

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Then Sings The Church A New Song

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By

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Abstract

The collective life of the Ancient Israelites was defined by a tumultuous journey through the desert as the primary setting where God continuously sought a relationship with them. Their liberation from Egyptian bondage was the central element that resulted from God's self-revelation and action toward His people. Their response to Him in worship reflects the nature instilled in all humankind to respond in many ways to divine action. One of these ways is through the use of music. Music has accompanied the worship of God's people since the time of the Patriarchs. The Exodus was the experience that sprung many new songs authored by Hebrew leaders like Moses as they led the Israelite nation to the promised land. Their worship practices initiated a long-lasting heritage of tradition.

Today the Christian Church responds in worship to God after the Christ event transformed the relationship between God and humanity. Many other events throughout church history have warranted the creation of new songs in each era. The worship practices of Ancient Israel remain a comprehensive source of study that informs the myriad of traditions and rituals seen in the church today. However, the unifying character of music and praise of the Israelites is disconnected from the current attitudes unwilling to reconcile compartmentalized expressions of worship. Contemporarily composed music does not cease to be a source of discontent and contentious debate among church members. Several areas in history are considered to help explain this disconnect. The shared active experiences of Church staff members also serve to highlight the often-misguided attitudes of the American church.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Throughout the decades, the Christian church has been defined by many different aspects that constitute its purpose. Undeniably, one of these aspects is music, as it has been a vital tool to express the worship rendered to God in response to His work in people's lives, as stated in the pages of the Bible. However, the church has seen numerous different stances arise amongst the other congregations about music throughout history. Different age groups have taken on contrasting opinions over what kind of music should be played or is genuinely representative of sound Christian faith. This study examines the perceived attitudes towards music in Biblical times as a tool to encourage worship and the attitudes seen today that place music in the center of much scrutiny. This study considers multiple books and writings on the matter of church music. Waves of contemporary music were implemented in worship services during the twentieth century to appeal to broader audiences and add vigor to the worship experience, creating divisions in the community. The current reality will be compared to Biblical accounts of Israelite worship. Certain historical moments in the church's life are suggested to have influenced and shaped congregational attitudes towards music. It is significant in worship leadership, offering light for worship leaders and music ministries today to tackle their work in unity to encourage the unity of the church as a whole.

Statement of Primary Research Questions

The worship music executed in the Christian church can be described as an immensely diverse event across all faith denominations with many points of origin that can be identified throughout history. The twentieth century, from the 1960s to the 1990s, saw remarkable social developments that were encompassed mainly in music-making and sparked changes in the

United States and within church circles, being a significant influence behind the waves of Contemporary Worship music in the church. This tradition of worship may find itself at a crossroads with no clear direction moving forward. It begs the question of how exactly the church has gotten here. Amongst a single congregation, people with cultural differences find themselves perpetually isolated from each other.

The Old Testament of the Bible describes a nation liberated by God and traces its evolving worship attitudes and practices. Biblical writers place great importance on the music and its essential purpose of encouraging praises to God; the call is to “Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord all the earth. Sing to the Lord, praise His name; proclaim His salvation day after day.”¹ However, the “new song” the Christian church has seen in the twentieth century, when waves of the “contemporary worship music” as we conceive it today first took place, was met with complex responses. “Like a river drawn from several headwaters and fed by various tributaries, contemporary worship had neither a single point of origin nor solitary influence shaping it.”² Nevertheless, this music tends to be enclosed in a single category and pinned against the “traditional” culture of the Christian church.

The gap identified in literature pertains to the disparate scenarios where the “new song” of the Israelite nation defined its people and sang to the Lord. In contrast, the “new song” of the twentieth century does not represent the whole people of the church, nor does “all the earth” (Ps. 96.1) entirely translate to the current era to include all generations and schools of thought within the Christian community. Two research questions are examined in this study.

¹ Psalm 96:1-2. *All Bible verses will be in the New International Version.*

² Swee Hong Lim & Lester Ruth, *Lovin' On Jesus* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2017), 1.

Question One: What are the differences in attitudes towards music between Biblical peoples and the current church?

Question Two: What key historical event has influenced and shaped congregational attitudes towards music?

Significance of The Questions

Recently, the rising waves of the “contemporary worship” known today in Christian congregations have made an effort to bring new peoples into the church family. New people come to Christ and join the church body in worship by recapitulating the Christ event, actualizing the church, and anticipating the kingdom. Webber mentions these aspects, stating that “worship is the action that brings the Christ event into the experience of the community gathered in the name of Jesus.”³ Christ’s physical signs are evident in the various gifts of each member of the body. The church is present and visible in these signs (people, offices, gifts, Word, sacraments).

Initiated in the New Testament of the Bible, albeit with no single highly developed statement on worship, the centrality of the Christ event is a direct mirror of the Exodus event’s centrality in the worship of ancient Israelites in the Old Testament. For this reason, the redeeming Christ message of the Bible is the essential link to the Christian church of today. However, new church community members will often find themselves assimilated into one subsection of the whole congregation, undermining the enriching opportunity to share God’s blessing in its most diverse forms.

Joining the church family entails receiving the higher calling of finding one’s proper place and role within the life of the church body. An overview of church history sheds light on

³ Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old & New* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 67.

where it stands today. Historical events have reflected the incentive of singing “a new song” to the Lord, meaning new hymns, songs, and cultural upheavals that have redefined church music. Governmental and corporate decisions have also contributed to church music’s growing richness, preservation, and endurance. The current divide between traditional and contemporary traditions exemplifies conservatism for the music of specific times and cultures coupled with the delegitimization of other musical expressions in a way that hinders the true essence of actualizing the Christ event.

The worship wars were related to a myriad of issues in the service related to music, like the instrumentation (namely, guitar versus organ), the song repertoire, and the role of the songs within the service. Additionally, these worship wars found battlefronts in other matters of the church, like “the preaching style, the use of technology, the impact of popular entertainment, the relationship between the pastoral dimensions of worship (‘Is the service for us?’) or evangelistic ones (‘Is the service for others?’) and even the level of informality and dress appropriately for Christian worship”⁴ as Lester Ruth states. To pin these matters against each other as *Traditional* versus *Contemporary* is only verbal typography that encompasses a much more widespread conflict between many fronts in the church body.

The critical event of the Reformation movement brought to the forefront some crucial conflicts in a musical and theological sense. Martin Luther and John Calvin initiated two different schools of thought regarding music. Luther “believed music to be of utmost importance in worship, and at times he used it to teach doctrine.”⁵: “he often won more converts through his

⁴ Lester Ruth, “The Eruption of Worship Wars: The Coming of Conflict,” *Liturgy*, 32 (1), 3.

⁵ Elmer L. Towns & Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship Through the Ages* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2012), 108.

singing than through his preaching.”⁶ For this reason, Luther often composed original hymns that became hallmarks of the Christian repertoire.

In contrast, John Calvin advocated for the Psalms of the Bible to be the only source of hymn lyrics. He commissioned the French court poet Clément Marot to set all 150 psalms in meter, later publishing the Genevan Psalter.⁷ In a broader sense, the Reformers consisted of an assortment of groups and schools of thought that took on individual paths upon breaking away from the Roman Catholic Church of the sixteenth century. Later, established denominations like the Presbyterian, Baptist, Methodist, and Pentecostal churches began experiencing internal reforms of their own in the twentieth century.

Core Concepts

The concepts of *Traditional* versus *Contemporary* come under scrutiny and examination as to the totality of matters they encompass. Many problems in the church body caused these terms to become opposing labels, notably in the twentieth century. Blanchard refers to someone’s ego beyond the realm of psychology. “When we talk about ego, [...] we’re talking about major heart issues. [...] We have two simple definitions of ego: edging God out or exalting God only.”⁸ It is possible congregations are exclusive to one of these mentalities dictating music selection.

The scholarship of Psalms is taken into account here as they offer insight into the different circumstances the Israelites lived through, and individuals were driven to write them in

⁶ Donald Hustad, *Jubilate II: Church Music in Worship and Renewal* (Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing, 1993), 188.

⁷ Towns & Whaley, 109

⁸ Ken Blanchard & Phil Hodges, *The Servant Leader: Transforming your Heart, Head, Hands, & Habits* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2003), 26.

diverse ways. Gunkel revolutionized Psalm scholarship and has “inspired in his students and successors an appreciation of the true character of the many diverse literary forms or genres represented in the biblical records,”⁹ as expressed by Muilenburg. The Psalms have provided the lyrical content of many church hymnodies.

Worship is defined in Merriam Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary (11th ed.) as “reverence offered to a divine being,” as well as the “act of expressing such reverence.” Whaley states that “God initiated the task of revealing Himself to man through creation. He gave an eyewitness account of the events of the ages and opened the windows of heaven to reveal His glory, character, love, and wisdom so that we can know Him. Why? Our instinctive response in knowing God personally is worship.”¹⁰ Meyer “espouses the philosophy that music possesses value and transmits greatness.”¹¹ In *Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, he details information theory. He speaks of the meaning conveyed through well-constructed and well-performed music.¹² As a creation of God, each individual has been instilled with an impulse toward Him, to which the response is expressed in music. The overall role of the musician entailing integrity, humility, honesty, and service is also examined.

Certain conceptions of contemporary worship music are examined. Issues include the level of quality, as contemporary Christian music is held in contempt by the creative edge of popular music. Another issue is the challenge of the entertainment paradigm; as Bell writes, “we

⁹ Joel McGowan, “Psalms of Music: Worship in Ancient Israel through Song,” Ph.D., Baylor University, 2015, 1.

¹⁰ Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2009), 3.

¹¹ Marjorie Ness, “The Role of the Musician in the Faith Community”, *The American Organist*, August 1, 2020, 42.

¹² Leonard B. Meyer, *Music, the Arts, and Ideas*, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

are going into uncharted territory where music is increasingly seen as something which is the preserve of gifted individuals whom others are expected to listen to and admire.”¹³ Subtle and complex rhythmic practices in songs are another issue, as congregations of the past were thought not to be able to sing certain syncopations, and hymnal editors did not think they were proper in church music. The transience or seemed problematic because hymns were increasingly passed to history, and congregational fragmentations were furthered between generations. There is also perceived self-centeredness in contemporary Christian music and the consideration that many lyrics are ill-suited to a traditional concept of Christian worship that stresses the incorporation of individuals into the whole body of Christ, emphasizing the *ekklesia*.¹⁴ The modern secular culture is truly unique as the first culture that rose and developed with an ideology independent of any religious system.¹⁵ These points scrutinize many music genres in the church that seeks to reflect and keep with the times. This may also mirror the context of Ancient Israelites as the diversity of surrounding nations and cultures influenced the genres of music performed in their religious rituals.

Working Hypotheses

Research Question One: What are the differences in the stances towards music between the Ancient Israelites and the Early Church and today’s church?

Possible answers to this question reveal a vast array of stances. The context of the Ancient Israelites in the Old Testament, with the most remarkable event being their exodus from

¹³ John Bell, *The Singing Thing* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2000), 118.

¹⁴ The Greek (and Latin) word that the early church adopted as its name was “ekklesia,” the Greek word for “assembly of citizens”.

¹⁵ Quentin Faulkner, “Gothic Pillars and Blue Notes: Art as a Reflection of the Conflict of Religions”, *The American Organist*, Part 1, March 1998.

Egyptian slavery, may suggest a unified approach to music in their worship ritual written by numerous composers, including King David and his appointed instrumentalists and procession leaders. The peoples of the New Testament that saw the initiation of the Christian faith also may reflect Old Testament approaches, now centered on Christ and the anticipation of God's perfected kingdom. Different age groups in today's Christian church may be the primary example of a now diversified opinion and approach to music as it is found in a context where the Biblical events are viewed retrospectively and result from a history of the established faith that spans millennia. The sole ascription to the Bible may be the basis for those who favor traditional hymns. At the same time, continued consideration for current times and the endurance of God's work may be the basis for those who prefer contemporary songs. "A Lutheran theologian in 1994 suggested that the worship wars paralleled the broader 'culture wars' engulfing the nation."¹⁶

Research Question Two: What key event in the church's history influenced and shaped congregational attitudes toward worship?

Though numerous events are marked in the history of the faith, one crucial moment may be the Reformation movement of the sixteenth Century in Western Christianity, when religious and political challenges were posed to the Catholic Church. Among the entirety of congregational aspects, music was of great importance. This movement emphasized the use of the common folk and contemporary culture music to revitalize genuine worship on the congregation's part, as opposed to the ritual music of the church leaders of the day, set against the backdrop of the Renaissance era. Martin Luther was the pioneer of this movement that attacked the use of Latin in Roman Catholic liturgy. Luther espoused the priesthood of all believers and their direct access to God through the death and resurrection of Christ. "For the

¹⁶ Ted Peters, "Worship Wars," *Dialog* 33, no. 3, Summer 1994, 166-73.

first time indeed, in Christendom for many centuries, there was genuine congregational singing, and it owed its origin to the fertile brain of Luther every whit as much as did the hearty worship that accompanied it.”¹⁷

Method/Design

In this study, the method and design utilized is a qualitative descriptive procedure. This research is based on collecting data from numerous books, journal articles, magazine articles, and theses and dissertations around the subject of the different kinds of music executed in church worship and their backgrounds. Throughout the process, the information gathered in the research will be examined to build bridges between these writings to provide a unique angle to contribute to a holistic understanding of church music.

The multiple themes found in this literature cover different facets of the church ministry; the cultural surroundings of the church have initiated efforts of change and restructuring liturgical, physical, and ethnic implications in the worship design in the United States. These implications are centered around the essential Biblical worship themes and are interwoven within the heritage the church enjoys from certain ancient religious rituals. International youth culture is considered to establish the importance of the church experience for the youth, arguably the most vital age group of congregations. Interdisciplinary methods are argued to deconstruct misperceptions that hinder the study of sound, music, and religion altogether to widen further the view of complex aspects of life,¹⁸ exemplified that serving in the music ministry entails spirituality and practicality on the part of each individual. The complexity of human life is

¹⁷ J. F. Rowbotham, “The Music of the Protestant Reformation,” *The Quiver*, January 1889, 84.

¹⁸ Isabel Laack, “Sound, Music, and Religion: A Preliminary Cartography of a Transdisciplinary Research Field.” *Method & Theory in the Study of Religion*, vol. 27, no. 3, 2015, 222.

encapsulated in the church gathering that reflects concepts of identity and social perceptions. These themes are laid out in the context of the impact and influence of music.

Research Plan

In this study based on texts and interviews, the focus will begin with the core concepts of worship presented in the Biblical documents, based on the examined literature, to describe the behavior of the people of Israel and form the main base of worship in general. Webber states, “If God gifted the peoples of Israel and the early church with worship, then Scriptures will relate principles and patterns of worship that will not only inform the church about worship but guide it in its concern to be faithful to the biblical tradition.”¹⁹ An inductive and deductive data analysis is used to examine the surrounding aspects of worship music, starting with the Psalms.

An ethnographic procedure follows to inform the first research question. In light of the concept of the interdisciplinary methodology stated by Laack, the cultural ramifications of church music, including the appropriations of specific genres affected by historical events and periods, are considered. Multiple data sources showcase the personal experience of several people across age groups and nations of the world to exemplify church gatherings reflecting a summary of the broader society in terms of personal identity and role in the community. To offer an example, Yoon writes that “Korea represents one of the strongest Christian populations in the world and at the same time challenges – a drop in the number of young members and a huge generational gap in its church congregations,”²⁰ which represents a significant issue caused by said appropriations of genres and rituals at large. An additional consideration is about the

¹⁹ Webber, 13.

²⁰ Sunny Yoon, “Tuning in Sacred: Youth Culture and Contemporary Christian Music”, *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music*, vol. 47, no. 2, 2016, 315.

personal perceptions found across both sides of the debate in question here, based on involvement in the realms of traditional and contemporary music.

These ethnographical phenomena seem to respond to the ever-changing music environments of the church that inform the second research question. These data sources are examined to present a unique point of view to interpret the wholeness of the church music environment and the disparate musical stances of the Christian peoples today, in contrast to the ancient Biblical peoples. This literature represents a threshold to step into further documents to draw interpretations from to tie the loose ends and seek that the church's life restores a thorough interrelationship amongst the peoples that constitute the church body. Faulkner wrote, "History confirms that music evolves and develops by the gradual confluence of newer styles with older, established ones."²¹

²¹ Quentin Faulkner, "Straight Talk about Traditional Versus Contemporary Christian Music," *The American Organist*, June 1, 2006, 79.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

The Biblical accounts of the worship practices provide the very groundwork upon which all of Christendom builds today. Webber, the author of *Worship Old & New*, remarks that worship is not tangential to the Christian story but lies at its heart from beginning to end. Worship is essentially about God's continual movement towards humankind and their response in faith and obedience. He enumerates several themes upon which worship is based, including event orientation, exemplified in the meeting between God and His people after they were freed from Egyptian bondage; the covenantal nature of worship was akin to the ancient treaties where an emperor granted a favored position to his servant; this covenant called for obedience and sacrifice. Other worship themes revolve around the people's response through acts of remembrance, anticipation, and celebration.

Although God had initiated a relationship with Abraham and the patriarchs, and they responded with worship and obedience, the Exodus marks the turning point of salvation history in the Old Testament, which points to the fundamental nature of Biblical worship, as the salvation brought by Christ also does so in the New Testament. The event orientation of Old Testament worship is seen clearly in the meeting between God and His people that took place after He miraculously delivered them from the grip of Pharaoh. The context of the Sinai event is described in chapters 19-24 of the book of Exodus, the most pertinent part of which took place at the foot of Mount Sinai.

When Moses went and told the people all the Lord's words and laws, they responded with one voice, 'Everything the Lord has said we will do.' Moses then wrote down everything the Lord had said. He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings to the Lord. Moses

took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he splashed against the altar. Then he took the book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, ‘We will do everything the Lord had said; we will obey.’ Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, ‘This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.’²²

The importance of this meeting rests on establishing the most basic structural elements for a meeting between God and His people. The initial call from God for His people to convene at the foot of the mountain as His assembly established this calling as a prerequisite of true worship. A responsibility structure was also arranged; Moses was given the leadership role while other parts of the drama were played by Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, the seventy elders of Israel, the young Israelite men, and the people. “The picture is not that of leaders and an audience but of full participation of those congregated. [...] The full orchestration brought every person together in a harmonious whole. This act points to participation as a fundamental aspect of worship.”²³ The meeting with God was characterized by the proclamation of the Word, establishing that worship is not complete without hearing from God. The people are also to accept the conditions of the covenant, which extends to the continuous renewal of personal commitment being an essential aspect of worship in both Judaic and Christian traditions. The meeting was ultimately climaxed by a symbol of ratification; a blood sacrifice was always used by God to demonstrate the sealing of the relationship with His people.

Part of the covenantal nature of worship for the Israelites was to maintain their identity as the people of God, for they continuously recalled and celebrated their relationship with God in worship. They were also to offer their tribute as the loyal servant of the Great King, reflecting

²² Exodus 24:3-8.

²³ Webber, 21.

the treaties by emperors that constituted part of their cultural background. Throughout the history of Ancient Israel, worship's covenantal nature was affirmed in the words of the prophets, repeatedly announcing God's judgment upon them because, in their negligence of the covenant, their worship had turned false. Their worship was lost, ritualized, or corrupted by pagan influence whenever they lapsed into sin. Relationship renewal was imperative for this reason, as exemplified in the covenant renewal under Joshua (Joshua 23:1-16); King David's reforms based on the Book of the Covenant (1 Chronicles 15:11-16:43); the renewal movements under Solomon (1 Kings 8:1-9:9), Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29:1-31:1), and Josiah (2 Chronicles 34:14-35:19); and the rediscovery of Deuteronomy upon Israel's return from Babylonian captivity under Ezra, the priest and Nehemiah the governor (Ezra 9:1-10:17; Nehemiah 12:27-13:31).

In Scripture, covenants between God and the people were always secured with a sacrifice, as exemplified in the stories of Noah, Abram, Isaac, and Jacob in the book of Genesis. A central aspect of the sacrificial system was the notion of atonement, particularly expressed in the sacrifices on the day of atonement. On this day, the High Priest carried the blood of the sacrifice and sprinkled it on the lid of the Ark of the Covenant to make atonement for all of Israel. This ritualistic pattern was to occur at specific times. Several festivals were established throughout Israel's history to remember God's acts of salvation and goodness, among which the Passover was chief. The rationale of remembrance was expressed by Moses in conversation with God, in that the people sought a way to tell the next generation about the laws they had. Biblical religion also relies on a principle of promise, which in Israel's case was the land God promised to the patriarchs and subsequently called the nation out of Egyptian bondage to possess. This promise was the reason for Israelite worship to be based on anticipation. Webber contends that Israelite worship was also based on celebration, by remembering the past and making the past

contemporaneous through story, song, drama, and feasting.²⁴ However, these outward expressions of worship would only be meaningful if they sprung from the people's gratitude and commitment of their lives, approaching their God with homage and reverence.

Peterson sheds light upon the language utilized in Israelite worship. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *to worship* as "to honor or revere as a supernatural being or power, or as a holy thing; to regard or approach with veneration; to adore with appropriate acts or ceremonies."²⁵ Biblical words for worship do not represent concrete concepts but constitute a spectrum of thought about how to relate to God. Perhaps the most prominent word Peterson references in his book *Engaging with God* in his exploration of the original language used in Scripture to convey acts of worship is *proskuneo*. This compound word denotes the act of blowing a kiss toward one of higher rank. This term was also utilized to refer to the inward attitude of homage and respect. By extension, the term also conveys the outward gesture of prostration representing this homage. "General consensus indicates that it originated in the Tragedians, with Persian origins presupposed. [...] During the Tragedian period, the early usage of the physical act of prostration and kissing the earth was transformed directly to a mental or spiritual inward attitude. This is supported with documentation that shows that *proskuneo* was used to express respect for the bow of Heracles."²⁶

In the cultic context, the only command to bend over before the Lord was in connection with the presentation of the first fruits at the sanctuary in generational succession. The individual who brought the first fruits "acknowledged himself to be the personal recipient of the gift

²⁴ Webber, 28.

²⁵ *The Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XII V-Z (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1933), 320-21.

²⁶ Thomas A. Seel, *A Theology of Music for Worship Derived from the Book of Revelation* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1995), 37.

promised centuries beforehand to the patriarchs.”²⁷ In the absence of verbs or any indicators of physical movement in other instances, a more abstract sense of *worship* can be understood. Other terms in the Greek Bible often translated to *worship* are *latreuein*, adequately rendered “to serve;” *douleuein*, referring to the obligations of an enslaved person to their master; and *leitourgein*, which specifies the priestly role in the cultic service of Israel.²⁸ From the latter source the church inherited the term *liturgy*. The definition of this term was once confined to the work of the Catholic priests and was later transformed to convey the work of all the people following the Reformation.

In addition to these times of worship for the Israelites, Webber writes that a specific place of worship was also designated throughout Israel’s trek. The book of Exodus lists instructions delivered by God regarding the building of the tabernacle as a symbol of His indwelling presence amongst the Israelites. This was a contrast to surrounding pagan nations that bore images or idols of their god. The ark that contained the book of the Covenant was positioned in the Holy of Holies within the tabernacle, expressing both the presence of God and His rule over Israel. Wherever the Israelites moved, the tabernacle would always remain at the center of the camp. The arrangement of the outer court, the inner court, and the Holy of Holies represented the distance between the worshiper and God. “All of the pieces of furniture such as the altar, the laver, the golden lampstands, the table with the bread of the Presence, the altar of incense, and the ark were laden with symbolic meaning as they depicted an encounter with God. Nothing in the temple furniture or layout was randomly selected or haphazardly placed.”²⁹ King David

²⁷ J. A. Thompson, *Deuteronomy, Tyndale Old Testament Commentary* (London, England: Inter-Varsity Press; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), 256.

²⁸ David Peterson, *Engaging with God: A Biblical Theology of Worship* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 64, 66.

²⁹ Webber, 34.

brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem during his reign, establishing the city as the center of Israel's life and worship. In the subsequent reign of King Solomon, the temple was finally erected as a larger and more magnificent successor to the original tabernacle to represent God's presence and the nation's worship.

Cosper is a young pastor who sheds light on the subject of the Gospel story being told through the church's worship in his book titled *Rhythms of Grace*. In the matter of music, he highlights the key moments of encounters between God and His people, beginning with His promise to Abraham, an aging, childless man who God promised innumerable heirs. Cosper associates him with the song of the patriarchs, a song "born of weeping, of too much drink, of long-suffering, of hopeless sojourns and agonizing compromise."³⁰ The next event Cosper brings attention to is the exodus itself, the central aspect of the Old Testament, to contend that the bleary song of the patriarchs became a tearful slave song in Egypt. Subsequently, their liberation and trek through the desert on the other side of the Red Sea inspired their shouts of *glory*, *hallelujah*. Settlement in the Promised land brought about national declarations of God's indwelling presence. "It is a violent song, written with fire and bloodstains, and it is a song of failure and reconciliation."³¹ In the book *Then Sings My Soul*, Morgan remarks that in the ancient world of the Bible, much of the collecting, preserving, and spreading of truth was done through song. He points to Psalms 117 and 119 as some examples of the great hymns of the Bible, which were meant to be learned and circulated from individual to individual through singing. The first Biblical reference to music is associated with an individual named Jubal, who is described as the

³⁰ Mike Cosper, *Rhythms of Grace* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 46.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 59.

father of all who play the harp and flute (Genesis 4:21). Found in Exodus 15 is the first recorded Biblical hymn after the Israelites escaped Egypt through the parted Red Sea. Moses and the Israelites were quick to recount the story of their trek in the form of a song that could be easily learned and spread abroad. The first verse of this chapter reads: “I will sing to the Lord, for He is highly exalted. The horse and its rider He has hurled into the sea.” The parting of the Red Sea was the greatest miracle recorded in the Old Testament, worthy of being perpetually retold. This tradition of singing to recount the nation’s journey continued with the infamous golden calf, around which there was sensuous idolatry by the Israelites, causing Moses to destroy the Ten Commandments on the rocks. This was followed, however, by new songs of Jehovah that Moses taught to the Israelites.³² It reads in Deuteronomy 31:30-32:3: “And Moses recited the words of this song from beginning to end in the hearing of the whole assembly of Israel:

Listen, O heavens, and I will speak;
Hear, O earth, the words of my mouth.
Let my teaching fall like rain,
And my words descend like dew,
Like showers on new grass,
Like abundant rain on tender plants.
I will proclaim the name of the Lord.
Oh, praise the greatness of our God!

McGowan references the research done by several scholars regarding the use of the psalms in the context of the Second Temple in Ancient Israel. Some of them contend that the psalms were intended for a cultic context where the Israelites became united in their praise of Yahweh, an idea deeply rooted in the time of Moses. In the first chapter of McGowan’s thesis, *Psalms of Music: Worship in Ancient Israel through Song*, he mentions the revolutionary work of Gunkel for psalm scholarship, who implemented a study method that sought to organize,

³² Robert J. Morgan, *Then Sings My Soul*, (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2011), 10-11.

classify, and understand the psalms more deeply. Gunkel once wrote that the prevailing reliance upon superscriptions to contextualize the psalms isolated Israel's literature and culture from the broader environment of other peoples of the Ancient Near East, thus limiting its horizons.³³ One of Gunkel's students, Sigmund Mowinckel, further expanded upon his teacher's work and sought to understand the psalms as the authentic words of prayer uttered by human beings as they lived through certain situations and periods. Mowinckel believed the most likely case was that these personal poems were adopted for use in the Temple, along with other compositions explicitly written for Temple use. Music would become heavily involved in the cultic practice of Ancient Israel. As previously referenced, their worship was based upon their deliverance from slavery in Egypt. The crowd was indeed overcome with feelings of joy, thankfulness, and praise, as McGowan writes, due to this deliverance and blessing from God. An example of these expressions can be found in this excerpt from Exodus 15:1-2 (New International Version):

I will sing to the Lord
For He is highly exalted.
Both horse and driver
He has hurled into the sea.

The Lord is my strength and my defense;
He has become my salvation.
He is my God, and I will praise Him;
My Father's God, and I will exalt Him.

While Cospers offers key concepts and themes surrounding Israel's exhaustively recorded worship practices based on the main event of the Old Testament, Webber also provides some insight regarding the New Testament's main event, which directly pertains to our current Christian church. Whereas the exodus marked the worship of the Old Testament, the Christ event

³³ Joel McGowan, "Psalms of Music: Worship of Ancient Israel through Song," Ph.D., Baylor University, 2015, 2.

of the New Testament defines the worship of Christendom. Webber finds that studying the New Testament proves more challenging and complex due to the fragmentary nature of its sources.

“There is no single highly developed statement on worship in the New Testament. Rather, brief descriptions provided by hymns, confessions, benedictions, doxologies, and subtle hints in words descriptive of worship are scattered throughout the New Testament documents.”³⁴

The crucible of the events surrounding Jesus provides the basis for the worship of the New Testament. Early Christians, having worshiped in the synagogue for some time, faced growing conflicts that forced them elsewhere, and hints emerged about the inclusion of Gentiles to be identified as a new people of God. Jesus’ own life and teachings contribute to the basis of New Testament worship. Webber lists three characteristics gleaned from Jesus’ attitude toward worship. First, Israelite worship was supported by Jesus, as confirmed by examining his relationship to the temple, the synagogue, and feasts. The four Gospels describe the cleansing of the temple, in which Jesus is evidently concerned for the purity of temple worship. It was Jesus’ custom to go into the synagogue on the Sabbath, according to the Gospel of Luke. He also attended the feasts of Israel, and the detail with which he celebrated his last Passover displayed his knowledge and appreciation of this chief Israelite feast.³⁵

The second characteristic is that Jesus believed he superseded the Old Testament institutions of worship. He viewed himself as the fulfillment of the temple cult and as superior to the temple, rendering its rituals obsolete. “I tell you that something greater than the temple is here. If you had known what these words mean, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice,’ you would not

³⁴ Webber, 41.

³⁵ Ibid., 42.

have condemned the innocent. For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.”³⁶ Jesus also saw himself as the final sacrifice and the true Lamb of God, which he articulated to his disciples as he celebrated his final Passover.

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, ‘Take and eat; this is my body.’ Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom.’³⁷

The third characteristic is that Jesus assumed the right to reinterpret the customs of Jewish worship. This was demonstrated in his confrontations with the Pharisees over the Sabbath when he asserted that the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath, and that the Son of Man was Lord even of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27-28). Jesus readily called into question the strict rules of the Sabbath as developed by the Pharisees. This carried over to his attitudes toward the regulations that governed cleanness and uncleanness, as well as the rules regarding fasting and prayer. In each of these cases, the main point was that Jesus proclaimed himself—his lordship, his place in the kingdom, his place in the revelation of God in history—as superior to everything before him.³⁸ Jesus was preparing the way for the significant changes that would happen in worship as the new people of God developed worship depicting the Old Testament rituals fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

A significant amount of worship literature was generated by the birth of Christ, praising God for fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies. This narrative is the keynote of Mary’s

³⁶ Matthew 12:6-8.

³⁷ Matthew 26:26-29.

³⁸ Webber, 42.

Magnificat, considered one of the earliest hymns of the church. Cospers' discourse continuously focuses on the songs sung throughout the ages, associated with the blood of the sacrifices of generations past as a foreshadowing and preview of the shed blood of Jesus Christ himself. As he draws his final breath while hanging on the cross, he utters a song of redemption, according to Cospers. Jesus' death and resurrection are met with a worship response highlighting the destruction of the powers of sin and death. There has been much discussion amongst scholars whether these recurrent themes of the New Testament, partly embedded in song and rituals such as baptism, are products of early Christian worship. "At an early date, liturgical and catechetical forms began to be developed for the worship and teaching of various churches and soon spread widely among the rest."³⁹ Other hymns found in the Gospels are the *Benedictus* (Luke 1:68-79), the *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (Luke 2:14), and the *Nunc Dimittis* (Luke 2:29-32), as these hymns were known and used by the church before their incorporation into the gospel text. The same has been said for the hymns found in John 1:1-18, Philippians 2:6-11, Colossians 1:15-20, and the many odes, psalms, and doxologies found in the book of Revelation.

The Acts of the Apostles gives us insight into the worship of the first Christian community in Jerusalem, composed of Aramaic- and Greek-speaking Jews. The Jerusalem Christians continued being related to the temple, though their connection with Jewish sacrificial rites was unclear. Luke nonetheless proclaims priests to have become obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7). The Jerusalem Christians engaged in fellowship in their homes and in the temple courts, where they also proclaimed the gospel message. However, members of the Synagogue of the Freedmen, an organization of Jews outside of Palestine, continued subscribing to Mosaic law and

³⁹ James D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1977), 141-49.

were staunchly opposed to the teachings of Christ's messiahship. This is the account of Stephen, a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian who preached Christ's message and launched into a narrative of the history of Israel's disobedience to God in response to his opponents while emphasizing the fulfillment of the Old Testament cult in Christ. The period until A.D. 100 was a highly formative period in the early church's life that led to maturation and increased organization. Heretical groups arose and challenged the church after the mission extended throughout most of the Roman Empire and beyond, putting pressure on the church to become more clearly defined. This was achieved through growing literature, a more precise organization of the church, the emergence of creedal statements, and a further developed liturgical consciousness. Many scholars recognize the presence of worship materials in apostolic period literature, presupposing the incorporation of hymns, baptismal catechetical literature, confessions, doxologies, and benedictions. "It is thought that hymns of the church are sometimes used as arguments to make a particular doctrinal point or that large sections of the Epistles are elaborations on existing worship materials already known to the church."⁴⁰

The church's worship during the third century found itself in the midst of a hostile culture. Societal ridicule and discrimination forced Christians to worship inside homes, continuing the inherited practice of hearing the Word and celebrating at the table. Maxwell delineates what a worship service may have looked like at the end of the third century:

Liturgy of the Word:

Lections: Law, Prophets, Epistles, Acts, Gospels, Letters from bishops
Psalms sung by cantors between lections
Alleluias
Sermon, or sermons
Deacon's Litany for catechumens and penitents
Dismissal of all but the faithful

⁴⁰ Webber, 48.

Liturgy of the Table:

Deacon's Litany for the faithful, with diptychs (list of names) of living and dead
Kiss of Peace
Offertory: Collection of alms
Presentation of elements
Preparation of elements and admixture of water to wine
 Sursum corda (Lift up your hearts)
 Consecration prayer
 Preface: Thanksgiving and adoration for creation, holiness of God, etc.
 Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy)
 Thanksgiving for redemption (a prayer)
 Words of institution
 Anamnesis (Remembrance)
 Epiclesis (Invocation of the Holy Spirit)
 Great intercession for living and dead
 Lord's Prayer
 Fraction (Breaking of the bread)
 Elevation—"Holy things to the holy"—and Delivery
 Communion of all in both kinds, each communicant replying "Amen"
Psalms 43 and 34 were sung by cantors.
 Post-communion thanksgiving
 Deacon's litany and celebrant's brief intercession
 Reservation of bread only, for sick and absent
 Dismissal⁴¹

Constantine's conversion in the early fourth century led to a major worldview shift in the Roman Empire. Politics previously at enmity with the church were now courting the church's favor and, in the late fourth century, decreed Christianity to be the only legitimate religion of the Roman world. The church was now finding itself in a friendly environment where, with gifts of buildings in which to gather, the church's worship shifted from intimacy to theater. While Christians sang psalms, hymns of doctrine and faith, spiritual songs, or scripture texts during the first and second centuries, music encompassed a renewal of theology and evangelism in the third

⁴¹ William Maxwell, *An Outline of Christian Worship* (London, England: Oxford University Press, 1939), 17.

and fourth centuries.⁴² Many groups, like the Gnostics and the Marcionites, utilized music to promote their false theology. Teacher Bardesanes and his son Harmonious wrote hymns that propagated astrology. Popular genres of music were used to promote heretical teachings that undermined Jesus' divinity. Ambrose of Milan wrote doctrinally sound hymns in response to this trend, developing a simple, rhythmic, and syllabic chant that appealed to common people. The clergy began taking an increasingly prominent role in preparing and presenting music for worship at a time when the church was growing at an unprecedented rate.

The fall of the Roman Empire in 476 marked the beginning of the Middle Ages. This period saw the depopulation and de-urbanization of the empire due to the Franks' invasion from the north and the Islamic invasion from the south. After the time of Constantine, Christianity was the new state religion, and adherence to it was required to achieve citizenship. Bishops and cardinals of the empire took unprecedented control of large regions and populations, encouraging a growing unity between the church and the rulers of various parts of Europe. Pope Gregory innovated worship significantly with the use of the chant. He encouraged differing factions in the church to incorporate Gallican, Ambrosian, Mozarabic, and Celtic liturgies into a single structure that facilitated uniformity in worship. The use of the chant was drawn from the Jewish synagogue. Most Gregorian chant originates in three types of music: cantillation consisting of prayers, readings, and psalms; free composition; and antiphons, which are short improvised phrases or refrains of Hallelujah inserted between verses from the Psalms. Though music was not Gregory's focus as a pope, it proved to be his most enduring legacy. Wilson-Dickinson writes, "Pope Gregory, a great diplomat, administrator, and theologian, would probably be surprised to

⁴² Donald Hustad, *Jubilate II: Church Music in Worship and Renewal* (Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing, 1993), 164-65.

know that he is most widely remembered for the changes to the music for the Roman liturgy which took place during his papacy.”⁴³

Within the monastic tradition, Benedict of Nursia developed *The Rule*, a system where he divided the day into six hours of prayer, five hours for manual work, and four hours for Scripture study. The six hours of prayer were divided into a daily cycle of services:

- Matins (morning)—before daybreak;
- Lauds (praises)—at dawn;
- Prime (at the first hour)—6:00 AM;
- Terce (third hour)—9:00 AM;
- Sext (sixth hour)—mid-day;
- None (ninth hour)—3:00 PM;
- Vespers (evening)—6:00 PM; and
- Compline (completion)—at the end of the day.

The services were organized around the Psalms so that all 150 psalms were sung each week. There were two types of music sung during the *Divine Office*, another kind of worship service under Benedict’s Rule—modes and hymns. Modes developed by the monks were identified by their sequence of intervals. Most Gregorian chants, no matter how complex or elaborate, are based on one of the eight modes.⁴⁴ Hymns were often improvised and freely composed based on Scripture, whether literally or paraphrased or based on scriptural text or thought. Because hymnody lent itself to the spread of antibiblical theology around this time, the clergy also developed innovative hymn services in response. These services included the use of choir and vocal ensembles, introducing polyphony to Christian worship. Another innovation to worship was the development of written notation for music, pioneered by Guido D’Arezzo. He

⁴³ Andrew Wilson-Dickinson, *The Story of Christian Music: From Gregorian Chant to Black Gospel, an Illustrated Guide to All Major Traditions of Music in Worship* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 32.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

instructed singers to place neumes above the text to indicate specific musical notes and trained them to differentiate between tones and semitones through the *sol-fal* system he created. His invention of codifying music solidified a musical heritage.

By the end of the Middle Ages, however, the monasteries, clergy, and papacy were severely corrupted, and the worldview of many Europeans had changed. Towns and Whaley write:

The Renaissance spurred the growth of individualism, and many immersed themselves in the study of logic, reason, mathematics, humanities, and the arts. Wealth was no longer controlled by feudal landowners, and new wealth emerged in trade centers across Europe, creating a middle class of bankers, traders, merchants and industrialists. Economic individualism stirred across the Western world, creating a desire for academic and creative individualism. People explored new dimensions of literature, the arts, music, and sculpture.⁴⁵

The simple services of the first century had developed into complex ceremonies led by professional clergy. Worship historian Hustad suggests five areas of deterioration in the worship practices of the Roman Catholic Church.⁴⁶ First, the preaching of the Bible was minimized. Although the Psalms, the Gospels, and the Epistles were sometimes read, scripture readings were often omitted in favor of stories of the saints' lives. The priests were trained so poorly in some parishes that they could not read the Bible. Second, worship services were held in Latin, not a language the common people spoke, leading the congregation to become passive observers. Third, the Lord's Supper or Eucharist became a priestly function that espoused grief, as opposed to a time of celebration. Only the priest was permitted to receive the bread and the cup regularly, while the rest of the congregation received communion only once a year. Fourth, the Mass only

⁴⁵ Towns & Whaley, 101.

⁴⁶ Hustad, 185.

placed emphasis on Christ's death. Little attention was given to his resurrection or his promises of the second coming. Fifth, the Prayer of Thanksgiving was transformed into a long petition for God to receive the saints' offerings, leading congregants to fear that God wouldn't receive their own gifts. Congregational singing was nearly eliminated in the Roman churches after the fourth century Laodicean Council decreed that the laity were forbidden to sing publicly in church as much as they were forbidden to preach and interpret the Scriptures.

The affliction of the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages by the rebellion against its spiritual authority is regarded by Risi from the Florida Atlantic University. This was due to the prevalent tradition of the Gregorian Chant being sung by an elite group of musicians in a language the common church folk did not understand. The lack of the congregation's real engagement in worship fostered a growing discontent and scorn in the people, initiating a decrease in the Roman Catholic Church's influence. Informal services would be held in remote villages far from the urban cathedrals, where their own prayer and thanksgiving were sung to newly composed melodies or well-known secular tunes. The Moravians published the first hymnbook in 1501, including secular songs adapted with new spiritual lyrics and many new hymns.⁴⁷ This was one of the main elements that began the trend toward the eventual break from the Roman Catholic Church, known as the Reformation.

Martin Luther, an Augustinian monk from Wittenberg, Germany, challenged the Catholic Church's control over Christendom, espousing the individual's freedom to exercise their conscience before God. The bold monk posted his ninety-five theses on a church door in Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, publicly challenging the Pope and his authority over the

⁴⁷ Petrice Risi, "Pop Goes the Worship: The Influence of Popular Music on Contemporary Christian Music in the Evangelical Church." Order No. 1441545, Florida Atlantic University, 2007, 5.

church. For Luther, the only two essential elements for salvation were repentance from sin and faith in Jesus Christ. No individual could reach God by meeting the church's demands, paying indulgences, embarking on pilgrimages, or becoming a member of monastic orders. Luther thought these were "spurious inventions of the Church to line its coffers."⁴⁸ The Roman Catholic Church categorically rejected Luther's challenge and continued to use the revenue from indulgences to finance the lavish building of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. Luther's "desire for change was not motivated by politics but by sincere Christian conviction and the consequence of a balanced spiritual and family life."⁴⁹

Luther was an avid musician who advocated for new music to be composed and learned by the congregation in their language and cultural expression in an effort for the Church to recapture the Gospel story at heart. In Luther's first hymnal, his famous composition is based on Psalm 46, *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*.

Later he wrote a few more hymns, but he was primarily concerned with getting the ball rolling. After introducing his twenty-three hymns, he encouraged German poets to compose evangelical hymns—and they did! Writing to one musician, Spalatin, Luther said: "Grace and peace. I am willing to make German Psalms for the people, after the example of the Prophets and the ancient fathers; that is, spiritual hymns whereby the Word of God, through singing, may conserve itself among the people. We are therefore seeking everywhere for poets. Since you are endowed with versatility and good taste in German expression, and since, through abundant effort, you have cultivated both these gifts, I beg you to join hands with us and make the attempt to transform a Psalm into a hymn, after the pattern I enclose. I desire, however, that newfangled words, and courtly expressions, be omitted in order that the language may be the simplest and most familiar to the people."⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Wilson-Dickson, 60.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 60-61.

⁵⁰ James F. Lambert, *Luther's Hymns* (Philadelphia, PA: General Council Publication House, 1917), 15.

As Hustad noted, “Luther is remembered as the individual who gave the German people the Bible and the hymnbook in their own language.”⁵¹ His desire for congregational songs was motivated by the same conviction with which he translated the Bible to German. His emphasis on the priesthood of all believers required that everyone be permitted to sing to the Lord. “Next to theology, I give the first and highest honor to music,”⁵² he wrote. Luther held music in such high regard that he frequently utilized it as the main tool for evangelism and to teach doctrine, often winning more converts to the faith through singing rather than preaching.

The sixteenth-century Reformation produced two main types of Protestant worship music: Luther’s German chorale and Calvin’s use of the Psalter. Luther was considered the first evangelical hymn writer; his chorales were much less complicated than the polyphonic chants used in the church by the clergy prior to the Reformation, and they were popularized in Germany and Scandinavia. Most of his chorales for congregations were in unison, unaccompanied by instrumentation. The chorales established the precedent for congregations and choirs to sing in four part-harmonies—soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. In keeping with Roman Catholic tradition, Luther generally retained the use of the choir in the church service, with the tenors often carrying the melody of songs. Luther’s hymns demonstrated believer priesthood, propagated Lutheran doctrine, and retained what he thought to be orthodox in the Roman Mass. He wrote in the style of secular German lyric poets while adapting texts and familiar melodies from plainsong, sacred and secular folk songs, and the Roman Catholic liturgy.⁵³

⁵¹ Hustad, 186.

⁵² Robert Morgan, *Preacher’s Sourcebook of Creative Sermon Illustrations* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc., 2007), 320.

⁵³ Wilson-Dickson, 62.

About Martin Luther and his famous hymn, Morgan writes, “Enflamed by the fires of Reformation, congregations began singing again, and during the first hundred years of the Reformation, scholars reckon that twenty-five thousand hymns were written in Germany alone.”⁵⁴ Some of the hymnists that followed Luther’s legacy were Johann Walter and Michael Praetorius. Martin Rinkart wrote the famous hymn *Now Thank We All Our God*, through which he encouraged the German people to continue hymning through the period of the Thirty Years’ War from 1618 to 1648. Paul Gerhardt is one who grew up during this tumultuous period and became a famous church musician. He composed more personal and pietistic hymns than did Luther, like *We Sing, Emmanuel, Thy Praise* and *Commit Whatever Grieves Thee*. The hymn *Praise to The Lord, The Almighty* was authored by Joachim Neander, a seventeenth-century pietistic hymnist himself.

Interestingly, as Luther’s movement spread westward, all the new Protestant churches adopted his revival of congregational singing, but some rejected the singing of humanly composed hymns. Such is the case of followers of John Calvin in Switzerland, France, the Netherlands, Scotland, and England, who believed only biblical hymns should be sung, specifically those of David. This opinion also spread throughout the American colonies, posing a threat to the church's unity in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The Swiss reformer Ulrich Zwingli and the French reformer John Calvin were influential in the attitude of English reformers. Calvin wanted nothing to do with organs, choirs, or hymns, instead believing that metrical versions of the Psalms, sung in unison, were the proper songs for the assembled church. One example is the *Old Hundredth*, a metric rendition of Psalm 100 in the 1551 Geneva Psalter, sung to the melody associated with the *Doxology*.

⁵⁴ Morgan, 35.

All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice.
Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell;
Come ye before Him and rejoice.⁵⁵

The Whole Booke of Psalms was published by John Day in 1562, providing sung versions of all 150 Psalms of the Bible, becoming the primary hymnbook for English worship for the next century. In 1696, Nahum Tate and Nicholas Brady published the *New Version of the Psalms of David, Fitted to the Tunes Used in Churches*. This work was greatly criticized by those who preferred the older version of 1562. Considered the first substantial book published in English-speaking North America, the Bay Psalm Book (*The Whole Booke of Psalmes Truthfully Translated into English Meter*) was introduced by the American Puritans. Despite these efforts, the general development of hymns in British congregations became retarded by these prevailing attitudes. Thomas Ken was an English educator who penned a devotional manual for students of Winchester College, including a morning hymn, *Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun*, and an evening hymn, *All Praise to You This Night*. Both of these ended with a refrain known today as the *Doxology*: “Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him all creatures here below. Praise Him above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.”

Another individual written about by Morgan is English Baptist preacher Benjamin Keach, born in 1640. All English churches were required to use the rites and ceremonies of the *Book of Common Prayer* after the Act of Uniformity was passed in 1662. Government troops threatened Keach with death by being trampled by horses for writing a children’s book presenting some spiritual lessons at odds with the *Book of Common Prayer*. After years of imprisonment and subsequent secret gatherings of a small Baptist church he pastored in a private home in London,

⁵⁵ Morgan, 37.

the laws changed in 1672, and the church began to worship openly. He introduced the highly controversial practice of the congregational singing of hymns during a time when English Baptists were convinced only metrical psalms should be sung. Regardless, Keach led the church to sing a hymn at the Lord's Supper service, followed by the Thanksgiving services. Amid much debate, the church ultimately voted to sing hymns and metrical psalms every Sunday. The hymn would be sung at the close of service, after the sermon and prayer, allowing those opposed to "go freely forth."⁵⁶ In 1691, Mr. Keach published *The Breach Repaired in God's Worship, or Singing of Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs Proved to be a Holy Ordinance of Jesus Christ*, as well as a hymn book containing about three hundred hymns, known as the first Baptist hymnal, published in England.

Hymn singing in the church was also heavily influenced by the Wesley brothers, John and Charles, who were the founders of the Methodist movement. Although they were both preachers, theologians, and hymnists, John is chiefly remembered for his sermons and Charles for his hymns. Their work was highly prevalent during the time of the Great Awakening in the American colonies and the Wesleyan Revival of the British Isles in the eighteenth century. Some scholars put the total of hymns written by Charles Wesley at 8,989, including hymns like *And Can It Be That I Should Gain, Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus, Christ The Lord Is Risen Today, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, O for A Thousand Tongues To Sing, Rejoice, The Lord Is King*, and *Love Divine, All Loves Excelling*. In the preface of the 1761 volume of *Sacred Melody*, John Wesley listed seven rules for congregational singing:

- Learn these tunes before you learn any others;
- Sing them exactly as they are printed here;
- Sing all. See that you join with the congregation as frequently as you can. Let not a slight degree of weakness or weariness hinder you;

⁵⁶ Morgan, 40.

- Sing lustily and with a good courage. Beware of singing as if you were half dead or half asleep, but let up your voice with strength;
- Sing modestly. Do not bawl so as to be heard above or distinct from the rest of the congregation, that you may not destroy the harmony;
- Sing in time... Do not run before nor stay behind; and
- Above all, sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing Him more than yourself.⁵⁷

Composers like William Williams, who wrote *Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah*, Edward Perronet, who wrote *All Hail The Power Of Jesus' Name*, and Robert Robinson, who wrote *Come Thou Fount Of Every Blessing*, were part of the generations that followed the life and work of the Wesley brothers in church hymnody. Former slave trader John Newton became an Anglican minister and powerful hymnist following his conversion to Christ. His collaborations with noted English poet William Cowper produced the classic testimonial hymn *Amazing Grace*, considered the most famous hymn in English history. Other hymnists were John Fawcett, who wrote *Bless Be The Tie That Binds*, Reginald Heber, who wrote *Holy, Holy, Holy*, James Montgomery, who wrote *Angels From The Realms Of Glory*, blind Scottish pastor George Matheson, who wrote *O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go*, and Matthew Bridges and Godfrey Thring, who wrote alternating verses of *Crown Him With Many Crowns*.

Isaac Watts is considered the *Father of English hymnody*. He was the son of Isaac Watts Sr., an educator and tailor who was classified among the Dissenters of the Church of England after he chose to attend an independent Christian congregation. The family lived in the English port city of Southampton, and he showed early signs of brilliance, displaying a natural talent for rhyme. His influential work as a hymnist stemmed from his education at the Nonconformist Academy at Stoke Newington Green under the tutelage of Rev. Thomas Rowe. It also reflected his general discontent with the church's stagnant tradition of singing metrical Psalms that were

⁵⁷ Morgan, 42-43.

largely devoid of New Testament content. His father's encouragement was a catalyst for Watts to compose hymns for his home church weekly. Though he was initially reluctant to publish his compositions due to the enduring controversy surrounding hymns, he was led by the encouragement of his brother Enoch to publish his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* in 1707. This was followed by the children's hymnal, *The Divine and Moral Songs for the Use of Children*, in 1715, and his landmark *The Psalms of David Imitated in the Language of the New Testament* in 1719. His hymns are still sung today, including *Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed*, *I Sing the Mighty Power of God*, *I'll Praise My Maker*, *Jesus Shall Reign*, *Join All the Glorious Names*, *Joy to the World*, *We're Marching To Zion*, *O God Our Help in Ages Past*, and *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*. Watts was also a prolific educator and author of faith-based literature. His academic writings included *The Art of Reading and Writing English*, published in 1721, *The Right Use of Reason in the Inquiry After Truth* in 1724, and *A Brief Scheme of Ontology*, published in 1733, among other works. His successful book about heaven, *The World to Come*, was published three years before his death. His enduring legacy has led churches previously opposed to hymn-singing to ultimately embrace the hymnody he authored, going so far as to discard the Psalms. Due to his declining health, "he finally stopped his prodigious output of writing and retired from his literary pursuits. His last months were devoted to getting his papers in order, praying and meditating, catching up on correspondence, and visiting with his close friends."⁵⁸

The development of the Singing School and shaped notes was a crucial factor in the evolution of Christian music in the United States. Harvard-educated ministers were discontent with the poor quality of congregational singing, leading Massachusetts pastor John Tufts to

⁵⁸ Morgan, 209.

publish what was the first of hundreds of manuals for singing school and church use in 1721. Ministers and musicians used these manuals to teach the rudiments of music and introduce sacred melodies to Americans. Lowell Mason was a significant figure in early American music education, having moved to Boston from Georgia to become a music director for several churches, eventually being called the *Father of American Church music*. A warm devotional style, combining simplicity and dignity, defined his music and that of his contemporaries. However, Americans grew acquainted with popular ballads and folk music before the Civil War. This style of music began permeating congregations and became a driving force during the surge of camp meetings. These began in Kentucky and instigated a national revival, accompanied by popular, rousing, and cheerful songs. Some examples of this music included the spirituals *Give me the old-time religion* and *Just a Closer Walk with Thee*.

Towns and Whaley offer some context surrounding these meetings. The United States experienced a long period of spiritual decline following the American Revolution. Towns and Whaley describe the destruction of church buildings, farms, towns, the economy in general, and the deaths of hundreds of clergy members as a result of the war with Great Britain. In addition, Americans were increasingly fascinated with European empiricism and rationalism, resulting in the spread of secularism and deism. Such were the conditions in the United States that French infidel Voltaire said Christianity would be forgotten in the new nation within three decades.⁵⁹ It seemed as though Christianity was about to phase out of American society. Several denominations experienced turmoil:

- Presbyterians publicly deplored the nation’s ungodliness but did little, if anything, to prevent rowdy behavior;

⁵⁹ Elmer L. Towns & Douglas Porter, *The Ten Greatest Revivals Ever: From Pentecost to the Present* (Ventura, CA: Vine Books, 2000), 73.

- Church attendance among Baptist churches was on the decline, and their few attempts at evangelism were feeble and ineffective;
- Since the death of Wesley, Methodists were losing more members than they were gaining;
- The Congregationalist Church of Lennox, Massachusetts, did not take in new members for nearly sixteen years;
- Due to a lack of church business, the bishop of New York's Protestant Episcopal Church resigned and took a secular job; and
- The Lutherans considered a merger with the Episcopalians. Both churches were desperate for members.⁶⁰

The camp meetings codified several innovations in worship. First, public display of emotions was rarely seen in the early colonies' strict Presbyterian, Congregationalist, and Baptist churches. The meetings at Gasper River Church and Cane Ridge offered an opportunity to publicly express worship, repentance, and sorrow for sin. Second, believers began demonstrating devotion through bodily movement and vocal expression. Shouting, clapping, dancing, and several other physical worship expressions were permitted and encouraged partly due to the influence of African Americans who participated in the meetings. Third, the Calvinistic theology behind the previous revivals was adapted and moderated. It previously emphasized the intellectual aspect of Christianity, encouraging believers to know and understand God's calling cognitively and to obey in daily life. This awakening put increased emphasis on emotions, encouraging believers to "pray through" until they felt salvation in their souls. This theological shift allowed individuals to seek forgiveness and publicly invite Jesus into their lives. Fourth, the meetings were held outdoors. Attention to detail was given in setting up the large tents, grouping the meeting area in rows with split logs as pews, and constructing a hewn pulpit platform for preaching. Fifth, camp meetings provided multiethnic worship due to the participation of African

⁶⁰ Towns & Whaley, 136.

Americans, who were enslaved at the time. Lastly, folk music and spirituals were utilized as source material for worship.

During the Great Awakening that spread from New England to Kentucky, millions of pioneers shouted, danced, barked, and jerked, getting release, entertainment and, incidentally, salvation... Slaves attended these services and were profoundly influenced. They combined the revival hymns of eighteenth-century England with an African song style and created our greatest national music... The first songs slaves sang on this continent were probably those sturdy eighteenth-century English hymns depicting amazing grace, Jordan's stormy banks, and fountains filled with blood. Traditionally a leader would recite the line, after which the congregation sang in a slow, languorous manner called long or common meter, which allowed for intricate embellishment by each singer.⁶¹

As the nation grappled with the Civil War in the late nineteenth century, Moody rose as a prominent figure in urban revivalism that shifted Christian music worldwide. He became a chaplain who led many soldiers to faith in Christ. His approach to *worship evangelism* was informed by his identity as a layman-evangelist. He used personal testimony and presented the *gospel in song* to combine the emotional with intellectual, as he avoided either extreme. This reality produced a love for people and affected his evangelistic methods in several ways: his preaching was less theological and less refined than ministers of previous eras; his services began with a full hour of singing and engaging entertainment, interspersed with personal testimony; the order of his services consisted of congregational singing, special music by a soloist or a choir, prayers, Scripture reading, the sermon, and invitation; there was significant use of vast choirs, sometimes numbering at several hundred; "creating an atmosphere" was an important factor; and the larger campaigns were held in tabernacles, exhibition halls or temporary structures. Moody's method of creating an atmosphere garnered criticism. One critic wrote, "His unusual surroundings and general attitude of the crowds attending his meetings did

⁶¹ Anthony Heilbut, *The Gospel Sound* (New York, NY: Proscenium Publishers, 1985), xv-xx.

not contribute to feelings of reverence or spirituality.”⁶² The building was an important part of creating this atmosphere for Moody. He wanted the service to flow in an entertaining fashion. A newspaper reporter described one of the songs at his meeting as a combination of “a circus quick-step, a negro minstrel sentimental ballad, a college chorus, and a hymn all in one.”⁶³

After the war, Moody joined Gospel singer Ira Sankey to move evangelism from the country camps to urban auditoriums, embarking on a series of campaigns in all the major cities in the United States and the United Kingdom. The singing was simple, enthusiastic, emotional, personal, and heart-lifting, in the popular style of the time. Sankey’s desire for this earnest music that described the Christian’s experience in emotional terms and its use in the campaigns gave rise to the era of the Gospel song. The genre was called this way because the message centered on core ideas of the salvation message—sin, grace, redemption, and the experience of conversion.⁶⁴ Author William Reynolds identified seven characteristics of the American gospel hymn:

- It had an emotional rather than an intellectual emphasis;
- Phrases were simple and repetitive;
- The emphasis was on evangelism;
- Simple tunes based on popular melody—camp or marching songs and parlor piano music;
- The refrain was easy to learn;
- The words and melodies can be easily memorized; and
- The melodic line was supported by a simple harmonic structure with infrequent chord changes.

The most prolific poet of the Gospel song era was Fanny Crosby, blinded in infancy but became a well-known speaker and Christian personality of her time. She drew from her broad

⁶² Hustad, 235.

⁶³ Ibid., 236.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 235.

memorization of Scripture to compose thousands of Gospel songs and dictate them to waiting secretaries. Composers William Bradbury, Robert Lowry, and William Doane were among those who put her poems to music, including *To God Be the Glory* and *Blessed Assurance*. Other musicians, music publishers, and music educators she collaborated with include Charles Converse, George Root, Phoebe Knapp, Philip Phillips, James McGranahan, E. O. Excell, Elijah Hoffman, and George Stebbins. Later in life, she wrote about her blindness, “I verily believe that it was God’s intention that I should live my days in physical darkness, so as to be better prepared to sing His praise and incite others to do so. I could not have written thousands of hymns if I had been hindered by the distractions that would have been presented to my notice.”⁶⁵

The era of Gospel songs continued into the twentieth century under the direction of Charles M. Alexander and Homer Rodeheaver after the death of Moody in 1899. Rodeheaver was criticized for his popular-sounding melodies, but he wrote in his memoirs, “It was never intended for a Sunday morning service, not for devotional purposes—its purpose was to bridge the gap between the popular song of the day and the great hymns and gospel songs and to give men a simple, easy lilting melody which they could learn the first time they heard it, and which they could whistle and sing wherever they might be.” Many Gospel songs from this era of evangelistic ministries include *Softly and Tenderly*, written by Will Thompson, a poet from Ohio who had a highly successful publishing house. *The Old Rugged Cross* was written by evangelist George Bennard during his preaching trips across the Midwest. *Are You Washed in the Blood?* was written by prominent music publisher Elisha Hoffman. *His Eye Is on the Sparrow* was written by Civilla Durfee Martin as she was inspired by the testimony of an infirmed couple she

⁶⁵ Towns & Whaley, 191.

and her husband stayed with in New York. *Let the Lower Lights be Burning* was written by evangelistic song leader Philip Bliss, who later perished in a train wreck in Ashtabula, Ohio.

The popularity of the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University in Nashville promulgated the African American Spiritual around this time. This genre encompassed a heritage of slave songs from the Old South, originally composed and sung in the midst of suffering and oppression. *When the Saints Go Marching In*, *Were You There*, *Deep River*, and the Christmas spiritual *Go Tell It on The Mountain* were all authored by unknown individuals at the time. Charles A. Tindley, the son of slaves, became the far-famed pastor of Calvary Methodist Episcopal Church, where he initially found work as a janitor. He composed *I'll Overcome Someday*, which served as the basis for the Civil Rights anthem "We Shall Overcome," among other songs. *Precious Lord, Take My Hand* was written by composer Thomas A. Dorsey after he lost his wife and child. Later, African American jazz merged with the Pentecostal and Azusa Street revivals to solidify a uniquely American form of Christian music known as Black Gospel.

Following the time of the Great Depression and the Second World War, amidst hymns and Gospel songs of past generations, churches sang many popular hymns of comfort and assurance with a focus on Jesus. Some include *Since Jesus Came into My Heart*, *All That Thrills My Soul is Jesus*, *Jesus Is All the World to Me*, and *No One Ever Cared for Me Like Jesus*. Composers John W. Peterson and Gloria and William Gaither also rose to prominence by writing Gospel songs and modern compositions churches adopted into their repertoire. Cliff Barrows and the Billy Graham choirs popularized *How Great Thou Art*, now considered a classic, introduced to North American audiences at the 1955 Billy Graham Crusade in Toronto, Canada. The next occasion was the 1957 Billy Graham Crusade in New York City. George Beverly Shea sang it 99

times over the sixteen weeks of the crusades in Madison Square Garden, Times Square, and Yankee Stadium, with the choir joining in the rousing chorus.

George Beverly Shea and Cliff Barrows served as the nucleus of Billy Graham's music team from the beginning of his ministry. Barrows served as choir director for the meetings and music and radio-television program director for *The Hour of Decision*.⁶⁶ In addition, radio provided a forum for popularizing songs expressing Christian doctrines. Due to the effectiveness of radio ministries, local churches often modeled their worship after popular weekly broadcasts' formats. Perhaps the most successful among established radio ministries was *The Old-Fashioned Revival Hour* with Charles E. Fuller, having aired its first broadcast from a Hollywood studio over all the stations of the Mutual Network on October 3, 1937. It was later moved to the Long Beach Municipal Auditorium. A gathering of highly talented and motivated musicians under the direction of H. Leland Green was one of several factors contributing to the success of Fuller's broadcasts, including gospel musicians Rudy Atwood and George Bradbent. The program devoted thirty minutes to music by a choir and male quartet with fresh approaches to traditional gospel music performance. Members of the quartet were Bill McDougall, Jack Coleman, Ken Brown, and Arthur Jaissle, singing a wide variety of literature, including Southern Gospel, Traditional Gospel, Western European hymns, and African American spirituals. Additional factors contributing to the broadcast's success were that Fuller was an expository evangelist with a homespun and relaxed approach to preaching, boasting an audience of five thousand individuals during the live broadcasts and its access to a vast pool of evangelical musical talent.

History shifted when the decade of the 1960s arrived. This era was marked by multiple events, including the Bay of Pigs, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the assassination of United States

⁶⁶ Towns & Whaley, 271.

President John F. Kennedy, the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, the anti-war movement, the assassination of Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy, and the Watergate scandal. Morgan wrote about this critical time that “hundreds of young barefoot, long-haired, newly converted believers flocked to the church, and they brought their guitars with them.”⁶⁷

Laack writes about the vital role music plays in our society. She contends that it often lies at the heart of our cultural and religious identity. In her journal article *Sound, Music, and Religion: A Preliminary Cartography of a Transdisciplinary Field*, she writes about the existence of a complex diversity of music created within religious traditions throughout history. Incredible power has been ascribed to sound, with theories about its effect on humans and non-human entities, such as deities. For this reason, many religious themes and motifs are found in Western classical and popular music, which typically have a secular categorization. However, despite this integral element of music in our societies, the author points to a wide gap in the research due to a neglect of sound and music in the academic study of religion. Because of what Laack describes as the fall of the phenomenology of religion into disgrace, religion and culture have been considered separate social subsystems with distinct functions and objectives, neglecting the notion of any relationship between the two.

Furthermore, religious scholars have either been hesitant about focusing on religious experience and the role of music in religion or have felt incompetent in both religious studies and musicology. “Music is neither discussed in the seminal theories on religion proposed between the 1950s and 1990s nor in recent introductions to methodological and theoretical topics within the

⁶⁷ Morgan, 54.

discipline.”⁶⁸ Laack exhorts that the disciplines of the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences work together to contribute to the goal of bridging this gap.

The origins of Contemporary Worship music as known today are considered by authors Hong Lim and Ruth. They point to the changes in the socio-cultural landscape embodied in music-making around the mid-twentieth century and draw connections with the sense of identity in the generation that came of age. This was the emerging Black culture era through rhythm and blues and rock and roll, with figures like Elvis Presley and The Beatles making their mark on popular music. This context gives rise to the Jesus People as an evident hallmark of church music, with songs like *Seek Ye First* exemplifying the imminence of Christ’s return dominating their spirituality and themes. Falkner would opine that those who remember mid-twentieth-century church music would testify to its high stylistic diversity and multiple facets. Yoon, author of the article *Tuning in Sacred*, brings attention to the Christians of South Korea, offering insight into the underlying social issues as they relate to the youth in the church, highlighting the problem of abuse of power among Christian leadership and their political social power.

Hong Lim and Ruth remark on uncertainties surrounding the history of *contemporary* worship. One contributing factor is that churches engaging in this style of worship have not always used this term. There have been three surges in the use of the term *contemporary worship* throughout the twentieth century. During the 1920s and 1930s, the term was first widely utilized to refer to the worship of a particular group of people at a particular time, presumably far in the past. The next surge of usage of this label came in the 1960s and 1970s, corresponding to the above-referenced period of experimentation in worship. Liturgical experimenter White, reflecting on the increased interest in innovation, believed at the time that the period began in the

⁶⁸ Laack, 223.

mid-1960s.⁶⁹ There was a dramatic increase in the use of the term within several years in publications as people wrote about the phenomenon. This surge continued the earlier sense of worship of a specific people in a particular time and place, with the difference that it referred to the people of today. The contemporary people of the 1960s and 1970s sought to have worship in their contemporary English, addressing their contemporary concerns, using their contemporary music, and establishing a trifecta of sorts of what constitutes *contemporary worship*.⁷⁰ The concern over the use of current English was also paralleled by the surge of new Bible translations during the same period. White suggested by the mid-1970s that many liturgical experiments had become routine, causing the term *contemporary worship* to fall out of use. However, his assessment largely applied to mainline congregations. Elsewhere in the United States, especially in nondenominational circles, new developments were taking place that would lead to the term's third surge. The incubation period of this new worship during the 1980s led to widespread awareness in the early 1990s, solidifying *contemporary worship* as a clear technical name to describe the phenomenon. "Since that time the term has spread widely, becoming the most common way to brand, promote, and adopt this new style of worship in mainline congregations. [...] From that time forward, a deluge of publications followed, using it as a technical way to refer to this new form of worship. In these early publications, the freshness of the term is shown in a feature that would be anachronistic today: the authors of the feature had to define what the term meant and describe how to get such a service started."⁷¹

⁶⁹ James F. White, *New Forms of Worship* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1971), 7, 15.

⁷⁰ Hong Lim & Ruth, 8.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 9.

To expand the focus beyond mainline congregations, especially white ones, Hong Lim and Ruth list several alternative names *contemporary worship* has been given by others. One of these terms has simply been *worship*, a common word in Calvary Chapels and Vineyard Fellowships, two associations that introduced alternative worship styles in the 1970s and 1980s. The use of this word was based on the historical sense in these churches that worship's true character had been newly discovered. Pastors John Wimber of the Anaheim Vineyard congregation, and Bill Hybels, of the soon-to-be influential megachurch Willow Creek Community Church, testified to this sense of discovery and transformative experience. An emphasis of this new worship was placed on congregational singing and the criticalness of singing to God and not just about God, which led to *worship* and *music* becoming synonymous terms to many congregants. The preferred label among Pentecostals and many nonwhite congregations, regardless of denomination, has been *praise and worship*, especially during the 1980s and 1990s. It rests upon a biblically informed distinction between praise and worship. Praise refers to recognizing God's actions and attributes and honoring Him by recounting these in the third person. At the same time, worship indicates direct affection for God expressed in the more intimate language of second-person pronouns. This combination thus gives a congregation a sense of progress through the extended time of congregational singing, reflecting a pattern of God's self-revelation followed by our response as His people. The *seeker-driven* or *seeker-sensitive* label for contemporary worship highlighted the desire to adapt worship to match modern people to the level of strategic planning.⁷² Willow Creek Community Church adopted this tactic in its approach to seek the unchurched in its weekend services. Thousands of churches followed suit with the same rationale as Willow Creek for implementing contemporary worship

⁷² Hong Lim & Ruth, 15.

styles. The last term Hong Lim and Ruth elaborate upon is “modern worship,” which music executives utilized in the late 1990s with the intention to promote worship music that was an edgier style of rock, much of it originating from outside the United States.⁷³ The term referred to contemporary worship that used this new music, serving as a differentiation from the existing earlier styles of contemporary worship music known as praise choruses or praise and worship music.

Hong Lim and Ruth do not regard contemporary worship as a monolithic phenomenon and note that it had several points of origin and follows several intertwining paths of evolution. They first consider a set of developments in youth ministry starting in the mid-twentieth century, when Christians embraced a widespread cultural attitude that the future lay with the youth. This attitude became wedded to a sense of urgency underlying a necessity to change as ministries noted youth’s disinterest.⁷⁴ This resulted in generational thinking becoming common in how churches approached their ministries. With youth and college-age ministries providing a seedbed for new developments in contemporary worship, many of these musical practices became more widespread throughout time as that generation turned older and more powerful. Another source for contemporary worship was Pentecostalism, which emerged in the early twentieth century as a revisioning of a New Testament emphasis on the active presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Azusa Street revival in Los Angeles beginning in 1906 was a critical threshold for the tradition’s emergence and spread. Other denominations that emerged from this event include the Church of God in Christ, the Assemblies of God, the International Church of Foursquare Gospel,

⁷³ Monique Ingalls, “Transnational Connections, Musical Meaning, and the 1990s ‘British Invasion’ of North American Evangelical Worship Music,” *The Oxford Handbook of Music and World Christianities* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2016), 425-48.

⁷⁴ Hong Lim & Ruth, 16.

the Open Bible Standard Church, Apostolic Churches, and the Church of God. It also influenced the establishment of international organizations, mission initiatives, Bible colleges, and parachurch organizations.⁷⁵ The result in worship was an expressive and exuberant liturgical tradition. It is argued that Pentecostalism contributed to the sacramentality of contemporary worship, entailing the expectation that God's presence could be encountered in worship and the standard means by which this encounter would happen.

The baby boomer generation is considered another important factor that shaped contemporary worship. This generation came of age during the 1960s and had a common characteristic of questioning tradition, instigating a search for new forms of worship that seemed more natural or authentic than the established traditional liturgies of the time. Amid incredible social turmoil in the late 1960s, baby boomers used musical choice as a way of claiming identity.⁷⁶ It was during this time that the Jesus People movement arose as a Christian element in the hippie counterculture, beginning on the West Coast of the United States but soon being found across the nation. Despite their visible distinctiveness fading by the late 1970s, they left a lasting impact as a significant source of contemporary worship music. Songs like *Seek Ye First* and *Father, I Adore You* are examples of their contributions. They also helped institutionalize the process of distributing streams of new songs through publishing houses focused on worship music beginning with Maranatha! Music and Mercy Publishing. Their namesake spoke to the intense focus on Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior that awakened and reinforced a longstanding evangelical affection for him as the object of worship, a sentiment often found in the lyrics of

⁷⁵ Towns & Whaley, 222.

⁷⁶ Michael S. Hamilton, "The Triumph of the Praise Songs: How Guitars Beat Out the Organ in the Worship Wars," *Christianity Today* 43, no. 8 (July 12, 1999), 30.

contemporary worship songs.⁷⁷ Another source for contemporary worship's development was the mid-twentieth-century development of church growth missiology. Sociological explanations arose concerning why some churches grow and others do not, espousing prescriptive principles that ought to be adopted by churches desiring to grow. This contributed to the motivation for congregations to adopt this new worship style to make and keep members more effectively. "Church growth thinking reawakened a liturgical pragmatism that has characterized much of American Protestantism since the branding and promoting of camp meetings in the Second Great Awakening at the beginning of the nineteenth century."⁷⁸ This is a thoroughly American mind frame based on democratic and capitalistic assumptions about numerical validation.

Ruth has written profoundly about the eruption of conflict within the church called the *worship wars* in the United States. He points to the year 1993 as the time this war was declared among Protestants, causing many wounds in congregational leadership and fracturing the holistic function of the church body. There was fighting over instrumentation, song repertoires, and even music's role in worship. Ruth correlates these issues with the matter mentioned above of social identity, as this would be expressed through musical preference. Music was indeed at the front line of combat, but other battlefronts included preaching style, technology, the impact of popular entertainment, and even the dress code. According to Ruth, it was under the categories of *traditional versus contemporary* that these contentious issues became subsumed, albeit somewhat erroneously, for multiple reasons.

Various denominations inherited a somewhat traditional style from the mid-twentieth century, including Baptists, Pentecostals, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Lutherans. However,

⁷⁷ Lester Ruth, "Some Similarities and Differences between Historic Evangelical Hymns and Contemporary Worship Songs," *The Artistic Theologian* 3 (2015), 70.

⁷⁸ Hong Lim & Ruth, 21.

historical research indicates denominational reforms initiated later for some of the previously mentioned denominations. These reforms were themselves mislabeled as *traditional* despite being intended to replace older forms. In addition, *contemporary* worship was not a monolithic entity, as the term was related to concerns about the influence of megachurches like Willow Creek Community Church in Illinois, among others. Simultaneously, other forms of contemporary worship emerged in Pentecostal denominations and *new paradigm* churches, as sociologist Miller calls them, such as the Vineyard Fellowships, Calvary Chapels, or Hope Chapels.⁷⁹

The matter of one's identity is strongly integral to the environment of music and individuals who struggle to find a footing in the community, especially when they are involved in the fiercely competitive music industry. Hicks has much to say about the pastoral nature of a worship leader and the church's call for outreach. In his book *The Worship Pastor*, he calls a worship pastor an *artist chaplain* who ought to minister to artists by providing a loving, safe space in the church community. He cautions not to receive an artist's work for what the church imposes on it but by what it is; in the same manner, artists should be accepted for who they are rather than how the church's particular culture tends to stereotype them. He stresses that in receiving artists, the church needs to be sensitive to the fact that it has recently adopted an adversarial and judgmental attitude towards culture, devaluing artistic endeavors and making artists objects of moral condemnation by the religious. Instead, the church must listen to and receive them and their stories without judgment. The church must also receive artists' acquaintance with inadequacy. This means an artist will always see their work as insufficient, and they do the work with a struggle for recognition. Also, local artists can give insight into our

⁷⁹ Ruth, 4.

cities, as they often understand the city's makeup far better than those of other vocations. This speaks directly to the church's missional nature.

Falkner and Morgan would agree on the need for reconciliation between today's popular music and more conservative stylistic traits. Falkner contends this to be a key element in providing richness in the evolution of music. Morgan is adamant that the church must embrace interwoven worship. Whenever he hears opinions that do not favor Contemporary music, he states he would respond by saying,

I love the old hymns too, and we want to keep them alive and popular. But it's also important to remember that if there's ever a generation of Christians who don't write their own music, Christianity is dead. Every generation needs to compose its own praises—and those songs written by a younger generation aren't likely to sound exactly like those of prior eras. We should learn to enjoy both.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ Morgan, 271.

Chapter 3

Methodology

A series of questions have been written for research interviews to assess the reality of congregational attitudes in today's church regarding music and worship styles. These were held with several individuals currently in professional leadership positions of a church, namely the Lead Ministers and the Music Directors. Two church congregations in the Jacksonville, Florida, area are the settings for these interviews. The First Christian Church of the Beaches is a member of the Disciples of Christ denomination. It is a relatively medium-sized assembly whose members currently have the freedom to attend one of three services held on Sunday morning, each with varying degrees of duration, worshipping style, and liturgy. The second church assembly considered is the Christ Episcopal Church of Ponte Vedra. This much larger campus holds a total of nine Sunday morning services, including multiple service times for a Traditional liturgy in terms of music and worship style based on the *Book of Common Prayer*, as well as a Contemporary-leaning liturgy in terms of music called the Jordan Service, a Spanish service for a small Hispanic demographic, among other kinds of worship experiences. These two congregations represent contrasting theological streams and different degrees of organizational scope related to their leadership teams. A Lead Pastor and Executive Pastor are at the forefront of leadership at First Christian Church of the Beaches. In contrast, the staff at Christ Episcopal Church is led by a clergy composed of the Rector, two Associate Rectors, the Vicar, and several Deacons. The staff of each congregation represents the disparate sizes between these diverse assemblies of the Protestant spectrum of the faith, each having a unique approach to the music used in worship and tracing their musical history from distinct sources and historical events.

However, these two assemblies find common ground through several intertwining musical selections.

The Lead Ministers and Music Directors will be contacted through email utilizing several documents and templates designed according to Institutional Review Board standards. (IRB) Their views will be considered concerning the demographics that constitute their congregations, the musical diversity of the community, the antecedents to their assortment of Sunday services and their distinguishing qualities, and the perceived congregational attitudes towards music in the service. The topic of generational identity will be discussed while considering its impact on the local church's operations and implications for worship space. Finances will also be brought to attention as they relate to the influence of the broader American culture of worship ownership, the by-product of compartmentalized worship currently witnessed, and how it correlates with the Biblical vision. Finally, the vision of these church leaders regarding the direction their church is headed in terms of music will be discussed, as well as any given plan on the staff's part to guide the flock through this process, as this also pertains to the relationship between the Lead Minister and the Music Director. The views discussed from these diverse theological streams will be compared to the historical context of these denominations and worship expressions. The results from these interviews with the leadership teams will also shed light on the current state of the Christian church.

Chapter 4

The Vision of Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell

The vision of Barton Stone and Alexander Campbell stood on the foundation of Christian unity above all. They had no intention to start another sect, an idea that was abhorrent both to their feelings and their principles. Historian Richardson thought this was evident in their earliest efforts to associate themselves with some denomination while preserving their own freedom. He noted that the pioneers learned that Protestantism had failed in two important respects: by overemphasizing doctrinal details and making these details the basis for fellowship; and by making matters of opinion into matters of faith.⁸¹ An early period of American expansion provides context for what would become a Christian movement of American restoration on the part of these individuals. President Thomas Jefferson doubled the size of the United States in 1803 by purchasing the Louisiana territory from France. Westward expansion was accompanied by religious expansion as well. Winthrop Hudson describes this migration as a “stampede,” creating the fears that there would be political imbalance and that the uncivilized West would subvert society’s moral order. The American population also experienced fluctuating levels of religious interest highlighted by the aforementioned camp meeting revivals. Barton Stone was an ordained Presbyterian minister who preached at Cane Ridge. Many other preachers joined him in conducting these great revivals that established the precedent for the founding of the Christian Church under Stone. Part of the spirit of this movement is termed *the Frontier Mind* by historian Frederick Turner. This was characterized by individualism, which contended religion lies only between man and his God and is not dictated by any hierarchy. The characteristic of freedom lent itself to a sense of destiny that propelled them to conquer geographical barriers, akin to Joshua as

⁸¹ Leroy Garrett, *The Stone-Campbell Movement: The Story of the American Restoration Movement* (Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing Co., 2002), 4.

he led his people to the land of Canaan. This passion for freedom was evident in all the documents the founders of the Stone-Campbell movement composed.

Barton Stone and his companions, amid the prospect of trials over their anti-Calvinistic sentiments espoused in the Cane Ridge revival, joined to compose a protest over the Kentucky Synod's charges against Richard McNemar and John Thompson, which later became a part of *The Apology of the Springfield Presbytery*. Their *Protest* began by stating:

Reverend Sir: We, the underwritten members of Washington and W. Lexington Presbyteries, do hereby enter our protest against the proceedings of Synod, in approbating that minute of the Washington Presbytery which condemned the sentiments of Mr. McNemar as dangerous to the souls of men, and hostile to the interests of true religion, and the proceedings therewith connected; and for reasons which we now offer, we declare ourselves no longer members of your reverend body, or under your jurisdiction, or that of your Presbyterians.⁸²

In addition to this writing, they asserted their right to interpret Scriptures for themselves without threat or reprimand, not based on the decrees of councils. They did not presume themselves to be right and everyone else wrong, nor were they withdrawing fellowship with anyone.

Alexander Campbell was another individual who also resented the constructs of the Presbyterian Church. At the age of 20, he received a metal token from the elders of the Anti-Burgher Seceder Presbyterian Church that would allow him to participate in the upcoming semiannual communion service. Despite his doubts, he reluctantly attended this service and joined his fellow Seceders at one of the tables. However, after he dropped his token into the plate, he declined to partake in communion when the elements were passed before him and walked out a free man. Richardson writes, "The ring of the token, falling upon the plate, announced the instant at which he renounced Presbyterianism forever, the leaden voucher

⁸² Garrett, 76.

becoming thus a token not of communion but of separation.”⁸³ Campbell’s doubts can be traced to the influence of the Glasite Independents, the Haldane brothers, and Greville Ewing. When the Haldanes formed their first “Congregational Church” in Edinburgh, where James Haldane served as pastor, Ewing designed its form of government. This government allowed for a lay ministry, a free observance of the ordinances, and the Bible itself as the only guide in religion. By inspiration from Greville Ewing, Alexander Campbell was led to consider the issue of reformation seriously. The restoration of primitive Christianity was paramount to the Haldanes and Greville Ewing. It was left for Alexander and Thomas Campbell, along with the Stone movement, to relate the restoration of primitive Christianity to the unity of the church. Its unique feature was to be “the unity (and reformation) of the church through a restoration of the ancient order.”⁸⁴

The Campbells subsequently moved to the United States and found a bedrock to further their impassioned endeavor, especially for the young pioneer preacher Alexander. Throughout time he became a controversial figure of notoriety and the leader of an underdeveloped reformation among Baptist churches. From his earliest sermons, he demonstrated substantive theology with unusual maturity and insight in handling Scripture and ideas. His eloquence was conversational in tone so as to simply be understood. The pattern that gained him fame was “a linguistic-historical treatment of the passage, within the framework of basic principles drawn from extensive resources.”⁸⁵

⁸³ Robert Richardson, *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, Vol. 1 (Cincinnati, OH: Standard, 1897), 190.

⁸⁴ Garrett, 121.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 125.

As the Stone-Campbell movement gained widespread support in states like Kentucky and Ohio, it was ultimately forced out. Scores of churches began calling themselves *Reformed* Baptists or *Campbellites*. Those within the movement only referred to themselves as Reformers to distinguish themselves from other Baptists. However, these Reformed Baptist congregations soon became known as the Disciples of Christ. “Campbell’s message was unequivocal, rooted in the tradition of the Reformation and historic Christianity, centered as it was in Jesus Christ. While he was pious, humble, and mild-mannered, he was conscious of his influence in an ever-expanding reformation Movement.”⁸⁶

The Church of Christ, the Christian Church, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are the three denominations that sprung from the Stone-Campbell movement, despite their adamance against merely founding additional Christian sects. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) was solidified on September 26, 1968. Its namesake refers to the union of the Christians and the Disciples of Christ movements in 1832. Throughout general conventions, congregational autonomy was examined in light of the interdependency and unity of the church as espoused in the New Testament. Rather than the leadership of dominant individuals, the church would be led by the *principle of polity*. Given the Disciples’ freedom orientation and discomfort with authoritative structures, they sought a theological base for restructuring. Osborn described it as *the community of the covenant*. He wrote, “It is altogether appropriate that in the process of restructure we should develop this concept more fully by devising a declaration of our covenant in Christ, by which our congregations may bind themselves to one another in the common life and mission of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for the service of God.”⁸⁷

⁸⁶ Garrett, 233.

⁸⁷ Ronald E. Osborn, *Toward the Christian Church* (Louisville, KY: Commission on Brotherhood Restructure, 1964), 37.

Many internal conflicts and disagreements have been inevitable throughout time, namely on the grounds of conservative and liberal sentiments. However, the Disciples were charter members of what is now the National Council of Churches of Christ, offering to cooperate with any movement to unite believers. They have been leaders in ecumenical efforts, holding an office in the Council on Christian Unity and having dialogue with the United Church of Canada, the Anglicans, and the Roman Catholic Church. Contentious debates and contrasting positions have painted a picture that the church has no theological convictions. However, a prominent pastor has concluded they do believe “plenty,” such as that God is at work in Christ healing broken relationships. He also called Disciples to “find our mission and our fulfillment in being the people of God and in living out this vocation toward Christian unity.”⁸⁸ In addition, D. Newell Williams calls the Disciples to be a church that accepts diversity and recognizes that their unity isn’t in any particular approach to the Bible but in the Gospel of Christ, as was the order of Alexander Campbell.

Discussing Worship at First Christian Church of the Beaches

These are the views gleaned from the research interviews regarding congregational attitudes toward the music in worship with the Lead Pastor and the Director for the Contemporary Praise Team of First Christian Church of the Beaches congregation located at Neptune Beach, Florida. The congregation is perceived as mostly a middle-class population of the baby boomer generation or as “predominantly affluent whites.”⁸⁹ The demographic has shifted depending on the timeline of the church’s history. A large older population has prevailed

⁸⁸ Don P. Moseley, “Do We Believe Anything?,” *Disciples Theological Digest*, Vol. 7 no. 1 (1992), 33f.

⁸⁹ Interview with the Lead Pastor, June 16, 2022. *All interviews were confidential; the names of interviewees are withheld by mutual agreement.*

from the beginning spanning the approximately five decades the church has been planted, although many young families are also present. The city of Jacksonville is a riverine location that facilitates Naval Station Mayport, Naval Air Station Jacksonville, the U.S. Marine Corps Blount Island Command, and the Port of Jacksonville, along with the nearby Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, forming the third largest military presence in the United States. This is reflected in the population of Neptune Beach and, by extension, represented in this church. Traditional and contemporary worship and music styles are found in this church's operations, with a diverse music selection. The range of musical styles includes sung hymns accompanied by an organ and Gospel choir renditions within the traditional worship style offered, as well as elements of blues, jazz, rock, pop-rock, and contemporary arrangements of the older hymnody within its Contemporary worship expressions. Church growth around the 1980s instigated the diversification of the services from a centrally Traditional style. A short early-morning service was added first for the congregants who were not compelled to engage in music as their primary means of worship expression. This was followed by implementing contemporary styles throughout the 1990s, initially for space reasons. The early-morning service is held at 8 AM as a short, casual, and Contemporary-leaning worship experience outdoors. The 9 AM service represents the church's Traditional style. This less relaxed experience does not follow a formal high church regime and is notable for traditional hymns and the participation of the chancel choir. The 11 AM service is the Contemporary service defined by modern worship music and a more diverse congregation in terms of age range.

Most attitudes are appreciative and respectful of the diversity of music in the church, although it has been a learning process to arrive at this level of appreciation. The Praise Team director considers that generational identity contributes to the prominence of Contemporary

Christian music. In contrast, the Lead Pastor points to the capitalization and commercialization of Christianity as the main reason for this prominence, as the Christian music industry now has the resources to behave like a large record company. In addition, there has been an increasing quality to these contemporary styles and implications regarding their accessibility due to their propagation in the music industry. In the case of blended services for special occasions in the church's calendar, the worship style would be ascribed to a traditional or contemporary stream, depending on the Lead Pastor's vision and the time of day in which said service would be held. Although the Lead Pastor argued that demographic representation hardly bears weight in these decisions, the Praise Team Director is confident that representation is based on the expectation that everyone comes. The event of Thanksgiving, in particular, tends to be celebrated with a traditional orientation for the service.⁹⁰

The director considers the book of Psalms to play a major role in incorporating new music and instrumentation in the church. She also opines that every church has people that come to be fed than to serve, although, in the local congregation, she does not believe it happens much. In a contrasting perspective, however, the Lead Pastor testified to only a handful of individuals in the congregation who engage in personal worship daily, a central principle in Old Testament scripture. He also remarked that the influence of consumerism is such that the church has commodified itself, turning to Sunday corporate worship as the primary tool for disciple-making. For this reason, the church has not equipped people to worship alone at home, resulting in a culture of reliance upon "paid professional Christians" to worship for them.⁹¹ This problem became especially glaring after the Covid-19 pandemic affected our society. He contended that

⁹⁰ Interview with the Praise Team Director, May 26, 2022.

⁹¹ Interview with the Lead Pastor, May 31, 2022.

whereas Ancient Israelites focused on their worship and song to God instead of reading their scripture, Christians today focus on scripture reading but do not engage in personal worship and song. This is an extension of the American ideal that one is considered a good person if one attends church. The diversity of services was not designed primarily with money in mind, upon which both the Lead Pastor and the Praise Team Director would agree. Having these multiple experiences has the end to meet as many people as possible in the place in life where they currently are and facilitate that they come to engage in worship and relationship with God. The Praise Team director admits that perhaps 20 years ago, the aspect of appeasement was present in the decision to compartmentalize the church's worship experiences. However, she professed that God's plan for worship was never superseded by that appeasement.

On the topic of the theological substance of Contemporary music, the director contends that Contemporary worship leaders are delivering a general message that it's good to commune with God as we sing. Traditional music often sings about God, while Contemporary Christian music is more about singing to God.⁹² However, there has been a change in language that orients Contemporary Christian music toward the self, as the Lead Pastor contends. In the Praise Team director's view, there is more encouragement in a modern setting to enter into the Holy Spirit's presence. She also added that Contemporary Christian music's origins should never be forgotten. "Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," as is written in scripture, are a directive for worship. The vision on the leadership team's part is that music is the way to start a conversation with God, and the song lyrics open the door for individuals to "leave the page" and genuinely worship God. Genuine worship is a vision that the Lead Pastor strongly desires to serve by further encouraging the congregation to sing. The Praise Team director supports her view of the staff working

⁹² Interview with the Praise Team Director, May 26, 2022.

together with the number of retreats, meetings, and prayers that are held concerning guiding the flock in worship that's valid and true, listening to the Holy Spirit, and taking into account the sermon message on the Lead Pastor's part. In another contrasting view on this topic, the Lead Pastor argued that the compartmentalized worship experiences of this church render a disjointed staff.

Understanding the Background of the Episcopal Church

The early church grew in size and authority and survived as the Roman Empire collapsed. The emerging European nations were causing a myriad of political and economic changes, throughout which the church clung to its authority and power instead of embracing change. The English King Henry VIII pit himself against the Pope and the church over his desire for a divorce, challenging the authority of Rome throughout his reign. Like the reformed European churches, the doctrine of salvation through faith and God's grace replaced salvation through worth or successes. The creation of a standard prayer book for all congregants rendered worship similar to that of the Roman Catholic Church. When exploration of the "new world" began, many missionaries from this reformed catholic church crossed the ocean in search of religious freedom amid the prevalent dissent and persecution in Europe. Continued allegiance to the King and royal family was a cause of persecution for the Anglicans until the American Revolution resulted in the separation of church and state. After the Bill of Rights granted freedom of religion, the first Episcopal General Convention met in Philadelphia. The House of Bishops and House of Deputies were established, and a *Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and Other Rights and Ceremonies of the Church* was revised and adopted.⁹³ After

⁹³ Marti Rideout, *All Things Necessary: A Practical Guide for Episcopal Church Musicians* (New York, NY: Church Publishing, Inc., 2012), 2.

worldwide missionary efforts by the church, the controversial Oxford Movement took place in England and the United States in the 1830s, recalling the church's Catholic heritage. This movement resulted in a more *high church* worship style, including the use of vestments, attention to the liturgy and ceremony, and the centrality of the Eucharist to worship.⁹⁴ The organization or government with bishops as overseers, viewed as successors to the apostles, is central to the common life in the Episcopal Church.

An Anglican music tradition is foundational to Episcopalians. Many may express diverse and nostalgic opinions regarding said tradition today. Some members may contend that “only choral music written specifically for the Church of England should be sung, or only music from the sixteenth century, or only unaccompanied anthems or accompanied choral music from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries or nineteenth to twentieth centuries.”⁹⁵ From its inception, music was composed for the liturgy of the Church of England. Anthems and motets were written and sung by the cathedral, collegiate, and parish choirs, while hymns were composed for congregational use. Choirs in the cathedrals were composed of musically educated men and boys, often in residence at the cathedral, where multiple rehearsals were held in preparation for weekly services. Psalms were set to chant for choirs or congregations. The ordinary Eucharistic pieces, such as the *Kyrie Eleison*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei*, and *Benedictus*, were given choral arrangements. Canticles for Matins and Evensong were also composed, as well as preces and responses for the priest or cantor and the choir.⁹⁶ Anthems and hymns were based upon scriptural passages, recounting the overarching Biblical story. Composers like

⁹⁴ Christopher L. Webber, *Welcome to the Episcopal Church: An Introduction to its History, Faith, and Worship* (Harrisburg, PA: Morehouse Publishing, 1999), 2-18.

⁹⁵ Rideout, 7.

⁹⁶ Wilson-Dickson, 41-43.

William Byrd, Thomas Tallis, Christopher Tye, Orlando Gibbons, Thomas Morley, Adrian Batten, and Thomas Weelkes greatly expanded choral music after English replaced Latin as the prevalent language in church liturgy following the Reformation. Byrd, Gibbons, Weelkes, Thomas Tonkins, and John Bull were particularly notable for composing music alternating between sections for a soloist or small group of singers and the whole choir, known as verse-anthem.⁹⁷ Anglican music further flourished in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries with the contributions of renowned composers like Herbert Howells, John Ireland, Harold Darke, Edward Elgar, Herbert Sumsion, Ralph Vaughn Williams, William Walton, and Harold Friedell.

The Episcopalian tradition has experienced renewal and revitalization in its hymnody, liturgy, and music since the mid-twentieth century. Episcopalians have been shaped by political decisions, socioeconomic changes, wars, social justice concerns, advancements in communications, and the economy. Rideout testifies to a complex diversity in the Episcopal Church of today, reflecting a combination of repertoire genres, liturgies, ceremonies, words and prayers, and physical structures. In addition, there is a broad representation of the ethnic diversity of the church due to its history of missionary outreach. Concerning Anglican roots, Rideout believes the current Episcopal church can be guided by some of the same principles that defined the past tradition:

- Music, including selection, practice, and performance, should always be directed toward God, to honor the Creator of our song in all ways good and possible. Music should bring the worshiper into a sense of the presence of the divine;
- Music in the liturgy should be chosen primarily from scriptural passages, authorized texts and with an understanding of its theology;
- Music should have integrity within the service, chosen to engage the congregation in participation, not for entertainment; and

⁹⁷ Donald J. Grout, *A History of Western Music* (New York, NY: W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1960), 236-37.

- Musical excellence is a worthy goal, one which can and should be obtained. Musicians are people who practice, whether an instrument, voice, conducting, or in a group.⁹⁸

Discussing Worship at Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra

The Traditional Music Director views the Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra as a community church. This means this church has a high profile, drawing people from different denominations. In her view, many who come to this church are not cradle Episcopalians, despite the church's namesake. There is tremendous diversity, despite the typical makeup of an Episcopal church. The Associate Rector of this parish added that within the Spanish-speaking community of this congregation, there is multi-national representation while also recognizing that older generations of Caucasians, most of whom are professional and well-educated individuals, constitute the majority of the assembly as a whole. The liturgy is very relaxed, primarily due to the church's proximity to Ponte Vedra Beach and surrounding communities. The dominant age range of the congregation is upwards of 60 years of age, fomenting an attitude of inflexibility regarding service times and a culture that does not seek to serve. The Music Ministries director contends that on an Episcopalian scale from 1 to 10, Christ Episcopal Church is a 12 in terms of liturgical diversity.⁹⁹ She identifies a few reasons for this; the creativity with the liturgy is facilitated by diverse musical styles and genres, whereas the typical Episcopal church would utilize fifteenth to eighteenth Century repertoire and avant-garde music dominated by the use of the organ. The musical richness in this parish ranges from orthodox Episcopal music to the most eclectic blends that may even include multi-ethnic styles. The goal of offering this variety is for anyone that arrives to feel that their needs are met and to create space for

⁹⁸ Rideout, 9.

⁹⁹ Interview with the Music Ministries Director, June 16, 2022.

worshippers in each stage of their lives.¹⁰⁰ The church holds several services, including meditative, contemporary, and blended services, called Rite I and Rite II, across multiple service times on Sundays.

Like the First Christian Church of the Beaches, church growth dictated the need for a greater service variety and interdenominational representation. The church has established a committee where Popular music from several denominations and Contemporary genres were selected, including songs composed in Presbyterian, Disciples, Baptist, and Methodist circles, among other streams. Each service is driven by different needs and certain elements, including the participation of the chancel choir, the vestments, processions, and the centrality of the music or the liturgical words. Words are the meditative service's primary orientation, supplemented by Celtic music styles and an overall quiet environment. The *Jordan Service* is notable for the contemporary style of music, representing the substance of the church's theology while not holding to tradition. The *Holy Eucharist Rite I* reflects the broader Episcopalian tradition of utilizing a prayer book from 1982 with *acapella* Gregorian chants as the source of the liturgy. *The Holy Eucharist Rite II* is a blend of Praise and Contemporary music with the traditional style of the church. Also included in the Sunday schedule is a Spanish-speaking service that blends translated Contemporary songs with cultural worship songs from several Latin American countries represented in this service's demographic.

The director sees that the congregation tends to love the music used for worship. The Associate Rector added that most congregants are highly receptive and open to new material while appreciative of the old due to the church's strong capacity to represent different styles. The older generations are used to high standards, translating to soulful and meaningful music that is

¹⁰⁰ Interview with the Associate Rector, June 17, 2022.

intentional and purposeful. Although people expect the best and like to be challenged and surprised, there is a healthy level of resistance, which the Associate Rector believes all churches need to have. Regarding the idea that Contemporary Christian music, as we call it today, is rooted in the countercultural movement of the 1960s, the Music director contends that what grew out of that time was the desire for an intimate relationship with Jesus. The trend continues today, albeit more complex with the evolution of our relationship with Jesus, as she describes. We are now faced with thousands of choices and challenges regarding our society, reflected in musical stylings. Freedom in Christ was the exploration back then.¹⁰¹

The Associate Rector explained how a typical service is divided into two liturgies reflecting strong Ancient Hebrew roots. Within the liturgy of the Word, portions from Hebrew scriptures are read and given as much importance as New Testament readings to provide context for our place in the story. The liturgy of the Table centers around the Eucharist, a direct inheritance from the Passover. The musical director likens the church's leadership and the clergy to the Old Testament Levites. They were set apart for serving the people in religious rituals and battle, infusing all of their lives. As for the importance of music, she explains that the Torah was often set to music, indicating high regard for music's power. It translates to acknowledging who we are as worship leaders, considering our place before God's power and glory, and our relationship with God. We also assume the responsibility to accept the calling of God to set the example. Balance and integrity in the service and leadership are critical. The Associate Rector spoke about a tendency to utilize predominantly Contemporary styles of music in the event of a combined service, with any Traditional repertoire being adapted to this style. However, they strive to consider all demographics instead of favoring one constituency over another. For a good

¹⁰¹ Interview with the Music Ministries Director, June 16, 2022.

number of parishioners in general, the religious identity of the denomination is relatively unimportant.

The Associate Rector and the Music director asserted that consumerism culture bears influence in the church entirely, and the church's leadership engages in a daily battle with this reality. The church leadership ought to choose how to react to this culture and determine how they will reach out to the people with the central gospel message as we live in a society where high standards are always necessary. There were differing opinions regarding the importance of the church's finances as it relates to having multiple services; the Music director legitimized its importance, but the Associate Rector instead gave importance solely to the church's commitment to outreach, adding that this amount of services is a financial burden. Although Christ Episcopal Church is an incredibly privileged campus, checking the balance between allocating the money and serving and reaching people is of utmost importance. The Music director contends it is imperative to be mindful of the corruption caused by the love of money.

The Associate Rector recognizes that while there is no Biblical ordinance to hold multiple services, history shows ever-shifting worship expressions that precede written sacred texts in the three Abrahamic religions.¹⁰² Our standards, like musical technique, have to be a present foundation, as noted by the Music director. There is consistency and stability in that God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. These adjectives apply to music as well. These standards should be held to and creatively used in a diverse population and culture to resonate with people. There seems to be no way around being eclectic. Through Christ, there is nothing one cannot do, as long as the fundamentals of Scripture are held. According to the director, people get comfortable with tradition and familiarity rather than trying new things. People would

¹⁰² Interview with the Associate Rector, June 17, 2022.

not want to go out of their way to experience something they do not feel drawn to experience.

The church's focus should always be the core relationship with Christ and the calling to lead and minister for Jesus through the music in this case.

The Music director believes Traditional and Contemporary music styles may have started as just scriptural and emotional, respectively, but the evolution of these styles has gradually led them to merge. The stigmas of sacred and secular music have also permeated church life. The Associate Rector, however, expanded the topic to the differences between Traditional and Contemporary worship expressions overall, opining that within Traditional settings, ministers preach thematically. In contrast, in Contemporary settings, they preach scripturally. For this reason, he views Contemporary worship styles as more scriptural, despite widespread contrary belief. He added that Contemporary music invites worshipers to engage not just with their minds but with their whole selves.¹⁰³

The focus of the music ministry at Christ Church remains on the mission Jesus called his disciples to go about, reaching everywhere and ministering to everyone. The Music director considers the leadership team's current vision for the church regarding music a blessing, given the accelerated growth of the congregation in recent years that lent the eclectic musical diversity it now enjoys. She recounts it used to be largely undefined for this church and opines that music directors, in general, are often tasked with solidifying it. Some of the vision is interpreting the thoughts and ideas of the lead priests and knowing the church's personality. Additionally, the vision of the clergy has been to maintain the roots in the Episcopal ethos while experimenting with new musical styles. There is still room for improvement in the staff's unity in leading the congregation on this path.

¹⁰³ Interview with the Associate Rector, June 17, 2022.

The Prevalent Realities of Consumerism

The twentieth century can be largely seen as the century of the United States. Cross calls it an especially ironic time. Despite clashing ideologies, two devastating world wars, and a forty-five-year cold war that rendered the United States of America the leading global power, the ultimate victor of the century was consumerism.¹⁰⁴ The vision of a stable political community of shared values and active citizenship has given way to a seemingly passive society of consumption in the United States and increasingly worldwide. The belief that goods gave meaning to individuals and their societal roles rose to prominence despite having no formal philosophy, parties, or apparent leaders. Nonetheless, diverse groups like the Arts and Crafts movement of the early twentieth century, the modernist literati of the interwar years, and environmentalists of the 1960s vigorously fought this idea, attacking it as a threat to true community, individuality, and the environment. Consumerism triumphed over other ideologies because it concretely expressed the century's central political ideas—liberty and democracy.

The terrors of war provided the groundwork for promoting material goods to restore a sense of normalcy and security in life for Americans. The ancient dual economy of mass subsistence and elite luxury gave way to an economy that delivered vast and diverse stores of goods to the general population during a time when wealth was increasingly underlying the Western world. Individuals' sense of identity revolved around ownership of suburban homes, country club memberships, and college diplomas facilitated by a system that discriminated against outsiders and the poor. Religious, political, and other social groups were as discriminatory, often causing resentment and hostility, especially if they made absolute claims.

¹⁰⁴ Gary Cross, *The All-Consuming Century: Why Commercialism Won in Modern America* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2000), 1.

“Social or faith groups may actually be less flexible than markets in adjusting to change because of their democratic participatory ethic.”¹⁰⁵ For example, when a voluntary leisure group is dominated by its members, it often unintentionally excludes others or becomes fractionalized. In the context of consumerism, liberty means expressing oneself and pursuing personal pleasure in and through goods. Democracy means to share with others in personal ownership and use of certain commodities, rather than equal rights under the law or common access to the political process.

Consumerism constantly changed, improved, and was redefined to meet the needs of Americans in their ordinary but special (to them) lives in their roles as family units and thousands of other roles. However, in other ways, it has threatened the kind of individual responsibility and social solidarity that defined political democracy of the past. Fixation on personal goods negates the necessity of sacrifice beyond the family. It has confined aspiration to the personal realm, allowing little space for social conscience. Beyond concepts of nostalgia and fantasy, consumerism has no interest in linking the present to the past and the future, according to Cross. He points to the absence of an established national church, a weak central bureaucracy, the regional division of the elite, the lack of a distinct national “high culture,” the fragmentation of folk cultures due to slavery and diverse immigration, and the social and psychological impact of unprecedented mobility as factors that contribute to the predominance of markets over other social and cultural institutions in American history.¹⁰⁶

“The twentieth-century United States and the culture of consumption have become so closely intertwined that it is difficult for Americans to see consumerism as an ideology or to

¹⁰⁵ Cross, 3.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 4.

consider any serious alternatives or modifications to it.”¹⁰⁷ To participate in this culture requires wage work, time, and effort, often given without interest or enthusiasm. The unconscious choice to define the self and community through the ownership of goods benefits the economic system as it perpetually demands the reciprocal relationship between consumption and work. The current reality is a stark contrast to the beginning of the twentieth century when different constituencies thought in terms of citizenship and explained individuals and their relationship to society in political terms. Throughout the second half of the century, there has been a decline in identification with class, nation, and high-minded social reform. Cross contends that religious communities gained influence since the 1970s with their spiritual challenge to consumerist materialism. However, the profound hold of goods on American life was hardly challenged by their calls for prayer in schools and the banning of abortion. He also contends that the end of the external threat of communism instigated an “enemy crisis,” contributing to the “culture wars” between secularists and religious absolutists that render a political stalemate. The prevalence of consumerism also underlines the decline in political and social institutions in the industrial world, juxtaposed with increased spending on election campaigns. Regimes based on stimulating people around ideas of social solidarity tend to become bureaucratic and corrupt. The relatively open and undemanding goals of liberal democracy for public life have failed to compete with consumerism.

Fractured Leadership

It is especially telling that the reality of underlying consumeristic attitudes permeates the church's operations, as discussed in the above interviews with church leaders, leading to a fragmented team on both campuses. A sense of owning one's worship “goods” is a defining

¹⁰⁷ Cross, 5.

characteristic of ready acceptance of compartmentalization. As gleaned from these interviews, it is a daily wrestle with the self-serving lifestyle the past century has increasingly nurtured in the American psyche. It is imperative to consider Blanchard's insight regarding servant leadership in this context. He recognizes the value of leadership as an influence process where one assumes a visionary role and tries to help people accomplish goals. This involves establishing a compelling vision informing us of our purpose, path, and guiding principles.

Blanchard utilizes the Walt Disney Company and its Parks division as an example of establishing a clear purpose. This way, the rest of the team or the employees can understand each of their roles. He stresses the importance of having a purpose statement, which too many companies make too complicated. When Walt Disney started his theme parks, his purpose statement was clear: "We're in the happiness business." Once the purpose has been defined, it is important to visualize the future so everyone is informed of the path to take. Walt Disney charged his cast members (employees) to keep guests smiling throughout their time at the parks, no matter how long or short that time was. This is because the image of guests leaving the park smiling as when they entered was the end result that he visualized. One's values provide the guidelines to proceed in the pursuit of the purpose and picture of the future. The Walt Disney Company has four rank-ordered values: safety, courtesy, the show, and efficiency. Safety was the highest ranked value for Disney as the consequences of any lack of it would be a cause for guests to stop smiling. Regarding the second-ranked value of courtesy, the author presents a hypothetical scenario in which a cast member gives directions to a guest cordially and politely. This is interrupted by another guest screaming, prompting the cast member to excuse themselves as politely as possible to address the pressing situation unfolding elsewhere. This is an example of maintaining the priorities established by the company of the rank-ordered values, as this

situation calls for action in keeping with the value of safety. Blanchard also utilizes this scenario to explain the reality of value conflict. He writes, “There will be times when you cannot act on two values simultaneously. [...] That is why Walt Disney put efficiency—running a profitable business—as the fourth-ranked value. He wanted to make clear they would do nothing to save money that would put people in danger, nor do a major downsizing in the park that impacted in a negative way their courtesy value.”¹⁰⁸

Blanchard lists ten characteristics of servant leaders. The first is a deep commitment to listening intently to others, which identifies and clarifies a group's will. The second characteristic is empathy which allows others to find acceptance and recognition for their unique spirits. The third is the healing of one's self and one's relationships with others. “There is something subtle communicated to one who is being served and led if, implicit in the compact between servant leader and led, is the understanding that the search for wholeness is something they share.”¹⁰⁹ The fourth characteristic is awareness, which helps in understanding issues of ethics, power, and values. It encourages the ability to view situations more holistically. The characteristic of persuasion involves leaders seeking to convince others rather than coerce compliance. This distinguishes servant leadership from traditional authoritarian models. The key is to build consensus within groups. The sixth characteristic involves broad conceptual thinking on the leader's part and addressing the need for long-term goals. Blanchard contends many directors or boards of trustees fail in this area as they become easily consumed by daily problems. The characteristic of foresight is closely related to the previous characteristic. It enables the servant

¹⁰⁸ Ken Blanchard & Renee Broadwell, *Servant Leadership in Action: How You Can Achieve Great Relationships and Results* (Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2018), 9.

¹⁰⁹ Robert K. Greenleaf, “The Servant As Leader” (Atlanta, GA: The Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership, 1970).

leader to understand the lessons from the past, the reality of the present, and the likely consequence of a decision going forward. Blanchard notes that foresight is a largely unexplored area in leadership studies. The eighth characteristic is stewardship, which assumes the commitment to serve the needs of others. Commitment to the growth of people is the ninth characteristic, calling for leaders to recognize the responsibility of doing everything in their power to encourage the personal and professional development of their employees or colleagues. The final characteristic is building community. Blanchard places this principle in light of the significant loss suffered in recent human history due to the shift from local communities to large institutions as the primary shaper of human lives.¹¹⁰ For this reason, servant leaders must seek ways to build community with those who work within a given institution. “Servant leadership characteristics often occur naturally within many individuals and, like many natural tendencies, they can be enhanced through learning and practice. Servant leadership offers great hope for the future in creating better, more caring institutions.”¹¹¹

Maxwell sheds light on the importance of showcasing a positive attitude in one’s work as a leader. “The attitude or disposition of leaders is important because it influences the thoughts and feelings of the people they lead. Good leaders understand that a positive attitude creates a positive atmosphere, which encourages positive and productive responses from others.”¹¹² In his discourse regarding the importance of a “whatever-it-takes” mindset, he lists several areas. To have this mindset calls to *disown your helplessness*, which means renouncing a victimhood mentality. Instead of relying upon others to solve problems, a leader must assume responsibility

¹¹⁰ Blanchard, 17.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 18.

¹¹² John C. Maxwell, *Developing the Leader Within You* (Nashville, TN: HarperCollins, 2018), 120.

for proactivity and help others strive for this mindset, making them feel valued and challenging them to take responsibility for their performance. Second, to *take the bull by the horn* means to possess initiative in the face of challenges, recognize what a leader wants, what it will cost, and have the willpower to pay the price promptly. Entering the *no-whining zone* entails that the leader handles their feelings, putting their attitude in charge of their emotions. This can be exemplified in expressing gratitude independent of feelings, for small and ordinary things, as well as in the midst of adversity. Appreciating small things lends meaning to the big things. Fourth, *putting on a new pair of shoes* has to do with encouraging teamwork. It requires openness to others' points of view in order to understand how to make a connection and give direction. The fifth item listed by Maxwell is to *nurture your passion*. Leaders are driven to strive for excellence when they exude energy and enthusiasm. Church Ministers ought to exude enthusiasm for diversity in the assembly and its various, potentially unifying cultural expressions, guiding the rest of the leadership team in this vision. Maxwell draws from his pastoral experience to exemplify his sixth item, to *exceed expectations*. To visit the sick, preach on Sunday morning, and offer pastoral counseling served to meet expectations. However, his growing desire to do more throughout time prompted him to set expectations for himself higher than others' expectations. This results in a high return for leaders and inspires growth in their leadership skills. The final characteristic he lists is *positive discontent*. The team benefits from a visionary leader who does not settle for what is but strives toward what could be.

The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude in life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more important than the past, than education, than money, than circumstances, than failures, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness, or skill. It will make or break a company, a church, or a home. The remarkable thing is that we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past. Nor can we change the fact that people will act in a certain way.

We also cannot change the inevitable. The only thing that we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10 percent of what happens to me, and 90 percent how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes.¹¹³

¹¹³ Charles R. Swindoll, "Quotes: Quotable Quote," Goodreads, https://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/5139.Charles_R_Swindoll, accessed July 21, 2022.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

The leadership teams of these two congregations represented in the interviews provided a diverse field of research that gave insight into the complexity of theological thought and corresponding streams. Leadership perils especially came to light in these engaging conversations with the lead Ministers and the music directors. The issue of pride is palpable in the American society's tendency to wed church attendance with a good status of personhood, exacerbated by widespread inconveniences of a pandemic that solidified a somewhat idealized action of worship in the minds of many congregants akin to comfort and self-service. The aspect of egotism underlines the fears experienced by some leadership team members at the prospect of introducing new ideas or expanding the mindset of the congregation regarding music. These fears are given legitimacy by the historical accounts offered by Ruth that show how a litigious people would be quick to terminate a church Minister's job position for his or her vision of worship. Jealousy finds expression not only in the attitudes of the congregation at large but also within the leadership team, with a resolve to remain compartmentalized that puts their very leadership in question. Popularity finds expression in the prospect of musical choice based on the offerings of the Christian music industry, at times leading to a lack of theological substance or congregational engagement. A sense of infallibility and indispensability accompanies egotism and jealousy in many leaders that do not engage in proper delegation or care to readily recognize the full potential of likely successors in leadership, principles championed by Blanchard and Maxwell. The leadership teams in these campuses wrestle with daily elation and depression as they navigate constant disagreements with each other. It was a common aspect among both lead Ministers interviewed that they strived to stimulate camaraderie between music leaders in charge

of the individual traditional and contemporary worship styles of these congregations. The Lead Pastor of First Christian Church of the Beaches especially exemplifies the distinction between a popular leader and an unpopular prophet, as he embraces beneficial ideas for the assembly that he pastors regardless of the potential controversy it would cause. He paints an especially dire picture of the current state of the American church in general and his own church, showing little to no complacency as he continues to lead the congregational mindset to change and engage with the Gospel. This strongly comports with the vision shared by Stone and Campbell in their reformative movements that gave way to denominations like the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Relationship with the Literature

The relationship of these results with the reviewed literature is perhaps best encompassed in the leadership team members' conclusions of the Biblical vision applied to their work. The early phases of the Biblical story have much to do with the sense of community that joyfully shared among each other in the faith instigated by the Exodus event that gave them an identity and a sense of freedom, albeit under the statutes of Mosaic law. Leadership team members in First Christian Church of the Beaches and Christ Episcopal Church in Ponte Vedra profess to apply Ancient Israelite concepts of worship leadership as it pertains to the functions and delegations of each team member. It also showcases the heritage of worship material found in the biblical canon, mainly in the book of Psalms, adapted to current styles of music and language. Although it only serves as a supplement to the true center of Christian faith found in the accounts of the four Gospels, the emphasis is placed on Ancient Israelite expressions of worship due to their high volume of documentation. Naturally, the church today inherited versions of many of those ancient concepts that exemplify the presence of God among His people, that inform the

words and gestures to denote devotion and repentance to God, and that unified an imperfect nation repeatedly stimulated to live a life dedicated to relating with their Creator.

The current state of the church also relates to a cycle delineated throughout this literature. The Pharisees became corrupted in their abuse of Mosaic law, and their ignorance of Jesus' wisdom and divine character that challenged their hunger for power. Subsequent political and social constructs often led to compromise on the part of leadership teams worldwide. Staunch political and religious conformity confined a life of faith to a performance of indiscernible language to common people of the middle ages. The freedom granted to Christians from persecution at the time of Constantine brought a new dispensation that inspired astounding growth and prevalence yet easily opened the door to the pitfalls of human power. Whaley showed remarkable enthusiasm in writing about the historic revivals of faith, which are microcosms of the reformation. The Gospel inspired renewed interest in a genuine relationship with God, often through changes in language and musical expressions. The overall cycle in this literature testifies to the need to sing a new song in the church as a way to overcome constructs while holding fast to the Gospel. The results of these interviews stem from an amalgamation of the revivals documented by Towns and Whaley that shaped the American church. These results also called for further exploration of the ramifications of consumerism and how it relates to the operation of leadership teams in church and secular organizations. The Ancient Israelites achieved freedoms as they escaped the grip of Pharaoh; freedoms were also achieved by the believers of Constantinople from the grip of negative public opinion. The United States is currently a country that incessantly boasts of freedoms and privileges that are far-reaching by all objective standards. American citizens do not sit in church pews mindlessly listening to a language that engages no demographic in their midst, nor do they perish in bombings in

sanctuaries every week due to hateful public views. However, the peril of conformity subtly permeates the current church, often at the expense of the Gospel, rendering the Ancient Israelite heritage as mere theater. Morgan's call to embrace interwoven worship speaks to this reality of conformity that must be dismantled in all ways possible, abiding by God's law of love. Music is a powerful tool that can accomplish this goal. It requires the church to fully embrace the unifying Gospel story and the consecration of all qualities of art and creativity God has gifted to worship leaders.

Exceeding the Limitations

This research only drew from the thoughts and experiences of a total of four individuals. Church leadership teams are expansive, with a myriad of titles and functions being delegated to the members of these teams. The current organization of church leadership teams in the United States is ripe for a far more comprehensive array of perspectives according to each member's function. Music is only one facet of church leadership. The conversation of church attitudes can be expanded to issues of age groups, as many team members are in charge of activities that engage the congregation's kids and youth. Hong Lim and Ruth's points of social identity continue to pertain to the demographics of today. Aspiring church leaders can benefit from further study to identify how the storyline of church youth unfolds today in detail. Directors of children's formation and family ministries, hospitality and nursery, facilities, marketing communications, operations, pastoral care, and finance all have a unique nuance to add to the conversation. This depends on the size of individual congregations and their available resources. Interpersonal relationship within church leadership teams is the subject of Nance's work *God's Armorbearer*, as well as Rainer and Geiger's *Simple Church*. Boshart's *Becoming Missional* and Van Gelder's *The Missional Church and Denominations* are additional resources to expand the

topic of attitudes to other denominations beyond Disciples and Episcopalians. Lane's *The Worship Band Book* and Hoffman's *Tips for Tight Teams* provide worship leaders with several guiding points to lead their music teams effectively, with some emphasis on spiritual application and exemplifying the Gospel.

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Appendix 1: Research Interview

- How would you describe the demographical and generational make-up of the congregation you serve?

Interview 1: First Christian Church of the Beaches is mostly a middle-class population. Generations eb and flow, depending on the timeline of the church's history. There is a large older population tracing back to the beginning spanning four to five decades. Young families are also present. There is a lot of movement in this area of town largely due to the military.

Interview 2: Our church is made predominantly of boomers, affluent white folks.

Interview 3: Christ Episcopal Church is a community church, meaning we have a high profile. Our liturgy is very relaxed because of our proximity to Ponte Vedra Beach. The dominant age range is upwards of 60 years, and there is inflexibility about the service times and a culture that does not seek to serve.

Interview 4: We are a very diverse community in Christ Church. There is variety in the Spanish-speaking community as well. The majority of the congregation is middle-aged to old Caucasians, professional and well-educated people. Although there is much more age diversity than the average Episcopalian church.

- How would you describe the musical make-up of your congregation? How diverse do you view it to be?

Interview 1: The music is traditional and contemporary. Our music selection is very diverse, and we embrace several styles of worship.

Interview: We have a pretty diverse makeup of music. We move between hymns, the organ, and gospel choir renditions. Sometimes blues and jazz are incorporated into music, as well as acoustical renditions of both old and contemporary hymns. We also have rock and pop-rock.

Interview 3: On an Episcopalian scale from 1 to 10, Christ Church is a 12. There are two reasons for this: there is creativity with the liturgy, facilitating diverse musical styles and genres. The typical Episcopal church would use fifteenth to eighteenth century repertoire and avant-guard music, dominated by the organ.

Interview 4: The musical environment is extremely diverse. There is traditional, contemporary, and contemplative. It is all very blended, from very orthodox Episcopal music to the most unique and multi-ethnic flavors.

- Does the campus hold several services on Sunday? If so, when and why did these multiple services begin to take place?

Interview 1: The church growth we had around the 1980s was the first reason for diversifying services and problems with space. The shorter earlier service was the first addition. In the 90s we implemented contemporary styles.

Interview 2: Three services. From my understanding the church has had multiple services since the 1950s as some were held at the drive-in theatre in town. 8am was designed for those who wanted to worship and also weren't big into music. They only sang one verse of one hymn. There was an attempt to have blended worship, but eventually split up between two services.

Interview 3: Church growth dictated the need for a greater service variety. In addition is the interdenominational representation. The church has put together a committee where Popular music from a number of denominations, and Contemporary genres were selected including songs composed in Presbyterian, Disciples, Baptist, and Methodist churches.

Interview 4: It might have been the 70s and 80s when the explosion of growth occurred for Christ Church. Multiple services resulted from church growth, and it serves the diversity of people in the community. The goal is to offer a variety of worship styles so anyone that comes can have their needs met. We also wanted to create space for worshipers in each stage of their lives. There's a strong family orientation to this.

- What basic qualities distinguish these services from one another?

Interview 1: The 8 AM service is short, outdoors, casual and contemporary; the 9 AM service is less casual with traditional hymns and the choir; the 11 AM service is a more diverse age-group.

Interview 2: At 8 AM they do not sing! It is crazy! At 9 AM is the mainline traditional service, liturgical light, not high church formal regimented. The 11 AM service is more relaxed.

Interview 3: The Meditative service has Celtic styles of music and is quieter. The Jordan service has contemporary Christian music. Rite I uses the traditional prayer book from 1982 with *acapella* Gregorian chant. Rite II

is a blend of Praise and Contemporary music with the traditional style. The Chapel service is very simplified with minimal singing, mainly instrumental. The Spanish service is completely in Spanish, blending translated Contemporary songs with cultural worship songs from several Latin countries.

Interview 4: Distinguishing qualities of the services are worship style through music, liturgy, and language, Rite I is old English and Rite II is contemporary English. There are choirs, vestments and processions. The Jordan service represents the substance of the theology while not holding to tradition. Even the sanctuaries are different. Some services are oriented around music, others around words like the Cooper Chapel service. Music seems to be the central aspect of the former, more so than the sermon. Each service is driven by different needs.

- What attitudes do you perceive on the congregation's part regarding music in the service?

Interview 1: Most attitudes are appreciative and respectful of the diversity of music presented in the church. It has been a learning process to arrive at this level of appreciation.

Interview 2: The attitudes toward music are "to each his own."

Interview 3: The congregation tends to love the music used for worship. The older generations are used to high standards, which translates to music that has meaning and soul, music that is intentional and purposeful.

Interview 4: The majority of the congregation is very receptive and open to new material while very appreciative of the old. It is due to the immense capacity of this church in particular to represent different styles. People expect the best and they like to be challenged and surprised. There is however, a healthy level of resistance, which churches need.

- *Contemporary Christian Music* as we know and call it today is associated with the countercultural movement of the 1960's and its musical implications. Would you agree that generational identity is a great reason for Contemporary Christian music's growing prominence in recent decades in the church?

Interview 1: Generational identity is certainly a part of CCM's prominence. There are music industry and accessibility implications. The quality of music seems to have improved through time.

Interview 2: The capitalization or commercialization of Christianity is the reason for Contemporary Christian Music's growing prominence. Contemporary

Christian Music is a big business and it has the resources to behave like a big record company.

Interview 3: What grew out of the 60s was the desire for intimate relationship with Jesus. The same translates to today, albeit more complex with the evolution of our relationship with Jesus. Freedom in Christ was the exploration in that point in time.

Interview 4: The Episcopal church in general is stuck with Traditional music. Only churches with great resources are incorporating Contemporary Christian Music and exploring it. In my perspective churches have generally incorporated Contemporary Christian Music in poor ways, disregarding the beauty and complexity of some of that music. Some people at Christ Church have moved from traditional worship to contemporary worship permanently.

- If a combined service is held, is there a dominant kind of music ascribed to it? How important a role do you consider demographic representation plays in a combined service?

Interview 1: Blended services would be ascribed to either a traditional or contemporary style of music. Demographic representation hangs on the expectation that everyone comes, although for Thanksgiving there is a mindset to ascribe to its traditional history.

Interview 2: The dominant kind of music in a combined service depends on the time it is held. Demographic representation does not bear much weight.

Interview 3: At Christ Church we try to represent as many people as we can to get them engaged. We are now faced with thousands of choices and challenges regarding society, which reflects in musical stylings.

Interview 4: Combined services tends to lean towards contemporary music. Any traditional music is adapted into a contemporary style. The setup also plays a factor at times. A balance is kept because all demographics are considered, so everyone has something they identify with, instead of favoring one group of people over another.

- What correlation, if any, do you see your congregation's life of worship has to the worship expressions of Ancient Israel in particular?

Interview 1: The book of Psalms plays a major role in the mindset of incorporating new music and instrumentation in the church. It is there that we find so many examples of singing songs to God. The psalms are songs!

Interview 2: It correlates with Israel in that only a handful of people in the different services sing to God wholeheartedly as part of their daily personal life.

Interview 3: Old Testament leaders were the Levites, akin to Christ Church's priests, set apart for the service to the people in religious ritual and in battle. All of life was infused by that. As an example, the Torah was often set to music, and music's power is highly regarded. It translates in terms of knowing who we are as worship leaders, considering our place before God's power and glory and our relationship with God, assuming the responsibility to set the example and accept the calling of God. Balance and integrity in our service and leadership are key components.

Interview 4: The main correlation to Ancient Israel in our liturgy is huge. The service is divided in two liturgies: the Word and the Table. Within the first liturgy, two portions are read from the Hebrew scriptures, aside from readings from the New Testament. The second liturgy, like the service itself, centers around the Eucharist, a direct inheritance from the Passover. This means the service has strong Ancient Hebrew roots.

- Would you consider that consumerism culture bears influence in the life of the Church? If so, to what degree?

Interview 1: Every church has people that come to be fed and not to serve. In the local congregation that doesn't seem to happen much.

Interview 2: Absolutely consumerism bears influence. It plays a huge roll, as the church has ways to consume worship rather than participate in worship. The church has commodified itself.

Interview 3: Consumerism culture bears influence in the church 100 percent. We choose how to react to this culture and determine how we are going to reach out to the people with the central gospel message. We live in a society where high standards are important to have.

Interview 4: Consumerism culture has high influence in the life of the church. It is the mentality many people come to church with, making them approach the church with very specific demands and a big awareness of what they want. Here in Ponte Vedra, it is a daily battle with this reality. There is a study found in the book *Simple Church*, where several successful churches and unsuccessful churches were considered. From a leadership standpoint, the church has adopted a market mentality. Successful churches are not driven by offering programs, but by offering ourselves and the Gospel.

- How important a role do you view finances play for there being multiple services?

Interview 1: Of course, churches need money to operate. But the multiple services were not designed with money in mind.

Interview 2: Money is never a reason for holding these services.

Interview 3: Finances play an important role 100%. Christ Church is an incredibly privileged campus. In our society money translates. But the biggest importance is to check the balance in terms of allocating the money and also the serving and reaching of the people. It is imperative to be mindful of the corruption that money can cause.

Interview 4: Finances for the church is not the main factor for having this amount of services. In fact, it is a financial burden to have them. Holding these services stems from the mission of allowing as many people to worship in their own way.

- Would you say that the compartmentalized musical expressions of the church serve to further the worship standards set in the Bible, or that they diverge from them?

Interview 1: Having these multiple experiences has the end to meet as many people as possible in the place in life where they are and facilitate that they come to worship and to a relationship with God.

Interview 2: Whereas Ancient Israel focused on their worship and song to God instead of reading Hebrew scripture, today we focus on scripture reading but not engage in personal worship and song. There's an American idea that if one goes to church it means they are a good person.

Interview 3: Your standards, like musical technique, have to be a present foundation. There is a consistency and stability in that God is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. These adjectives apply to music as well. In a diverse population and culture these standards should be held to and creatively used to resonate with people. There seems to be no way around being eclectic. Through Christ there is nothing one cannot do, as long as the fundamentals of Scripture are held.

Interview 4: There is not really a Biblical ordinance to have these multiple services. But history shows that worship expressions have always changed and shifted. In fact, worship precedes written sacred texts in the three Abrahamic religions.

- Could this circumstance of compartmentalized worship be reflective of a greater concern with religiosity and good behavior than with God's love, His self-revelation, and relationship with His people?

Interview 1: Perhaps twenty years ago the aspect of appeasement was present in the decision to compartmentalize worship. God's plan for worship, however, was never superseded by that appeasement.

Interview 2: The church has turned to corporate worship on Sunday as the primary disciple making tool, a bad move. For this reason, the church has not equipped people to worship by themselves at home, but a culture of reliance on paid professional Christians to do worship for them. When Covid happened and churches shut down this became glaring. This is all a shadow of what we will experience with God in heaven, but people might not hear that.

Interview 3: People get very comfortable with tradition and familiarity rather than trying new things. People would not want to go out of their way to experience something they do not feel drawn to experience. Our focus should always be our core relationship with Christ and the calling to lead and minister for Jesus through the music.

Interview 4: The multiple services do not reflect a higher concern with religiosity than anything else. The people that have lately come join Christ Church come from a variety of denominations. For a good number of our parishioners, the religious identity of our denomination is relatively unimportant.

- Traditional worship music is often viewed as scriptural, while Contemporary worship music is viewed as merely emotional. Would you agree or disagree? Is there a particular balance you consider healthy?

Interview 1: True Contemporary music leaders are saying it is okay to commune with God as we sing. Traditional music is often singing about God, while Contemporary Christian Music is more about singing to God. There is more encouragement in a modern setting to enter into the Holy Spirit's presence. Our origins in Christian music should never be forgotten. "Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," are a directive for worship.

Interview 2: There has been a change in language in Popular music that is more oriented towards the self, while traditional music is about God. Traditional hymns can be played contemporarily.

Interview 3: Traditional and Contemporary music styles may have started out as just scriptural and emotional, respectively. However, there has been an evolution that has made traditional and contemporary music come together on multiple levels of music styles. The stigmas of sacred and secular music have also permeated church life. Jesus went everywhere and ministered to everyone!

Interview 4: I do not view Contemporary worship music as less scriptural than Traditional worship. In many respects it can be more scriptural. The music also invites worshipers to engage not just with their minds but also with their whole selves. In the context of traditional worship, the preaching can be very thematic while in a contemporary context it is heavily scriptural, often leading to an abuse of Scripture.

- During the time you have served in your current congregation, what has been the vision for the congregation's direction regarding music? How does the church staff work together to guide the flock in this direction?

Interview 1: The vision is that music is the way to start a conversation with God, so the words are opening the door for individuals to leave the page and worship God genuinely. Retreats, meetings and prayers serve for the staff to work on guiding the flock in a worship that is valid and in truth, listening to the Holy Spirit and taking into account the sermon message by the lead Pastor.

Interview 2: The vision for the church is more people singing! The staff does not work together, they work individually! There is no unified worship pastor because of the compartmentalized worship. The pastor works with the choir director to choose familiar hymns that are sung completely. With the Praise team director there needs to be more instigation for the congregation's actual singing.

Interview 3: The vision we have now for the church regarding music is a blessing, considering the accelerated growth of the congregation in recent years that lent our eclectic musical diversity. The vision used to be largely undefined, and the music director often solidifies it. Some of the vision is interpreting the thoughts and ideas of the lead priests, as well as knowing the personality of the church.

Interview 4: The vision of the clergy has been to maintain the roots in the Episcopal ethos while experimenting with new music styles. The one thing we all agree on is that the music is congregational and designed to worship God. The staff is not as involved with each other as they ought to be in this aspect, and there is still much to learn. There exists great disconnect between the people involved in each music style. I only recently got the traditional and contemporary leaders to sit together for lunch!

Appendix 2: Institutional Review Board Approval

Ian Bula
Jerry Newman

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY21-22-730 Then Sings The Church a New Song

Dear Ian Bula, Jerry Newman,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form(s) and final versions of your study documents can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. Your stamped consent form(s) should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document(s) should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP
Administrative Chair of Institutional Research
Research Ethics Office