

Liberty University

School of Music

**The Impact of Southern Baptist Worship Ministries on Denominational Effectiveness**

A Thesis Proposal Submitted to  
the Faculty of the School of Music  
in Candidacy for the Degree of  
Master of Arts in Music and Worship

by

**Laura S. Brod**

Lynchburg, VA

April 2023

**MA: Music and Worship**

**Defense Decision**

The thesis Advisor and Reader have rendered the following decision concerning the defense for

Laura S. Brod

on the Thesis

The Impact of Southern Baptist Worship Ministries on Denominational Effectiveness

as submitted on April 10, 2023

- Full approval to proceed with no proposal revisions.  
The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.
- Provisional approval pending cited revisions.  
The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.
- Redirection of project.  
The student is being redirected to take ETHM/MUSC/WRSP 689 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

Jerry L. Newman

Print Name of Advisor

Signature

4/10/23

Date

Rodney D. Whaley

Print Name of Reader

Signature

April 10, 2023

Date

## **Abstract**

Worship ministries maintain prominent roles in Southern Baptist (SB) churches. Despite ample available literature for today's church educational methods and congregational discipleship, little study has focused on ways SB music ministries can bolster the spiritual health of congregants. SBs currently experience the consequences of recent scandals alongside dwindling attendance numbers. To address this multifaceted, spiritually rooted issue, this historical qualitative study proposes to discover characteristics and methods of music and worship ministries (WM) and leadership qualities that can best promote spiritual growth within SB churches to strengthen the denomination's health. To undertake this, the study will explore SB history and polity as it relates to WM. It will also examine closely related scholarly literature surrounding elements that can shape effective, disciple-making WMs like worship, discipleship, theological education, and denominational resources. Findings from these processes may indicate the need for increased leadership training, improved engagement between local Baptist associations and their local churches, the utilization of strategic methods in selecting worship materials, and the reworking of music ministry program offerings via denominational entities. Practical implications from this study will implicate means toward refinement, benefit local church leaders and congregants, and aid the long-term recovery, accountability, and health of SBs as a positive spiritual force for God's kingdom.

## **Dedication/Acknowledgements**

I could not have accomplished this process without the undying support of my husband, Rev. Andrew Brod, who lovingly encouraged me to pursue this degree program and constantly cheered me through each assignment and late study night. You read my papers, rallied me when I wanted to give up, offered biblical wisdom, and loved me from home or distant lands and shores over the last few years. I love you more than I can express.

To my parents, Rev. & Mrs. David and Barbara Williams, thank you for a heritage of faith and for emphasizing academic and spiritual education. I learned to observe through a biblical worldview, treat others compassionately, and harness my problem-solving skills because of you. Thank you for modeling worship, sensitivity, musicianship, and excellence.

Drs. Jerry Newman and Rodney Whaley, I count myself privileged to have your advisement while developing this project. Thank you for your encouragement in classes and the thesis process.

I also acknowledge three people who shaped my faith and my musicianship. They will not see this since they are exuberantly worshiping Christ in heaven now. My first real “church job” ministry mentor, Simeon Nix, at Bell Shoals Baptist Church in Brandon, Florida, taught me numerous skills invaluable to worship ministry. My granddaddy, Mosie Lister, emphasized the importance of communicating a song, shared stories about small-town life and the Navy, and instilled a love of God and music in our family. And, my grandma, Sarah “Sadie” Williams, always believed in me, encouraged me, and modeled a lifestyle of prayer to an insecure, impressionable middle school girl. I carry these lessons and memories with me forever.

“‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty’, who was, and is, and is to come” (Rev. 4:8).

# Contents

<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Dedication/Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Contents.....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Tables.....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of Figures .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Abbreviations/Definitions .....</b>	<b>x</b>
<b>Chapter One: Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
Background.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	3
Statement of the Purpose .....	6
Significance of the Study .....	6
Research Questions .....	7
Hypotheses.....	7
Core Concepts.....	8
<b>Chapter Two: Literature Review.....</b>	<b>16</b>
Literature Review Section One: Worship Ministry Literature .....	16
Worship Ministry Characteristics Contributing to Great Commission Acts .....	16
Evangelism and Discipleship.....	17
Corporate Revelation-Response Approach.....	17
Transformative.....	19
Evangelism.....	22
Discipleship.....	23
Gospel-Centric Service Elements .....	25
Worship Leader Characteristics Contributing to Great Commission .....	26
Pastor.....	26
Evangelist.....	27
Disciple-Maker .....	28
Community Builder .....	31
Influential Leader.....	33
Team Player .....	35
Literature Review Section Two: Southern Baptist Church Music History.....	38
The Birth of the SBC Church Music Ministry (1915–1941).....	38
Rapid Growth in the Mid to Late Twentieth Century (1941–Mid-1990s).....	39
The Onset of Decline (Mid-1990s–Present-Day) .....	44

Literature Review Section Three: Southern Baptist Associations .....	47
Associations - Literature .....	47
Associations – Online Representations .....	52
Challenges to research .....	53
“Resourcing Worship” – SA WM Directors’ Training.....	57
Literature Review Section Four: Lifeway and Southern Baptist Seminaries .....	59
Lifeway’s Current Support for Church Ministries .....	59
Current Southern Baptist Seminary Worship Ministry Programs .....	65
<b>Chapter Three: Methodology .....</b>	<b>68</b>
Research Method and Design .....	68
Research Plan .....	69
Additional Questions and Hypotheses .....	70
<b>Chapter Four: Research Findings .....</b>	<b>73</b>
Section 1: Summary of Worship Ministry Literature .....	73
Section 2: Summary of Southern Baptist Church Music History .....	75
Section 3: Summary of Southern Baptist Worship Literature .....	77
Associations – Literature Review Summary.....	77
Associations – State and Local Associations Online Review Summary .....	78
Associations – Summary.....	82
Section 4: Summary of Lifeway and Southern Baptist Seminaries .....	85
Summary of Lifeway’s Current Support for Church Ministries .....	85
Summary of Current Southern Baptist Seminary Worship Ministry Programs .....	92
<b>Chapter Five: Conclusion of Research .....</b>	<b>95</b>
Summary of Study .....	95
Summary of Findings.....	96
Summary of Main RQs .....	96
Sub-Questions .....	98
Limitations .....	100
Recommendations for Future Study .....	101
Implications for Practice .....	102
Conclusion .....	105
<b>Bibliography.....</b>	<b>106</b>

## List of Tables

1	Worship Literature by Category, Number of Uses, and Applied Subtopic .....	74
2	SA program offerings: director/group training/leader development .....	80
3	Current Status of Local Opportunities in States Without WM Departs.....	82
4	SBC SA Websites Revealing WM Support (by %) .....	83
5	SBC SA Websites Revealing WM Director (by %) .....	83
6	SA Websites with WT Training Opportunities (by %).....	83
7	SBC SA Websites with WL Training Opportunities (by %) .....	83
8	SBC LA Websites with WM Support (by %).....	84
9	SBC LA Websites with WT Training Opportunities (by %).....	84
10	SBC LA Websites with WL Training Opportunities (by %).....	84
11	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Women</i> .....	85
12	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Adults</i> .....	86
13	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Kids</i> .....	86
14	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Students</i> .....	86
15	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Black Church</i> .....	86
16	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Leadership</i> .....	87
17	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Research</i> .....	87
18	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Worship</i> .....	87
19	Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway <i>Español</i> .....	88
20	Spiritual Enrichment Materials Within Each Ministry Department’s Website (by %) .....	88
21	Worship Ministry Degree Programs Available at SBC Seminaries .....	92
22	Master of Arts (Worship Ministry Area) Course Offerings by Category .....	93

23	Master of Divinity (Worship Ministry Area) Course Offerings by Category .....	93
24	Ranked order of Course Categories at SBC Seminaries – MA level.....	94
25	Ranked order of Course Categories at SBC Seminaries – M.Div. level.....	94



## List of Figures

1	History of Southern Baptist Convention Support for Church Music Ministries Through Present-Day.....	76
2	SB-Backed WM Training From Mid-Twentieth Century – Early 2000s .....	77
3	SBC-Backed WM Training After the Early 2000s .....	78
4	Lifeway’s Student Landing Page .....	89
5	Resources Available on Lifeway Students’ “Shop” Area.....	89
6	Lifeway’s Worship Landing Page .....	90
7	Lifeway Worship’s Home Page .....	91

## Abbreviations/Definitions

SB	<i>Southern Baptist.</i> A title used to distinguish a person, group of people, identity, or practice aligning with the Southern Baptist Convention.
WM	<i>Worship ministry.</i> A ministry of the church that provides engaging moments of spiritual formation for the church during times of congregational worship. Examples of WM responsibilities include music, responsive readings, confessions, dramatic arts, lighting, technology, and worship education.
WL	<i>Worship leader.</i> The director who shepherds and oversees all elements encompassed by the church’s WM.
SBC	<i>Southern Baptist Convention.</i> An affiliation of participating churches who agree to follow the precedents set forth in their guidebook, “The Baptist Faith and Message,” and who associate with one another to fulfill the Great Commission.
GC	<i>The Great Commission.</i> Found in Matthew 28:16–20. Jesus’ instruction to evangelize and disciple the world.
WWII	<i>World War Two.</i> A war that affected the majority of the world during the years 1939–1945.
CWM	<i>Contemporary worship music.</i> Birthed after the Jesus Movement and the Christian music publishing era, CWM began to take hold in the 1980s–1990s. Christian-themed lyrics fused with modern radio-sounding music used during times of congregational worship.
WT	<i>Worship team.</i> Volunteer personnel comprising and contributing to the overall ministry of a church’s WM. Positions may vary: instrumentalists, singers, sound technicians, computer operators, social media planners, etc.
LA	<i>Local association.</i> Local iteration of an SBC SA, usually organized by city or several adjacent towns.
SA	<i>State association.</i> The state support system for SB churches, SAs are supported by the SBC and provide training, and materials to empower SB pastors and churches in their areas.
SS Board	<i>Sunday School Board.</i> A now-defunct title describing the SBC’s publishing house for educational and spiritual enrichment materials encompassing every ministry of the church.

CMD	<i>Church Music Department.</i> The music branch of the SBC's SS Board for over fifty years with a comprehensive approach to church music ministry including graded choirs, discipleship, leader training materials, and camps.
Lifeway	<i>Lifeway Christian Resources.</i> The SBC's current main publishing house and ministry resource headquartered in Nashville, Tennessee.
AL	<i>Alabama.</i> Used when referring to AL's SBC SA.
GA	<i>Georgia.</i> Used when referring to GA's SBC SA.
CA	<i>California.</i> Used when referring to CA's SBC SA.
HI	<i>Hawaii.</i> Used when referring to HI's SBC SA.
IN	<i>Indiana.</i> Used when referring to IN's SBC SA.
MD/DE	<i>Maryland/Delaware.</i> Used when referring to the joint MD/DE SBC SA.
SC	<i>South Carolina.</i> Used when referring to SC's SBC SA.
RW	<i>Resourcing Worship.</i> A group of SBC SA WM leaders who produce and disseminate their own WM training content.
SM	<i>Student ministry.</i> A church ministry typically geared toward 6 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> grade students and their families.
Gateway	<i>Gateway Seminary.</i> Formerly Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary. Located in Ontario, California.
SWBTS	<i>Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.</i> One of six SBC seminaries, located in Fort Worth, Texas.
MBTS	<i>Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.</i> One of six SBC seminaries, located in Kansas City, Missouri.
SBTS	<i>The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.</i> One of six SBC seminaries, located in Louisville, Kentucky.
NOBTS	<i>New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.</i> One of six SBC seminaries, located in New Orleans, Louisiana.
SEBTS	<i>Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary.</i> One of six SBC seminaries, located in Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Baby Boomers	A generation of people born during the time frame that occurred near the end of WWII.
MA	<i>Master of Arts.</i> A graduate-level degree typically centering on social sciences, humanities, languages, and arts. In this project, the Master of Arts is contrasted with the Master of Divinity.
M.Div.	<i>Master of Divinity.</i> A graduate-level degree typically centering on the study of religion. In this project, the Master of Divinity is contrasted with the Master of Arts.
D.Ed.Min.	<i>Doctor of Education in Ministry.</i> A post-graduate level degree focused on educational ministry.
CR	<i>Credit Hours.</i> The amount of credit a university student receives per course. Credit hours are combined to complete a degree program.

## Chapter One: Introduction

### Background

#### Music

Singing appears throughout Scripture as a foundational component of Christian worship. In the Old Testament, Moses and Miriam acted as pastor and worship leader (WL) in Exodus 15, leading in Word and song to celebrate God's victory. During King David's tenure, the Levites received an official designation as WLs, singing praises to God around the Ark while Asaph read His Word aloud.<sup>1</sup> Levitical worship continued to balance worship assemblies; combining psalms and prophetic messages with music, people found strength and extolled God.<sup>2</sup> New Testament Christians continued these practices in their churches<sup>3</sup> as the Apostle Paul ardently highlighted singing and preaching God's Word in Christian gatherings (Col. 3:16, Rom. 1:16, New International Version). As clearly demonstrated throughout the Scripture, music is essential to Christian worship alongside the preaching of God's Word.

#### God's Design for Order and Worship Leaders

There is a distinctive biblical calling and purpose for the role of the WL. Worship is to be carried out with order. From the beginning of the Old Testament, God modeled His desire for order.

---

<sup>1</sup> Vernon M. Whaley, *Called to Worship: The Biblical Foundations of Our Response to God's Call* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2009), 151-152.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew Henry, "An Exposition, With Practical Observations, of the First Book of Chronicles," in *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*, vol. 2, *Joshua to Esther* (McLean, Virginia: Mac Donald Publishing Company, 1985), 898-899.

<sup>3</sup> Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994), 38.

He took time during the Creation, pausing between days<sup>4</sup> and closing each with a statement of praise that glorified His goodness. Later, when God called the first official group of temple musicians from the tribe of Levi to lead worship,<sup>5</sup> King David ensured professional quality be rendered unto God by appointing Asaph to start a school of music to train these newly dubbed leaders of singers and players. Cheneniah served over all as the song leader, Heman oversaw the vocalists, and Jeduthun trained those who played percussion.<sup>6</sup> The Levite WLs continued to serve, receiving pay for their work for God (I Chron. 9:33, Neh. 11:22–33). When the Psalms were composed, commonly known as a book of praises, they were also purposefully organized into five books according to their endings (double amens, amens, and hallelujahs).<sup>7</sup> Therefore, a definitive standard for maintaining called, trained, and equipped WLs who utilize organized methods is evident throughout the Old Testament.

### **Worship in Church Gatherings**

Persisting in this Old Testament worship practice, New Testament churches sang together. Jesus Himself sang in worship (Heb. 2:11–13). Paul further clarified the enduring importance of musical worship in his teaching (Col. 3:16). Churches obeyed the Apostle Paul’s teachings within their culturally diverse bodies of believers (Eph. 5:19-20),<sup>8</sup> and through this practice they

---

<sup>4</sup> Whaley, *Called to Worship*, 9-11.

<sup>5</sup> Elmer L. Towns and Vernon M. Whaley, *Worship Through the Ages: How the Great Awakenings Shape Evangelical Worship* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Academic, 2012), 35.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Worshipful: Glorifying God for Who He Is* (Colorado Springs, Colorado: David C. Cook, 2004), 15.

<sup>8</sup> Terry L. Schultz, “Whose Heart Music is in Your Mission’s Hymnal? Ethnomusicology Principles for Cross-Cultural Ministry,” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 115, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 30, <http://essays.wisluthsem.org:8080/bitstream/handle/123456789/4439/Schultz%20-%20Ethnomusicology%20Principles%20for%20Cross-Cultural%20Ministry.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

demonstrated their grasp on the role of congregational singing in fostering community.<sup>9</sup> A continuation of these practices is essential, as “Christians singing the faith is a necessity for engaging in fully biblical worship.”<sup>10</sup>

### Statement of the Problem

Many can name the pastor and the WL, two individuals most visible on the staff at one’s church. While SBs base proposed criteria for pastoral candidacy upon New Testament texts and have gone as far as to recommend disfellowshipping churches in non-adherence to these standards,<sup>11</sup> no supportive documentation for the role of the WL can be found within the current *Baptist Faith and Message* or denomination’s published resolutions. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) has also permitted WL training opportunities falling outside of the traditional seminary format to shrink to virtually non-existent measures.<sup>12</sup>

---

<sup>9</sup> Constance M. Cherry, *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2010), 154-155.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 154.

<sup>11</sup> SBC, “Baptist Faith & Message 2000: VI. The Church,” accessed January 7, 2023, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/#vi>; Timothy Cokes, “SBC Coverage: Credentials Committee Withdraws Recommendation,” *Baptist Press in Baptist & Reflector: Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists Since 1835*, June 22, 2022, <https://baptistandreflector.org/sbc-coverage-credentials-committee-withdraws-recommendation/>; Jeff Robinson, “Fall Trustees Meeting: Board Commends Mohler’s Stance on Meaning of Pastor in BF&M 2000,” News and Features, *The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*, October 13, 2022, <https://news.sbts.edu/2022/10/13/fall-trustees-meeting-board-commends-mohlers-stance-on-meaning-of-pastor-in-bfm-2000/>.

<sup>12</sup> Donald Oren Blakeney, “The Rise of the Part-Time Worship Leader in the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church,” (D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University, May 2019), 77, *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects* 2083. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2083>.

SB church attendance has steadily dropped since 2006,<sup>13</sup> causing the denomination's most considerable reduction in over a century.<sup>14</sup> Notwithstanding their massive effort to plant new churches, the denomination still closed over 900 churches yearly as of 2015.<sup>15</sup> Although multiple causes exist, two prime factors reveal failings in the accountability and integrity of the denomination's leaders at local church and organizational levels. First, SBs currently face the realities of worldwide news reports highlighting recent scandals rooted in sinful behavior. SB leadership must live worshipful lifestyles that fall in accordance with biblical principles. Second, SBs have not quickly adjusted to the needs of the current ministry era like other entities. This ineptness at remaining technologically and culturally relevant hampers its ministry and training methods.<sup>16</sup>

Although WMs contribute to and can sometimes dominate worship services, the value and understanding of their contribution are often shrugged off as being so disproportionately secondary that the SBC takes inadequate action toward researching methods that bolster the mission effectiveness of its congregations *through* WMs. The underwhelming effort of the SBC to recognize the widespread impact held by its WMs represents a systemic issue in which everything that transpires before the sermon is valued as a pep rally for the preaching. On the contrary, musical worship can be equally as formational as preaching.

---

<sup>13</sup> Frank Newport, "A Look at Southern Baptists in the U.S. Today," *Gallup*, June 11, 2021, <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/350987/look-southern-baptists-today.aspx>.

<sup>14</sup> Aaron Earls, "Southern Baptists Face Largest Membership Decline in 100 Years," Insights, *Lifeway Research*, June 4, 2020, <https://research.lifeway.com/2020/06/04/southern-baptists-face-largest-membership-decline-in-100-years/>.

<sup>15</sup> John Mark Clifton, foreword to *Flickering Lamps: Christ & His Church*, by Richard Blackaby and Henry Blackaby (Jonesboro, Georgia: Blackaby Ministries International, 2015).

<sup>16</sup> R. Albert Mohler, Jr., "Southern Baptist Identity: Is There a Future?" in *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, ed. David S. Dockery (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009), 35, 36.



A lack of sufficient published evidence specific to this field for SBs indicates a gap and the need for this study. Correlated research highlights the effects of music, which provides a powerful tool for forming a theological belief system. Educators frequently utilize musical mnemonics since songs can become earworms,<sup>17</sup> presenting learning materials in ways that are easily recalled from long-term memory.<sup>18</sup> Studies link improved recall of material via music versus text alone,<sup>19</sup> showing that repeated songs create memory connections through familiarity.<sup>20</sup> Music is also proven to induce emotive reactions, which helps treat behavior therapy patients.<sup>21</sup>

Christian researchers have extrapolated rational biblical applications in teaching and building community through worship music.<sup>22</sup> Hanna Byrd's research found that "It is necessary that leaders are able to determine the most effective songs for ministry."<sup>23</sup> Similarly, Boyd Monty McGee's dissertation proposed incorporating various styles of music so that everyone can participate in meaningful worship.<sup>24</sup> Robert E. Webber surveyed college students on the trajectory

---

<sup>17</sup> Riah Werner, "Music Movement and Memory: Pedagogical Songs as Mnemonic Aids," *TESOL Journal* 9, no. 387 (2018): 2, <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/tesj.387>.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 4, 8.

<sup>19</sup> Wanda T. Wallace, "Memory for Music: Effect of Melody on Recall of Text," *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 20, no. 6 (1994): 1481, 1483, <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0278-7393.20.6.1471>.

<sup>20</sup> Patricia Purnell-Webb and Craig P. Speelman, "Music and Memory for Text," *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 106 (2008): 953-954, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epdf/10.2466/pms.106.3.927-957>.

<sup>21</sup> Helena Dukić and Miro Jakovljević, "Music, Religion and Health; A Scientific Perspective on the Origin of Our Relationship to Music," *Psychiatria Danubina* 33, no. 3 (2021): 146, 147, <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34010264/>.

<sup>22</sup> Monique M. Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation: How Contemporary Worship Music Forms Evangelical Community* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

<sup>23</sup> Hanna Byrd, "The Impact of Lyric Choices on Spiritual Edification" (D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University, May 01, 2019), 12, *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects* 2088, <https://digitalcommons-liberty.edu./doctoral/2088>.

<sup>24</sup> Boyd Monty McGee, "Serving the Body of Christ in Corporate Worship: An Apologetic for Embracing Multiple Styles of Music" (D.Ed.Min thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018), 152, *Boyce Digital Repository*, 2018, <https://repository.sbts.edu/handle/10392/5696>.

of contemporary church music. His survey group indicated a desire for authenticity during worship. “We are tired of superficiality ... What we don’t want is phony, loud entertainment worship, or dead ritualistic worship.”<sup>25</sup> These applicable points indicate the vital role WMs and WLs play in forming a congregation’s theology and spiritual health by selecting singable, scripturally accurate songs for worship.

### Statement of the Purpose

This study proposes to research characteristics of WMs and WLs that augment congregational spiritual well-being at SB churches and inspire believers toward Great Commission (GC) actions of evangelism and discipleship, thereby boosting both the local church and the denomination.

### Significance of the Study

All persons touched by SB life can benefit from the results of this study. If by researching, highlighting vital aspects of, and then refining the process of WM at SB churches it is possible to address internal denominational issues and increase discipleship (Matt. 28:19–20), then more will ultimately come to know Christ. SBs care deeply about the GC.<sup>26</sup> Gospel-centered WMs aid the denomination’s effort in furthering the gospel through mission and discipleship.

Due to these factors and their long-term effects on people, SB WMs should closely examine the potential reach of WMs, evaluate the SBC’s current efforts at fortifying WMs as spiritual leaders in their churches, and consider recommending enhancements and guidelines for these

---

<sup>25</sup> Robert E. Webber, *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2002), 188-190.

<sup>26</sup> SBC, “Great Commission Baptists: looking ahead,” *Baptist Press*, September 24, 2012, <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/great-commission-baptists-looking-ahead/>.

ministries while still upholding the Baptist principle of autonomy. Until further research in this arena transpires, SB churches will continue to face spiritual and numerical decline due to inadequately trained/supported WMs.

What is the importance of this research project? Left unexamined, shallow WMs can perpetuate the further spiritual decline of the church. Why should these RQs be investigated? These declines will eventually cripple the SB denomination's GC effectiveness in reaching the world for Christ, invoking damning eternal consequences. Consequently (although often disregarded), the study of WMs at SB churches presents a matter of urgency for local and SBC denominational leaders.

By examining this project's research questions, the SBC and its WM leaders can evaluate methods for effectively equipping the saints for ministry (Eph. 4:12) and furthering the church's mission (Matt. 28:16–20). In so doing, SBC leaders and churches will witness the effects of discipleship, mission, and multiplication that will last for generations.

### Research Questions

Because of the lasting spiritual influences from SB WMs, this study seeks to discover answers to the following research questions (RQ):

RQ 1: What are the characteristics of WMs that foster GC lifestyles in SB Churches?

RQ 2: How can the leadership qualities of WLs at SB churches foster GC lifestyles in the denomination?

### Hypotheses

Substantial evidence indicates correlations between the goals of the SBC and the role of WMs in both communicating the gospel and helping Christians experience spiritual growth through discipleship. Further growth implications from this research may be made for the levels of

attendance, volunteerism, and the denomination's reputation and effectiveness as a whole. As such, additional points may become clear at the conclusion of research. Consider the following hypotheses:

H 1: The characteristics of WMs that foster GC lifestyles in SB churches include gospel-centric music and service elements, active discipleship, and evangelism.

H 2: The leadership qualities of WLs at SB churches that foster GC lifestyles in the denomination include pastoral leadership characteristics, teamwork capability, and musical adeptness.

### Core Concepts

Several concepts should be generally comprehended and evaluated when studying the practices of WMs at SB churches. First, one must possess a basic understanding of SBs, their means of organization, and their polity. The history of SB WMs must also be grasped. The biblical act of worship from Scripture is vitally pertinent to this research study. Biblical worship follows patterns set forth by Scripture<sup>27</sup> in gathering groups of people for one purpose—uniting their focus on God to glorify Christ as Savior.<sup>28</sup> Therefore, gospel-centricity and the GC apply to SB WMs. Each of these foundational concepts are crucial to this research.

---

<sup>27</sup> Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 13.

<sup>28</sup> Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation*, 112.

## Southern Baptists

### History

SBs identify as “a body of like-minded local churches cooperating together to reach the world with the Good News of Jesus Christ.”<sup>29</sup> While maintaining distinctive polity mingling parameters for cooperative fellowship with the championing of congregational autonomy, SBs march forward as a conservative alliance in a progressive world. When Baptist churches in the southern United States joined to create the SBC in 1845, they spearheaded a longstanding history of combined efforts to follow by pooling resources rather than creating a statement or system of beliefs for adherence.<sup>30</sup> However, sin stained the union due to their outspoken support of slavery. James 3:9–10 (New Living Translation) addresses this sinful conduct, stating, “Sometimes [the mouth] praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!” Conversely, wisdom stems from applying God’s Word to one’s life and keeping Godly counsel (Prov.1:7, 12:15). Morris H. Chapman applicably states, “orthodoxy (right doctrine) must lead to orthopraxy (right practice).”<sup>31</sup> Eventually, SBs rightly acknowledged and decried these prior sins.<sup>32</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup> “Meet Southern Baptists,” About, SBC, accessed December 28, 2022, <https://www.sbc.net/about/>.

<sup>30</sup> Slayden A. Yarbrough and Michael Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists, A History of a Confessional People* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2021), 45.

<sup>31</sup> Morris H. Chapman, “Axioms of a Cooperating Southern Baptist,” in *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, ed. David S. Dockery (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2009), 169.

<sup>32</sup> SBC, “Resolution on Racial Reconciliation On the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Southern Baptist Convention,” Resolutions, June 1, 1995, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/resolution-on-racial-reconciliation-on-the-150th-anniversary-of-the-southern-baptist-convention/>.

In *Southern Baptists: A History of a Confessional People*, Yarbrough and Kuykendall

submit that SBs can learn from their history and move forward, stating:

If the contemporary church is to have a relevant prophetic voice, its people must understand its history ... that knowledge of one's history equips a person and institutions to be prepared to make their own history. Making history never stops with any generation ... Baptists must know their history ... interpret that history ... they must have the freedom which characterizes the Baptist heritage to become history makers for themselves and for future generations ... committed to the Lordship of Christ through faith.<sup>33</sup>

For SBs to advance from an era marked by sins broadcast on news headlines worldwide, the church must study its past and pursue spiritual rectification while still working within its unique contexts, motivated by the leadership of the Holy Spirit and proceeding from God's Word.<sup>34</sup>

### **Autonomy**

SBs hold firmly to Scripture as the basis for each decision. James L. Sullivan, a former SBC president, writes, "Two theological beliefs undergird every decision Southern Baptists have made about polity: the priesthood of the believer and the autonomy of the local congregation. ... The church is related not only to Scripture but also to geography. It is *local*."<sup>35</sup> This autonomy allows SB congregations to determine their own best methods for ministry although they must still abide by denominational parameters set forth by the *Baptist Faith and Message*. As such, a broad spectrum of churches and ministries can be found within the denomination. Yarbrough and Kuykendall state, "Historically, this has proven to be a strength, not a weakness."<sup>36</sup>

---

<sup>33</sup> Yarbrough and Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists, A History of a Confessional People*, 6, 7.

<sup>34</sup> James L. Sullivan, *Baptist Polity – As I See It*, rev. ed. (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998), 43, 44.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>36</sup> Yarbrough and Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists, A History of a Confessional People*, 9.

## Cooperation

SB churches operate best through cooperation despite their autonomy, evidenced as far back as the Philadelphia Association of 1707.<sup>37</sup> Without this intentional cooperation, Chapman warns that SBs will “no longer house a mighty force of God’s people who came together with stouthearted biblical convictions, determined obedience to the Great Commission, a passionate love for the lost, and a compassionate heart for the hurting.”<sup>38</sup> This alarming statement should urge SB churches to practice willful cooperative accountability at local and denominational leadership levels to witness the best possible return of spiritual outcomes.

New Testament churches modeled this same kind of cooperation.<sup>39</sup> Chapman writes,

Congregations in various regions understood they had an obligation to the ministry outside their own locale. The council at Jerusalem (Acts 15) in AD 50 indicates ... the larger Christian family. Another example ... the commissioning of missionaries. The famine in Jerusalem evoked the collection of a freewill offering from among the Gentile churches ... hospitality for other Christians was a congregational duty ... collaboration (we can do more together than separately and God expects no less) is what makes Southern Baptists fundamentally different from independents or separatists.<sup>40</sup>

With autonomous churches practicing cooperation, SBs follow Scripture’s example.

## Associations

Associations serve as regional hubs equipping cooperating churches with their mission. Although they organize and gather leaders from area churches to host events and trainings, they do not possess any hierarchy over the local churches. Rather, they exist to empower ministries as they “pool their energies, resources, talents, and gifts to serve, minister, and do missions as efficiently

---

<sup>37</sup> Chapman, “Axioms of a Cooperating Southern Baptist,” in Dockery, 180.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 162.

<sup>39</sup> Chapman, “Axioms of a Cooperating Southern Baptist,” in Dockery, 180.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 169-170.

and effectively as possible,”<sup>41</sup> often with a small paid staff funded by local churches choosing to support its ministry.<sup>42</sup> For a local church to hold membership with its associational group, it must meet approval demonstrating basic adherence to fundamental Baptist principles.<sup>43</sup>

Like much in the last few decades, associations have shifted their operations. Having functioned in a consistent vein for about a century,<sup>44</sup> it may be time to rework some associational methods so they are better prepared to adequately meet churches’ needs.<sup>45</sup>

### Worship Ministry in the Southern Baptist Denomination

The SB WM timeline begins with non-professional lay leaders in the early 1900s. SBs saw the need for a dedicated music ministry department early on, though, and in the 1930s, employed the first music director who headed a trend toward professional music ministry involving music education and wide-scale productions and programming.<sup>46</sup> While churches experienced rapid growth after World War Two (WWII), numerous factors caused growth and leadership methods to shift after the 1990s. Since, the SBs have witnessed the effects of contemporary worship music (CWM), which brought with it leaders needing different skill sets to incorporate modern technological advents and styles. Overall, SB WMs swung from a small scale to a large volume of

---

<sup>41</sup> Yarbrough and Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists, A History of a Confessional People*, 166.

<sup>42</sup> Sullivan, *Baptist Polity – As I See It*, 62.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Michael Day, “The Future of State Conventions and Associations,” in *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, ed. David S. Dockery (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2009), 226.

<sup>45</sup> Chapman, “Axioms of a Cooperating Southern Baptist,” in Dockery, 171.

<sup>46</sup> David W. Music, “Turning Points in Baptist Church Music,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 52, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 71, 73, 75.



ministry coverage that produced a high musical professionalism, and have since drifted back toward an updated smaller scale.<sup>47</sup>

Armed with these baseline understandings of SBs and how music and worship have historically fit within their context, one can identify a substantiated overlap of interests and goals relating to this research project.

### Gospel-Centricity

As the church endured periods of persecution, congregations entered periods of hiding. When the Catholic church emerged, they appointed both priests and musicians as leaders. Ambrose of Milan arose as one who kept the gospel central, composing hymns to replace errant hymns distributed by the Arian faction.<sup>48</sup> Similar phenomena still permeate today's church culture even though the Bible describes that the gospel should be clearly communicated.<sup>49</sup> Navarro writes, "There is an illiteracy [of the Bible]... unchallenged in our Christian churches."<sup>50</sup>

Scripture shows the Trinity at the Creation (Gen. 1:26–27, John 1:1–4) and Jesus exalted for eternity in heaven (Rev. 3:13). Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all tell the story of redemption from beginning from the Bible's cover to cover. By centering on the Word of God, the whole gospel is proclaimed. Mike Cospers states, "God is holy. We are sinners. Jesus saves us from our sins. We gather, remember our identity-shaping story, and send one another back into the wider world,

---

<sup>47</sup> Emily Snider Andrews, "Who's Minding the Music? The Impact of Charismatic Renewal on Southern Baptist Training of Worship Leaders," *Liturgy* 37, no. 3, (August 2, 2022): 39-42, DOI: 10.1080/0458063X.2022.2085967.

<sup>48</sup> Robert J. Morgan, *Then Sings My Soul: The Story of Our Song; Drawing Strength From the Great Hymns of Our Faith*, bk. 3 (Nashville, Tennessee: W. Publishing Group, 2011), 19-22.

<sup>49</sup> Nathan A. Finn, "Priorities for A Post-Resurgence Convention," in *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, ed. David S. Dockery (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2009). 266-267.

<sup>50</sup> Kevin J. Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2001), 27.

allowing that story to shape us as we go. ... It's a gospel rhythm, reminding us of our dependence and Christ's sufficiency."<sup>51</sup> Church worship must be measured by the Scriptures. WMs must be founded upon and apply biblical theology<sup>52</sup> and gospel-centricity in every action they carry out.

A gospel-centric WM acknowledges that all Scripture tells the story of salvation through Christ. This biblical narrative is communicated through service elements' material content and through team members' worshipful lifestyles. By these means, the Savior receives glory, and congregants are motivated to accomplish GC acts.

### Great Commission Lifestyles

Evangelism *and* discipleship matter. The two parts complete a cycle that should be inextricably connected. Practicing the GC transforms people's lives and impacts communities because of its missional, evangelical, and unifying nature. These acts of obedience also draw dissimilar groups of people together as the cycle continues. The twofold intent of the GC is explained as follows in this excerpt from an SBC Resolution about evangelism:

The Great Commission is carried out when unbelievers hear the Gospel, repent of their sins and believe in the Gospel, are baptized as witnesses to the Gospel, and are taught to obey all the commands of Christ (Matthew 28:16–20); ... we encourage *all ministry staffs, deacons, and church members to offer support* [emphasis added] as their pastors lead them to make disciples in consistent obedience to the Great Commission, both locally and globally.<sup>53</sup>

WM content, therefore, heavily influences the outcomes of this GC mission. Churches may be tempted to hire/utilize anyone who musical can carry a tune to “lead the singing,” but a fully

---

<sup>51</sup> Mike Cospers, *Rhythms of Grace: How the Church's Worship Tells the Story of the Gospel* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2013), 18-19.

<sup>52</sup> James M. Hamilton, Jr., *What is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 16-21.

<sup>53</sup> “On Evangelism and Soul-Winning,” Resolutions, SBC, June 1, 2016, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-evangelism-and-soul-winning/>.

biblical approach should be employed and taught throughout the churches of the SBC. This way, the intentional GC mission of the SBC, as motivated and prescribed by Christ through Scripture, continues to be carried out through the supportive WMs of the church.

## Chapter Two: Literature Review

### Literature Review Section One: Worship Ministry Literature

Due to the lack of research gauging SBC WMs for GC effectiveness alongside their potential to strengthen spiritual well-being through discipleship, this literature review details closely related materials instead. Some of this research is derived from literature with specific WM audiences in mind, while others are aimed at church leaders/pastors/ministers and Christians in general. Although not of the literature reviewed is SB-specific, materials here focus on elements that can and should emanate from SBC WMs and WLs to inspire GC actions.

#### Worship Ministry Characteristics Contributing to Great Commission Acts

The church's WM operates best as a unit rather than as independent individuals. Ephesians 4:16 (NIV) reiterates this point, reading, "From him the whole body *joined and held together* by every *supporting* ligament [emphasis added], grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." To remain biblical, collaboration and support are necessary in ministry. Emphasizing collaborative trends throughout Baptist history, Yarbrough and Kuykendall point out each believer's responsibility to obey the GC. They state, "[with]in the concept of the priesthood of believers is the duty of each Christian to serve as a priest in relation to others ... through teaching, preaching, evangelism, and missions ... there is no distinction made between clergy and laity."<sup>54</sup> While some might erroneously relegate the charge to evangelize and disciple only to ministers, the whole church works together to carry out this directive. Moreso, an entire worship team (WT) should lead the way together in these efforts, setting examples for the rest of the congregation to follow. This portion of the literature review reveals that a WM can effectively spearhead the GC together via evangelism,

---

<sup>54</sup> Yarbrough and Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists*, 40.

discipleship, corporate revelation-response approaches, transformative acts, and the utilization of gospel-centric service elements.

### Evangelism and Discipleship

The SBC resolved: “That we devote ourselves to obedience to the Great Commandments (Matthew 22:37–40) and the fulfillment of the Great Commission throughout our nation and to the ends of the earth (Matthew 28:16–20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:5; 15:20).”<sup>55</sup> The phrase “Great Commission” often invokes thoughts solely referring to evangelism among Christians. Christ followers, though, should recognize the cyclic two-fold nature of the GC’s call to witness *and* disciple others. As new believers grow in their faith and knowledge through the church’s intentional acts of discipleship, they should then progress toward also sharing the good news of Jesus. These two acts cannot be separated from one another.

When a WM team clearly communicates and models the GC both on and off the platform, the Savior is glorified and congregants will respond by carrying out gospel-motivated acts outside the church’s walls within their community. Multiple acts of evangelism and discipleship can be developed, allowing a WT to accomplish Jesus’ charge with excellence. Literature covering these behaviors is detailed below.

### **Corporate Revelation-Response Approach**

WTs that accept the biblical directive to witness and disciple will pursue GC actions that transform their team behaviors and their individual lifestyles. Because SB WMs base their purpose and vision upon God-initiated salvation, a GC-motivated WM similarly employs a corporate

---

<sup>55</sup> “On the Promotion Of A ‘Cooperative Culture’ In The Southern Baptist Convention For Mission Advance,” Resolutions, 2019 Annual Meeting, June 1, 2019, SBC, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-the-promotion-of-a-cooperative-culture-in-the-southern-baptist-convention-for-mission-advance/>.

revelation-response approach in worship, facilitating congregants' spiritual transformations. Cherry explains revelation and response, stating, "First, worship begins with a reflection on who *God* is rather than reflection on *us*,"<sup>56</sup> and that this revelation comes from Scripture. "Second ... God initiates worship. God invites us to worship. Worship is an invitation, not an invention. We see this in John 4:23–24: 'True worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for *the Father seeks* such as these to worship him' [emphasis added]. God the Father seeks us."<sup>57</sup> Cherry also shows that worship lasts for eternity, writing, "that which occurs in heaven contemporaneous with our worship at any given moment, and that which foreshadows the worship to come when Christ reigns. Worship is eternal."<sup>58</sup>

To communicate this corporate revelation-response practice, WTs mimic the corporate nature of the worship occurring in heaven (Rev. 5:11–12). This collaborative atmosphere requires a learned habit of teamwork from WTs. WM personnel must therefore approach God and one another in humility, recognizing their position before God and one another. God, Himself, is the beginning and end of all worship, which, according to Cherry, "is fundamentally the result of, and response to, great saving events performed by God. ... this story of the salvation of God in Christ ... a covenantal relationship. ... corporate in nature. ... trinitarian in its essence. ... a journey of transformation."<sup>59</sup>

---

<sup>56</sup> Cherry, *The Worship Architect*, 4.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 5, 7, 17.

## Transformative

People develop learned habits over time. Locales, dialects, beliefs, mannerisms, and speech patterns all affect habits and lifestyles within cultures. The more one studies a topic, the more proficiency one garners. Similarly, when Christians spend time in God’s Word and in worship, they are transformed, becoming more Christlike. Gary M. Mathena writes, “Worship is the biblical means by which we become more like Christ. Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, ‘And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect [contemplate] the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit’ (2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV).”<sup>60</sup> Mathena continues, “A man who is worshipping God in the context of His Word—reflecting and contemplating His glory—will be ‘transformed into the same image from glory to glory’ (2 Corinthians 3:18). . . . Genuine worship is transforming—it is life-changing. No one who has been in the presence of God ever goes away the same.”<sup>61</sup>

Church worship practices can affect a variety of spiritual transformations. Joyce Berger points out how God uses non-sermon elements conducted by the WT to change lives:

Worship finds itself in the interesting position of being not only a spiritual discipline, but also being one of the places that Christians are formed in the disciplines. I would argue that the formation that occurs in worship should not happen as much through “teaching sermons” as through the act of worship itself and through the practices we include in worship. . . . Everything we do in worship forms us. As pastors and worship leaders, we can choose to let formation happen unintentionally, possibly leading to malformation, or we can do it intentionally, in a way that helps our congregants become spiritually resilient.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>60</sup> Gary M. Mathena, *One Thing Needful: An Invitation to the Study of Worship* (Bloomington, Indiana: CrossBooks, 2013), 89.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 90, 91.

<sup>62</sup> Joyce Berger, “How Worship Forms Our Faith Practices,” *Spiritual Resiliency, Reformed Worship*, June 2021, <https://www.reformedworship.org/article/june-2021/spiritual-resiliency>.

Furthermore, a church's congregational worship routine functions as a habit-forming process. Mike Cospers broadens this point, writing,

The ancient church summed this up in the Latin phrase *lex orandi lex credendi*, which essentially means “so we pray, so we believe.” The phrase acknowledges this habit-formed reality. The identity of the church is formed and transformed as it gathers around the Word and responds in the songs, prayers, and fellowship of the saints. So let's all acknowledge this fact: for better or worse, our worship, regardless of our tradition or musical style or culture, is shaping the hearts and minds of our congregations.<sup>63</sup>

Of note, Cospers illustrates the transformation that worship practices can induce to not only the lives of the WT and the congregation but also the church's outlying community. “For good or bad, our worship practices are forming us and our communities, giving shape to what we believe.”<sup>64</sup>

The act of repentance dispels pride and selfish tendencies that might prevent WMs from forming biblical communities within the congregation and outside the church. Elements of repentance, then, exist as undisputable moments to be included in all WMs' habits through independent devotion times, group accountability, and discipleship. Repentance, alongside lament, should likewise be publicly present in worship service materials. These materials can take the form of public worship through Scripture readings, confessions, and song lyrics, for example.

In 2018, Malcolm Gordon analyzed CCLI's Top 100 songs' lyrics to determine whether older hymnody contained more lament than its modern counterpart, CWM.<sup>65</sup> His conclusion determined a general lack of suitable material for people grappling with “a liturgical act of protest

---

<sup>63</sup> Cospers, *Rhythms of Grace*, 94.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*.

<sup>65</sup> Malcolm Gordon, “Removing the Rose-Tinted Glasses: Did Historical Hymns Engage in Lament More than Contemporary Worship Songs?” *Stimulus: The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought & Practice* 35, no. 1 (July 2018): 27-33, <https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/informit.767987933919031>.



or complaint to God. ...with questions of justice”<sup>66</sup> apart from a quick turnaround to praise. Gordon writes:

Historical hymns (with prestigious theological backing), often indulged in glib sentimentalism, whilst contemporary worship music only tends to acknowledge suffering when it has already been overcome. ...rather than contemporary...rejecting a part of its inheritance from historical hymns, this poverty has in fact been bequeathed to it *by those hymns*. ...it is neither theological nor liturgical.<sup>67</sup>

WM members should diligently seek only those transformative materials that apply biblical standards of repentance and lament in their public and private worship times. By so doing, they can likewise model this standard to the church.

When WM personnel engage in these transformative measures, the results impact congregants’ spiritual lives. The effect of personal transformation spreads to others. Rory Noland writes:

Serving others is the ultimate example of worship as a verb. ... We speak of being “ministered to” by the worship or “fed” by the teaching. We rarely think of church as a service of worship where we minister to God and others. As a result, this purely consumerist approach to church isolates us from, and stifles our witness to, the culture at large. The church that doesn’t function beyond its own four walls does not possess the true spirit of worship. Therefore, I challenge you to put hands and feet to your worship – feet that take you outside your comfort zone with hands ready to serve others.<sup>68</sup>

Noland’s example of a WM that serves God and others, reaching past the walls of the church represents an approach to ministry that occurs after the application of personal spiritual disciplines that transform the worshiper into Christlikeness. It is then that the WT members can say, like the Apostle Paul, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” (1 Cor. 1:11).

---

<sup>66</sup> Gordon, “Removing the Rose-Tinted Glasses: Did Historical Hymns Engage in Lament More than Contemporary Worship Songs?” 31.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Rory Noland, *The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Others in Worship* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2007), 76.

## Evangelism

When Christ met with His disciples for the first time since His resurrection, He gave them unmistakable direction, declaring, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20).

The GC presents as one of Christianity’s most basic foundational precepts. Any church leader not pursuing this calling shirks Christ’s clear directive. Churches should regularly evaluate their methods to devise the most effective means of reaching their local communities for Christ, resisting the temptation to hide Him within the walls of the church building and condemn their neighbors to hell for want of simple obedience. Church ministries that do not carry the good news into their community actively disobey God. Therefore, intentionality in evangelism and discipleship, personally modeled and led by the pastor, can be effectively mirrored and reinforced by the WL and WM via service elements (music choices, readings, prayers, etc.) and the combined examples of their daily lifestyles.

Other varied elements of congregational worship also significantly sway the tone of the church’s lifestyle. A healthy WT embraces its charge to evangelize and disciple others as part of its standard worship lifestyle. For example, the lyrical content of songs sung during worship is paramount in forming a congregation’s evangelistic motivations and foci. Michelle K. Baker-Wright stresses the weight of word selection on today’s CWM composers, highlighting differences between emotive Christian music and theologically sound songs with evangelistic themes.<sup>69</sup> On

---

<sup>69</sup> Michelle K. Baker-Wright, “Intimacy and Orthodoxy: Evaluating Existing Paradigms of Contemporary Worship Music,” *Missiology: An International Review* 35, no. 2, (April 2007): 169-178, <https://doi.org/10.1177/009182960703500207>.

Western Christianity's inward focus inwardly during worship rather than outward/upward, she writes:

We stand in the narrative of a larger Christian tradition in which God has been active, and worship is not just about "Jesus and me."... missional approaches to worship have the potential to create a worship that is simultaneously God-centered and communal. These are elements that ... are often set against each other. Worship music that is solely focused on the needs of the self ... gives expression to real personal pain often forbidden in the church. However, it also authentically reflects and conforms to the dysfunctions in Western culture. A missiological approach is able to combine authenticity with a theological perspective that challenges individualism and self-centeredness. It is authentic in that it is organic to the congregation, but such music will also draw congregations out of themselves, towards each other and God, and towards a world in need of the good news of the gospel.<sup>70</sup>

Fueled by prayer alongside consistently GC-themed content lyrics and worship service content, a WT can actively participate in evangelism. In *Going Full Circle*, Powers writes, "Organize and empower your worship ministry to go into your community on a regular basis to build witnessing relationships. Our goal is this: Every member a missionary!"<sup>71</sup>

## Discipleship

Following salvation, believers must be discipled. Accentuating the importance of spiritual growth in a healthy congregation, Francis, Foster, Lankshear, and Jones studied discipleship approaches that assisted congregants in maturing their faith.<sup>72</sup> Participants selected factors like "listening to sermons," "trying to put my faith into practice in daily life," "music in church worship," and "a familiar pattern of worship."<sup>73</sup> Their findings suggest that a well-rounded approach

---

<sup>70</sup> Baker-Wright, "Intimacy and Orthodoxy: Evaluating Existing Paradigms of Contemporary Worship Music," 176-177.

<sup>71</sup> Mark C. Powers, *Going Full Circle: Worship That Moves Us to Discipleship and Missions* (Eugene, Oregon: Resource Publications: 2013), 72.

<sup>72</sup> Leslie J. Francis, Simon Foster, David W Lankshear, and Ian Jones, "What Helps Christians Grow? An Exploratory Study Distinguishing Among Four Distinctive Pathways," *Pastoral Psychology*, 68 (2019): 379-392, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-019-00866-5>.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 386.

to discipleship involving the inextricably correlated areas of group activity, Christian experience, church worship, and public engagement is greatly needed in an effective discipleship process.<sup>74</sup>

It is proven WT habits and actions influence church discipleship processes, either benefiting or detracting from a body's goal to build each other up in the faith. At the same time, WTs also need their own discipleship. The responsibility of discipleship does not fall solely on the head WL from a church staff; WTs disciple and are disciplined by each other as a group. Often, WTs consist of several WLs who work together. Addressing this grave discipleship need, Bridgette LaShawn Yancey writes:

Discipleship is the next step following baptism for a Christian to develop Christ-like mindfulness. By having disciplined worship leaders, the outcome of the worship service will more likely be Holy Spirit-filled and led, and others will be encouraged to become disciples of Jesus Christ. As a result of a disciplined worship leader, many issues regarding worship in the church can be resolved prayerfully and in God's will.<sup>75</sup>

When a WT desires to prioritize habitual group discipleship, Scripture presents as the best source for developing practice methods. In *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, Harrington and Patrick write:

Again, let's look at Paul's instructions to Timothy in 2 Timothy 2:2: "The things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." Timothy was to take the principles Paul had taught him and entrust them to reliable people. ... Discipleship in the Bible is life on life, heart with heart, eyeball to eyeball. Paul was as concerned about how he lived in front of Timothy, how he modeled the faith and how he showed Timothy how to lead, as he was concerned with doctrine. Again, it was life and doctrine working in tandem- both are equally important. Disciple makers who multiply disciples hold equally to both parts of this tension.<sup>76</sup>

---

<sup>74</sup> Francis, Foster, Lankshear, and Jones, "What Helps Christians Grow? An Exploratory Study Distinguishing Among Four Distinctive Pathways," 385-387.

<sup>75</sup> Bridgette LaShawn Yancey, "Discipleship as Understood And Practiced By Worship Leaders, Pastors, And Congregations Of Selected Southern Baptist Churches" (D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University, April 16, 2020), 5, *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects* 2484, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2484/>.

<sup>76</sup> Bobby Harrington and Josh Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook: 7 Elements of a Discipleship Lifestyle* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017), 160.

By discipling one another, each WT member can multiply their efforts as they turn around and share with others outside the group. This discipleship plan rounds out the WT's two-fold GC action plan. Justin Aaron McKinney summarizes evangelism and discipleship alongside the role that worship plays in cultivating the two GC actions with wisdom, stating:

Discipleship is the process of growing into a deeper relationship with God ... in one-on-one ... one-on-few ... in larger group settings including corporate worship services. Discipleship is the heart of the Great Commission. Evangelism is the intentional sharing of the gospel with non-believers through various means. It is the first part of the Great Commission as evangelism occurs before discipleship. ... Worship is foundational to both discipleship and evangelism and should not occur outside of a growing relationship with, and daily worship of, Jesus Christ. ... Regardless of their personal motivation for serving, unless workers are worshipers then they are not serving from an overflow of God working in their lives. ... *Therefore, any focus of the church which does not include a growing relationship with Jesus as primary, found through worship, is misguided* [emphasis added].<sup>77</sup>

Research reveals that the WM of a church must receive intentional guidance in personal spiritual disciplines that develop mature relationships with Christ, followed by training in evangelism and discipleship.

### Gospel-Centric Service Elements

Scripture communicates the gospel narrative from beginning to end. Just as God's Word demonstrates variety in how the Father carried out His plan for redemption, a breadth of biblical methods used by WMs uphold GC actions. God's Word is sufficient to construct a congregation's belief system and inspire them to pursue a missional response. Bob Kauflin writes, "Sadly, doctrine and theology rank fairly low on the popularity scale these days. But biblical worship is impossible

---

<sup>77</sup> Justin Aaron McKinney, "Worship, Discipleship, and Evangelism: How the Purpose of the Church Affects Congregational Singing" (D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University School of Music, October 2021), 14, 9, 5, 7, *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects*, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/3217>.

without them.”<sup>78</sup> By embracing Sola Scriptura and the Self-Authenticating Model,<sup>79</sup> which declare Scriptural sufficiency, WMs can confidently base every service element on the gospel and facilitate well-rounded and sound congregational worship. By so doing, the church engages with biblical truths that focus on redemption through Christ at all moments of worship through responsive scripture readings, confessions, prayers, songs, and all other creative expressions outside of the sermon.

### Worship Leader Characteristics Contributing to Great Commission

#### Pastor

Scripture presents a myriad of requirements for pastoral leadership, including that the minister is known as gentle and personable, a skilled teacher, above reproach, faithful in marriage, self-controlled, not angry or quickly argumentative, able to manage family matters, well respected, sober, honest, hospitable, pure, holy, disciplined, one who loves to study God’s Word, and who can communicate it with proficiency (1 Tim. 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–9). Pastors ought also to be humble (Luke 22:25–27) and be compelling examples for those who follow them (1 Peter 5:3). Individuals who feel called to the worship ministry should likewise exemplify these pastoral characteristics.

More than musicians who happen to be Christians, WLs identify as Christians called by God to operate as pastoral musicians leading others in their walks with Christ. Ephesians 4:11, 13, 15–16 further clarify this point. Several vital characteristics ring consistently true for pastors and WLs that

---

<sup>78</sup> Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2008), 35.

<sup>79</sup> Matthew Barrett, “Sola Scriptura in the Strange Land of Evangelicalism: The Peculiar but Necessary Responsibility of Defending Sola Scriptura Against Our Own Kind,” *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 19, no. 4, (2015): 32-33.

should be heavily considered when evaluating a WL's purpose, including their roles as evangelists, disciple-makers, community builders, influential leaders, and team players.

### Evangelist

Because a primary role of ministers is to share God's Word, a WL must also faithfully evangelize. In addition to sharing Christ in normal interactions, a WL must intentionally select weekly worship service materials that rightly portray God's plan for redemption. This concern calls into consideration the lyrical content of the songs used for congregational worship. In *Southern Baptist Identity*, Nathan A. Finn writes:

It is possible to attend any number of Southern Baptist churches on a Sunday morning and not hear the gospel ... Sometimes the gospel is cliché-ed or dumbed-down, transformed into little more than lingo. ... Most tragic of all, sometimes the gospel is actually redefined, resulting in an articulation of something that is "sub-gospel"—in some cases "non-gospel." This scenario occurs when anyone describes the good news as something different from the biblical gospel. It also takes place when only one aspect of the gospel is equated with the entirety of the good news. So the gospel becomes "God loves you," or "God wants to save you," or "You should just trust God," or "God wants you to be the best person that you can be," or "God is in the business of second chances," or "God loves you just the way you are," or "Jesus wants to be your best friend." ... This gospel is preserved for us in the pages of Scripture, appearing as the central element that draws together and ultimately makes sense of all the individual stories within the Bible's grand narrative.<sup>80</sup>

However, many songs chosen by WLs indicate a deficit in pastoral wisdom to select texts that will bolster the congregation's gospel understanding and spiritual growth. Regarding this tendency, Baker-Wright highlights the inclination of Western culture's Christians to embrace a need-based form of worship wherein songs shape a self-centered worldview among some groups. She writes:

---

<sup>80</sup> Finn, "Priorities for A Post-Resurgence Convention," in Dockery, 265-267.

Because a common solution to loneliness in North American culture is consumerism, worship can readily be treated like another product to satisfy this need, and the focus of worship remains the emotional longing rather than God's character. . . . music that stops here will not encourage a more authentic relationship with God because mature relationship requires seeing another as more than simply an extension of one's own needs.<sup>81</sup>

It is crucial that any educational material these songs consist of stems directly from Scripture. Allan G. Harkness studied how congregational times of worship can be used to intentionally introduce implicit educational opportunities through the lyrical content of songs.<sup>82</sup> Ryan J. Martin's research confirms that of Harkness, stating that Christ's directives, given to the apostles and prophets as communicated through the New Testament, are sufficient for the content of worship. Writing specifically of songs used for worship, Martin describes how Scripture is "both authoritative and inspired. This body of teaching is sufficient for the faith and practice of Christians today. If persons claim to follow Christ...the practice and worship of their churches must also conform to the New Testament."<sup>83</sup> Song lyrics chosen by the WL must accurately reflect the gospel narrative described throughout God's Word so that all in attendance will hear the good news of Christ.

### Disciple-Maker

Bridgette LaShawn Yancy studied methods for WLs to engage in discipleship processes. In Yancey's research, the overarching theme of discipleship as obedience to Christ's GC is communicated as the goalpost for all WLs. Yancey's study revealed: "Several pastors responded on

---

<sup>81</sup> Baker-Wright, "Intimacy and Orthodoxy," 170, 171.

<sup>82</sup> Allan G. Harkness, "Intergenerational Corporate Worship As A Significant Educational Activity," *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 12-14, 18.

<sup>83</sup> Ryan J. Martin, "Love for Christ and Scripture-Regulated Worship," *Artistic Theologian, School of Church Music and Worship at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 8 (2020): 39, <https://artistictheologian.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-Vol-8-Artistic-Theologian.pdf>.



how they want their worship leaders to mentor others on their team through discipleship and through training.”<sup>84</sup>

For the WL, disciple-making results from knowing God through His Word (theology), prayer, and transferring what has been learned to others. This process transpires through everyday living and through the strategic selections employed for the church’s worship materials. In a 2016 study conducted by Randall L. Sheeks, though, a “Biblical Theology of Worship” only ranked eleventh out of twenty “Skills/Training Valued Most by Professors and Pastors/Music Min. (Rank Ordered)”.<sup>85</sup> This surprising statistic reveals a lack of theological study and application among recent church leaders. But, the church’s worship service *must* cohere with biblical theology from the opening prelude to the closing benediction.

Theological knowledge and application are necessary skills for successful disciple-makers. To impart biblical wisdom to others, one must know God’s Word. Navarro builds the section of his book entitled “Becoming a Theologian,”<sup>86</sup> upon the concept that “Our theology must be accurate if our worship is to be accurate.”<sup>87</sup> He continues:

---

<sup>84</sup> Yancey, “Discipleship as Understood and Practiced by Worship Leaders, Pastors, and Congregations of Selected Southern Baptist Churches,” 89.

<sup>85</sup> Randall L. Sheeks, “Skills Necessary for Evangelical Church Ministry: A Comparative Study of Perceptions by Selected University Programs and Church Leaders” (D.M.A. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, November 22, 2016), 98, *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global* 1883897399, <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/skills-necessary-evangelical-church-music/docview/1883897399/se-2>.

<sup>86</sup> Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader*, 17-46.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

There is an illiteracy today unchallenged in our Christian churches. We do not encourage our people to know the Scriptures. What are we as worship leaders doing about our biblical literacy? Do we know what the Word teaches about God? Have we studied to show ourselves approved? ... If we want to worship God we have to know God. Knowledge comes from being in relationship with God through his Word. ... There is a desperate need for the complete worship leader. The one who would seek to lead God's people into worship must first know the Lord for himself or herself. ... We must worship the God who has revealed himself as recorded in creation and through the Scriptures.<sup>88</sup>

To successfully model a desired outcome to others, one must thoroughly understand the topic. For example, Harrington and Patrick write, "We can only 'make disciples' if we know *what* a disciple is and *how* to make one. ... guided by intentionality and planning. ... If I lack strategy or I'm not sure what it means to make a disciple or what a disciple looks like— well, I probably won't make disciples."<sup>89</sup>

In *From God to Me to Us*, Samantha M. Inman applies a theological analysis to Chris Tomlin's worship music.<sup>90</sup> Theological wisdom assists a WL in discerning worship selections. Inman writes, "Sacred music both shapes and reflects beliefs. ... both lyrics and musical style contribute to this process. ... Unpacking this theology requires consideration of the text, music, and their interaction."<sup>91</sup> She concludes, stating, "The approach applied here to Tomlin's output might profitably be applied to that of other artists or organizations ... to ground claims about attributes and trends ... in concrete statistics. ... which can serve as creative and effective vehicles in

---

<sup>88</sup> Navarro, *The Complete Worship Leader*, 27-28, 29.

<sup>89</sup> Harrington and Patrick, *The Disciple Maker's Handbook*, 100, 101.

<sup>90</sup> Samantha M. Inman, "From God to Me to Us: Chris Tomlin and the Dimensions of Worship," *Artistic Theologian, School of Church Music and Worship at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 9 (2021):109-159, <https://artistictheologian.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021-Vol-9-Artistic-Theologian-Inman.pdf>.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

corporate worship.”<sup>92</sup> A WL can faithfully and successfully disciple others through diligent study and application of biblical theology.

Jerry Leonard Newman points out the value of theological knowledge and application in the practice of mentoring as a means of spiritual leadership (discipleship) stating,

One key element in [pastoral leadership development] is the understanding of the importance and biblical mandate for relational mentoring in ministry. . . . In mentoring, ministering to God’s people, and service as under-shepherd of His flock, the love of God is conveyed, and people are met with the reality of a loving God who seeks after them. In worship, pastoral ministry is often missing in many local churches. Worship pastors must realize the importance of daily ministry to reach others with the Gospel.<sup>93</sup>

### Community Builder

Christians are meant to live in community. When every member of a worshipping community, including the WL, faithfully pursues God through spiritual disciplines, the spiritual health of the church is bolstered. Dietrich Bonhoeffer addresses this point, emphasizing the vital role that spiritual disciplines serve in the life of the church family, writing, “Every act of self-discipline by a Christian is also a service to the community.”<sup>94</sup> WLs carry a significant responsibility within the WM to live as examples for their members to emulate. Bonhoeffer continues, “Every member serves the whole body, contributing either to its health or to its ruin, for we *are* members of one body not only when we want to be, but in our whole existence.”<sup>95</sup> WLs can either foster thriving spiritual communities or lackadaisical, floundering music teams that drift from Scripture’s

---

<sup>92</sup> Inman, “From God to Me to Us: Chris Tomlin and the Dimensions of Worship,” 151.

<sup>93</sup> Jerry Leonard Newman, “Worship Pastor’s Need For Pastoral Leadership Development” (D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University School of Music, April 2019), 85-86, *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects*, <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2016/>.

<sup>94</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: Readers Edition* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2015), 66.

<sup>95</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: Readers Edition*, 66.

intentions for worshipers. The key difference between the two communities lies in the WL's daily choices, a free choice that cannot be taken for granted or abused. According to Bonhoeffer, "The Christian cannot simply take for granted the privilege of living among other Christians."<sup>96</sup> He indicates the importance of listening to others, speaking and teaching God's Word, offering practical assistance and support to others, bearing with one another and carrying each other's burdens, demonstrating forgiveness, praying for one another, and maintaining humility as goalposts for those who serve God through building community.<sup>97</sup>

It can be seen that WLs must develop the ability to live harmoniously with all kinds of people. This view is supported throughout Scripture. Thus, WLs should consult cultural and generational data representative of their congregation when selecting worship materials. Aaron Earls writes, "For most pastors, the so-called 'worship wars' over the style of the music used in their church have subsided."<sup>98</sup> A trending musical style is far less important and distinctive than the context of *who* makes up the congregation.

Ed Stetzer states, "Our churches need to be biblically faithful, culturally relevant, counter cultural communities."<sup>99</sup> Terry L. Schultz warns, "One needs to diligently guard against considering one's home culture's standards for emotional expression in worship to be universally applicable."<sup>100</sup> Through intentional relationship building and careful attention to the congregation's makeup, a

---

<sup>96</sup> Bonhoeffer, *Life Together: Readers Edition*, 1.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 75-86.

<sup>98</sup> Aaron Earls, "Most Churches Aren't Engaged in a Worship War Over Music," *Lifeway Research*, August 28, 2019, <https://research.lifeway.com/2019/08/28/most-churches-arent-engaged-in-a-worship-war-over-music/>.

<sup>99</sup> Ed Stetzer, "Toward a Missional Convention," in *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, ed. David S. Dockery (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2009), 193.

<sup>100</sup> Schultz, "Whose Heart Music is in Your Mission's Hymnal? Ethnomusicology Principles for Cross-Cultural Ministry," 50.

worshiping community can reflect and glorify Christ with its uniqueness rather than adopting a one-size-fits-all idealized style.

Ingalls summarizes: “the ‘church’s voice’—a church congregation’s unique identity and position relative to other congregations and within networks—is actively constructed and contested through musical practice.”<sup>101</sup> Elsewhere, Ingalls adds:

We know that each local congregation has its own unique history, geographical and social location, demographic makeup, and mission. ... we need to cultivate a deep understanding of the local church’s unique ‘music culture’ in order to discern what engages ... our congregation members. ... Gaining deeper insight into the church contexts in which we work, serve, or study is crucial for shaping what actions we will take in realizing our mission.<sup>102</sup>

WLs can support the church by building thriving, Christ-honoring communities through strategic, culturally appropriate selections that encourage the congregation to raise its own distinctive worship to God.

### Influential Leader

Leadership skills are required of every WL. Understandably, leadership ranked third in Sheeks’ study of valuable traits for WLs.<sup>103</sup> More than mere managers of programs and music, WLs influence others toward deeper relationships with God. Henry and Richard Blackaby stress the influence that leaders need to be effective when they write, “Influence is fundamental to a leader’s role. It is not enough to know where people should go; leaders must have the capacity to move them

---

<sup>101</sup> Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation*, 139.

<sup>102</sup> Monique M. Ingalls, “Using Ethnographic Observation to Understand a Congregation’s Unique Music Culture” in “Ethnography and Worship: From Scholarship to Practice,” *The Hymn* 70, no. 4 (Autumn 2019): 40, <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/ethnography-worship-scholarship-practice/docview/2399872076/se-2>.

<sup>103</sup> Sheeks, “Skills Necessary for Evangelical Church Ministry: A Comparative Study of Perceptions by Selected University Programs and Church Leaders,” 98.

to that place.”<sup>104</sup> John C. Maxwell’s “Law of the Lid” is another apt indicator that influence affects leadership effectiveness and ability. He writes, “leadership ability is the lid that determines a person’s level of effectiveness.”<sup>105</sup>

Leaders should always strive toward growing and maintaining their influence among their people. Maxwell’s pointers abound as he provides tips toward this end, like “Pay attention when people start avoiding you,”<sup>106</sup> learn the difference between equipping and developing people,<sup>107</sup> and “Your character determines the trust.”<sup>108</sup> The concept of influence is further communicated when Maxwell asserts, “For leaders to be effective, they need to connect with people. Why? Because you first have to touch people’s hearts before you ask them for a hand. That is the Law of Connection. All great leaders and communicators recognize this truth and act on it almost instinctively. You can’t move people to action unless you first move them with emotion.”<sup>109</sup> Jesus understood and often modeled these kinds of connections.

Jesus led others by serving them. In *Jesus on Leadership*, Wilkes writes, “Live out what you teach. ... You will lead others as you model what you teach. If all you have to offer are words, few people will follow you. Your example will give them a picture of what you are talking about.”<sup>110</sup>

---

<sup>104</sup> Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda* (Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group, 2011), 147.

<sup>105</sup> John C. Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You* (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 2007), 1-10.

<sup>106</sup> John C. Maxwell, *The 360-Degree Leader: Developing Your Influence From Anywhere in the Organization* (New York: Harper Collins Leadership, 2011), 217.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 229.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 245.

<sup>109</sup> Maxwell, *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*, 115.

<sup>110</sup> Gene C. Wilkes, *Jesus On Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership* (Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998), 170, 171.

Later, he states, “Jesus said, ‘I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you’ (John 13:15). Those who lead in the kingdom of God must check where they sit and what they wear. If you are not kneeling at the feet of others, wearing a servant’s towel, you are in the wrong place.”<sup>111</sup>

An influential WL earns the opportunity to lead others by humbly serving them, following Christ’s example, and investing in personal relationships. People notice others’ behaviors. They notice when they are genuine and when they are fake. People will follow a leader whose words are backed up by a lifestyle that demonstrates character and integrity. Through these means, a leader can influence others toward action.

#### Team Player

WLs should cooperate as team players in at least two major aspects of their ministry by serving both their pastor and their fellow SB music ministries. Christians are meant to live harmoniously with one another, humbly speaking blessings and peace, mourning with those who grieve (Rom. 12:14–21). It is crucial that the leadership of a church models this kind of holy, Christlike unity in their relationships with one another. W.A. Criswell specifically addresses the working relationship between WLs, WTs, and pastors, charging pastors to intentionally engage with WMs. He asserts, “they will respond at their maximum, they will have a true feeling that they are helping in the preparation and response of the congregation instead of wondering if it is just a performance of religious music.”<sup>112</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> Wilkes, *Jesus On Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership*, 175.

<sup>112</sup> W.A. Criswell, *Criswell’s Guidebook for Pastors* (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1980), 190-191.

As a whole, SBs aspire to cooperate in reaching the world for Christ through the GC. They specify:

RESOLVED, That we work together to cultivate a culture that stewards all the talents and resources of the Southern Baptist Convention for the fulfillment of the Great Commission; and be it finally RESOLVED, That by God’s grace and work of the Spirit, the Southern Baptist Convention would experience the cultivation of a “cooperative culture” that inspires investment in our gospel work together, develops godly and wise leaders, and leads to effective witness to the gospel in our nation and all the nations.<sup>113</sup>

The SBC achieves much of its mission through local and state associations (LAs/SAs). SAs and LAs are reviewed in greater detail within section three of this research project, however, WLS can impact the cooperation of area churches and associations through their ability (or inability) to act as team players. While cooperation remains a central tenet of the SBC’s plan for carrying out the GC, data from LA/SA WM departments does not currently support this premise (table 1). This failure can potentially be linked to the enigmatic disappearance of the SBC’s music department. To alter this trend in the future, a team-playing SL attitude must be prioritized.

Because the SBC diminished its department that specifically supported church music ministries throughout previous decades, Blakeney’s study highlights strong points found in the current cooperative ministry of the Episcopal Church to empower their church musicians.<sup>114</sup> Blakeney draws from Marti Rideout’s article in *American Organist Magazine*, in which the Episcopal Church’s program is outlined as follows:

---

<sup>113</sup> SBC, “On The Promotion Of A ‘Cooperative Culture’ In The Southern Baptist Convention For Mission Advance”.

<sup>114</sup> Blakeney, “The Rise of the Part-Time Worship Leader in the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church,” 77.



The LPM program was designed for those who (1) had not yet had the opportunity to develop their musical skills through long-term education or continuing education, (2) might have studied music in a college environment but did not study how to plan and lead worship or how to select hymns and service music, (3) were members of other denominations yet served in Episcopal congregations and needed to know more specific information, (4) were young musicians with potential for church-music leadership, and (5) desired positive professional relationships with other musicians and clergy.<sup>115</sup>

Rideout continues, “While this is a program for the Episcopal Church and the Lutherans ... participants from other denominations ... have taken all or part of the courses and have successfully used the principles for their own churches. The Lutherans and Episcopalians are not the only denominations with a mandate to help musicians serving in small congregations.”<sup>116</sup>

Blakeney underscores the difference between the SBC’s current support for WMs and the Episcopal Church in this effort. He states:

Building such a program within the Southern Baptist Convention would be an easy means of providing many underserved worship leaders with the cost-effective and timely tools they need to be better prepared for their ministry. However ... that idea is simply not on the radar of the Southern Baptist Convention, other denominations have already put mentoring strategies into place. In order to see a lasting monumental change, the denomination must make mentoring and training the part-time worship leader a priority.<sup>117</sup>

SBC WLs can be team players by cooperating with their church and associational groups on similar projects that build up the SB community in its ability to better its efforts to complete its biblical GC mission.

---

<sup>115</sup> Marti Rideout, “Value Added: The Leadership Program for Musicians,” *American Organist Magazine* (August 1, 2015): 42, <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1700971529/fulltextPDF/A1A701F9B9C54BE7PQ/1?accountid=12085>.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>117</sup> Blakeney, “The Rise of the Part-Time Worship Leader in the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church,” 77.

## Literature Review Section Two: Southern Baptist Church Music History

### The Birth of the SBC Church Music Ministry (1915–1941)

While this project focuses on the current state of WMs in the SBC, it still remains crucial to examine the history of the SBC’s music department during this portion of the literature review. To foresee the future, the past must be evaluated. In the early twentieth century, SB educational facilities had only just begun offering church music opportunities, with “Southwestern Seminary’s pioneering lead (1915) and ... New Orleans Seminary (1919).”<sup>118</sup> Leading up to the initial organization of a music department within the denomination, Baptist music leaders in the 1920s–1930s “frequently manifested in the context of evangelistic (‘protracted’) meetings,” according to Hugh T. McElrath. He continues, “In keeping with the late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century trend in evangelism carried on by men like P. P. Bliss, Homer Rodeheaver, and many others, several among Southern Baptists took positions of leadership in musical evangelism.”<sup>119</sup>

As the need for church music ministry leaders became more apparent, so did the SBC’s helpful response in providing the necessary actions toward facilitating additional measures of assistance. The SBC appointed its first musician to the Sunday School Board (SS Board), B. B. McKinney. Music writes:

---

<sup>118</sup> W. Plunkett Martin, "Music Education, Baptist," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, vol. 2 (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press: 1958), 93, quoted in Hugh T. McElrath, “The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (July 1986): 15, <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=30&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>.

<sup>119</sup> Hugh T. McElrath, “The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (July 1986): 11, <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=30&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>.

In 1935 ... the first time a Board employee's assignment was to work strictly with music... Three landmark events occurred during McKinney's tenure:

1. publication of *The Broadman Hymnal* in 1940
2. formation of the Church Music Department in 1941
3. establishment of the quarterly magazine, *The Church Musician*, in 1950<sup>120</sup>

#### Rapid Growth in the Mid to Late Twentieth Century (1941–Mid-1990s)

The formation of the Church Music Department (CMD) occurred just in time for the post-war boom that would affect church music departments within several years. Wesley L. Forbis writes, “the Department of Church Music of the Baptist Sunday School Board was established in 1941. The investiture was a recognition by various components of the Convention of the need for a structured approach to maximize the use and effectiveness of music in the local church.”<sup>121</sup> The CMD soon began disseminating numerous print resources for WM leaders to enhance their knowledge and skills. As the 1940s continued, publications for church musicians began to appear. Speaking as a former state music department head, Paul McCommon stated in 1986:<sup>122</sup>

The Sunday School and Training Union Departments ... were already deeply involved through a study course plan in membership training. In 1942 the Sunday School Board published *Let Us Sing* by B. B. McKinney and Allen W. Graves, and ... Broadman published *Music in the Scriptures*. ... by I. E. Reynolds ... the scriptural foundation for the emphasis on music, a fundamental approach always important to Baptists. After World War II, more books were added, state music programs were organized, the first church music magazine was published (*The Church Musician*), and Southern Baptists were on the threshold of developing one of the most far-reaching music programs of leadership and membership training in all of Christian history.<sup>123</sup>

---

<sup>120</sup> Music, “Turning Points in Baptist Church Music,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, 71.

<sup>121</sup> Wesley L. Forbis, “The Sunday School Board and Baptist Church Music,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 19, no. 1 (1984): 19.

<sup>122</sup> Paul McCommon, “Trends in Southern Baptist Church Music Since 1915,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (Jul 1986): 50-56, <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=32&sid=9538132b-1593437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

The denomination continued to adapt its WM methods during the perils of WWII, accepting more female than male music ministers.<sup>124</sup> Describing the effect that growth brought to WMs with the throngs of people who flocked to churches at the end of the WWII era, Music writes:

After the war, however, churches began devoting significant attention and resources to their music programs. At the same time, hundreds of young people began to feel called by God to devote their lives to full-time Christian ministry through music. The result was the creation of a new church staff position, minister of music, whose roles included the following:

- lead congregational singing
- direct (or develop) adult and youth choirs
- supervise a children's choir program
- assist the Sunday school and other organizations with their musical needs
- serve as the coordinator or resource person for all musical activities

... the music programs of Baptist churches embarked upon a period of growth and increasing sophistication that reflected a new spirit of professionalism.<sup>125</sup>

At this time, organization and professionalism in music ministry increased, as did training opportunities for WM leaders. SB trainings abounded via camps at the Baptist retreats (Ridgecrest in NC and Glorieta in NM) while local and state Baptist associations/conventions facilitated their own seminars.<sup>126</sup> Music shares, “the large number of young people committing themselves to music ministry led to significantly higher enrollments in college and seminary music schools.”<sup>127</sup> This growth reached across the denomination’s music ministries, strengthening the numbers of active participants and areas for involvement. McElrath writes, “Southern Seminary (1944) and Golden Gate Seminary (1948) also began degree programs for church musicians.”<sup>128</sup>

---

<sup>124</sup> McCommon, “Trends in Southern Baptist Church Music Since 1915,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, 13.

<sup>125</sup> Music, “Turning Points in Baptist Church Music,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, 72-73.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> Martin, “Music Education, Baptist,” quoted in McElrath, “The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, 15.

Emily Andrews similarly features critical moments in SBC CMD history, outlining further developments that followed McKinney's tenure. Opportunities for laity to benefit from professional music ministry grew to include a comprehensive music education program for children spanning a broad reach. Quoting an interview from McElrath of McKinney's successor, Andrews writes, "W. Hines Sims, who succeeded McKinney at the Church Music Department, outlined five distinct areas of responsibility for the SBC music minister."<sup>129</sup> These areas are:

1. Focus on congregational music, especially hymn singing.
2. Create and maintain choirs of all ages.
3. Teach instruments to enable various musical ensembles.
4. Offer music classes in subjects like theory, conducting, singing, and accompanying.
5. Promote music in various ministries of the local church and in coordination with Convention-wide bodies.<sup>130</sup>

Forbis explains the CMD as follows:

A program within the Church and Staff Support Division of the Baptist Sunday School Board. As such, its purpose is to develop services and materials acceptable for use by Southern Baptist churches, associations, and state conventions in establishing, conducting, enlarging, and improving experiences of congregational services, church music and performance groups, music activity groups, and study groups.<sup>131</sup>

Due to the overarching increased desire for a professionally trained music ministry force in SB churches, states answered the request at the 1944 Convention meeting that they support WMs as equally as they supported other ministries of the church.<sup>132</sup> As the years progressed, the SB Church Music Conference was organized in 1957 "in response to the needs of those working in church

---

<sup>129</sup> Andrews, "Who's Minding the Music?: The Impact of Charismatic Renewal on Southern Baptist Training of Worship Leaders," *Liturgy*, 38.

<sup>130</sup> Hugh T. McElrath, "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life," *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (July 1986): 11, <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=30&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>, quoted in Andrews, "Who's Minding the Music?: The Impact of Charismatic Renewal on Southern Baptist Training of Worship Leaders," *Liturgy*, 38.

<sup>131</sup> Forbis, "The Sunday School Board and Baptist Church Music," *Baptist History and Heritage*, 21.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

music for exchange of ideas, inspiration, and mutual support. One of the first concerns to surface in the ... conference was ordination ... because it has related vitally to the sense of divine calling ... the musician's role, the status of the office ... and the professional identity of the minister of music."<sup>133</sup> According to McElrath's 1986 article, numerous titles have been used for SB worship leaders through the years. Complications have arisen concerning religious duties/actions that legally stem from ordination. McElrath continues, "However, in spite of these conflicting issues, there is a fairly consistent trend, growing stronger year by year, in the direction of the ordination of ministers, including women, who are called to fulfill their ministry primarily through music."<sup>134</sup>

In the latter half of the twentieth century, church WM growth persisted and was met by growth in the opportunities for training and support hailing from SBC entities. McElrath reports that "Southeastern Seminary (1978) and Midwestern Seminary (1983) ... inaugurated special courses to equip musicians for ministry."<sup>135</sup> By this point in time, all six SBC seminaries engaged in training the SBC's future of full-time vocational music ministers.

Denominational contributions stemming from the SB CMD allowed church WMs to flourish throughout the 1980s. In that decade alone, numerous articles in the publication *Baptist History and Heritage* portray various aspects of SB worship ministry and history. This evidence reflects a generally heightened interest in local church WMs and in the CMD of the SBC. During this time frame, *Baptist History and Heritage* functioned underneath the organizational umbrella of the

---

<sup>133</sup> McElrath, "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life," *Baptist History and Heritage*, 16.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>135</sup> James H. Blackmore, "Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary," *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*, vol. 4 (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1982), 2460, and *Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Catalog* (1983-84), 59, 80, 81, quoted in in McElrath, "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life," *Baptist History and Heritage*, 15.

Historical Commission of the SBC as an auxiliary, though it was eventually eliminated in 1995.<sup>136</sup> In these WM-themed *Baptist History and Heritage* articles, WLs who might not have been able to attend seminary courses benefitted from its edifying articles, like William L. Hendricks's "Church Music As A Shaper of Baptist Theology," requested of him by the Historical Commission.<sup>137</sup>

Hendricks's article serves as more than a mere example of the kind of materials that the Historical Commission distributed relating to SB church music and ministry. Hendricks's article serves as an encouragement, challenge, and edifier to all SB WM leaders. In it, he expresses the approach SB WM leaders should take while following their callings. He asserts,

Theology grows out of worship. Worship precedes theology. But in turn, theology returns to critique the worshipping community and to inform it. In Baptist heritage both worship and theology claim and seek to be biblically based. ... Whereas Bible, theology, and belief have theoretically provided the bases for hymn texts and the consonant tune moods. ...our feeling for what is appropriate theologically. ...strictly speaking, has to be balanced or corrected by biblical and theological insights. ... It is not really appropriate nor precisely possible to speak of church music as a shaper of Baptist theology so long as music and the planning and proclamation of worship are held separately. The isolation and compartmentalization of ministries in planning worship prevent the desirable shaping and interactive process that should take place at a planned and systematic level.<sup>138</sup>

Hendricks continues with thought-provoking questions for WM leaders encompassing multiple necessary characteristics for SB WLs. He asks, "Are we using the best texts and tunes? If not, why not? ... Is our music integrated with our worship, its proclamation, and the church year? ... Is there a balance of musical styles? ... of doctrine rather than a limited use of some few theological themes?"<sup>139</sup> He addresses the need for pastors to communicate with one another when planning

---

<sup>136</sup> "History of the BHHS," About, Baptist History and Heritage Society, accessed March 21, 2023, <https://thebhhs.org/about/history-of-the-bhhs/>.

<sup>137</sup> William L. Hendricks, "Church Music As a Shaper of Baptist Theology," *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (1986): 3.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.*, 3-4.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

biblical worship, asking readers, “Is there a shared responsibility in the general failure of ministers of proclamation and ministers of music in putting together, planning, and working together to integrate theology and music in worship services?”<sup>140</sup> With this great wealth of resources throughout the 1980s and into the mid-1990s, SBC WMs thrived.

#### The Onset of Decline (Mid-1990s–Present-Day)

It remains difficult to locate evidence in literature regarding what happened to the CMD. Therefore, no definitive date can be pinpointed to its disappearance. However, several articles from *Baptist Press* reveal clues as to how the SBC’s WM support structure tumbled from being a thriving beacon of ministerial empowerment to today’s iteration as a disconnected free-for-all. At some point, every branch of the SB SS Board, CMD included, became known as Lifeway Christian Resources (Lifeway).<sup>141</sup> The CMD’s new title became “Lifeway Worship.”<sup>142</sup> As CWM gained large followings during the mid-1990s, the rise of conflicts dubbed the “worship wars” ensued, impacting denominations throughout Christendom. Addressing this shared experience by churches when musical style preferences sparked extensive debates among congregations, Lee Hinson spoke at the SBC’s 1999 Church Music Leadership Conference during a seminar called “Transitioning in Worship Styles.”<sup>143</sup> Hinson said, “The church is in transition . . . If you aren’t able to change, you’re dead. The business world knows this, but the church is often the ‘caboose’ when it comes to change.

---

<sup>140</sup> Hendricks, “Church Music As a Shaper of Baptist Theology,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, 3.

<sup>141</sup> “History of Lifeway Christian Resources,” About, History, Lifeway, accessed March 21, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/about/history>.

<sup>142</sup> “Lifeway Worship,” Worship, Lifeway, accessed March 21, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/worship?vid=worship>.

<sup>143</sup> Chip Alford, “Transition in Worship Styles Requires Careful Planning, Loving Your People,” *Baptist Press*, July 19, 1999, <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/transition-in-worship-styles-requires-careful-planning-loving-your-people/>.



We're on the tail end of it." Emphasizing the importance of not making hasty style changes without good reason, Hinson continued, "You just need to know why you are doing what you're doing ... The question should be, 'How can we bring people into the kingdom.'"<sup>144</sup>

Hinson's seminar demonstrated that attention could be directed toward a potentially contentious, denomination-wide issue. Yet, at another denominationally led music conference the very same summer (the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference held in Nashville, TN), main elements that the CMD would typically have highlighted during the 1980s-1990s like choirs, orchestras, and hymnals, were highlighted. There is no evidence that the divisive topic that would soon alter the trajectory of most SBC worship services ever broached the conference's conversation.<sup>145</sup> This failure to address such a vital issue for SB churches and WM leaders at a denominationally-backed meeting reveals how the decline began.

In 2008, Lifeway disclosed its "two-year journey to create and launch the next-generation hymnal," which was the "primary focus of LifeWay Christian Resource's presentation June 10 during the 2008 Southern Baptist Convention annual meeting."<sup>146</sup> Chris Turner's *Baptist Press* article explains: "Titled 'The Worship Project,' it is an online digital music project which allows worship leaders to customize worship and special music through downloadable files. ... incorporates a variety of styles ... and includes music found in the soon-to-be-released Baptist Hymnal. ... the first printing ... since 1991."<sup>147</sup> This massive project received much promotion through the SBC.

---

<sup>144</sup> Alford, "Transition in Worship Styles Requires Careful Planning, Loving Your People," *Baptist Press*.

<sup>145</sup> Art Toalston, "Church Music Conference Slated June 6-8 in Nashville," *Baptist Press*, April 16, 1999, <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/church-music-conference-slated-june-6-8-in-nashville/>.

<sup>146</sup> Chris Turner, "LifeWay Highlights Worship Project," *Baptist Press*, June 11, 2008, <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/lifeway-highlights-worship-project/>.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

By 2022, though, the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic closed down any further work that Lifeway may have foreseen for church WM leaders/departments. That year, Laura Erlanson wrote, “Lifeway released its last box of new choral offerings for churches.”<sup>148</sup> Erlanson reports that Brian Brown, Director of Lifeway Worship, described churches using praise team music with their choirs. “So Lifeway has begun adding bass lines to vocal charts for worship songs to make them usable by four-part groups. And Lifeway will continue to publish pieces specifically for choir, but it will be in digital format only – no physical product.”<sup>149</sup>

---

<sup>148</sup> Laura Erlanson, “Church Music Landscape Rearranged As Big Publishers Close,” *Baptist Press*, January 3, 2022, <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/church-music-landscape-rearranged-as-big-publishers-close/>.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*

## Literature Review Section Three: Southern Baptist Associations

### Associations - Literature

RESOLVED, That we work together to cultivate a culture that stewards all the talents and resources of the Southern Baptist Convention for the fulfillment of the Great Commission; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That by God’s grace and work of the Spirit, the Southern Baptist Convention would experience the cultivation of a “cooperative culture” that inspires investment in our gospel work together, develops godly and wise leaders, and leads to effective witness to the gospel in our nation and all the nations.<sup>150</sup>

The associational method of churches uniting with one another for ministry and mutual benefit precedes the denomination’s formation. According to Yarbrough and Kuykendall, “Baptists in England began to cooperate together during the mid–1600s. In the 1700s, Baptists in America formed associations in Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and North and South Carolina. ... Evangelism and missions were included among the early important functions of the associations.”<sup>151</sup> Chuck Beem confirms, “Local associations pre-date the Southern Baptist Convention by one hundred and thirty-eight years.”<sup>152</sup> Beem continues, “The purpose of the association is to serve the church in carrying out the Great Commission. ... not just in their local community, but across their state, North America, and the ends of the earth as well.”<sup>153</sup> Walter B. Shurden further explains, “the eight major eighteenth-century Baptist documents ... describe the nature and power of Baptist

---

<sup>150</sup> SBC, “On The Promotion Of A ‘Cooperative Culture’ In The Southern Baptist Convention For Mission Advance.”

<sup>151</sup> Yarbrough and Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists: A History of a Confessional People*, 43.

<sup>152</sup> Chuck Beem, “Leading the SBC Association: A Model For Executive Leadership,” *Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders*, (June 7, 2021): 1, <https://www.sbcal.org/leading-the-sbc-association.html>.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, 2, 13.

associations. ... the documents also ‘urge’ Baptist churches to ‘associate’ together. ... with a keen eye on the unity of the fellowship of the churches.”<sup>154</sup>

Explaining the Scriptural basis for associating, F. Russell Bennett writes:

The Association is the Baptist response to Paul’s explanation of the church in his letter to the Ephesians. That is the “what” and our Lord’s commission is the “why”. The leader must unify the churches as family to do their work of ministry. His “**how**” is to enable the family to be redemptive of their changing environment, not to just do what they’ve always done, because their world is not what it was. The leader of an association must recognize that he is not the pastor of a church but leading *a fellowship of churches designed to edify one another unto good works* [emphasis added]. He must cultivate the family of God, not run a business of the world. If he doesn’t first recognize the tool with which he has been entrusted he will misuse it regardless of training in leadership skills and organization. The house must have a good foundation for the scaffolding of the walls to survive.<sup>155</sup>

Yarbrough and Kuykendall describe the workings of associations, stating, “Associations do not exercise authority or control over their constituent churches or individuals. Rather, they implement the desire of Southern Baptists to pool their energies, resources, talents, and gifts in order to serve, minister, and do missions as efficiently and effectively as possible.”<sup>156</sup> Per Sullivan, “Most are well organized. ... have one or two employees, including a director of missions. Many have stated office locations from which the personnel will function, and the work they do is appreciated by the participating churches. Their budgets and size of work are determined by the churches who send designated gifts directly to the association for the support of its work.”<sup>157</sup>

Sullivan continues:

---

<sup>154</sup> Walter B. Shurden, “The Authority of a Baptist Association,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 40, no. 1 (January 2005): 6, 7.

<sup>155</sup> F. Russell Bennett, “Leading a Baptist Association in God’s Changing World,” *Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders*, October 22, 2016, <https://www.sbcal.org/leading-a-baptist-association-in-gods-quot-changing-world.html>.

<sup>156</sup> Yarbrough and Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists: A History of a Confessional People*, 166.

<sup>157</sup> Sullivan, *Baptist Polity – As I See It*, 62.

The existing churches need help and encouragement from the other churches of the area. Churches in desperate need can be identified and assistance can be given. Volunteer workers can be trained and on call when appeals are sent out for help in the furtherance of any special denominational emphasis. These needs are current and real. They are not apt to diminish. New churches or existing ones desiring fellowship and participation in local associations are carefully screened by the association involved to make sure they hold basic doctrinal beliefs of Baptists.<sup>158</sup>

Several notable observations in *Southern Baptist Identity* challenge associations' current practices and efficacy. Addressing a healthy past, Day asserts, "Bill Agee of the North American Mission Board suggests that associations were highly effective in both their being and doing for their first one-hundred years. He concludes: 'They fostered fellowship, maintained uniformity in faith and practice among the churches, gave support and counsel, and provided a vehicle for churches to cooperate in a broader ministry.' Not a bad start at all!"<sup>159</sup>

Speaking to current trends, however, Chapman writes, "A major overhaul by the national Convention and the state conventions appears to be an absolute necessity, letting the facts speak for themselves lest the conventions discover too late they were blind and deaf to a delivery system that better serves the churches. Questions waiting to be asked and answered are stacking up by the month."<sup>160</sup> Day concurs with Chapman's statement. He writes:

Chapman's remarks are profound, encouraging, and directly on target. It appears that the "overhaul" is underway as many local and state Baptist entities engage in the work of "re-creating" the local association or state convention with an eye toward creating cooperative bodies that are clearly focused on the work of the churches and clearly committed to assisting the churches in the accomplishment of their work. ... This new paradigm for cooperation begins with affirmation that the church is the living expression of God's mission in the world. The Great Commission and Acts 1:8 were spoken to the nucleus of the church and not to local associations or denominational entities. ... It is a church-focused and a church-driven vehicle for cooperation.<sup>161</sup>

---

<sup>158</sup> Sullivan, *Baptist Polity – As I See It*, 62.

<sup>159</sup> Day, "The Future of State Conventions and Associations," in Dockery, 226.

<sup>160</sup> Chapman, "Axioms of a Cooperating Southern Baptist," in Dockery, 171.

<sup>161</sup> Day, "The Future of State Conventions and Associations," in Dockery, 236, 237.

Churches throughout the denomination now feel the combined effect of the CMD's fallout and a changing associational environment. SAs historically supported the CMD's mission. Now, the literature surrounding associations mixes with that of the CMD by necessity. Forbis highlights several aspects of SAs and the now-defunct CMD in "The Sunday School Board and Baptist Church Music." Written in 1984, Forbis shares, "By December 31, 1955, sixteen states had program leaders whose responsibilities included a program of church music. In the present thirty-seven ... there are eighteen full-time music secretaries."<sup>162</sup> He describes part of the CMD's role in supporting the SA music personnel, explaining that it "hosts two annual meetings for the state music secretaries. Salient agenda items include: (1) ascertaining the needs of the local church, (2) identifying the materials to answer those needs, and (3) developing the activities (clinics, conferences, camps, and field events) to fulfill those needs."<sup>163</sup> However, this once robust support structure now remains a ghost of the past.

#### According to Music:

The music programs of Baptist churches embarked upon a period of growth and increasing sophistication that reflected a new spirit of professionalism. ... Each summer, thousands attended Church Music Weeks at the Baptist retreat centers at Ridgecrest, North Carolina, and Glorieta, New Mexico. ... State conventions established their own music departments and sponsored hymn sings, choir festivals, and training opportunities. In addition, the large number of young people committing themselves to music ministry led to significantly higher enrollments in college and seminary music schools.<sup>164</sup>

Music further elaborates, citing the "church growth movement of the late twentieth century" with its "pop idioms as one of the keys to rapid enlargement of the congregation"<sup>165</sup> as a significant turning point. He continues, "this approach led many churches to adopt this model, discarding

---

<sup>162</sup> Forbis, "The Sunday School Board and Baptist Church Music," *Baptist History and Heritage*, 20.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>164</sup> Music, "Turning Points in Baptist Church Music," *Baptist History and Heritage*, 73.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

hymnals (and hymns), choirs, and organs in favor of choruses and contemporary Christian songs, “praise teams,” and pop/rock bands.”<sup>166</sup> Music’s weightiest statement, however, addresses the overall failing SBC WM:

We are perhaps too close as yet to this last turning point to evaluate its impact fully, but from the present perspective it is evident that it represents as much of a major change as the others discussed in this article. “Ministers of music” have now become “worship leaders” (ignoring the facts that there are other elements in worship besides music, and that music can have usefulness in other areas of church life). The emphasis on church music education and training that was characteristic of Baptists between the 1940s and 1990s has almost disappeared. The unity of congregational song repertoire—once represented by Baptists mostly singing from the same book—is gone. Despite all the “newness,” in many respects the denomination has returned to a pre-1940 approach in which each church has its own repertory and “worship style,” with no common body of song and no unifying organization of approach or purpose.<sup>167</sup>

Blakeney addresses today’s support-starved atmosphere affecting SB WLs, with a comprehensive thought process applied to the issue. Blakeney writes, “churches cannot afford, or do not prioritize, continuing education in their undereducated staff...there must be resources developed from denominational, state, local or parachurch organizations to help fill in the educational gap. The need has been demonstrated, but. ... There is a gap in the resources available to these men and women called to serve in worship.”<sup>168</sup> He continues, “While there is no set nationwide denominational training event or program that is geared towards part-time or bivocational worship leaders, there are regional or local events or programs established by local or state denominational organizations.”<sup>169</sup>

Offering practical criticism, Blakeney adds,

---

<sup>166</sup> Music, “Turning Points in Baptist Church Music,” *Baptist History and Heritage*, 75.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Blakeney, “The Rise of the Part-Time Worship Leader in the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church,” 74.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 74.

Developing a network of worship leader mentors ... would be a cost-effective and potentially groundbreaking practical step for many part-time worship leaders. Other than roundtable discussions, there are few other opportunities for worship leader training. One opportunity is that of worship leader training events or conferences. ... There are always well-known artists and speakers in attendance. ... Such events are popular among worship leaders but may be out of reach for those financially unable to attend or obligated to another employer for that time period.<sup>170</sup>

Blakeney delivers yet another cutting truth, stating,

Any networks available to the part-time worship leader for enrichment is usually found at the state or local levels. This is why mentoring and coaching opportunities will be key in the future training of the part-time worship leader. Although the secondary institutions and the seminaries have lacked in the preparation of bivocational ministry, the Southern Baptist Convention, as a whole, is responsible for its lackluster effort towards this ministry.<sup>171</sup>

#### Associations – Online Representations

Each state that maintains an organized SBC-recognized association is listed on the SBC's website.<sup>172</sup> A thorough investigation of this listing identified each of these states' unique online representations as provided by the SBC. The online evaluation of SAs was designed to determine the presence or absence of critical factors relevant to WMs, including evidence of a SA WM leader/director, a SA WM program with sponsored events and/or training, and SA-sponsored opportunities specifically designed to develop leadership qualities of SB Ws/WTs. Here, some interesting facets of SAs online representations are reviewed. In-depth results from this evaluation is located in section three of this research project.

Kentucky (KY) presented the researcher with a well-organized visual depiction of their current SA's WM department structure. It was easy to identify KY's WM director, titled "Worship

---

<sup>170</sup> Blakeney, "The Rise of the Part-Time Worship Leader in the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church," 74.

<sup>171</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>172</sup> SBC, "State and Local Associations," Directories, accessed March 8, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/resources/directories/state-and-local-associations/>.



& Music Consultant,” within their staff listing. The director’s name and photo was linked to route visitors to a “Meet the Staff” page where a biography and the role of KY’s SA WM director was easily accessed.<sup>173</sup> An additional link, conveniently provided within the staff biography section for the “Worship & Music Ministry,” revealed a plethora of ways for people to engage in training and ministry activities alongside other KY-based WMs.<sup>174</sup> Biblical citations were noted throughout the WM area online, as was a full scope of worship representation through areas like children’s choirs to copyright laws and technology.

### **Challenges to research**

The wide array of SA personnel and organizational management, combined with the general lack of a streamlined process across SA websites presented many research challenges. Some common setbacks arose due to confusing leadership nomenclature, poorly designed/ill-organized websites, and SAs that omitted WM departments from their ministry listings despite the later discovery of existing, robust programs. In such cases, these WM sites host separate websites from their SAs, which were only discovered after the researcher noted WM-related events on SAs’ activity calendars.

A large number LA links provided by the SBC did not function when clicked upon. This failure rests with the SBC’s lack of website maintenance, not with the SAs/LAs. However, SAs/LAs should also be responsible for updating the SBC if and when their website information changes.

Churches sharpen each other’s iron (Prov. 27:17) when they join together to accomplish these missional goals. Associations exist to facilitate church collaboration in promoting the GC and

---

<sup>173</sup> Kentucky Baptist Convention, “Jason ‘Bubba’ Stewart,” Worship & Music Consultant, Meet the Staff, accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.kybaptist.org/staff/jason-stewart/>.

<sup>174</sup> Kentucky Baptist Convention, “Worship & Music Ministry,” Strengthening Church Ministry, accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.kybaptist.org/worship-music-ministry/>.

they impact people’s eternities through their work. For these reasons, SAs must use clear verbiage to communicate their purpose. SA leadership nomenclature – how SAs title those who oversee designated areas – should be easily comprehensible for anyone seeking to participate in ministry. Many groups commonly title a staff person a director, minister, missionary, administrator, or something similar indicative of a significant leadership role. Alabama’s (AL) SA WM staff leader, however, is called the Coordinator, while the department heads of all other SA areas in AL are titled Director. The reasoning behind this title irregularity is unclear. One can easily locate the Coordinator alongside other leadership on their Alabama Worship site and the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions site. On the worship website, their “about” section reads:

Alabama Worship partners with Alabama Baptist churches and associations to fulfill our one mission – the Great Commission. Worship Resources is housed under the Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions that exists to serve you and your church needs! We seek to identify & equip the church with any of your worship needs to proclaim the gospel through music.

This includes:

Music Needs for Children through Adults

Worship Events

Instrumental Needs

Sound Consultations

Networking<sup>175</sup>

Initially, the researcher errantly assumed that AL’s WM Coordinator role handled the primary clerical duties within the department. Continuing to search for AL’s WM department head, a return to AL’s main SBC SA website revealed this same person, the “Worship Resources

---

<sup>175</sup> “About,” Alabama Worship, accessed March 8, 2023, <https://alabamaworship.org/about/>.

Coordinator,” named within the staff list.<sup>176</sup> After reading their biography, the Coordinator’s expertise in WM was discovered and a conclusion was safely drawn that this Coordinator role is comparable to Director roles in other equivalent departments. The question of why this job title is named differently from similar positions within the same state remains unanswered. It is possible that other visitors to AL’s SA site may make the same assumption and determine that AL does not have a director overseeing a music ministry department.

Similarly noteworthy is Georgia’s (GA) nomenclature. While GA’s website presents a clean, organized navigational structure and their SA WM department hosts a website, the titular verbiage for WM leadership remains unique. The staff listing for GA’s SA worship and music area names the following positions: Catalyst, Support, Northeast Region, Northwest Region, West Central Region, and Southeast Region. A logical deduction process implies the Catalyst’s headship over the other staff position based on several factors. The Catalyst is listed first. The Support person likely supports each of the other persons represented. The various regional representatives would cover their respective areas. According to Merriam-Webster, the word catalyst is defined as “a substance that enables a chemical reaction to proceed at a usually faster rate or under different conditions (as at a lower temperature) than otherwise possible” or “an agent that provokes or speeds significant change or action.”<sup>177</sup> GA possibly views this role as one that incites action and change, which could indicate potential directorship over the SA’s WM. This researcher finds GA’s naming of this role confusing and unclear for its future ministry partners.

---

<sup>176</sup> “State Missionaries,” Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions, accessed March 8, 2023, <https://alsbom.org/staff/>.

<sup>177</sup> “Catalyst,” *Dictionary*, Merriam-Webster, accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/catalyst>.

California's (CA) SA website presented great difficulty in locating information about a WM presence. Overall, the website's navigational organization prohibits ease of use in finding much information about specific ministries in general. Its resource section contains an area for worship housing blog posts and listed events on the website demonstrate the occurrences of church music workshops. Still, no additional information could be easily located, and no further organized links on the site pointed to a distinct WM run by CA's SBC SA. Despite this lack of organization, the evidence of music-related workshops prompted further research. An internet search including the words "California SBC music," yielded the researcher the "California Worship" website for the CA SBC. There, it was easy to review a listing of upcoming events/training opportunities and a page about California Worship and its leadership.<sup>178</sup>

Smaller states potentially experience more significant challenges in associating with one another to strengthen their ministry efforts. An overall lack of technology, WM departments/leaders, and general personnel strains appear commonplace in these locales. Iowa, for example, shows no WM on its SA website, and the SBC's online listing for the state does not indicate any LAs in existence for the state. Hawaii (HI) also lacks a WM department, but a link on the local Oahu Baptist Network indicates training events for Ws. It states, "Inspire and train your worship leaders. Break out session[s] include Vocal, Guitar, Piano, Leadership. Call ... ." A name and phone number appear next to the listing.<sup>179</sup>

Indiana (IN) also appears to be devoid of a WM representation, based on their SA's website. The SBC's website presented challenges when investigating IN, though, because each link for the

---

<sup>178</sup> "Welcome to California Worship," California Worship, accessed March 8, 2023, <https://caworship.com/>; "About," California Worship, Accessed March 10, 2023, <https://caworship.com/about-us>.

<sup>179</sup> Oahu Baptist Network, "Worship Workshop," Ministries and Events, accessed March 10, 2023, <http://www.oahubaptist.net/worship-workshop.html>.

state's LAs resulted in a listing that routed back to the SBC website. Similar phenomena occurred when researching the LAs for the state of Louisiana. While the Maryland/Delaware (MD/DE) area does not appear to have a WM department at the SA level, an employee is listed on one of MD/DE's LA sites as being available to assist churches with their technology and web needs, which is part of what some SA WMs provide to their area churches.

### “Resourcing Worship” – SA WM Directors’ Training

While examining SAs via the online phase of this project, this researcher discovered an intriguing link on the South Carolina Baptist website. South Carolina's (SC) SA worship page<sup>180</sup> contains a link to another website called “Resourcing Worship.”<sup>181</sup> The home page of “Resourcing Worship” (RW) reads: “Worship Resources: Southern Baptist worship consultants resourcing worship leaders worldwide.” It continues,

The worship consultants of our Southern Baptist state conventions work together to provide the best resources and guidance to our churches. We have begun posting video keynotes and breakouts from last year's Resourcing Worship Virtual Worship Conference and the Children's Worship University. We will be releasing one video each week along with a downloadable mp3 to equip and encourage you and your leaders. Check back each week for a new video.<sup>182</sup>

Intriguingly, the information underneath RW's “About Us” tab states, “Meet your state convention worship consultants. We collaborate together to identify needs and resource our churches in worship and music across the country.”<sup>183</sup> Additional areas on RW's website describe

---

<sup>180</sup> “Worship and Music,” South Carolina Baptist Convention, accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.scbaptist.org/worship/>.

<sup>181</sup> “Worship Resources: Southern Baptist Worship Consultants Resourcing Worship Leaders Worldwide,” Resourcing Worship, accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/>.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> “About Us,” Resourcing Worship, accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/about-us-2/>.

their purposes, sharing, “We have held two major virtual worship conferences in the last 12 months with nearly 100 videos of excellent instruction”<sup>184</sup> and “The worship & music consultants from our Baptist State Conventions across the USA are working closely to resource our churches to thrive during these challenging times. This website was created to bring together the best resources available on the web to help you navigate these days of ministry.”<sup>185</sup>

Visitors can make a few noteworthy observations from reviewing RW’s website. First, RW appears independent from the SBC despite the fifteen SBC SA WM directors running it because their website does not contain links or statements to confirm an affiliation with the SBC in an official capacity. Second, no uploaded videos or trainings have dates more recent than 2021. Third, within the list of RW’s fifteen SA WM directors, three leaders were not found on their own SA websites at the time of research (Ohio, Indiana, and Minnesota, see tables 2 and 3). This leadership listing anomaly again highlights the communication failings created by a lack of any streamlined process by the SBC for SAs and LAs regarding online communications, and for a process of organization due to the denomination’s autonomous polity.

---

<sup>184</sup> “Video Library Release,” Home, Resourcing Worship, accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/homepage/>.

<sup>185</sup> “About This Site,” Home, Resourcing Worship, accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/homepage/>.

### Literature Review Section Four: Lifeway and Southern Baptist Seminaries

Apart from the tremendous contributions of SB associations throughout history that bolstered WMs through provisions like training events and music camp weeks, additional aid for SB WM personnel has derived from the work of the SS Board and the church's seminaries. The history of SB church music has already been researched in this project, revealing the CMD's/SS Board's eventual absorption by Lifeway. Therefore, section four's research focuses on current denominational offerings presented by Lifeway Worship and through the WM programs available at the SBC's seminaries.

#### Lifeway's Current Support for Church Ministries

Yarbrough and Kuykendall describe Lifeway, stating,

LifeWay juggles several ministries under its banner. ... centered around its ministry as a publishing house. ... Although LifeWay sells products created by non-Southern Baptists, they must be from a decidedly conservative perspective that does not disagree with the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. ... LifeWay's denominational impact may have lessened in recent years, but its influence continues into the twenty-first century. ... in 2019... Almost 4000 employees worked for LifeWay in 170 stores. However, in 2019, after five years and \$50 million loss of revenues, LifeWay closed all its brick and mortar stores. It now emphasizes online sales.<sup>186</sup>

From Lifeway's website: "For more than 130 years, Lifeway Christian Resources has served as the world's leading nonprofit provider of ministry resources for the local church. ... *We continue to evolve* [emphasis added] to serve the changing needs of the church. From Bibles and Bible studies to church supplies, camps, and events, our team passionately pursues the needs of local churches, no matter where they are."<sup>187</sup> Further clarification of Lifeway's mission is found within

---

<sup>186</sup> Yarbrough and Kuykendall, *Southern Baptists: A History of a Confessional People*, 110, 111, 112.

<sup>187</sup> "Who We Are," About Lifeway, Lifeway, accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/about>.

“The Organizational Manual of The Southern Baptist Convention” on the SBC’s website.<sup>188</sup> Some of the details outlined in this manual relate to Lifeway’s potential impact upon WMs as communicated by the SBC, and therefore also relate to the focus of this research project. Related tasks highlighted within the manual uncover the SBC’s desire for Lifeway to develop camp programs, discipleship materials, various services that improve music and worship ministries, and for them to compile statistics/trends that help churches and the SBC as they make decisions for the future of the denomination. The SBC’s mission statement for Lifeway and four out of their ten ministry foci read as follows:

Lifeway Christian Resources exists to assist churches and believers to evangelize the world to Christ, develop believers, and grow churches by being the best provider of relevant, high quality, high value Christian products and services. ...

**... Assist churches in the development of church ministries.** Provide programs, products, and services that help churches grow in the areas of Bible study, discipleship, music, worship, administration, media/library, recreation, fellowship, and family ministry; consult with church leaders regarding total church growth concepts, strategies, and resources.

**... the operation of conference centers and camps.** Develop, promote, and operate conference and resident camp facilities useful to Southern Baptist Convention entities, state conventions, associations, and churches in establishing, enlarging, and improving their ministries. ...

**... the publication of books and Bibles.** Produce, publish, and distribute products, including books, of Christian content and purpose and Bibles that contribute to the effectiveness of churches and individuals. ...

**... conducting research and compiling statistics.** Conduct research and compile statistics on matters relating to, and of interest to, Southern Baptists, noting future trends and possible effects on church practice, productivity, witness, and health, and tender reports to the Executive Committee for review and possible report or action in an SBC annual meeting.<sup>189</sup>

---

<sup>188</sup> “Organizational Manual,” Lifeway Christian Resources, What We Do, SBC, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/about/what-we-do/legal-documentation/organization-manual/>.

<sup>189</sup> “Ibid.



The SBC's 2022 Ministry Report contains a section reserved for updates from Lifeway.

Within this portion of the SBC's publication, Lifeway reports "many new and exciting developments for Lifeway Worship, the church music and church supplies arm of Lifeway Christian Resources, since the Southern Baptist Convention's 2021 annual meeting."<sup>190</sup> Among the reported highlights, Lifeway states,

Lifeway Worship Music continues to offer new choral and congregational music for churches of every size. Particular emphasis has been given this year to releasing more digital music content for church choirs and congregations. Lifeway Worship also released dozens of new playlists through all the major digital streaming providers, including iTunes Music, Spotify, Pandora, TuneCore, and many others, greatly increasing the amount of Christian music content created by Lifeway Worship on these platforms. Lifewayworship.com released hundreds of new Spanish language songs on the site, making it one of the largest digital providers of Spanish language music content. Future Plans – Broadman Supplies is releasing a new and improved prefilled communion cup ...<sup>191</sup>

All Lifeway-based WM support is currently accessible through the Lifeway and the Lifeway Worship websites.<sup>192</sup> Evidence results reflecting the full breadth of ministry support for WM as outlined in the SBC's organization manual could not be found. Specifically, Lifeway Worship was found to be devoid of any WM-categorized Bible studies, discipleship programs, spiritual enrichment programs, or events. Lifeway has not focused equal attention on the SBC's WMs as it has to that of other specific ministries. For a full report of Lifeway's ministry provisions across all ministry areas, see tables 11–20.

Lifeway's publications and website organization stand out as particularly deficient when meeting the broad spectrum of WM needs. For example, Lifeway formerly produced WM

---

<sup>190</sup> "Lifeway Christian Resources," 2022 Ministry Report, SBC, accessed March 28, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/ministry-reports/2022-ministry-report/>.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> "Lifeway," Lifeway, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/>; "Lifeway Worship," Lifeway Worship, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/worship?vid=worship>.

magazines that specifically equipped and edified WT's and WL's like *Church Musician* and *Pedal Point*. These WM publications no longer exist. But, Lifeway still publishes *Deacon Magazine*, which “enables deacons to learn more about their ministry role in the church and community. ... assists them in carrying out their deacon ministry responsibilities ... Each quarterly issue connects real-life current conditions in church leadership with biblical truths written by key leaders. Devotionals and training plans for monthly deacons meetings are included in each issue.”<sup>193</sup> One can only guess at or assume the reasons for dropping one and keeping another.

Lifeway touts its ability to provide what WM leaders desire to carry out within their ministries. This claim is seen on Lifeway’s website link to Lifeway Worship which reads, “Lifeway Worship seeks to meet the varied music and worship needs of churches of all types and sizes. Through the product lines Let's Sing, You Can!, and Multi-Generational Worship, *our mission is to provide products and services that assist the local church in accomplishing its ministry goals* [emphasis added].”<sup>194</sup> This mission statement projects good intentions, stating Lifeway’s commitment to aid WL in bolstering their ministries. Realistically, Lifeway Worship provides an online repository of music charts, music tracks, and various digital tools for planning musical selections to fit within an order of worship. These tools are similar to those found on other popular WM-themed websites, although each slightly varies from one another. While a link is also provided on Lifeway Worship for a blog site called “Worship Life,” it re-routes visitors to the main Lifeway website landing page. The brief description for “Worship Life” describes the site as “A blog to help Worship Leaders live out the greatest commandment, ‘Love the Lord our God with your heart, all

---

<sup>193</sup> “Deacon Magazine,” For Churches, Lifeway, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/product-family/deacon-magazine.html>.

<sup>194</sup> “About Lifeway Worship,” Lifeway Worship, Lifeway, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/worship?vid=worship>.

your soul and all your mind.’ Matthew 22:37”.<sup>195</sup> A quick internet search confirmed that this WM-themed blog no longer exists. Thus, Lifeway’s worship site currently provides WMs with music-specific resources and no additional materials for the numerous other areas of WM directly impacting the overall spiritual health of SB congregations.

For comparison, the researcher visited the Lifeway Students website, geared toward middle and high school student ministries.<sup>196</sup> Because Lifeway Worship essentially functions as a resource site for purchasing music products and for building orders of worship, the researcher chose to visit the area of Lifeway Students for shopping available student products.<sup>197</sup> The categorization of products for student ministry (SM) represents a comprehensive approach to ministry, covering the areas of “Short-Term Bible Studies,” “Curriculum,” “Guys Ministry,” “Girls Ministry,” “Disciple Now,” “True Love Waits,” “Devotionals,” “Student Events,” “Camps,” “Leader Resources,” and a blog. Similar provisions to these SM resources are visible on other specific ministry sites hosted by Lifeway, where full-scope ministry plans are enacted to develop wholly mature believers. The same level of dedication to buffeting unwavering Christian leaders does not occur within Lifeway’s current WM online support structure, even though WM personnel actively sway the theology and lifestyles of SB congregations.

As youth camps are associated with SM, music is associated with WM. Both ministries encompass far greater impacts than what results from camp and musical times of worship, though. Instead of merely providing camp programs, for example, Lifeway Students provides a breadth of

---

<sup>195</sup> “Worship Life,” Sites, Lifeway Worship, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://worship.lifeway.com/findAndBuy/home?cid=topmenu>.

<sup>196</sup> “Lifeway Students with Ben Trueblood,” Lifeway, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://studentministry.lifeway.com/>.

<sup>197</sup> “Resources to Impact Your Leadership and Student Ministry,” Lifeway Students, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/ministries/teenagers>.

materials to train the whole student. Similarly, WMs undertake much more than merely planning biblically thematic music for others to sing along with before the pastor preaches. On the contrary, healthy SB WMs engage in the acts of discipling one another, encouraging the church, living as examples of local Christian leadership, and modeling evangelism to the rest of the congregation, among many other marks of worship lifestyles that are carried out publicly and privately. While Lifeway Worship's aforementioned "About" statement does offer readers the ability to infer that their WM provisions incorporate the same level of materials to assist WMs in guiding their WLs and WTs toward spiritual maturity for the purpose of properly guiding SB congregations, these interpretations would not be accurate.

Part of Lifeway Worship's failure to fully support WMs simply results from poorly designed website organization. For example, Lifeway does, in fact, market some materials related to worship and WMs. A visitor to Lifeway Worship might not know that these materials exist since only music products are promoted for purchase on the worship site. Conversely, Lifeway's SM site filters a wide array of student-related materials into one conveniently located area on their Lifeway Students website. This same attention to detail has not been applied to the Lifeway Worship website (see figures 3 and 4) .

To determine whether equivalent materials are produced for WMs as currently exist for SMs, the researcher visited Lifeway's main website and searched the term "worship," selecting filters for "Bible Study" and "Adult." While 115 resources appeared, some seemed to apply to WMs only loosely, while others directly targeted the goal that WLs might set for their WTs. For example, the researcher learned that Lifeway published Henry Blackaby and Ron Owens' *Worship: Believers Experiencing God* in 2001, which is described as "an invaluable resource for pastors, ministers of music, and worship-team members, especially when questions arise over different worship styles.

All believers can benefit from learning what it is about worship that really matters to God. Designed for study either individually or in a small group, this resource can help guide your church to remember the true and proper focus of worship.”<sup>198</sup> Other studies potentially relevant to WMs focus on the Psalms, the seasons of the Christian calendar, and developing Christlike characteristics pertaining to lifestyles of worship. These kinds of studies could easily be implemented into the Lifeway Worship site, making it comparable to other Lifeway ministry-specific sites.

#### Current Southern Baptist Seminary Worship Ministry Programs

All six of the SBC’s seminaries are reviewed in this research portion to determine the breadth of WM training provided for individuals seeking to enter full-time, vocational WM. By examining these degree program offerings, this study project will reveal trends and common themes within the SBC’s goal for its future WLs and WMs. The six SBC seminaries are Gateway Seminary (founded as Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary) in Ontario, California (Gateway), Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (SWBTS) in Fort Worth, Texas; Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (MBTS) in Kansas City, Missouri; The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (SBTS) in Louisville, Kentucky; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS) in New Orleans, Louisiana; and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (SEBTS) in Wake Forest, North Carolina.

Because six seminaries exist for SBs, each WM degree program was examined and culled to determine the most commonly offered concentrations from each location. A list of programs from each seminary’s website was compiled into a master list of WM offerings for review (table 21). Through this examination, it was deduced that two main programs could be investigated and further

---

<sup>198</sup> “Worship: Believers Experiencing God,” Lifeway, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/product/worship-believers-experiencing-god-P001116718>; Henry Blackaby and Ron Owens, *Worship: Believers Experiencing God* (Nashville, Tennessee: Lifeway Christian Resources, 2001).

compared (tables 22-25). Currently, only one of the six seminaries, Gateway, does not offer any WM degree programs.

WM degree programs are currently offered at the following five SB seminaries: SWBTS, MBTS, SBTS, NOBTS, and SEBTS. In a study of higher-education training programs for church music ministry, J. Schröder writes, “These programmes are switching from degrees in church music to degrees in worship studies at seminaries and universities.”<sup>199</sup> The accuracy of Schröder’s statements is reflected in the WM degree program titles available at these five SBC seminaries.

Academic offerings pages on each seminary’s website were used to search for WM-related degree programs. The following programs were examined:

- SWBTS: Master of Arts in Worship Leadership;<sup>200</sup> Master of Divinity with a concentration in Worship Leadership<sup>201</sup>
- MBTS: Master of Arts in Worship Ministries;<sup>202</sup> Master of Divinity in Worship Ministries<sup>203</sup>

---

<sup>199</sup> J. Schröder, “Academic Music Ministry Training From a Practical-Theological Perspective,” *Acta Theologica* 2021, 31 (June 14, 2021): 218, [https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/ejc-theolog\\_v2021\\_nsup31\\_a13](https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/ejc-theolog_v2021_nsup31_a13).

<sup>200</sup> “Master of Arts in Worship Leadership: Deepen your faith and develop your creative skills,” Degrees, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://swbts.edu/degree/master-of-arts-in-worship-leadership/>.

<sup>201</sup> “Master of Divinity with a concentration in Worship Leadership: Training leaders in musical excellence and ministry experience,” Degrees, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://swbts.edu/degree/master-of-divinity-with-a-concentration-in-worship-leadership/>.

<sup>202</sup> “MA in Worship Ministries,” Academics, Masters Studies, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.mbts.edu/degrees/masters-studies/mawm/>.

<sup>203</sup> “Master of Divinity (MDiv),” Academics, Masters Studies, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.mbts.edu/degrees/masters-studies/mdiv/>.

- SBTS: Master of Arts in Worship Leadership;<sup>204</sup> Master of Divinity in Worship Leadership<sup>205</sup>
- NOBTS: Master of Arts in Worship Ministry;<sup>206</sup> Worship Ministry M.Div. Specialization<sup>207</sup>
- SEBTS: Master of Divinity with Worship Leadership<sup>208</sup>

Each degree program's course listing provided names and numbers that were used for consulting course descriptions in online seminary catalogs. Courses were then accurately filtered into categories for comparison. Category selection stemmed from the results a of the worship literature review conducted in chapter one section two.

As observed through chapter one's literature review, today's WM leaders must faithfully exercise the vital skills of evangelism, discipleship, gospel-centricity, community building, and the ability to work within a team. Therefore, SBC seminary degree programs categorized courses into groups based on the following foci: theology, practical leadership, spiritual leadership, and music. Results from these categorizations of course offerings at SBC seminaries can be viewed in Tables 22-25.

---

<sup>204</sup> "Master of Arts in Worship Leadership," Degree Programs, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.sbts.edu/bgs/degree-programs/ma/worship-leadership/>.

<sup>205</sup> "Master of Divinity in Worship Leadership," Degree Programs, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.sbts.edu/bgs/degree-programs/mdiv/worship-leadership/>.

<sup>206</sup> "Master of Arts in Worship Ministry," Catalog, Graduate Programs, Master's Degree Programs, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://catalog.nobts.edu/graduate/masters/degrees/arts/worshipministry>.

<sup>207</sup> "Worship Ministry M.Div. Specialization." Catalog, Graduate Programs, Master's Degree Programs, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://catalog.nobts.edu/graduate/masters/degrees/divinity/worship-ministry>.

<sup>208</sup> SEBTS does not offer an MA degree program. "Master of Divinity with Worship Leadership," Degree, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.sebts.edu/degree/master-of-divinity/worship-leadership-track-mdiv/>.

## Chapter Three: Methodology

### Research Method and Design

This study uses a historical qualitative research approach to analyze existing literature and documentation. This research method fits the project and its goal to ascertain methods that bolster the current status of SB WMs because a breadth of the literature exists relating to the historical trends at SB churches, general studies on musical worship, worship leadership, leadership qualities, elements of discipleship and evangelism, and musicianship.<sup>209</sup> Since leaders must know their past to forge a path forward,<sup>210</sup> this historical qualitative approach<sup>211</sup> examines the past by combining themes and trends into implications and recommendations for the future of the Convention and its various leaders.

This study contains several reflexive elements.<sup>212</sup> Raised in a full-time vocational SB WM leader's household in the during the 1980s–early 2000s, this researcher is now married to an SB minister and also served as an SB church WL throughout the majority of this research project. Therefore, this researcher is well-versed in many issues surrounding this study. Heightened awareness is applied to prevent swayed interpretations. Bias and opinion are mitigated via written notes of internal reactions that may alter outcomes.<sup>213</sup>

---

<sup>209</sup> Margaret D. LeCompte and Jean J. Schensul, *Ethnographer's Toolkit*, bk. 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., *Designing & Conducting Ethnographic Research: An Introduction* (Lanham, Maryland: AltaMira Press, 2010), 56.

<sup>210</sup> Mathena, *One Thing Needful: An Invitation to the Study of Worship*, xiv.

<sup>211</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Los Angeles, California: SAGE Publications, 2018), 62.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.



## Research Plan

Closely related literature is thoroughly examined for this research project. While minimal study exists centering on the SBC's current WM emphasis, some research has well documented various aspects of this topic like the challenges faced by a largely untrained, part-time WL force, which is rising in numbers due to an overall decrease in church size and wherewithal.<sup>214</sup> SAs and Lifeway primarily provide SBC churches with training and materials for their various ministries, so both entities are researched in this project. Historically, SB seminaries and schools have trained future full-time WLs through their curriculums, so another aspect of this project focuses on analyzing the existing SBC seminary programs. Resulting from these investigations, applications may be made toward adjusting the ways that the denomination actively pursues developing its current and future part-time and full-time WLs.

The analysis and organization of research transpire in the following manner: First, this study will examine relevant scholarly literature surrounding the application of WM to determine which qualities are considered most desirable for WTs and WLs alike. Results will be weighed against both RQs and applied toward determining SB WM efficacy in fostering GC lifestyles that impact the spiritual health of the denomination and the world. Second, a summary of the literature surrounding the history of the SBC's CMD will occur for accurate perspective and comparison to the current status of the SBC's church music ministries. Third, SAs will be thoroughly examined for evidence of their participation in collaborating with the denomination and with churches to educate and train their states' local WM personnel. Fourth, relevant SBC WM educational and discipleship materials will be reviewed to determine the SBC's scope in preparing and equipping its WM teams and leaders. This gathering includes resources highlighting WM program offerings from seminaries

---

<sup>214</sup> Blakeney, "The Rise of the Part-Time Worship Leader in the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church."

and LifeWay. Deficiencies in the WM area will be noted and compared to non-WMs wherein the SBC has offered training materials. This summary presents additional data for both analysis and interpretation into summarized findings that need attention from the ministry community to stop the decline and increase the GC efforts' effectiveness.

Finally, materials are analyzed separately by RQ category (WM characteristics from RQ 1 and qualities of WL from RQ 2). Analysis of each RQ appears in visual and written format, with conclusions drawn on how they impact local churches and the denomination.

Within this final summary section, multiple syntheses will highlight findings and conclusions from each of the three main research sections. These syntheses will ultimately deliver a final resolution to both RQs in a concluding report. The concluding statement offers a thorough overview, representing the SB WM's current GC impact alongside further opportunities for research and enhancement.

### Additional Questions and Hypotheses

The following questions and hypotheses apply to the online research portion of this project. When searching online, this researcher will study the various offerings provided by SBC entities like seminaries, LifeWay Christian Resources, and SA/LAs. While these questions and hypotheses represent the researcher's interests at the onset of this investigation area, the results of this study may differ from the hypotheses listed below.

1. Q: Are SBC educational facilities training WLs through specific WL degree programs?  
H: Some SBC educational facilities are training WLs through specific WL degree programs, but not all offer these kinds of learning tracks.
2. Q: Do SBC WM programs offer well-balanced programs consisting of music, practical leadership, spiritual leadership, and theology?

H: SBC WM programs do not offer well-balanced programs.

3. Q: Of SBC participating states within the United States, do any SAs include a WM/department within their list of ministries provided for partner churches?

H: Of SBC participating states within the United States, some SAs include a WM/department within their list of ministries provided for partner churches, but not all SAs provide this vital ministry.

4. Q: Of SBC participating states within the United States, are any SAs producing WM events/training specifically for their WLs to develop their skills?

H: Of SBC participating states within the United States, some SAs produce WM events/training specifically for their WLs to develop their skills, but not all do.

5. Q: Of SBC participating states within the United States, are any SAs producing WM events/training for WT volunteers?

H: Of SBC participating states within the United States, some SAs produce WM events/training for WT volunteers, perhaps less than those that offer training for WLs.

6. Q: Is LifeWay providing WM-specific training materials that equal its curricula for other church ministries (women/men, children, youth, Sunday School, small group, etc.)?

H: LifeWay is not providing WM-specific training materials that equal its curricula for other church ministries (women/men, children, youth, Sunday School, small group, etc.).

7. Q: Did any additional SBC-backed efforts appear during research that the researcher did not know about before beginning this project?

H: The researcher will not learn of additional SBC-backed efforts during research.

8. Q: What interesting or surprising findings will the researcher discover during this research phase?

H: “At the time this question is asked, the answer remains yet to be determined what/if any interesting or surprising findings will be discovered.”

## Chapter Four: Research Findings

The following sections outline the data resulting from literature reviews and materials related to this project's proposed RQs. Sections are organized by the category of literature reviewed. Within each section, findings are represented in written and visual formats, then synthesized for final comparison and analysis in chapter five.

### Section 1: Summary of Worship Ministry Literature

The review of WM literature highlights vital aspects of the church's ministry through worship. Of the resources utilized within this research portion, twenty were expressly written for WM, eight were written for an SB context,<sup>215</sup> eight were written for a generalized Christian leadership audience, and one was written for an audience that could be considered as secular/Christian/other. While many desirable instructions for WMs and leaders from WM-specific literature would also fit in an overall Christian leadership genre, the opposite is not always true. Literature pertaining to general Christian leadership does not always address WM. Thus, the need for quality WM-specific literature proved itself.

Table 1 illustrates the breakdown of worship literature categories, the number of times each appeared in this review, subtopics cited within each category, and the frequency that each repeat. Evidence in table 1 establishes that the authors within the WM literature genre recognize the gravity of specific qualities and skills for WM leaders (evangelism, discipleship, gospel-centricity, community building, and the ability to work within a team). Much less writing, though, stresses SB-specific aspects of WM leadership. Because WM leaders exist across denominational lines, it makes sense that authors would potentially write for more mass appeal.

---

<sup>215</sup> Two of the eight SB-specific materials in this section overlap with and are accounted for among the twenty sources found in the WM category.

Due to the lack of SBC-specific literature reviewed in this section, a conclusive application of findings to the RQs remains challenging. However, it is clear that evangelism and discipleship ranked highest among leadership literature topics in the WM category (table 1). This result demonstrates that WM authors acknowledge the two acts central to the GC as vital characteristics of WMs (RQ1) and as leadership qualities for WLs that foster GC lifestyles in others (RQ2).

Table 1. Worship Literature by Category, Number of Uses, and Applied Subtopic

Category	#Times Cited	Applied Subtopic	Subtopic Frequency
WM Leadership	20	Evangelist	5
		Discipleship/Disciple Maker	6
		Evangelism & Discipleship	3
		Evangelism via Gospel-Centricity	1
		Community Builder	3
		Team Player	2
		SB Leadership	8
		Evangelism	1
		Discipleship	1*
		Evangelism & Discipleship	1
		Community Builder	2
		Team Player	2*
General Christian Leadership	8	Discipleship	3
		Evangelism via Gospel-Centricity	1
		Community Builder	1
		Influential Leader	2
Other Leadership	1	Influential Leader	1
Total	37		*See footnote 215.

## Section 2: Summary of Southern Baptist Church Music History

After completing a thorough review of the literature surrounding SB church music history, a clear timeline was grasped. SBC support for WMs can be interpreted as starting low with some help from seminaries, then rising upward rapidly. WMs soon received high levels of support for several decades, but assistance declined toward the end of the twentieth century and continues to wane into the twenty-first century. This trend /timeline is visually depicted in figure 1.

Seen in figure 1, a collection of significant events contributed to three major eras representative of SB church music support trends as indicated throughout the literature review. Not visually represented in figure 1 is the overarching theme of cultural influence, which bookended the history of SB WM support from the convention. At the start of the 1900s, SB music leaders followed in the footsteps of gospel song leaders at evangelistic meetings.<sup>216</sup> As that era's musical style grew in popularity, entire genres of Christian music were formed, like traditional gospel songs and hymns, southern gospel, and black gospel music.<sup>217</sup> On the opposite end of SB WM history, observers now witness the effect that the "worship wars" had on the current landscape of church worship practice. This music and its effect was also heavily influenced by the surrounding culture.

The swift uptick in the SBC's WM support began during the people's rapid return to church after WWII. Solid provision for WMs continued through the baby boomers' professional working years. The CMD thrived during these years. As a generation of workers slowly began to turnover, the effects of a changing culture slowly took place simultaneously. A gradual decline in SB WM support soon became evident. It is clearly observed that culture impacts church music trends.

---

<sup>216</sup> McElrath, "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life," *Baptist History and Heritage*, 11.

<sup>217</sup> Towns and Whaley, *Worship Through the Ages: How the Great Awakenings Shape Evangelical Worship*, 253, 255, 257.

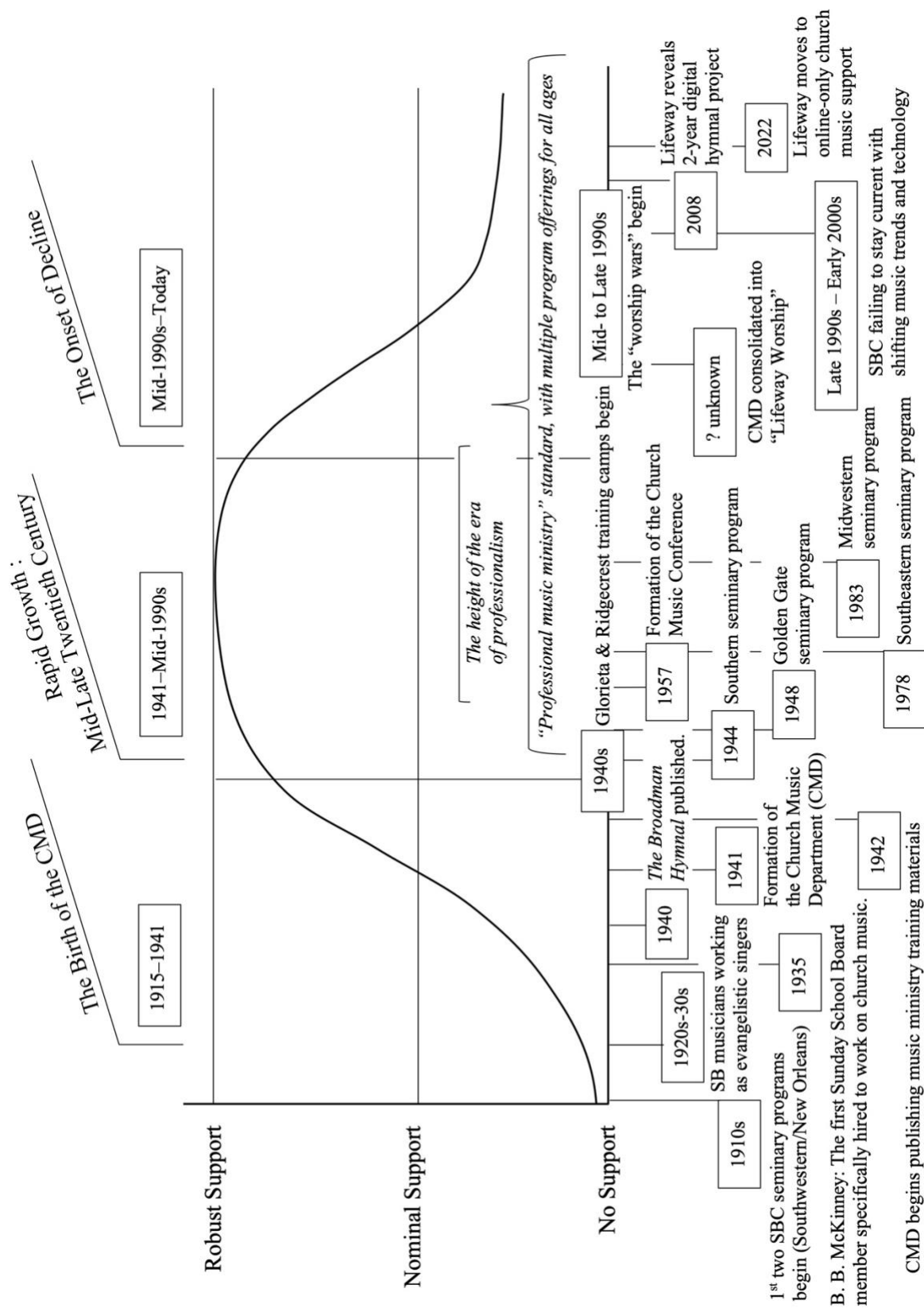


Figure 1. History of Southern Baptist Convention Support for Church Music Ministries Through Present-Day



### Section 3: Summary of Southern Baptist Worship Literature

#### Associations – Literature Review Summary

SBs have clearly outlined an associational method and organization for accomplishing GC ministry goals. This pattern and intention are evidenced in its founding documents and groups, resolutions from annual SBC meetings, and writings from well-respected SBC leaders. Most importantly, associating with other believers is a biblical precedent that was modeled by early believers and serves as an example for today's churches.

Research from the literature surrounding associations indicates a necessary overlap between associations, the former SS Board, and the former CMD in their unified purposes to serve the churches' needs while they equipped the churches for ministry. A review of seminaries is not included in this research portion since they receive their own category in this research project. However, since they also train SBs for GC WM, seminaries are reflected in figures 2–3 with the distinction of being visually separated from the other SB entities. From the mid to late twentieth century, the SB entities functioned something like this:

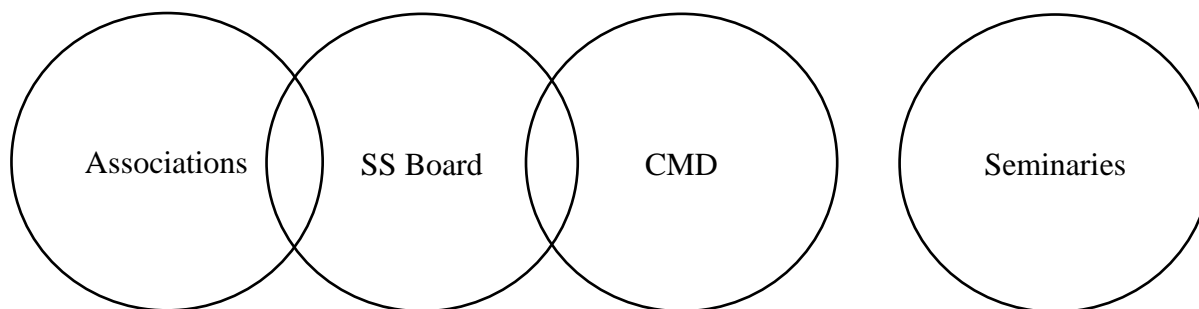


Figure 2. SB-Backed WM Training From Mid-Twentieth Century – Early 2000s

Each group operated independently from one another and on equal status levels to accomplish specific and unique ministerial purposes while also sharing the common goal of educating and training SB leaders and ministry teams. By default, each group crossed into one another's territory which did not seem to present issues. Upon the close of the twentieth century, however, the SS Board had been completely rebranded into the Lifeway name, and the CMD mysteriously disappeared soon thereafter. Only a portion of this phenomenon is covered in this research section due to a mysterious lack of available documentation/evidence online. After these changes took place, more current SB ministry training from the denomination can be represented like this:



Figure 3. SBC-Backed WM Training After the Early 2000s

Now, lay WM leaders and WT members must either learn from associations and other local SB WM leaders or seek alternate routes for learning that do not necessarily cooperate with SB teachings.

#### Associations – State and Local Associations Online Review Summary

Gross data from an online study of SBC state and local associations can be seen in Tables 2 and 3, and the following procedures apply:

## Findings from Table 2

First, the SBC's website was consulted for a listing of currently active SAs. Upon visiting each SA website, staff listings were investigated for evidence of any person named as the WM department leader. If one was quickly located, this was marked in the first column to the right of the SA name ("SA WM Dir."). If an individual could not be found, a listing of ministries supported by the SA was examined. When a WM department was located, the researcher searched for a responsible individual's name. If no such person could be found, the "SA WM Dir." column continued to remain blank.

Next, the researcher investigated each SA's provisions for WMs in their state by searching their WM department section, their calendar of events, and by typing the words "music" and "worship" into their website search areas. If results revealed opportunities for WT training, this was marked in the next column ("SA WT Tr."). Additionally, if trainings or development opportunities were presented specifically for WM leaders, this was indicated in the following column ("WM Ld. Dvlp."). If no results for anything WM related appeared, an indicator was placed in the last column ("No SA WM listed"). From this point, totals were added at the bottom of each column. Results show that out of forty-one active SAs, fourteen states utilize WM directors while twenty-seven states have no WM leader listed.

Table 2. SA program offerings: director/group training/leader development

SA	SA WM Dir.	SA WT Tr.	WM Ld. Dvlp.	No SA WM listed
Alaska				X
Alabama	X	X	X	
Arkansas	X	X	X	
Arizona				X
California		X	X	X
Colorado				X
Dakota				X
Florida	X	X	X	
Georgia	X	X	X	
Hawaii				X
Iowa				X
Illinois		X	X	X
Indiana				X
Kansas/Nebraska	X		X	
Kentucky	X	X	X	
Louisiana				X
Maryland/Delaware				X
Michigan				X
Minnesota/Wisconsin			X	X
Missouri				X
Mississippi	X	X	X	
Montana		X	X	X <sup>a</sup>
North Carolina	X	X	X	
New England				X
New Mexico			X	X
Northwest	X		X	
Nevada				X <sup>b</sup>
New York				X
Ohio		X	X	X
Oklahoma	X	X		
Pennsylvania/S. Jersey				X
Puerto Rico				X
South Carolina	X	X	X	
Tennessee	X	X	X	
Texas (BGCT)	X	X	X	
Texas (SBTC)	X	X	X	
Utah/Idaho				X
Virginia (BGAV)		X		X
Virginia (SBCV)		X	X	X
West Virginia				X
Wyoming				X
Total (41 SAs)	14	18	20	27

<sup>a</sup> Montana uses multiple WM staff members to fill various roles in the WM department, but none have a director title.

<sup>b</sup> One of Nevada's three LAs lists a WM director but does not specify what this role covers.

### Findings from Table 3

After completing the research for table 2, data from table 2's last column—states without WM departments/leadership offerings—revealed an opportunity to investigate states without a SA WM evident online. In so doing, the researcher set out to determine if LA training opportunities exist for those SB WMs left behind by their SAs. As noted in table 2, some SAs provide training events for their WMs despite the absence of a department head. These trainings potentially stem from an SBC seminary or other entity, or a WM department may still exist without a clearly defined leader named online. Because of these varied scenarios, table 3's listing includes just twenty-one SAs' names versus the twenty-seven marked in the last column of table 2.

All twenty-one states without SA WM departments were further researched for evidence of training at the LA level. To do this, the researcher first accessed these SBC LA websites via the same SBC weblink used for SAs. Next, opportunities for SBC church musicians to be trained by LAs ("Local WT Train.") and for WM leaders to further develop their skills ("Lead. Develop.") at the local level were investigated on each website. If nothing could be found indicating development or training opportunities specific to WM teams and its leaders, this was indicated in the final column ("No offerings listed").

Out of twenty-one SAs lacking WM provisions, just over half of the LAs fill in the gaps: four meet local WT training needs ("Local WT Train.") and seven present development opportunities for leaders ("Lead. Develop."). The remaining ten do not offer support for their area WMs. While eleven out of twenty-one LAs make up for SAs' lacking, almost half of them do not meet WM needs.

Table 3. Current Status of Local Opportunities in States Without WM Depts.

SA	Local WT Train.	Lead. Develop.	No offerings listed
Alaska	X		
Arizona	X		
Hawaii	X	X	
Iowa			X
Indiana		X	
Louisiana			X
Maryland/Delaware	X		
Michigan			X
Minnesota/Wisconsin		X	
Missouri			X
Montana		X	
New England			X
New Mexico		X	
Nevada		X	
New York			X
Pennsylvania			X
Puerto Rico			X
Virginia (BGAV)		X	
Virginia (SBCV)	X	X	
West Virginia			X
Wyoming			X
Total (21 SAs)	5	8	10

#### Associations – Summary

When the data from SA/LA mingles with the SBC's intent for churches to associate with one another for ministry and training, the results appear bleak, if not critical, in some cases. WMs occupy up to fifty percent of gathered worship times at many churches. They are often staffed by people with little biblical, theological, pastoral, evangelical, discipleship, and musical training. SB churches would not likely choose a pastor possessing inferior practical knowledge and skills necessary to biblically serve a congregation. Equally grave consideration should be extended to those who lead the congregation in biblical times of worship.

Ephesians 4 reads:

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up ... and become mature ... Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow ...mature ...From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Ephesians 4:11, 13, 15-16 (NIV)

SB SAs, who acknowledge the inerrancy of God's Word, recognize their role in equipping the saints to do God's work. Preparing others to do God's work requires providing the training needed. The statistics uncover a harsh reality for WMs seeking support from their SA and LA. Broken down by percentages, the data can be further analyzed to reveal the SBC's feeble performance in providing for WMs' specific needs through SAs and LAs.

The data for tables 4-7 derives from table 2.

Table 4: SBC SA Websites Revealing WM Support (by %)

SAs with WM support on their website	54
SAs without WM support on their website	46
Total	100

Table 5: SBC SA Websites Revealing WM Director (by %)

SAs with WM director on their website	34
SAs without WM director on their website	66
Total	100

Table 6: SBC SA Websites with WT Training Opportunities (by %)

SAs with WT training opportunities on their website	44
SAs without WT training opportunities on their website	56
Total	100

Table 7: SBC SA Websites with WL Training Opportunities (by %)

SAs with WL training opportunities on their website	49
SAs without WL training opportunities on their website	51
Total	100

Similar data was extrapolated from LA research results, with staggeringly more tremendous differences in some categories. These findings show that if support fails at the SA level, there is a significant chance that leaders will not receive any assistance or training from denominational entities.

Percentage points for tables 8-10 derive from table 3.

Table 8: SBC LA Websites with WM Support (by %)

LAs with WM support on their website	52
LAs without WM support on their website	48
<hr/>	
Total	100

Table 9: SBC LA Websites with WT Training Opportunities (by %)

LAs with WT training opportunities on their website	24
LAs without WT training opportunities on their website	76
<hr/>	
Total	100

Table 10: SBC LA Websites with WL Training Opportunities (by %)

LAs with WL training opportunities on their website	38
LAs without WL training opportunities on their website	62
<hr/>	
Total	100



## Section 4: Summary of Lifeway and Southern Baptist Seminaries

### Summary of Lifeway’s Current Support for Church Ministries

Lifeway’s support for WMs does not equal what they provide for other specific ministries in SB churches. Evidence clearly supports this point in the materials visible on Lifeway’s ministry-specific websites. Tables 11-19 outline the various provisions reflected on each of Lifeway’s nine ministry-specific sites. By examining these program offerings, research demonstrates the SBC’s level of support for its churches’ WMs in contrast to the other eight supported ministries.

When available, the “categories” option on Lifeway’s ministry-specific sites revealed the various materials available for that particular group. When this option was absent, the specific ministry site for comparable offerings to those found within “categories” was examined. The individual ministries represented on Lifeway’s website are *women, adults, kids, students, black church, leadership, research, worship, and español*.

Table 11. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Women*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	X
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	X
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 12. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Adults*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	X
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	X
Total	6

Table 13. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Kids*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	X
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	X
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	X
Total	7

Table 14. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Students*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	X
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	X
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	
Total	6

Table 15. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Black Church*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	X
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	X
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	
Total	6

Table 16. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Leadership*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	X
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	X
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

Table 17. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Research*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	X
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>

Table 18. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Worship*

Bible studies	
Spiritual growth studies	
Events	
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>

Table 19. Categories of Ministry Support Provided on Lifeway *Español*\*

Bible studies	X
Spiritual growth studies	X
Events	
Life applications (magazines, articles, blog, etc.)	
Practical ministry tools for leaders (supplies, music, etc.)	X
Leadership training	X
Extras (downloads, podcasts, etc.)	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>

\*The researcher does not speak Spanish, so Google Translate was utilized to ensure full comprehension of Lifeway's product offerings within their *Español* ministry site.

The data from Tables 11-19 demonstrates the disparity between Lifeway's provision for WMs and other ministries of the SBC. While the majority of Lifeway's ministry sites provide seventy-one to one-hundred percent coverage among the represented category offerings, the WM department only receives fourteen percent coverage of similar spiritual enrichment materials. A concise review of these representations is seen in table 20.

Table 20. Spiritual Enrichment Materials Within Each Ministry Department's Website (by %)

Women	100
Adults	86
Kids	100
Students	86
Black Church	86
Leadership	100
Research	86
Worship	14
Español	71
<b>Total</b>	<b>Out of 100</b>

Figures 3-5 represent the current differences in spiritual enrichment materials between Lifeway's SM site and WM site. Figure 3 depicts the first landing page for Lifeway students.

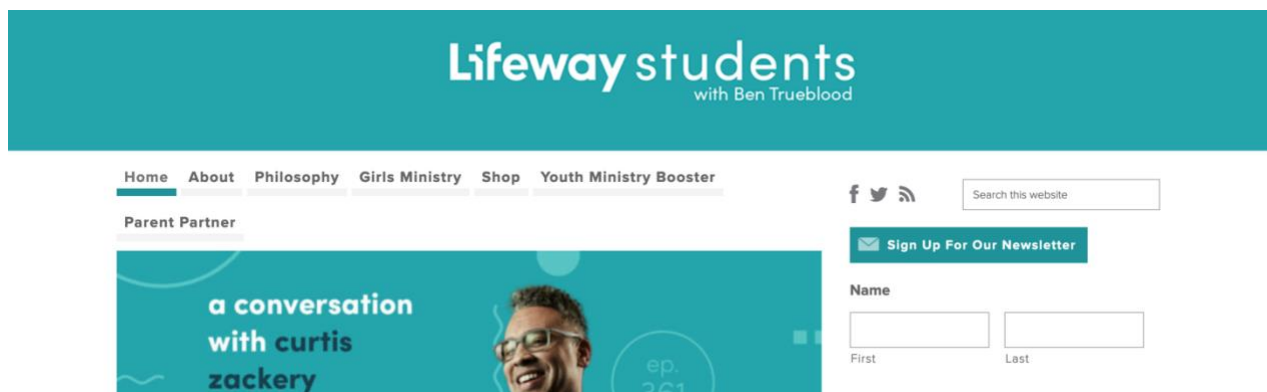


Figure 4. Lifeway’s Student Landing Page<sup>218</sup>

When opened (figure 4), the SM shop option revealed the types of products available for purchase at Lifeway Students, including an array of Bible studies, discipleship curricula, programs, camps, resources for leaders, and a blog.

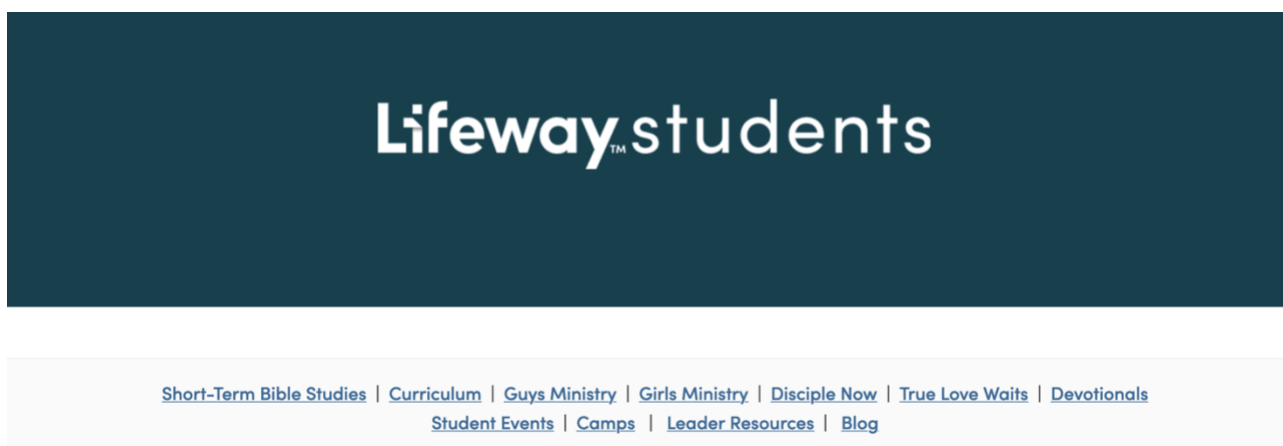


Figure 5. Resources Available on Lifeway Students’ “Shop” Area <sup>219</sup>

<sup>218</sup> “Lifeway Students with Ben Trueblood,” Lifeway.

<sup>219</sup> “Lifeway Students: Resources to Impact Your Leadership and Student Ministry,” Ministries, Students, Shop, Lifeway, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/ministries/teenagers>.

Figure 5 shows Lifeway’s description of Lifeway Worship on their website. Here, visitors see a brief description of the Lifeway Worship website alongside links for purchasing music.

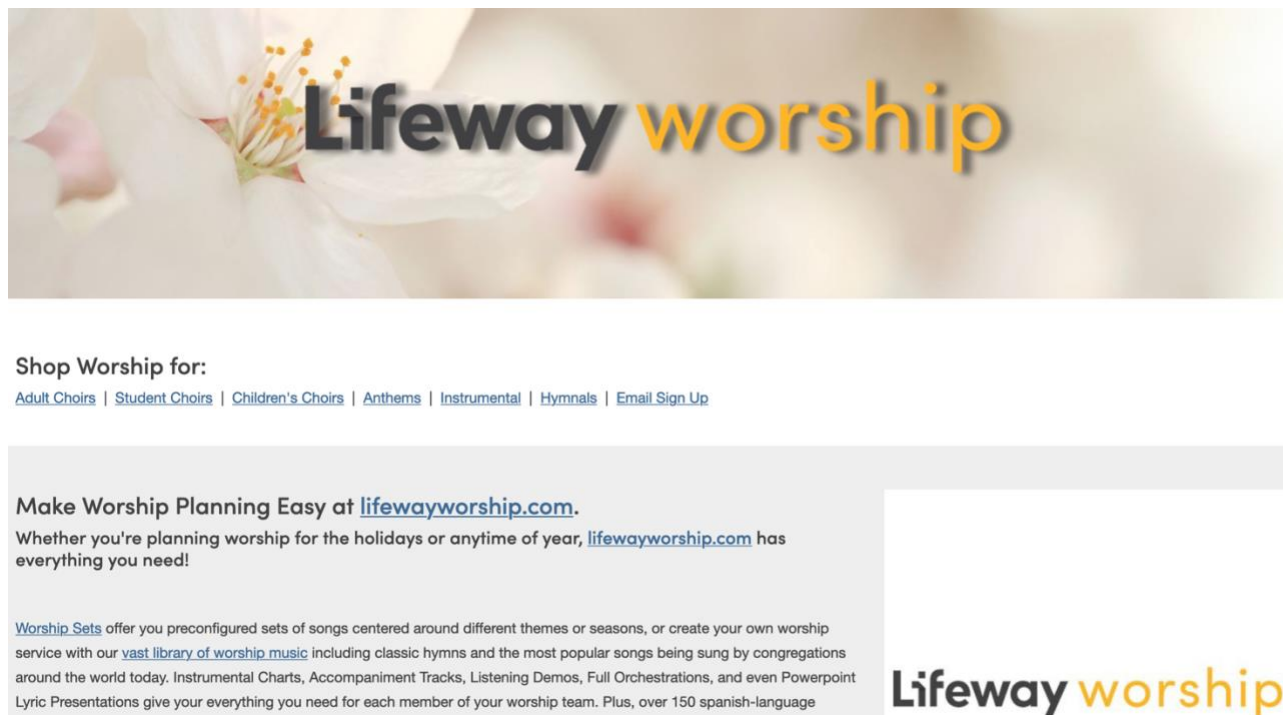


Figure 6. Lifeway’s Worship Landing Page<sup>220</sup>

The following options are available to visitors upon selecting the Lifeway Worship link (figure 6) via Lifeway’s homepage (figure 5).

---

<sup>220</sup> “Lifeway Worship,” Lifeway Worship, accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/worship?vid=worship>.

**Lifeway worship**

Home   Find Music   Plan Worship   Log In/Register   Sites   Help

---


**Search for charts, tracks & more...**

🔍


**NEW! Training Videos** Get Started!

Discover new features and quick short-cuts for common tasks on the site!


Best Sellers   New Releases   Easter   America's Top Songs   Songs by Category   Prepay & Save




Hosanna (Praise Is Rising)




Thank You Jesus for the Blood




Goodness of God




O Praise the Name (Anastasis)




This Is Our God




Contemporary Hymn



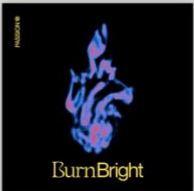
Christ the Lord Is Risen



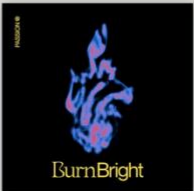
Gratitude



Living Hope



The Power of the Cross



What He's Done

Figure 7. Lifeway's Worship Landing Page<sup>221</sup>

Provisions on Lifeway Worship can be seen in figure 5, including music available for purchase and tools built to ease the process of searching for songs and filling them into worship sets. It is evidenced that the same level of spiritual enrichment materials is not found on Lifeway Worship as on Lifeway Students.

<sup>221</sup> "Lifeway Worship," Lifeway Worship, Accessed March 27, 2023, <https://worship.lifeway.com/>.

### Summary of Current Southern Baptist Seminary Worship Ministry Programs

Table 21 highlights the available MW training programs at the SBC seminaries. As demonstrated in table 21, the master of art (MA), master of divinity (M.Div.), and doctor of education in ministry (D.Ed.Min.) represent the most common degree programs offered at the seminaries with WM programs.

Table 21. Worship Ministry Degree Programs Available at SBC Seminaries

School	BM	BA	G. Cert.	MA	M.Div.	MM	MT	D.Min.	D.Ed.Min.	DMA	Ph.D.
Gateway	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
SWBTS	X	X	X <sup>a</sup>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
MBTS		X		X	X			X	X		
SBTS				X	X			X	X		X
NOBTS		X		X	X	X			X	X	
SEBTS					X						X
Totals	1	3	1	4	5	2	1	3	4	2	3

<sup>a</sup>SWBTS offers a graduate certificate option.

Tables 22-23 outline categories of courses these programs represent at each seminary.

Course categories are derived from the most commonly cited WM topics found in table 1. As the potential may arise for confusion between music and practical leadership courses, clarification is warranted. Music refers to courses that contain music as the primary subject matter, even when the leading of music takes the focus (for example, a choral conducting course). This type of course would not be counted in the practical leadership column. Practical leadership entails courses like “CE8306 Principles of Leadership”<sup>222</sup> and courses that focus on other skills like leading teams,

<sup>222</sup> “MAWM-CE Course Catalog: Christian Education Courses,” Masters Studies, MA in Worship Ministries Christian Education, Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.mbts.edu/degrees/masters-studies/mawm-ce/>.



building orders of worship, working with technology, creating and maintaining ministry budgets, etc.

The total number of credit hours (CR) for each program is listed in the final columns of tables 22 and 23.

Table 22. Master of Arts (Worship Ministry Area) Course Offerings by Category

School	Theology	Practical Leadership	Spiritual Leadership	Music	Total CR*
SWBTS	18	6	4	6	36
MBTS	21	14	7	15	66
SBTS	27	9	9	3	54
NOBTS	24	3	9	9	45
SEBTS	...	...	...	...	...
Total	90	32	29	33	N/A

Table 23. Master of Divinity (Worship Ministry Area) Course Offerings by Category

School	Theology	Practical Leadership	Spiritual Leadership	Music	Total CR*
SWBTS	41	8	19	28	86
MBTS	51	12	24	15	90
SBTS	42	9	27	3	88
NOBTS	48	3	27	3	87
SEBTS	45	...	33	...	85
Total	227	32	130	49	N/A

In tables 22-23, theology courses top the offerings at the MA. and M.Div. levels. Table 22 shows practical leadership and music courses reporting equally at second place at the MA level, with spiritual leadership ranking last. Table 23's M.Div. data reveals spiritual leadership ranking second, followed by music and practical leadership. This data is visually depicted in tables 24 and 25.

Table 24. Ranked order of Course Categories at SBC Seminaries – MA level

Theology	1 <sup>st</sup>
Practical Leadership	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Spiritual Leadership	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Music	3 <sup>rd</sup>

Table 25. Ranked order of Course Categories at SBC Seminaries – M.Div. level

Theology	1 <sup>st</sup>
Spiritual Leadership	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Music	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Practical Leadership	4 <sup>th</sup>

To interpret results from tables 24-25, findings must be evaluated through the context of results from the literature review in table 1. Evangelism and discipleship topped table 1's evidence, followed by one's ability to build community, work well with teams, and influence others through leadership. A considerable theological base would be deemed necessary for accomplishing these tasks. As such, it could be interpreted that tables 24 and 25 demonstrate solid foci in SBC seminary programs for the most important topics relating to today's SL needs for accomplishing the GC and supporting a healthy denomination. It remains challenging to interpret the actual effectiveness of each individual degree program. A separate research study would better suit that kind of investigation.

## Chapter Five: Conclusion of Research

This chapter presents conclusions, recommendations, and suggestions regarding the impact of SB WMs on the overall health of the denomination. Both RQs are addressed according to each category of research. Areas for further research are summarized for the potential benefit of church leaders, researchers, and worshipers. A final summation of the RQs alongside closing considerations appears within the conclusion.

### Summary of Study

This research project proves that WMs can strengthen the overall spiritual health of the SBC when ministry is conducted intentionally and accompanied by denominational support measures. Therefore, this study demonstrates the grave need for a mutualistic, interdependent relationship between SBC WMs and the SBC as they bolster the spiritual health of the denomination and equip/train WMs for ministry, respectively. Training and support of a spiritual nature from the SBC, specific to WMs, has steadily declined since the early mid-1990s. With WMs often responsible for massive portions of SB congregational worship service times alongside the selection of the spiritually formational materials included therein, this denominational lack of attention represents a failure of SBC leaders to recognize the vast impact that WMs have on the spiritual health of congregations.

This research project also demonstrates the cyclic nature of the GC. As believers share Christ with others, new believers must be disciplined into spiritual maturity. Growing Christians should likewise share their faith in Christ with others as they learn about Him through spiritual disciplines like prayer, Bible study, and participation in a worshipful Christian community. As such, the GC acts of evangelism and discipleship cannot be separated from one another. WMs that desire to witness their congregation's spiritual growth and transformation will actively participate in those

spiritual disciplines that bring about personal transformation first and carry their experiences into the greater community. This process perpetuates the GC among believers.

### Summary of Findings

This research project set out to determine the impact of SB WMs on the overall effectiveness of the SB denomination. The biblical acts of evangelism and discipleship, comprising the GC, serve as goalposts for the SBC's general ministry and identity.<sup>223</sup> This study revealed that SB WMs can support or weaken the denomination's GC pursuit, thereby leading their congregations toward growth or decline based on the motivations behind their lifestyles and actions. These findings demonstrate consistencies with hypotheses to both RQs, indicating the wealth of bearing that SB WMs can affect on the denomination's GC effectiveness through intentional foci, which boost the overall spiritual health of the church.

### Summary of Main RQs

#### **Hypothesis 1**

From chapter one, Hypothesis 1 states, "The characteristics of WMs that foster GC lifestyles in SB churches include gospel-centric music and service elements, active discipleship, and evangelism." Discipleship and evangelism may not have received as high a valuation during past eras of SB WM when professionalism, music education, and evangelism (not often accompanied by discipleship) ruled the day.

However, results from current materials support that when SB WMs prioritize gospel-centric music and service elements alongside active discipleship and evangelism methods, GC lifestyles are fostered in their churches. Primary markers of the GC and the SBC, discipleship and evangelism

---

<sup>223</sup> "We Are Great Commission Baptists," SBC, accessed March 29, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/>.

consistently appeared within sections of this research that apply to the current status of SB WM. They topped the results found in recent WM-dedicated literature and remain central to the training courses at SBC seminary WM degree programs. The biblical accuracy of lyric content similarly appeared as a vital element of the church's evangelistic and discipleship means, as songs have been scientifically proven to assist in committing concepts to memory.

It can safely be concluded that evidence from this study upholds today's emphasis on these biblical applications of the GC through the actions of SB WMs (hypothesis 1).

## **Hypothesis 2**

From chapter one, Hypothesis 2 states, "The leadership qualities of WLs at SB churches that foster GC lifestyles in the denomination include pastoral leadership characteristics, teamwork capability, and musical adeptness." Literature researched in this project proves that influence gains leaders a following through the modeled lifestyle of character and integrity. Pastoral leadership upholds these characteristics alongside additional biblical requirements found in the New Testament. Derived from these biblical qualities are the implications of a WL's ability to work with a team and overall musicianship skills.

From the literature surveyed, almost every quality of SB WL leadership listed in hypothesis 2 is substantiated as beneficial in fostering GC lifestyles. Since the GC is evaluated through evangelistic and discipleship contexts, applications to the GC are easily inferred from one's pastoral leadership characteristics and teamwork capabilities. However, the element of musical adeptness stretches to fit within the GC context. While musical acumen is necessary for all SB WLs to lead WMs and garner the respect of their personnel successfully, the specific musicianship level of a WL may not hold a direct bearing on the resultant efficacy of the GC within that community. For this reason, hypothesis 2 is evidenced to be mostly true.

### Sub-Questions

The following hypotheses are derived from the list of sub-questions found in chapter three applying to the online research portion of this project. Questions centered on various offerings provided by SBC entities like seminaries, LifeWay Christian Resources, and SA/LAs.

#### **Hypothesis 1**

Hypothesis 1 states, “Some SBC educational facilities are training WLs through specific WL degree programs, but not all offer these kinds of learning tracks.” As five of the six SBC seminaries currently offer WM degree programs, hypothesis 1 is verified. Gateway Seminary currently offers nothing for those seeking WM-specific degrees.

#### **Hypothesis 2**

Hypothesis 2 states, “SBC WM programs do not offer well-balanced programs.” A separate research project is needed to fully examine the well-balanced nature of SBC WM programs. However, results from this study demonstrate that within the MA level programs, required courses break down into percentages by category as follows, from highest to lowest (all schools combined): theology = 90% of requirement; music = 18% of requirement; practical leadership = 17% of requirement; spiritual leadership = 16% of requirement. At the M.Div. level, required courses similarly break down as follows: theology = 52% of requirement; spiritual leadership = 30% of requirement; music = 11% of requirement; practical leadership = 7% of requirement.

Five seminaries offer the M.Div., and four offer the MA. Comparatively, the MA represents the more well-balanced course structure between the two schools. While this research project does not presume to measure the efficacy of seminary degree programs, it can be observed that the M.Div. skews toward an uneven representation of WM. Hypothesis 2, due to the limitations of this study, remains undefined.

### **Hypothesis 3**

Hypothesis 3 states, “Of SBC participating states within the United States, some SAs include a WM/department within their list of ministries provided for partner churches, but not all SAs provide this vital ministry.” Hypothesis 3 is verified through the findings represented in table 4. After researching each SA website listed on the SBC’s online directory, 54% of SA websites were identified to have WM support listed on their websites, while 46% of them showed no evidence of WM engagement.

### **Hypothesis 4**

Hypothesis 4 states, “Of SBC participating states within the United States, some SAs produce WM events/training specifically for their WLs to develop their skills, but not all do.” Table 7’s findings support hypothesis 4. Evidence of WL training opportunities was demonstrated on 49% of SA websites, while 51% did not present any training for their state’s WLs.

### **Hypothesis 5**

Hypothesis 5 states, “Of SBC participating states within the United States, some SAs produce WM events/training for WT volunteers, perhaps less than those that offer training for WLs.” Hypothesis 5 is true based on the results reported in table 6. WT training opportunities were evidenced in 44% of SA websites, but 56% did not provide any training. Fewer SAs offer training for WT members (44% in table 6) than for WLs (49% in table 7).

### **Hypothesis 6**

Hypothesis 6 states, “LifeWay is not providing WM-specific training materials that equal its curricula for other church ministries (women/men, children, youth, Sunday School, small group, etc.)” The evidence supporting hypothesis 6 is found in tables 11–20. Table 20 compiles the data

from each of Lifeway's ministry branches into percentages, revealing the disparity between the provisions for WM and other church ministries. While other church ministries receive 71–100% attention based upon the various spiritual enrichment provisions, the WM receives 14% coverage from Lifeway. Hypothesis 6 is substantiated.

### **Hypothesis 7**

Hypothesis 7 states, "The researcher will not learn of additional SBC-backed efforts during research." No additional SBC-backed efforts to equip/train SB WMs were discovered during this research process. Hypothesis 7 stands true.

### **Hypothesis 8**

Hypothesis 8 states, "At the time this question is asked, the answer remains yet to be determined what/if any interesting or surprising findings will be discovered." Through the research process, the researcher learned about "Resourcing Worship" (RW), a website containing WM training compiled by various SA WM leaders. RW does not appear to be an official SBC entity. If RW is truly self-instigated, then hypothesis 7 remains upheld and hypothesis 8 presents an interesting, surprising finding to this research project.

### **Limitations**

Several limitations arose during this research project. Due to the nature of the project's study parameters, no people were interviewed throughout this research process. Missing the interaction of individuals experiencing the effects of the various categories of research, this project's results are limited to information currently available in printed format via books, articles, journals, and websites. Despite this limitation, a wealth of sources surrounding this topic exists for perusal, providing plenty of data from which to build a complete study.



Another limiting factor to this project was found in the lack of WM materials that specifically relate to SBs. This limitation was particularly noted during chapter one's review of WM literature. Due to this lack of specific materials, the resource pool was opened up to a general WM genre, which served the purposes of this research project.

Websites created a significant limitation to study, as organizational structure varied from SA to SA, the SBC's links to LA frequently did not work, and SAs sometimes omitted WMs from their websites. This lack of consistency caused the researcher to alter methods of investigation at times to determine the presence of WM offerings in various locations.

The potential originality of this research project also presents a limitation. As far as this researcher knows, a study of this kind has not yet been conducted. For this reason, nothing yet exists against which to compare this study's findings. Hopefully, as future studies are carried out, more remarkable contributions to the field of study surrounding the impact of SB WMs will reveal consistent threads that imply necessary actions and goals for the Ws, WTs, the denomination, and its leaders to take as they move ahead in pursuit of sharing Christ through His GC.

#### Recommendations for Future Study

Limitations, findings, and research procedures from this study lend themselves to further studies in multiple areas that would benefit the WMs of the SBC. A survey of each SBC seminary WM program would greatly benefit the future of church WMs as they evaluate longevity, discipleship, cooperation and associations, GC mission focus, and establish future trends. Similarly, a study detailing the specific ministry provisions stemming from Lifeway would benefit the overall denomination as it considers the future of its ministry and growth, GC effectiveness, technical impact and relevancy, and ability to minister in a new era of methods brought on after the effects of the global pandemic. Further studies could focus on interviewing current SB Ws to determine their

level of interaction with denominational entities. An analysis of this nature would enhance the results of this research project by adding real, personal experience to the data provided.

### Implications for Practice

#### **Mentoring**

Implications for SB SAs and LAs must be evaluated through noted limitations. Every SB locale does not share equal access to the same resources and personnel, which may inhibit the availability of opportunities in some places. The ministry field available to WLs willing to participate through associations becomes even more remarkable in such areas. Associations can benefit from this study as they look toward improving their means of supporting WMs.

Mentor relationships that can be implied from this study can also take the form of internships for those who cannot receive formal training. The biblical example of Paul and Timothy depicts the ideal for this kind of mentoring relationship. Stacy E. Hoehl indicates the intentional process of their mentorship, highlighting how "Paul ensures that Timothy is the right person for the job, equips him for ministerial tasks, empowers him for success, employs him in a challenging environment to develop effectiveness, and communicates to Timothy the value of the relationship."<sup>224</sup> Hoehl continues, "By following similar strategies, today's leaders can develop mentor relationships that prepare tomorrow's leaders to handle the challenges of an ever-changing workplace."<sup>225</sup>

---

<sup>224</sup> Stacy E. Hoehl, "The Mentor Relationship: An Exploration of Paul as Loving Mentor to Timothy and the Application of This Relationship to Contemporary Leadership Challenges," *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 2 no. 3 (2011), <https://www.regent.edu/journal/journal-of-biblical-perspectives-in-leadership/paul-and-timothy/>.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

SAs without a WM department can investigate fruitful church WMs within their state to find prospective ministry leaders for the association. Additional training opportunities can be explored through local WLs and WTs, colleges/universities, and neighboring SA WM departments. Overall, SAs devoid of any WM activity can wholly benefit from absorbing the results of this study that demonstrate the profound spiritual impact WMs have on their congregations. Moreover, they can survey methods to engage with their SA/LA WMs in the future to assist them as they continue to influence the spiritual growth of their churches.

### **Associations and WM Departments**

Implications for SB SAs and LAs must be evaluated through noted limitations. Every SB locale does not share equal access to the same resources and personnel, which may inhibit the availability of opportunities in some places. The ministry field available to WLs willing to participate through associations becomes even more remarkable in such areas. Associations can benefit from this study as they look toward improving their means of supporting WMs.

SAs without a WM department can investigate fruitful church WMs within their state to find prospective ministry leaders for the association. Additional training opportunities can be explored through local WLs and WTs, colleges/universities, and neighboring SA WM departments. Overall, SAs devoid of any WM activity can wholly benefit from absorbing the results of this study that demonstrate the profound spiritual impact WMs have on their congregations. Moreover, they can survey methods to engage with their state WMs in the future to assist them as they continue to influence the spiritual growth of their churches.

WLs can also benefit from the results of this research surrounding SAs and their WM departments as they seek further opportunities to mentor, collaborate, and engage with ministry colleagues in their local areas.

## **Lifeway Worship**

Lifeway can benefit from the results of this research as it “continue[s] to evolve to serve the changing needs of the church.”<sup>226</sup> This study revealed Lifeway’s lack of spiritual enrichment materials specific to SB WMs. This lack implies the need for investigating means to rectify the absence given the SBC’s intent for Lifeway as recorded in “The Organizational Manual of The Southern Baptist Convention.”<sup>227</sup> Current services and product offerings promoted on Lifeway Worship are analogous to those afforded by other entities like Praise Charts, Planning Center Online, CCLI, and MultiTracks. If Lifeway Worship were to hearken back to its prior undertakings, it could concentrate on training and empowering WMs while offering digital and print music. By so doing, it could emphasize spiritually enriching publications and opportunities like annual training camps infused with SB doctrinal teaching that edifies WM personnel alongside published materials that bolster the SBC’s WMs’ spiritual health through WM-g geared discipleship studies, books, and reading plans. With this assortment of implied adjustments effective at Lifeway and made visible on their Lifeway Worship website, Lifeway Worship could provide SB WMs with equivalent support to what they currently offer other SB church ministries.

## **SB WM Literature**

WLs and the denomination can similarly find value from the implied need for increased literature targeted at SB WMs that is supported in the findings from this study. WLs and WT members can garner insight and practical knowledge to employ within specific SB ministry contexts after evaluating this kind of literature. The SBC can also reap the benefits of increasing their

---

<sup>226</sup> “Who We Are,” About Lifeway, Lifeway.

<sup>227</sup> “Organizational Manual,” Lifeway Christian Resources.

attentiveness and responsiveness to WMs while developing new literature concerning modes for implementation at the association, publication, and local levels. Moreover, the creation and compilation of new SB WM literature would provide the denomination with innovative occasions to further enact the GC throughout its churches, thereby impacting the world.

### Conclusion

Due to the formational nature of content used in congregational worship and the common identification of church WTs, SB WM personnel typically serve as leaders in their churches. As such, WMs either positively or negatively influence their churches' spiritual health and development. SB WMs mark individual lives, worshiping communities, surrounding areas, and the world. The immeasurable weight of SB WMs' influence has remained unexamined in similar historical qualitative research studies. Yet, this research field remains of paramount value to the denomination and Christendom due to the prolific nature of the SBC as a dominating force for distributing the gospel.

This study proposed to evaluate the impact of SB WMs on denominational effectiveness by examining the characteristics of SB WMs and the leadership qualities of SB WLs that foster GC lifestyles at SB churches and within the denomination. Findings from this project revealed that GC actions can be significantly bolstered through intentional WM practices that align with their ministerial purpose to live individual and collective lifestyles of worship while serving the church and modeling biblical characteristics. When SB WMs focus on these goals, everyone profits as lives are transformed by the gospel and sanctified toward Christlikeness. While further research on this topic would present additional findings to benefit the SBC and its WMs, the results from this project indicate the significant impact of SB WMs on denominational effectiveness as the SBC marches forward to fulfill the GC throughout the world.

## Bibliography

- Alabama Baptist State Board of Missions. "State Missionaries." Accessed March 8, 2023, <https://alsbom.org/staff/>.
- Alabama Worship. "About." Accessed March 8, 2023, <https://alabamaworship.org/about/>.
- Alford, Chip. "Transition in Worship Styles Requires Careful Planning, Loving Your People." *Baptist Press*, July 19, 1999. <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/transition-in-worship-styles-requires-careful-planning-loving-your-people/>.
- Andrews, Emily Snider. "Who's Minding the Music? The Impact of Charismatic Renewal on Southern Baptist Training of Worship Leaders." *Liturgy* 37, no. 3 (August 2, 2022): 36-45. DOI: 10.1080/0458063X.2022.2085967.
- Baker-Wright, Michelle. K. "Intimacy and Orthodoxy: Evaluating Existing Paradigms of Contemporary Worship Music." *Missiology: An International Review* 35, no. 2 (April 2007): 169-178. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009182960703500207>.
- Baptist History and Heritage Society. "History of the BHHS." About. Accessed March 21, 2023, <https://thebhhs.org/about/history-of-the-bhhs/>.
- Barrett, Matthew. "Sola Scriptura in the Strange Land of Evangelicalism: The Peculiar but Necessary Responsibility of Defending Sola Scriptura Against Our Own Kind." *The Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*, 19, no. 4 (2015): 9-38.
- Beem, Chuck. "Leading the SBC Association: A Model For Executive Leadership." *Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders*. (June 7, 2021): 1-15. <https://www.sbcal.org/leading-the-sbc-association.html>.
- Bennett, F. Russell. "Leading a Baptist Association in God's Changing World." *Southern Baptist Conference of Associational Leaders*. October 22, 2016. <https://www.sbcal.org/leading-a-baptist-association-in-godrsquos-changing-world.html>.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Richard. *Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God's Agenda*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Publishing Group, 2011.
- Blackaby, Henry, and Ron Owens. *Worship: Believers Experiencing God*. Nashville, Tennessee: Lifeway Christian Resources, 2001.
- Blakeney, Donald Oren. "The Rise of the Part-Time Worship Leader in the Mid-Size Southern Baptist Church." D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University, May 2019. *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects* 2083. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2083>.

- Blackmore, James H. "Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary." In *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*. Vol. 4. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1982. Quoted in Hugh T. McElrath, "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life." *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (July 1986): 9-20. <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=30&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Life Together: Readers Edition*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015.
- Borger, Joyce. "How Worship Forms Our Faith Practices." *Spiritual Resiliency, Reformed Worship*. June 2021. <https://www.reformedworship.org/article/june-2021/spiritual-resiliency>.
- Byrd, Hanna. "The Impact of Lyric Choices on Spiritual Edification." D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University, May 01, 2019. *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects* 2088. <https://digitalcommons-liberty.edu/doctoral/2088>.
- California Worship. "About." Accessed March 10, 2023, <https://caworship.com/about-us>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Welcome to California Worship." Accessed March 8, 2023, <https://caworship.com/>.
- Chapman, Morris H. "Axioms of a Cooperating Southern Baptist." In *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, edited by David S. Dockery, 159-173. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009.
- Cherry, Constance M. *The Worship Architect: A Blueprint for Designing Culturally Relevant and Biblically Faithful Services*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2010.
- Clifton, John Mark. Foreword to *Flickering Lamps: Christ & His Church*, by Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby. Jonesboro, Georgia: Blackaby Ministries International, 2015.
- Cockes, Timothy. "SBC Coverage: Credentials Committee Withdraws Recommendation." *Baptist Press in Baptist & Reflector: Telling the Story of Tennessee Baptists Since 1835*, June 22, 2022. <https://baptistandreflector.org/sbc-coverage-credentials-committee-withdraws-recommendation/>.
- Cosper, Mike. *Rhythms of Grace: How the Church's Worship Tells the Story of the Gospel*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2013.
- Creswell, John W., and J. David Creswell. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Los Angeles, California: SAGE Publications, 2018.
- Criswell, W.A. *Criswell's Guidebook for Pastors*. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1980.
- Day, Michael. "The Future of State Conventions and Associations." In *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, edited by David S. Dockery, 223-241. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009.

- Dockery, David S., ed. *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009.
- Dukić, Helena, and Miro Jakovljević. "Music, Religion and Health; A Scientific Perspective on the Origin of our Relationship to Music." *Science, Art & Religion* 1, no. 1-2 (2021): 143-149. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34010264/>.
- Earls, Aaron. "Most Churches Aren't Engaged in a Worship War Over Music." *Lifeway Research*, August 28, 2019. <https://research.lifeway.com/2019/08/28/most-churches-arent-engaged-in-a-worship-war-over-music/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Southern Baptists Face Largest Membership Decline in 100 Years." *Insights, Church Life & Ministry*. *Lifeway Research*, June 4, 2020. <https://research.lifeway.com/2020/06/04/southern-baptists-face-largest-membership-decline-in-100-years/>.
- Erlanson, Laura. "Church Music Landscape Rearranged As Big Publishers Close." *Baptist Press*, January 3, 2022. <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/church-music-landscape-rearranged-as-big-publishers-close/>.
- Finn, Nathan A. "Priorities For A Post-Resurgence Convention." In *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, edited by David S. Dockery, 257-280. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009.
- Forbis, Wesley L. "The Sunday School Board and Baptist Church Music." *Baptist History and Heritage* 19, no. 1 (1984): 17-26.
- Francis, Leslie J., Simon Foster, David W Lankshear, and Ian Jones. "What Helps Christians Grow? An Exploratory Study Distinguishing Among Four Distinctive Pathways." *Pastoral Psychology*, 68 (2019): 379-392. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-019-00866-5>.
- Gordon, Malcolm. "Removing the Rose-Tinted Glasses: Did Historical Hymns Engage in Lament More than Contemporary Worship Songs?" *Stimulus: The New Zealand Journal of Christian Thought & Practice* 35, no. 1 (July 2018): 27-33. <https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/informit.767987933919031>.
- Hamilton, Jr., James M. *What is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2014.
- Harkness, Allan G. "Intergenerational Corporate Worship As A Significant Educational Activity." *Christian Education Journal* 7, no. 1 (Spring 2003): 5-21.
- Harrington, Bobby, and Josh Patrick. *The Disciple Maker's Handbook: 7 Elements of a Discipleship Lifestyle*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2017.
- Hendricks, William L. "Church Music As a Shaper of Baptist Theology." *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (1986): 3-8.



- Henry, Matthew. "An Exposition, With Practical Observations, of the First Book of Chronicles." In *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible*. Vol. 2, *Joshua to Esther*. McLean, Virginia: Mac Donald Publishing Company, 1985.
- Hoehl, Stacy E. "The Mentor Relationship: An Exploration of Paul as Loving Mentor to Timothy and the Application of This Relationship to Contemporary Leadership Challenges." *Journal of Biblical Perspectives in Leadership* 2, no. 3 (2011). <https://www.regent.edu/journal/journal-of-biblical-perspectives-in-leadership/paul-and-timothy/>.
- Ingalls, Monique Marie. *Singing the Congregation: How Contemporary Worship Music Forms Evangelical Community*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Using Ethnographic Observation to Understand a Congregation's Unique Music Culture." In "Ethnography and Worship: From Scholarship to Practice." *The Hymn* 70, no. 4 (Autumn 2019): 39-43. <https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/ethnography-worship-scholarship-practice/docview/2399872076/se-2>.
- Inman, Samantha M. "From God to Me to Us: Chris Tomlin and the Dimensions of Worship." *Artistic Theologian, School of Church Music and Worship at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 9 (2021):109-159. <https://artistictheologian.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021-Vol-9-Artistic-Theologian-Inman.pdf>.
- Kauflin, Bob. *Worship Matters: Leading Others to Encounter the Greatness of God*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2008.
- Kentucky Baptist Convention. "Jason 'Bubba' Stewart." Worship & Music Consultant, Meet the Staff. Accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.kybaptist.org/staff/jason-stewart/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worship & Music Ministry." Strengthening Church Ministry. Accessed March 10, 2023, <https://www.kybaptist.org/worship-music-ministry/>.
- LeCompte, Margaret D., and Jean J. Schensul. *Ethnographer's Toolkit*. Bk. 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., *Designing & Conducting Ethnographic Research: An Introduction*. Lanham, Maryland: AltaMira Press, 2010.
- Lifeway. "About Lifeway Worship." Lifeway Worship. Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/worship?vid=worship.product-family/deacon-magazine.html>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Deacon Magazine." For Churches. Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "History of Lifeway Christian Resources." About, History. Accessed March 21, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/about/history>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Lifeway." Lifeway. Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/>.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Lifeway Students with Ben Trueblood" Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://studentministry.lifeway.com/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Lifeway Worship." Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Who We Are." About Lifeway. Accessed March 20, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/about>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worship: Believers Experiencing God." Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/product/worship-believers-experiencing-god-P001116718>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worship Life." Sites. Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://worship.lifeway.com/findAndBuy/home?cid=topmenu>.
- Lifeway Christian Resources. "Organizational Manual." What We Do, SBC. Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/about/what-we-do/legal-documentation/organization-manual/>.
- Lifeway Students. "Resources to Impact Your Leadership and Student Ministry." Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/ministries/teenagers>.
- Lifeway Worship. "Lifeway Worship." Worship. Accessed March 21, 2023, <https://www.lifeway.com/en/worship?vid=worship>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worship Life." Sites, Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://worship.lifeway.com/findAndBuy/home?cid=topmenu>.
- Martin, Ryan J. "Love for Christ and Scripture-Regulated Worship." *Artistic Theologian, School of Church Music and Worship at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary*, 8 (2020): 23-46. <https://artistictheologian.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/2020-Vol-8-Artistic-Theologian.pdf>.
- Martin, W. Plunkett. "Music Education, Baptist." In *Encyclopedia of Southern Baptists*. Vol. 2. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1958. Quoted in Hugh T. McElrath, "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life." *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (July 1986): 9-20. <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=30&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>.
- Mathena, Gary M. *One Thing Needful: An Invitation to the Study of Worship*. Bloomington, Indiana: CrossBooks, 2013.
- Maxwell, John C. *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership: Follow Them and People Will Follow You*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The 360-Degree Leader: Developing Your Influence From Anywhere in the Organization*. New York: Harper Collins Leadership, 2011.

- McCommon, Paul. "Trends in Southern Baptist Church Music Since 1915." *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (Jul 1986): 50-56. <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=32&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>
- McElrath, Hugh T. "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life." *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (July 1986): 9-20. <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=30&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>.
- McGee, Monty Boyd. "Serving the Body of Christ in Corporate Worship: An Apologetic for Embracing Multiple Styles of Music." D.Ed.Min. thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2018. *Boyce Digital Repository*. <https://repository.sbts.edu/handle/10392/5696>.
- McKinney, Justin Aaron. "Worship, Discipleship, and Evangelism: How the Purpose of the Church Affects Congregational Singing." D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University School of Music, October 2021. *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects*. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/3217>.
- Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "MA in Worship Ministries." Academics, Masters Studies. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.mbts.edu/degrees/masters-studies/mawm/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "MAWM-CE Course Catalog: Christian Education Courses." Academics, Masters Studies, MA in Worship Ministries Christian Education. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.mbts.edu/degrees/masters-studies/mawm-ce/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Master of Divinity (MDiv)." Academics, Masters Studies. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.mbts.edu/degrees/masters-studies/mdiv/>.
- Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary Catalog* (1983-84). Quoted in Hugh T. McElrath, "The Minister of Music in Southern Baptist Life." *Baptist History and Heritage* 21, no. 3 (July 1986): 9-20. <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=30&sid=9538132b-1593-437e-8810-bfce986a00b1%40redis>.
- Mohler, Jr., R. Albert. "Southern Baptist Identity: Is There a Future?" In *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, edited by David S. Dockery, 25-42. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009.
- Morgan, Robert J. *Then Sings My Soul: The Story of Our Song; Drawing Strength From the Great Hymns of Our Faith*. Bk. 3. Nashville, Tennessee: W. Publishing Group, 2011.
- Music, David W. "Turning Points in Baptist Church Music." *Baptist History and Heritage* 52, no. 3 (Fall 2017): 65-77.
- Navarro, Kevin J. *The Complete Worship Leader*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2001.

- New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. "Master of Arts in Worship Ministry." Catalog, Graduate Programs, Master's Degree Programs. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://catalog.nobts.edu/graduate/masters/degrees/arts/worshipministry>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worship Ministry M.Div. Specialization." Catalog, Graduate Programs, Master's Degree Programs. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://catalog.nobts.edu/graduate/masters/degrees/divinity/worship-ministry>.
- Newman, Jerry Leonard. "Worship Pastor's Need For Pastoral Leadership Development." D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University School of Music, April 2019. *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects*. <https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2016/>.
- Newport, Frank. "A Look at Southern Baptists in the U.S. Today." *Gallup*, June 11, 2021. <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/350987/look-southern-baptists-today.aspx>.
- Noland, Rory. *The Worshiping Artist: Equipping You and Your Ministry Team to Lead Others in Worship*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan. 2007.
- Oahu Baptist Network. "Worship Workshop." Ministries and Events. Accessed March 10, 2023, <http://www.oahubaptist.net/worship-workshop.html>.
- Powers, Mark C. *Going Full Circle: Worship That Moves Us to Discipleship and Missions*. Eugene, Oregon: Resource Publications, 2013.
- Purnell-Webb, Patricia, and Craig P. Speelman. "Music and Memory for Text." *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 106 (2008): 953-954. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/epdf/10.2466/pms.106.3.927-957>.
- Resourcing Worship. "About This Site." Accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/homepage/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "About Us." Accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/about-us-2/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Video Library Release." Accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/homepage/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Worship Resources: Southern Baptist Worship Consultants Resourcing Worship Leaders Worldwide." Accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.resourcingworship.com/>.
- Rideout, Marti. "Value Added: The Leadership Program for Musicians." *American Organist Magazine* (August 1, 2015): 42-43. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/1700971529/fulltextPDF/A1A701F9B9C54BE7PQ/1?accountid=12085>.

Robinson, Jeff. "Fall Trustees Meeting: Board Commends Mohler's Stance on Meaning of Pastor in BF&M 2000." News and Features, *The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary*. October 13, 2022. <https://news.sbts.edu/2022/10/13/fall-trustees-meeting-board-commends-mohlers-stance-on-meaning-of-pastor-in-bfm-2000/>.

SBC. "Baptist Faith & Message 2000: VI. The Church." Accessed January 7, 2023, <https://bfm.sbc.net/bfm2000/#vi>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Great Commission Baptists: Looking Ahead." *Baptist Press*. September 24, 2012. <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/great-commission-baptists-looking-ahead/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Lifeway Christian Resources." 2022 Ministry Report. Accessed March 28, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/ministry-reports/2022-ministry-report/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Lifeway: Worship and Music Ministry." 2022 Ministry Report. Accessed March 28, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/ministry-reports/2022-ministry-report/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Meet Southern Baptists." About, SBC. Accessed December 28, 2022, <https://www.sbc.net/about/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On Evangelism and Soul-Winning." Resolutions. June 1, 2016, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-evangelism-and-soul-winning/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On the Promotion of A 'Cooperative Culture' In The Southern Baptist Convention For Mission Advance." Resolutions, 2019 Annual Meeting. June 1, 2019, <https://www.sbc.net/resource-library/resolutions/on-the-promotion-of-a-cooperative-culture-in-the-southern-baptist-convention-for-mission-advance/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Organizational Manual." Lifeway Christian Resources, What We Do. Accessed March 24, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/about/what-we-do/legal-documentation/organization-manual/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Resolution on Racial Reconciliation On the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Southern Baptist Convention." Resolutions. June 1, 1995, <https://www.sbc.net/resourcelibrary/resolutions/resolution-on-racial-reconciliation-on-the-150th-anniversary-of-the-southern-baptist-convention/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "State and Local Associations." Directories, Accessed March 8, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/resources/directories/state-and-local-associations/>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "We Are Great Commission Baptists." Accessed March 29, 2023, <https://www.sbc.net/>.

Schröder, J. "Academic Music Ministry Training From a Practical-Theological Perspective." *Acta Theologica* 2021, 31 (June 14, 2021): 209-232. [https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/ejc-theolog\\_v2021\\_nsup31\\_a13](https://journals.co.za/doi/abs/10.10520/ejc-theolog_v2021_nsup31_a13).

- Schultz, Terry L. "Whose Heart Music is in Your Mission's Hymnal? Ethnomusicology Principles for Cross-Cultural Ministry." *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 115, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 22-71.
- Sheeks, Randall L. "Skills Necessary for Evangelical Church Ministry: A Comparative Study of Perceptions by Selected University Programs and Church Leaders." D.M.A. diss., New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, November 22, 2016. *ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global* 1883897399. <https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/skills-necessary-evangelical-church-music/docview/1883897399/se-2>.
- Shurden, Walter B. "The Authority of a Baptist Association." *Baptist History and Heritage* 40, no. 1 (January 2005): 6-7.
- South Carolina Baptist Convention. "Worship and Music." Accessed March 17, 2023, <https://www.scbaptist.org/worship/>.
- Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. "Master of Divinity with Worship Leadership." Degree. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.sebts.edu/degree/master-of-divinity/worship-leadership-track-mdiv/>.
- Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. "Master of Arts in Worship Leadership: Deepen your faith and develop your creative skills." Degrees. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://swbts.edu/degree/master-of-arts-in-worship-leadership/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Master of Divinity with a concentration in Worship Leadership: Training leaders in musical excellence and ministry experience." Degrees. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://swbts.edu/degree/master-of-divinity-with-a-concentration-in-worship-leadership/>.
- Stetzer, Ed. "Toward a Missional Convention." In *Southern Baptist Identity: An Evangelical Denomination Faces the Future*, edited by David S. Dockery, 175-202. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2009.
- Sullivan, James L. *Baptist Polity – As I See It*. Rev. ed. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1998.
- The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. "Master of Arts in Worship Leadership." Degree Programs. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.sbts.edu/bgs/degree-programs/ma/worship-leadership/>.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Master of Divinity in Worship Leadership." Degree Programs. Accessed March 25, 2023, <https://www.sbts.edu/bgs/degree-programs/mdiv/worship-leadership/>.
- Toalston, Art. "Church Music Conference Slated June 6-8 in Nashville." *Baptist Press*, April 16, 1999. <https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/church-music-conference-slated-june-6-8-in-nashville/>.

- Towns, Elmer L., and Vernon M. Whaley. *Worship Through the Ages: How the Great Awakenings Shape Evangelical Worship*. Nashville, Tennessee: B&H Academic, 2012.
- Turner, Chris. "LifeWay Highlights Worship Project." *Baptist Press*, June 11, 2008.  
<https://www.baptistpress.com/resource-library/news/lifeway-highlights-worship-project/>.
- Wallace, Wanda T. "Memory for Music: Effect of Melody on Recall of Text." *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition* 20, no. 6 (1994): 1471-1485.  
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0278-7393.20.6.1471>.
- Webber, Robert E. *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Worship Old and New*. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994.
- Werner, Riah. "Music Movement and Memory: Pedagogical Songs as Mnemonic Aids." *TESOL Journal* 9, no. 387 (2018): 1-11. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/tesj.387>.
- Whaley, Vernon M. *Called to Worship: The Biblical Foundations of Our Response to God's Call*. Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2009.
- Wiersbe, Warren W. *Be Worshipful: Glorifying God for Who He Is*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: David C. Cook, 2004.
- Wilkes, Gene C. *Jesus On Leadership: Timeless Wisdom on Servant Leadership*. Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House Publishers, 1998.
- Yancey, Bridgette LaShawn "Discipleship as Understood and Practiced by Worship Leaders, Pastors, and Congregations of Selected Southern Baptist Churches." D.W.S. thesis, Liberty University, April 16, 2020. *Doctoral Dissertations and Projects* 2484.  
<https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/doctoral/2484>.
- Yarbrough, Slayden A., and Michael Kuykendall. *Southern Baptists, A History of a Confessional People*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers, 2021.