

Liberty University

**That They Do Always Remember Him: The Impact of Music and Covenant on the Modern
Rite of the Last Supper**

A Thesis Submitted to
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Masters in Ethnomusicology

by

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Abstract

This paper examines the function of music in the rite of the Lord's Supper as well as similarities and differences in execution, doctrine and function within three major branches of Christianity. As Christianity has evolved the practice of Communion has been adapted to fit the beliefs and practices of various Christian traditions. The Catholic Church, Protestantism and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints represent three different applications of the rite. The use of active covenant making in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a unique characteristic of their Sacrament ordinance. Examining data gathered through surveys, interviews, journals and ethnographic study displays that the covenant making process in the Sacrament of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is impactful on the use of function of music in the service. Semiotic associations with the hymns used for the Sacrament service, themes of remembrance and the decisions of each member throughout the service determine if their thoughts are focused on remembering Jesus Christ or on the plethora of distractions around them. Those that are attuned to their own reactions are successful in keeping the covenant of remembrance as it is made.

Keywords: Lord's Supper, Sacrament, religion, covenant, semiotics, hymns, ordinance, congregational singing

Dedication

I dedicate this to Mia, Adam and Violet. May both your Heavenly Father and your education guide you throughout your lives. I began this journey with you three in my heart, and I end it with your names on this page. I love you.

Chapter One: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

“This do in remembrance of me,”¹ is a statement indicating direction, purpose and meaning. Within the New Testament, the books of Luke and I Corinthians include this line following the breaking and sharing of the bread. The gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as well as an account in I Corinthians all provide similar accounts of Jesus Christ’s last gathering with his apostles prior to his arrest² and trial.³ This traditional meal of the Passover⁴ was transformed that evening to commemorate a “new testament.”⁵ Instead of reflecting upon the salvation of Israelites from the plagues of Egypt in preparation for the Messiah, the meal would now represent the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ for all people, not just those of Jewish heritage. Throughout the spread and growth of the Christian church, many accounts within second and third century Christian history depict a *eucharist* or meal of thanksgiving. While the earliest accounts omit most of the language of Gospels, by the third century, accounts of Christian writers distinctly reference the Biblical accounts of the Last Supper.

Similar practices occur in Christian churches across the globe. Differences in denomination and procedure have led to varying interpretations and executions of this ritual meal. The practice of consuming bread (or a similar substance) and wine (also juice or water) in

¹ Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 11:24.

² Luke 22:54.

³ Luke 23.

⁴ Bernhard Blankenhorn, *Bread from Heaven : An Introduction to the Theology of the Eucharist*, (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2021) Accessed December 20, 2023. ProQuest Ebook Central.

⁵ Luke 22.

remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ is a seemingly universal rite across Christianity and can possess many names. The Lord's Supper, Eucharist, the Lord's Table, Communion and the Sacrament are all used to reference the ritual consumption. While each denomination possesses their own practices, distinguishing factors are most clearly observed when comparing Protestantism (post-Reformation sects of Christianity), Catholicism (pre-Reformation practices) and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (classified as a Restoration based religion as opposed to Reformation).

Each denomination includes music in conjunction with the rite. Differences in the function and role of the ordinance for each faith may determine differences in the roles of the music associated with the service. When compared to other denominations of Christianity, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint's use of the Communion rite (the Sacrament) utilizes music in a way that seems to directly impact the ritual. By exploring the practices of several denominations, the unique traits of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints church through using hymns⁶ within a covenant become evident. This research will explore if the Sacramental hymn⁷ is in fact part of the covenantal process and not an addition to the rite as in other faiths.

⁶ The use of the term "hymn" as it relates to congregational use throughout this paper will refer to the strophic, often homophonic, 4+ part harmony, musical setting to a religious text utilized by Western religions accredited in origin to Issac Watts and Charles Wesley.

⁷ The Sacrament(al) hymns referenced in regard to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints include twenty-six hymns that are included in the hymnal of the church that are used primarily, if not solely, for the congregational hymn prior to the blessing and passing of the Sacrament as an ordinance.

The Last Supper and Early Christianity

Following the death of Jesus Christ, his followers began to institute and practice the newly altered meal of Passover in remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and the bid to remember Him through the partaking of bread and wine. Throughout the history of the Jewish people, the use of food to represent God's covenant promises with His people was a common and well understood practice. During the Last Supper, Christians believe that Jesus Christ established a new covenant, reflective of those made with Israel as a people in which all that believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ would be saved. Gillian Feeley-Harnik addresses the connection in *The Lord's Table: Eucharist and Passover in Early Christianity*.⁸ She states:

Early Christians used the language of food to establish the legitimacy of Jesus and the novelty of his message. The last supper... establishes binding relations between human beings and God, but relations of a very different order from those established in scripture or by other sectarians. The meal is a redefinition of sacrifice. Of all sacrificial meals, it most closely resembles the passover, but every critical element in the Passover is reversed: the time, the place, the community, the sacrifice, and ultimately the significance of the meal. The passover is a feast that celebrates kinship and nationhood. Jesus' sacrifice symbolizes the death of family and polity. His new covenant includes all humans.⁹

These changes were practiced among the early Christians in various communities as the news and message of Jesus Christ spread to surrounding lands. Accounts of a similar rite are addressed in the chapters of John¹⁰ as well as in the letters of Paul to the Corinthians.¹¹ Each of these

⁸ Gillian Feeley-Harnick, *The Lord's Table: Eucharist and Passover in Early Christianity*, reprint 2016 (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017).

⁹ Ibid., 19.

¹⁰ John 13.

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.

accounts includes language similar to that that is in the Gospels, which are regarded as first-hand accounts of the experience.

Second century accounts provide further insight that the practice of the “new” Passover meal was being treated as a needed rite of those that follow Christ. St. Justin Martyr describes the practice of a Eucharistic meal that follows the patterns established in 1 Corinthians. An account from second century Rome explains:

And this food is called among us *eucharistia* [thanksgiving], of which no one is allowed to partake except one who believes that the things which we teach are true, and has received the washing that is for the remission of sins and for rebirth, and who so lives as Christ handed down. For we do not receive these things as common bread and common drink; but in like manner as Jesus Christ our Savior, having been made incarnate by God’s logos, took both flesh and blood for our salvation, so also have we been taught that the food eucharistized through the word of prayer that is from Him , from which our blood and flesh are nourished by transformation, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who became incarnate. For the apostles, in the memoirs composed by them, which are called Gospels, thus handed down what was commanded them; that Jesus took bread, and having given thanks, said, “Do this for my memorial, this is my body.”¹²

This statement not only references the practices established by Jesus during the Last Supper, but also alludes to the belief of *transubstantiation* that is still practiced in the Catholic Church.

Blankenhorn regards this account by Justin Martyr as “the most important, precise witness to the Christian liturgy as celebrated in the second century.”¹³

Blankenhorn provides specific references to the Last Supper through documentation written through the third and fourth centuries as well. These accounts span through Africa, Rome and Syria. Blankenhorn summarizes the main findings of these reports as

First, the Scriptures, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, and Cyprian, as well as each of the early Eucharistic prayers mentioned above, recognize that the Eucharistic ritual that they

¹² Bernard Blankenhorn, *Bread from Heaven: An Introduction to the Theology of the Eucharist*, 48.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 50.

celebrate has its historical origin with Jesus of Nazareth. Second, the same sources identify this origin with the Last Supper.¹⁴

The early foundation of this eucharistic meal referencing a new covenant through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ leads to the institution of the Eucharist as a sacrament within the Catholic Church in the 15th and 16th-century councils of Florence and Trent. Blankenhorn provides quotes from such councils dating 1551 and 1562 that directly link the practice of the Eucharist and Communion to the rite of the Last Supper. He explains:

The Council of Trent has left us a teaching on the institution of the Eucharist. In her Decree on the Sacrament of the Eucharist (from the year 1551), Trent taught that Christ instituted the Eucharist at the Last Supper. He becomes truly present in these gifts after his blessing. In the Decree on the Sacrifice of the Mass (from the year 1562), Trent proclaims that, at the Last Supper, Jesus instituted a sacrifice. The Council also teaches that Jesus instituted the apostles as priests at the Last Supper by saying, "Do this in memory of me." He thus ordered them to perpetuate his sacrifice. Finally, Vatican II reaffirms that, at the Last Supper, Christ instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice.¹⁵

It is clear that the Biblical accounts of the Last Supper provided directions and at times literal dictates for the ceremonial elements. The specificity of second and third century accounts recognize the continuity of the original experience that led to the institution of the Eucharist as a sacrament in the 15th century. These practices form the foundation of the Catholic understanding of the Eucharist; an understanding that will perpetuate through the Reformation into the teachings of Christianity. A similar rite emerged through the teachings of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

¹⁴ Ibid., 59.

¹⁵ Blankenhorn, *Bread from Heaven*, 64.

Catholicism, Protestantism and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Following the end of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry, followers of Jesus Christ were soon referred to as "Christians."¹⁶ Functioning as a single church growing throughout the world several centuries would pass before the first great division would happen. In 1054 AD, a division between the Eastern and Western followers would result in the Western Catholic tradition and the Eastern Orthodox tradition. Many similarities exist between these faiths; however, there are many distinguishing factors. Orthodoxy and similar Eastern Christian traditions will not be discussed in this paper. The primary religions discussed will be the Western denomination of Catholicism and the subsequent divisions that lead the modern Protestantism as well as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The research will focus on the similarities and differences between Catholicism, Protestantism and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, seeking to identify potential singularities.

The Catholic church fluctuated in the location of the headquarters of the church and eventually Vatican City in Rome, Italy became the home of the papacy and the Roman Catholic Church. The belief in the pope as the head of the church is a defining factor of Catholicism and separates Catholicism from all other Christian sects. The greatest division following the East-West division of 1054 succeeded Martin Luther's posting of the 95 Theses — a document challenging many Catholic beliefs and traditions — on a cathedral door in Wittenberg, Germany in 1517. The issues arising from this bold statement against the head of the church led to the Reformation of Christianity resulting in a division between Protestant and Catholic believers. The greatest points of division revolved around the Catholic belief of intercession between church leadership and God which Luther felt was leading to corruption and monetary greed,

¹⁶ Acts 11:26

disputations between church leaders and European monarchs and the printing of scripture in European languages allowing the increase of scriptural knowledge for non-Latin speaking believers. Following the divorce of Henry VIII in 1534, the Church of England officially separated from the Catholic Church to become its own Christian entity under the rule of the British monarch. Other denominations of Christianity have branched off from 1517 onward. There is a debate around the number of Protestant denominations that span from three to seven major schools with various sub-categories of each. Generally, it would be safe to assume there are several thousand. The exact number is not relevant to this research as the view of Protestantism will be approached through the lens of general belief and practice as it pertains to the doctrine and function surrounding the Lord's Supper within Protestant denominations.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not claim to be associated with Christianity from the same root of Reformation as other sects of Protestantism. Instead, the church refers to itself as a restoration church (some place it under the category of non-Trinitarian) that believes its leadership was originally on the Earth at the time of Christ, was removed from the Earth following the death of the Apostles and was restored through a living prophet in 1830. While many core beliefs of Protestantism exist in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the belief in a single religious figure at the head of the church resembles the Catholic view of the pope. Following the formation of the church, there have been groups that have separated from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that is headquartered in Salt Lake City, Utah over discrepancies in leadership, practice and doctrine. The exact number of these groups is also not definitive and not a relevant point for the purpose of this study. One unifying factor among these three major world religions is the continued belief in, practice of and historical connection to the Eucharistic meal established by Jesus Christ during the Last Supper.

The specific beliefs and practices differ as well as the interpretation of the meaning and function within these groups. Each group utilizes music in their services and often have specialized selections that lead to or accompany the ordinance.

Holy Communion, Lord's Supper and the Sacrament

Churches across the world that follow Jesus Christ routinely practice a rite reminiscent of the Last Supper. The declaration of Christ that bread and wine *represent* His body and blood and should be taken in remembrance of Him¹⁷ is practiced in many differing capacities. The Catholic Church teaches that partaking of the Eucharist through the Holy Communion is a literal and transformative process. “The transformed bread and wine are **truly** the Body and Blood of Christ and are not merely symbols. When Christ said, ‘This is my body’ and, ‘This is my blood,’ the bread and wine are transubstantiated. Although the bread and wine appear the same to our human faculties, they are actually the real body and blood of Jesus.”¹⁸ Protestant Christian churches vary in their belief around consubstantiation¹⁹ and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not believe in transubstantiation, but both do continue to practice the rite in varying ways as a symbolic representation of the same principle. Each of these religions includes music in the service prior to the ordinance. The specificities of each tradition and the themes and content of the music will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The bread of the original Eucharist meal has been replaced in most Catholic and Protestant churches with a wafer or small cracker that the individual can pick up or is passed

¹⁷ Matthew 26:17-30.

¹⁸ “Is the Eucharist a Symbol?” updated 2022, accessed August 6, 2023, <https://www.usccb.org/eucharist>.

¹⁹ Consubstantiation is the spiritual presence of Christ in the host allowing it to be both the Host and Jesus Christ.

around. In many cases these are individually packaged and only handled by the individual eating the wafer. In other instances a large wafer will be broken and pieces will be distributed to the members. These wafers or crackers often do not contain leaven in reflection of the type of bread used during the Passover. There are several types of these wafers to accommodate dietary needs of the members.²⁰ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints uses bread that is torn by individuals of a certain age and priesthood assigned to that task. In certain parts of the world other substances are used in place of bread as long as they are bread like, accommodations can be made for those with allergies.²¹ The exact type of substance used for the rite does not impact the service of the Sacrament, while in other denominations the rite calls for an unleavened substance.

Similarly, wine or juice is often used within Catholic and Protestant denominations. Communion wine made entirely from grapes is still the common drink associated with the Eucharist in Catholic services. However, many Protestant sects have switched to grape juice in replacement of wine based on doctrine that discourages alcohol consumption, while still staying in line with the substance used by Christ in the Last Supper. Many Catholic Churches provide individual, prepackaged servings; however, the communal communion cup is still utilized in certain diocese. The communion cup allows each member to drink from the same cup after receiving their wafer. Many Protestant churches opt for the use of individual servings of juice that do not require the sharing of a communal cup. These products are available through distributors and are purchased by the congregation as needed. The Church of Jesus Christ of

²⁰ “Communion Bread and Wafers,” Concordia Supply, <https://www.concordiasupply.com/Church-Supplies/Communion-Supplies/Communion-Bread-Wafers>, accessed 1 January, 2024.

²¹ “18.9.3 Guidelines for the Sacrament,” *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2021),

Latter-day Saints does not use wine or juice, but instead uses water in the Sacrament service. The use of water allows all congregations to utilize the same substance without needing to purchase or store juice or wine. Within the Sacrament service the substances that are used are not specifically dictated because whatever is used is blessed. The church views the blessing as the necessary step to make whatever substance is on the table appropriate for the service.

Frequency of communion or the Lord's Supper in Catholic or Protestant denominations varies dramatically. While the Eucharistic prayer and consumption of the communion meal are part of the Mass Ordinary and can therefore be utilized in daily mass, not all Catholic services offer the communion daily. Most strive for a weekly offering. Even when made available those that are present (and admitted to do so based on Catholic regulations around who can partake of communion) can choose to participate. Pew Research found that about 43% of American Catholics receive Communion every time they attend Mass.²²

The Lord's Supper within the Protestant tradition is not considered a necessary part of each weekly service by most Protestant denominations. Some choose to provide the Lord's Supper weekly, some monthly and some once or twice a year. There are religious leaders and scholars that claim that the Lord's Supper should be offered weekly,²³ but this does not seem to be universal understanding. The purpose most stated around the use of the Lord's Supper is to remember Christ and His sacrifice as well as recognize the promise of a new covenant established for the believers of Christ by Jesus during the Last Supper. Between all three groups

²² Alexandra Sandstorm, "Five Facts about Communion and American Catholics," September 24, 2015, <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2015/09/24/5-facts-about-communion-and-american-Catholics/#:~:text=The church recommends that Catholics,%>

²³ Jonathan Arnold, "How Often Should We Receive the Lord's Supper?," 22 February, 2021. <https://holypoys.org/how-often-lords-supper/>.

discussed in this research, a connection to remembrance and covenant can be applicable to every group in varying degrees and through differing execution.

Ordinances and Covenants

The word *covenant* is not foreign to anyone familiar with Christian teachings. In Old Testament scripture, God made covenants with Abraham that preceded and prepared the Israelites for the coming Messiah.²⁴ Following the birth and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth, the covenants of Abraham were fulfilled in many ways. Followers of Jesus who came to be referred to as “Christians” often reflect on the Abrahamic covenant as being fulfilled through the spreading of the teachings of Christ across the globe.²⁵ This leaves the act of covenant-making as something from the past; although, modern-day believers still benefit from the fulfillment and extension of past covenants through following Jesus Christ. The Bible Project states that:

Jesus perfectly succeeded at every point where humanity failed. He is the guarantor and mediator of the new and better covenant. Now people from every nation, tribe, and tongue who trust Jesus can become a part of God’s covenant family. In the new covenant, we receive the forgiveness of sins and God’s empowering Spirit to help us live lives full of self-giving love.²⁶

Covenant making within modern day churches often reflects back on covenants that God made with ancient Israel as well as the new covenant Christ established with all that would believe and follow Him. This leaves modern-day covenants or “new” covenants as something that Catholics

²⁴ Genesis 12:1-3; Genesis 17:1-9; Genesis 22:15-18; 3 Nephi 20:25-27; Doctrine and Covenants 132:29-32; Abraham 1:18-19; Abraham 2:6-11.

²⁵ “What Is the Abrahamic Covenant?,” August 11, 2022, <https://www.Christianity.com/wiki/bible/what-is-the-abrahamic-covenant.html>.

²⁶ Whitney Woollard, “The Five Key Covenants God Makes With Humans in the Bible: Partnerships Between God and People,” 2018, Bible Project, accessed August 4, 2023, <https://bibleproject.com/articles/covenants-the-backbone-bible/#:~:text=Covenants are one of the,order to rescue his world.>

and Protestants often find taboo or unnecessary. However, *ordinances* are actions that are related to covenants and often reflect the promises of the covenant. Ordinances are similar to rites and sacraments as they are sacred actions that are often symbolic.

Charles Mawungwa from the site letstalkscriptures.com claims that making covenants with God past the time of Christ is not only not necessary but demonstrates a lack of Biblical understanding. He states, “If you’re in Christ and are looking to make another covenant with God outside of the covenant of Christ, then you don’t really know what you’re asking for.”²⁷

Mawungwa goes on to explain that the covenant that Christ made with God covers every possible promise, need or desire humanity could ever ask from God. There is no need to covenant or vow anything to God, which would require action by Him, because Christ has covered those with the new covenant sealed with His death. It does seem that certain areas of Protestantism do recognize the need for action from mankind to participate in those covenants. *The Lord’s Supper as the Sign and Meal of the New Covenant* recognizes that both baptism and the Lord’s Supper are actions that believers should actively participate in to fully become in active association with Christ’s new covenant. Within the text Waters, Ortlund and Van Pelt state:

Baptism and the Lord’s Supper are alike in a number of ways. Christ has instituted both. Each is an ordinance unique to the new covenant. Each is to be observed only within the new covenant community. Each serves to point the recipient to Christ and the benefits of his salvation. Each is to be observed until Christ returns at the end of the age.²⁸

²⁷ Charles Mawungwa, “Should You be Making Covenants with God?.” November 4, 2022, <https://www.letstalkscriptures.com/should-you-be-making-covenants-with-god/>.

²⁸ Guy Prentiss Waters, *The Lord’s Supper as the Sign and Meal of the New Covenant*, (Wheaton, Illinois:Crossway, 2019),102.

The authors claim throughout the text that there are certain requirements that should be in place before believers are allowed to participate in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper. These factors are associated with a previous acceptance of Jesus Christ, identifying as a member of the new covenant and avoiding sin. The authors state "because the Supper is a covenant meal, entrusted to the covenant community and administered by Christ's ministers, it is left to the elders to admit or exclude individuals for this Table." They go on to state the main responsibility is upon the participant, "it is wrong for one who knowingly and willingly gives himself to a particular sin to seek to commune in this ordinance with the Lord Jesus Christ."²⁹ It seems that at least certain denominations Protestant Christianity support the understanding that the Lord's Supper is connected to a covenant and holds meaning beyond the remembrance and repetition of actions established by Jesus Christ during the Last Supper.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints teaches that members still can and need to make covenants with God. Throughout membership in the church every person can make covenants at the time of baptism, weekly during the Sacrament meeting and in temple services.³⁰ These covenants are tied to the saving ordinances needed for individuals to gain the highest level of exaltation following their death. While the church does not teach that only members can reach "heaven," the teachings about heaven differ from traditional Protestant Christianity as well as Catholic and Orthodox traditions.³¹ These needed covenants are the baptismal covenants, endowment and sealing covenants, as well as other saving ordinances: receiving the Priesthood

²⁹ Ibid., 100.

³⁰ Temples are a separate entity from church buildings. Temples are reserved for specific ordinances and are regarded as highly sacred spaces.

³¹ Individuals will spend eternity in differing "degrees of glory" determined by their focus, actions and desires of their time on Earth and choices following their death. Every person has the same potential to achieve the highest degree. "Topics and Questions: Kingdoms of Glory," accessed August 14, 2023, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/kingdoms-of-glory?lang=eng>.

for men and renewing through the Sacrament. The church defines an ordinance as, “a sacred, formal act or ceremony performed by the authority of the priesthood. Some ordinances are essential to our exaltation. They include baptism, confirmation, ordination to the Melchizedek Priesthood (for men), the temple endowment, and the marriage sealing. With each of these ordinances, we enter into solemn covenants with the Lord.”³² The church often teaches about the importance of ordinances and covenants and teaches they can influence members’ lives. The same site states, “Ordinances and covenants help us remember who we are. They remind us of our duty to God. The Lord has provided them to help us come unto Him and receive eternal life. When we honor them, He strengthens us spiritually.”³³

The baptismal covenant includes, “to take upon ourselves the name of Jesus Christ, always remember Him, keep His commandments, and serve Him to the end.” In return, “Heavenly Father promised us a remission of sins and, through the ordinance of confirmation, the gift of the Holy Ghost.”³⁴ The Sacramental covenant renews the baptismal covenants each week. The Endowment is an individual covenant that each member performs only once for themselves. However, this covenant as well as all others (except the Sacrament) are often performed by church members acting in proxy for members of their family that did not perform the ordinance during their lifetime. Church members often study their genealogy and return to the temple to perform ordinances for their ancestors. The church teaches that members’ families

³² “Doctrinal Study: Ordinances,” accessed August 6, 2023, https://site.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/ordinances?lang=eng&adobe_mc_ref=https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/manual/gospel-topics/ordinances?lang=eng&adobe_mc_sdid=SDID=2087E091151FB358-2EFE2F6BE97B0CEA|MCORGID=66C5485451E56AAE0A490D45%40AdobeOrg|TS=1691596808.

³³ “Doctrinal Study: Ordinances.”

³⁴ “What Covenants Did I Make at Baptism?,” accessed August 6, 2023, https://site.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/youth/learn/yw/ordinances-covenants/baptism?lang=eng&adobe_mc_ref=.

will have the option to accept these essential ordinances from the Spirit World³⁵ and if they do so will receive all the eternal blessings as though they had accepted them on the Earth. This ordinance occurs within the temples, which are separate buildings from those used for Sunday worship. The endowment means *a gift* and covers five covenants:

1. Live the law of obedience and strive to keep Heavenly Father's commandments.
2. Obey the law of sacrifice, which means sacrificing to support the Lord's work and repenting with a broken heart and contrite spirit.
3. Obey the law of the gospel of Jesus Christ, which is the higher law that He taught while He was on the earth.
4. Keep the law of chastity, which means that a member has sexual relations only with the person to whom he or she is legally and lawfully wedded according to God's law.
5. Keep the law of consecration, which means that members dedicate their time, talents, and everything with which the Lord has blessed them to building up Jesus Christ's Church on the earth.³⁶

“In return, Heavenly Father promises that those who remain faithful to their temple covenants will be endowed 'with power from on high'”³⁷ The church handbook states that, “Some of the gifts that members receive through the temple endowment include: Greater knowledge of the Lord's purposes and teachings; Power to do all that Heavenly Father wants His children to do; Divine direction when serving the Lord, their families, and others; Increased hope, comfort, and peace.”³⁸ The final saving ordinance and covenant is the sealing ordinance. “A temple sealing joins a husband and wife together for time and all eternity. Couples who are sealed in the temple

³⁵ “The spirit world is a place of waiting, working, learning, and, for the righteous, resting from care and sorrow. Our spirits will live there until we are ready for our resurrection. Then our mortal bodies will once more unite with our spirits, and we will receive the degree of glory we have prepared for”; “Spirit World,” *Gospel Principles*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2011).

³⁶ Jake Frandsen, “What are the Five Covenants Made in the Temple Endowment,” February 8, 2023, <https://www.ldsliving.com/what-are-the-5-covenants-made-in-the-temple-endowment/s/11289>.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ “The Endowment,” *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2021) 27.2.

are promised glory and joy throughout eternity. They will receive these blessings if they are faithful to the covenants they make in the temple. Through this ordinance, their children may also be part of their eternal family.”³⁹

There are guidelines around when and how members receive and take part in these ordinances and covenants, but the church encourages all members to prepare to be able to make and keep the promises and take part in the ceremonies. This is a commonality among all three groups discussed in this paper. Catholicism, Protestantism and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints all view participation in the Lord’s Supper, Communion and the Sacrament as a sacred experience that should require an individual to display a level of worthiness and loyalty to the church and Jesus Christ to participate. While these guidelines are not strongly enforced by all denominations of Protestantism, nor by all Catholic priests, the teachings within the doctrine support the ability of church leaders to both admit and exclude participants on a basis of worthiness. The major defining distinction between these three groups is the interpretation of the covenant/ordinance relationship for the modern-day practice of the Eucharist meal. Catholics interpretation involves a physical manifestation of accepting Christ upon consumption, Protestants believe in varying degrees that the meal represents a willingness to participate in the body of Christ’s church within the new covenant, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes that the weekly ordinance is an active covenant renewed each week upon participating in the ordinance. Each group finds the practice important, each have doctrine that supports that the ordinance should be performed weekly, the frequency of the ordinance in Catholic and Protestant congregations depends on the local leadership while in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the Sacrament is held weekly worldwide.

³⁹ “Sealing of Husband and Wife,” *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2021), 27.3.

Statement of Purpose, Research Questions and Hypothesis

The purpose of this thesis is to first compare the practices of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper and the Sacrament as they function within their perspective denominations of Christianity (Catholicism, collective Protestantism and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) with a more explicit view of the musical element. Following the comparison, specific traits of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint practice of the Sacrament will be further explored. The unique qualities of the Sacrament will be discussed as they pertain to the role and function of music within the service. Finally, research tools will be utilized to determine semiotic associations between the Sacrament hymns, the ordinance itself and the experience of members participating in the service. The research will explore how the covenant itself is impacted through the use of music and if members recognize the function of the Sacramental hymn as part of the ordinance through the following research questions:

RQ1: How does the Sacrament in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints differ from the modern rite of the Lord's supper in Catholicism and Protestantism?

RQ2: In what ways does the Sacrament hymn function as a part of the ordinance process?

RQ3: How do members recognize the themes and promptings to "remember?"

RQ4: What semiotic associations are present in Sacramental hymn experience and how do those experiences translate into the ordinance itself?

Determining such impacts will help to distinguish if the covenantal aspect of the Sacrament creates a unique environment for music to become a part of the ordinance or not. I hypothesize:

H1: The majority of members are not consciously aware that the Sacrament hymn and text of the prayer are encouraging remembrance directly throughout the covenant process; therefore, demonstrating that the covenantal element does not directly impact the role of music in the Sacrament service and that the hymn is not recognized as the catalyst for beginning or continuing the process of "always remembering."

At the conclusion of the paper, the findings will be presented as they compare to the ornamental function of music within other denominations to determine if the unique qualities of the Sacrament impact the purpose of music in the service.

Significance of the Study

This study examined communion practices of different denominations and highlighted The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints due to its unique semiotic elements. Presenting the teachings of the churches as they are stated by the church allows readers to determine their opinions about the teachings without the inherent bias or opinion of the author. Research presented with fact and clear statements in line with what each church teaches introduces readers to the culture of the churches as they stand for those involved.

By emphasizing research primarily on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, this study provides detailed information about the musical practices and functionality of the ordinance. In addition to the impact the study may have on understanding the Sacrament within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints as well as comparative associations provides insight for other Christian denominations. In many ways the study is beneficial for the field of Ethnomusicology. Ethnographic fieldwork of a unique ordinance and direct insight into an under-investigated denomination is insightful and encouraging for the development of future research. Both individual and group experiences provided a multi-dimensional account of distinctive musical experiences and religious practices.

The tool of comparison provides understanding from a relational standpoint. By including comparison members of each perspective faith are able to see similarities and differences with the practice of the Eucharist meal. It is not often that comparisons within religion are neutral in

composition. The goal of this paper is to present the findings and descriptions of an ordinance ritual as well as to determine the impact of the covenant process on the musical experience.

Research Plan

Through the use of surveys and questionnaires, a large number of members across the United States have shared their understanding of the ordinance, Sacrament hymns and practices. Members were asked to answer or fill in questions about the prayers, songs and ordinance to gauge their familiarity with the language. Scales were presented for members to rank the importance of the Sacrament hymn as it relates to the logistics and doctrine of the ordinance as well as where their time is spent both physically and mentally as they participate.

An ethnography of a specific congregation provided the opportunity to observe members' engagement in the Sacrament hymn and ordinance practice. Attention was placed on behavior, body language, and apparent focus of members during the passing and partaking as well as any possible distractions or common features between differing congregations. Following a similar service in the same congregation, the researcher had the opportunity to speak to members about their experience in that setting of the ordinance, ask the members if they recall the hymn and its context and if they felt that memory was established, before, during or after the ordinance or, at all.

Interviews with members and church leaders provided deeper insight into the thought processes of members during the ordinance. Having information from members on multiple occasions offered a thorough understanding of what an individual perspective of the process looks like. Throughout the interviews the music of several Sacrament hymns was presented with text and members were asked to share any thoughts, feelings or behaviors that occur. This practice helped to determine in what way the music functions as an associative sign.

Willing members were asked to keep a journal of thoughts throughout services; logging at what points their thoughts shifted and what was the catalyst for change. By selecting members from differing backgrounds, ages, connections to the church and phases of life for all the above research, a general collection of information was produced that is a cross-section of members within the United States and also a specific area.

Once the collection of data was complete, a comparison of findings was used to determine the connection between the thoughts and behaviors of members and the Sacrament hymn. By noticing when members shift focus during or after the hymn as opposed to during or after the prayer, connections were made between the hymn and the elicitation of remembrance. Whether members remembered the hymn from the service or not provided insight into the validity of the hymn as part of the ordinance. Connections with word associations between words and Jesus Christ or melodic lines and Jesus Christ determined if semiotic associations were tied more to symbolic signs through language or indices through music, or both. These findings in comparison to the known function of other denominations provided insight into whether the covenantal element of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Sacrament service impacts the commission of music associated with the ordinance.

Chapter Two: Literature Reivew

Catholicism

Sources

The history of the Catholic Church has been a topic of literary discussion for centuries. Following the death of Jesus Christ collections of His teachings and the writings of the apostles spread throughout what at the time was the Roman Empire. Followers, that came to be known as Christians, created congregations in what would become Southeast Asia as well into the area that would become Europe. Letters from Paul as well as other early documents began the prolific documented history of the Catholic Church. Following the Great Schism of 1054 AD⁴⁰ where the Easter tradition of Orthodoxy separated from the Western Catholic tradition, the Catholic Church has been well documented through record keeping both within the church and from outside sources.

The Catholic Church believes that when Christ spoke to Peter in Matthew 16:18 and proclaimed “upon this rock I will build my church”⁴¹ that Paul received the leadership that would set him apart as the first Pope and leader of the Christian Church as whole. Peter’s death in Rome provided the location for the church to form. In 381 AD, Julian the Apostate’s conversion led Theodosius to proclaim Catholicism as the official religion of the Roman Empire. Throughout time the Roman Empire decline in political power as outside groups began to move into the area. While many accepted Christianity, their practices did not always align with those of Rome. The presence of the Pope placed Rome as the spiritual center of the area and therefore

⁴⁰ “The History of the Catholic Church,” accessed 12, March 2024, <https://Catholicworldmission.org/Catholic-church-timeline/#church-start>.

⁴¹ Matthew 16:18.

the center of power for the church and its leadership.⁴² Many more conversions resulted in a shift to not only spiritual power, but a great influence on political and government matters.

Catholic history and doctrine are accessible through many historical documents and have been interpreted and commented upon by many scholars. For the purpose of this paper, the history and doctrine of the Catholic Church will come from sources either published or supported by the Church, or by those that are involved in the church. There are various interpretations of Catholic Liturgy and not all parishes or dioceses practice or hold the same regulations. Just as any other religion, there are variations of Catholicism that range from very strict to more liberal in nature. For the purpose of this paper, sources will be selected that reflect the middle ground and most standard practice of the church as a whole as opposed to seeking input from the various extremities in practice. Most sources will come from material created by large, multi-national and publicly available sources that are generated for the knowledge and application of active members of the Catholic Church.

The Eucharist

The year 320 AD brought about great growth and development for the Catholic Church once it became the official religion of the Roman Empire. The practice of the Eucharist as a sacrament ordained by Jesus Christ had continued and was adopted as part of the liturgy. A few centuries later, following many changes to the Catholic Church including naming Latin the official language, congregations gathering in a church as opposed to their homes, and the declaration of the Latin Mass,⁴³ the Eucharist as a sacrament began to take a different form. Two

⁴² “The History of the Catholic Church.”

⁴³ “The History of the Eucharist,” accessed 12 March, 2024, <https://Catholicworldmission.org/the-history-of-the-eucharist/>.

major changes to the practice of the Eucharist consisted of the decision that the “host”⁴⁴ was too holy for ordinary people to touch. This led to the practice of the clergy placing the host onto the tongue of the recipient.⁴⁵ Additionally, many Catholics began to feel unworthy of participating in the Eucharist and would refuse to ingest the bread and wine. Legislation determined that “communion should be received at least one per year by all Catholics.”⁴⁶

Around the year 1250 AD, Thomas Aquinas’ writings on the Eucharist and exploration of the idea of transubstantiation proved to be extremely impactful to Catholicism.

Aquinas defined transubstantiation as the physical elements of the Eucharist literally transforming into the body or blood of Christ. This differed and continues to differ from modern Christian beliefs that the bread and wine are mere symbols of remembrance. According to the Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, the elements literally become the body and blood of Christ.⁴⁷

The Holy Eucharist is considered the greatest of the seven sacraments due to the sacred nature of transubstantiation and the proximity of the literal body of Christ to members through that process. The Eternal World Television Network (EWTN) provides broadcasts, television programs, books, articles and more to those interested in learning about Catholicism and members that want to increase their study and knowledge. Their site provides insight into the deep spiritual meaning and power behind the Holy Eucharist as it pertains to a Catholic believer. They state:

The Catholic Church teaches that in the Eucharist, Our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, is really, truly, and substantially, present under the appearances of bread and wine. Our Lord is not merely symbolized by the bread and wine; nor is he present only through the faith of those present. Rather, the two material things, bread and wine, are completely changed into the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ, leaving behind

⁴⁴ This refers to the bread or wafer that represents the body of Jesus Christ.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ “The History of the Eucharist.”

only their sensible appearances. Thus, through the words of consecration spoken by the priest, Jesus, without ceasing to be present in a natural way in heaven, is also present sacramentally, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, wherever the consecrated elements are present.⁴⁸

The belief in transubstantiation creates an incredibly sacred nature in the partaking of the Holy Eucharist. Catholics believe that Christ is fully present and entering the body of those taking the Eucharist and in turn blessing their flesh and spirit. EWTN explains “have we been taught that the food which is blessed by the prayer of His word, and from which our blood and flesh by transmutation are nourished, is the flesh and blood of that Jesus who was made flesh.”⁴⁹ They continue the explanation around the presence of Christ during and after participating in the Eucharist as

His Presence is real, because it has “real being.” This philosophical term conveys that it has actual existence, and not just mental existence. His Presence is true. Truth refers to an accurate statement of a reality. The Blessed Sacrament is called Christ because it is Christ. It is not simply a symbol, as a flag is the symbol of a nation, or as a photograph is a representation of the individual shown. Finally, His Presence is substantial. Even though our senses detect the appearances or properties of bread and wine, the substance is Christ, Who is wholly present, Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity, under each element, and any parts of them.⁵⁰

Around the year 1300 the Feast of Corpus Christi became a part of the liturgical calendar. This feast, which is hosted on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday (this date corresponds with the historic date Christ held the Last Supper) focuses on adoration of the Eucharist as a physical representation of the body of Jesus Christ. This “adoration” involves viewing and pondering the importance of the Eucharist meal as well as the sacrifice and importance of Jesus Christ’s death

⁴⁸ “What is the Holy Eucharist?,” accessed 12 March, 2024, <https://www.ewtn.com/Catholicism/seasons-and-feast-days/corpus-christi-14356>.

⁴⁹ “Is Jesus Present in the Eucharist?,” accessed 12 March, 2024, <https://www.ewtn.com/Catholicism/seasons-and-feast-days/corpus-christi-14356>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

and resurrection. Catholic World Mission explains that adoration period provides “faithful Catholics a chance to meditate and rest in the presence of Christ while extolling worship and honor upon Jesus for his death on the cross and resurrection three days later.”⁵¹ This has become such a popular and meaning part of worship for many Catholics that some parishes offer “perpetual adoration” where the Holy Eucharist is on display at all times. Some churches stream a twenty-four hour broadcast of the Eucharist so Catholics can participate in the adoration from their home.

Present-day Catholicism is seeing a re-emphasis in the importance and dedication to the Holy Eucharist. A “Eucharistic Revival” is occurring and churches are seeking to re-center their focus on Jesus Christ through the practice and participation of the Holy Eucharist. This movement is not only focused on a regeneration of taking the Holy Eucharist, but also seeks donations for the purchase and distribution of monstrances⁵² to churches across the world. The aim is to make the adoration of the Eucharist and therefore the presence of Jesus Christ more available to practicing Catholics across the world. Many Catholic churches have restrictions about who can participate in the Eucharist. Many support the idea that only baptized members of the Catholic faith in good standing with the church should take the Eucharist. There are parishes where this rule is not upheld, despite it being generally accepted as the guideline for participation.

The Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales (LOCBCEW) published a document titled “Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist” that defines clearly each portion of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the musical elements that can and should be

⁵¹ “Is Jesus Present in the Eucharist?”

⁵² A *monstrance* is a vessel that contains the host of the Holy Eucharist. These are often displayed in Catholic Churches or cathedrals for members to participate in the adoration of the Eucharist.

involved, and lists of possible musical settings that fit the needs of that particular part of the service. The following is a summarized account of the musical elements and how they are viewed by practicing Catholics as a functioning element of the Eucharist.

Music of the Liturgy of the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Eucharist takes part in the Mass Ordinary following the Liturgy of the Word. This setting of the Mass is the portion that can be practiced every day by members of the Catholic faith.⁵³ The Liturgy of the Eucharist is a set of prayers, songs and practices that are followed as the hosts (bread and wine) are prepared, presented and ingested by the congregation. Music is an important and substantial part of the Liturgy of the Eucharist and while certain elements are intended to always be sung, many other elements can be sung at the discretion of the leadership of each congregation. The LOCBCEW describes the function of music as:

Music is integral to our celebration of liturgy. It is not only that singing is one of the ways that we are invited to participate and that some parts of the Mass make more sense if they are sung rather than said. Music helps shape our celebration, it marks parts as out as more important than others, it can articulate the structure of the liturgy. Music acts as a form of punctuation in the liturgy; singing emphasises or highlights the point at which there is music. It is important, therefore, that the music reflects the flow of the liturgy.⁵⁴

The various parts of the Liturgy of the Eucharist include the Eucharistic Prayer and its elements: Preface Dialogue, Preface, Sanctus, Thanksgiving, Institution Narrative, Memorial Acclamations, Intercession, Doxology and Amen;⁵⁵ and the Communion Rite and its elements: The Lord's Prayer, Rite of Peace, Breaking of the Bread, Communion, Period of Silence or Song

⁵³ The Mass Proper are portions of the Mass that change to fit the needs of the particular day within the liturgical year. Different texts, readings and songs are performed on certain holidays and important days of the liturgical year.

⁵⁴ *Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist*, Liturgy Office of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales for the Year of the Eucharist (Catholic Bishops' Office of England and Wales: 2005), 1.

⁵⁵ *Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.*, 1.

of Prayer. ⁵⁶The following briefly describes the use of music within the Eucharistic Prayer and the Rite of Communion.

There are eleven versions of the Eucharistic Prayer depending on the date and function of the Mass, each has a slightly difference format and therefore one set structure does not work for every service. Music within the prayer should be prepared before hand so it can seamlessly occur within the prayer and avoid causing pauses that would cause the prayer to seem in-cohesive. The prayer is an actively participatory part of the service where the priest and the congregation are praying to God. At times the priest is praying on behalf of everyone and at times the congregations prays together to God. The sections of the Eucharistic Prayer that are often sung are called the Acclamations and consist of the Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation and Amen. The Sanctus is often sung and described as “the point in the liturgy where it is most explicit that in our worship we are joined with heaven.”⁵⁷ Musicians are encouraged to not make the Sanctus longer than the rest of the prayer as to not confuse significance. There are three Memorial Acclamations that can be sung:

We proclaim your Death, O Lord,
and profess your Resurrection
until you come again.

When we eat this Bread and drink this Cup,
we proclaim your Death, O Lord,
until you come again.

Save us, Savior of the world,
for by your Cross and Resurrection
you have set us free.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Ibid., 4.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 2.

⁵⁸ Kristopher W. Seaman, “The Memorial Acclamations,” in *Preparing Your Parish for the Revised Roman Missal: Homilies and Reproducibles for Faith Formation*, (Chicago, Archdiocese of Chicago Liturgy Training: 2011).

Other Acclamations have been utilized in past versions of the Mass, but these are presently used. The Amen is the conclusion of the Prayer and the transition in the the Rite of Communion. Sung Amens are encouraged to unite the people and should be longer and more pronounced than a spoken “amen” as members stand from prayer. The LOCBCEW encourages priests to sing the prior step of the Doxology with the congregation joining on the Amen. Following the Amen, there should be a pause before beginning the Rite.

Within the Rite of Communion, several elements are suggested to be sung. The Lord’s Prayer is viewed by some as an element that should be sung, and by others that it should not. Some claim that a simple chant is the best option to fit the movement of the text. The Rite of Peace encourages members to speak to each other and therefore is not conducive to singing or music. The Breaking of the Bread is often accompanied by the text *Lamb of God* or the Latin *Agnus Dei*. This is a commonly sung text with numerous settings to fit the length and need of the parish. With the use of communion wafers as opposed to the breaking of loaf, the need for a long *Lamb of God* setting is not often relevant, but is encouraged to be used in the correct context and not as a transitional piece. During the Communion Procession, baptized members of the Catholic faith come forward to receive the Eucharistic host. During this time music is encouraged and can include chant, Psalms with refrains or repetitious ostinati. The LOCBCEW describe the importance of this practice as

Singing while processing, which is a very Catholic thing to do during the liturgy, is more than just giving people something to do while they stand in a queue. We receive communion not as group of individuals, the whole of Mass has being drawing us together to form one body and it as the body of Christ that we go to receive the Body of Christ. Music helps to unify as we sing with one voice. If the text and music is chosen well it can help those who are processing express their faith in what they are about received and those who have already received reflect on the mystery in which they have participated.⁵⁹

⁵⁹ *Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist*, 6.

Following Communion singing is encouraged while participants and the priests take part in prayer but some parishes choose to have a choir sing during this time. Music during this section should reflect the Rite or be focused on thanksgiving for God as a whole.⁶⁰

Overall, the music of the Liturgy of the Eucharist is both functional and spiritual. Music highlights transitions and marks for changing sections within the service, but also symbolically unites the congregation with God through unison raised voices. The various options available for music as well as the multiple options for settings indicate that while music is important, it does not define the rite itself. The document describes that some parishes may not have much singing or that the Priest will sing in place of the congregation. Yet, church authority seems to feel that members should be participating and that the use of music during this portion of Liturgy is important for the spiritual understanding and preparation of the congregation.

Protestantism

Sources

The whole of Protestantism contains extremely diverse practices, beliefs and presentations. From the time of the Reformation, Protestantism has been continuously evolving with no singular authority (outside of the divine authority of their God) that manages the growth, practices or divisions of Christianity. There are organizations and associations that manage congregations that choose to participate under their direction. Within these organizations, churches must follow the standards of the organization or they will no longer fall within the umbrella of the organization and will be removed from any funding or support of that organization. Without participation in a larger group, individual Protestant churches are

⁶⁰ *Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist*, 7.

individual entities that must fund and support themselves. Currently, the largest organizations in the United States are: The Southern Baptist Convention (16 million), United Methodist Church (7.6 million), National Baptist Convention (5 million), Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (4.1 million), and Assemblies of God (3.1 million).⁶¹ Many of these organizations have sub-cooperatives that manage the funds and memberships of individual churches. The Southern Baptist Convention, for example, has links to the necessary steps for membership on their website, but smaller cooperatives such as the California Southern Baptist Convention, also has protocol and links to join their individual cooperative on their site. Within these organizations, variation can occur. For example, some congregations within the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) allow female pastors while others do not. In some cases, the SBC has allowed female leadership in churches, while at other times it has removed churches from its organization for electing to use a female pastor. Outside of these organizations, churches can be formed and organized by any person with the funding and following to do so. While there are core beliefs that need to be in place in order to refer to oneself as a Protestant Christian, the execution of such practices is not managed.

Variation in practice can occur within the same umbrella denomination of Christianity. Some Baptist churches are very liberal in belief while others discourage women from wearing pants. The differences in practices are even more extreme with comparing different versions of Protestantism. Certain congregations in the Appalachian mountains practice snake handling, while anabaptist congregations vary from Old Order Amish to Brethren in Christ⁶² that allow

⁶¹ “America's Christian Landscape: A Comprehensive Overview Of The Largest Christian Denominations,” last modified 10 January, 2024, <https://www.Christianpure.com/learn/largest-Christian-denominations-america>.

⁶² “Positions: What We Believe About Marriage,” last modified 2024, Brethren in Christ, <https://bicus.org/about/what-we-believe/positions/>.

divorce (with a recovery period) and modern dress. Additionally, there are small congregations that meet in homes or schools as well as mega churches that host thousands of members every week in stadium size establishments. Therefore, there can be no single standard or explanation for Christian beliefs, even with regards to the Lord's Supper. Some congregations will take part in this rite weekly, while others host the rite once a year. Some use communal cups, while others use individual cups. However, the function of the Lord's Supper as obedience to the command of Christ given during the Last Supper is relevant to every Protestant denomination. When compared to Catholicism and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, no Protestant congregation (that aligns with Protestant theology) believes in transubstantiation as the Catholics do and none believe they are actively covenanting with God, as The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does.

There are many sources for the various denominations of Protestant Christianity available. While most Protestants follow similar practices and beliefs, there are and will be differences in the execution of their core beliefs. For the purpose of this paper, sources will be utilized that fall inside of the most common structure of a Protestant congregation. Some denominations of Protestantism are very similar to Catholicism, and therefore will not be utilized for comparison. Others, are very unique to the individual church that organized such beliefs and would not be selected as a source. Sources will come from publicly available sources that pertain to larger Protestant organizations and are published for the education of active members.

Examples given within the paper on the Protestant practice of the Lord's Supper will not apply to all denominations and is not a reflection of every Protestant denomination. Care will be taken to keep examples as applicable as possible to as many denominations as possible.

The Lord's Supper

The early reformed church faced differing opinions on the meaning and function of the Lord's Supper and whether it was a literal interpretation of scripture or a symbolic one. Despite leaving the Catholic Church, Martin Luther held fast to the idea that the bread and wine used for the Lord's Supper were literally the body and blood of Jesus Christ. During a debate between Martin Luther and radical Reformer, Ulrich Zwingli, Luther supposedly wrote *hoc set mum corpus* or "this is my body" on a table and beat it with his fists stressing the literal language of Christ derived from scripture.⁶³ This doctrine of "real presence" closely aligns with transubstantiation, but differs in that while Catholic doctrine teaches that the host becomes the body and blood of Christ, Luther and the Lutheran church believe in *consubstantiation*. This doctrine teaches "the actual substantial presence and combination of the body and blood of Christ with the eucharistic bread and wine according to a teaching associated with Martin Luther."⁶⁴ This difference in the presence of both the substance and the blood or body (consubstantiation) as opposed to becoming solely the blood or body (transubstantiation) continue to raise debate between Lutheran and Catholic believers.

Ulrich Zwingli and other reformers denounced the idea of "real presence" and instead viewed the Lord's Supper as a symbolic representation of the body and blood of Christ. This understanding of the use of bread and wine/juice/water is what is accepted by the majority of Protestant Christianity with the exception of those rooted in Lutheran doctrine. Some faiths that

⁶³ Josiah Roberts, *The Gospel Embodied: Luther's Theology of the Last Supper*, accessed 21 March, 2024, <https://davenantinstitute.org/luthers-theology-of-the-lords-supper/>.

⁶⁴ "consubstantiation," accessed 21 March, 2024, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/consubstantiation>.

believe in consubstantiation or a variation of it include: Lutherans, Anglicans (and other's derived from Church of England) and Episcopalians. Zwingli and other leaders taught of the spiritual presence of Jesus Christ during the Lord's Supper. This practice was widely understood and generally was accepted by many Protestants prior to the discussions and debates between Zwingli and Luther.⁶⁵ Because of this, Zwingli's teachings, while drastically different than the previously accepted belief in transubstantiation were easily accept and did not appear radical as were some of his other teachings. Zwingli, Martin Luther, John Wesley and John Calvin are the major leaders in the Protestant Reformation and contributed to the practices that are still followed by the major denominations of Christianity. Zwingli encouraged the Lord's Supper on a quarterly basis as to not create a familiarity and casual nature in partaking in the ordinance. However, leaders like Luther, Wesley and Calvin felt that the scriptures and early leaders of the church made it clear that the communion meal should occur at every meeting of a congregation.

John Calvin stated:

Each week, at least, the table of the Lord ought to have been spread for the company of Christians, and the promises declared on which we might then spiritually feed. No one, indeed, ought to be forced, but all ought to be exhorted and stimulated; the torpor of the sluggish, also, ought to be rebuked, that all, like persons famishing, should come to the feast.⁶⁶

Similarly, John Wesley taught that any frequency other than weekly was catering to the human disposition to become comfortable and forget the importance and sacredness of the familiar. He taught:

Reverence for the sacrament may be of two sorts: either such as is owing purely to the newness of the thing, such as men naturally have for anything they are not used to; or such as is owing to our faith, or to the love or fear of God. Now, the former of these is not

⁶⁵ Trevin Wax, *Luther vs. Zwingli 3: Zwingli on the Lord's Supper*, 12 February, 2008, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/trevin-wax/luther-vs-zwingli-3-zwingli-on-the-lords-supper/>.

⁶⁶ Jonathan Arnold, *How Often Should We Receive the Lord's Supper?*, 21 February, 2021, <https://holyjoys.org/how-often-lords-supper/>.

properly a religious reverence, but purely natural. And this sort of reverence for the Lord's Supper, the constantly receiving of it must lessen. But it will not lessen the true religious reverence, but rather confirm and increase it.⁶⁷

Scholars like Jonathan Arnold believe that the practice of infrequent communion initially began from leaders like Zwingli that felt that weekly observance was too similar to the Catholic practice of daily mass that the Reformation was attempting to separate from. While this practice continues in many churches, the true roots of each congregational choice are not fully expressed or understood. While tradition may play a part, expense in the purchase and distribution of the communion bread and wine/juice may be another.

While the practice of the Lord's Supper differs among denominations, many denominations follow a similar structure in their execution of the rite. Because many do not distribute the Lord's Supper on a weekly basis, so when it occurs the service often reflects the importance of the rite. The most common time that communion occurs when not set to regular increments is around Easter and Good Friday. When the service of common begins, hymns or musical numbers are selected that reflect the message of coming to the table of Christ, of eating together and of the teachings of the Lord's Supper. Once it is blessed it is either distributed to the congregation, or the congregation comes forward to receive their items. In some congregations the bread and juice/wine are separate and in others the individual is given a bread or wafer that they dip into a communal cup and then eat. Smaller congregations may still choose to use a communal cup for all members to drink from. Music can be played and the congregation remains quiet as their fellow members ingest their items. This summary does not align with every protestant practice.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Protestant individuals believe they are following a commandant of Jesus Christ when they taken communion and view the experience as a way to come closer as a communal congregation or “body of Christ” as well as closer to Jesus through His spiritual presence during the service. With the exception of Lutheran based practices, Protestants believe only in the spiritual presence of Christ as opposed to the literal presence through a change in the bread and wine. To devout Protestants, this is a sacred experience and an important part of the weekly, monthly or quarterly worship. Music is an integral part in most services and reflects the teachings and sacred nature of the communion service.

Music of the Service

Early church leaders John and Charles Wesley valued communion and the music of it so dearly they created a hymnal dedicated only to the Lord’s Supper and communion services. The book contains one hundred sixty-six hymns as well as teachings of the brothers on the importance and meaning of the Lord’s supper. Modern hymnals often contain sections of hymns for the Lord’s Supper as well as recitations in denominations that observe that practice. The modern Baptist hymnal contains the following: A Parting Hymn We Sing, According to Thy Gracious Work, As He Gathered at His Table, As We Gather Around the Table, Here, at Your Table, Lord, I Come With Joy to Meet My Lord, In Remembrance, Jesus, at Your Holy Table, Let Us Break Bread Together, The First Day of the Week, This is a Day of New Beginnings, This is the Threefold Truth, We Meet Within this Holy Place, We Worship Around this Table, and Your Supper, Lord Before Us Spread.⁶⁸ The Baptist Hymnal also contains a responsive reading for members to participate in during the service if prompted by the pastor.

⁶⁸“Topical Guide: The Lord’s Supper,” *Baptist Hymnal*, (Tennessee: Convention Press, 1991).

Not all Protestant congregations utilize a hymnbook and many evangelical churches have church bands that lead the congregation in contemporary arrangements and compositions. In these settings the text is often projected onto a screen at the front of the church. While the band performs, members are encouraged to join in the song or participate through movement or acts of worship. Many of the larger church bands that have a following outside of their congregation publish their compositions for others to use in their services. Bands such as Elevation Worship and Hillsong Worship began as church bands for a specific church and gained popularity to the extent of touring and selling albums and merchandise. In more modern services, the songs used can vary from traditional hymns, arranged hymns or new compositions. The contemporary content used around the communion service is often reflective of community, remembrance, the Lord's Table, the crucifixion, sacrifice and similar themes to the hymns from hymnals. The song "Remembrance" by Hillsong Worship is often considered a popular choice from contemporary modern services. The text reads:

I take the bread of life
 Broken for all my sin
 Your body crucified
 To make me whole again

I will recall the cup
 Poured out in sacrifice
 To trade this sinner's end
 For Your new covenant

Hallelujah
 I'll live my life in remembrance
 Hallelujah
 Your promise I won't forget

I'll walk salvation's road
 With fear and trembling
 Your way borne as my own
 As Christ is formed in me

If ever I should lose my way
 If ever I deny Your grace
 Remind me of the price You paid
 Hallelujah
 I'll live in remembrance

You've been so, so good to me
 You've been so, so good to me
 Oh to think where I would be
 If not for You
 If not for You

As far as heights reach from the depths
 As far as east is from the west
 So far Your grace has carried me

Until I see You face to face
 Until at last I've won my race
 Remind me You're not finished yet

Hallelujah
 Hallelujah
 Hallelujah
 I'll live in remembrance⁶⁹

Most songs that are used within this context have slower tempos and are more reverent in nature.

The idea of remembrance and reflection upon the acts of Jesus Christ occur in many contemporary settings. This seems to reflect of the nature of the hymns in hymnals as many are slower tempo, uplifting in tonality with avoidance to minor keys and reverent in execution.

⁶⁹ Hillsong Worship, "Remembrance," from *There is More* (Hillsong Music and Capitol Christian Worship Group: 2018).

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Sources

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints maintains a vast amount of research, literature and academic findings through the libraries and collections of their university system and within the church records. The Harold B. Lee library at Brigham Young University - Provo has “about 98 miles of shelving for the more than 6 million items in its various collections. In addition to the increase in collection space, the library also has a seating capacity of 4,600 people and is the equivalent of 2½ football fields from North to South.”⁷⁰ Within the Church Education System there are three universities (BYU-Provo, BYU-Idaho and BYU-Hawaii), an online university (BYU-Pathways Worldwide) and an online/in person two-year college (Ensign College). However, academia in general does not seem to accept these books, records or studies. While a plethora of texts exist in university libraries that explain the beliefs, doctrine or history of world religions as potential insight into another culture, this does not seem to be the case for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Most available literature presents as accusatory or whistle-blowing perspective as opposed to a neutral representation of the beliefs and values of a cultural group outside of the societal norm.

For the purpose of this study, any information or statements regarding the teachings of the church will be drawn directly from the church. Readers with no understanding of the teachings of the church will be able to draw conclusions on the teachings of the church as a separate process from the validity of the findings. Valid research does not depend on the agreement of all readers to the content. This will allow the teachings of the church to function as

⁷⁰ “History of the Library,” accessed August 7, 2023, <https://lib.byu.edu/about/history/>.

a basis and insight for the: thoughts, feelings, associations, beliefs and practices of those involved in the study without the reader needing to agree with their beliefs to form an opinion on the semiotic relationships presented in the findings.

Other sources that will be used to reference the teachings of the church will be scripture pulled from the full canon utilized by the church. Teachings of present-day and former prophets are also regarded as scripture by the church and will be presented under the similar assumption. The manual *Teachings of the Living Prophets: Student Manual* states, “The words of the prophets delivered through the Spirit during general conference are latter-day scripture.”⁷¹ Such teachings will be presented as such within this paper and study to reflect the value placed on the teachings by those participating in the study.

History and Leadership

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was founded in 1830 in upstate New York. Members of the church refer to the beginning of the church as a “restoration” as opposed to “creation” or “formation” as they believe the church is the restored version of the church established by Jesus Christ during his mortal ministry. Throughout this paper the teachings and beliefs of the church will be presented as understood by church members to show awareness of their intent as well as to show respect for their beliefs. The church will be referred to by its full name: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints per the request of church leaders in 2018⁷² to avoid using terms such as “LDS” or “Mormon.” Currently, the church is established

⁷¹ “Chapter 6: General Conference: Overview” in *Teachings of the Living Prophets: Student Manual*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2016).

⁷² Russell M. Nelson, “Correct the Name of the Church,” (General Conference Broadcast of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October 2018).

worldwide with members on every livable continent. At the end of 2022 the recorded membership of the church was 17,002,461, seeing a growth that year of 197,061 members.⁷³ The church in 2021 had a total of 31,315 congregations.⁷⁴ The membership totals and demographics have not yet been released for the year 2023.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints maintains a unified approach to worship services and doctrine, despite being a world-wide church. A handbook is made available to every member (accessible through print or on the church's application "The Gospel Library") that details the practices, callings, administrative duties, doctrine, schedule and running of the church.⁷⁵ Each local congregation meets on Sundays at scheduled times and follows the same order of events. Most congregations are referred to as "wards," with smaller groups of Saints referred to as "branches." Some buildings have multiple wards that meet at different times of the day. Congregations are determined by the home address of members and are organized similarly to school zones. Members that live within a similar geographic area are assigned to be a ward or branch, and multiple congregations in a region form a larger "district" referred to as a "stake," referencing scripture that refers to "Stakes of Zion."⁷⁶ One scriptural reference is from Doctrine and Covenants, a modern canon of scripture members use along with the King James Version of the Bible and the Book of Mormon. The verse states, "For Zion must increase in beauty, and in

⁷³ David Schneider, "Charts Show Church's Ongoing Growth Through 192 Years," May 29, 2023 11:00 am, <https://www.thechurchnews.com/members/2023/5/29/23737944/charts-show-church-growth-through-192-years-members-temples-stakes-wards#>.

⁷⁴ David Noyce, "See How Much the LDS Church Grew in 2021 and How the Pace is Still Lagging," *The Salt Lake Tribune*, April 2, 2022, last updated April 6, 2022, <https://www.sltrib.com/religion/2022/04/02/see-how-much-lds-church/>.

⁷⁵ *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2021).

⁷⁶ Doctrine and Covenants 82:14.

holiness; her borders must be enlarged; her stakes must be strengthened; yea, verily I say unto you, Zion must arise and put on her beautiful garments.”⁷⁷ This verse is reminiscent of a verse in Isaiah that states, "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes.”⁷⁸

Church headquarters are located in Salt-Lake City, Utah. Leadership of the church begins with the President of the Church. Members view the President of the church as a living prophet acting in the same role as prophets of previous dispensations. The current prophet is responsible for both leading the church as well as receiving and recounting prophecy to the world directly from God. Currently, the prophet is Russell Marion Nelson. Nelson is currently 99 years old and has been the prophet since 2018.⁷⁹ Below Nelson, leadership branches down to church officials that are responsible for specifically assigned areas of the world, gradually becoming more specific to a local bishop (evangelical leader) of each individual congregation. The church has twelve men called as apostles under Nelson that also act as “prophets, seers and revelators,”⁸⁰ that regularly travel the world meeting church members, speaking to groups, leading construction or service opportunities and managing the business of the church across the globe.

Congregations across the United States and throughout the world meet utilizing the same standards for every aspect of their services. The order of events typically starts with a large meeting containing the Sacrament ordinance. The order may differ in buildings that are the worship space for multiple congregations. This meeting’s topic is chosen by local leaders based

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Isaiah 54:2.

⁷⁹ “Russell M. Nelson,” The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, last modified February 28, 2022, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/learn/russell-m-nelson?lang=eng>.

⁸⁰ Members of the church sustain these men during a world wide conference under these titles. Right hands are raised in support and recognition of the prophet and apostles as “prophets, seers and revelators.”

on the needs of the congregation and is filled with “talks” given by members of the congregation that have been asked to speak on a specific topic. The meeting begins with a song, prayer and announcements; followed by a Sacrament hymn and Sacrament ordinance. Speakers then address the group along with the occasional inclusion of another, intermediate hymn or musical presentation. The final speaker is followed by a closing hymn and prayer. There are no paid clergy. All leaders, speakers, musicians, building managers, financial clerks, teachers and any other needed position are volunteer positions. Following the Sacrament meeting, the congregation divides into smaller group classes alternating weeks between male and female groups (12-18 meet separate from adults with children 3-12 in their own classes) as well as Sunday school classes organized by age (adults, 16-18 year olds, 14-16 year olds, 12-14 year olds, etc. through age 3-4. Children ages 18 months through 3 years are in a nursery class for the second hour). A pre-determined schedule for lessons and lesson topics is established for the entire church seeing that all members both in a congregation and across the world are studying the same lessons and same section of scripture each week. Children’s lessons are pulled from the same topics and members are encouraged to read the sections at home with their families.

The Sacrament

Of all the saving ordinances, one stands unique in several ways. There is one ordinance that is performed weekly, making it the only ordinance that members perform for themselves more than once. This ordinance is the only rite that occurs during a church meeting and is currently the only ordinance that includes a musical element. The Sacramental ordinance is unique and by nature the most familiar, repeated and practiced ordinance within the church. Every Sunday, members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints gather at their appointed times in their appointed buildings and worship together through song, speech and

sacrament. The word *sacrament* in many Christian churches refers to a rite or ritual that “is believed to have been ordained by Christ and that is held to be a means of divine grace or to be a sign or symbol of a spiritual reality.”⁸¹ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints uses the term as a proper noun in reference to the ordinance of consuming bread in water in remembrance of Jesus Christ. The church site describes Sacrament meetings this way for investigating researchers:

Church service times vary from congregation to congregation. However, you can always count on one main worship service for everyone, followed by classes for children, youth, and adults. The service for everyone is called “Sacrament meeting.” This meeting consists of songs, prayers, and sermons (or “talks”) given by different members of the congregation every week. But the most important part of the meeting is when we take the Sacrament (which is similar to communion) to remember the Savior.⁸²

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints addresses the importance of the Sacrament as a practice that connects us to the first sacrifice of Adam. A former church leader, L. Tom Perry spoke on the symbolism of the Sacrament in 2006 at the annual General Conference of the church where leaders speak to the world. He states:

One of the first commandments given to Adam was that he should worship the Lord and offer the firstlings of his flocks as an offering to Him. This ordinance was given to remind the people that Jesus Christ would come into the world and would ultimately offer Himself as a sacrifice. From that day down until the time of our Savior, Heavenly Father’s children were commanded to offer sacrifices. It was discontinued with the Savior’s atoning sacrifice. Then, the night before He completed that sacrifice, the Savior instituted the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper to help us remember Him and the Atonement He made for all mankind. Thus, in the ancient law of sacrifice and in the Sacrament, the Lord has helped us be certain that we do not forget His promises and the requirement that we follow Him and obey His will.⁸³

⁸¹ “Sacrament,” Meriam-Webster, accessed August 4, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sacrament>.

⁸² “What is a Church Service Like?” *5 Common Questions About Church*, accessed August 5, 2023, <https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/comeuntochrist/belong/sunday-services>.

⁸³ L. Tom Perry, “As Now We Take the Sacrament,” General Conference of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, April 2006.

Perry’s statement that the Sacrament helps us to be “certain that we do not forget” touches on the prevalent theme of “remembrance” that is included in many of the Sacrament hymns and the Sacrament prayer. The symbolic element is addressed by the church in many different parts of the website and literature. A post on the site created for those exploring the church states:

The most important part of our Sunday meetings is the Sacrament (similar to Communion). Each week, bread and water are blessed and offered to the congregation. It’s a time when people can meditate, think about Jesus Christ, and feel close to God. As we eat and drink these symbolic elements, we promise to remember the sacrifice of Jesus and strive to keep His commandments. It’s a wonderful opportunity to feel God’s love for us and invite the Holy Spirit to guide and comfort us. Today, we take the Sacrament as a weekly reminder of the sacrifice made by Jesus Christ, which allows us to be forgiven of our sins and live again after we die.⁸⁴

The website that is designed for members of the church to study and explore doctrinal topics has this more in-depth explanation in the “Guide to the Scriptures” category:

For Latter-day Saints, Sacrament refers to the ordinance of partaking of bread and water in remembrance of Christ’s atoning sacrifice. The broken bread represents His broken flesh; the water represents the blood that He shed to atone for our sins. When worthy Church members take the Sacrament, they promise to take upon them the name of Christ, to always remember Him, and to keep His commandments. Through this ordinance, Church members renew their baptismal covenants.^{85 86}

During the Sacrament hymn, two or three men, at least age sixteen or older that having been ordained to do so, stand at a table at the front of the chapel and begin to break bread into small pieces and place it onto a tray. Water has previously been poured in small, single serving cups and fill a similar tray. Once the trays are full, the men sit. When the song concludes one of the men kneels behind the table and offers a prayer:

⁸⁴ “The Sacrament: Symbols of Jesus,” Accessed August 6, 2023.
<https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/comeuntochrist/belong/sunday-services/sacrament>.

⁸⁵ “Sacrament.” In *Guide to the Scriptures*. Accessed August 4, 2023.
<https://site.churchofjesuschrist.org/study/scriptures/gs/sacrament?lang=eng>.

⁸⁶ 1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Doctrine and Covenants 27:2.

O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it; that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him, and keep his commandments which he hath given them, that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.⁸⁷

This prayer is the same prayer offered every week at every Sacrament table in the world in hundreds of languages. The man stands and six to eight men and/or boys (at least twelve years of age and ordained) are handed the trays to pass among the members. One does not have to be baptized into the church to take the Sacrament if they would like to participate, but are encouraged to listen to the words of the prayer to understand the promise they make as they partake. Members of the church who have committed serious sins are asked occasionally to refrain from taking the Sacrament for a period of time until they have reached a point in their repentance to fully make and keep the covenants of the ordinance. The church handbook states this on the matter: “Partaking of the Sacrament is an important part of repentance. It should not be the first restriction given to a repentant person who has a broken heart and contrite spirit. However, if a person has committed serious sins, a leader may suspend this privilege for a time.”⁸⁸ It is not common for members to be asked to not partake of the Sacrament and members are encouraged to not judge or criticize anyone they observe not partaking. Some members express that at times they feel they are distracted during the ordinance, they choose to not participate. This is not a practice that is encouraged or taught by the church.

Once the bread has been offered to every member of the congregation, the men return the trays to the stand, another man kneels and similar prayer is offered:

⁸⁷ Moroni 4:3

⁸⁸ “Informal Membership Restrictions,” *General Handbook: Serving in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints* (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 2021). 32.8.3.

O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.⁸⁹

The trays are again dispersed and the water cups are dispersed through the congregation. During the time that the bread and water are passed, the room is usually very quiet with the exception of the sounds of small children. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not offer a childcare option for members during the Sacrament meeting and encourages families to sit, listen and take the Sacrament together. Young children and babies can be heard throughout almost every congregation, especially in moments where all speaking has stopped. There are congregations, typically around large universities, where unmarried members of the church have separate meetings. These usually do not have children present and are typically very quiet.

Members are encouraged during the Sacrament to reflect on Jesus Christ; something they have previously sung and covenanted prior to ingesting the bread or water. A current apostle of the church, Dallin H. Oaks has stated, “The ordinance of the Sacrament makes the Sacrament meeting the most sacred and important meeting in the Church. It is the only Sabbath meeting the entire family can attend together. Its content in addition to the Sacrament should always be planned and presented to focus our attention on the Atonement and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ.”⁹⁰ Oaks brings attention to the element of the service most applicable to this study: the music. Oaks states:

The music of Sacrament meeting is a vital part of our worship. The scriptures teach that the song of the righteous is a prayer unto the Lord. The First Presidency has declared that “some of the greatest sermons are preached by the singing of hymns.” How wonderful

⁸⁹ Moroni 5:2

⁹⁰ Dallin H. Oaks, “Sacrament Meeting and the Sacrament,” General Conference for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, October, 2008.

when every person in attendance joins in the worship of singing—especially in the hymn that helps us prepare to partake of the Sacrament. All Sacrament meeting music requires careful planning, always remembering that this music is for worship, not for performance.^{91 92}

Sacrament Hymns

The Sacrament hymn of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints possesses possible functionality in a covenantal practice when viewed in concurrence with the ordinance as a whole. The small amount of Sacrament hymns (twenty-six in total) within the hymnody as well as the similarities they hold in: theme, content, composition and feeling can lead to greater connection with these hymns than perhaps others in the hymnbook. A closer look at traits of these hymns introduce the words and music that members will be singing during the Sacrament and prior to answering questions in the interviews and thought journals. The following represents the text of one of the Sacrament hymns. The lyrics for this Sacramental hymn were written by L. Tom Perry, a general authority of the church quoted earlier.

As Now We Take the Sacrament

1. As now we take the sacrament,
Our thoughts are turned to thee,
Thou Son of God, who lived for us,
Then died on Calvary.
We contemplate thy lasting grace,
Thy boundless charity;
To us the gift of life was giv'n
For all eternity.
2. As now our minds review the past,
We know we must repent;
The way to thee is righteousness—
The way thy life was spent.
Forgiveness is a gift from thee
We seek with pure intent.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Doctrine and Covenants 25:12; *Hymns* ix.

With hands now pledged to do thy work,
 We take the sacrament.
 3. As now we praise thy name with song,
 The blessings of this day
 Will linger in our thankful hearts,
 And silently we pray
 For courage to accept thy will,
 To listen and obey.
 We love thee, Lord; our hearts are full.
 We'll walk thy chosen way.⁹³

The Sacrament hymn *As Now We Take the Sacrament* is in the key of E flat Major. The first and second lines of the song often reference a minor tonality by starting with a minor seventh leap in the melody at the beginning of each line and hovering around c minor and d minor⁷ as it descends until resolving back to E flat Major. In comparison, the third line rises in pitch first with a leap of a minor sixth followed by leap of a perfect fifth. The line resolves with a half cadence on the dominant of the key (B flat Major). The final line begins with a Major mediant (G Major) progressing to a fermata held on a minor submediant (c minor), creating a feeling of suspense before resolving into a perfect authentic cadence with no fifth scale degree.

The correlation between text and tonality is apparent. The first two lines reflect on the crucifixion of Christ and our need for repentance and the tune hovers around a more minor tonality. The descending pitch reflects burial and sadness as referenced in the text. The third line of each verse references the covenants made through the ordinance. As major chords dominate and the pitch ascends the lyrics speak of contemplating “lasting grace,” seeking forgiveness as a gift from God and praying for courage to accept His will. All three verses in this section refer to something given to man by God and the reception of such gifts. The ascension of pitch reflects the perceived relationship of God to His people, above the Earth. Each verse ends with two

⁹³ L. Tom Perry, “As Now We Take the Sacrament,” in *Hymns*, (Salt Lake City, Utah: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1985), 169.

solemn statements: the first sustained over a minor chord and the second ending the verse. The serious nature of each of the first line is pronounced using a cadence to the minor sixth sustained with a fermata. The second acts as the final line of the verse and concludes the song through a solid perfect authentic cadence.

Both the music and lyrics allude to the crucifixion and the human relationship with God. The text speaks a great deal of remembrance and refers to elements from the life of Christ that could be brought into the minds of the members. Continued study of this Sacrament hymn and others will provide insight to the content presented to the members immediately preceding the ordinance, and research will determine if such findings as those described above impact the nature of a member's experiences.

Congregational Singing

Congregational singing has existed within the Christian church from the time of its formation. Matthew 26:30 speaks of Jesus Christ singing with His apostles following the Last Supper before his journey to the Mount of Olives to pray.⁹⁴ Psalms, Proverbs and other poetic elements from the Bible were written to be sung. Brian Wren states, "I believe that congregational song is an indispensable part of Christian public worship."⁹⁵ Wren goes on in his text *Praying Twice: The Music and Words of Congregational Song* to describe the elements of congregational music that had both meaning and impact the singer. Jeffrey Titon reflects a similar thought when he states, "Congregational singing, as a felt, bodily, vibratory phenomenon,

⁹⁴ Matthew 26:30.

⁹⁵ Wren, Brian A. Wren, *Praying Twice : the Music and Words of Congregational Song*, first edition, (Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 47.

exemplifies the melding of sound with thought, music with word.”⁹⁶ Wren addresses several elements of congregational singing relevant to the study.

Wren addresses that congregational singing is multi-faceted. He claims, “Congregational song is by nature corporate, corporeal, and inclusive; at its best, it is creedal, ecclesial, inspirational, and evangelical. Each characteristic is theologically important.”⁹⁷ The corporate element relates to the unifying nature of each member of the congregation joining in similar action both in body and voice when singing. As the body participates, the “corporeal” element manifests in the engagement of the body through singing, standing, swaying or moving unitedly throughout the song. The final physical element of inclusivity recognizes that all members can and should participate in congregational singing. In so doing, differences can be related with unifying experiences that bind and bond congregations. Thomas Turino speaks to this in relation to participatory music cultures when he describes the impact of “an activity that emphasizes our sameness”⁹⁸ as having the result of creating *communitas*. *Communitas* is defined as, “a possible collective state achieved through rituals where all personal differences of class, status, age, gender, and other personal distinctions are stripped away allowing people to temporarily merge through their basic humanity.”⁹⁹ The act of participating in the Sacrament ordinance as a church, as a body as opposed to individually, is a distinguishing trait of the rite. The establishment of unification through group singing, prior to the collective experience of the Sacrament will

⁹⁶ Jeff Todd Titon, “Ethnography in the Study of Congregational Music,” in *Studying Congregational Music : Key Issues, Methods, and Theoretical Perspectives*, edited by Andrew Mall, et al., Taylor & Francis Group, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=6450699>. 70.

⁹⁷ Wren, *Praying Twice*, 84.

⁹⁸ Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: the Politics of Participation*, (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 18.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

increase any feelings associated with such unification. In so doing, members may be led to be more aware of their participation in the act and therefore, more aware of where they focus their attention. This has potential to impact the study if members are unified in an experience that either encourages or discourages remembrance.

The second set of traits established by Wren speaks to the doctrinal significance of congregational singing. Members are reminded of stories, teachings and beliefs of their faith as they participate in the singing of texts set to memorable tunes. Lester Ruth speaks of the importance of Christian hymn lyrics in his chapter “In Case You Don’t Have a Case: Reflections on Methods for Studying Congregational Song in Liturgical History” in the text *Studying Congregational Music: Key Issues, Methods, and Theoretical Perspectives*.¹⁰⁰ Ruth states that, “Lyrical texts give us a critical first step in understanding a worshipping people’s piety. I much more prefer this term to theology per se as the latter is normally understood. Song lyrics are not typical theology since theology is normally written in prose. Prose has its own set of rules and aims, but poetry has another.”¹⁰¹ Ruth goes on to explain that the way that song lyrics are created has to fit both the meter and style of the music as well as fit correctly within the doctrine of the church. This presets lyrics as a particular type of manifestation of a group’s beliefs. Ruth describes the difference in prose-style theology and poetic theology when he explains:

Theology normally is expressed in prose which strives to achieve clarity and precision. A prose-based theology uses an amplitude of words to expand thought to achieve that clarity and precision. Thus relationships are explained, terms are defined, and objections are answered. A prose-based theology has an abundance of words to keep opening up the concepts until the theological case is made. Song lyrics, because they are poetry, cannot and do not use the same rules of expression. Nor do they strive for the same ends. Rather,

¹⁰⁰ Lester Ruth, “In Case You Don’t Have a Case: Reflections on Methods for Studying Congregational Song in Liturgical History in *Studying Congregational Music : Key Issues, Methods, and Theoretical Perspectives*, edited by Andrew Mall, et al., (Taylor & Francis Group, 2021). ProQuest Ebook Central, <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/liberty/detail.action?docID=6450699>. 11-24.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 16.

poetry evokes and creates emotion and experience through word games. Limited in the number of words, song lyrics as poetry play with rhyme and meter, misdirection, lack of definition, and the stretching of words beyond what one would expect in order to evoke emotion and create experience.¹⁰²

The analysis of hymn lyrics in comparison to the words of the prayer or teaching from scripture (both ancient and modern) will provide insight to any correlations between response from the member during or after the hymn as opposed to during or after the prayer. The unique nature of hymn lyrics may elicit more emotional responses through the use of poetic imagery as well as the addition of musical elements that can and often create emotional responses within the singer.

Wren addresses the potential of music to create a separate reaction to the text when he quotes Anthony Storr on the emotional nature of music: “Music captures the turbulent flow that is hard to describe in language. With melody, harmonic progression, rhythm, and dynamics (movement between loudness and softness), music mimics emotional processes.”¹⁰³ Wren continues the explanation of this important distinction in music and lyrics when he states, “Because it mimics emotional flow, music too can arouse visceral emotional responses in individuals, crowds—and congregations.”¹⁰⁴ The possible connection between particular musical elements and emotions will be further explored in the section of review focused on the semiotic nature of music.

Despite the unifying impact of music and the collective response that can occur, quite often members experience the impact of congregational singing in differing ways. The power of that emotional response will either be diffused or exasperated by the collective nature of the hymn and ordinance. The style of the music and theme of the hymns should create an

¹⁰² Ruth, “In Case You Don’t Have a Case,” 16-17.

¹⁰³ Anthony Storr, *Music and the Mind*, first Ballantine Books edition, (New York: Ballantine, 1993). 30.

¹⁰⁴ Wren, *Praying Twice*, 67.

environment that collectively creates positive, balanced and intentional direction. Wren states “When a group is singing or listening to music, different individuals may have different emotional responses. But ‘what matters is the general state of arousal and its simultaneity. Because of its capacity to intensify crowd feeling, music has a power akin to that of the orator.’”¹⁰⁵ Selection of music is important to the general feeling of the service.

Wren summarizes the “aim” of congregational singing in terms that can be applied across all Christian congregations. He states that congregational singing should be “one or more of the following”:

1. Formative, shaping and modeling our faith as it tells a story within the whole story of God in Christ and draws us into the drama of God's saving love.
2. Transformative, moving us from isolation to belonging, indifference to interest, interest to conviction, and conviction to commitment.
3. Cognitive, giving us something to ponder and think about.
4. Educational, teaching us something we didn't know about the Bible, the church, and Christian faith.
5. Inspirational, lifting us out of ourselves into hope, joy, and peace.¹⁰⁶

The presence of these factors separately, or in conjunction will greatly impact the experience of members throughout the hymn and into the subsequent rite.

Semiotics

Charles Sanders Peirce pioneers the philosophical study known as *semiotics* that explains the relationship between a sign (anything that can be perceived by an observer) and what that sign calls to the mind of the observer in conjunction with any physical responses created in the body.¹⁰⁷ Thomas Turino has applied this theory to reactions and connections formed when

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Wren, *Praying Twice*, 71.

¹⁰⁷ Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 5.

exposed to musical performance as both a participant and observer. This principle is highly applicable when discussing the impact of music on social movements and propaganda. Turino describes the semiotic *index* as experiencing the sign (what the observer perceives) at the same time as the object (what the sign calls to mind or body). Music — especially music charged with emotion, religious symbolism, or familiar stories — is full of indexical connections and therefore reactions in the body. For instance, when discussing the connection of previously known stories with a tune, the indexical reaction to the music itself will then be connected to the stories and the emotions tied to them. Turino explains the power of indices as, “The emotional power of indexical signs is directly proportionate to the attachment, feelings, and significance of the experiences that they index, but since these signs operate to connect us to our own lives, they can be the most ‘personal’ and tend to have the greatest emotional potential of all three sign types.”¹⁰⁸ Raymond Monelle addresses the possibility that the topic of the lyrics can function as a symbol that can be both indexical and iconic depending upon the focus and audience. He states, “The topic is essentially a symbol, its iconic or indexical features governed by convention and thus by rule. However, topics may be glimpsed through a feature that seems universal to them: a focus on the indexicality of the content, rather than the content itself.”¹⁰⁹

Song lyrics that speak of specific events can also engage in semiotic responses through the use of symbolic signs. Words function as signs because they are *Symbols* for a socially agreed-upon definition for the word. Because of this trait “symbols, established through linguistic definition and agreement, have the greatest potential for relatively predictable

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 9.

¹⁰⁹ Raymond Monelle, and Robert. Hatten, *The Sense of Music Semiotic Essays*, course book, (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2000), 17.

communication.”¹¹⁰ This quality of symbols being present in the hymn and prayer will increase the possibility that members will respond similarly or engage in thinking of the content of the lyrics when sung or on the content of the prayer when listening.

The lyrics and text of the prayers are not the only elements of the ordinance containing semiotic associations. Music holds potential for many associations through the listeners’ experiences with tonality, rhythm, melody and style. Monelle claims:

More vitally than language, music reflects the mobility of meaning, denying those points of rest which give language its semblance of referentiality. Music moves through its references, whether these are the simple social units of topics or the more fundamental indexicalities of time and authorial voice. Music cannot be translated into language; on the contrary, it chastens language by drawing out its limitlessness.¹¹¹

Researchers such as Haines Britain Halber, David Carr and Kristin Leutwyler express similar statements connecting music to the creation of emotional and physiological reactions. Statements such as: “Music has emotional significance, not merely because it casually arouses feelings(which we may nevertheless admit that it does), but by virtue of its intrinsic emotional character;”¹¹² “When we speak of the power of music, we mean that it has a way of forcing itself upon our attention as no other art has. It impresses itself upon our minds, so that we must give it audience and listen to its message;”¹¹³ and “But music goes much deeper than that; below the outer layers of the auditory and visual cortex to the limbic system, which controls our emotions. The emotions generated there produce a number of well-known physiological responses,”¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 10.

¹¹¹ Monelle, *The Sense of Music*, 10.

¹¹² Carr, David Carr, “Music, Meaning and Emotion,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 62, no. 3, (Summer 2004), 226.

¹¹³ Halbert, Haines Britain. “The Power of Music,” *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods* 5, No. 13. (June 1908). 353.

¹¹⁴ Kristin Leutwyler “Exploring the Musical Brain,” *Scientific American*, January 22, 2001, accessed July 20, 2022. <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/exploring-the-musical-bra/>.

mirror the understanding that the power of music to generate feelings is well understood and supported.

As the Sacrament hymns of the church are researched in context later in the study, any potential traits prone to semiotic connection will either support or disprove the possibility that the music of the hymn functions as a semiotic sign for members to remember, react and respond as they sing. Additional comparisons will address commonalities, symbols and potential indicators of indexical signs that could produce additional responses linking the performance of a hymn to the act of remembrance. It does not seem to be a matter of *if* there are semiotic connections between members and the Sacramental hymns, but *what* are the connections. The use of imagery, repetition, minor chords and descriptive language are all likely to engage members in reactions. The difference in responses and if those responses create a lasting or temporary change in focus will be determined through the comparison of data. It seems that no matter which connection has the greatest impact, at least a single element will be impactful. Wren states that, “Nowadays, it is widely agreed that to set intellectual against emotional responses is a false opposition. Philosophically and psychologically, Leonard Meyer sees no gulf between affective and intellectual responses to music.”¹¹⁵

Throughout the ethnographic studies of services, attention will also be paid to any visual or additional auditory stimuli that may create supporting or contrasting responses in the members. The visual of the sacrament trays under a white cloth may remind members of a body under a burial shroud, reminding them of Christ; the sound of a crying baby may remind a member of their children being small and distract their mind from the ordinance. The

¹¹⁵ Wren, *Praying Twice*, 57.

possibilities of semiotic signs within the service seem endless. The ability to observe and speak to members as well as have them record their thoughts will be vital in determining which signs have the greatest impact and if members agree on this.

Chapter Three: Research Methods

Survey

Surveys provided insight into the thoughts and experiences of many members in a quick and efficient process. Utilizing social media and the author's network of members across the United States, surveys reached many groups in different areas from different backgrounds. Demographics of members are not important for this type of survey and no material would be jeopardizing towards members if their identity were to be discovered. There was no collection of identifying material with the surveys and therefore, no extra measures were needed to ensure confidentiality.

The survey was produced on an internet survey-building platform and distributed to members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints throughout the United States of America. The software allowed the survey taker to remain anonymous as they answered questions about their views of the Sacrament and the Sacrament hymn. A screening page asked visitors if they were over the age of eighteen and if they were active members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. A response of "no" to either question closed the survey and an individual on the same device was not permitted back into the survey. The questions of the survey were as follows:

1. Do you consider the sacrament hymn as part of the Sacrament ordinance?

Yes

Somewhat

No

2. Do you consider participation through singing the Sacrament hymn as part of the Sacrament ordinance?

Yes

Somewhat

No

3. Do you feel it is possible to participate in the Sacrament hymn without singing?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

4. Which term best describes your experience during the Sacrament hymn each week?

- Religiously Reflective
- Personally Reflective
- Repentant
- Engaged but unfocused
- Distracted
- No particular feeling

5. How would you rate the necessity of the Sacrament hymn to the process of the ordinance?

- Completely necessary
- Somewhat necessary
- Important, but not necessary
- Meaningful, but not important
- Unnecessary

6. How would you rate the necessity of the Sacrament hymn to the meaning of the ordinance?

- Completely necessary
- Somewhat necessary
- Important, but not necessary
- Meaningful, but not important
- Unnecessary

7. How would you rate the necessity of the Sacrament hymn to your particular experience with the ordinance?

- Completely necessary
- Somewhat necessary
- Important, but not necessary
- Meaningful, but not important
- Unnecessary

8. Which term, to you, best describes the role of the Sacrament hymn as it pertains to the ordinance?

- Preparatory
- Thought provoking
- Centering
- Initiating
- Other (write your own)

9. Which term do you feel best summarizes the overall message of the Sacrament hymns?

- Remembrance
- Repentance
- Forgiveness
- Reverence
- Other (write your own)

10. How would you compare the Sacrament hymns musically to the remainder of the hymns in the hymn book?

- Exactly the same
- Similar, but differing in feeling
- Similar, but differing in content
- Very different in feeling
- Very different in content
- Completely unique

Answers from these surveys were stored in a data base securely held by password admittance in the survey building site. The responses were analyzed for consistency or discrepancies. The goal was to determine if members are aware of the Sacrament hymn and if they feel that it influences their experiences throughout the Sacrament as well is the role of the hymn as it pertains to the ordinance and covenant. Answers were compared to notes from interviews and thought journals to see if members isolated view of the ordinance when separate from the event aligns with what occurs while members are actively participating in the Sacrament service.

Interviews

Jeffrey Titon's chapter "Ethnography in the Study of Congregational Music," on ethnographies of congregational singing speaks to many elements that are important to remember when conducted and planning interviews. Titon states that, "Interviews aimed at eliciting cultural categories will also help review answers to 'what does it mean to them.' Meaning often follows from the way the particular attributes of cultural categories are combined to form larger wholes."¹¹⁶ Titon also explains that the way that questions are asked can lead to conversations that share deeper information full of insight into the personal experience of the member. He explains:

Interviews that begin with general questions may turn into conversations, either in which information is shared or in which the ethnographer spends the time listening to one life story after another, occasionally interposing a general question after a period of silence. Life stories always will contain a great deal of unasked-for-information that may be very valuable to the ethnographer interested in meaning, for even though they may not contain as much factual truth, they always tell a lot about who the speakers think they are.¹¹⁷

Interviews with church members came from those that marked they were willing to participate on the final page of the survey. Titon encourages "...question(s) that leads to a memory of when singing a song brought out powerful feelings can help people answer thoughtfully and in some detail."¹¹⁸ The following questions were used in live and phone interviews with church members immediately following their Sacrament meetings:

1. Do you recall the Sacrament hymn that was sung in Sacrament meeting today?
Can you repeat any of the text?

2. Do you recall any of the thoughts you had during the hymn? After the hymn? As the bread or water was passed?

¹¹⁶ Titon, "Ethnography in the Study of Congregational Music," 68.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 70.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 71.

3. Do you recall anything that occurred in the setting that distracted your thoughts during the hymn? After the hymn? During the passing of the bread/water?
4. Do you feel you were able to keep your thoughts where you intended them to be during this Sacrament experience?
5. Do you feel that the Sacrament hymn today prepared you to make and keep the covenant of the Sacrament? Why or why not?
6. Describe your typical Sacrament experience.
7. Please briefly describe: what you feel is the purpose of the Sacrament hymn? What you feel the theme of the Sacrament hymns is overall?
8. I am going to play a section of five sacrament hymns. What word best describes the thoughts and feelings you have after each selection?

The final question involved playing an instrumental track of five separate Sacrament hymns from the hymn book. When interviews were completed by phone the interviewer instead hummed the melody for these selections to avoid any recording issues that can occur when attempting to play a recording over a phone call. Following each excerpt, the interviewer paused and let the individual describe any thoughts, feelings or emotions they experienced during the music. Only the music was used to determine if the music alone impacts the individual when separated from the text. In some interviews, following the completion of the set questions, the interviewer asked the person to expound on something they said during the interview or ask a follow-up question. These questions were focused on making sure the interviewer is aware of the interviewee's intentions. Some of these questions were:

6. Can you tell me more about the distraction you mentioned earlier?
7. Is that a normal occurrence for you, or do you feel that this was an isolated event?
8. You stated “_____” could you please tell me more about that and how it impacted your thoughts today?

Interviews with church leaders provided deeper insight into the services as leaders were responsible for planning and maintaining the reverence of the ordinance in their buildings and congregations. Titon explains that:

The most reliable information about meaning usually resides with leaders and those who have been in the social group for a comparatively long time. Meanings that obtain for the social group sometimes are distinguished from those that are personal only, but in some instances personal meanings become models, shared among several members and come to represent the congregation as a whole.¹¹⁹

With members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints having a universal doctrine and volunteer clergy, it is interesting to note if church leaders have drastically different responses to members around the Sacrament. Discrepancies in data would lead to conclude that either leaders are more able to remain focused because of the situation surrounding their experience (location in the chapel) or that leaders' position in the church is based on their understanding and commitment to the doctrine.

Ethnography

Titon warns that, "Too much familiarity leads an ethnographer to take important things for granted and therefore omit them in any description."¹²⁰ As a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints the author took precautions to provide explicit details and descriptions of events and practices to avoid such a research pitfall.

Thick description provides a thorough explanation of the experience for the reader to fully comprehend the happenings surrounding of the event. The space and its components are important elements as the setting for both the Sacrament hymn and the ordinance. While chapel set-ups differ from building to building and especially across the globe, the sanctity of the space

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 68.

¹²⁰ Titon, "Ethnography in the Study of Congregational Music," 67.

to the members will be connected to the space despite appearance. Members from across the globe will recognize the importance of reverent and respectful behavior upon entering a chapel, whether the chapel be a new build or a canvas tent. The presentation and practice of the Sacrament in that space deems it a sacred location for members and care is taken to show reverence. Caitlyn Finlayson and Victor Mesev describe the sanctity of the chapel to members as, “This notion that ritualization and collective performance contribute to the sacralization of space is pertinent for geographers of religion...For many members, partaking of the sacrament is a deeply spiritual experience that invokes memories of past rituals and ordinances.”¹²¹

Throughout the ethnography care was taken to provide description of: congregational behavior, description of the involvement in singing and the awareness of the ordinance, any possible distractions, clear indicators of emotional reaction in members and distinguishing features of the location. Ethnographies will be compared to interviews to determine which, if any, elements are unique to a particular setting and if these factors influenced the ordinance in way that would detract from any reactions initiated through the Sacrament hymn.

Active Journaling

Willing members that have taken the survey were asked to keep a running journal of their thoughts as they participate in the Sacrament ordinance. The identity of these members has been kept confidential. The individuals were asked to document the thoughts that occur, in order, during the service, trying their best to be as detailed and honest as possible. They were encouraged to note any distractions or mental shifts as well as things they notice visually or audibly. The following directions were provided to those keeping a thought journal:

¹²¹ Caitlyn Finlayson and Victor Mesev, “Emotional Encounters in Sacred Spaces: The Case of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” in *The Professional Geographer*, volume 6, issue 3, (2014). 436-442.

Thank you for choosing to participate in this research study. Please keep this paper with you during a Sacrament meeting to keep track of your thoughts and experiences during the ordinance. Please begin the journal during the final verse of the Sacrament hymn. Please include any of the following: thoughts inspired by the song, emotions or feelings prompted by the song, distractions that occur during the song; mark with time stamps. Following the song and prayer please note with time stamps: intentional thoughts, distractions, wandering thoughts, the content of prayers prayed, actions or behaviors.

The purpose of this study is to understand where the mind goes during and after the Sacrament prayer. There is no “right” or “wrong” thought pattern. Please include as many thoughts as possible as honest and descriptive as possible. Please do not exclude thoughts or distractions intentionally.

Journals were compared to the survey responses and interview responses of the members.

Similarities were noted as well as differences between the members intentions during the Sacrament and the reality of their experiences.

Data Comparison

Following the collection and comparison of data, findings determined if the hypothesis was proved or disproved through the research. Information shows either that members are not aware of the connection between the Sacrament hymn and the service and experience them as separate events viewing remembrance as a post-ordinance event or that members are aware of the function of the hymn and that it elicits remembrance through semiotic associations, preparing the members for the covenants they are about to make. These findings are presented in chapters four and five.

Survey results provided a broad scope of member experiences that while less specific in occurrence provided an overall understanding of how members of the church view the Sacrament hymn and ordinance. These findings when compared to the thought journals demonstrated if members opinions on these matters are reinforced during a service when distractions are present. Journals also offered insight into how members manage distractions and thoughts in real time. While members may hope to maintain thoughts about specific happenings, the journals exposed

whether members are successfully able to do so. The survey and journal data are presented in chapter four.

Interviews that occurred immediately after a Sacrament service provided members with an opportunity to explore if their perceptions of what they thought should happen played out during the service and their thoughts about the process. Thought journals compared with interviews helped determine if people are able to maintain the thoughts they desire or expect themselves to have or not. Members may not have been able to recall the Sacrament hymn or what their thought were. If this was the case, then the prompt of remembrance instituted by the hymn was not sustainable throughout the service and into the time of active covenant keeping. Insight about how the melody impacts members was also be helpful in determining if the Sacrament hymns elicit thoughts through text or alone or if the association of the music with themes of remembrance manifests in the melody alone.

These findings in comparison to the known function of other denominations will provide insight into whether the covenantal element of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Sacrament service impacts the commission of music associated with the ordinance.

Chapter Four: Research Findings

Survey

The initial survey was made active in January of 2024 and was open to use through March of 2024. The total number of responses taken was seventy-three; sixty-six of those surveys were fully completed while seven were incomplete. Within the sixty-six responses, there were questions that individuals chose not to answer, which means that not all questions will have a total of sixty-six responses. The initial review of the responses demonstrates that overall, members of the church find great value in the Sacrament hymn, and many view it as a necessary part of the Sacrament experience. However, there seems to be division among members as it relates to whether the hymn is a needed part of the ordinance or not. The responses are as follows:

1. Do you consider the sacrament hymn as part of the Sacrament ordinance?

Yes - 45%
Somewhat - 26%
No - 29%

2. Do you consider participation through singing the Sacrament hymn as part of the Sacrament ordinance?

Yes - 47%
Somewhat - 21%
No - 32%

3. Do you feel it is possible to participate in the Sacrament hymn without singing?

Yes - 64%
Somewhat - 29%
No - 8%

4. How would you rate the necessity of the Sacrament hymn to the process of the ordinance?

- Completely necessary - 32%
- Somewhat necessary - 17%
- Important, but not necessary - 31%
- Meaningful, but not important - 18%
- Unnecessary - 2%

5. How would you rate the necessity of the Sacrament hymn to the meaning of the ordinance?

- Completely necessary - 28%
- Somewhat necessary - 23%
- Important, but not necessary - 30%
- Meaningful, but not important - 19%
- Unnecessary - 0%

6. How would you rate the necessity of the Sacrament hymn to your particular experience with the ordinance?

- Completely necessary - 44%
- Somewhat necessary - 25%
- Important, but not necessary - 20%
- Meaningful, but not important - 11%
- Unnecessary - 0%

7. Which term best describes your experience during the Sacrament hymn each week?

- Religiously Reflective - 24%
- Personally Reflective - 43%
- Repentant - 3%
- Engaged but unfocused - 16%
- Distracted - 2%
- No particular feeling - 2%
- Other - Five people chose to respond with their own thoughts.

“Personally, religiously reflective.”

“I couldn’t pick more than one, so religiously reflective, personal reflection, repentant.”

“It varies: personally reflective; religiously reflective; engaged but unfocused; repentant.”

“I often think more about whether I’m singing well or not, but I try to think of the meaning of the words in the hymn.”

“Religiously reflective, personally reflective and repentant.”¹²²

8. Which term, to you, best describes the role of the Sacrament hymn as it pertains to the ordinance?

Preparatory - 46%

Thought provoking - 25%

Focusing - 24%

Initiating - 3%

Other - Three people chose to respond with their own thoughts.

“Attempting to reflect and recommit and the presence of precious grandchildren can be delightful and distracting.”

“A mixture. An attempt at reflective essay and trying to help children focus sometimes. Sometimes distracted.”

“Time filler.”¹²³

9. Which term do you feel best summarizes the overall message of the Sacrament hymns?

Remembrance - 35%

Repentance - 8%

Forgiveness - 3%

Reverence - 18%

Other - Nine people chose to respond with their own thoughts.

“Creating a change of focus from the welcoming open hymn. Preparing us to remember and reflect.”

“All of the above.”

“Love.”

“Remember what Christ has done for me.”

“Atonement.”

“All of the above.”

“Awe.”

“Preparatory.”

¹²² “That They Do Always Remember Him,” question 7, accessed March 30, 2024.

¹²³ “That They Do Always Remember Him,” question 8, accessed March 30, 2024.

“Singing of the Sacrament hymn is to bring reverence into the chapel for those preparing to take the sacrament in remembering our Savior, Jesus Christ, and all that he did for us, each and everyone. That he suffered for our sins and gave his blood and his life to cleanse our souls, that we might be forgiven if we ask forgiveness for our missteps and mistakes here in this mortal life. And to remember his resurrection from death, so that we too, can come forth from death and be able to return to Him and our Father in Heaven for all eternity. Which sometimes hard to fathom in our minds. But the hymn before Sacrament is blessed and passed to each who is willing to accept the promise and covenant, the hymn prepares us to think of all that he has done. And to be reverent, to ‘be still and know that I am God’ thinking. Just needed for reverence, care, strength and love in our lives.”¹²⁴

10. How would you compare the Sacrament hymns musically to the remainder of the hymns in the hymn book?

- Exactly the same - 3%
- Similar, but differing in feeling - 32%
- Similar, but differing in content - 29%
- Very different in feeling - 17%
- Very different in content - 6%
- Completely unique - 13%

The survey presented what seemed to be a clear distinction between members that felt the Sacrament hymn was part of the ordinance and members that did not until the later, more specific questions appeared. The 45% of members that responded “yes” to “Do you consider the sacrament hymn as part of the ordinance?,” answered the following about singing the hymn as part of the ordinance as “yes” as well with almost no exception (one “no” and two “somewhat”). However, those that responded “yes” to question one did not maintain the same level of response for the following, more specific questions. When asked if they felt the Sacrament hymn was necessary for the “meaning” and “process” of the ordinance, members that initially responded to “yes” to the question if the Sacrament hymn was a part of the ordinance responded mostly with “completely necessary” or “somewhat necessary,” but over a third responded with either “important, but not necessary” or “meaningful, but not important.” This poses a disconnect

¹²⁴ “That They Do Always Remember Him,” question 9, accessed March 30, 2024.

between the initial idea that the Sacrament is a part of the ordinance, but not a clear understanding of in what capacity it is a part; or perhaps, it is a part of the ordinance that members feel is not completely necessary. Generally, members that initially felt that the Sacrament hymn was in fact part of the ordinance were not consistent in responding with a similar mindset for the importance of the Sacrament hymn as it pertains to the logistics of the ordinance.

Of those that initially answered “yes” the same individuals that responded “completely necessary” to the first specific question, continued with similar responses for the remainder of the specific questions of either “completely necessary” or “somewhat necessary.” Those that answered “yes” initially that opted for “important, but not necessary” or “meaningful, but not important” continued for the remainder of the specific questions with the same level of response. The final specific question “How would you rate the necessity of the Sacrament hymn to your particular experience with the ordinance?” was predominantly answered “completely necessary” by same people that responded “yes” to the initial question on the Sacrament hymn as part of the ordinance. By comparing the responses of those that initially answered “yes” with the more specific questions on “meaning” and “process” and seeing there was less correlation between those, but then realizing that these individuals almost all stated that the hymn was necessary for their personal experience, it is clear that these individuals felt the hymn as part of the ordinance in their own experience, but not within the logistics or doctrine of the ordinance itself.

Comparatively, members that answered “no” to “Do you consider the Sacrament hymn as part of the ordinance?” continued with similar responses throughout the logistical-specific questions and the personal experience question. These individuals seemed in agreement that while the hymn may be “meaningful” or “important” it is not necessary to the logistics of the

ordinance, nor for their own experience. Despite the answer of “no” from 29% of members that the hymn is not part of the ordinance, when asked to rate the necessity of the hymn in logistics and personal experience, only one individual marked “not necessary” on one instance for all three questions. This indicates, that while members may not think the Sacrament hymn is a necessary logistical part of the ordinance, they hold it in high regard to a standard above “not necessary.” By analyzing these responses across all comparisons, it is evident that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints view the Sacrament hymn as a meaningful part of the experience on a personal level. While some feel that the ordinance requires the singing of a Sacrament hymn and others do not, very few if any members feel that the hymn is irrelevant to the ordinance.

Question three asks members if they “consider participation through singing the Sacrament hymn as part of the Sacrament ordinance?” 47% of members responded “yes” to this question which was interesting as only 45% considered the hymn as part of the ordinance. This may indicate certain members felt that participation in the hymn was the part of the experience that was necessary for the ordinance. However, in the following question “Do you feel it is possible to participate in the Sacrament hymn without singing?” 64% of members responded “yes” and 29% responded “somewhat,” leaving only 8% of members feeling that they cannot participate in the hymn without singing. Of these five responses, all but one felt that the hymn was “completely necessary” for their own ordinance experience and none felt the hymn was part of the ordinance. All five marked “no” or “somewhat” for question one. It appears that these members have a distinct understanding of the hymn as a musical experience that preludes the ordinance, but is not a structural part of the ordinance. Seventeen members marked that one could “somewhat” participate in the hymn without singing. Intriguingly, that so many members

felt that “participation through singing was part of the ordinance” and then immediately answered that one could participate even somewhat without actually singing. There seems to be a view of participation within this musical experience that extends beyond action and into intention.

The questions focused on logistical elements of “process” and “meaning” held the closest percentages within the range of responses. It seems that members agreed less on the specifics of these questions than any others. From previous questions it seems that this stems from a view that the Sacrament hymn is necessary from a personal standpoint, but not from a doctrinal standpoint. This is gathered from the consensus among those who marked “no” on question one and continued to answer questions without using “completely necessary,” except when asked about their personal experience. Even when a member did not feel the hymn was part of the ordinance, many still felt that it was necessary for their personal experience. While those that initially marked “no” were more likely to select “meaningful, but not important” or “important, but not necessary” the responses in these two questions was divided among both “yes” and “no” responses for question one. It is clear that once an individual answered any question outside of the direct affirmative “yes” or “completely necessary” they were more likely to choose outside of the direct affirmative for the remaining questions. Similarly, if an individual began by answering question one as “no” they were considerably more likely to select all their remaining responses about the necessity of the Sacrament hymn outside of the direct affirmative. To summarize, those that began with a “yes” were more likely to stay in the direct affirmative and those that began with a “no” were more likely to stay outside of the direct affirmative. However, those that began with a “yes” were the more likely of the two to step out of the pattern and leave the direct affirmative for indirect affirmative or the negative.

When viewing later questions, the pattern of question one determining later responses continued into the more personal questions. For example, every individual that marked “engaged, but unfocused,” “distracted,” or “no particular feeling” for the questions “which term best describes your typical experience during the Sacrament hymn?” almost exclusively selected “no” for question one and question two. This continues to reinforce the pattern that a “no” in the first question or even second question resulted in a higher likelihood that a member would respond outside of the direct affirmative for personally related content as well.

A combined 67% of members felt “religiously reflective” or “personally reflective” during the Sacrament hymn. The majority felt “personally reflective.” Of the five members that chose to share personal thoughts, almost all described a reflective state in some regard. Many listed more than one of the words given as possible options. The combination of these three reflective options would raise the percentage to over 70% of members stating their personal experience with the hymn is reflective in nature. There is no direct correlation between these responses and any previous responses.

The following question about the role of the Sacrament hymn resulted in 45% of members labelling the role of the hymn as “preparatory” and the remaining responses split between “thought provoking” and “focusing” with only two responses of “initiating.” One person chose to label the role themselves and wrote “time filler.” This individual also marked outside of the direct affirmative for every other question beginning with a “no” on question one. While others that selected “no” for question one were more likely to select a term other than “preparatory,” the division of terms was fairly equal among them.

The final two questions deal directly with the Sacrament hymns as a body, their meaning and message. Question nine asks members “Which term do you feel best summarizes to overall

message of the Sacrament hymn?” The majority of members selected “remembrance” with a total of 54% of the responses. “Reverence” and “choose your own” received almost the same percentages of 18% and 17% respectively. Of all the questions, members chose to select their own term more for this than any other question. Five of the nine responses either included “remembrance” in the responses or were marked “all of the above” which would include remembrance. “Preparatory,” “love,” “awe,” and “atonement” were the other answers that did not relate to the terms given as options. There are no correlations between the responses of question nine and any previous responses.

The final question asks members how they feel the Sacrament hymns relate to the rest of the hymns in the hymnbook. The only clear direction is that members generally felt that there was some level of difference between the Sacrament hymns and the other hymns in the hymnbook. A majority 61% felt that the Sacrament hymns are similar to other hymns, but different in content or feeling. A combined 23% felt that the Sacrament hymns are very different in either feeling or content and 13% of members felt that the Sacrament hymns are completely unique. Only 2% or two responses felt they were “exactly the same.”

While there is some discrepancy between the role of the Sacrament hymns and the theme of the hymns, it is clear that members feel that there is something different about the Sacrament hymns. Generally, most members feel the hymn is a “preparatory” experience focused on “remembrance.” Other opinions are clearly present, but the majority of members agree on those labels. The unique characteristics of the Sacrament hymns and the view they focus on “remembrance” result in members generally feeling “reflective” during the hymn. While the necessity of the Sacramental hymns from a doctrinal standpoint seems a point of dispute, most members felt that their personal experience benefits and even requires the presence of a

Sacrament hymn. Overall, members who felt comfortable expressing responses outside of the positive affirmative from the beginning continued that pattern but did not reflect this pattern in the questions focused specifically on the hymns.

Interviews

Interviews were scheduled with individuals who chose to participate in further research following the completion of the online survey. Once they had input their information, the author reached out via email and scheduled a time to meet with each individual immediately following their Sacrament meeting, prior to any other meeting. Individuals range in age from early twenties to mid-sixties and live in three different states. Two of the individuals are not native to the United States but are currently US citizens. Four interviews were completed and the findings from the responses indicate similarities in experience that correlate with the findings from the interviews. The names of those interviewed have been changed for the purpose of anonymity throughout this paper. Any personal information that may indicate the identity of the individual has been removed or left out of quotations.

When asked if members recalled the Sacrament hymn from the Sacrament meeting, three of the four people interviewed immediately recalled the hymn they sang prior to the Sacrament in their meeting. The fourth person, did not initially recall, but was able to remember the Sacrament hymn shortly after. All three were able to recite some of the lyrics, although some were limited to the words in the title of the song.

Each individual had different thoughts during the Sacrament hymn that ranged from what they needed to improve in the following week, to what they would like to say in their testimony following the Sacrament. Sarah Williams described that the Sacrament hymns often function as “triggers” for thoughts about things she is studying on her own. She explained that:

I receive something in the song and my mind takes off because it is related to something I read, heard or studied the day before. Then I ponder it and then return to the song. The song seems to trigger something in my head that I've been studying in days before. Its not necessarily that I'm just focused on the song, but its a triggering point. When we sang today, I had images of the Saviors sharing the bread and wine at the last supper. "We take the bread and cup this day" was a trigger, for that.¹²⁵

She also explained that the line "Thy will, o Lord, be done" reminded her of Gethsemane and she recalled learning that not every Christian faith teaches the same purpose for Gethsemane.

Among all interviewed a common theme emerged in their experience with maintaining thoughts during the Sacrament hymn. Each person indicated that in some way, the hymn itself, whether it be the content, the key or the quality of the performance (by themselves or others) impacted their ability to have spiritual thoughts. Amanda Smith stated "The brother conducting did not know the meter of the hymn. So we were singing different rhythms, we were not synchronized with the spirit and it was a super short hymn."¹²⁶ Similarly, Matthew Anderson stated:

I was a little bit distracted this time. I remember that the accompanist was having a hard time with the organ pedals. I usually sing bass and she was not getting the same notes. The person who was directing the music had a lot of feeling. I remember thinking 'this is a great person, she's really putting feeling into it' I remember the man next to me was not getting the right notes. Probably, my thoughts were more about logistics of the song than the meaning.¹²⁷

Sarah Williams was not distracted by others performance, as much as she was by her own. She stated "I had gunk in my throat and I was bothered by the thought I didn't sound very good. I tried to sing alto and that didn't work, because of my voice. So I was distracted by my own inability to sing well."¹²⁸ Unrelated, to performance, but in line with the hymn itself being a

¹²⁵ Sarah Williams, interview by author, March 31, 2024.

¹²⁶ Amanda Smith, interview by author, March 3, 2024.

¹²⁷ Matthew Anderson, interview by author, March 17, 2024.

¹²⁸ Sarah Williams, interview by author, March 31, 2024.

distraction, Samantha Miller felt the key of the hymn becomes a distraction to her thoughts. She stated “The hymn gave me the feeling of a hymn written in a minor key, which is something disruptive to my spirit. It took me a minute to get over the fact that it wasn’t a Sacrament hymn that I was going to get deeply into spiritually. I remember thinking, ‘don’t let this interfere ’ because this is an important time for me.”¹²⁹ Later in his interview, Matthew disclosed that certain Sacrament hymns cause slight anxiety in his mind when they are written from a perspective that is addressing Jesus Christ instead of Heavenly Father.¹³⁰ “I kind of get a feeling of... a little anxiety that we are singing a prayer to Jesus and not to Heavenly Father.”¹³¹ These distractions came up for most people during the question “Do you recall any thoughts you had during the Sacrament hymn?,” but many were restated and explained in greater detail when asked about what distractions they noticed in their surroundings during the hymn. The author addressed this situation with each individual asking directly if the hymn itself can impact their ability to maintain their thoughts where they would like them to be during the experience. They each confirmed that it can impact their ability to do so. The presence of distractions, was not always a negative experience. There were two situations described that indicated that positive situations can also lead to distractions. Amanda stated that she was sitting next to a visitor and began to wonder if he had been taught about the Sacrament and that it was okay for him to take

¹²⁹ Samantha Miller, interview by author, March 17, 2024.

¹³⁰ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints does not believe in the trinity as does the remainder of Protestant Christianity. Their doctrine teaches the Godhead at three distinct and individual beings: God, the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.

¹³¹ Matthew Anderson.

part in it.¹³² Matthew stated that the conductor was very emotive and “even though she was doing a great job, it still took my attention.”¹³³

Despite distractions, each person interviewed also gave strategies they use to redirect or maintain their thoughts during the Sacramental hymn. Amanda Smith recounted that typically "I listen to the song. I read it, and think about it, and imagine what I am singing and I like to keep very quiet, close my eyes and think about the Savior. When I am very focused and I want to have a spiritual experience I try so hard to not let other things around me distract me. When I do get distracted, I try to... come back."¹³⁴ Samantha, Matthew and Sarah all described a meditative or mindful practice that allows them to manage their attentions during the Sacrament hymn and the remainder of the ordinance. When asked if she was distracted, Samantha stated “I usually have my eyes closed, that’s why I memorize the hymns, so that I don’t get distracted because that’s the most important part of my week. And so, I safeguard it, so no, nothing distracted me. I looked at the hymn book when I was unsure of the words, but I kept myself from being distracted.”¹³⁵

Matthew was visiting another ward and felt that was a bit unsettling. He shared his typical experience with the hymn and ordinance as:

I open the book and follow the lyrics even though a lot of them I have pretty much memorized. I follow along so I can follow the message. I often keep the hymn book open to the side during the passing of the sacrament. I typically have a mindful prayer process I do with the sacrament. When the prayer starts and when they’re passing it I have a meditative practice I do. It’s usually the same every time, but may vary slightly. I let go of whatever thoughts were about the song and just went into mindfulness.¹³⁶

¹³² Amanda Smith.

¹³³ Matthew Anderson.

¹³⁴ Amanda Smith.

¹³⁵ Samantha Miller.

¹³⁶ Matthew Anderson.

Sarah Williams explained that often a meditative practice is the best way for her to manage her thoughts, as she often struggles with such a long period of keeping the same focus. She stated on a few occasions “‘I used to have a meditative experience where I would clear my mind;’ ‘My mind does not stay focused for 15 minutes, it does not. It goes to other things that are somewhat related unless I practice meditation;’ and, ‘Ideally I would want to stay completely focused on spiritual matters, but my mind takes off to more mundane matters. That’s a bit bothersome, but they are related. Today, it was somewhat related. I don’t do very well unless I’m really engaged in an exercise of mediation, I do not stay focused.’”¹³⁷ The use of a set practice to maintain thoughts was apparent in all those interviewed. The content of the thoughts they chose to maintain during the Sacrament hymn and immediately after differed among individuals, but common themes did occur.

Each person’s thoughts following the Sacrament hymn were unique to their situation, but almost all correlated to the hymn or the content of the hymn they sang in some way. Amanda’s ward was about to have a testimony meeting. She stated she was “remembering Jesus in gethsemane; and how thankful I was for what he did.”¹³⁸ After the hymn she “was thinking about what I was going to say in my testimony. I wanted to keep the same spirit from the sacrament and the hymn in my testimony.”¹³⁹ The hymn sung by her ward was *There is a Green Hill Far Away*¹⁴⁰ that speaks of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ through sacrifices on the cross and in the

¹³⁷ Sarah Williams.

¹³⁸ Amanda Smith.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ *Hymns*, 194.

garden of Gethsemane.¹⁴¹ Her thoughts about Gethsemane would directly correlate with the message of the hymn that day. Samantha Miller's ward sang, *Thy Will, O Lord Be, Done*,¹⁴² which describes the Savior's submission to the will of His Father and His power over death. It also explains that we should have the same mentality of "Thy will, o Lord, be done" when we take the Sacrament. She explained that her thoughts were focused on "I reviewed my week and what I need to do better next week. I thought about my need for more humility and praying for the gift of charity."¹⁴³ Sarah Williams restated that the hymns often function as "triggers" for thoughts that occur after the hymn. Her ward also sang *Thy Will, O Lord, Be Done*¹⁴⁴ but on a different week in a different state. She explained that:

The hymn was a trigger of thoughts for questions I've had. Today was "what is the scriptural relationship between the sacrament and our baptism? We hear that we renew our covenant with the sacrament, but I don't know a scripture for that, and I've been thinking about that. So the song is often a trigger for me, as a starting point for my thoughts that have been very active the days before today."¹⁴⁵

Each member felt that the purpose of the Sacrament hymn was to prepare them for the ordinance and taking the Sacrament. When asked "What do you feel is the purpose of the Sacrament hymn" the following responses were given: "to be reverent and to feel the connection

¹⁴¹ The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believes that it was while praying in the Garden of Gethsemane that Jesus Christ took on the pains of the sins of the world.

¹⁴² *Hymns*, 188.

¹⁴³ Samantha Miller.

¹⁴⁴ *Hymns*, 188.

¹⁴⁵ Sarah Williams.

between the hymn and the sacrament;”¹⁴⁶ “prepare me spiritually to receive a covenant;”¹⁴⁷ “to get me in the right frame of mind and heart for the sacrament;”¹⁴⁸ “Our minds take time to settle and the hymn is like ‘that’s it, we are starting ’it’s like an anchoring point into the renewal of my decision to follow Christ through the partaking of the Sacrament. It’s almost like a marker in time, now we’re getting serious.”¹⁴⁹ The overall feeling was that the Sacrament hymn was available to transition their thoughts into the ordinance process.

When asked to provide a word they felt encompassed the “theme” of the Sacrament hymns as a whole, the following terms were given: sacrifice, Jesus, open-hearted, awe. Each term reflects both the relationship of the believer to Jesus Christ in some way. Whether in reference to what He did, who He is or how the member should react to Him.

The final portion of the interview was to present each person with the music of several Sacrament hymns with no text and without telling them beforehand what song would be played. They were instructed to share any thoughts, feelings or emotions that occurred while they were listening to the music.

The hymn *Jesus of Nazareth, Savior and King*¹⁵⁰ led to feelings of “reverence,”¹⁵¹ “a kind of pleading, beseeching feeling,”¹⁵² and “that usually causes me to think about the Savior’s life

¹⁴⁶ Amanda Smith.

¹⁴⁷ Samantha Miller.

¹⁴⁸ Matthew Anderson.

¹⁴⁹ Sarah Williams.

¹⁵⁰ *Hymns*, 181.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁵² Matthew Anderson.

and teachings. I kind of go through a panorama of things that are specifically important to me in his life.”¹⁵³ The hymn *As Now We Take the Sacrament*¹⁵⁴ resulted in the descriptions of “I was thinking about Jesus in Gethsemane praying and His apostles are far from Him and He is alone suffering,”¹⁵⁵ and terms like “somber.”¹⁵⁶ Other terms provided were: clam, peace, love, tenderness, and celestial. Some individuals were reminded of situations they have had with the Sacrament in their personal lives and the feelings around those experiences. A common occurrence between two individuals interviewed is the connection between the Sacrament hymns and images of the ministry of Jesus Christ. Both Amanda Smith and Samantha Miller described an experience where the Sacrament hymn acted as a catalyst for images or a “panorama” of Jesus’ ministry. When asked if this is something she feels occurred organically or if it is something she initiates each week, Amanda Smith stated “I think sometimes it happens, not every time. Other times, I just pray and talk with him and tell him how I feel. But, most of the times I think of things that have been.”¹⁵⁷ When asked “So, is the Sacrament hymn your ‘cue’ to think about Christ and the things he did?,” she replied “Mm-hmm, yeah.”¹⁵⁸

Overall, it seems that members are aware of the preparatory nature of the Sacrament hymn and to maintain the desired outcome of preparing spiritually for the ordinance they must be

¹⁵³ Samantha Miller.

¹⁵⁴ *Hymns*, 169.

¹⁵⁵ Amanda Smith.

¹⁵⁶ Sarah Williams .

¹⁵⁷ Amanda Smith.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

intentional in their thoughts and behaviors. Distractions are common and can side track members that are not actively working to manage where their minds are wandering. However, every member interviewed was aware of their need to combat distractions and had a plan to do so. Changes in environment created difficulty for managing distractions. All interviewed members found value in the Sacrament hymn and felt that the hymn typically prepares them for the ordinance. When Samantha Miller was asked if the hymn prepared her for the ordinance, she stated “I think they all do, I don’t think I’ve every sung a sacrament hymn that didn’t better prepare me. I used to tell people that I don’t like the fluffy hymns, I like singing songs about the savior. And so, all of the sacrament hymns hit that touch point to me.”¹⁵⁹

Ethnography

The following ethnography was developed as a preliminary study by the author at a local ward of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This ethnography is taken as a study of the setting and processes of a Sacrament meeting for the church and the behavior of the members during the service. The entirety of the service is not included, what is provided is attention only to the process and setting during the Sacrament hymn and Sacrament ordinance. While there are differences in church buildings, the order of the service as well as the words of the Sacrament prayers will be the same in every congregation of the church throughout the world. Translations of the prayer will of course impact the directness of translation, but the translation of the prayers is done by the church and is not a responsibility of the member saying the prayer.

Attendance at this particular location of this church is for all members that live within the set boundaries. The boundaries for this congregation are around 24 miles wide and 28 miles long

¹⁵⁹ Samantha Miller.

resulting in roughly 672 square miles of the state of North Carolina covered by this meetinghouse. The size of the boundaries depends on the number of members actively participating in meetings in the area. The more members in an area, the smaller the boundaries. In states like Utah and Idaho where there are large numbers of church members, a ward's boundaries may be no more than a few square blocks. Any size area that holds between 150 and 500 active members will make a ward. At church based schools like Brigham Young University (BYU), there are thousands of active members in a small area. At the Provo location of BYU, there are 235 wards just for the University students.¹⁶⁰

This congregation is comprised of members from various ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds. The ward boundaries cover very affluent areas of the county as well as rural areas and very low-income areas as well. Children in the church are kept with their families during the entirety of the Sacrament service. This poses the potential for noise, crying and movement throughout the meeting and the Sacrament ordinance. The amount of small children in a congregation often determines the overall loudness of the chapel during the Sacrament ordinance. This congregation has several families with multiple small children and the room was never silent at any given time. Members respond to these distractions differently and parents will small children often spend the service consoling, monitoring or caring for their young ones. Aside from parents, other members may be distracted by the children around or by their own thoughts, physical state or possessions. Cell phone usage during the service is not managed by leadership and members can choose to be on their phones at any time. The church has all scriptures, study material and hymns available on a phone application; which leads to members

¹⁶⁰ "Ward and Stake Information," accessed April 1, 2024, <https://pf.byu.edu/space/ward-and-stake>.

using their phone to access those things during a service. However, not every member uses their phone for religious activity and phones often become a distraction during services.

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints: Sacrament Meeting

The meetinghouse for this particular congregation is a brick building with a simple design and a single spire. There is no cross on the spire¹⁶¹ and no stained glass or other traditional indicators of a church building. The name of the church is on the side and a flag pole flies the American flag to the side of the building. There are several doors to enter the building. I entered through the door that is closest to the chapel where the service will take place. Entering the lobby, there are several people chatting. The missionaries¹⁶² assigned to the area greet people as they enter and members of the congregation introduce themselves to people that are new or visiting. “It is wonderful to meet you,” “How are you?” and “Welcome!” are heard ringing through the lobby as members greet each other and any new faces. The lobby is simple with a small couch and two small chairs. There are four pictures of Jesus Christ on the walls and a small table with cards, books to take and a sign up sheet to feed the missionaries. To the left is a small Christmas tree with tags bearing the description of items. One read “Male, size medium sweatshirt” another read “Wal-Mart giftcard” a third read “girl, 3 years old.” It seems the tree contains items that could be purchased and donated to those in need. Past the tree are double doors that lead to the chapel.

¹⁶¹ The LDS church does not use the symbol of the cross within their buildings, in publications or on clothing or jewelry.

¹⁶² LDS missionaries serve for 18 months to 2 years and are assigned a location by the church officials. They proselyte and serve in the area they are assigned.

In the chapel rows of pews are filling with families and the conversation is more hushed than in the lobby. A small floral arrangement sits at the very front of the church and a poinsettia is placed to the far left at what seems to be a desk area at the front of the room. There are three stairs ascending to a pulpit with seating for about thirty. A baby grand piano and electric organ are at the center with three men seated in front of them, all wearing white collared, button down shirts and ties. A microphone on a podium is directly center and a small camera positioned on the front row is focused on the microphone. A pianist is playing prelude music at the front of the church. The music is a medley of Christmas tunes. I am able to pick out “Mary Did you Know?,” “O Holy Night,” “Do You Hear What I Hear?” and “Joy to the World” before the service begins. At 10:02 am a man in a white shirt, tie and suit stands and the congregation quiets. He greets everyone as “brothers and sisters,” gives his name and states “and I will be conducting. Our bishop, will be presiding.”¹⁶³ He then greets all visitors and announces the opening song will be hymn number 201, “Joy to the World.” The pianist plays an introduction as the chorister stands to the right on the seated men and the congregation begins to sing.

Most members of the congregation sing the melody, but I can hear a few voices singing alto and tenor as well. I sing a different part on each verse. Most people are not looking at the hymn book and sound of children can be heard beneath the music. All ages are present in the room. Infants and small children stay with their parents and are seated in the pews. Some have toys and others coloring books, read or play with siblings. The words to “Joy to the World” are slightly different than what is traditional sung. The line “let heaven and nature sing” has been

¹⁶³ These three men are members of the bishopric. The highest called leader in the room will be “presiding” over the meeting, no matter which one conducts. This is usually the bishop, but a visiting leader with a higher call would be the presiding leader when present.

replaced with “and saints and angels sing.”¹⁶⁴ Everyone seems to know this and there is no confusion around this line.

Following the hymn a member of the congregation walks to the front and offers the opening prayer. The prayer begins with “Our father in heaven...” the language is formal using “thee” and “thine” instead of “you” and “your.” The congregation stays quiet as the man sits and Brother Goodrich stands again. He states there is “No ward or stake business, so we will move on and prepare for the sacrament.”¹⁶⁵ After announcing the sacrament hymn, he sits and the piano begins to play the introduction to Sacrament hymn number 170 “God Our Father, Hear Us Pray”¹⁶⁶ The congregation begins to sing, with quieter, more subdued voices than in “Joy to the World”:

Verse 1: God, our Father, hear us pray;
Send thy grace this holy day.
As we take of emblems blest,
On our Savior’s love we rest.

Verse 2: Grant us, Father, grace divine;
May thy smile upon us shine.
As we eat the broken bread,
Thine approval on us shed.

Verse 3: As we drink the water clear,
Let thy Spirit linger near.
Pardon faults, O Lord, we pray;
Bless our efforts day by day.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁴ *Hymns*, 201.

¹⁶⁵ Churches within The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are organized similar to school districts. Member attend based on where they live and the individual group within an area is usually called a “ward.” Smaller groups are called “branches.” Several congregations in an area function together as a larger “stake.”

¹⁶⁶ *Hymns*, 170.

¹⁶⁷ Annie Pinnock Malin, “God Our Father Hear Us Pray,” music by Louis M. Gottschalk, in *Hymns*, 170.

As the congregation sings, two men (a young man and a middle aged man) are breaking slices of bread into pieces into silver, handled trays to the right of the men seated at the front. The tune is in G Major, but lingers in e minor for quite a bit of the melody, resolving at the end to a perfect authentic cadence. The congregation is not loud, and a few voices can be heard singing parts, but less than in the opening song. Sounds of baby babbling and children's voices mingle with the music.

As the song ends, the men are not finished with the bread breaking, so the pianist continues with an embellished version of the same melody as the congregation sits quietly. As the bread tearing concludes the men cover the platters with a sheet and sit. The younger man kneels down behind the table. The table contains two rows of silver handled platters covered by a white sheet, one row was used for the bread and the other has not yet been uncovered.¹⁶⁸ The young man begins to offer a prayer:

O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this bread to the souls of all those who partake of it, that they may eat in remembrance of the body of thy Son, and witness unto thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they are willing to take upon them the name of thy Son, and always remember him and keep his commandments which he has given them; that they may always have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.¹⁶⁹

The congregation repeats "Amen" and the young man stands back up. The sheet is raised from the bread platters and they are handed down to six males (young men and older men all dressed in white, button down collared shirts with ties) who proceed to pass the trays down each pew. The bishopric at the front are offered bread first and every male passing the bread seems to have a specific section they are responsible for serving. Members take a single piece and pass the tray

¹⁶⁸ The layout of the trays under the sheet is reflective of a body under a funeral shroud.

¹⁶⁹ Moroni 4:3.

down. Parents offer bread to the children and very few people present do not partake of the bread.

I took this time to observe the congregation. The room is very quiet and some people have their heads bowed and eyes closed. Some parents tended to children and a several people were looking at their phones. Most men and boys are wearing the same style white, button-down, collared shirt as the missionaries, bishopric and those blessing and passing the bread. Some men have colored shirts and a few wear sweaters. Many younger boys are wearing colored shirts, many in Christmas plaids with sweaters. The women and girls are in dresses or skirts and tops. There are two women that sat with the missionaries that were in “street clothes” (jeans and tops), they appear to be visiting.

As the dispersement of the bread finishes, those passing form two lines at the back of the chapel. The two men that are blessing stand and the passers walk to the front, pass back their trays (taking a piece for themselves), and sit back down. The middle-aged man at the table kneels behind the table and offers a prayer.¹⁷⁰ His prayer is in Spanish:

Oh Dios, Padre Eterno, en el nombre de Jesucristo, tu Hijo, te pedimos que bendigas y santifiques esta agua para las almas de todos los que la beban, para que lo hagan en memoria de la sangre de tu Hijo, que por ellos se derramó; para que testifiquen ante ti, oh Dios, Padre Eterno, que siempre se acuerdan de él, para que puedan tener su Espíritu consigo. Amén.¹⁷¹

Which translates to:

O God, the Eternal Father, we ask thee in the name of thy Son, Jesus Christ, to bless and sanctify this water to the souls of all those who drink of it, that they may do it in remembrance of the blood of thy Son, which was shed for them; that they may witness unto

¹⁷⁰ The blessing of the bread and water are prayers that occur every week. They are found in scripture and are commonly known by members.

¹⁷¹ “Benedición del Agua,” accessed 14 December, 2022, https://www.churchofjesuschrist.org/bc/content/shared/content/spanish/pdf/language-materials/33133_spa.pdf.

thee, O God, the Eternal Father, that they do always remember him, that they may have his Spirit to be with them. Amen.¹⁷²

The congregation states “amen” the other side of the sheet is raised to show a second row of containers holding small cups of water. The trays are dispersed to the passers that follow the same pattern of passing to the congregation. The room stays quiet as members continue to pass the trays back and forth. The sound of cups being dropped into the open center of the tray “ping pongs” around the room. A small child begins drumming on a book and a baby starts to cry. The children are quieted by their parents, but the hum of children’s sounds seems to increase as the silence prolongs. As the passing concludes and the passers return to the front, they receive their water. They and those that offered blessings stand and return to sit with their families. The man conducting rises and stands again at the podium.

The ethnography demonstrates the dichotomy of reverence and distraction that members are faced with prior to and during the Sacrament ordinance. The noise of children, availability of cell phones and close proximity of so many other people can create a setting that is distracting and lacks peace. However, the reverence of the music, images of Jesus Christ, formal language and content of the Sacrament hymn remind the members of the purpose of their meeting and where their attention should be focused. Many members in the congregation were intentionally demonstrating behavior to focus their thoughts and ignore distractions. Bowed heads, closed eyes, reading the hymns and perhaps scripture in books or possibly on their phones suggests that members are aware that they control their experience. However, not every member demonstrated the desire to maintain a deep level of reverence and some scrolled on phones or chatted with their neighbor. Those with small children seemed incapable of maintaining both reverence and order and perhaps have their own strategies in place for doing so. It appears that members

¹⁷² Moroni 5:2.

determine their experience with the Sacrament hymn and ordinance through their intentional behavior and ability to avoid distraction.

Active Journaling

Active journaling in the form of thought journals were completed by individuals that took part in the initial online survey and selected to participate in further research. The author reached out to individuals by the provided email and provided directions for keeping and sharing their thought journals. Five individuals provided thought journals in two different states. The age range for those that provided journals is mid-twenties to upper sixties. Some individuals provided more than one journal for more than one week of Sacrament meetings. This resulted in a total of nine thought journals. Some individuals provided time stamps, while others did not. The names of those that provided thought journals have been changed to maintain anonymity. In addition any information that would compromise the anonymity of the journal keepers.

Most journal keepers noted that specific lines in the text led to thoughts, feelings or images related to the words. Natalie Walker's ward sang *How Great the Wisdom and the Love*¹⁷³ which led to the following thought

The words "Thy will O God, not mine be done," inspired me to consider the difference between my own will and God's will for my life. Thought about how I can let go of my own will and more fully turn my life over to God. Felt admiration for my Savior and His humility. Felt a desire to learn from Him and be more like Him.¹⁷⁴

Similarly, Megan Jones stated several connections between the text and her thoughts in three of the journals that she kept. While singing *Behold the Great Redeemer Die*,¹⁷⁵ Megan stated "the

¹⁷³ *Hymns*, 195.

¹⁷⁴ Natalie Walker, letter to author, March 10, 2024.

¹⁷⁵ *Hymns*, 191.

verse starts “although in agony he hung” I feel grateful. He died for me. I need forgiveness today.

Especially today.”¹⁷⁶ In a following journal, while singing *As Now We Take the Sacrament*¹⁷⁷

Megan noted:

During the song I am focused on the words. After the song the words “we’ll walk thy chosen way” are repeating in my head. The reality that I’ve struggled to walk His chosen way is so daunting. If it’s a straight and narrow path I’ve kind of been off of it a long time. Well a recently long time. But more like just kind of in an adjacent path. Close. But not enough. I can do better.

I keep thinking of the phrase “we’ll walk thy chosen way”. And now “we thank the lord our hearts are full”. My heart IS full. I am SO loved. I want to cry haha I don’t want to be so emotional. But gosh I am loved so much more than I probably deserve. He gives me grace. I wish I could see me like He sees me. My Heavenly Father is so giving. I don’t deserve it.¹⁷⁸

This pattern continued into a third journal Megan submitted. During the Sacrament hymn *Father in Heaven, We Do Believe*¹⁷⁹ Megan shared the following about how the text impacted and instigated thoughts in her mind. The following represents three separate thoughts notated in consecutive order:

The song ends and I feel peaceful and calm.

The end of a verse from the hymn is running in repeat through my head “the spirit’s heavenly flame”. So I want to understand what that means. Ahead of that it said “let us receive through covenant” so because I’m bound to God By my covenants, I’m about to receive the spirit’s heavenly flame. So, influence and guidance. It makes me remember it’s guidance and influence FROM HEAVEN. That’s what we get through our covenant power.

I’ve read the hymn again. I don’t typically but was so impressed with the heavenly flame above that I wanted to see what else stands out. The last verse “baptize us with the Holy Ghost and seal us as things own” stands out. In correlation with what I’ve already been thinking, our covenants,

¹⁷⁶ Megan Jones, letter to author, March 31, 2024.

¹⁷⁷ *Hymns*, 169.

¹⁷⁸ Megan Jones.

¹⁷⁹ *Hymns*, 180.

specifically what I'm doing right now, seals me to Heavenly Father. I am not worthy of such love. But He wants me. He wants me sealed to HIM.¹⁸⁰

The progression of thoughts demonstrated in Megan's journal was also present in Rachel Brown's. Rachel provided time stamps for one journal, but not the other. Her entries demonstrates the combination of thoughts around the text as well as personal thoughts that enter the mind even when trying to remain focused. All the journals suggested that individuals faced this throughout the Sacrament hymn and ordinance. While all clearly intended to keep their thoughts focused, personal thoughts entered and at times were given attention and at times were dismissed. Many of the personal thoughts were not completely unrelated to the settings. One individual pondered how the music was impacting their new child, another felt a desire to bring a former partner closer to Jesus Christ. Other examples include upcoming church responsibilities like teaching lessons or a musical programs as well as scripture that was studied at home that did not directly apply to the message, but was returning the the mind. The following entry by Rachel provides a clear example of how quickly thoughts come and go and the connection they have to the message of the song even when personal in nature. During *There is a Green Hill Far Away*¹⁸¹

Rachel noted :

10:13:03 - Today is Palm Sunday. How much changed for the world in one week? People's emotions went from joy to suffering to hope.

10:13:27 - Easter devotional tonight. Someone is singing this song. Prayer to consecrate their efforts to the Lord.

10:13:35 - Gratitude for blessing and for the Savior's love.

10:14:02 - Christ "unlocks the gate" for our eternal life, but it is our choice whether we enter. Thought about my dad.

10:14:27 - "Trust in His redeeming blood" - How can I trust the Lord better and let go of feeling the burden of responsibility for choices of others?

¹⁸⁰ Megan Jones.

¹⁸¹ *Hymns*, 194.

10:14:35 - That was a short Sacrament hymn. I hope that I got enough data.¹⁸²

The impact of the hymn and the text continued in Rachel's mind into the ordinance. She stated later in her journal "Remembered "trust in his redeeming blood and try his works to do" I Need to trust more and worry less. Just try & let the Savior work it out. This is between me & Him."¹⁸³ Rachel found a connection between the song and a musical program she was part of that same evening. She also allowed the text to remind her of needs she had in her personal life and matters she was hoping to resolve. Rachel's second entry again demonstrated this pattern of thoughts around the text being mingled with personal thoughts in a continuum of monitored awareness. Rachel's second journal did not have time stamps, but the progression of thoughts both about the text and about personal matters is clearly demonstrated.

- Easter season -making celebration more Christ-centered and intentional. Love for the Savior and His mercy.
- How do I understand the Savior's atonement more fully?
- Prayed about calling and how to serve fully without losing balance in my life.
- How do I "ever witness" something - is it witnessing it in a stable, consistent way or doing it over & over again?
- Things I have to do today - people I have to talk to, potential issues with upcoming Easter devotional, texts/emails I have to send.
- Hymn says Christ "won our souls with love" - how can I love in a way that makes an impact?
- Noticing someone looks burdened. Love them but not sure how to help.
- Remembered a quote from somewhere that having a pen in your hand is like having an antennae for the Spirit - I should always journal during Sacrament meeting - Would I ever read what I wrote down or have a journal full of promptings I didn't follow up on?
- Hymn says the Lord was "veiled in flesh" - how is He veiled in my life? How can I better see/uncover Him?
- "Be like man almost" - How can I be "like him almost"?
- Prayer about a meeting I have this week
- Gratitude for a recent blessing that was a deep desire of my heart
- Difficulty I am having with a friend

¹⁸² Rachel Brown, letter to author, March 24, 2024.

¹⁸³ Rachel Brown.

- Noticing how thoughts have gone from being about Christ and his role to everyone to his role in my personal.¹⁸⁴

The desire to understand the text fully was present in the journals of both Rachel and Megan.

Both asked questions in their own minds about the meaning of the text and the application of it in their lives. Emily Green followed a similar pattern of pondering the meaning of the text. Her journal during the Sacrament hymn *God Loved Us, So He Sent His Son*¹⁸⁵ contained the following questions “What is the meaning of ‘to recompense?’”¹⁸⁶ and “What is the meaning of ‘deed for word?’”¹⁸⁷ Emily also was prompted into thoughts that relate to her own life through the text of the song. The line “that in His offering I have part, and hold a place within His heart.”¹⁸⁸ Emily states “I marvel ‘His Heart;’ I ‘have a place in his heart?’ I wonder ‘What have I done for Jesus this week?’ Images of my service pop in my head. I think, ‘What has Jesus done for me?’ I realize I cannot count as there are too many things he has done for me this week.” Emily also explored the connection between Christ’s heart, His death and the details around His crucifixion. She explains that this train of thought leads her to realize that He faced cardiac arrest.¹⁸⁹

The journal keepers also expressed on multiple occasions the impact that the Sacrament hymn has on their mental and physical state. Statements such as “I felt a sense of reverence

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

¹⁸⁵ *Hymns*, 187.

¹⁸⁶ Emily Green, letter to author, March 17, 2024.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ *Hymns*, 187.

¹⁸⁹ Emily Green.

during the singing of the hymn. The hymn helped focus my thoughts on the Savior and the atonement...all he endured;”¹⁹⁰ “I felt soothed and calmed by the song. My stress from the week faded and I felt relaxed;”¹⁹¹ and “Song ends and I feel peaceful and calm;”¹⁹² suggest that the experience of the Sacrament hymn led to a physical reaction in the minds and bodies of the journal keepers.

The thoughts journals were not free from notes of distraction. It is clear, that distractions are present in every service and differ in degree by individual. Some journal keepers were in the same ward and while some were very aware of the sounds of children, others did not mention at all that they were noticing the behavior around them. While each person’s individual idiosyncrasies may determine which sounds or distractions are most bothersome, location of the individual to the distraction will also influence the level of distraction the person will face. It is not clear how close in proximity the different journalizers were to one another. Therefore, the factor of proximity cannot be taken into account for this study. Some of the distractions listed by journal keepers outside of their own thoughts include: “Stopped singing to focus on caring for baby;” “Felt tired and thought about taking a nap after church;”¹⁹³ “Distracted by chorister’s new hair then the guy’s socks in front of me;” “it’s so loud in here;” “Distracted by the baby who looks like his grandpa;” “There’s a water issue - not enough. And it looks a little stressful;” “kids

¹⁹⁰ Monica Evans, letter to author, March 10, 2024.

¹⁹¹ Natalie Walker.

¹⁹² Megan Jones.

¹⁹³ Natalie Walker.

behind me are going wild today;” “Kids are loud. It’s cute;”¹⁹⁴ “Noticing someone looks burdened.”¹⁹⁵

Despite clear distractions in the space all journal keepers were able to manage their thoughts with their own direction. On one occasion, Megan Jones admits “I was so consumed by my own non-sacrament thoughts that until I started praying after partaking of the bread, I didn’t record anything.”¹⁹⁶ Although Megan was distracted for some time, she became aware of her distraction and had the desire to re-direct her thoughts to the experience. There were no instances of individuals completely abandoning their thoughts to the whim of distraction. Both Emily Green and Monica Evans recognize distractions and address that they are not impacting their ability to maintain their thoughts. Monica states “Although here were the normal noises... children, coughs, etc. they did not really distract me.”¹⁹⁷ Emily similarly notes “I am aware of the people around me, but I do not pay attention.”¹⁹⁸

The final two similarities among journals was an expressed gratitude for those that bless the bread and water as well as pass it and the distraction of the quality of musical performance on the journal keepers thoughts. Megan Jones and Monica Evans both recognize the individuals that pass the Sacrament and note their appreciation. Monica wrote “Felt a sense of gratitude for the young men who so carefully administer the Sacrament.”¹⁹⁹ Upon noticing the administrators had

¹⁹⁴ Megan Jones.

¹⁹⁵ Rachel Brown.

¹⁹⁶ Megan Jones.

¹⁹⁷ Monica Evans .

¹⁹⁸ Emily Green.

¹⁹⁹ Monica Evans .

run out of water and were handling the situation, Megan wrote “there’s a water issue - not enough. And it looks a little stressful. These boys are handling it like pros. So grateful for them. Said a prayer of gratitude for worthy priesthood holders”^{200 201} Additionally, Monica Evans notices an aspect of the music that is impactful enough to note it in the journal. Monica wrote “I was a bit distracted because the piano and the singing did not seem to be in sync.”²⁰² in a similar fashion, Megan became distracted by her own performance while singing the hymn. She states “During the song my mind wandered to thought of how I was singing, I was not focused on what I was singing.”²⁰³ It appears that the quality of the musical performance by those participating as well as by those around them can impact the ability of an individual to maintain their thoughts during the Sacrament hymn.

²⁰⁰ Megan Jones .

²⁰¹ The Sacrament is often administered by young men in the ward. The passing of bread and water is often done by boys ages twelve to sixteen years old.

²⁰² Monica Evans

²⁰³ Megan Jones

Chapter Five: Conclusion

Conclusion

The collection of data and research indicates that members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints recognize the Sacrament hymn as a preparatory action within the Sacrament meeting as they prepare to make the covenants associated with the Sacrament. This is both similar and different to the use of music in Catholicism and Protestantism. While all Protestantism and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints both utilize music as a preparatory tool prior to the rite, the need to be actively remembering in order to effectively keep the covenant of the Sacrament places a greater emphasis on the effectiveness of the Sacrament hymn. The music in a Protestant service is impactful and focusing, but does not impact the rite directly. The belief in transubstantiation in the Catholic Church and the specific guidelines around when and how music is used in preparation to the Eucharist is similar to the specific function of the Sacrament hymn.

While members do not feel that the Sacrament hymn is required doctrinally; the majority of those participating felt the hymn was a necessary part of their personal Sacrament experience. Members in the interviews, survey and thought journals expressed that the Sacrament hymn was often a tool used in their Sunday service to prepare themselves for the Sacrament. 71% of members felt the hymn was part or somewhat part of the ordinance, while 69% of members said that it was completely or somewhat necessary to their personal experience. None of the 31% of remaining members, felt the hymn was unnecessary to their experience. Members were less aligned on procedural questions indicating that the necessity of the Sacrament hymn derives from a personal need over a logistical need.

Data suggests that the Sacrament hymn generates thoughts and associations with Jesus Christ that create a state of remembrance within the member as they covenant to “always remember Him.” Members often visualize images of Jesus Christ’s life, meditate, pray or reflect on the hymn as they sing the Sacrament hymn; often these thoughts continue into the ordinance. Without the presence of the text, members still associate the music of the Sacrament hymns with feelings of peace, religious terms and images of Jesus Christ. Members also connect the Sacrament hymns to memories and the accompanying emotions that occurred. These associations indicate that the small number of Sacrament hymns and the repetition of their use have created semiotic associations for the members between the songs and specific: feelings, emotions, memories and images. These associations will effectively generate remembrance or a state of being that evokes reverence and spirituality. The direct connection between the Sacrament hymns and the ordinance create a mental marker that the ordinance is beginning and thoughts, behavior and attention should shift to what is appropriate. The Sacrament hymn acts not only as a catalyst for a spiritual experience but as a signal that a sacred experience is about to occur.

As members are encompassed with the semiotic associations that the Sacrament hymns produce both consciously and unconsciously in their thoughts and feelings; they are simultaneously presented with an array of distractions. Discordant singing, mistakes from the instruments or chorister, or self-criticism about their voice are common distractions for members that impact their ability to think of Jesus Christ. Additionally, some members are impacted by the tonality of the piece or the specific content of the text. This indicates that the Sacrament hymn itself, the success of the music and the success of the individual singer impacts whether the hymn is an effective instrument in generating remembrance.

There are many additional distractions in the setting as members attempt to focus on Jesus Christ; children, movement, talking and cell phones are the most common physical distractions. Members must intentionally decide if they wish to remain focused on the Sacrament hymn and the thoughts that accompany it, or the distractions around them. Those that maintain thoughts of remembrance throughout the hymn and into the ordinance do so intentionally and often with redirection. Most members recognize that the Sacrament hymn is an opportunity to reflect and remember. Around 70% of members felt that their experience with the hymn was either personally or religiously reflective. Similarly, 60% members felt the overall theme of the Sacrament hymns was remembrance or some form of the term. This general awareness of the role of the Sacrament hymn encourages members to actively maintain the thoughts and feelings that are connected to the hymns through association. The effectiveness of the Sacrament hymns' ability to prepare members for the Sacrament is directly related to the member's commitment to seeking out and maintaining an inflexible connection to the ideas and reactions the hymn generates through association. When the member decides that they will cling to the purpose of the hymn and its potential to prepare them for the covenant, they will effectually enter a state of remembrance or reverence necessary to keep the covenant as they partake of the bread and water.

Relationship of Results to the Literature

The research determined that the implied theme of remembrance that is commonly referenced throughout the Sacrament hymns as a collection is recognized by members. Church leaders that have discussed the Sacrament ordinance as a time to think of Jesus Christ and the repetition of words referencing remembrance in the text of the Sacrament hymns was supported in the members' responses to the surveys as well as their descriptions of thoughts and images that entered their minds during and after the Sacrament hymn. The research demonstrates that

members do in fact recognize the Sacrament hymn as their initial cue to begin the process of remembrance and therefore begin to keep the covenant they subsequently make during the ordinance. However, the effectiveness of the hymn as a catalyst is determined by the member's individual willingness to maintain the connections brought about by the hymn and its text. This demonstrates that the effectiveness of the Sacrament hymn as a catalyst is not only determined by each individual but can change weekly by for any individual depending on their commitment to the process.

The specific role of the Sacrament hymn, and the logistical elements that surround the performance, text, music, and setting suggest that the Sacrament hymn is more similar to the music of the Liturgy of the Eucharist than that of a hymn prior to the Lord's Supper in a Protestant setting. The varying nature of music used in Protestant churches as well as the use of communion to remind members of a promise as opposed to actively making a promise are clear differences between the Sacrament hymn and music of the Lord's Supper as they relate to the rite. While the covenant made during the Sacrament is vastly different than the belief of transubstantiation, the level of reverence that is encouraged prior to a covenant and the literal presence of Christ in the host of the Eucharist meal reflect two instances where music is used: intentionally, under strict direction and with a clear purpose to prepare for a sacred event. The data thus supports that the Sacrament hymn is more similar to the music of the Eucharist, while still maintaining distinct and doctrinally diverging uniqueness. This finding supports the idea that the covenant made does impact the use and function of the Sacrament hymn as it is utilized to prepare for the covenant as opposed to the use of hymns in the same service for less sacred purposes.

The data that describes members' views of the singing of the Sacrament hymn as part of the ordinance and also believe that they can participate in the hymn without singing implies that congregational singing is an impactful and meaningful part of the ordinance. However, the understanding of what it means to participate in congregational singing differs among members and perhaps differs in cultures that are more participatory in musical culture. The power of congregation singing seems to impact members that are not participating in a way that creates a feeling of inclusion even when they are not actively making music. The literature's description of congregational singing as a way to encourage community, to teach principles and generate feelings within those present seems to occur and transfers to those that are not singing as well. It seems that members can choose to ignore the influence of the song if they instead focus on distractions or practice an avoidant attitude, but to those actively engaged, the singing of the hymn is a powerful and impactful part of the service.

In addition to the power of congregational singing, the use of music as a semiotic tool of remembrance is supported in the findings. Members describe images, feelings and memories associated with the Sacrament hymn as a whole as well as with the music alone. This supports the idea that the hymn is a sign in multiple respects. The familiarity with the tunes has created associations that manifest in mental images or the physical representation of the content of the text; as many Sacrament hymns discuss or describe the life of Jesus Christ. The text would function for these individuals as a symbol as the images of Christ are agreed upon images that reflect the meaning of the text as a sign. Additionally, feelings of peace, reverence, calm, and others suggest that the sound and content of the Sacrament hymn are connected to mental state that members hope to achieve during the Sacrament. Since members must intentionally choose to avoid distraction and engage in the service, it appears that the members that choose to participate

over time develop associations that are cued by the sound of the Sacrament hymns that are familiar to them. This type of association is indexical in nature as it connects the hymns with an emotion or physical state that is associated with the hymn. An indexical association also occurs when members are reminded of the Sacrament ordinance, the service, or memories from the past when they hear the hymns. These members' brains have created connections between the Sacrament hymns and specific events in their life that are recalled as the hymns are heard or sung. These associations seem to impact the idea that members can participate without singing as the direct semiotic impact of the hymn on their physical and mental state would imply action despite the lack of physical singing. Further research could determine if members feel that they are participating while not singing when a new or unfamiliar hymn is used in place of a known hymn with established semiotic connections to the Sacrament ordinance.

Similarly, there are elements about the songs or the way the songs are performed that have their own associations that function as a distraction to the intended purpose of the Sacrament hymn. For some members, who the hymn is addressing (God the Father or Jesus Christ) has a clear connection to feelings of anxiety. This indicates an indexical connection between the text and doctrinal beliefs that are seemingly challenged by the hymn. Additionally, members that prefer major tonalities as opposed to minor tonalities have associations between tonalities and feelings of disruption. The Sacrament hymns that contain more minor tonality than others generate associations to unrest, and therefore work in opposition to the desired outcome of the hymn.

The most popular distractive association is the self-critical analysis that one's performance is sub-standard or that the musical performance around them is of low quality. Mistakes by the pianist, organist, conductor or a neighbor are distracting and when connected to

the associations of Western music culture are considered unworthy of audience. These connections between members and what is considered a quality performance are manifest in members' reactions to the mistake of others and oneself. The primary focus of Western music to label people as either "musicians" or "not musicians" has created a disconnect in congregation singing where members that feel they are "not musicians" feel that they should not sing. Perhaps these members are the same that notice the mistakes of others and therefore feel that their neighbors will notice and be distracted by their own mistakes. Further research could determine if there is a connection between members that notice others mistakes and those that are self-conscious of their own. These concurrent and contradictory semiotic associations manifested in the Sacrament hymns, the content or tonality of the hymn, the performance of the hymn, a one's own performance of the hymn suggest that semiotic associations with the hymns lay beyond those connected to the Sacrament and also include semiotic associations that are associated with music and music performance within the music culture of the individuals participating.

Limitations

Limitations to the research were confined to regulations in place around the research of human subjects. The survey was available to individuals within the United States of America. Data collected from groups outside of the United States may differ as music cultures value music, participation and worship differently. The limitation of the United States will cause the data and findings to represent those that are in and surrounded by a Western music culture.

Other limits to the research are related to the number and gender of participants. Female members of the church were more willing to participate in surveys, interviews and thought journals. Therefore, the majority of input was collected from female members of the church. While both genders were approached to participate in thought journals, only female members

responded and followed through with providing thought journals. Additionally, multiple men were contacted to give interviews and only one responded to schedule a time. The limitation of willingness has created data that is heavily female in experience. However, there is a diverse sampling of female members with over forty years of age difference, three different states and three different nationalities (though all are currently American citizens).

The final limit to the research is the element of time. With a larger time frame the author would be able to reach more members in differing locales to provide a wider sample of informants. A greater number of interviews and thought journals could be gathered to provide a broader scope of potential experience. The similarities in findings suggest that more of the same evidence would be collected even with a larger sampling group, but this could only be determined with additional research on a larger community of members.

Further Research

The findings present additional questions that could be approached in further research. The number of individuals that feel that the hymn is part of the ordinance, but were very unclear as the capacity indicate that research could be done to determine the role that members feel the hymn plays in the ordinance. Music is highly regarded in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and is present in all meetings. However, when the Sacrament is taken to an individual unable to attend a Sacrament service due to health limitations, a Sacrament hymn is not required in that circumstance. Additional research could determine what capacity members feel that the Sacrament hymn holds in the ordinance and distinguish if the “necessity” that is made apparent in the research is personal in nature or logistical.

Over 64% of individuals that participated in the survey felt it was possible to participate in the Sacrament hymn without singing. An additional, 29% felt it was possible to “somewhat”

participate in the hymn without singing. This left less than 8% of members acknowledging that one could not participate in the musical experience without singing. There is a clear disconnect between what it means to participate in a musical experience and what it means to actively observe a musical experience. Several areas of research could be pursued from this finding.

First, research on participation in music and the various ways that participation can occur may uncover if it is a general belief that one can participate in a group, participatory musical experience without making sound. Additionally, where does this belief develop? Western music culture is primarily based in presentational experiences where trained and practiced musicians present polished performances to observant audiences that acknowledge the work through engagement and applause. It seems obvious that individuals would not consider a concert where the performers sat quietly pondering the music in front of them a “musical experience,” yet they feel that their internal feelings about the Sacrament hymn are enough to justify participation. Where is the line between active observation and performance?

Individuals in the interviews and journalizers were clear that their own musical performance impacted their ability to remain spiritually focused during the Sacrament hymn. Individuals that are not confident may feel they would detract from the experience by taking part in the singing. Research could determine if this is a cause of the view that participation without action is possible or if they are separate. By analyzing similar data within an area where the music culture is more participatory by nature than presentational, research could determine if the fear of unsavory performance is inhibiting and redefining participation or if this is applicable across all cultures. How do participatory music cultures view levels of participation? The human condition of worship through song is both deliberate and insentient leaving a host of possible

research topics outside of the impact of covenant on the music of the modern rite of the Last Supper.

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APPENDIX I

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY.
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

December 28, 2023

Rebecca Ard
Leon Correia Neto

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-752 "That They do Always Remember Him" the Impact of Music and Covenant on the Modern Rite of the Last Supper

Dear Rebecca Ard, Leon Correia Neto,

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

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

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

Any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research would not reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation; or

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

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

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

Sincerely,

G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

