can Save Us from Drowning* (New York: Waterbrook, 2018), 32-33.

⁷³ Griggs, “Musical Worship as Pentecostal Sacrament,” 33.

megachurch he pastors.⁷⁴ Both authors center the liturgies of their services around the eucharist.^{75, 76} This is one of the two nearly-universally recognized sacraments of the Christian faith, along with water baptism. However, Packiam and Niequist are examples of pastors and worship pastors raised in an exclusively modern context that have left the narrow stream they have known and discovered broad range of (often older) practices to incorporate into their church liturgies. Because these books are first-hand accounts of the movement this thesis is investigating, these texts are treated as primary sources in the literature review.

Niequist suggests that the practices and styles of modern worship settings are insufficient, explaining that he found that “four rock songs and a hymn fell far short of the depth and width of the kingdom vision” of properly worshipping.⁷⁷ Worship is beyond musical expression. While Niequist would agree with Lemley’s critique of popular music dominating modern worship expressions, stating that “we often excel at offering worship music and inspiring art that move people’s hearts. But inspiration without spiritual formation doesn’t bring lasting change. *Church as concert hall is not enough.*”⁷⁸ Here we see a practicing pastor and worship pastor corroborating Lemley’s research findings: modern worship is insufficient for true Christian worship. Lemley’s contrast between the congregation being the consumers of worship versus the composers of worship is akin to Niequist’s contrast between a “church *for* the people” that says “come hear our gifted artists provide a worship experience that will inspire and bless you” versus a “church *of* the people” where “worship becomes prayerful, intentional space that empowers the

⁷⁴ Glenn Packiam, *Discover the Mystery of Faith* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2013).

⁷⁵ Niequist, *Eternal Current*, 34-36.

⁷⁶ Packiam, *Discover the Mystery*, 69-73.

⁷⁷ Niequist, *Eternal Current*, 14.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 58. *Emphasis added.*

people to co-create a worship experience both as individuals and as a body, both when they are home and when we are together.”⁷⁹ The similarities are blindingly clear. Niequist and Lemley both hold that modern popular music is inadequate and misaligned for appropriate Christian Worship.

However, Niequist would disagree with Lemley’s way of framing his research. Lemley implicitly assumes that there is musical genre that would indeed effectively convey properly-framed worship. Conversely, Niequist holds that music alone is insufficient for worship, regardless of the genre. Niequist claims that, “correct information and compelling art are important in the church but primarily to help us participate in the human and divine work of spiritual formation....Dr. M. Robert Mullholland Jr. defined spiritual formation as ‘the process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the sake of others.’”⁸⁰

Lemley’s critique is that pop music as a particular genre is inadequate for proper Christian worship and that other music would better serve a congregation. Niequist sees worship as something beyond music and that music on its own would never be a sufficient vehicle. Instead, he points to other practices such as centering prayer, the Lectio Divina, lament, and the Eucharist as complementary means of corporately worshiping in a way that leads to healthy spiritual formation.⁸¹ To this end, Niequist offers that corporate worship that flows with the full history of the Christian church is not an “either/or” decision, but both/and: “reading ancient

⁷⁹ Niequist, *The Eternal Current*, 28.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 59.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 26.

prayers? Yes. Singing pop songs with our hands in the air? Yes. Passing the Peace? Yes. Singing old spiritual laments? Yes.”⁸²

While Lemley may question the expressive emphasis pop music gives worship, Niequist welcomes it and adds to it, saying, “Expressive worship is necessary and important; it is a gift to many people. But it is only half the story....we must also participate in formative worship.”⁸³ Dr. John Witvliet compares leading others in expressive worship to teaching children to express themselves with words: it is an honorable cause but the higher calling of parents is “to help form them into the kind of adults we know they need to become...whole and healthy adults” and the higher calling of worship leaders is to teach the congregation to become more Christ-like.⁸⁴ Niequist would likely recommend a worship training that includes not only traditional and modern songs with classical and popular techniques but also various other musical styles beyond the music composed by white protestant men. He would likely recommend not only training in modern technology but also the historical practices and theology of Christian worship from diverse denominations and cultures.

Similar to *The Eternal Current*, Packiam’s book draws a picture similar to Niequist’s: one that points to the inadequacy of modern worship music and its practices. Packiam employs the imagery of spiritual nutrition, suggesting that the modern worship song setlist and service is the spiritual equivalent of a happy meal.⁸⁵ He says that, “good, rich, Christ-centered worship is a feast. This kind of worship is a bounty of beauty and truth, with layers of flavor, textures of

⁸² Niequist, *The Eternal Current*, 31.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 61.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 60-61.

⁸⁵ Packiam, *Discover the Mystery*, 19.

taste.”⁸⁶ By comparison, what he calls “pop-evangelicalism”, which is what most modern Music & Worship degrees are preparing graduates for, is “sorely lacking in both taste and nutrients.”⁸⁷ While Packiam is less concerned about style and more concerned about content, one cannot help but question if indeed you can have one without the other. To use Packiam’s food/nutrition analogy in which spiritual formation is the nutritional side of the meal and style is the flavor, are not some flavors inseparably connected to certain nutritional values? Sweetness, unless artificially added, is always connected to sugar, rich or creamy flavor is always connected with fats, and meat always has protein. Might not this also be true of worship practices? Might pop music worship and its consumerism framework always lead to “empty calories” in the diet of spiritual formation?

Packiam uses the Psalms as a source material for richer worship, explaining that singing the psalms teaches us the language of prayer, and the church knew and practiced this since ancient times on through at least the Protestant Reformation.⁸⁸ Similar to Niequist’s call for worship leading that goes beyond expressive worship, Packiam warns against “the idleness of ‘praying what’s in our hearts’” only.⁸⁹ Instead, things like singing the psalms provides the proper words for our souls and lives to be shaped into beings that think and act and pray like Christ.

Additionally, Packiam welcomes a diversity of instruments when available in his services, suggesting that he would also encourage a wider musical training than just a pop-technique.⁹⁰ Additionally, his emphasis that ancient practices are crucial to the future of the

⁸⁶ Packiam, *Discover the Mystery*, 18.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 33-34.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 65.

church suggests that he would hold that church and liturgical history would be important areas of study for future worship leaders.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research model used was a convergent parallel mixed methods approach. This was helpful because of the small sample size used due to the limited number of evangelical churches and pastors already fully exploring this sacramental liturgical shift. The primary data sources were an interview yielding qualitative data and a survey yielding quantitative data. This data was augmented by a single participant providing their church's church song repertoire data collected.

This study examines the initial trends of a fledgling movement, so the numbers of churches that are currently making this shift are not very large. However, that also means that the pastors in this research are early-adopters that hold significant influence over others that will follow in their footsteps. Similarly, in the late 1990s, an analysis of what Hillsong Church, Matt Redman, and Tim Hughes were doing in corporate worship settings would forecast what the vast majority of non-denominational and evangelical—and eventually many denominational—churches would do with their worship practices over the next decade.¹ An analysis of the influential participating pastors will provide prescriptive insight into what the next shift in corporate worship will look like, and therefore what worship education will need to include.

Protocols

Initially, the researcher pursued a very rigorous and time-intensive case study research model that included an interview, a survey, church service observations, a song usage archival report, and a follow-up interview. Research approvals were attained through the Liberty University IRB and all protocols were followed at all times to maintain participant

¹ Ingalls, "Awesome in this Place," 157-159.

confidentiality. Once an approved and stamped consent form was received from the IRB, research participation proposal emails were sent to a total of fifteen pastors. Initially, every pastor that did reply chose to decline participation due to the heavy time commitment needed during a very busy season for churches and pastors (preparing for Christmas). A request for Change in Protocol was submitted to reduce the research methods to a shorter interview, shorter survey and the song usage archives. Additionally, participants were offered the three activities of research participation as an “a la carte menu.” Each participant could elect if they wanted to participate in each of the three research activities. After making this modification, 5 participants completed the informed consent form. All participants completed all activities they consented to do and no participants withdrew from the study.

All research participants are kept confidential. Interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed. Names of pastors were changed to code names in the transcripts and computer files and church names and identifying details were redacted. The code name index was stored in a hand-written document that was stored away from the password-locked computer with all research documents stored on it. Research participants were not compensated. Four of the pastors elected to participate in an interview, three of which also completed the survey. The fifth pastor chose to only provide their song usage history. All three modes of research were during the same research period, providing a convergent parallel mixed methods research model as outlined by John Creswell.² The diversity of data collection methods helps offset the narrowness of the participant pool.

The interviews were all conducted over the phone, recorded and then transcribed using a professional transcription service. These transcripts were then checked for any errors and

² John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 4th ed, (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2014), 233-234.

corrected. The interviews each followed a pre-planned list of questions provided in the Appendix. However, each interview remained open enough to allow for divergent follow-up questions based upon each participant's answers to the initial questions. The primary goals of the interviews were two-fold. First, to gather first-hand experience and perspective in a phenomenological way about the "why" behind each church's journey back into historical worship/liturgical practices. Kvale and Brickmann explain that this is a vital approach for qualitative research interviews.³ Seeking the "why" provides researchers with vital contextual "descriptions so that they will have relevant and reliable material from which to draw their interpretations."⁴ Kvale and Brickmann further expound that the job of determining the "why" may lead the researcher to "go beyond the subjects' self-understanding" and critically evaluate the answers provided to conclude their own findings rather than simply accepting interview answers at face value.⁵ The interviews aimed to allow the researcher participants to self-describe and self-guide, but the follow-up questions aimed to help find clarity to their unique contexts, motivations and perspectives of the phenomenon that is the evangelical-sacramental movement. It is worthwhile to note that the interview participants agreed to a 15-30 minute interview but each participant was so open and free-flowing in their responses that every interview ran over 50 minutes in length by the participant's own choosing.

The survey was a confidential online survey through Google Forms that was only accessible by a direct link that was only shared with the research participants after they completed and returned the informed consent form. The survey followed the question formats

³ Steinar Kvale and Svend Brickmann, *InterViews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2008), 133.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

used by Cooper, Hendricks, and Sheeks in their research projects, asking questions about the importance of various worship leadership skills and the songs sung in their particular context. In addition, it also asks about what styles and eras of music and lyrics they sing in their sacramental services.

The song list data was provided by the participant in screenshot form from their cloud-based scheduling solution Planning Center Online.

Survey results, interview transcripts and song usage database data were uploaded into NVivo 12 where they were coded by theme. Initially, these themes were focused around the key research study questions, but trends were identified noticed, new themes were added upon those trends. Additionally, NVivo was used to analyze word frequency and word patterns between the various data courses. Being able to codify and merge the various data sources allowed the quantitative and qualitative data points to corroborate or discredit one another.

Questions and Hypotheses

As previously explained, this research took the form of three different protocols that participants could select individually like an a la carte menu. The majority of the research participation came in the form of a confidential phone interview with a significant amount of supporting data coming through the survey. The primary research question was: “How important are various skills and training (such as the history of Christian Worship, contemporary music theory, hymnody, classical music theory, administrative organization, and orchestration) for worship leaders in evangelical sacramental churches, and how are these skills used?” The scripted interview questions and a copy of the online survey are provided in the appendix of this thesis.

Prior to collecting research data, the hypothesis was that the evangelical/sacramental worship leaders would need similar skill sets to those found necessary for evangelical worship

leaders in Sheeks's and Hendricks's research projects, however, there would be a few primary areas of divergence to accommodate the sacramental elements and mindset. These areas were: 1) an increased knowledge of the historical practices of church music, liturgy and worship (Church Music History), 2) an increased need for original songwriting skills, and 3) a more diverse musicality where the worship leader is familiar with and comfortable in various musical styles. As will be shown in the next two chapters—RESEARCH RESULTS and DISCUSSION—each of these three areas were confirmed by the majority of the research participants along with additional areas of need expressed by the participants.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH RESULTS

Introduction

Interviews were analyzed in two ways: qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitatively each interview was assessed and summarized according to general meanings and key points of emphasis based upon context. Quantitatively, all interview transcripts were coded and cross analyzed to reveal the frequency and unanimity of key words and perspectives. The surveys provided another source of quantitative data that made direct one-to-one comparisons between the participants. Additionally, the survey provided direct data to compare these research participants with the participants of Hendricks's and Sheeks's research. The song usage archives provided by a single participant helped to parallel with part of the survey and interview answers given by other participants. The song archive gave hard data points of what songs and music genres were used at the ministry while the survey and interviews allowed the participant to estimate these ratios, introducing a margin of error.

Because research participation was confidential, participants and their churches will be referred to as Pastor/Church One, Two, Three, Four, and Five. Three of the five participants were worship pastors for their church (all three completed the interview) while the other two pastors functioned now in a teaching pastor role but have previous ministry experience as a worship leader or pastor. Each pastor represented a different church. To protect their confidentiality, I will disguise the gender of the pastors by intentionally using the grammatically incorrect pronouns "they/them/their."

Interview Findings: Qualitative

The four interview participants were either the worship pastor or preaching pastor at four different churches from four different states and regions of the United States. Two of the four

churches represented were megachurches. The other two churches were a recent church-plant and a mid-sized church. Both reported experiencing healthy growth patterns.

While a large or mega-sized church is not a sign of a church's health, it can be used to point to how effectively it is serving a felt-need in the community. Additionally, because of their congregation size and other networking connections, most of the participants have an influence on a large number of other churches in their region, the nation, and the globe. Additionally, while there were unique findings in each interview, generally there was strong corroboration between the participant answers with regard to their musical, pastoral, and theological convictions: the key areas of question for the research. Because of this agreement and the mixed methods research approach used, I believe that I achieved a far richer population saturation than would be expected from so few participants. Presented first are separate summaries of each pastor's interview, divided into the same sub-sections: Motivation, Liturgy, Music Styles & Genres, and the Role & Skills of the Worship Leader.

Pastor One

Motivation

Pastor One is the worship pastor at their multi-site church that offers both a contemporary and a traditional/sacramental service. They lead worship in the contemporary service and oversee the worship leader of the sacramental service and a worship staff of about ten people. The church added the traditional service out of a desire to reach the next generation, explaining that Millennials and Generation Zers were seeking something more rooted and withstood the test of time rather than "a Ted Talk" sermon and watching people perform modern music on-stage.¹

¹ Interview with Pastor One, November 2, 2018.

They sought words, prayers, and songs that the church has used for “hundreds of years.”² The pastor shared that the motivation behind these changes was to “pass the baton [of the faith] to the next generation” and in order to do so, “we need to learn the language of the next generation.”³ The upcoming generation’s language and perspective is one inclined towards the past.

Additionally, the “next generation” has been exposed to far more diversity than any generation in history. The advent of broadband internet and mobile devices has made cultures and perspectives around the globe immediately available and intimately close. Pastor One stated that one result of this is younger people having diversified musical tastes that reach far beyond their geographical region, creating an “amalgamation in everything.”⁴ The next generation is diverse and yet how this diversity plays out will still be unique to the communities the individuals are in. Culture will be both extremely global and intimately local. Therefore, Pastor One says that each church will develop a liturgical and musical expression that reflects the community it serves rather than mimicking a monolithic expression of modern worship music and seeker-sensitive church services.⁵

Liturgy

While the contemporary service also features some hymns mixed with the mostly CCM setlists, the sacramental service highlights these traditional elements far more.⁶ The general liturgy of the traditional service, as described by the pastor is:

² Pastor One, 2018.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ This is reminiscent of the “four rock songs and a hymn” that Aaron Niequist expressed dissatisfaction with in his book *The Eternal Current*, 14.

- Instrumental/Piano Prelude
- High Welcome
- Call to Worship (from the Book of Common Prayer)
- Three Worship Songs. (normally two of which are hymns)
- Prayers of Confession/Forgiveness
- Offering (with instrumental hymn)
- Testimony
- Scripture Reading
- Homily
- Passing of the Peace
- Communion
- Worship Song (contemporary or traditional)
- Prayer
- Liturgical Benediction

The service liturgy is tailored and trimmed to fit a service that was less than 70 minutes because of service and parking lot scheduling limitations.⁷

Music Styles & Genres

In the traditional/sacramental service, the traditional songs/hymns are played with traditional accompaniment during the vocal sections but the keyboardist, who is a “gifted jazz musician” has freedom to reharmonize during the instrumental sections.⁸ The reason for

⁷ Pastor One, 2018.

⁸ Ibid.

retaining the traditional accompaniment during the vocal sections is because the region the church is in is “a traditional region.”⁹ The congregants had a great diversity of various denominational backgrounds prior to their joining Church One. This diversity effected how they approach singing hymns. While each denomination represented a slightly different set of remembered hymns and harmonies, congregants already know the original vocal harmonies of their particular hymns. Modernizing a hymn would require reharmonizing the song which would drastically alter the vocal harmonies even if the melody remained unchanged. Therefore, the hymns in their services are performed with original harmonies and accompaniment. For the contemporary songs that are performed, the predominant musical genre used in the sacramental service is more of a folk sound rather than a rock sound of CWM and MWM used in the church’s contemporary service.¹⁰

Role & Skills of the Worship Leader

One way the role of the worship pastor/leader has changed for this church in that the worship pastor serves more as a “manager over the service: not leading it.”¹¹ Additionally, a more extensive knowledge of historical liturgical practices and resources like the Anglican *Book of Common Prayer* is vital for a sacramental worship service.¹² Furthermore, to serve the community, the musical stylings of a service, regardless of liturgical elements, would be driven by the congregation. Their church plants and secondary church sites used music that reflected the general population: an inner-city location with a larger minority congregation featuring a musical

⁹ Pastor One, 2018.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

blend of contemporary and black gospel while a more rural location was more unplugged and acoustic guitar-heavy.¹³ The worship leader would aim to authentically deliver musical corporate worship moments that acknowledge the cultures represented in the congregation. The music the worship leader has to choose between will no longer be either traditional hymns or contemporary rock choruses. With a diversified population comes a diversified musical expression.

Pastor Two

Motivation

Pastor Two was a senior pastor that had musical experience and knowledge from past ministry service. They expressed that their motivation for incorporating sacramental and historical service elements was pastoral and missional. The church was comprised of various denominational backgrounds, just like Church One. Pastor Two adds that many congregants had grown disillusioned with evangelicalism as it had become allied to very specific worldviews and political positions.¹⁴ Pastor Two goes on to say that, “non-denominational” had come to mean “non-rootedness” for many congregants. The ancient practices introduced at [Church Two] allowed for a pure break from both the conservative evangelicalism—and sometimes liberal progressivism—that congregants had been wounded by. The main elements that helped bring healing were “the table and the creed.”¹⁵

¹³ Pastor One, 2018.

¹⁴ Interview with Pastor Two, November 15, 2018.

¹⁵ Pastor Two, 2018.

Liturgy

Pastor Two described the crafting of their liturgy as desiring to create a “liturgy close to the dirt.”¹⁶ This means they desired a liturgy that did not feel distant or detached, but rather reflected the life and culture of the congregants: it was earthy and grounded in everyday life. Alongside this value, Pastor Two expressed a value of “Beauty”: that words and service elements would be well thought out.¹⁷ Pastor Two did not provide a thorough liturgical order that was consistently followed, but did indicate the following elements were consistently present:

- Call to Worship
- Recital of the Creeds
- Songs of Worship
- Passing of the Peace
- Scripture Reading
- Homily
- Benediction¹⁸

Pastor Two indicated that they used the *Book of Common Prayer* to structure the worship service but were not heavy handed with its application. Additionally, they eventually followed the lectionary and annual worship calendar and were “almost fully Anglican.”¹⁹ Yet, they also were “unashamedly charismatic” leaving room in their services and homilies for expressions of

¹⁶ Pastor Two, 2018.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid.

the gifts of the spirit like “Words of Knowledge.”²⁰ Of the four interview participants, Pastor Two seems the most charismatic-sacramental rather than evangelical-sacramental. Nonetheless, all three elements are present in their doxology.

Musical Styles & Genres

The music in Church Two was primarily neo-folk in style, similar to the band “All Sons & Daughters” (a touring folk music worship band).²¹ However, hymns were not modernized or re-arranged into this folk style. They were played in the original style in order to preserve the original vocal melodies since a primary reason for returning to these historic songs were their familiarity and feeling of being anchored to something older than the congregation’s present culture.²² One example this pastor gave was the popular recent song “Cornerstone” by Hillsong Worship (released in 2012). “Cornerstone” takes the verses of the classic hymn “On Christ the Solid Rock” and sets them to a new melody and pairs them with a new chorus. Pastor Two stated that they did not do that song in their church because “that song has already been written. That song is ‘On Christ the Solid Rock.’ And that song is done. Leave it alone. ... [The congregation] liked feeling like they were singing something that wasn’t written 10 years ago.”²³

Pastor Two estimated that roughly 40% of songs were hymns, 30% were original compositions and 30% were other modern tunes.²⁴ Original compositions were vital to Church Two because of the standard of excellence and theological scrutiny applied to all service

²⁰ Pastor Two, 2018.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

elements, including lyrics. Because of this, many modern songs were rejected due to weak or poor theology. One such example Pastor Two gave was the very popular CWM song “Good, Good Father.”²⁵ Pastor Two recommended the song to the worship pastor because of its popularity in the national Christian community and worship industry, but the worship pastor pushed back against the suggestion, citing the values that Pastor Two had instilled in the pastoral team and that the song was “self-centered and individualistic.”²⁶ Due to this more selective filter for selecting newer songs for corporate worship, the church worship pastors and musical community crafted original songs in modern folk styles to sing as a congregation.

Role & Skills of the Worship Leader

Pastor Two describes that a worship leader needs to “have all the machinery” of a modern worship leader but also must be “children of the Tradition.”²⁷ The Tradition referred to is the traditions of the church throughout history. Pastor Two believes that in the next 10-15 years there will be a wave of worship leaders that will have modern musical training and a love for the historical practices of the church and these worship leaders will be able to combine the two currently divergent areas: MWM and ancient liturgical practices.²⁸

²⁵ Pastor Two, 2018.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

Pastor Three

Motivation

Pastor Three is the worship pastor for a recent church-plant that desired to expand their doxology beyond “the Charismatic evangelical non-denominational thing” that was lacking in some areas of spiritual formation.²⁹ Pastor Three had found that in the modern evangelical non-denominational church one often loses perspective of the “global, universal, past-present-future Church.”³⁰ They wanted to include their evangelical non-denominational heritage and build upon it with the diverse and historical practices of other traditions. Without historical elements and understanding, a church, congregation, or parishioner can “feel adrift” or in a faith where “there’s not a...backbone to everything.”³¹

Liturgy

Pastor Three provided a run-down of the church’s service liturgy, detailing the various service elements and the ways they had been modified and how they interacted with each other.

- Acclamation: scripture reading (often including a participatory section)
- Songs of Worship (roughly 4 songs)
- Prayer (maybe a “collect prayer”)
- Passing the peace (modified and blended with a modern “meet & greet” atmosphere)
- Gospel or Scripture Reading

²⁹ Phone interview with Pastor Three, Nov 20, 2018.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

- Homily (following the Narrative Lectionary)
- Time of Prayer, Reflection or Activation (depending on homily topic)
- Holy Communion
 - Included in this is a time of Confession & Absolution/Affirmation
 - A Worship song is sung during this time, but the song does not have to be “as congregational” meaning it is “not necessary for people to sing along.” Instead, they can choose to listen and receive.
 - A Post-Communion Prayer concludes this segment.
- Another song of Worship (more congregational)
- Closing includes:
 - Prayer over people with birthdays and anniversaries
 - Announcements
 - Benediction (often read by a child)³²

This Liturgy is derived from the Anglican holy communion service; however, the pastoral team “tweaked, removed and re-ordered elements” for their unique setting and convictions around how to serve their congregation.³³

Musical Styles & Genres

Pastor Three desires to continue to have a modern, mostly rock-influenced musical sound, using a full rock/pop band that includes electric guitars, synthesizers and accompaniment tracks. Part of this desire is to be a church that connects with and is relevant to artists and

³² Pastor Three, 2018.

³³ Ibid.

musical artists in their area so that their band is full of musicians and artists that are also making music outside the church. Most of the musicians in the area are modern rather than classical in their training and sound. However, Pastor Three also voiced willingness having someone play cello and then “have a weekend where it’s more acoustic.”³⁴ That being said, regardless of how full the band and instrumentation is, they said, “we want people to come into the services and we want them to feel it.”³⁵ The “it” they want congregants to feel is a sound quality and sound saturation that is excellent, immersive, and loud.³⁶

Pastor Three’s desire to maintain a modern rock/pop sound for their songs of worship is tailored or refined in their ratio of types of songs used in their service. Having local music artists serve on their worship team means there is ample opportunity for the church to craft their own corporate songs of worship that are unique to their community. This is a priority for the church both because of the natural songwriting skills present in the team and because they want to have songs that can speak to the wide variety of sermon topics the narrative lectionary brings to the church. These two aspects of the church symbiotically feed one another. The church has a need and desire for original music which creates a space for artists to practice their gifts in this area and use their gifts to minister to and serve the other members in their church community. Additionally, Pastor Three acknowledged that their church is “part of a group of other churches that are pioneers in this area [of sacramental evangelical expression,] and naturally there’s going to be new art and new things that come out of that kind of wrestling with this” new movement.

³⁴ Pastor Three, 2018.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ During the interview the pastor referenced meeting with an audio/video systems specialist that generally works with large scale systems to consult for them on their venue.

They are trying to do “nuclear fusion” with the different streams of ecclesiological expression.³⁷

Church Three wants to be a resource and produce resources for other churches that desire to incorporate historical elements into their modern services. These resources include new songs for corporate singing.

Along with the original songs Church Three sings, they primarily do other MWM songs by artists like Bethel Worship and Hillsong Worship. However, a strong contingent of their songs are also classic hymns. The hymns would be modernized only as much as the original melody would allow. Pastor Three explained: “to me a song is melody and lyrics, so I don’t want to mess with those things if I can avoid it.”³⁸ Therefore, they seek to modernize the instrumentation and take more liberties with the harmonic structures of hymns than churches 1 and 2 did, but they desire to retain the original melodies of older songs. Pastor Three wants “there to be space for things to feel actually tradition” because “there is comfort in the familiarity and it just feels like something you can trust.”³⁹

Role & Skills of the Worship Leader

Pastor Three expressed that, in their context, the musical skills of a worship leader are largely unchanged from a modern worship context, but the role of the worship leader broadens to need to be “open to different expressions of worship and different methods of connecting with God and interacting with the Spirit.”⁴⁰ A worship leadership student needs to be exposed to and taught to appreciate the diverse expressions and practices of worship in the global church and

³⁷ Pastor Three, 2018.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

various denominations. This includes at least a survey of various worship practices used throughout church history. This wider and more historical training will allow worship leadership students to not become myopic with their own unique church's or denomination's expression.

Pastor Four

Motivation

Pastor Four is a worship pastor at a megachurch that they describe as originally having a punk-rock feel. Prior to joining this church over a decade ago, they had an extended tenure as a worship pastor at a heavily “seeker-sensitive, worship-evangelism, presentational-model” church. It was during their time at this “seeker-sensitive” church that they met and began being mentored by the worship scholar Robert E. Webber. “Bob screwed my life up,” Pastor Four affectionately says about his mentor.⁴¹ Through times with Webber and then further seminary training, Pastor Four developed a love and passion for pastorally guiding his next congregation towards a broader, more ancient expression of Christian worship. He has been working to “see liturgical forms renewed inside of a more contemporary context” for over a decade.⁴²

Pastor Four always uses two lenses when evaluating how to introduce historical practices to the congregation. The first lens was to always be pastoral in their implementation. They never forced a new practice on the congregation or demanded it be accepted because they were the pastor now. Instead they slowly introduced things in ways that served and fed their congregation in ways that they were ready to receive. They were sensitive to the congregation's apprehensions

⁴¹ Interview with Pastor Four, Nov 28, 2018.

⁴² Ibid.

about returning to what seemed like “dead religion.”⁴³ The second lens was to prioritize congregational participation. The alternative option would be that they introduced historical practices in a way that the pastors did something new and the congregation merely watched. Pastor Four compared this unacceptable option to “medieval clericalism” where all the worship practices of the liturgical forms were performed by only the clergy and the congregation merely observed the worship rather than actively engaging and contributing to it.⁴⁴

Liturgy

Pastor Four shared that various historical practices were not introduced all at once to the congregation. Furthermore, they will still add and remove various practices in a seasonal rotation to serve their congregation and allow them to experience new practices and keep various practices from feeling dry or old. However, their service now includes the following elements on a consistent basis:

- Call to Worship (usually a psalm)
- Opening Music (often includes the “Prayers of the People” segment)
- Passing of the Peace
- Scripture Presentation (sometimes a dramatic presentation)
- Message/Sermon
- Eucharist, including an epiclesis and mystery of the faith.
- Benediction

⁴³ Pastor Four, 2018.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

- The service may also include a creedal reading in the service.⁴⁵

At a macro or annual level, the church follows a lectionary for the message topics and texts but does not read the lectionary text in the service. The lectionary is “followed as a scaffold” for the teaching pastor and worship pastor’s service planning.⁴⁶

Musical Styles & Genres

Pastor Four expressed that in the past, their church’s musical worship was more diverse or “schizophrenic. It’d be like getting in your car and hitting ‘scan’ [on the radio].”⁴⁷ However, now, they are more uniform in musical style than ever before and have more MWM songs than ever before. Every weekend has a band that always has a typical rock band setup of drums, bass guitar, electric guitars, synths/keyboards, and some singers. This band will often be augmented by various “supplemental instruments that pop in and out” such as a brass section or some strings instruments; however, “it’s never like in a sacred or traditional music genre.”⁴⁸ In this way of mixing together different textures, Pastor Four compared the church’s sound to the indie-eclectic-rock recording artist Beck.⁴⁹

Additionally, Pastor Four spoke to the church’s strong proclivity towards synthesizers in their church band. They frequently have multiple synth/keys players on the band and the bass player will be playing a Moog synth bass for a weekend. Furthermore, they will create their own synth-heavy accompaniment tracks that are not “just Ableton filling in two extra guitar parts. No,

⁴⁵ Pastor Four, 2018.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

this is bleeps and bleeps kind of stuff.”⁵⁰ The church has a very consistent techno/EDM style in their corporate music, and yet, for some Advent services, they will use only a piano and string quartet for the whole service.

Pastor Four stated that the bulk of their church song bank is older hymns and spirituals although more and more MWM has been introduced in recent years. However, the hymns and spirituals are automatically modernized because of the musicians they have. Because the musicians’ sensibilities and backgrounds are modern, the “musical enfleshment” is naturally modernized.⁵¹ The pastor’s term “musical enfleshment” can be taken to mean the instrumentation, and instrumental riffs, parts, and rhythms that do not alter the song’s melody or harmonies. However, they again expressed that they do not alter the hymns’ and spirituals’ melodies—and harmonies as much as possible. Original songs are also very prominent in their worship song repertoire. They write new songs for certain seasons or sermons, but they “don’t always stick around.”⁵²

Role & Skills of the Worship Leader

Pastor Four stated that breadth of knowledge was the most important skill for a worship leader in their context. One needs at least a survey-level knowledge of past and present. Some of this is because the church’s age range is quite wide, and the church community is quite diverse in background. However, more so, it is because the church celebrates that they are part of a very long stream of church history. Pastor Four says this celebration can mean that in a single service

⁵⁰ Pastor Four, 2018.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

they may sing a “Bethel song and we may sing the Trisagion, this 4th-century Greek hymn.”⁵³

Pastor Four clarified that the knowledge of older church practices is more about the content of the worship elements and lyrics rather than the specific musical techniques and genres.

Additionally, Pastor Four shared a desire for a high level of musical fluency for church musicians and worship leaders even in modern worship contexts. They shared a story of a worship leadership graduate serving as an intern at their church. That intern had the worst musicianship of the entire worship department and amongst all the volunteer musicians.⁵⁴ The student’s weaknesses were in the areas of “range” and “vocabulary.”⁵⁵ The student was not able to read sheet music and could only play or sing in a limited number of genres or styles. This church uses primarily sheet music rather than chord charts in order so that all musicians—rhythm section and strings/brass—can read off of the same charts. The intern could not read the sheet music with proficiency. Pastor Four expressed a desire for worship leadership students to receive more robust training music theory and musicianship on their instruments, including rock-band instruments. When asked if the skills needed to succeed in their church’s music setting were closer to those of a traditional sacred music degree or a contemporary worship leadership degree, Pastor Four affirmed, “I’ll bet it’s the former.”⁵⁶

Survey Results

Three of the interview pastors also consented to completing a survey: Pastors 2, 3, and 4. Due to the limited number of participants, it is difficult to gain clear trends from the questions

⁵³ Pastor Four, 2018.

⁵⁴ Ibid. Church Four has multiple bands, so this volunteer team has dozens of members.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

that had divergent responses from the three pastors. However, a strong majority of the quantifiable answers (percentages or rankings) had a standard deviation ≤ 1 selectable point on the fixed-point scales provided in the survey. Twenty-three out of the thirty-three worship leader skills listed had a standard deviation of ≤ 1 on a 5-point scale, with nine of the thirty-three skills having no deviation at all. Seven of the nine musical styles asked about had a standard deviation of ≤ 1 on a 10-point scale, with two genres having no deviation at all. Five of the seven time-period options listed for lyric content had a standard deviation of ≤ 1 on a 10-point scale with no time era options having a standard deviation of zero (0). All three participants marked that “some of the songs” sung were original compositions written in-house (out of the options: all of the songs, most of the songs, about half of the songs, some of the songs or none of the songs). Each of the three participants marked a different amount of the songs had the music of the songs significantly re-arranged: answers ranged from “none of the songs” to “most of the songs.”

Worship Leader Skills

The highest ranked skills by the survey participants were: Leading Teams, Vision Casting, Teamwork, Integrity, Devotional Life, and Christian Lifestyle. Each of these received the highest rating (5 on a scale of 1-5) from all three participants. Other skills that received average scores above a 4 were: Vocal Health (4.67), Worship Planning (4.67), Reads Chord Charts (4.67), Instrument Proficiency (4.33), Administrative Skills (4.33), Biblical Theology of Worship (4.33), and Pastoral Care (4.33). The lowest rated skills were: Lighting Systems (2.33), Classical Music Theory (2), Choir Conducting (2), Classical Vocal Performance (1.67). Pop Vocal Performance received a 2.67 average from individual scores of 1, 3, and 4. In the follow-up short-answer question about which pastoral skills are most lacking, all three participants indicated that Pastoral Care the most lacking in the worship leaders and worship training with which they were familiar.

Table 4.1 Importance of Various Worship Leader Skills

IMPORTANCE OF:	PS 2	PS 3	PS 4	AVG	STDEV
LEADING TEAMS	5	5	5	5	0
VISION-CASTING	5	5	5	5	0
TEAMWORK	5	5	5	5	0
INTEGRITY	5	5	5	5	0
DEVOTIONAL LIFE	5	5	5	5	0
CHRISTIAN LIFESTYLE	5	5	5	5	0
VOCAL HEALTH	5	5	4	4.67	0.58
WORSHIP PLANNING	5	4	5	4.67	0.58
READS CHORD CHARTS	5	5	4	4.67	0.58
INST. PROFICIENCY	5	4	4	4.33	0.58
ADMIN SKILLS	5	4	4	4.33	0.58
BIB. THEO. OF WORSHIP	5	4	4	4.33	0.58
PASTORAL CARE	5	4	4	4.33	0.58
RECRUITING ABILITY	5	3	4	4	1
BUDGET MANAGEMENT	5	3	4	4	1
HISTORICAL LITURGIES	4	4	4	4	0
VOCAL TEAM LEADERSHIP	5	3	4	4	1
CURRENT MODELS OF WORSHIP	3	4	4	3.67	0.58
ROCK BAND LEADERSHIP	4	3	4	3.67	0.58
SONGWRITING	5	3	3	3.67	1.15
PCO/MUSIC ADMIN SOFTWARE	5	4	1	3.33	2.08
READS SHEET MUSIC	5	1	4	3.33	2.08
MUSIC THEORY - POP	1	4	4	3	1.73
CHURCH MUSIC HISTORY	3	3	3	3	0
VIDEO SYSTEMS	5	3	1	3	2
SOUND SYSTEMS	5	3	1	3	2
DAWS (RECORDING)	3	3	3	3	0
POP VOCAL PERFORMANCE	1	4	3	2.67	1.53
INST. CONDUCTING	5	2	1	2.67	2.08
LIGHTING SYSTEMS	3	3	1	2.33	1.15
MUSIC THEORY CLASSICAL	1	2	3	2	1
CHOIR CONDUCTING	2	3	1	2	1
CLASSICAL VOCAL PERFORMANCE	1	2	2	1.67	0.58
OTHER	1	3	1	1.67	1.15

It is worth mentioning that the pastor that gave Pop Vocal the lowest score of 1 made comments in their interview that suggest that they misinterpreted the title, thinking this was asking for the worship leader to perform actual pop music songs in service rather than to sing the worship songs with a pop vocal technique as was intended. If that score is indeed due to misunderstanding, and therefore omitted, pop vocal performance receives a score of 3.5.

Music Genre and Lyric Usage

Each participant indicated that “Modern” and “Traditional” were the most commonly used genres, ranging from 30-60% and 30-40% respectively. A strong third-most-used style is folk music which was used in between 10-30%. It is worth noting that these numbers are clearly estimates because none of the participants had percentages that added up to exactly 100%. Two participants had more than 100% represented in their estimations and one pastor has marked a total of only 90%. The over-estimating of genres may indicate that the participants view some songs as qualifying in more than one genre. For instance: songs that sound like the Neo-Folk Band “Mumford and Sons” may have been considered both folk and modern; likewise, some Spirituals may be also considered Gospel. None of the pastors indicated using any choral or chant music.

Table 4.2 Music Genres Used

GENRE	PS 2	PS 3	PS 4	AVG	ST. DEV.
MODERN	40%	30%	60%	43.33	15.28
TRADITIONAL	40%	40%	30%	36.67	5.77
FOLK	10%	20%	30%	20	10
OTHER	0%	20%	0%	6.67	11.55
GOSPEL	0%	10%	0%	3.33	5.77
TAIZE	0%	10%	0%	3.33	5.77
SPIRITUALS	0%	10%	0%	3.33	5.77
CHORAL	0%	0%	0%	0	0
CHANT	0%	0%	0%	0	0

Overall, the lyric used paralleled the genres, with 21st century compositions and the 18th-20th century compositions being the most used eras of lyrics, mirroring the Modern and Traditional genres most used.

Table 4.3 Lyrics Used by Era

ERA	PS 2	PS 3	PS 4	AVG	ST. DEV.
21ST CENTURY LYRICS	40%	20%	70%	43.33%	25.17%
1700-1900 LYRICS	40%	30%	10%	26.67%	15.28%
1970-2000 LYRICS	20%	20%	10%	16.67%	5.77%
1900-1970 LYRICS	0%	20%	10%	10.00%	10.00%
1500-1700 LYRICS	0%	10%	0%	3.33%	5.77%
PRE-1500 LYRICS	0%	10%	0%	3.33%	5.77%
OTHER	0%	10%	0%	3.33%	5.77%

Song Usage Archives

One pastor, Pastor Five, chose to provide an archive of their church's songs used over the last six months. This content was catalogued and categorized according to composition date and genre. Since there was no data regarding if the church re-arranged the songs, the genre of the original recording of the song was used in this study. This content was coded and cross-analyzed with the estimated genre and time-period usage answers provided from the interviews and surveys of the other participants. The primary findings were the ratios of the genres/eras of songs used. Sixty-six songs were scheduled a total of 156 times for the church's Sunday services. Each weekend counted only once regardless of how many services were held that weekend. This meant the averages song was scheduled 2.36 times, with thirty-one songs being scheduled only once and only seven songs being scheduled more than four times.

For genre/era usage, 71% of the songs were Modern Worship Music: songs published and recorded by other churches or artists since the year 2000 in a rock/pop style. Percentages were determined by counting how many times any song in a category was sung rather than individual song titles. This means if a single hymn was sung 78 times, it would show that “Hymns” were sung 50% of the time. 18% of the song were categorized as originals. To determine if a song was an original composition or not, I ran song titles through the online CCLI worship song database “SongSelect” to determine the songwriters of the songs by that song title. In order for these songs to be categorized as “Originals”, the search results had to list the most popular song on CCLI had to have at least one of the church’s worship leaders as one of the songwriters. Hymns (and songs written before 1970) comprised 9% of the church’s database. Two of these hymns were modern hymns including the familiar “In Christ Alone.” Two more were written between 1900 and 1969, and the remaining hymns were written between 1700-1900.

Table 4.4 Church Five’s Song Usage

	TOTALS: PERCENTAGES	
DIFFERENT SONGS	66	
TOTAL SONGS SCHEDULED	156	2.36
CWM USAGE	4	3%
HYMN USAGE	16	10%
MWM USAGE	110	71%
ORIGINAL SONG USAGE	28	18%
DIFFERENT CWM SONGS	4	6%
DIFFERENT HYMNS	9	14%
DIFFERENT MWM SONGS	44	67%
DIFFERENT ORIGINAL SONGS	10	15%

One song was modern worship song that was written in the 21st century with a strophic form and didactic hymn-like melody but had modern neo-folk accompaniment in the original

recording, so in the “Song Usage and “Different Songs by Genre” counts, it is counted in both Hymns and MWM. “In Christ Alone” is counted only as a hymn.

Data Cross-Analyzed

After all research protocols were concluded and data was collected, the interview transcripts, survey answers and song archives collected were imported into NVivo 12 and content was coded according to key words and subject matter. All source types were coded uniformly to allow them to be cross referenced.

Motivation

When discussing motivation for their church moving in a sacramental direction, all four professors referenced a desire to minister to people in a culturally effective but theologically rich manner. Additionally, three of the four pastors made a point about the “beauty” or the liturgical practices and traditional songs or styles that they incorporated.⁵⁷ While two of those pastors also referenced other people’s interpretation of historic liturgical elements as “dead,” these pastors have found a beauty and a life in these practices that they are trying to bring back into the lives of their church communities.⁵⁸ All four pastors frequently made mention of a desire for active congregational participation in the re-introduced historical liturgical elements.⁵⁹

Additionally, a common feature among these pastors is their tendency towards longevity in their tenure with a church. One pastor is part of a recent church plant but had served for well

⁵⁷ Pastors 2, 3, and 4.

⁵⁸ Pastor One also referenced evangelicals using the phrase “dusty old hymns.”

⁵⁹ Pastor One used the word “engaged,” Pastor Two referenced using call-and-response elements, Pastor Three detailed elements that intentionally included congregational prayer or confession, and Pastor Four explicitly said that they prioritized congregational participation.

over a decade at their previous church that helped launch the church plant. Two other pastors had also been at their churches for over a decade. The shortest tenure was still an above-average 8-year stint. Two of the four pastors connected this longevity with a gradual incorporation of various historical practices rather than immediate service-order reform.⁶⁰

Liturgical Elements

All four pastors interviewed mentioned the following as standard service elements in their churches: call to worship, songs that involved hymns in some way, scripture reading separate from the sermon, passing of the peace, the eucharist, and the corporate recital of creeds or prayers. Additionally, all four mentioned primary Anglican inspiration for their historical content and forms, citing the Book of Common Prayer and either a standard Lectionary or the Narrative Lectionary as source material for their prayers, professions, and church calendar. Only one of the of the pastors did not state that their church is following a lectionary for their sermon content on a weekly basis.⁶¹

Although every church is incorporating historical practices, none of the churches have become fully traditional.⁶² All four pastors made a point of discussing the integration of traditional/ancient with the contemporary/modern. This is especially reflected in the songs and genres used. Although the rest of the services mostly feature elements that are centuries old, the song genres most commonly used are modern.

Furthermore, each pastor utilized the traditional liturgical elements with a plasticity. All four pastors shared accounts of removing or rearranging segments for various reasons to serve

⁶⁰ Pastor Two and Pastor Four.

⁶¹ Pastor One. This is likely because their sermon is live-streamed from the contemporary service.

⁶² Pastor Two seems to be the closest when they said they were almost “fully Anglican.”

their local community and context. These reasons included time restrictions, sensitivity to parishioners' skepticism about liturgical expressions, and room for inspiration and customization in the service and sermon preparation.

Worship Leader Skills

All four interview pastors stated that an understanding of the wide and diverse traditions of Christian worship was among the most important areas of training for worship pastors. "diversity," "broad stream of church history," "heritage," "diversity," "breadth," and "different expressions" were all used to frame this need. For context, each of these pastors had backgrounds in evangelical churches with modern, seeker-sensitive worship expressions so they have each had to widen their perspective from the evangelical to the global and historical. However, when asked what skill is most lacking from the Worship Leadership, all pastors answered either in the interview or in the survey that "pastoral care" was significantly lacking. Pastor Two said in their interview, "My experience has been that many of them are great song leaders and musicians but not great LEADERS or PASTORS... they struggle with leading and building teams and shepherding the people under their care."

Only one of the pastors expressed significant concern over the musicality being developed in newer worship leaders. All pastors expressed a desire for quality and excellence in the music made, but the other three pastors seemed to be content with the level of musicianship they were experiencing in both their immediate context and the modern worship genre. Three of the four pastors did communicate that songwriting was a consistent part of their worship community. Classical techniques and music theory were among the least valued or prioritized skills in the surveys returned. The importance of reading sheet music seems to be inconclusive. Pastor Four highly valued this both in the survey and the interview and Pastor One stressed the benefit of having a jazz musician in their worship team, but the others did not prioritize formal

music training. All pastors, however, did prioritize excellent musicianship and at least a familiarity with a diversity of musical styles.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Each pastor in the interviews expressed the dichotomous desires to reach the younger generation with the gospel and to incorporate older doxologies into their churches. However, these desires are not so disconnected when one reads Robert E Webber’s description of younger evangelicals. He says that they are attached to pre-Constantinian Christianity, emphasize the “mystery, transcendence, and a deep sense of wonder,” want to remember the otherness of God, have an “Ancient-Future” approach to theology, and want a sacramental and deeper experience with Communion.¹ Many Christian millennials have grown fatigued by everything in their life being tailor marketed to try to be relevant to their immediate feelings and desires. They are tired of trends. Instead, they are seeking things that stable and proven if not also something that brings an escape from their current cultural reality.

The intentionally-curated music and liturgical practices the participant pastors use help meet these needs. Lemley’s research agrees that pop music (and modern worship music) allows for a heightened experience and escape. However, his concern that MWM “does not put into motion the economy of God’s kingdom” does not seem to resonated with the research participants.² Instead, they reclaim the term “worship” by defining it by more than just the music and songs sung and use the entirety of the service to create moments of spiritual formation for the sake of the Kingdom of the Heavens. Nonetheless, this dilemma of what music to use in a neo-liturgical service was one of the major findings from this research alongside the specific skillsets needed for worship leaders in the neo-liturgical movement.

¹ Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals*, 92-93, 122, 128 & 189.

² Lemley, *Liturgies of Word and Turntable*, 245.

Music Genres Used in Worship

While ancient and traditional service elements are dominant in the ancient-future or neo-liturgical churches in this research, ancient and traditional music styles have not likewise replaced their modern counterparts. While “classics” do seem more prominent in these churches than most evangelical churches, the music of each participant church primarily featured modern or contemporary rock or folk styles. Their means of achieving deeper spiritual formation was not through changing the music as Lemley suggests but through adding other activities to their worship. Pastor Three made much of the need to be intentional with language in general and more specifically the language surrounding the word *worship*: “We do not call the church musicians and singers the ‘worship team’ but instead call them ‘the band.’”³

Likewise, they do not have “worship nights” (a common event in non-denomination churches that feature almost exclusively extended times of corporate singing). Instead, events such as this will still happen, but they will not call them by such a title. Pastor Three continued that when we call the singing “worship” or say “now we are going to go back into worship” when singing resumes, it subliminally teaches that everything else going on in the service was not worship. This conflation of worship and music is a problem of growing concern in the evangelical church and western world. Indeed, “Worship” is a genre or category in and of itself on music streaming services such as iTunes and Spotify at the time of this thesis being written.

If the responsibility of corporate worship and spiritual formation is shared between service elements beyond the songs of a gathering, then a worship experience that speak to a richer and wider range of life experience can be achieved. This satisfies both Lemley’s concerns regarding CWM’s undesirable proclivities and underlying ethos.

³ Pastor Three, 2018.

Beyond a wider range of expression, the neo-liturgical service also offers a reprieve from a world obsessed with materialism and certainty. Tullian Tchividjian claims that 21st century westerners are fatigued of the modernist, Enlightenment mindset, wanting to be drawn to church by “the glorious mystery of it all. . . .yearning for meaning which transcends *this world*.”⁴ Tchividjian’s own testimony is that he was “evangelized, not by a *man-centered show*, but by a *God-centered atmosphere*.”⁵ The participant churches offer this otherness in their various service segments and in their inclusion of a strong number of hymns. However, the modern songs of worship could provide these moments of transcendence. Lemley admits that pop music “can provide a transcendent encounter” with the other, and “originated as an attempt to escape...rather than engagement.”⁶ This may lead one even to consider if congregants still attracted to the concert-like feel of MWM aren’t also seeking the same transcendent escape from this world Tchividjian describes.

Tchividjian also claims that “our world is becoming weary with the message and the methods of modern culture” and the “cutting-edge” because they have failed, leaving individuals desiring something “more constant and less shallow” and “reaching not just *upwards* but *backwards*.”⁷ Indeed, we see many of these sentiments in the revitalized liturgical elements. Each pastor makes a point about their using older hymns and retaining the original melodies (and harmonies when possible) because their congregations appreciated the historic nature of the songs. As Pastor One said:

⁴ Tullian Tchividjian, “A Cry for Difference from the Culturally Weary,” The Gospel Coalition, <http://resources.thegospelcoalition.org/library/a-cry-for-difference-from-the-culturally-weary-3rd-ed>. (accessed Dec 1, 2018)

⁵ Ibid., 127 (emphasis in the original).

⁶ Lemley, “Liturgies of Word and Turntable,” 235.

⁷ Ibid., 128.

With younger people, a lot of times they desire in such an environment of fluid truth where you don't know one day to the next what real truth is, [it was valuable] to have a more liturgical service with more hymns and more music that has really stood the [test of time]. ... We realized that people wanted something where they felt like there was an anchor for our soul. Where they could really have truths that are unchanging truths: things that the church has been doing and saying and praying and singing about for hundreds of years. In a very unstable environment, that's a really strong stability. So we started a liturgical service.⁸

Yet even Lemley, referencing Josh Kun, states that, "pop music can provide a transcendent encounter with an unfamiliar culture, world, or identity."⁹ Furthermore, Lemley cites Friskics-Warren when he states that pop music does this while holding a strong connection to spirituality.¹⁰ This suggests that any music, including pop, would be capable of being a part of a transcendent experience. Indeed, I would venture to say that anyone that has listened to a variety of musical styles has experienced moments of wonder from more than just one genre.

Music genre remains largely unchanged in these evangelical-sacramental churches. This could be because of a number of reasons. First, these churches and pastors are still evangelical along with being sacramental, so they still have a desire for their church services to minister to the unbelieving visitor as well as the faithful convert. So, although Tchividjian may disagree, these pastors still desire to have expressions that seem somewhat familiar or approachable to those in the congregation. Pastor Three wanted to include their evangelical non-denominational heritage and build upon it with the diverse and historical practices of other traditions. Aaron Niequist calls this "include and transcend."¹¹ For the participants, Modern Worship Music and evangelicalism is a part of the inclusion side of the equation.

⁸ Pastor One, 2018.

⁹ Josh Kun, qtd. In Lemley, "Liturgies of Word and Turntable," 235.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Niequist, *The Eternal Current*, 110.

Second, to claim that one music genre is more appropriate, and another is ill-suited for proper Christian worship is akin to the ethnocentric fear of syncretism held by many missionaries of the past. Both syncretism and this disapproval of modern pop-rock music in worship suggests that a particular culture and art-form is closer to God's way of thinking and expressing than another is. For missionaries concerned with syncretism, somehow classical music was more appropriate for singing praise to God than was the music of the native cultures.¹² Current conservative theologians must be careful that they have not developed a similar attitude.

With every cultural and generational change, there are new aspects or expressions in it that allow God to reveal himself in a fresh way and there are aspects of it that have grown away from Him that He must help to trim and correct. Historically, art is not something that gets trimmed, or if it does, it does not stay trimmed. If it were, we would still be singing like the first-century Jewish apostles or perhaps the Pre-Nicene and Nicene-era Church Fathers.

Each church has achieved Niequist's "church *of* the people" that focuses on the priesthood of all believers and empowers the church member through the service elements. Webber describes this as a community where "clergy and people are united in common ministry."¹³ Their retention of modern music does not lead to a fixation on the talented singers and musicians as characterized by Niequist's contrasting "church *for* the people." Instead, all participants were fixated on ensuring congregational participation with every decision. Any

¹² For an excellent depiction of the complexities and nuances of syncretism and cultural contextualization the Christian Gospel, see Lynda Newland's article "Turning the Spirits into Witchcraft: Pentecostalism in Fijian Villages" in *Oceania*, 75, No. 1 (September 2004), 1-18.

¹³ Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals*, 146.

appreciation for the artistic expression on display is trained to be pointed back to God as an act of thanksgiving and worship.¹⁴

The research participants believe that music in the service should be something that reflects the cultural expression of the community. This is why one church leaned more towards “techno” and disliked neo-folk while another’s music was primarily neo-folk. Both of these genres would qualify in Lemley’s category of “pop music” that he claims, “can provide a transcendent encounter” with the other, but “originated as an attempt to escape...rather than engagement.”¹⁵

Perhaps the combination of the modern/pop genres in singing with other non-musical acts of corporate worship have allowed for what Michelle Robinson considers worship as orientation: “communal singing is itself an orienting act that connects us with our neighbors and turns us toward God.”¹⁶ Music helps establish this orienting and building of rapport between congregants and between clergy and congregant in preparation for the disorienting and reorienting of a church service.¹⁷

Worship Leadership Skills

This research was heavily informed by the prior research of Hendricks, Sheeks, and Cooper in the field of optimizing worship education for the needs of the role of a worship leader. While Cooper only researched the courses offered at various universities, Hendricks and Sheeks included in their research surveys for senior pastors and worship pastors. They had slightly

¹⁴ Pastor Three, 2018.

¹⁵ Lemley, “Liturgies of Word and Turntable,” 235.

¹⁶ Michelle Robinson, “Music in Worship: Supporting Orientation, Disorientation, and Reorientation,” *Touchstone: Theology Shaping Witness* 33, No. 1, (Feb 2015), 43. <http://touchstonecanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Touchstone-Feb-2015-final.pdf> (accessed March 15, 2017).

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 43-45.

different findings but the general consensus of was that pastors did not prioritize classical techniques, music theory, songwriting, church music history, conducting, historical liturgies of the church.^{18, 19} Both these research models were conducted with an evangelical church in mind. This research expands on theirs in two ways: one, it shifts to look at the growing trend of sacramental-evangelical churches, and two, it introduces a mixed-methods research approach to provide qualitative data alongside the quantitative research they used. The primary places of divergence in this research's findings from Hendricks's and Sheeks's findings are that historical liturgies/church history, songwriting, and pastoral care have become far more important to the worship leader role in the sacramental context.

Historical Content

In the churches represented in this study, services are structured around resources such as the *Book of Common Prayer* and the *Narrative Lectionary* and include historical creeds and prayers. All these resources are certainly within the domain of the historical/liturgical that both their research findings ranked very low. Additionally, it is worth noting that historical and liturgical studies are not even a category of courses in the worship programs Cooper included in his research. As mentioned in the findings, Pastor Four even claimed that their worship leadership needs were likely closer to the skill set developed in a sacred music degree than in a modernized worship leadership degree. This is because they valued the historic practices and the perceived more-rigorous musicality taught in the sacred music degree. Likewise, Pastor Two said:

I just want [a worship leader] to have a great respect for the broad stream of our Christian history and heritage and theology. Like I just want you to be a child of the tradition as

¹⁸ Hendricks, "A Renewed Approach," 73.

¹⁹ Sheeks, "Skills Necessary," 87-88.

much as possible...They need to have all the machinery of a good worship leader, but I think that they, especially as we move towards a richer re-appropriation of the tradition, I just think that they have to be more children of the tradition.²⁰

Pastor Three shares that worship leaders need to become more accepting and open to different people's worship expressions and traditions. They state an appreciation for the beauty they have found in other historical traditions and lament the resistance to such expressions many evangelicals they know still have. They went on to cite the Anglican "three streams ministry of spirit, scripture, and sacrament" as both a guide for their service construction as well as a litmus test for evaluating churches.²¹ This "three streams" language mirrors both Gordon T. Smith's call for the Church to be "Evangelical, Sacrament & Pentecostal" and Niequist's call for ecumenism and for churches to "include and transcend" their denominational traditions.²²

Pastor One shared that "we need to learn the language of the next generation."²³ This next generation is just unique in that their new language is actually the language of history. This paradox of the generation of the future looking to the past is captured in Robert Webber's phrase "Ancient-Future" and specifically identified with the Younger Evangelicals that believe "the road to the future runs through the past."²⁴

Songwriting

Another area of training that held higher importance among the participants than those in Hendricks's and Sheeks's studies was the need for songwriting. Most evangelical churches are

²⁰ Pastor Two, 2018.

²¹ Pastor Three, 2018.

²² Niequist, *The Eternal Current*, 112-114.

²³ Pastor One, 2018.

²⁴ Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals*, 82.

currently comfortable singing the recorded and published “worship songs” released by worship artists/churches such as Hillsong Worship, Bethel Music, Elevation Worship, Chris Tomlin, Passion, and Matt Redman. While sacramental-evangelical churches I studied still sing some these songs, they all expressed a desire to create music out of their own context. Each church seems to have a doxological conviction about creating art birthed from this newer movement. In fact, Pastor Three directly mentioned wanting to create resources and songs for other similar churches to use in their liturgies. Therefore, the desire for original content is not a fixation on the local church over the global church or a resistance to the industry that worship music has been turned into. Instead, it is a product of the currently available “worship songs” not expressing all the theology and attitudes of worship that sacramental, liturgical churches embrace and explore. For instance, the time of confession and absolution offers a time of lament and repentance.²⁵ The inclusion of this moment around the Eucharist beckons for the strong songwriting communities present at most of the participant churches to craft songs that express this heart posture in their gatherings.

Lemley again is relevant here, critiquing that very few contemporary worship songs “provide an expression of lament, pain or suffering” and when it was reference, it was normally done so in reference to the person’s life before conversion.²⁶ Aaron Niequist also expresses this dissatisfaction with the monotone expression of joy and triumph present in contemporary and modern worship.²⁷ While evangelicals and CWM songwriters would hold that praising in a time

²⁵ Some of the participant churches called this “confession and affirmation to be sensitive to theologically convictions and concerns about the nature of forgiveness and how it is granted and by whom.

²⁶ Lemley, “Liturgies of Word and Turntable,” 184.

²⁷ Niequist, *The Eternal Current*, 17.

of distress—or “praising before the breakthrough”²⁸—is a powerful spiritual act of faith that God calls us to do, the sacramental “younger evangelical” worldview of embodiment and *being* rather than *becoming* longs for songs that express the moment much like the Psalms of Lament do.²⁹ Songs that explore a broader spectrum of reflection and habitation with the presence of God are helpful for Neo-Liturgical churches and need to be written within the context of these churches.

Pastoral Care

Another criterion that was very important for all four interview participants—and bears repeating here—was the need for future worship leaders to be trained more in the area of “Pastoral Care.” Pastor Four captured the general consensus when they lamented that, “pastoral care seems to be ‘reserved’ for the non-musical pastors in many churches, so there doesn't appear to be a lot of training in these areas for those interested in worship leadership.” As a means of addressing this misappropriation, Pastor Three said that the pastors on staff at their church do not delineate titles such as “Teaching Pastor” “Worship Pastor” and “Executive Pastor.”³⁰ Instead, they are all just simply pastors at their church and all share the responsibility to pastor and shepherd their congregation.

This heart for pastoral care also is what drove each pastor towards the sacramental, neo-liturgical expression. They felt a shift in the culture as millennials desired a more trustworthy expression similar to Tchividjian’s “Cry for Difference.” This heart for pastoral care led each pastor to introduce historic practices in a way that, as Pastor Four described it, would “feel like

²⁸ See the MWM song “Praise Before My Breakthrough” by Bryan & Katie Torwalt, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MXb7-WommBY>. (accessed Nov 22, 2018)

²⁹ Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals*, 70 & 186.

³⁰ This is true even though Pastor Three is the pastor that sings and is in charge of the music, and another pastor is the primary sermon-teacher, and another pastor is the primary organizational leader.

it's cold water on a thirst throat." These pastors did not want to force a new worship expression on an unwilling or uninformed congregation just because the pastor "knew what was best for them." Herein lies the difference between pastors and theologians: theologians can find a need for change or a short-coming in a culture or practice and immediately, directly, and unapologetically communicate the truth in what they have found. Pastors that see the same need must guide the hearts, emotions, and baggage of a group of people to help them develop a taste for the same change. To help them slowly see the same need. This second method takes far more time, energy, emotional intelligence, and care.

Musicality and Diversity

One final criterion that was significant in the research was that excellent musicianship and musicality in a diverse range of genres was important. Pastor Four especially spoke to this need, citing the negative experience with a worship leadership graduate/intern that was too narrowly trained musically. Pastor Four makes a point about "breadth" being important for a worship leader. This is true both liturgically and musically. Musically, that church is doing historical hymns, popular modern worship songs, utilizing strings and brass sections, and making original techno/EDM beats for their worship songs. From a liturgical perspective, Pastor Four brings clarity that the increased training needed has more to do with the materials written throughout history than the exact musical expressions of them. Pastor One mentioned the benefits of having a jazz musician as an accompanist, allowing for tasteful spontaneity in the hymn arrangements they do. In general, Jazz studies programs have a very different and stronger rigor in their musical training than music studies programs have. One would wonder how the same worship leadership intern from Pastor Four's church would fair at Pastor One's church.

Additionally, all four pastors expressed a desire to retain the original melodies and harmonies of traditional hymns whenever possible. This standard almost always introduces the

need for advanced music theory knowledge and rapid chord movements in order to perform the song. Perhaps these reasons are why Pastor Four said they do “a lot of a Capella singing.”³¹ If the band has musicians with modern-sensibilities, those sensibilities do not cater to delivering a classical-style hymn with its original harmonies. A Capella allows for a hymn to retain its historical feel without advanced instrumental musicality. In this same spirit, Pastor One called CWM “really very simplified music.” Worship leadership students would benefit from musical training that includes pop techniques but also familiarizes them with classical and gospel harmonization to prepare them for a likely increase in the use of hymns and spirituals in churches.

³¹ Pastor Four, 2018.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Summary

As churches begin to embark on what it means to be Evangelical, Pentecostal, and Sacramental, the worship practices will undoubtedly change. Evangelicalism and Pentecostalism were once separate streams that have intermingled through their shared contemporary worship genre. In time that worship genre even spread to other denominations. What seems to be next is a spread of sacramentality and liturgy to all denominations and church groups that do not already hold a sacramental and liturgical doxology.

Worship education has been slow to keep up with change from traditional to contemporary/modern worship practices as the church was undergoing the 20th century worship wars. Indeed, schools are still adapting and creating modernized worship leadership programs. The goal of this thesis was to help bring awareness to the necessary or coming changes to how worship leaders need to be equipped to lead worship in local churches as they become more sacramental and neo-liturgical. The question that I asked was: What skills and training are most important for worship leaders in evangelical sacramental churches, and how are they utilized? The results were that in addition to a standard modern worship leadership training necessary in an American evangelical church, these churches also need their worship leaders to have further training in songwriting, pastoral care, and the historical worship practices and resources of the Church.

The extent of sacramental renewal may vary widely from one church to the next, one denomination to the next or even from one region or nation to the next. Nonetheless, the insights from this research will aid churches that are considering making a move toward sacramental renewal by equipping them with stories of how other churches have gone before them and what

lessons they learned along the way. Additionally, this research will aid universities and bible schools as they develop or review worship leadership programs. If sacramental and neo-liturgical doxologies continue to grow as seems likely with the growing and maturing of what Webber calls “The Younger Evangelicals,” more and more churches will need students that have developed skills and knowledge similar to those discussed in this research. Bachelor’s level Worship Studies programs need to continue to equip pastors to serve the local church, but they must consider a greater emphasis on this liturgical renewal. Just as worship leadership programs are emphasizing the modern musical styles in their music courses, new adaptations are becoming necessary on the theological and pastoral aspects of the degree.

The movement towards historical practices by evangelical-sacramental, neo-liturgical churches is not a rejection of the “modern” popular music styles of their surrounding cultures. Instead, the churches recognize and utilize these genres in their worship communities as valid expressions of “folk hymnody.” The critique that pop music is inadequate for Christian formation is an unfair one because no music style has ever been independently adequate for Christian formation. Evangelical-sacramental churches include “modern” musical expressions in their liturgies and transcend them with more historical songs, prayers, confessions, elements, and sacraments in their corporate worship in order to more fully facilitate Christian formation.

Further Research Needed

Future research is certainly needed in this field. Case studies could be conducted in neo-liturgical services to assess the actual practices of the church and therefore the skills being used in those practices. This study only asked for the pastor’s estimation or self-assessment. First-hand observation would be a deeper analysis. A wider study would also add validity to this research field. The limited number of potential participants immediately made the research pool small, however, the time of year this research was conducted (late fall) also reduced the number

of participants. Likewise, research around how this neo-liturgical movement is affecting church in other cultures and country that primarily sing other genres such as Black Gospel or Southern Gospel is also needed. This is evident even from this research: the music of the church was always aimed at representing and ministering to the culture of the congregation in order to maximize congregational participation. Additionally, research can be done to assess the effectiveness of the spiritual formation in neo-liturgical church congregation compared to those of modern/contemporary churches, Black Gospel or traditional/high-liturgy churches. Finally, more theological dialogue is needed regarding the viability and legitimacy of music as Christian sacrament.

Research will also be triggered by sure-to-come technological advancements and cultural changes that will be opportunities for the church to assess its worship and witness. How will an increasingly global society and emerging technology like virtual reality change how people interpret the Biblical call of “not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another”?¹ Will a Virtual Reality church provide healthy spiritual formation that leads to a Christlike life? Or how will we continue “addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs” if we attend a virtual church service?² How can one receive the Eucharist via a virtual church? Can people effectively be “in community” with other Christians on the other side of the globe because they attend the same church virtually?

Likewise, technology and culture present new opportunities for educational systems to change and improve. Virtual reality could present the opportunity for education to be personal online as it is in-person. Distance education students could attend classrooms in real time with

¹ Hebrew 10:25, ESV.

² Ephesians 5:19, ESV.

one another or virtually attend a class that others are attending in person. Internet data transfer could likely reach speeds that allow music students to rehearse in an ensemble via virtual reality without current problems of latency and lag. Speech, sermon, conducting and band-leading courses can be delivered online with real-time audiences and ensembles.

The future for both the church and the academy seems to be a paradox: a mixture of historical and futuristic, traditional and technological, formational and experiential, simple and excellent, head and heart, global and local. Yet each dichotomy offers the opportunity to find new innovations and expressions to better embody the kingdom of God to a new people, a new generation, and a new worldview.

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APPENDIX

Survey

1. On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate the importance of each of the items below for a Worship Pastor in your church context?

Music Theory Classical	Teamwork
Music Theory - Pop	Pastoral Care
Pop Vocal Performance	Integrity
Classical Vocal Performance	Devotional Life
Vocal Health	Christian Lifestyle
Instrument Proficiency	Reads Sheet Music
Worship Planning	Reads Chord Charts
Leading teams	Video Systems
Recruiting Ability	Sound Systems
Vision-Casting	Inst. Conducting
Admin Skills	Rock Band Leadership
Budget Management	Choir Conducting
PCO/Music Admin Software	Vocal Team Leadership
Bib. Theo. of Worship	Songwriting
Current Models of Worship	DAWs (recording)
Historical Liturgies	Lighting Systems
Church Music History	Other

2. From the list above what are the most lacking in worship training you are aware of?

3. What formational elements have been added to the service flow or liturgy?
 - Congregants kneel to pray
 - Communion/Eucharist at every service
 - Congregants come to the altar/designated area to receive the Elements
 - Congregants drink from the common cup
 - Corporate recital of creeds or prayers
 - Passing of the Peace
 - Scripture Reading separate from the sermon
 - Other:

4. Select all style of MUSIC that are utilized in your services on a regular basis (at least once a month). (For instance, the Hillsong version of "Cornerstone" would qualify as Modern Worship, but a traditional singing of the hymn "My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less" would qualify as Choral/Hymns.)
 - Modern Worship
 - Gospel/Black Gospel
 - Southern Gospel
 - Traditional 20th Century / Anthems
 - Choral/Hymns (pre-20th century)
 - Chant
 - Acoustic/Folk
 - Other

5. How often does your service make use of each style of MUSIC that is utilized in your services?

- Modern Worship
 - Gospel/Black Gospel
 - Traditional
 - Choral
 - Chant
 - Folk
 - Taize
 - Spirituals
 - Other
6. To the best of your knowledge, select all eras from which lyrics used in services were written, regardless of musical style accompaniment. (For instance, “How Great Thou Art” would be 19th century regardless of what modernization the music may have.)
- 21st Century
 - 1970s-2000
 - 1900-1970
 - 1700-1900
 - 1500-1700
 - Pre-1500
 - Other (specific narrower eras if you feel it is important)
7. To the best of your knowledge, how much of your lyrical repertoire is from these various time periods?
- Within the last 18 years.
 - 1970s-2000

- 1900-1970
 - 1700-1900
 - 1500-1700
 - Pre-1500
 - Other (specific narrower eras if you feel it is important)
8. How many of the songs sung in your worship gatherings are written in-house (LYRICS and MUSIC)?
- All of the songs
 - Most of the songs
 - About half of the songs
 - Some of the songs
 - None of the songs
9. How much of the songs sung in your worship gatherings have the MUSIC extensively re-arranged for your worship gatherings from the original recordings/compositions?
- All of the songs
 - Most of the songs
 - About half of the songs
 - Some of the songs
 - None of the songs

Interview Questionnaire

1. How long have you served at your current church?
2. What was your background experience before your current position?
3. In your understanding, what was the motivation behind moving towards more sacramental and historical practices in corporate worship?
4. In your experience, how important are various skills for worship leaders in evangelical sacramental churches, and how are they utilized?
5. How varied or monolithic are the musical genres and sounds in the worship of sacramental evangelical churches?
6. How does the variety of songs in these churches compare to that of the modern worship music of early 21st century evangelical churches?
7. What orders, practices, and disciplines, if any, have changed in the worship services of churches that have shifted to a more sacramental faith?
8. What changes, if any, has the role of the worship pastor undergone in the Evangelical church and since the emergence of the Evangelical Sacramental movement?
9. In your understanding, how does a sacramental church such as yours that has roots and history in the modern worship movement compare and contrast from a church that has always been sacramental and never embraced the modern worship context?
10. What kind of degree or training would best prepare one to serve as a “worship pastor” in a church such as yours? What would be the strengths and weaknesses of a sacred music degree or of a worship leadership degree?

*Follow-up questions to each participant varied depending upon the scope of the answers given and the direction and duration of the interview.

Informed Consent Form

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Protocol # 3503.100818

CONSENT FORM

Educating Worship Leaders for Sacramental Modern Worship
Jordan Covarelli
Liberty University
School of Music

You are invited to be in a research project investigating the musical training valuable for evangelical churches that have re-incorporated sacramental and historical practices into their worship services. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a pastor or worship leader at a church that is evangelical and sacramental and has in the past used modern worship practices. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Jordan Covarelli, a student in the School of Music at Liberty University, is conducting this study.

Background Information: The purpose of this study is to assess the importance of various skills for worship leaders in evangelical sacramental churches, and how are they utilized.

Procedures: If you agree to be in this study, you would be able to select from the list below the activities in which you would like to participate:

1. A 15-30 minute phone interview (that could be audio recorded with your permission).
2. Complete a brief survey regarding church practices and skills valuations. The survey should take less than 15 minutes.
3. Provide six months of past service flows from your services or a PCO report of the songs you have done over the last six months.

Risks: The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

Benefits: Participants should not expect to receive any direct benefits by participating in this research. However, the findings of this research might be most applicable and most valuable to the participants.

Benefits to society include:

- An increased understanding of sacramental practices and diversity in the body of Christ.
- Access to the research results which would provide the participant with perspective on how other churches and pastors are navigating the same transition as the participant is.
- More optimally trained worship pastor candidates coming from schools that adjust their curriculum to match the results of this study.

Compensation: Participants will not be compensated for participating in this study.

Confidentiality: The records of this study will be kept private. All participants and contributions will be kept and published with **complete confidentiality**. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records. I may share the data I collect from you for use in future research studies or with other researchers; if I share the data that I

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collect, I will remove any information that could identify you, if applicable, before I share the data.

- Participants desiring confidentiality will be assigned a pseudonym. I will conduct all interviews, whether the participant desires confidentiality or not, in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After three years, all electronic records will be deleted. Pseudonym codes will be stored in a journal that will be held in a locked drawer away from the password-locked computer. **Note:** Per federal regulations, data must be retained for three years upon completion of the study.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Recordings will be stored on a password locked computer for three years and then erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or the researcher. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships. Additionally, participants may change their decision regarding their election or waiving of confidentiality in the research participation at any time without affecting those relationships with Liberty University or the researcher.

How to Withdraw from the Study: If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you, will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

Contacts and Questions: The researcher conducting this study is Jordan Covarelli. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at 817-965-2945 or covarelli@gmail.com. You may also contact the researcher's faculty chair, Dr. Keith Currie at kacurrie2@liberty.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

Please notify the researcher if you would like a copy of this information for your records.

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Statement of Consent: I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Interview Participation:

- I consent to participate in a short phone interview with the interviewer.
- I do not wish to participate in an interview.

Survey Participation:

- I consent to complete a 15-minute survey about my understanding of my church's worship practices.
- I do not wish to participate in the survey.

Song or Service Archives Participation:

- I consent to provide a 6-month archive of either my church's service flows or song usage.
- I do not wish to participate in the Song or Service Archive aspect of this research.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Investigator

Date