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The Influence of Charismatic Worship Forms in the Local Evangelical Church

in the 21st Century in the United States

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by

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DOCTOR OF WORSHIP STUDIES THESIS DEFENSE DECISION

The committee has rendered the following decision concerning the defense for Kyle Grizzard on the Thesis, The Influence of Charismatic Worship Forms in the Local Evangelical Church in the 21st Century in the United States as submitted on September 26, 2020

a. √ Full approval to proceed with no revisions. The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.

b. Provisional approval pending cited revisions. The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.

c. Redirection of project. The student is being redirected to take MUSC/WRSP 889 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

Hanna Byrd 9/26/2020
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ABSTRACT

Despite a continued desire to understand the direction of worship liturgy in the American evangelical church culture, many scholars are unable to identify the influence of charismatic worship forms in various evangelical churches in the United States. This research is important for understanding the future of worship in the local evangelical church in America and will aid in determining the theology, liturgy, and philosophy of worship and its practices. Guided by scholars of worship in both charismatic and traditional evangelical worship cultures, this qualitative historical research study provides insight to the worship culture in current evangelical worship. Perspectives on behavior, theology, culture, and preference emerged as themes through exploration of existing literature in this field. Research was informed by scholarly literature involving charismatic worship practices, traditional evangelical worship, and theology. The study identified how charismatic worship has influenced transitions in worship culture over the past twenty years, leading to major paradigm shifts in worship music repertoire and casual environments. One of the main reasons that church leadership may desire the music and worship atmosphere typically associated with large church worship music publishing houses is the perception of congregational engagement. Multiculturalism, generational expectations, worship transitions, and church revitalization are some of the byproducts of charismatic worship forms influencing the evangelical church in the 21st century. This work is important because the more worship leaders, pastors, and theologians recognize the growing trends in charismatic worship, the more this influence will be understood.

*Keywords:* charismatic worship, multiculturalism, evangelical worship
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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Worship liturgy in the evangelical church in the United States displays a wide gamut of philosophy and methodology. However, in the last twenty years, the most influential worship form and practice has been the charismatic emergence. Many churches, who once were stoic and traditional in their worship practice, along with the leaders of these churches have opened their minds and hearts to a more progressive worship liturgy. The trend is not just a part of a movement. Many young church leaders have realized that this form of worship is part of a growing and active congregation. Carey Nieuwhof engaged this argument by stating, “If you look at almost any growing church led by young leaders, it definitely tends toward the charismatic—expressive worship, more emotional delivery in preaching, an openness to the work and activity of the Holy Spirit, and generally a warmer, more enthusiastic and expressive gathering.”¹ The statistics indicate that churches are moving to a new worship identity because of the effect of the culture and the inclusion of multiculturalism in many worship environments. This study is designed to unpack the effects of the charismatic influence on the evangelical church in America thus far in the twenty-first century. In understanding where the charismatic movement has come from and evolved into, research can show the depictable future for worship practices in the local evangelical church in the United States.

Background

An examination of past and present worship reveals that worship practices, songs, and expressions have and will change. From one generation to another, culture can and does influence corporate worship practices.\textsuperscript{2} It is important, however, to go back to the foundations of worship in the Old and New Testament to truly understand the worship practices that God desires. From scripture, it is clear that worship is highly expressive. In Psalm 119:120, David, King of Israel, expresses that he trembles and stands in honor of God. Psalm 149:3 is a reminder that dancing and instrumental praise is acceptable to the Lord. In Psalm 47:1, David also encourages to clap hands and to shout to the Lord.

These passages clearly recommend outward expressions of worship for all believers. However, some denominations take issue with specific worship practices, deeming these activities unacceptable for utilization in corporate worship. Some have had issues encouraging these practices. Particular reasons for discouragement of outward worship practices may vary, yet a few reasons for disregard are noted. First, some find outward expressions intimidating and may lead to distraction. Second, there may be a lack of biblical teaching and worship theology within the congregation to explain what scripture states concerning worship expressions. Last, if no one around is responding outwardly, it may feel uncomfortable to proceed in following through with emotional and bodily responses in times of corporate worship.\textsuperscript{3}


History

At the turn of the twentieth century, America was met with a “new brand” of Christianity. The Azusa Street Revivals sparked many new denominations. Collins and Price claimed, “By 1998, approximately 500 million people in more than 100 nations called themselves Pentecostal or Charismatic – descendants of the Azusa Street Awakening.” In the last one-hundred years, a new fresh approach to congregational worship rapidly emerged. Through the Charismatic Movement, worshipers regained a desire for expression and passionate worship. It allowed church leaders to ask the question, “Where are we going? What will be the driving force, trends, and paradigm shifts in worship during the twenty-first century?” Each charismatic movement had a different focus. The Azusa Street Revival served as the birthplace of modern Pentecostalism. The charismatic renewal, however, swept through many of the mainline denominations, in particular the Episcopal church, and led to a restructuring of those churches.

As the new millennium began, it was evident that new waves of worship trends, forces, and paradigm shifts occurred in the local evangelical churches in America. Twenty years later, this trend has become the norm. Worship in the United States, in virtually every denomination, has become more diversified. Whaley detailed this by writing, “Worship in the evangelical tradition is in the midst of a paradigm shift. The influence of postmodern culture on evangelicals is greater now than it has ever been... There is an emphasis on sensory worship. There is a

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6 Ibid., 356.

7 Ibid., 359.
greater sensitivity to adapting worship to the surrounding culture.”

One of the leading factors to this perceived change in corporate worship is the Pentecostal-Charismatic movement.

Charismatic worship has continued to exert significant influence in mainline denominations. Although it is extremely difficult to recognize the future of Christian worship in American churches, a growing influence from charismatic worship forms is inevitable. Worship practices will continue to change in evangelical communities as long as leadership desires to become more diverse, creative, and have a heart to communicate to the next generation. New worship expressions are bound to emerge as leadership continues to be more innovative.

The Divide

The division of doctrinal practices and worship theology between charismatics and other traditional evangelicals is obvious. Carledge and Swoboda shared it this way:

While many Protestants and Evangelicals are likely to see the preached Word as the liturgical high point of a worship gathering, and in Roman Catholics and many Mainline traditions the Eucharist is the high point, it is a Pentecostal... who experiences personal response to God as the high point of worship. This response is not always the same and is often rather fluid: for some it is sung worship, for others it is ministry time or speaking in tongues. The practice changes; the responsiveness, however, remains as passionate.

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8 Towns and Whaley, Worship Through the Ages, 362.


11 Towns and Whaley, 359.

12 Carledge and Swoboda, Scripting Pentecost, 124.
The individual experience of encountering the presence of God in corporate worship has become a driving force to make transitions, change repertoire, and encourage expressions in worship in many 21st century evangelical churches.

Although many could argue that there are stark differences in theology between charismatic churches and non-charismatic churches, the differences are not as vast as one might think. 13 Some of the transitions that occurred have less to do with theology and more to do with expression. Nieuwhof gave several examples of these transitions. The first transition is anonymity to a sense of belonging. 14 In a traditional evangelical setting, it is common for a worshipper to come into the house of worship, take a seat in a designated pew, sing quietly, pray silently, and listen intently. In the charismatic setting, it is common to hear loud music and singing. Furthermore, prayers are encouraged to be spoken aloud and all at once time and an intimate environment to distinguish acceptance is desired.

The second transition is the engagement of the heart, not just the head. Charismatics have traditionally followed the service flow based on feeling and less on cerebral influence. This transition is not implemented to take away from using the mind in worship; however, it does give a pose to reengage the heart in the corporate worship setting. The biblical weight of this transition is based on the fact that Jesus proclaimed the First Commandment found in Matthew 22:36, to love him with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. This transition has been implemented in attempt to engage emotions within worship. God feels. Scripture is a reminder

13 Nieuwhof. “5 Reasons Churches are Growing.”

14 Ibid.
that God laughs,\textsuperscript{15} mourns,\textsuperscript{16} hates,\textsuperscript{17} loves,\textsuperscript{18} rejoices,\textsuperscript{19} feels anger,\textsuperscript{20} feels jealousy,\textsuperscript{21} and feels compassion.\textsuperscript{22} God is Spirit.\textsuperscript{23} The anticipation to connect with God on an emotional level in addition to the mind is strongly encouraged in a charismatic worship environment.

The third transition mentioned is the ability to add more variety of items in the order of service than just three songs and a message. Charismatic houses of worship have brand new departments that encourage more creativity. Complete subdivisions within the church staff have been formed that are titled Creative Team, Experience Team, Production Team, and Visual Arts Team. Many traditional evangelical churches have a service order that encompasses a few songs and a sermon. The charismatic worship experience is meant to be just that – an experience. Every week, many charismatic worship orders are filled with new stage designs, lighting programs, visual stories, and creative elements in worship. It is not abnormal to find a baptism in the middle of a music selection or a testimony in the middle of the sermon. It is common in many charismatic environments to see low house lights and bright stage lights, loud music and trendy clothing. In many parts of the country, today’s culture is flooded with visual stimulation. The reason for implementing this transition is to

\textsuperscript{15} Psalm 37:12-13.
\textsuperscript{16} John 11:35.
\textsuperscript{17} Proverbs 6:16-19.
\textsuperscript{18} John 3:16.
\textsuperscript{19} Psalm 104:31.
\textsuperscript{20} Exodus 4:14.
\textsuperscript{21} Exodus 34:14.
\textsuperscript{22} Matthew 14:14.
\textsuperscript{23} John 4:24.
compete with the surrounding cultural entertainment appeal, and eventually, bring people’s focus to Jesus.

The fourth transition from traditional to charismatic is for more passionate expressions of worship. A common word that is spoken amongst young worshipers, in the Generation Z class and in some Millennials, is the word “authentic.” There is a deep desire to strip away the pomp and pageantry of a traditional service and get down to the raw feelings, emotions, passions, and expressions that seem to accompany a charismatic worship environment. Both the traditional evangelical and charismatic worship practices can have extremes attached to their liturgy. Traditional evangelicals have allowed legalism and cerebral theology to dictate their worship practices. The charismatic worship culture has allowed emotionalism and manipulation to cloud some worship practices. This transition actually pulls both sides of the extremes back to center. On the traditional side, one can see “religious” practices and obligation. On the charismatic side, one can see manipulation and phony worship. Many charismatic environments today desire to not allow the extremes of either practice to take away from the passionate expressions that are real, genuine, and authentic.

The fifth transition requires additional time during the service for prayer. This transition can happen in a number of ways. There can be an element in the service plan that calls for prayer at the altar. In addition, there can be spontaneous worship moments in a song or just after a song that encourage outcry of praise, repentance, and surrender. Many worship leaders and pastors encourage outspoken prayers and exhort specific focuses for these expressive moments.

Nieuwhof’s final transition is to add more time for contemplation in the service in order to engage the emotions beyond a formal welcome, upbeat music, and a thought-
provoking message. Here, again, is where the Creative Ministry teams in the charismatic
culture becomes vital to their desired achievement. Emotions can be captured in a personal
story or testimony caught on video. It could be a worship video “bumper” that engages the
heart and mind before a single word is spoken or sung. A profound thought from an
introduction video may communicate the sentiment of the sermon before the pastor has given
his first point. A lot of thought goes into the creative process in charismatic settings. This
includes, but is not limited to, social media engagement and online interactions. Many of the
changes that evangelicals have made have nothing to do with changing the message of
Scripture. In fact, many of the changes have moved a theology of worship closer to true
biblical worship.\footnote{24}

There is no denying that theological differences still exist. Charismatic roots that were
found in the Azusa Street Revival and the Jesus Movement were submerged in the theology of
Spirit baptism. For years, the tell sign that someone had been baptized in the Spirit was the use of
speaking in tongues or glossolalia.\footnote{25} Much of the divide in theology has been upended in the
newest charismatic movement called the “third wave.”\footnote{26} This new wave of charismatic worship
no longer required that speaking in tongues be the only sign of Spirit baptism.\footnote{27} With speaking in
tongues no longer a requirement to be considered “charismatic,” the door for more and more
believers to find themselves in non-traditional, non-affiliated churches called non-

\footnote{24 Paul Basden, *Exploring the Worship Spectrum: 6 Views*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 145.}

\footnote{25 Kenneth Copeland, “How Do You Recieve the Baptism of the Holy Spirit,”


\footnote{27 Basden, *Exploring the Worship Spectrum*, 142.
denominational. Many non-denominational churches seek the power of charismatic worship expression and environments without the extreme fringes of traditional Pentecostal theology.

Worship Renewal

One could say that there has been a renewed excitement in worship over the past twenty years in the local evangelical church. There are five ways that charismatic worship has shaped a “renewal movement.” First, there has been a renewed emphasis of the Holy Spirit in corporate worship settings. Second, spiritual gifts and manifestations have been inspired corporately following charismatic worship practices. Third, stagnant lifelessness has been replaced with emotional engagement of the believer. Fourth, a wide range of biblically stimulated external and physical expressions of worship have been revived. Fifth, a new wave of congregational songs from charismatic-driven houses of worship have dominated the worship set lists.

There are some church leaders, in both charismatic and traditional evangelical circles, that believe expressive and passionate worship can be fused with the power of the Word of God. In an article in “Christianity Today,” Adam Mayberry, a reformed, conservative fundamentalist pastor from Boston, stated, “I daydream about what could happen if the passion of the charismatic for the power of God and the passion of the evangelical for the Word of God could be combined to accomplish the work of God.”

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29 Ibid.

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

Similarly, Kenneth Ulmer, a pastor in East St. Louis, went to a highly dispensationalist seminary and considered himself to be an evangelical conservative. Early in his ministry preparation and education, Ulmer became a student of doctrines, especially the Pentecostal and charismatic movements. Ulmer admitted that he went through a “great theological metamorphosis.” During this time, Ulmer went from engaging in conservative evangelical “intellectual elitism” to “being a respected and sought-after voice among Baptists embracing Pentecostal and charismatic theology.”

Paul Morton, a fellow pastor of Ulmer’s tradition, led the Greater St. Stephen Full Gospel Baptist Church in New Orleans, L.A. He was a Baptist denominational leader that helped introduce black Baptists to the teachings and worship practices of the Pentecostal tradition. For this church leader, the Pentecostal tradition from the early 1900s was seen as strange, primitive, and cultish. However, by the 1960s, Baptist and Methodists, alike, were beginning to study, explore, and embrace many of the Pentecostal and charismatic worship styles. Many black Baptists in this sect found their banner under the Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship (FGBCF). One of the driving theological forces in the newly accepted FGBCF was the understanding that one could be gifted with the ability to speak in tongues and another person not be gifted with that spiritual gift, yet both could still dwell together in context as one is not superior over the other. This theological belief was a factor for major growth in the FGBCF during the mid 1990s.

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There are still some pastors that began as conservative, Southern Baptist preachers, that felt a unique touch of the Holy Spirit and their experiences have changed their view of some of the Pentecostal traditions. One pastor, in particular, came under heavy scrutiny from the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) when it was discovered that he was turning to Pentecostal traditions. Pastor Ron Phillips, a former leader and board member of the SBC in the 1970s, described a spiritual event he later classified as his “baptism of power.”\footnote{Bob Allen, “Charismatic Southern Baptist Churches see themselves as open to spiritual gifts,” Baptist Standard, \url{https://www.baptiststandard.com/archives/2008-archives/charismatic-southern-baptist-churches-see-themselves-as-open-to-spiritual-gifts}; accessed May 17, 2020.} Central Baptist Church was known as one of the largest and dynamic Southern Baptist Churches in America. The church is still growing, and their worship traditions have altered. The name of the church has also been changed to Abba’s House. Phillips still holds to his firm belief in the power of the Holy Spirit as the life’s blood of the church. He argues, “Could it be that Baptists who believe in the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit are truer to Scripture in their beliefs than some of those who are more comfortable with the formality of the reformation?”\footnote{Ibid.} Phillips also believes that the current count of Southern Baptist Churches that believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit totals well over five-hundred.\footnote{Ibid.} Ron Phillips wrote these words to debate the case:

> The fact remains that charismatic Southern Baptists exist, albeit a small minority. They are committed to historic Baptist identity and doctrine but make room for the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit within God’s people for ministry and proclamation. The question remains: Will the issue of charismatic gifts be a test of fellowship and cooperation? The process of making it a litmus test has already begun; let’s pray and hope that brotherly love and toleration for differences on this issue may begin to prevail.\footnote{Allen, “Charismatic Southern Baptist Churches.”}
Phillips, and the congregation at Abba’s House, still consider themselves to be a “Spirit-filled” Southern Baptist Church.\textsuperscript{39}

Problem Statement

Despite a continued desire to understand the direction of worship liturgy in the American evangelical church culture, many scholars are unable to understand the influence of charismatic worship forms in various evangelical churches in the United States. This research is important for understanding the future of worship in the local evangelical church in America and will help determine the theology, liturgy, and philosophy of worship and its practices.

Purpose of the Study

Guided by scholars of worship in both charismatic and traditional evangelical worship cultures, the purpose of this qualitative historical research study is to give insight to the current influences and the future of evangelical worship. There is a possibility that pastors, worship pastors, and theologians may never fully grasp the full scale of charismatic influence while it is happening. However, the need for this research in order for the church to explore the case studies and eyewitnesses at hand will help to gather as much information as possible concerning the future of corporate worship in the evangelical church.

Statement of the Research Questions

There is a significant gap in what is known about charismatic worship in the local evangelical church. Within many churches, there is a profound movement to be more expressive and responsive to the Holy Spirit in times of corporate worship. Don Williams, an author in \textit{Exploring the Worship Spectrums}, exclaims, “Charismatic-Pentecostal worship forms are the

\textsuperscript{39} Allen, “Charismatic Southern Baptist Churches.”
least understood yet the most practiced of all expressions worldwide. Regardless of what we think of its theological foundations and emphases, worship that emphasizes the outward manifestations of the Holy Spirit is the fastest growing worship model in the world.”\footnote{Basden, Exploring the Worship Spectrum, 165.} This includes conservative evangelical churches as well. This evidence leads to consideration of two primary research questions.

The primary research questions are:

Research Question 1: What are the characteristics of charismatic worship expressions that have influenced the change in worship music repertoire in some local evangelical churches in the 21st century in the United States?

Research Question 2: In what ways has charismatic worship forms influenced the worship environments as a whole in some local evangelical churches in the 21st century in the United States?

Significance of the Study

In some evangelical churches, there may be a lack of an understanding concerning the influence of charismatic worship. Therefore, this study will examine the factors of personal preference and perspective, theology, and culture in an effort to explain implication of charismatic worship on the 21st century evangelical church. Benefiting from these answered questions will be theologians, pastors, and worship pastors who make weekly liturgical decisions for their congregations and denominations.

Research Question 1 is significant because there are evident characteristics of charismatic worship forms that encourage change in congregational songs, from worship leaders and pastors
in local evangelical churches in the United States. Understanding these shifts is vital in shaping a theology of worship for the local congregation.

Research Question 2 is substantial in understanding the changes and transitions made in the evangelical church in attempting to create similar environments of various churches that practice these worship forms. Bowles writes, “The impact of American contemporary culture on evangelical churches over the past forty years has been a shift toward a more relaxed and casual style of worship in many churches, resulting in internal consternation and division among established churches.” This tension is what has been labeled “worship wars,” and it has been this very move from traditional and stoic to contemporary and expressive that has created the controversy. Scholastically speaking, the results of this research matters for understanding the current worship culture and its theology, liturgy, and philosophy of worship and its practices.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses to the research questions are:

Hypothesis 1: The characteristics of charismatic worship expressions that have influenced the change in worship music repertoire of the local evangelical church in the 21st century in the United States include outward expression, emotional engagement, and a renewed emphasis on the Holy Spirit in worship.

For years, many evangelicals have been timid about outward expressions of worship because of the history of charismatic examples. There have been extreme practices that have led to some evangelical churches stiff-arming these expressions. However, some practices have been shunned even though the Bible is clear that they are acceptable in corporate worship. Shouting,

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bowing, lifting hands, and trembling are a few examples of expressions that have been normalized in some evangelical worship cultures.

Emotional engagement is also an expression that has been bottled in some evangelical circles. Again, in an attempt to steer clear from the charismatic influence, some churches have not encouraged that type of outcry. Emotionalism can be an issue in some worship environments. However, outward expression tends to come from some sort of emotional context.

Finally, a renewed emphasis of the Holy Spirit in worship has made a return to corporate worship in the evangelical church. Spann writes, “The goal of charismatic styles of worship is to connect the congregation with God by singing songs directly to God rather than about Him. Charismatic leaders design every worship gathering with seeking an intimate encounter with God in mind.”42 For decades, evangelicals have focused on the superiority of the Word of God and the power of the cross. The hope was to return to a fundamental conservative foundation in teaching the Scriptures. The idea of intimacy and revelation of the Holy Spirit made some leaders nervous due to a number of extreme worship practices in the Pentecostal Movement. However, as some evangelical church congregations began to be exposed to the environments that encouraged personal worship and intimacy, and this mindset opened the door for church leaders to desire the expressions, emotions, and passions that accompany the manifest presence of God through the Holy Spirit in corporate worship.43

It is reasonable to assume that these expressions, emotions, and emphases will continue to influence worship culture and practices. With the influx of accessible live-streamed services, charismatic houses of worship have become readily available through various social-media


platforms. Worshipers can view these practices and experience them wherever they are, leading the worshiper to become locally affiliated with congregations of like doctrine and practice. In addition, the growing desire of the believer to experience the triune God in worship has become the focus of charismatic worship moments. This has led believers to seek congregational connections in corporate worship experiences where the feeling of acceptance, freedom, and inclusion are the drawing factors. Thus, more expressive worship moments and songwriting with an experiential mindset have undergone a renewal and resurgence.

Hypothesis 2: Charismatic worship forms may influence the worship environments as a whole in some local evangelical churches in the 21st century in the United States in terms of modern stage designs, platform presence, and casual attire.

Along with expressions of worship, some church leaders have begun to equate the experience with the environment that has been represented in many charismatic worship settings. A modern stage design is one of those influences that is matched with the overall experience. This includes, but is not limited to, darkly painted stages, intelligent and LED lighting, tracks that accompany the live worship band, and an informal stage design.

In addition to the stage design, the people on the platform have become an important representation of the charismatic influence. Pastors, worship leaders, band members, and praise team singers, who are a part of some evangelical churches, are encouraged to be outwardly expressive, give verbal exhortations during songs, and lead songs that encourage intimacy with the presence of God. Stage communicators have become culturally relevant in content and in nationality and race. In these worship environments, trendy clothing is worn to fit the culture of the platform.
In charismatic worship in the 21st century, there is a sense of casual environment. This has been one of the most attractive factors in its influence for other denominations. As many evangelical churches go through worship music transitions and church revitalizations, this charismatic form is widely influential.\footnote{Bowles, “A Case Study Analysis of the Process of Worship Change,” 48.}

Current worship trends show a desire to move and transition from a traditional worship environment to a casual worship environment. The culture is persuading people to what is important in a worship environment. In many evangelical churches in America, the traditional stage and suit wearing pastors are no longer relevant for the context in which the church dwells in. Nieuwhof writes:

So what’s happening? Well, culture changes and what people respond to changes, too. The church should change with it. While you should never change the mission of a church (it’s eternal), you should definitely adapt the method. Churches who love the method more than the mission will die. It happened in the 1950s, in the 1970s, in the 1990s and it’s happening today. What was effective a decade ago isn’t always effective today. Leaders who live in the past end up dying to the future.\footnote{Nieuwhof, “5 Reasons Churches are Growing.”}

This common phrase, “change the method, not the message,” has become a rallying cry for evangelicals to move from the traditional to the modern or contemporary in support of the culture around them. As churches transition, an understanding of charismatic worship is necessary to develop.

Core Concepts

It is important for this study to have a clear definition of “Charismatic worship.” There are extremes to all worship practices. This study is not to endorse or to reject the extremes of any
form of worship. However, this research does desire to bring a biblical and historical approach to the forms of charismatic worship and its practices. Daniel Snape defines charismatic worship expressions as “demonstrative displays of emotion manifested in numerous ways. These can include raising of hands, jumping up and down, shouting with joy and excitement, weeping, lying prostrate on the ground, running around the room, rocking and swaying, kneeling, clapping, glossolalia, and many other forms of vocal and non-vocal responses.”⁴⁶ There is a sense of freedom and order in charismatic worship that draws congregations to experience a transformational outcome by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Son from the source of the Father.⁴⁷ Furthermore, this study is designed to connect the relationship of charismatic worship forms to current worship practices in the local evangelical church in the United States.

Williams describes a type of worship that draws the heart of God to his people. He adds, “Eighty percent of all white Protestant churches in the United States include [music from a charismatic-driven house of worship] in their public worship.”⁴⁸ There is reason to take a serious note of this statistic. In history, no other worship tradition has claimed such a broad representation of American evangelical churches. Sally Morganthaler claims:

There is a reason that people of all ages – and especially our youth – are clamoring for radically expressive, unrestrained worship music. Whether we realized it or not, they were helping to correct the preponderance of cerebral, impassive worship music within certain sectors of Protestantism. In an increasingly expressive, post-rationalistic culture, this shift toward intimate, ‘in the moment,’ spirituality not only made relational sense; it made sense culturally.⁴⁹

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⁴⁷ Basden, Exploring the Worship Spectrum, 145.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 167.

⁴⁹ Basden, Exploring the Worship Spectrum, 168.
The culture within the walls of the church and the culture outside the walls of the church have influenced the decisions to transform and transition inside the 21st century evangelical church.

**Summary**

Worshipers today are hungry for true community, deeper experiences, and authentic transcendence.\(^{50}\) Charismatic worship and environments prioritize these desires. The need for extensive scholarship and study on the “why” of charismatic influences has become more and more relevant in the last twenty years. Historically some denominations have experienced charismatic influences more than others. In modern day worship settings, the significance of influence in evangelical worship cultures have become more pronounced. Still, valid fears of extreme practices of some Pentecostal worship environments have kept many evangelical churches from embracing this movement. Denominational divisions, once excessive, are now a secondary, and even tertiary, concern when it comes to charismatic worship expressions and environments. However, many of the biblically sound charismatic practices, once neglected by many evangelicals, have now become, not only the norm, but have found prominence in modern worship liturgy.

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\(^{50}\) Nieuwhof, “5 Reasons Churches are Growing.”
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITURATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to review the necessary literature related to the subject of charismatic worship practices, its history, and effects on the local evangelical church in the last twenty years. When discussing the effects of charismatic worship forms on the evangelical church in the twenty-first century in the United States, one must go to the beginning to determine the historical and contextual efficacy of the Pentecostal charismatic movements. Thus, literature in this chapter will examine the history of the Pentecostal movement and the impact it has on the evangelical church in America over the past twenty years. The first section explores literature discussing the Azusa Street Revival (ASR). Foundational understanding will determine the significance of the Pentecostal and charismatic movement. Within historical literature, this chapter discusses the effects of the “Jesus People” movement in the late twentieth century and the impact it made on some Church corporate worship environments.

The second section of this chapter surveys the spread of charismatic music and worship expressions in protestant, evangelical churches in the United States over last two decades. The third section of the literature review examines the effects, through written case studies, of charismatic music and worship expressions within the last twenty years. The study will also consider the driving forces, methodologies, paradigm shifts, and transitions in large charismatic houses of worship that find influential validity in worship practices and liturgy in evangelical churches. Similarly, the study will account the considerations in worship styles, formats, leadership, and the risks that may occur in adapting these charismatic practices in mainline protestant denominational settings.
Historical Review

Historically, several time periods stand out as influential in the rise of charismatic worship. In the twentieth century, worship practices began to emerge from various revivals and people groups. James White discussed the emergence of the Pentecostal tradition as a major worship tradition at the beginning of the twentieth century and identified it as “the first post-Enlightenment tradition in that it has no inhibitions about experiencing the reality of God’s presence in worship.” 51 Likewise, Robert Webber stated, “When Pentecostalism emerged in the early part of the twentieth century, it drew heavily on the convictions and experience of the Holiness movement. 52 In a sense, this movement can be traced back to John Wesley. In the founding principles of Methodism, Wesley argued for a life of perfection, implying that “the God who is good enough to forgive sin (justify) is obviously great enough to transform the sinners into saints (sanctify), thus enabling them to be free from outward sin as well as from “evil thoughts and tempers”—in short, to attain to a measure of holiness.” 53 There was a strict sense of fundamentalism and, at times, legalism in this movement. Nevertheless, the desire to focus on the post-conversion power of God in a believer’s life was paramount. 54 The most influential movement that launched from the Holiness movement was the Azusa Street Revival.

51 James F. White, 146.
52 Robert E. Webber, Worship Old and New, 123.
54 Ibid.
Azusa Street Revival

Azusa Street Revival (ASR), the most recognized revival of the past 100 years, changed the landscape of Christian worship, expression, and practice. William Joseph Seymour, an African-American from Centreville, Louisiana with Baptist beginnings, was the most influential person connected with the ASR. Seymour founded his Apostolic Faith Gospel Mission on 312 Azusa Street East in Los Angeles, California. His simple stated message, “The end of the world is at hand” preceded the most devastating earthquake in American history by four days. This disaster ravished San Francisco just 400 miles north. This event, although tragic, gave weight to Seymour’s message and revival began to break out.

The ASR introduced the dawn of new worship expressions. These multicultural men, women, and children practiced worship expressions including; shouts, cries, hand-clapping, foot-stomping, laughter and speaking in tongues. In uniquely spontaneous sessions, these “song services” led to spontaneous preaching. There was no liturgy assimilating these meetings during the ASR. Historian, Estrela Y. Alexander described the experience:

Men and women, adults and children, black, white, yellow and red freely worshiped God and admonished each other to holiness of life through speaking in tongues and interpretation, prophecy, testimony, song, prayer, miraculous signs and preaching. Each one, in order, as they felt directed by the Holy Spirit, gave vent to the fire that was shut deep within their bones and glorified God for their newfound freedom and empowerment. Women and men freely participated as they felt God leading them. Even children who felt inspired by God had a voice in the worship and received Pentecostal Holy Spirit baptism.

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56 Ibid., 222.

During the ASR, no one person was the designated preacher. Everyone came in on the same level before God. There was no stage or pulpit. Although Seymour did most of the preaching, everyone was free to speak as God led them to proclaim.

Not only did this account for the sermons that were preached, but also the music. It was even said that sometimes the sermons were sung. Entitled “the chanted sermon.” Stephen Marini, author of the book Sacred Song in America: Religion, Music, and Public Culture, wrote, “[It] is a unique form of sacred song, combining melody, rhythm, call and response, polyphony, rational content, and improvisation.”58 In addition, musical references during the revival services including many familiar hymns from both Baptist and Holiness traditions were used. However, these were utilized with improvisation, emotional drive and increased volume. The heart was encouraged to be more engaged in the worship songs and less in cerebral measures.

There is no doubt that the ASR impacted religious experience and doctrine. Hundreds of churches and many denominations rose out of this Great Awakening. There was a new introduction of new worship expressions and practices to evangelicals. Vernon Whaley and Elmer Towns noted ten specific practices that radically changed evangelical worship at the turn of the century. First, services focused on personal worship, knowing Jesus more deeply, and repentance from sin.59 Reformation worship was typically focused on the theologies and songs of scripture. ASR was a stark turn from the traditional model and brought personal worship to a new level. Second, the service emphasized holiness and sanctification in worship services.60 This was the most influential carry over from the Holiness movement. The importance of living a life


59 Towns and Whaley, Worship Through the Ages, 232.

60 Ibid.
in “perfection” for the glory of God was desired. Third, the services encouraged singing newly composed worship songs in English and in tongues.\textsuperscript{61} As new songs rang out from the ASR, it paved the way for fluid song singing and writing, even songs that were unintelligible. The fourth impactful practice was impromptu sermons from laymen and clergy.\textsuperscript{62} Pastors still had the role of preaching, but many “received” a word from God in these Pentecostal services and would desire to share their testimony of what He was telling them directly. The fifth practice was full improvised services without any planned agenda.\textsuperscript{63} The hope for each Pentecostal service was for the Holy Spirit to show up and move in the individuals that were present. Therefore, there was no planned agenda in order to not get “in the way” of what the Spirit of God desired to do. Sixth, camp-meeting-style worship sometimes lasted 10 to 12 hours – extending times for singing, confession of sin, foot washing and communion, prayer, and healing.\textsuperscript{64} Because of the lack of service planning, there was never a real end to the services. Singing, preaching, testifying, and healings would continue for hours on end. Public practice of glossolalia, speaking in tongues, with appropriate interpretation\textsuperscript{65} was the seventh influential practice at the turn of the century. This was a lasting practice that continued to designate Pentecostal sects from any other evangelical denomination. Eighth, prophesying in public, divine healing, anointing with oil, and praying over material objects made for long services and unstructured agendas.\textsuperscript{66} The ninth

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{62} Towns and Whaley, \textit{Worship Through the Ages}, 232.

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{64} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{66} Ibid.
practice was increased expression of emotions during worship services by men and women. 67 Women and children did not typically speak or engage in outward or verbal expressions. The door was now open for women to feel freedom to participate in like practices. Finally, racial integration during worship was hardly practice. 68 The black community and the marginalized now felt a since of belonging, acceptance, and approval.

Church leaders from all over the United States knew of the ASR. The news of this spiritual movement spread across the country through word-of-mouth and Seymour’s publications of doctrinal and worship practices. Seymour developed the Doctrine and Disciplines of the Azusa Street Mission in 1915, giving direction to orders of worship for ordination, Communion, weddings and other special services. 69 Worship practices from this Pentecostal movement are still seen in many charismatic churches today. Doctrines of glossolalia, Spirit baptism, and personal worship are still practiced and encouraged in some charismatic environments.

Neo-Pentecostalism: Charismatic Renewal

Most evangelical congregations viewed the charismatic movement negatively. However, some protestant churches began to recognize the charismatic movement as a “true moving of the Holy Spirit.” 70 During the mid-twentieth century, a group of charismatics called “Jesus People,” by main stream media, helped turn the hippie movement about drugs, love, and the occult into a

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67 Ibid.
68 Towns and Whaley, Worship Through the Ages, 232.
69 Ibid., 231.
70 Webber, Worship Old and New, 127.
Christ centered journey about confession of sin, forgiveness and repentance, and commitment to Christian ministry. Historian, Larry Eskridge, declared:

The Jesus People impacted both great numbers of young people in the counterculture as well as many young evangelical church youth who adopted the Jesus People persona and made it their own. Just as the lives of a significant number of Baby Boomers were shaped by the countercultures, the Jesus People movement was another of the major formative forces among American youth who came of age in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Moreover, its influence remained significant within the American evangelical subculture in the decades that followed... It is clear that Jesus People movement played an important role in the resurgence of American evangelicalism in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

One of the major push backs from the charismatic renewal was the insertion of rock and roll music into the corporate worship setting. However, one of the added influences on the culture was Christian worship in the rock and roll genre. Many rock and roll artists of this time period began to use congregational songs in their rock/gospel albums. Artists like Elvis Presley, Jerry Lee Lewis, Marvin Gaye, Al Green, and Ray Charles used their Pentecostal influenced music in the mainstream music scene. Dr. Wen Reagan from Duke University added:

Monique Ingalls contended that the Jesus Movement’s legacy was an argument ‘for the inclusion of popular styles in worship by unmooring musical style from its social and cultural contexts, attempting to remove the associational baggage from the music.’ This was certainly true, as Jesus People embraced electric guitars but not the sex and drugs that often accompanied them. But the rock music brought into the sanctuary was not completely unmoored from its social and cultural contexts; else it would have lost all communicative power. Instead, the movement selectively embraced the cultural capital available in rock music and put it to work.

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71 Towns and Whaley, 297.


73 Shannon D. Keith, 24.

74 Wen Reagan, 213.
Realistically, the Jesus People desired to embrace authenticity. Bringing the raw culture of rock music into the church allowed for this to become established in the worship environment. This also released a layer of emotion and community.

One reason the Jesus Movement is extremely influential in today’s congregational worship was the fact that the Jesus People that led the movement are many of the church leaders of today. These men and women became preachers and teachers in the local church and strengthened their commitment to biblical inspiration and inerrancy, evangelism, meeting the needs of others, global missions, and the use of praise and worship music in the church. Towns and Whaley wrote, “Yet evangelical worship music is perhaps the area of the Jesus Movement’s most profound and enduring influence. It introduced expression of praise that were God-centered and biblically based.”

This ushered the church worship liturgy, in some accepting traditions, to find new songs of praise.

Robb Redman summed up the effects of the Jesus Movement:

The Jesus movement felt strongly that if Christian worship were to be meaningful... the old music of their parents’ church, both the classically oriented mainline church and the Billy Graham crusade clones of conservative evangelicalism, [had to go] ... The positive perspective was their high esteem for authenticity and simplicity... It is remarkable how much of the substance of Christian worship they preserved in a new format, especially in their emphasis on biblical preaching, prayer, and congregational participation.

Praise and Worship Movement

The rise of rock music and several other trends in the church gave an approach to a new form and style of worship. Although it is not known exactly where the practice of praise and

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55 Towns and Whaley, *Worship Through the Ages*, 344.

worship music began, it is evident that it became the most influential form of worship expression across all denominations. Larry Eskridge described the Praise and Worship Movement as follows:

Arguably the single biggest alteration in the life of the average evangelical congregation within the last 30 years has been the sweeping change in the music that is played on Sunday morning. When organ and piano, formal choirs, and coal soloists and groups once held sway over a slowly changing cannon of staid hymnody and peppy gospel songs, a flood of guitars and “praise choruses” suddenly came rushing in during the 1970s. An irresistible, grassroots, pop culture-driven force met the immovable object of tradition and sentiment, and the ensuing years saw no shortage of conflict and controversy as a result.\(^\text{77}\)

There seemed to be a growing frustration with the traditional forms of worship, with more progressive church leaders calling them “dead.” A growing hunger for immediacy of the Spirit, a desire for intimacy, and a persuasion that informality was the way to connect with people of a post-Christian culture.\(^\text{78}\)

Webber claimed that traditional churches responded to the spread of praise and worship in one of three ways:

First, there are those churches that have not responded at all – perhaps because they are not consciously aware of the praise and worship tradition. These congregations may have heard one or two of the movement’s songs and be vaguely aware of the existence of such a style of worship in nontraditional churches, but for the most part they are ignorant of the movement.

Second are those congregations who are more aware of the praise and worship traditions but are indifferent to them or who actively dismiss them, arguing that they are “too superficial” or “too charismatic.”

The third set of traditional churches are not only a way of praise and worship and its relevancy to a post-Enlightenment culture but also seek to integrate this new approach to worship into the local church.\(^\text{79}\)

\(^\text{77}\) Page and Gray, \textit{Hungry for Worship}, 73.

\(^\text{78}\) Webber, \textit{Worship Old and New}, 128.

\(^\text{79}\) Ibid., 132.
The most emergent church from this era was Calvary Chapel (CC), located in Costa Mesa, CA. Chuck Smith, founder and pastor of CC, embraced the Jesus Movement and welcomed the rock music expression that led the worship environment. One of the greatest advances in worship music of that time came from CC. As an extension of CC’s praise and worship music, the multimillion-dollar company, Maranatha! Music was formed. In 1975, nephew of Chuck Smith, Chuck Fromm was asked to lead the company and remained its president for the next twenty-five years. Through Maranatha! Music, churches were able to access the rock-folk music that had become so influential in the Jesus Movement and Calvary Chapel praise and worship. Maranatha! Music was one of several multimillion-dollar contemporary praise and worship music industries; all with influence, implication, inspiration, and impact world-wide.

Contemporary Christian Music

By the 1980’s Christian music was a profitable industry. Artists like Keith Green, Larry Norman, Barry McGuire, and Second Chapter of Acts were pioneers from the Jesus Movement that led the way for Contemporary Christian Music (CCM). Many publishing companies and music labels released artists that drove Christian music into a performance driven entity. Key individuals like Michael W. Smith, Amy Grant, Steven Curtis Chapman, and Twila Paris were

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just a few Christian Music artists that sold out large venue concerts and filled the radio air waves, daily. 83 Bob MacKenzie noted:

People that were artists identified with a specific stylistic culture: rock, folk, black, rhythm and blues, etc... We started moving out into the enormous stylistic possibilities that we found in the pop world. And what happened is that it just opened the market broadly. And, because people had all these diverse interests, each found a hearing. Once somebody got the idea, “Oh we can use the current, commercial music culture to communicate our faith,” then the barn door was open. Then, everything was fair game. 84

This was the first time in history that musicians who had devoted themselves to create music for the church had “crossed over” to secular markets. In the past, it was secular artists that would become Christians and then become “Christian artists.” 85 During this time the radio became the litmus test for congregational worship in some evangelical churches. 86 CCM paved the way for a new “brand” of Christian worship in the local church. 87 Even though many of the songs that were sung were “performance driven,” it did not stop the church from utilizing the available songs for congregational enjoyment. However, performance driven Christian music posed a problem to congregational worship, as it removed the congregational liturgy from the song service. 88 Therefore, what was once a movement to engage the hearts of people returned to a disengagement. The focus turned from inclusion to exclusion. For two decades, worship music

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84 Towns and Whaley, Music Through the Ages, 330.

85 Ibid.

86 Page and Gray, Hungry for Worship, 57.

87 Ibid., 76.

88 Ibid., 57.
from CCM cannibalized evangelical worship environments in setting up the importance of the “performer” rather than the congregation’s response to God.\textsuperscript{89}

The development of new music and the continued level of difficulty of songs, paved the way for full-time worship leaders and pastors.\textsuperscript{90} There was a growing need for music leadership, choir directors, skilled musicians, and worship leaders.\textsuperscript{91} Seminaries and Christian universities began to realize the need to have “called” pastors equipped to handle the leadership and musical load of the growing evangelical church. Therefore, schools created brand new degree programs that would help to prepare students for the task at hand.\textsuperscript{92} Well into the 1990s, radio, television, and recordings continued to mold congregational worship in method and philosophy. During this time period, the traditional evangelical church struggled to accept popular music forms broadcast on radio and television.\textsuperscript{93}

\textit{The Modern Church Choir}

In the last decades of the twentieth century, large performing choirs sang southern gospel, black gospel, contemporary Christian, and traditional selections. It was in this time period that many evangelicals demised the compartmentalization of worship music and would offer a plethora of styles.\textsuperscript{94} Some of the choirs that led this new era included Central Baptist Church,

\textsuperscript{89} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{90} Towns and Whaley, 326.

\textsuperscript{91} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{92} Page and Gray, \textit{Hungry for Worship}, 77.


\textsuperscript{94} Towns and Whaley, \textit{Worship Through the Ages}, 335.
Chattanooga, TN, Christ Church, Nashville, TN, Brooklyn Tabernacle, Brooklyn, NY, Prestonwood Baptist Church, Plano, TX,\(^{95}\) and Hillsong Church, Sydney, Australia.\(^{96}\) Production companies like Word, Integrity, Prism, and Lifeway prepared content for churches all over the country based on what these large churches produced on a regular basis. Books and recordings would come across the Worship Pastor’s desk, sometimes monthly, encouraging the church leadership to buy products, such as, music preview resources, books, orchestrations, and accompaniment tracks so that their church could sound like and perform like the choirs on the recordings.\(^{97}\) Most of the songs compiled in these collections were an assortment of Southern Gospel, Black Gospel, Praise and Worship, and Contemporary Christian Music.

*Contemporary Worship Music*

In the 1990s, a new model placed the primary emphasis on worship, not performance.\(^{98}\) A new genre of music, Contemporary Christian Worship Music, began to emerge out of the church. This was not a new concept, but its infiltration into the local church was much more rampant because of the help of publishing companies. A number of large churches released their own music. Churches like Calvary Chapel through Maranatha!, Vineyard, Hillsong, and Passion brought worship music to the masses.\(^{99}\) Contemporary Worship Music (CWM) became its own unit. In-house publishers for worship music were the primary source of education in worship

\(^{95}\) Page and Gray, *Hungry for Worship*, 77.


\(^{97}\) Towns and Whaley, *Worship Through the Ages*, 347.


\(^{99}\) Towns and Whaley, 345.
leading, music literature, and new songs for evangelical churches.\textsuperscript{100} Publisher sponsored workshops and mailers were the primary avenue for worship leaders to get their hands on new music that could be utilized for congregational use, choir use, and orchestra use.\textsuperscript{101} Composers and arrangers fine-tuned many of their compositional approaches as this genre developed,\textsuperscript{102} many times hiring third party arrangers and orchestrators to make songs more useable for the local evangelical church.

\textit{The Worship Wars}

As songs from CCM and CWM continued to make their mark on the evangelical church, they were met with mixed emotions from church congregants. Most of the songs that came into the church from publishers like Hillsong, Passion, and Vineyard were emotionally charged and carried a weight of intimacy and personal worship rather than deep theological truths that hymnody was thought to include.\textsuperscript{103} Many traditional evangelical denominations did not celebrate the use of praise and worship music in the congregational setting. Yet, in other contemporary and charismatic worship environments, the tradition of hymns as the source of church music became a thing of the past in some evangelical churches. Reformed, liturgical, and traditional evangelicals were faced with the fact that praise and worship was unavoidable.\textsuperscript{104} For instance, a 1991 issue of the quarterly magazine \textit{Reformed Worship} was devoted entirely to the

\textsuperscript{100} Towns and Whaley, \textit{Worship Through the Ages}, 345.

\textsuperscript{101} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{102} Page and Gray, 112.


topic of praise and worship. Editor David Vanderwell ended his opening editorial, entitled “The Issue You Thought You’d Never See,” with these words: “You may not have expected to see ‘Praise and Worship’ as the theme of an issue of Reformed Worship, but this style of worship is certainly something we must all come to understand and evaluate—whether or not we plan to implement it in our own congregations.”

Don Cason, a long time Christian music publishing executive, described the effect of praise and worship on the evangelical church:

Prior to the 90s, praise and worship music was fully embraced in certain denominations or groups of churches ... In the 1970s and 1980s, it was primarily music that was used in the charismatic churches. However, in the 90s, more “mainline” evangelical churches and some liturgical churches began to see what was happening with the music in the charismatic church down the street: that people were being drawn into their worship services just by the music alone — that people were singing it and feeling a new breath of fresh air in their own personal worship. All these various denominations felt like “I want some of that! I want some of that freshness in my church.” ... And [contemporary worship music] ... became music that was embraced across all denominations because the music was touching people’s hearts.

The struggle in the late 1980s into the 1990s became known as the “Worship Wars.” Dubbed by evangelical commentators, this era created a new shift in worship planning and execution. New “blended” or “balanced” worship models would strategically place praise and worship songs along with hymns in order to accommodate style preference.

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105 Ingalls, “Awesome in This Place,” 103.
106 Ibid., 104.
107 Ibid.
108 Ibid., 105.
109 Ibid., 107.
Practical Considerations

Many evangelical churches ended the twentieth century with a different outlook on worship and congregational songs. Even though some evangelical congregations are still fighting the worship wars fight, most of the disputes have been laid to rest. However, worship practices, beyond just the song choice, brought various stages of conflict. In a 2002 essay, Presbyterian pastor Timothy J. Keller, in the aftermath of the worship wars, wrote, “One of the basic features of church life in the United States today is the proliferation of corporate worship and music forms. This, in turn, has caused many severe conflicts within both individual congregations and whole denominations.”\textsuperscript{110} As some evangelical churches continued to navigate change in worship music, the proliferation of performance aspects of communal worship changed as well.\textsuperscript{111} The roles, skills, appearance, and musicianship of the music minister were dramatically altered. From one Sunday to the next, music ministers became worship pastors or leaders. Many went from leading large choirs and orchestras to small praise teams and praise bands. In her 2008 dissertation, Monique Ingalls asserted:

Music ministers in long-established evangelical denominations were often classically trained organists or pianists who directed the congregation from the pulpit or a keyboard instrument. In contrast, ‘worship leaders,’ who generally served as lead vocalist and guitarist during musical worship, were trained in popular styles and were often expected to give verbal exhortations and spontaneous prayers. As charismatic ideas about worship became widespread among evangelicals, the worship leader was seen as being responsible for leading the people into a moving experience of the presence of God.\textsuperscript{112}

At the turn of the century, many evangelical churches either made massive overhauls in their

\textsuperscript{110} Ingalls, “Awesome in This Place: Sound, Space,” 106.

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 104.

\textsuperscript{112} Ibid., 107-108.
worship ministries or slight adaptations to the new culture of worship leadership. Either way, it was apparent that a worship renewal was underway.

21st Century Charismatic Influence

The Pentecostal-Charismatic movement in the United States has impacted virtually every denomination. This movement or renewal encouraged many “non-charismatic” communities to demonstrate their outward worship expressions in a myriad of ways. From hand raising to praying out loud communally to shouting praise words like “Amen” and “Hallelujah,” many outward expressions have become normal in numerous houses of worship in evangelical denominations. Jack Hayford wrote, “New Testament worship comprises a full array of expression. Biblical worship isn’t a one-dimensional activity. It involves a combination of reason, spiritual intuition, and emotions… worship is neither an exercise of barren intellectualism or thoughtless emotion. Worship involves the total human being: spirit, mind, emotions, body.”

Hayford derived this point from the very pages of Scripture in the New Testament. Jesus, Himself, declared that the first and greatest commandment was to worship God with everything; heart, mind, soul, and strength.

Charlotte Saikowski wrote, “According to church historians, the charismatic renewal is the fastest-growing Christian religious movement worldwide.” However, very little research is available to explain the contagion. Nearly eighty percent of white protestant churches in the

113 Towns and Whaley, Worship Through the Ages, 359.


115 Matthew 22:37

116 Charlotte Saikowski, “Impact of the Charismatics.”
United States have been influenced by the charismatic movement,117 and many churches have been persuaded to adapt to the worship forms that the movement brings. It is important to note what the charismatic movement desires to achieve. Spann and Corley explained, “The goal of charismatic styles of worship is to connect the congregation with God by singing songs directly to God rather than about Him. Charismatic leaders design every worship gathering with seeking an intimate encounter with God in mind.”118 This speaks of the “personal worship” experience that was so influential in the early beginnings of the charismatic tradition. Studies show that it is still the most dynamic draw.

The Hillsong Influence

Hillsong Church, whose home base resides in Sydney, Australia, is an international force in the area of music and worship. Born with a global ambition, the church’s leadership strives to stay relevant, mobilized, and clear in their message of salvation.119 The congregational presence of Hillsong Church is unmatched. What began as a small Pentecostal church bloomed to include gatherings on all six inhabitable continents and eighty campuses.120 In addition, Hillsong has three music entities: Hillsong Worship, for church services; the touring band Hillsong United; and the youth-focused Young & Free.121 Between the three groups, they have produced over 100 albums and their songs are sung by over 50 million people across the world each week.122

117 Zach Spann and Paul Corley, “A Look at Charismatic Worship.”


121 Ibid.

122 Ibid.
“Hillsong is just this massive, massive presence in Christian music,” says ethnomusicologist Tom Wagner, who wrote the book *The Hillsong Movement Examined.* “There’s nobody with as much influence as they have, and even as someone who doesn’t believe what they believe, it is absolutely incredible the work that they are doing. They’ve just kind of taken over.”\(^{123}\) Hillsong has had a strong surge of influence in nearly every evangelical worship culture. Head of Hillsong Music Publishing, Steve McPherson noted “I do believe we initially set out to write music for our congregation but as time went on and we saw the impact our songs were having across all denominations, we became more and more aware of the responsibility and the privilege to be speaking into the broader church, and I believe our songwriting has changed accordingly. Our focus went from being purely local to global.”\(^{124}\)

Hillsong brings a softer form of Pentecostalism, often called Charismatic Christianity.\(^{125}\) The songs and sermons in this environment are dedicated to encourage conversational and emotional well-being “with the promise of immediacy to an intimate God whose Spirit-filling empowerment energizes even the most mundane activities of work and family in everyday life.”\(^{126}\) The goal for Hillsong Church is to empower men and women to have an ambition to go after the ordinary things in life and desire for them to become extraordinary. This occurs by believing that these things can happen through ordinary people because of an extraordinary God. Their message is clear and direct. Hillsong Church’s leadership does not get caught up in

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\(^{124}\) Ingalls and Yong, *The Spirit of Praise*, 124.


\(^{126}\) Ibid.
partisanship or politics. Their theological framework is based on positive psychology and encouraging emotional and relational health.\(^{127}\) Even amidst their growing musical fame and continuous outreach globally, the leadership at Hillsong Church does not rest on their own successes. Gerardo Marti, in his article “The Global Phenomenon of Hillsong Church: An Initial Assessment,” wrote:

> They keep busy in part by scrutinizing their own successes and strategically striving to put in place even more churches and Hillsong ministries in ever-expansive circles, creating opportunities to deliberately meet with other church leaders, inspiring men and women to reinvent the spirituality around them, paving the way for others with similar ambitions, calling people back to what they see as the simplicity of faith in Jesus, and promoting a Christian identity they believe is necessary in our time yet rooted in eternity.\(^{128}\)

The Hillsong way of “doing church” is something that many believe is necessary for the world today.\(^{129}\)

As one of the largest charismatic worship environments in the world, it comes as no surprise that Hillsong’s influence would be just as sizeable. However, one of the biggest reasons that the Hillsong way is so effective is because of its minimalistic approach. Sub-Hillsong churches have risen up all over the country anywhere a sound system and screens can be set up. Groups have moved away from denominational authority, approval and the desire to appeal to individualized needs.\(^{130}\) Marti wrote, “More broadly, these gatherings creating an atmosphere of immersive contemporary worship are finding resonance with people almost everywhere by dovetailing into the larger currents of church goers who warmly acquiesce to the

\(^{127}\) Marti, “The Global Phenomenon of Hillsong Church,” 381.

\(^{128}\) Ibid.

\(^{129}\) Ibid.

\(^{130}\) Ibid., 382.
Pentecostalization or Charismatization of worship occurring across the world.”

131 The popularity of Hillsong is eminent among church leaders of all groups and denominations. Many evangelical churches, that do not necessarily believe the same secondary and tertiary theologies, are quite content to sing the music coming from the Hillsong music label. 133

While CDs and concert DVDs were utilized in the early 2000s, most recently Hillsong embraced new technologies and platform such as social media, YouTube, satellite radio, and Spotify. Hillsong is the number one Christian group on all social media platforms. 134 Now, not only are worshipers and seekers able to listen to the music of Hillsong but are able to experience their worship environment and engagement. There is also a dedicated Hillsong channel on cable networks; introducing speakers, music, and worship services into many homes around the world. 135 Hillsong’s strong influence is largely due to mass media. Media that is produced not only gives churches and leaders the ability to listen and see the worship forms but also teaches the ideology of Pentecostal megachurches. 136 Song lyrics and guitar charts were not the only things that influenced the local evangelical church. Worship expressions and postures, clothing trends, and platform engagement have found their way to the foreground of the worship manifesto, and Hillsong is leading the charge.


132 Ibid.

133 Ingalls and Yong, The Spirit of Praise, 124.


135 Marti, 383.

136 Ingalls and Yong, 193.
Other Large Charismatic Church Influences

As other church music publishing houses take their cue from Hillsong, more and more worship environments are gaining popularity. While the number of rising Charismatic worship collectives has grown each year, perhaps the most known charismatic worship houses are Bethel/Jesus Culture, Elevation Worship, Passion, Vertical Worship, Red Rocks Worship, and People and Songs.\(^{137}\) Bethel Church has a home base in Redding, California. Some of the biggest names in song writing have come from this community of worship. Led by Brian and Jenn Johnson, these artists have made a name for themselves on the shoulders of Bethel Music; they have produced artists like Amanda Cook, Leeland, Cory Asbury, Kristene DiMarco, and Jeremy Riddle.\(^{138}\) In conjunction with the Bethel name is the group Jesus Culture. Born out of the youth group from Redding, California, Jesus Culture broke away from Bethel in 2008 and moved to Sacramento, California.\(^{139}\) Jesus Culture has given the worshiping community songs from Kim Walker-Smith and Chris McClarney.\(^{140}\) These two, now separate, houses of worship have provided the church incredible songs such as “Goodness of God,” “Freedom,” “Move,” “Reckless Love,” “It Is Well,” “No Longer Slaves,” and “Raise a Hallelujah.”\(^{141}\)

In the same arena as Bethel, another influential charismatic house of worship is Elevation


\(^{140}\) Ibid.

Church. Although there are dynamic songwriters that write for Elevation Worship, the vast majority of the songs are not linked to a name but to a culture. This culture has been infused by the staff at Elevation. It is a culture of honoring the experience and the work of Elevation over the individual accomplishments. Pastor Steven Furtick, originally a Southern Baptist pastor, has led Elevation Church since its inception in 2006. Formally a church plant of the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, Elevation has grown to over 15,000 in attendance weekly from the combined congregations of their 15+ campuses.

Even though Elevation is listed as a Southern Baptist Church, many of its worship practices, song lyrics, and platform energy mimic more of a charismatic or Pentecostal environment. Just like in the cases of Hillsong and Bethel, the very popular “self-esteem therapy” theology is the focus of Elevation’s content. This is one of the most difficult disagreements traditional evangelicals, namely Baptists, have with Furtick (Elevation), Johnson (Bethel), and Houston (Hillsong). Although many evangelical churches sing and play a plethora of songs from these three songwriting churches, the concern has risen as to the infiltration of theological differences that could affect traditional and bible-focused churches.

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143 Rich Birch, “Elevation Church: Culture of Anticipation,” Unseminary, March 16, 2012,

144 Will Maule, “John MacArthur’s Church Attacks Steven Furtick: He’s Unqualified,” Hello Christian,

145 Ibid.

146 Johnathan Malm, “Why One Worship Leader Won’t Sing Hillsong Songs,” Sunday Mag. November 13,
Because social media and YouTube play such a major role in what is seen and heard by congregate leaders, some church leaders fear that the theology that accompanies these attractive songs and atmospheres will cause a skew in the theology and philosophy they are trying to impart to their own congregations. In 2007, Ian Carmichael, a conservative Christian author and writer for Matthias Media, wrote an article entitled “Should We Sing the Songs of Hillsong?” In this article, he not only addressed Hillsong but also Jesus Culture. The article mapped out three reasons why churches should not use these songs. First, Carmichael asserted that singing songs from Hillsong means that churches endorse them and are willing to promote their music. Second, singing songs from Hillsong means a willingness to contribute to their financial progress to continue spreading more erroneous music. Third, singing songs from Hillsong is a deliberate willingness to compromise theology. This specific article has been removed from circulation due to the amount of intense debate that ensued. Although some hold this negative view toward charismatic houses of worship, it has not slowed down the embrace of these worship cultures and songs.

Some conservative churches have found a compromise in using charismatic songs by incorporating the practice of vetting lyrics. In many evangelical churches, it is agreed that expressive worship is biblical. It is also agreed upon that some lyrics and theologies that come

147 Malm, “Why One Worship Leader Won’t Sing Hillsong Songs.”


150 Malm, “Why One Worship Leader Won’t Sing Hillsong Songs.”
from these charismatic houses of worship are not agreeable to the biblical understanding of
worship and the gospel in many traditional evangelical churches. Frank Page and Lavon Gray
wrote, “These influences can positively impact the development of a solid biblical and
theological understanding of worship; however, if not cautious, these influences could lead to a
hybrid perspective, mixing Pentecostalism with various theological traditions and worship
practices. The result: theological confusion.”151 In the effort to protect congregations from what
some church leaders believe as errant doctrine, the practice of theological vetting has been
applied. Page and Gray continued their argument:

Someone once said, “To be forewarned is to be forearmed.” The influences shaping the
modern worship culture affirm this statement. While not necessarily negative, some
influences are indeed problematic. All of them... impact the theological content of the
songs within the modern worship movement and must be understood in light of their
backgrounds, beliefs, and practices.152

This conservative plea for theological integrity is a strong stance in determining what songs are
congregationally appropriate for liturgy. Vetting allows evangelical worship leaders to become a
theological filter for their congregation.153 According to some traditional evangelicals, when this
practice is done properly, it allows the emotional and engaging aspects of worship to flourish
without watering down or even dismantling the gospel.

Gabriel Miller, a professor in the School of Music at Liberty University, described
himself as a Pentecostal charismatic. He also echoed the need for lyric vetting. He claimed that
song lyrics should be challenged on the grounds that they are false, peripheral, indirect, shallow,

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151 Page and Gray, Hungry for Worship, 125.

152 Page and Gray, Hungry for Worship, 127.

153 Ibid., 133.
vague, or clumsy.\textsuperscript{154} Although he sees the benefit in vetting lyrics, Miller’s response comes from a heart of liturgy and not accuracy. He called it the idol of doctrine. Miller claimed:

\begin{quote}
    Should we be mindful of the words we put on our congregants’ lips? Absolutely. But any worship planner who revels in pompously tossing out every imperfect lyric, thinking himself to be a general know-it-all and the supreme authority for all things theological, while he does not take into consideration that God may very well desire to use an imperfect lyric to bring revival to His people, worships the idol of doctrine.\textsuperscript{155}
\end{quote}

Congregational engagement seemed to be the focus of Miller’s response to vetting lyrics. A song that is biblically accurate and theologically sound and well-crafted still may not have the impact to invoke expression or activate the presence of God. Miller said, “If the congregation is not engaged, if there is no sense that God is moved by it, if there is no greater revelation of His presence, if there are no bodies healed, if there are not spirits soothed (or convicted), if there are no lives changed, the song may be ‘perfect,’ and yet ineffective.”\textsuperscript{156} God can move however He sees fit. As long as the song is not false, Miller said, “You’ve got a keeper.”\textsuperscript{157}

Evangelical Church Leader Responses

Some evangelical denominations have embraced charismatic worship practices more than ever before; these practices include singing songs to God to connect with the Holy Spirit in worship, freely displaying outward expressions of worship, and prioritizing worship music and expression within worship gatherings. Terry Williams, founder of \textit{Priority Worship} and former director of the Department of Music and Worship of the Florida Baptist Convention, has traveled

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\textsuperscript{154} Gabriel Miller, \textit{Idol Worship}, (VA: All Peoples Ministries, 2018), 932.
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\textsuperscript{155} Ibid., 989.
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\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., 988.
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\textsuperscript{157} Gabriel Miller, \textit{Idol Worship}, 932.
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from church to church since the early 2000’s preaching a message to evangelical, Southern Baptist Churches about the importance and priority of worship in the life of the believer. Furthermore, his message is dedicated to challenge the status quo and to encourage the outward expression of worship that the Scriptures detail to believers. Williams exclaimed:

The Holy Spirit is invading this generation and enabling the church of the Lord Jesus to worship and praise and to exalt Almighty God. Over the last two decades, eighty percent of protestant churches have plateaued or declined... The problem is, the church has devoted itself to “working” for Jesus, but where has that gotten us? All the while, God is calling out to His church and declaring, “What about ME? I’ve asked you to love Me with all that you are, but you would rather work.” Is it possible that God will not anoint our work until He anoints our worship?  

As a denominational leader in the Southern Baptist Convention, Williams is not always met with agreeable gratitude. Many pastors and leaders do not hold to Williams’ assessment about protestant worship and the priority of it in the life of the believer. He believes that many pastors and church leaders are scared of true worship because one cannot measure or count it. Baptists have a tendency to focus more on the number of people coming through the doors and the amount of money that goes into the offering envelope. Worship, however, is not a statistic. It cannot be controlled or contained. Likewise, Brett McCracken wrote, “[Francis] Chan believes many evangelical churches neglect the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and, out of fear of abuses or unwieldly emotionalism, come close to what Paul warns against in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-20: ‘Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt’.” The extremes practiced in some charismatic environments have caused some protestant groups to shut the door on the desire for the Spirit to move in congregational settings.

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One of the major push backs from some evangelical leaders is the thought that the worshiper cannot have worship of the mind and worship with emotion, simultaneously. Yet God is able to reach people through both the heart and the head.\footnote{Brett McCracken, “The Rise of Reformed Charsmatics,” 3.} Unfortunately, this discussion has pitted the knowledge of the Word against the experience of the Spirit. Well-known Reformed pastor and writer, John MacArthur, has accused charismatics of being light on biblical truth. In his book \textit{Strange Fire}, “Charismatics downplay doctrine for the same reason they demean the Bible: they think any concern for timeless truth stifles the work of the Spirit.”\footnote{Ibid} However, not all protestant church leaders feel this way. Francis Schaeffer wrote:

> Often men have acted as though one has to choose between reformation and revival. Some call for reformation, others call for revival, and they tend to look at each other with suspicion. But reformation and revival do not stand in contrast to one another; in fact, both words are related to the concept of restoration. Reformation speaks of restoration to pure doctrine, revival of a restoration in the Christian’s life. Reformation speaks of a return to the teachings of Scripture, revival of a life brought into proper relationship to the Holy Spirit. The great moments in church history have come when these two restorations have occurred simultaneously. There cannot be true revival unless there has been reformation, and reformation is incomplete without revival.\footnote{Ibid., 4.}

Some protestant denominations have found it refreshing to have solid biblical content and freedom of the Holy Spirit within times of corporate worship.\footnote{Ibid., 3.} Some church leaders and the churches they pastor are in the middle of this theological conflict. There is a growing number of theologically savvy, Spirit-filled followers in the United States.\footnote{Ibid., 2.} For example, Matt Chandler, a Reformed Southern Baptist, recognizes himself as a Reformed Charismatic. He believes the gifts
of the Spirit, like glossolalia, are still active and should be sought out in the life of the believer.\textsuperscript{166}

**Protestant Evangelical Decline**

In 2006, the Southern Baptist Convention’s (SBC) membership peaked with 16.3 million members in its worldwide denomination.\textsuperscript{167} Since then, the SBC lost a massive two percent in membership and fell with record lows in baptisms since World War II.\textsuperscript{168} SBC leadership reasoned it was due to a lack of work in fulfilling the Great Commission.\textsuperscript{169} Likewise, Scott McConnell, Executive Director of Lifeway Research (the SBC’s resources division), stated, “These numbers are not able to tell the story of all the evangelistic efforts that many individuals and churches have put in this past year. They do indicate, however, that the efforts of the same number of people in a congregation on average are seeing fewer people come to Christ and being baptized.”\textsuperscript{170} However, Ryan Burge, analyst for *Christianity Today*, identified that there are fewer children who were raised in the SBC who are still involved as adults. It is suggested that the major decline is not necessarily new converts, but a struggle in keeping their own.\textsuperscript{171} The research stated that 50\% of SBC kids stay attached to the denomination as adults.\textsuperscript{172}

Furthermore, research also indicated that the evangelical numbers as a whole are not declining.

\textsuperscript{166} Brett McCracken, “The Rise of Reformed Charismatics,” 3.


\textsuperscript{168} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{169} Kate Shellnutt, “Southern Baptists See Biggest Drop in 100 Years.”

\textsuperscript{170} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{171} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{172} Ibid.
Christianity Today noted, “Evangelical identity has held steady at just under a quarter of the US population over the past decade, with nondenominational Christianity growing as Protestant denominations experience decline.” 173 Burge reported research from the Cooperative Congressional Election Study (CCES) that fully agreed with the above assessment. He wrote:

CCES data also showed that 91.8 percent of people who started out as SBC in 2010 were still SBC four years later. Of the 37 people in the sample who left the SBC between 2010 and 2014—not a significant enough portion to extrapolate—31 of them either became a non-denominational Protestant or some other type of Protestant Christian. Just two became “nones.” Obviously, any defection is disappointing for those who want to see the SBC grow, but based on this sample, of the members who do leave, they often don’t stray too far. 174

They have seen the decline and have decided to change their worship repertoire and environment to appeal to the culture.

21st Century Charismatic Practices

As stated earlier, there is a draw for some charismatic worship elements within many of the protestant churches in America. There are many influential characteristics of charismatic worship that makes it so enticing. Grace Chou wrote:

Research has indicated that the charismatic movement, characterized among other things by miracles, spiritual gifts, glossolalia, an ecstatic worship style, and the power of the Holy Spirit, affected Christianity in many ways: Churches influenced by the charismatic movement showed signs of greater growth and were more likely to be involved with evangelism, and their members were more consistent and passionate in the practice of worship and prayer. 175

According to Chou, the free, high energy, charisma focused worship of Pentecostals is intoxicating and a fresh change from some staunch protestant traditions. The study from Chou

173 Kate Shellnutt, “Southern Baptists See Biggest Drop in 100 Years.”

174 Ibid.

showed that the individuals involved in the charismatic movement desired to attend service more and had a profoundly deeper commitment to God, making their well-being more significant.\textsuperscript{176} In addition to personal worship, intimacy with God, and contemporary worship forms, growth and passion are major attractions for church leadership in many denominations.

Studies have shown that a growing number of poor men and women in urban and rural areas find the charismatic tradition more acceptable to their way of life and authenticity.\textsuperscript{177} In his study of the charismatic traditions and the marginalized, Marius Nel wrote:

People did not become Pentecostals because they were deprived, disorganized, and defective, but because their religious concerns and acceptance of a Pentecostal hermeneutic. And this hermeneutic draws the attention of the Pentecostal to Jesus’s predilection for the marginalized, transforming them into change agents in the poor parts of society, allowing Gerlach to define Pentecostalism not as a ‘reaction to change’ but rather a ‘cause of change’.\textsuperscript{178}

Desiring growth in the church is important. Charismatic worship leaders and pastors do not necessarily only desire growth in numbers. Rather, charismatics desire to follow the examples of Jesus in response to the poor, needy, sick, orphaned, widowed, and marginalized. Culturally speaking, there is a growing trend to be inclusive and accepting. Without going against biblical authority and application, this manner of practice in the life of the believer has caused churches to grow in spiritual discipline and physical numbers.

\textsuperscript{176} Chou, “The Religious Life and Happiness of Protestants,” 365.

\textsuperscript{177} Marius Nel, “Attempting to Develop a Pentecostal Theology of Worship,” \textit{Verbun et Ecclesia} 37(1), a1661, 2.

\textsuperscript{178} Nel, “Attempting to Develop a Pentecostal Theology of Worship,” 1.
21st Century Case Studies

One way to acquire a clear picture of some of the transitions that traditional evangelical churches have made is to note different case studies that have been documented in the past twenty years. The literature review includes an examination of case studies of various evangelical churches. The conclusions include the churches’ start, past worship culture, present worship culture, and what essentials were foundational in the transitions that were made from traditional to charismatic and contemporary. Although, not every church followed the same strategies, there were common themes throughout that uncovered the driving forces that determined the need and aspiration for change.

Dallas County Baptist Churches

In 2017, Ronald E. Bowles conducted a case study analyzing four Dallas Texas County Baptist churches that had all completed the process of recent worship change. These churches transitioned their corporate worship settings providing common experience for participation. All four churches had been established for at least 50 years, and for theological foundations and commonality, the churches were affiliated with the Dallas Baptist Association. Bowles did not name the individual churches; however, each church was designated with a letter of the alphabet to ensure anonymity.

Description - Church A

Church A was depicted as a congregation of around 1,200 active Sunday morning attenders. The church began as a small community Baptist church 150 years ago. At the time

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180 Ibid.

of the case study, the pastor had served this church 12 years and minister of music had served for 11 years. The study determined that Church A had three distinct worship services; traditional, contemporary, and blended. In the past 20 years, Church A had two major worship transitions. The first transition was designed to begin a blended service to attract younger worshipers. Although the pastor and minister of music were not involved with the first major transition, the second was developed upon their combined leadership and wisdom. This transition opened the third service and provided Church A with a new contemporary and casual environment. The facility remained the same in all services fashioned with pews, choir loft, and pipe organ.

In the traditional service, the demographic was heavily senior adult and more inclined to traditional hymns, robed choir, and the organ/piano instrumentation.\textsuperscript{182} The service was simple and executed well. The singing of the hymns from the congregation was robust and present; lyrics were on screens instead of hymnals. Six hundred members attended the traditional service.\textsuperscript{183}

The contemporary service began 10 minutes after the traditional service concluded.\textsuperscript{184} There was just enough time for a quick stage change removing the traditional pulpit and making room for a praise band, including drum set, acoustic guitar, bass guitar, electric guitar, standard piano, and auxiliary electric keyboard. The initial song at the beginning was lively and upbeat yet seemed unfamiliar to many of the congregants. Other than the music selections and stage design, the environment did not change. However, the technical team controlled house and stage lighting differently. House lighting was brought down low during music adding focus to the

\textsuperscript{182} Ibid., 71.

\textsuperscript{183} Ibid., 72.

\textsuperscript{184} Ibid., 73.
platform. The atmosphere was much more relaxed and demographically younger than the traditional service. Attendance was also half of what the traditional service offered.\textsuperscript{185}

The final service for Church A on Sunday was a blended service. By design, the musical elements in this service were both contemporary and traditional.\textsuperscript{186} The piano and pipe organ were used along with the drums, bass, and guitars. The songs were familiar and congregational participation seemed strong. Some of the musical elements from the traditional service were used in the blended model. Choruses were not the same as the contemporary. Worship leaders sang older, more familiar choruses which helped the congregational involvement to be more engaged than the previous service. The atmosphere in the blended service mirrored more of the traditional service mainly because of the architecture and lighting. Other than the use of praise band and praise choruses, it mimicked the traditional service in all other service elements. The demographic for this service was mixed with both young and old attending. Attendance for this service was around 500, making it the second most attended service at Church A.\textsuperscript{187}

\textit{Description – Church B}

Located in the eastern residential area of Dallas, Texas, Church B was founded in 1955 and had a long history of strong ministry programs and discipleship development.\textsuperscript{188} In the early 1990s, the previous pastor made a unilateral decision to begin a contemporary service in a church, which up until that point in time, was very traditional. The pastor’s desire was to provide a worship environment that would attract younger worshipers and families. The transition was


\textsuperscript{186} Ibid., 75.

\textsuperscript{187} Ibid., 76.

\textsuperscript{188} Ibid., 77.
not received well, and the attendance that was around 1,500 weekly dropped to nearly 600. The current pastor and minister of music were both fully aware of the worship transitions that have taken place. Nonetheless, Church B still continued with two different services with the traditional service at 8:45am and the contemporary service at 11:00am. Both services were held in the same environment. The platform was designed to hold a 100-voice choir. The stage was also adorned with a baptistery in the center and a large cross hanging overhead. Church B remained, at an average, around 600 in attendance weekly.

The first service at 8:45am was called the traditional service. However, it captured more of a blended worship format in song selection. The hymns were segued in with older contemporary praise songs. The number of hymns in this service certainly outweighed the contemporary, but it was evident that the church leadership did not feel the need to be fully traditional.\(^{189}\) Piano, organ, choir, and traditional hymnody were the driving forces for the music section of the worship service. It was estimated that 400 people attended the traditional service.\(^{190}\)

During the bible study hour, the worship team prepared the stage for contemporary worship by setting up musical instruments which included two guitars, bass, drums, and vocal microphones.\(^{191}\) As the crowd entered, contemporary music played over the house audio system and a second-by-second countdown clock was displayed on the screens as to determine the start of the service. The stage personnel members were demographically younger and encouraged youthful participation.\(^{192}\) The praise songs to start the service were familiar to many people and


\(^{190}\) Ibid., 82.

\(^{191}\) Ibid.

\(^{192}\) Bowles, “A Case Study Analysis of the Process of Worship Change,” 82.
the majority of the 200 worshipers in attendance seemed to be engaged and participating. The same message was preached by the pastor and the invitation resembled the traditional service.

Description – Church D

Located in the eastern suburbs of Dallas County, Church D was founded in 1952. When the church was established it attracted white, middle-class, Southern Baptists. At its peak, Church D averaged around 900 in weekly attendance. At the time of this study, the current pastor was in his 25th year of ministry at this location and the minister of music was serving his 10th year. The leadership was strong and trusted by the congregation. For years, Church D had decided to have two distinctly different styles of worship. At times this method would work and at other times it was not as successful. This would depend on the music leadership at the time, according to the pastor and minister of music. The church still continued to decline and eventually the leadership felt it was too difficult to continue two different services at two different times. Financial limitations and lack of human musical resources were two of the deciding factors for a worship change. Church D went from two different services with two different worship styles to one service with the differing styles utilized from one week to the next.

On the day the service was observed, Church D was equipped to present a blended service complete with choir, orchestra, praise band, and vocal team. The song sets consisted of hymns and praise songs. The choir sang an anthem during the offertory time right before the pastor preached a 35-minute sermon. At the close of the sermon the pastor extended an invitation

\[193\] Ibid.

\[194\] Ibid., 90.
that encouraged a time of response and prayer. The blended service concluded with a benediction prayer.\textsuperscript{195}

Bowles encountered ten summations at the end of this case study. These results encapsulated all of the churches studied and is descriptive of their worship transitions. First, Bowles wrote that the churches faced the need for change as they aged and matured. Second, worship change and transition was inevitable. Third, change involved effective communication throughout the process. Fourth, the senior pastor greatly influenced and guided the worship change. Fifth, the role and perception of the worship leader had changed. Sixth, ministers and church members understood worship differently. Seventh, people expressed personal preferences in worship music. Eighth, worship change was influenced by local culture and environment. Ninth, worship transition and change were difficult for people. Tenth, change was necessary and painful, but achieved positive results.\textsuperscript{196} The influence of charismatic worship was evident in the addition of the worship music repertoire. However, this study did not clearly define how effective the transition was in achieving a change in worship atmosphere and participation.

Christ Fellowship Miami

The case study conducted at Christ Fellowship Miami (CFM) was designed to provide tools to assist the church to transition from primarily homogenous to more culturally conscious worship and music practices.\textsuperscript{197} As noted, cultural adaptation and contextualization is a key ingredient in the acceptance and passion of charismatic worship practices,\textsuperscript{198} and the

\textsuperscript{195} Bowles, “A Case Study Analysis of the Process of Worship Change,” 92.

\textsuperscript{196} Ibid., 141.

\textsuperscript{197} Kimberly Anne Martin, “Contextualizing Worship and Music in Multicultural Church: A Case Study at Christ Fellowship Miami,” ii.

\textsuperscript{198} Ingalls and Yong, 118.
congregation of Christ Fellowship is located in a melting pot of diversity. Christ Fellowship Miami is a Southern Baptist Church. The church is multicultural, multigenerational, and multilingual. They have eight campuses, and these campuses combine host worshipers from over seventy nations weekly. Because modern culture can influence music in the local church, understanding the multicultural music language in Miami benefits the inclusion of worshipers at Christ Fellowship. Martin wrote:

> These are important issues for churches seeking to engage in multicultural worship and the contextualization of music and worship. Understanding how music transmits cultural values and is a direct representation of the culture that it is a part of means that music and worship ministries should take on the role of ethnomusicologists so as to understand the ways that certain songs relate to the cultures represented within their worshipping assemblies.\(^{199}\)

This case study noted the need for cultural realization and relevance for all people groups within a given congregation.

According to Martin, Christ Fellowship Miami was consistent with their charismatic environment on a weekly basis. The welcome team was culturally diverse, the stage personnel was culturally diverse, and the staff was culturally diverse. The music of the service began with an upbeat and familiar tune from the artists of Hillsong, Elevation, or Passion.\(^{200}\) The use of moving lights and dim house lights set the focus to the platform. Although CFM mainly spoke English from the platform, there were also interpreters that used in ear devices to translate the speaking, song lyrics, and sermon to Spanish. There was also someone speaking in American Sign Language (ASL) for the deaf community, ensuring that all were engaged in worship.

\(^{199}\) Kimberly Anne Martin, “Contextualizing Worship and Music in Multicultural Church” 14.

\(^{200}\) Martin, “Contextualizing Worship and Music in Multicultural Church,” 23.
together. Martin wrote, “In order to reach every person that walks through the door and help them engage in worship, it is important to know whom they are and where they are coming from so that they can be ministered to even more effectively.” The culture and focus of CFM was not to force all cultures into one style. Quite the opposite was desired. Using contemporary and charismatic music, staging, lighting, and culturally relevant expressions, CFM intended to meet individuals at the heart of worship rather than the preference of worship. Instead, the interviewed church members of CFM shared that they found excellence in the music, freedom of expression, and engaging song lyrics were the driving forces for worship participation.

Over the past couple of decades, CFM has made strong transitions to become a culturally relevant congregation. One participant of the study noted, “She has been a part of the church since she was a teenager and has seen the church move from a predominantly white church where she felt more unwelcome as a black Jamaican teen to a diverse worshipping body that she now feels welcomed and accepted.” This indicated what Martin wrote when she exclaimed, “Having an understanding of the ways that people engage in worship is so important for worship leaders. The role of the worship leader is to help engage men and women in authentic worship that is done in spirit and in truth… [being] more culturally conscious in their leading approach so that no one is left behind.” The case study revealed the heart of CFM to find a sense of Heaven each week when the community around them gathers in worship. The goal of their

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201 Ibid.
202 Ibid.
203 Ibid., 34-35.
204 Martin, “Contextualizing Worship and Music in Multicultural Church,” 36.
205 Ibid., 39-40.
global worship was to provide a safe environment where all worship practices, expressions, and elements can be applied in weekly worship gatherings.\textsuperscript{206}

While CFM worked to engage multiculturalism, most of the worship and music leadership teams do not adapt their identity of worship to the minority culture. Worship engagement then becomes secondary to minority cultures. Charismatic worship environments desire to be much more inclusive in worship practices and music selections. Understanding the culture is vital to that success. In her book \textit{The Next Worship}, Opstal addressed this issue:

Congregations typically do not adapt their worship to represent minority communities. The Association of Religion Data Archives reports that “the general pattern for multiracial congregations is to attempt to assimilate members of other racial groups into a congregational way of life established by the dominant racial group.” As someone who has led in multiracial communities, I have seen the phenomenon in action many times. Congregants from underrepresented communities typically learn what kind of multiethnic community it is (white-Asian, black-white, pan-Asian, Latino-black) and adapt to the expectation of the dominant culture. They are more like a stakeholder in the community. It therefore should not surprise us that “members of the minority racial group in a congregation were significantly less likely to feel a sense of belonging, to have close friends in the congregations.” As long as our worship makes people feel excluded or in constant visitor status, we are not accomplishing the ministry of biblical hospitality.\textsuperscript{207}

The importance of this case study brought to light the need for cultural diversity. Culture shapes worship.\textsuperscript{208} However, there is a difference between diversity inclusion and cultural preference. Church leadership is responsible to build cross cultural relationships, share cultural forms of worship with each other, and use the differences to bring unity amidst the diversity.\textsuperscript{209}

\textsuperscript{206} Ibid., 44.

\textsuperscript{207} Van Opstal, \textit{The Next Worship: Glorifying God in a Diverse World}, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016), 63.


\textsuperscript{209} Martin, 44.
Antioch Community Church, Waltham, Massachusetts

This case study, written by Daniel Patrick Snape, desired to dissect the worship, theology, and praxis of a Baptist-charismatic church and missional organization. Antioch Community Church (ACC) began as a dream of young college students whose goal was to train and equip local churches to send people to all nations to proclaim the gospel of Christ.\textsuperscript{210} Texas native, Jimmy Seibert, was the young enthusiastic leader to take charge. After graduating from Baylor University, in Waco Texas, Seibert found himself involved in Highland Baptist Church. While attending Highland, Seibert desired to begin a training and discipleship program.

Inspired by Phoenix First Assembly of God and Youth with a Mission (YWAM), the new discipleship school launched in the fall of 1987. The program required a yearlong commitment and culminated with serving for three months overseas. Snape wrote, “Even at this inchoate stage, the foundations for ACC’s theological framework were beginning to take form. Already convergence of Baptist (Highland Baptist Church), Pentecostal (Phoenix First Assembly of God) and Charismatic (YWAM) theologies were beginning to emerge as the predominate modes of religious expression within the future church movement.”\textsuperscript{211} While leading the school, Seibert also transitioned to the role of college pastor. This move laid the foundation for ACC’s trait to focus on young adults in the demographic age of 20s and 30s.\textsuperscript{212} In 1999, with the blessing of Highland Baptist Church, Seibert planted Antioch Community Church in Waco. Since then, ACC has planted many churches. The church’s primary focus was proclaiming God’s kingdom.

\textsuperscript{210} Daniel Patrick Snape, “Worship, Theology, and Praxis at Antioch Community Church of Waltham, Massachusetts: An Exploration of the Foundations of Worship from a Baptist-Charismatic Perspective,” 57.

\textsuperscript{211} Snape, “Worship, Theology, and Praxis at Antioch Community Church,” 58.

\textsuperscript{212} Ibid., 57.
through worship, evangelism, and church planting.\textsuperscript{213} The relation between worship and mission was critical in understanding the philosophy of ACC. In fact, “mission and worship intimately connect in the forming of a horizontal and vertical intersection.”\textsuperscript{214} Terry Williams of \textit{Priority Worship} phrased it this way: “You cannot be horizontally effective in ministry until you have been vertically intimate in worship.”\textsuperscript{215} It is true worship that “combines both the vertical and the horizontal, i.e. both communion with the transcendent God and mission in the world.”\textsuperscript{216} According to the case study, worship is a key mode to the formation of ACC’s identity and its sense of mission.

In efforts for ACC to establish church plants, The River church officially transitioned to being Antioch Community Church of Waltham (ACCW) on March 19, 2017.\textsuperscript{217} Snape gave a brief snapshot of the city’s demographics. With a population of 62,227, the ethnic percentages are as follows: Asian (9.7%), Black/African American (6.0%), Hispanic or Latino (13.7%), and White (68.7%). The ethnic percentages inside the walls of ACCW mimicked the cultural variety with the area. There was a healthy reflection of ethnic diversity.\textsuperscript{218} Because of this, ACCW found itself at an unspoken crossroads. Navigating this intersection became increasingly exciting and dangerous.\textsuperscript{219} Snape wrote, “Worship, in part, can act as a vehicle that transports people and

\textsuperscript{213} Ibid., 65.

\textsuperscript{214} Ibid., 66.

\textsuperscript{215} Terry Williams, sermon.


\textsuperscript{217} Snape, “Worship, Theology, and Praxis at Antioch Community Church,” 77.

\textsuperscript{218} Ibid., 80.

\textsuperscript{219} Ibid., 81.
community across the intersection.” 220 The personal stories and testimonies of the congregation at ACCW was what kept a common thread in worship and community. According to the case study, it was the illness and suffering of a 50-year-old woman that inspired the worshipers of Waltham closer to Christ and closer to each other. 221

An important part of ACCW was their doctrine and theology. Some of their theological traits were clearly persuaded from their Baptist roots and others from their charismatic influences. The doctrine from the Antioch Community Church movement was derived from its understanding and interpretation of biblical authority, inspiration, and inerrancy. 222 Furthermore, the church also subscribed to an ongoing continuation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit as opposed to cessationism. The church’s understanding of this gift was settled upon the interpretation of such texts as 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and John 14:12. 223 Other charismatic worship expressions that were common at ACCW included outspoken and spontaneous prayers of healing and sharing testimonies. Snape connected these practices with corporate song lyrics. The church found a deeper reinforcement of their theology and doctrine when songs of praise, thanksgiving, intercession and lament were added to the weekly worship flow. These modes of prayer encouraged strong participation in outward expressions, singing, praying, shouting, and emotion. 224 Snape wrote:

We must address the question of how worship comes to have any authority in the affairs

220 Ibid.
221 Ibid.
222 Ibid., 86.
223 Snape, “Worship, Theology, and Praxis at Antioch Community Church,” 86.
224 Ibid.
of doctrine authority regarding doctrine resides with God and that fundamentally worship is not the initiative of humans but “God’s redeeming act in Christ through His Spirit.” Wainwright continues, “Worship, then, is a source of doctrine in so far as it is the place in which God makes himself known to humanity in a saving encounter. The human words and acts used in worship are a doctrinal locus in so far as either God makes them the vehicle of his self-communication or they are fitting responses to God’s presence and action.” Based on Wainwright’s assertions, worship is a God-initiated activity by which we respond to him and/or he chooses to communicate to us through our acts of worship and devotion; worship is a conduit to relationship with the living God.  

During the case study, a survey was compiled for the purpose of assessing the church’s demographics, determining musical and aesthetical preferences, and gaining feedback on service time and church involvement. Some of the findings from the survey were agreed on by the majority, yet others allowed leadership to think through more of the why and how the church’s worship environment looked and felt. For instance, 49% of those surveyed desired more spontaneous prayer and worship and 45% desired more multicultural worship. The most revealing of all the questions in the survey was the question of importance concerning the aesthetics of the worship environment. According to Snape, only 17% considered it of high importance. On the other hand, 30% of the respondents considered aesthetics not very important or not important at all. Snape added, “Perhaps this speaks into the psyche of a congregation that is not so concerned with décor and more with worship, preaching, and teaching.”

Snape concluded that ACCW’s theology and beliefs were to a significant degree impacted and influenced by the way they worship. The identity of ACCW were found in several influencing theologies and beliefs. First, a high view of scripture and a Christocentric

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225 Ibid., 88.

226 Ibid., 91.


228 Ibid., 116.
focus on worship is necessary in the daily life of the believer. As a result, Snape continued, “Many of the songs sung and the prayers prayed focus on the supremacy of Jesus, the indwelling and presence of the Holy Spirit, and the belief and desire to see and experience the miraculous and supernatural in the life of the church.” 229 The writer was quick to diminish any thought that ACCW followed the over-realized eschatology presented by Bethel Church. As ACCW believers hoped in the miraculous and supernatural power within the church’s community, the faith of the worshiper did not rest on the expectation that this is always the case, but that it can be the case. This tension, according to Snape, did not weaken or despair the believer; it strengthened the Christian lifestyle even when expectations are not met. 230 The charismatic influence in this particular case study was evident. From its inception, the church was thrust into an understanding of the Holy Spirit’s work in the church. The study, however, did not address the desire to create the appropriate atmosphere for a charismatic worship environment.

Hartford County, Georgia

Leslie Myers Gillis, a student at Boston University, conducted a case study of several Southern Baptist churches in Hartford County, Georgia. The purpose for this case study was to explore worship transition experiences. 231 These sites ranged in size and demographics; however, findings in all churches discovered unique experiences in their transition from traditional to nontraditional worship. At one point, all churches surveyed worshiped in the traditional manner with piano, organ, and choir. The transitions came at varying times and with

229 Ibid.

230 Ibid.

varying degrees. The study conducted on each congregation reflected individualized manifestations that echoed in the priorities of each gathering.²³² Here are some of Gillis’ findings.

*Trinity Baptist Church*

Trinity Baptist Church was established in 1876.²³³ The congregation had a broad range of demography with no target age group; however, the largest concentration of adults spanned from 40-55.²³⁴ The main worship auditorium seated around 500 people. The stage was elevated with a Baldwin piano, two electronic keyboards, electronic drums, and Aviom in-ear monitors for the band. The current pastor had only served there two months at the time of the case study, and the worship pastor had served nine years at Trinity. At the time, the church conducted two services; the traditional service took place at 8:30am on Sunday morning and the blended service took place at 11:00am.

The traditional service was made up of mainly older adults. The attire was traditional Sunday attire with suits and dresses. The staff wore suits as well, yet the choir did not wear robes. In creating the definition of a “traditional” service for Trinity Baptist Church, it was agreed upon that special music, choir, offertory, and a generally consistent format would be the formula from week to week. Despite the traditional focus, congregants tended to refuse the hymnals that were available in the back for use. Instead, they deferred to the projection screens for lyrics. The worship pastor described the decline of hymnal usage:

²³² Ibid., 154.

²³³ Ibid., 155.

²³⁴ Ibid.
When we first started that service, two or three folks made the effort. The hymn number is listed in the bulletin just in case someone wants to see the notes. But probably after three or four months even those folks quit bothering to pick one up, which is understandable, but in some ways sad because you don’t see the notes. But most people don’t read the notes anyway. They follow their ear.\textsuperscript{235}

The same choir participated in both services with ages ranging from 17-65. This multi-generational choir was an added benefit for outreach and inclusion. The worship pastor also created a rotation for special music of vocalists, keyboardists, and brass ensemble.\textsuperscript{236} It was not noted in the study if the choir sang the same song in both the traditional and the blended; however, the choir was the dominate vocal leading team for the traditional service.

The blended service varied in ages and an intentionally different feel than the traditional service. Attire was equally varied, but the common theme was nice-casual attire with some children in shorts.\textsuperscript{237} The music was centered around the praise band and nine singers were formed from a weekly rotation. Although the choir sang in this service, they did so at the beginning of the service and exited early in the service, just after the welcome/greeting time. The songs were a balance of hymns and contemporary choruses from artists like Chris Tomlin, Hillsong, Paul Baloche, Steve Fee, Christian Stanfill and others.\textsuperscript{238} The flow of the service order, while contemporary, still maintained a traditional Baptist order; song, welcome, song medley, offertory, special music, sermon, invitation, announcements, and a brief, sung benediction.

The blended service was the more well attended gathering with over 350 of its weekly


\textsuperscript{236} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{237} Gillis, "Contemporary Practices in Southern Baptist Church Music," 159.

\textsuperscript{238} Ibid., 160.
430 average in attendance. The move to contemporary was a difficult transition. The worship pastor stated that even he had to do some private study and prayer time with God to feel the scriptural support to incorporate modern elements. Throughout his personal transition, the worship pastor continued to emerge with a changed mindset and embraced blended worship as appropriate for Trinity’s congregation.\textsuperscript{239} The worship pastor found it difficult to stay current with all of the musical choices that are in abundance. He did enjoy working with the youth ministry, reading \textit{Worship Leader Magazine}, and listening to popular releases. The most difficult part of creating the transition to a blended worship environment was the preference of the traditionalist. However, there were mixed reactions that revealed a genuine concern for reaching people. The worship pastor felt comfortable in the transition in the fact that the church leadership and the pastor were on board and united together during the modification.\textsuperscript{240}

\textit{New Hope Baptist Church}

New Hope Baptist Church was founded in 1877. The main worship auditorium was adorned with high cathedral ceilings. A piano was positioned on the right of the stage, along with drums on the left. There was a digital organ on the floor in the front. The center stage was equipped with a choir loft, a baptistery, and a projection screen just above the choir. The screen covered the balcony during congregational worship.\textsuperscript{241}

New Hope and Trinity had very similar worship models. However, one of the biggest differences that New Hope experienced in their worship transitions from traditional to

\textsuperscript{239} Ibid., 162.
\textsuperscript{240} Gillis, “Contemporary Practices in Southern Baptist Church Music,” 174-175.
\textsuperscript{241} Ibid., 183.
contemporary was the backlash from the people. In 2010, the church leadership decided to create two identical services that were both blended in format. The high level of negative reaction forced the leadership to go to a traditional service followed by a blended service only six months after the initial transition.\textsuperscript{242} In conversations with the worship pastor, letters were shown that depicted the negative feelings of the transitions. One letter stated:

Andrew, I never thought we would go completely contemporary. The early (traditional) group is so grateful that we don't have to listen to a lot of guitars and drums. Now it seems that we are being forced to listen to it regardless of our feelings. Why couldn't they have asked us what we would rather have and not just say, “Too bad, that's it?” The church shouldn't change unless it's for the good of all and what good is it to listen to music that upsets us? Why aren't we allowed to have a say? The congregation knows what they like. And if they don't like the contemporary music, why force it on us? You are an excellent director but please, please don't force us to a blended service because most of us will be upset. (New Hope Church Member, written letter, received June 30, 2011) \textsuperscript{243}

The worship pastor of New Hope stated that he struggled through these difficult transitions. He claimed that he didn't believe that God cared about style; however, he wished the people of New Hope would begin to care more about the object of worship rather than the style of worship.\textsuperscript{244}

Gillis wrote:

[The worship pastor’s] words reveal a clear sense of struggle and anguish over what it means to lead a church through a worship transition, how it feels to be both the visionary and the scapegoat for a journey of change that many do not welcome. His words do not suggest a push for his own musical preferences but for a common ground in which his church could worship as one. He has observed a large local congregation be successful and unified in adopting a blended worship model and longs for his own congregation to have a similar spirit of unity and purpose.\textsuperscript{245}

\textsuperscript{242} Ibid., 192.


\textsuperscript{244} Ibid., 193.

\textsuperscript{245} Ibid.
Fortunately, the revised model of alternative worship experiences and keeping the membership content in style and preference worked for the congregation of New Hope Baptist Church.

*Highview Baptist Church*

The most differing factor in the next house of worship was the number of members, facilities, and staff. High View Baptist Church was noted as larger in all aspects than the first two churches discussed. Highview’s worship transitions brought them to a focus of having one contemporary praise and worship service at 8:45am and a hymn-based service at 11:00am. Ironically, the praise and worship service was held in the old, traditional chapel. Therefore, it was void of any newer lighting or updated technical fixtures. The service attendance was about 75 members a week. On the other hand, the hymns-based service had significantly more in attendance. That service had 600 in weekly attendance.\(^{246}\)

Although the first service was musically contemporary, it still had a traditional flow; which included pieces such as welcome and prayer, children’s sermon, and walk down invitation. The band leader was also encouraged to include a hymn in each service. The contemporary leader typically pulled hymn arrangements from Tomlin, Crowder, or Passion Hymns. The music was done well, yet there was little to no outward worship expression, such as clapping, throughout these songs, during or after.\(^{247}\)

The longstanding worship time for Highview was known to be at 11:00am. Therefore, most of the energy, involvement, and attention was given to this well attended service. The main


\(^{247}\) Ibid., 216.
auditorium sat around 1,000, and with weekly attendance of 600, it felt energetic. The demographic for this service was well rounded. All ages were involved, but the largest population of worshipers were older adults and middle-ages adults. The worship pastor credited the quality of the service as a major factor of attracting some of the younger crowd to the service. He stated, “The good news is that the young people are coming to our 11:00 traditional service… I think if we were a boring traditional service, we wouldn’t have them there. So, there’s hope.”

This case study revealed the importance and priority that the 11:00am hymn-based worship service had established. The worship pastor spent the majority of the interview discussing how excellent the music of the 11:00am service. Accompanied by piano, organ, choir, and orchestra, the music was taken from hymns and arrangements by John Rutter and Mark Hayes. If any music was not set to the traditional feel and lyrically deep, the worship pastor was certain that the choir, orchestra, and worshipers would become uncomfortable. Gillis wrote, “Philosophically, [the worship pastor] believes that he must maintain trust with the worshipers, to provide variety but not shot them or make them uncomfortable. While he realizes that comfort can lead to stagnancy, he also believes that a sense of comfort enables a person to release themselves in worship.”

In stark contrast to the previous statement, the worship pastor added in a minute of silence during the worship flow. He shared, “It’s the most awkward minute you will spend in your life… We hear life all around us, vehicles, train whistles, people coughing, and we hear uneasiness… It’s uncomfortable, but that’s the point. That’s the purpose, to make us uncomfortable.”

This silence was meant for confession time and the worship pastor saw the

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248 Ibid.


250 Ibid.
congregation adapt to this uneasiness.

In the worship pastor’s philosophy, following trends or becoming contemporary was “suicide.” 251 He stated the following:

I saw churches change and push their traditional service to an early hour, making their 11:00 be their contemporary service...Granted, senior adults are typically morning risers anyway, but...you just flip-flopped your paying customers...The truth is that the senior adults are the tithers...They sacrificed through the depression; they carried this church along, now you’re saying, “You’re just going to have to be pushed to the early morning because we want the main spot for the hippety-hop crowd.” I know why they do it. There are plenty of growth gurus out there who will tell you that the younger generation does not get up early... so flip- flop... But you still make them second class citizens... For us it would be suicide. 252

Believing that changing the traditional worship time to be disrespectful, the worship pastor was content not to change what he believed to be was constant, steady, and relevant. In his mind, there was no value in changing or chasing a moving target. 253 He believed the worship style was the identity of the church and made the point that there was a “real philosophical leadership issue” 254 when the church desired to catch up. He also likened the consistency of the traditional service to the eternal value of scripture, stating it to be a “cognitive dissonance.” 255 His argument was based on the ever-changing culture. He believed that if a church cannot find its own identity how will worshipers trust anything else that was said as “permanent.” 256

251 Ibid., 223.

252 Ibid.


254 Ibid.

255 Ibid.

256 Ibid., 223.
The transition to create a contemporary service at Highview Baptist Church was met with a shaky start. The leaders that were put in place were done so by the previous pastor and they all came from the traditional service with little to no contemporary worship skills. When the previous pastor left, it was discontinued by the worship pastor and the interim pastor. However, when the new pastor came, he reinstated the service and it was asked that the worship pastor be the leader in both venues. The worship pastor responded, “It ain’t my thing.” 257 Nevertheless, the service found success under a newly hired worship leader. Ultimately, the worship pastor “maintained his personal musical identity, preserved Highview’s traditional identity, and enabled the contemporary expression to develop its own unique character.” 258

Snape’s study reflected much on the leadership of the worship pastor and the philosophies and perspectives that were expressed in the decisions and transitions of each church. However, all churches that were noted underwent transitions due to the leadership of the senior pastor of that church. Snape wrote, “Although the ministers expressed their perspectives on worship, it is possible that their personal philosophy may or may not be fully implemented in the church’s chosen worship expression for at least two reasons. First... submission to the senior pastor’s vision for the church... Secondly, worship shaped by the needs, identity, and values of the congregation.” 259 All of the given accounts projected an honest assessment of the worship culture of each congregation. Even though the study noted a cultural demand and transitional necessity for modern worship environments, in some cases, the worship transition caused challenges, contrasting viewpoints, and mixed worship philosophies. Though the church

257 Ibid., 225.
258 Ibid., 226.
leadership challenged congregants to set aside their own desires and preferences to emphasize worship beyond the music, the common challenge was preference and comfortability.\textsuperscript{260}

Conclusion

The literature referenced in this chapter is part of historical and contemporary bodies of work that assessed the growing trend of charismatic worship forms in the United States. However, in spite of the growing body of literature addressing charismatic worship practices within corporate worship setting, there is a major gap in explaining some of the notable effects these practices have had on the evangelical church. In addition, the growing worship commonalities, denominational inclusions, and multicultural attractions that have been wrought from charismatic worship influences in the evangelical church have not yet been explored.

\textsuperscript{260} Ibid., 521.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Because of the lack of collective data concerning charismatic worship in the twenty-first century evangelical church in America, it is important to discover the common trends and trajectory for the coming generations of worship leadership. The purpose of this qualitative historical study is to examine the charismatic practices that have become the standard in many evangelical churches across America. These practices will engage church leaders and worship pastors to make foundational decisions and create a biblical worship theology and philosophy that can be implemented in congregations that hold to protestant, evangelical traditions. The purpose of this chapter is to explain the research construct and methodology used in organizing this qualitative historical study. In addition, this chapter is intended to address the specific research design that was applied to this study, as well as provide information regarding the process of gathering and interpreting the literature in an effort to answer the research questions.

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative historical design. Qualitative method is defined by Creswell as “a means for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. The process of research involves emerging questions and procedures; collecting data in the participants’ setting; analyzing the data inductively, building from particulars and general themes; and making interpretations of the meaning of the data.”\(^{261}\) This method will be utilized in measuring the influence and application of charismatic worship in the local evangelical church from existing literature.

A historical approach, defined by E. H. Carr as, “Historical research is a continuing dialogue, an endless exploration between generations of historians, between different interpretations of the significance of historical events, and between established opinions and challenges arising from new discoveries about the past”\(^{262}\) is also appropriate for this study. This approach will be helpful in understanding the charismatic movements throughout history and identifying the forms that are relevant in influencing the local evangelical church today.

The process for conducting this qualitative historical design began with identifying the fundamental problem. Once the problem was stated, research questions were formulated, and hypotheses were derived. Research data was then gathered, reviewed, and analyzed. In keeping with Creswell’s definition of a qualitative historical design, it was important that the data discovered was examined for validity, credibility, and applicability.\(^{263}\) Existing literature for historic discoveries and paradigm shifts in worship music, journal articles within the last twenty years that gave insight to the present day worship environments, dissertations that were applicable to relevant case studies, magazine writings, photographs of houses of worship in various stages of transition, live worship music videos, and live sermon videos that related to the study were utilized to examine validity, credibility, and applicability. This process of inspection guided the research to formulate conclusions. This process also uncovered the limitations to the study.


Research Questions

The primary research questions were:

RQ1: What are the characteristics of charismatic worship forms that have influenced the change in repertoire of some local evangelical churches in the 21st century in the United States?

RQ2: In what ways has charismatic worship forms influenced the worship environments as a whole in some local evangelical churches in the 21st century in the United States?

Hypotheses

The hypotheses for this study were:

H1: The characteristics of charismatic worship forms that have influenced the change in repertoire of the local evangelical church in the 21st century in the United States include outward expression, emotional engagement, and a renewed emphasis on the Holy Spirit in worship.

H2: Charismatic worship forms may influence the worship environments as a whole in some local evangelical churches in the 21st century in the United States in terms of modern stage designs, platform presence, and casual attire.

Case Study Analysis

In this qualitative research design, it was appropriate for the study to include case studies. As individual church worship environments are highly subjective and sometimes contentious in nature, utilizing a cross-case analysis of churches throughout the United States was able to give a snapshot of the local evangelical church and their worship practices. McMillian described case study as “an in-depth analysis of one or more events, settings, programs, social groups,
communities, individuals, or other bounded systems in their natural context.”

Useful data was obtained through utilizing case studies from previous thesis and dissertations. All of the case studies that were employed followed the guidelines laid out by Creswell as having verbal narratives gleaned from participant interviews and personal observations of the researcher.

Process of Gathering Data

This study began with examining biblical teachings concerning worship. Foundationally, when researching and studying worship, one must return to the original source. This study gathered biblical teachings and examples of worship from the Old and New Testament. Research clearly stated at the heart of charismatic worship is a desire to return to biblical worship. The biblical vetting uncovered the validity of this statement. Worship practices from the Bible were clearly identifiable and led to a better understanding of charismatic influence. In addition, the research of this study discovered case studies that witnessed worship practices and transitions in evangelical churches and worship practices from charismatic churches in the United States. In this way, the study compared and contrasted the different forms that are significant in both settings of various locations. Research from available books, articles, and magazines, in the area of charismatic, contemporary, blended, reformed, and traditional worship helped measure the influences in a local evangelical church.

The examination of church worship cultures in various churches demonstrated the potential to educate a great deal about the identity of worship today and for years to come. Research was essential in discovering the next phase of evangelical worship in the United States.

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Even though explanatory information is available, the lack of research in determining why evangelical churches are engaging charismatic worship is deficient. This historical qualitative study allowed exploration of common worship themes and can bring worship cultures and church leaders into a better understanding of worship trends and paradigm shifts.
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Chapter four presents the findings of research conducted to identify the effects of charismatic worship forms on the evangelical church in the 21st century in the United States. Addressing the first research question and hypothesis, explanations were given concerning the characteristics of charismatic worship forms that have influenced change in the worship music repertoire of the local evangelical church. Three themes emerged throughout the research including outward expression, emotional engagement, and a renewed emphasis on the Holy Spirit in worship. Likewise, in an effort to address the second research question and hypothesis, findings pertained to charismatic worship forms that may influence the worship environments, as a whole. The themes addressed in question two specifically considered modern stage designs, platform presence, and casual attire. These research findings are presented and discussed.

Influential Charismatic Worship Forms: Music Repertoire

Findings from the study supported themes related to the first hypothesis. Question one desired to discover the change in music repertoire because of the influence of charismatic worship. Worship music has changed in the local evangelical church. More specifically, contemporary praise and worship music has changed the landscape of congregational worship. Spawned by the charismatic movements in the mid to late twentieth century, this major influencer of the church has taken new ground in the last twenty years. The research confirmed that when a church decides to change from traditional to contemporary or charismatic, worship music is the first, if not the only, shift or transition made. In many evangelical churches, the conversation of worship style is one of the most controversial topics to address. However, many traditional evangelical churches have forged their way through the Worship Wars and have made

266 Tom Kraeuter, Guiding Your Church Through a Worship Transition, 37.
the cultural shift for the future and growth of their congregations. Change for the sake of change is never the answer. There are still some evangelical congregations in America that hold fast to their traditional worship model and are thriving. Style is open and flexible and relative to each culture, generation, and preference. However, the vast majority of the young adult culture in the United States did not find traditional worship relevant or applicable to their practice of worship. Because of the surge in streaming services and digitally available downloads, music groups and charismatic houses of worship like Hillsong, Bethel, and Elevation, are leading the forefront of Christian worship listenings and presentation.

Outward Expression

According to research findings, there were three characteristics of charismatic worship forms that have influenced change in the worship music repertoire in the local evangelical church. Outward expression was the first characteristic. It is important to note that outward expressions are not limited to a song style or even music in general. Biblically speaking, outward expressions have been a part of the believer’s worship to God since the beginning of the Old Testament. Nevertheless, praise and worship music in the church today has the ability to encourage certain outward expressions not easily boosted by traditional songs. Modern instrumentation, such as drums, guitars, and keyboards are utilized to encourage styles like rock, gospel, hip hop, and jazz to add a new and fresh arrangement to music that is in the language of this generation. The desired effect is to lead people into authentic expressions of worship.

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267 Robert E. Webber, *Worship Old and New*, 263.


common phrase that was used in encouraging outward expression is “worship is not a spectator sport.” Although this is true, the act of being expressive in worship is not the end goal. The encouragement of outward expression is the desire to be fully engaged. With heart, mind, and strength, God is glorified and free to move in the midst of the people.

There are nine different expressions articulated in scripture that are highly endorsed by charismatic worship music. The first three are from the spoken voice. The first expression is speaking. Psalm 34:1 says, “I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.” The second expression is shouting. Psalm 27:6 says, “Then my head will be exalted above the enemies who surround me; at his tabernacle will I sacrifice with shouts of joy; I will sing and make music to the Lord.” The third expression is singing. Psalm 47:6 says, “Sing praises to God, sing praises to our King, sing praises.” The next three expressions denote posture. The first expression is bowing. Psalm 95:6 says, “Come let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our maker.” The second expression is standing. Psalm 119:120 says, “My flesh trembles in fear of you; I stand in awe of your laws.” The third expression is dancing. Psalm 149:3 says, “Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with tambourine and harp.” The next three expressions are shown by the use of hands. The first expression is playing instruments. Psalm 33:2 says, Praise the Lord with the harp; make music to him and the ten-stringed lyre. Sing to him a new song; play skillfully, and shout for joy.” The second expression is clapping. Psalm 47:1 says, “Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy.” The third expression is lifting hands. Psalm 63:4 says, “I will praise you as long as I live, and in

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271 Ibid., 126.

272 Ibid.

your name, I will lift up my hands.” These expressions were used by David to demonstrate the desire to use his whole being in worship. Although they were used millennia ago, these expressions are not foreign to the current culture, and especially the worship culture.274

Research indicated that some evangelical churches have stiff-armed these expressions in the past.275 However, over the last twenty to thirty years, outward expressions in worship have become much more common in the local church. Jack Hayford acknowledged, “We’re a far more expressive society than thirty years ago... Along the way, many churches have also become more expressive, displaying more openly their joy and praise.”276 Many worship videos online corroborate Hayford’s acknowledgement; especially in the expressions of Elevation Church, Bethel, and Hillsong. In many of their worship videos, the platforms are electrified with expressive behavior. One reason for this is to strongly encourage the assembly to join in congregationally to the desired expression. The worship leaders have, in some respect, become passionate cheerleaders to help encourage the congregation to join in the expression.277 In viewing a worship video by Elevation of the song “Graves into Gardens,” there is a clear platform presence that seeks to encourage and involve the whole church. What is seen is a full platform with band, worship singers, and an expressive choir. From the start of the song, there is cheering, singing, hands raised, dancing, jumping, and shouting.278 The music of the song

274 Newman, “Nine Expressions of Worship.”


276 Ibid.


strongly encourages clapping and dancing, and the range of the song tends to encourage a timbre
of shouting and unison singing, mimicking a war cry. Many charismatic worship songs have a
characteristic to lead to these similar expressive responses. In Bethel Music’s “Raise a
Hallelujah,” a similar response is encouraged.\textsuperscript{279} This song even adds a type of call and response
in the lyrics, a prompt for the congregation to join in stronger and “louder.” In keeping with this
type of expression in worship, Hillsong, for years, has continued to set the bar for platform
expression. In a concert setting in 2012, an attender of a Hillsong United worship event could
observe a “worship leader” on platform that had the purpose of excitement.\textsuperscript{280} The gentleman
seen in that setting did very little singing. If fact, he mainly jumped around the stage and shouted
edifications throughout the event. This has not alleviated all concerns for some evangelical
gatherings. Not everyone is comfortable expressing worship outwardly.\textsuperscript{281} The apprehension is
that some expressions will lead to unseemly behavior. Hayford suggests that a way to encourage
outward expressions in worship is to be reminded of the purpose of it. Engaging expressions for
the sake of engaging expressions is counterintuitive. The goal is for God to display His glory and
for His glory to be the focus in worship. If God’s glory and his Spirit is quenched because of
over expression in corporate worship, then it is not productive to the worship environment.
Nevertheless, outward expressions in worship continue to be encouraged in many evangelical
churches.

\textsuperscript{279} Johnathan and Melissa Helser, “Raise a Hallelujah (music video).” YouTube, January 3, 2019.

\textsuperscript{280} Hillsong UNITED. “Relentless (music video).” YouTube, April 10, 2013.

\textsuperscript{281} Jack Hayford, “Expressive Worship with Reluctant People,” Christianity Today,
Emotional Engagement

Music in and of itself has the ability to draw the listener to emotion.\(^{282}\) An article by the Gospel Coalition stated, “The fact that music and singing have a profound ability to both impact and express human emotion will not come as a surprise to many. Common experience confirms the connection, as does the biblical witness. ‘Is anyone cheerful?’ writes James. ‘Let him sing songs of praise’ (James 5:13 ESV).”\(^{283}\) Emotion is also a common theme in charismatic worship environments. Because of the types of songs that these experiences tend to use, it is no surprise that emotion accompanies outward expression, all spurred by the charismatic music repertoire. The charismatic experience is never void of emotional responses. Music and lyrics are the language that is commonly used to stimulate some emotions. According to Jack Hayford, worship music and the emotional connection to it encourages four things. First, it personalizes praise.\(^{284}\) If a worshiper can relate a song to their personal life and testimony, it has the ability to become more meaningful and heartfelt. Second, emotions in singing can help verbalize thoughts.\(^{285}\) Worshipers ought to express love for God. Love is an intimate word, and some charismatic worship songs have the ability to express that level of emotion. A new lyric and song tune can allow the worshiper’s heart to experience a different level of praise not otherwise engaged. Third, emotions can lead to outward expression and mobilization of a worshiper’s


\(^{285}\) Ibid.
body. Simple symbols of bodily expressions, prompted by emotions, can enhance the worship language and create a freedom in worship. Last, emotions in worship open worshiper’s hearts to the people around them. The act of singing together, raising hands together, or praying out loud together can unleash a sense of connectedness in the body of Christ that raises the level of awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit in a worshipful environment.

Many evangelical leaders have begun to equip their congregants with some of the songs that invite emotional responses. However, some church leaders recognize extremes when it comes to emotions in worship. Zac Hicks, a writer for “Doxology and Theology,” asserted, “Emotions in worship are a touchy subject. They’re touchy because, first, worship is often intensely emotional, and, second, many of us have had unpleasant experiences with leaders who have abused that reality.” He offers two extremes, and both are unhealthy and unbiblical for congregational worship. Some evangelicals tend to not encourage emotion in worship because it can lead to manipulation. The common theme in these environments is the prompting of a worship leader or pastor to try and make the congregation “feel” something. This can lead to emotionalism and thus encourage the worshiper to focus on the emotion rather than on God. The second extreme is emotional avoidance. Often a reaction to the first extreme, worship settings that promote emotionless worship commonly emphasize reverence, fear, respect, and devotion.

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286 Jack Hayford, “Expressive Worship with Reluctant People.”


288 Ibid.

289 Zack Hicks, “Thinking About Emotions in Worship.”
As stated early in the research, there are extremes to every worship practice. However, emotions are a good, vital part of what God has created in the human being. If believers are to love God with heart, soul, mind, and strength this would include the senses, the ability to emote, and to do so in worship gatherings. The right emotions in the right setting with a focused heart on the gospel and the movement of the Holy Spirit is the sound formula for all evangelicals in worship. According to Hicks, it takes church leaders shepherding their flock to understand the right balance.

The current charismatic worship song list is filled with songs that have the ability to lead the worshiper to a level of emotion and expression. Looking at the current top 20 on Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI), it is clear that songwriters today utilize worship lyrics to capture the heart (emotions) of the worshiper. Many of these lyrics praise God for Who He is and what He has done; however, the lyrics also remind the worshiper of who they are in Him. The lyrics lead the worshiper to feel accepted, valued, loved, and recognized. For instance, one of the most popular songs in the church during the time of this study is “Way Maker.” Written by a journalist named Sinach, the song captures the never-ending abilities of God, and that miracles are, in part, for the believer. A portion of the lyrics are as follows:

VERSE 1
You are here, moving in our midst. I worship You. I worship You.
You are here, working in this place. I worship You. I worship You.

CHORUS
You are Way maker, miracle worker,
promise keeper, light in the darkness
My God, that is who You are.

BRIDGE

\[290\] Ibid.

\[291\] Ibid.
Even when I don't see it, You're working.
Even when I don't feel it, You're working.\textsuperscript{292}

This song, in particular, brings several charismatic themes to the worshiper’s expression. First, the verses conclude that God’s presence is tangible, restoring, healing, and performing miracles. The song also reminds the worshiper of Who God is. The chorus declares “You are Way Maker, Miracle Worker, Promise Keeper, Light in the darkness.” The declaration in the lyric of the song allows the worshiper to engage in adoration as well as be reminded of the awesome power of God. Finally, in this particular song, the bridge is a reminder to the worshiper that God is not susceptible to time, space, or calendar. The lyrics encourage the worshiper to trust God and to remember that He is always “working for our good.”\textsuperscript{293}

Another example of a contemporary, charismatic worship song that desires to evoke emotions through its lyrics is the widely popular, yet controversial, song “Reckless Love.” Written by Cory Asbury, one of the worship leaders from Bethel Church, the song came under heavy scrutiny for the use of the word “reckless” in reference to an attribute of love from a perfect God.\textsuperscript{294} Asbury’s response is noted:

Many have asked me for clarity on the phrase, “reckless love”. Many have wondered why I’d use a “negative” word to describe God… When I use the phrase, “the reckless love of God”, I’m not saying that God Himself is reckless. I am, however, saying that the way He loves, is in many regards, quite so. What I mean is this: He is utterly unconcerned with the consequences of His actions with regards to His own safety, comfort, and well-being. His love isn’t crafty or slick. It’s not cunning or shrewd… He simply gives Himself away on the off-chance that one of us might look back at Him and offer ourselves in return. His love leaves the ninety-nine to find the one every time. There’s no “Plan B” with the love of God.


\textsuperscript{293} Romans 8:28.

He gives His heart so completely, so preposterously, that if refused, most would consider it irreparably broken. Yet He gives Himself away again.  

Despite how some evangelical churches view the reasoning and response to the widely popular song, it is one of the most influential songs of this millennia to date.  

Taken from the theme of the parable of the lost sheep that Jesus taught in Matthew 18, some of the lyrics read:

CHORUS  
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God  
Oh, it chases me down, fights 'til I'm found, leaves the ninety-nine  
I couldn't earn it, I don't deserve it, still, You give Yourself away  
Oh, the overwhelming, never-ending, reckless love of God.

BRIDGE  
There's no shadow You won't light up  
Mountain You won't climb up  
Coming after me  
There's no wall You won't kick down  
Lie You won't tear down  
Coming after me  

The writer desires for the worshiper to emotionally connect with God by focusing on the reality that nothing can stop God’s love for mankind, even as undesirable as one may be. Musically culminating at the bridge, the song builds with energy and declaration with a sense of awe and wonder as the worshiper is led to consider the unmatched love of God, the cross, the sacrifice of Christ to draw the worshiper back to relationship, and the biblical account of Jesus’ parable.

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295 https://www.facebook.com/coryasburymusic/posts/many-have-asked-me-for-clarity-on-the-phrase-reckless-love-many-have-wondered-wh/10158977378510171/  


Emotions in worship are not new. In fact, in many evangelical churches, they are encouraged. It can be seen through “aesthetic ambiance”\textsuperscript{298} that is used in musical settings, arrangements, lighting, sound, and countenance.\textsuperscript{299} Many charismatic and contemporary songs, in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, are fueled by this desire. The lyrics of “Reckless Love” and “Way Maker” conform the desire to aid in enhancing the worship environment to spur a deeper level of emotions in the contemporary worship setting.

A primary factor for the success of a transition from traditional to charismatic is realized in the way the church leaders shepherd their churches through the transition. Zac Hicks wrote:

One of the keys to emotional shepherding in worship is found in “tethering” emotional experiences to the narrative of the gospel. The gospel tells the story of the glory of God, the gravity of our sin, and the grace of our Savior. Worship should faithfully tell that story in both its content and its structure. But then we can ask the question about what kinds of emotions would be appropriate to experience at various points in that story. And then we aim our aesthetic tools in that direction. In other words, we attempt to tether the right emotions to the appropriate liturgical moments.\textsuperscript{300}

Emotions in worship can be a complex subject in many churches. However, studies confirm that the current younger generations have a tendency to accept how they feel about a subject just as strongly as how they think about a subject.\textsuperscript{301} Therefore, it is legitimate to assert that worship song writers in the charismatic, contemporary genre understand the culture of worshipers and the emotions that speak to their understanding of God, His presence, and His glory.

Renewed Emphasis on the Holy Spirit

\textsuperscript{298} Zack Hicks, “Thinking About Emotions in Worship.”

\textsuperscript{299} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{300} Ibid.

While contemporary worship music is a catalyst for charismatic worship environments, one cannot assume that just because contemporary music is played that an emphasis on the Holy Spirit in worship is understood. Don Williams claimed, “My clear bias is that contemporary worship is a way station on the road to experiencing the fullness of the Spirit… for the whole congregation.” The research in several of the case studies viewed in this study showed the desire for cultural diversity and the goal to reach younger generations with contemporary music. However, it is not the music in itself that will lead to spirit-filled worship environments. This study also showed that changing the worship music repertoire cannot be the only transition when trying to adapt to charismatic worship environments. A.W. Tozer wrote:

A doctrine has practical value only as far as it is prominent in our thoughts and makes a difference in our lives. By this test the doctrine of the Holy Spirit as held by evangelical Christians today has almost no practical value at all. In most Christian churches the Spirit is quite entirely overlooked. Whether he is present or absent makes no real difference to anyone… So complexly do we ignore Him that it is only by courtesy that we can be called Trinitarian. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity boldly declares the equality of the Three Persons and the right of the Holy Spirit to be worshiped and glorified. Anything less than this is something less than Trinitarian.

The major theme of charismatic worship is to restore the Holy Spirit to the corporate environment. In some evangelical churches, the dominant transition to charismatic worship came from musical selection. The amount of songs from the charismatic and contemporary worship movement that speak about, pray to, invite, or desire to be with the Holy Spirit is overwhelming. CCLI noted that there are 2,403 songs in the SongSelect catalogue that are themed around the Holy Spirit. Some of the most commonly known songs that are sung with

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303 Ibid., 145.

304 Ibid.

an emphasis on the Holy Spirit are “Holy Spirit” by Jesus Culture, “Spirit of the Living God” by Vertical Worship, “Let the Heavens Open” by Kari Jobe, “Spirit Move” by Bethel Music, “Here as in Heaven” by Elevation Worship, and “Fullness” by Elevation Worship.\textsuperscript{306} This list is not exhaustive, but it does give a sense of the importance of this theme in charismatic worship environments. Two of the most popular are “Holy Spirit” and “Fullness.” The lyrics that point to the emphasis of the Holy Spirit is apparent. In the song “Holy Spirit,” the end of each verse calls for “Your presence, Lord.” The chorus invites the presence of God as it exclaims, “Holy Spirit, You are welcome here.” Finally, the bridge calls the worshiper to “become more aware” of the presence of the Lord. Similarly, the song “Fullness” invites the presence of God through the Holy Spirit. At the end of each verse, the lyrics state, “Spirit come, Spirit come.” This song also addresses the blessings of God accompanied with the dwelling of His presence in worship. In the chorus, the line reads, “Pour it out, let Your love run over. Here and now, let Your glory fill this house.” Some evangelicals take issue with this song because of the lyrics in the bridge. It states, “Tongues of fire,” referring to Pentecost, “testifying of the Son. One desire, Spirit come, Spirit come. Speak revival, prophesy like it is done. One desire, Spirit come, Spirit come.” Many evangelicals hold to the teaching that God has said all that is needed for the believer through His Word. Therefore, the idea of the Holy Spirit “prophesying” is irrelevant for the New Testament church.\textsuperscript{307}

With this transition to some of the more modern worship songs that find their home in the houses of Bethel, Hillsong, or Elevation, evangelical leaders cannot assume that the same emphasis on the Holy Spirit in the corporate worship setting will be ushered in with the sound of

\textsuperscript{306} Ibid.

the melody or the lyrics that are being sung. On the contrary, there must be a revised worship theology and philosophy that is added to the doctrine in worship, preaching, and expression. Church congregants that have not experienced the free moving of the Holy Spirit in worship gatherings must be reminded or even taught about this doctrine.

The evidence to this reality is that some evangelicals have branched out beyond their familiar denominations and found non-denominational churches that have understood the theological practice noted above.308 In order to emphasize this point, Brett McCracken noted, “[Francis] Chan believes many evangelical churches neglect the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and, out of fear of abuses or unwieldy emotionalism, come close to what Paul warns against in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-20: ‘Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt’.”309 Furthermore, in a study conducted by Barna Research Group, Barna acknowledged that only one-third of surveyed church goers felt that they frequently experienced the presence of God or interact with Him at church.310 The theological discrepancy between speaking in tongues for the apostolic age or the continuation of the practice for the church today has driven a very wide wedge in the evangelical church. However, every evangelical must biblically believe in the continued work of the Holy Spirit in the local church today. When this is agreed upon, the amount of focus the church puts on the activity of the Triune God in worship is invaluable.

The main themes associated with the influence of charismatic worship forms concerning worship music repertoire are outward expression, emotional engagement, and a renewed

308 Shellnutt, “Southern Baptists See Biggest Drop in 100 Years.”
emphasis on the Holy Spirit in corporate worship. Research findings of this study indicate that these themes are relevant in charismatic influence in the local evangelical church in the 21st century in America. As stated, contemporary and charismatic music has changed the landscape of worship in the local, evangelical church. The noted songs, practices, and engagements have proven that the charismatic influences have started to shape the worship theologies in evangelical churches more than ever before.

Influential Charismatic Worship Forms: Environments

In evangelical churches, music transitions are sometimes accompanied by environmental changes. These changes range from sound equipment, screens, projectors, LED walls, intelligent lighting, stage design, interior décor, worship leadership, stage communicators, and casual attire. There is no research that can confirm that changing a stage design or limiting the stage to a younger generation or well-spoken leaders will enhance the Holy Spirit’s movement in corporate worship gatherings. What the research does indicate is that the majority of the younger culture, Gen Z and Millennials, found these settings more comfortable and felt as though it addressed them at their level. However, upon further study, Barna indicated that it is not the casual environment or the aesthetics that continue to draw the younger generations back to worship. In fact, it is community and authenticity. What the study revealed was that the worship environment is not the main priority for younger generations. Conversely, personal worship, speakers that can connect on their level, small groups or community groups, and varieties of

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online places like podcasts and social media were found to be of utmost importance to the Millennial generation.\textsuperscript{313}

Media and Technology

Twenty-first century America is a technologically advanced nation. Computers, email, texts, smartphones, tablets, and social media, in many ways, define our culture.\textsuperscript{314} Just as these elements have impacted many lives, they have also impacted the church. Every generation brings new advances to the worship environment of the church.\textsuperscript{315} Technology is so vast that it is highly improbable that the local church can keep up with it annually, nor should it try. Just like emotionalism, theologically vetted lyrics, or manipulation in worship, it can be technology that robs the focus of worship and steal the glory from God. Page and Gray wrote, “Just as speakers or musicians frame the content of their sermons or songs within the context of their personal beliefs and preferences, particular applications of technology shape and influence how people perceive the message delivered through a specific medium. In our effort to creatively engage our culture, we must be careful the mode of delivery does not mask the message.”\textsuperscript{316}

Technology, in many evangelical churches, is utilized whether or not the congregation is leaning more contemporary or charismatic. Likewise, there are churches that lean more contemporary and charismatic in their worship that do not take full advantage of the technology that is available to them. There was evidence of both of these scenarios within the research. In one traditional environment, screens and projectors were utilized during the service. Even though hymnals were offered, no one seemed to take notice of the books at the entrance of the

\textsuperscript{312} Smith, “Millennials Flocking to Non-conventional Churches.”

\textsuperscript{314} Page and Gray, Hungry for Worship, 157.

\textsuperscript{315} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{316} Ibid., 158.
sanctuary.\textsuperscript{317} Also, in the same setting but different service, the technical team used as much lighting as they could to set the atmosphere for a contemporary feel. However, the traditional sanctuary was still the meeting ground for worship. There are also popular worship cultures, that are charismatic and contemporary in repertoire, that do not put a lot of emphasis on state of the art, contemporary, and technologically focused stage designs. Although they have recently added an LED wall to their stage, Harvest Bible Chapel in Elgin, IL, just outside of Chicago and home of Vertical Worship, does not take the approach to dark stage designs, lower house lights, or extreme lighting productions.\textsuperscript{318} Their music is a part of the leading charismatic trends; however, it appears that their focus is not stage design, production, or using either to attract congregants to their weekend worship services.

Over the past twenty years, production companies have realized the trend of technological upgrades within the church. Now, many companies have combined complete audio, video, and lighting (AVL) into an all-inclusive upgrade package that includes contemporary stage designs. One of the most prominent companies to take advantage of this trend is Paragon 360. Their slogan is “designing and building engaging environments.”\textsuperscript{319} Early in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century, one of the first notable churches to take advantage of this upgrade was Prestonwood Baptist Church in Plano, TX. Prior to 2008, Prestonwood’s stage design was a traditional design including grand piano, orchestra, wood paneling, carpeted floor, robed singers in the choir loft, and a traditional pulpit.\textsuperscript{320} However, after an AVL overhaul the stage turned

\textsuperscript{317} Bowles, “A Case Study Analysis of the Process of Worship Change,” 172.


more to the contemporary stage design. Along with their change in worship music, their stage and platform design became the flagship for many evangelical churches to strategically change their styles, both in music and environment. Because of Prestonwood's influence in the traditional evangelical community, evangelical churches desired to be as influential as the Dallas megachurch. Their online presence created a platform for other churches to see their style, upgrades, and lighting designs. In the past five years, Prestonwood has redesigned their stage again, taking advantage of LED walls, panels, and black stage pieces in order to highlight the walls, panels, and intelligent lighting.

Prestonwood Baptist Church, 1999

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Research indicates that technology is trending. As the world advances in this field, the church will as well. However, as it applies to the influence of charismatic worship practices in the evangelical church, technology is preferential, cultural, and nonessential. In a study by Barna, when asked what was important to the young generation in finding a church, the majority of millennials answered with three words: community, classic, and casual.\textsuperscript{322} In 2016, The “Washington Post” interviewed 1,300 young adults from ages 15-29. The Post wrote, “So many churches pour money and energy into flashy worship services meant to make teenagers and

\textsuperscript{322} Barna, “Designing Worship Spaces with Millennials in Mind.”
young adults think that church is cool. But it turns out cool isn’t what young people want. Forget the rock-band vibe and the flashing lights. *Warm* is the new cool.³²³ As trendy as technology has become in the United States, young adults do not consider it to be a primary factor in the worship atmosphere that draws them to a particular congregation.

Medium-sized churches have also taken advantage of the new technologies provided. Four churches researched made it clear that their desire is to develop a new experience and enhance their worship through platform upgrades.³²⁴ The desire is to add vibrancy and color to what can seem to be a dull, poorly lit, and old-fashioned design. Some of the churches included in this research were Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Dothan, AL; First Baptist Church Naples, Naples, FL; Grand Avenue Baptist Church, Fort Smith, AR; and First Baptist Church, Muskogee, OK. All four churches took full advantage of LED lighting, HD screen projection, and updated staging.³²⁵

![Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Dothan, AL – Updated in 2017](image)


³²⁴ Paragon360, “Projects.”

³²⁵ Ibid.
One of the characteristics of charismatic worship is a focus on the experience. In this way, some evangelicals have changed their stage designs to focus on the experience as well.\textsuperscript{326} Lighting, projection, and the design of the platform can have an incredible ability to enhance the worship. However, if done improperly, it can also be a distraction. Mark Logan, writer for “Renewing Worship” wrote:

\textit{As an example, let’s look at “Nothing but the Blood.” This song is timeless, and powerful, and true. It stands perfectly well on its own. I can remember two specific times when we

sang this hymn at conferences with very sophisticated lighting schemes. One place had rapidly moving laser lights, big washes, and bright spots in random locations. It was very, very cool. And it was very, very distracting. At a different conference, there were no dancing laser lights... All there was, primarily, was a massive wash of red lights all over the stage. A sea of red. And during this song about the blood of Jesus shed for our sins, seeing this wash of red visually enhanced this time of worship. Not only was I singing about the blood, but I was visualizing the blood of Christ washing over everything. It was very simple, but it was extremely impactful.\textsuperscript{327}

The American young person’s attention span has become shorter, likely to do with the amount of visual stimulation one experiences through television, video games, movies, and lights.\textsuperscript{328} Therefore, many find it appropriate to incorporate enhanced technology to add to the sensory palate in worship environments. This relates to the overall experience in worship.

Platform Presence and Stage Communicators

Many non-denominational and charismatic churches have found their popularity in a well-known stage communicator or pastor that preaches most worship services for that church. Some of the most common names affiliated with this type of growth are Steven Furtick, Andy Stanley, Ed Young, Jr., Francis Chan, Tony Evans, and Rick Warren.\textsuperscript{329} Despite differing beliefs on theological matters between the above pastors, one thing is common to their success: they have figured out how to communicate effectively to their congregation.\textsuperscript{330} In his article, Carey Nieuwhof explained that charismatic churches experience growth because people desire

\textsuperscript{327} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{330} Nieuwhof, “5 Reasons Charismatic Churches Are Growing.”
transformation over information.\textsuperscript{331} In other words, successful stage communicators have found a balance between sharing information and moving people to an authentic relationship with Jesus. With both the digital explosion and the cynicism of our age, people are hungry for a transcendent touch. As stated before, people are hungry for true community, deeper experiences, authentic transcendence, and the pastor that knows how to communicate with these goals in mind tend to be leaders of growing churches.

The pastors noted above do not commonly share the same denomination. Some have even removed the denomination affiliation from their church name to attract and become more inclusive. Elevation Church, led by Steven Furtick, is fundamentally a Southern Baptist Church yet carries a charismatic culture within worship gatherings. Fellowship Church, led by Ed Young, Jr., started as First Baptist Church, Irving TX before changing its name to become “seeker friendly.”\textsuperscript{332} North Point Community Church, led by Andy Stanley, started as a non-denominational church, although their core beliefs mirror that of Baptists.\textsuperscript{333} They are contemporary and charismatic in their approach to weekly worship. Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship, led by Tony Evans, is also a non-denominational church and their worship style is a mixture of contemporary and traditional.\textsuperscript{334} The study of these megachurches indicated commonalities. First, a good communicator that can connect with his or her congregation will have success in

\textsuperscript{331} Ibid.


numerical growth. Second, denominational affiliation is not a deciding factor for numerical growth; however, stage communicators that have growing churches tend towards charismatic or expressive worship. The common themes of successful church platform communicators tend to have more emotional delivery in preaching, open to the work and activity of the Holy Spirit, and are generally warmer, more enthusiastic and expressive.335

However, even though these speakers do convey similarities in their delivery, the way they connect with a congregation is vastly different. For instance, Steven Furtick is known to assist in singing and writing worship songs, using louder volume when he speaks to create reaction and energy from the Elevation Church congregation, and is known to move around not only the platform but will move throughout the auditorium. Andy Stanley, on the other hand, is much calmer in his approach. His speaking focuses on the main point and connecting the congregation to that one idea. Stanley wrote, “If you give people too much to remember, they won’t remember anything.”336 One of the most dynamic voices in the evangelical community is Ed Young Jr. Much of his approach to the platform is similar to Andy Stanley, yet their voices are very different. Tony Evans’ approach to communication is between Furtick and Stanley in style. He moves around some, raises his volume level, and tells compelling stories to connect to the Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship congregation.337 What this shows is that a good stage communicator knows how to connect with his or her congregation. Along with good stories, dynamic voices, and compelling content, stage communicators know their congregations and the congregations know what to expect from their communicators. Some of the driving forces in

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335 Nieuwhof, “5 Reasons Charismatic Churches Are Growing.”

336 Stanley, “Communicating for Change.”

charismatic worship environments is the connection between those that lead worship from the platform and those that are worshiping from the seats or pews.

Research showed that the art of good stage presence is essential to connecting with today’s generation.\textsuperscript{338} It is a standard and indispensable communication skill and for some it comes easily.\textsuperscript{339} Hiring and training good stage communicators accompanied the transition from traditional evangelical church to charismatic evangelical church. Research for this section found that stage communication was essential for a growing church; however, it did not show that it is unilaterally connected to the charismatic movement. Many charismatic environments have wonderful stage communicators, as mentioned above; however, there are traditional worship environments that have brilliant stage communicators and are growing and thriving as well. Charismatic communication is not necessarily connected with charismatic worship environments.

Summary

The findings demonstrated conclusions to the presented hypotheses. In the first hypothesis, the research sought to determine if, in fact, evangelical worship music repertoire has been influenced by the charismatic movement in the twenty-first century. The findings report that it has a noteworthy impact on worship music repertoire to achieve outward expression, emotional engagement, and a renewed emphasis on the Holy Spirit in worship. The findings also concluded that the second hypothesis was also accurate in determining that worship environments have changed as influenced by the progressive charismatic persuasion. However, the findings did not


\textsuperscript{339} Ibid.
show that all evangelical churches that are influenced in worship music repertoire find it necessary to embrace the progressive stage designs and environments that others deem important or essential. In addition, platform presence and stage communicators were not specific to either traditional evangelicals or charismatics. Therefore, the second hypothesis was partially supported by the findings in this study.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter will present a brief summary of the study and will include an overview of its purpose and procedure. Also included in this chapter will be a brief discussion of the study’s findings. Furthermore, the chapter will include discussions concerning the relationship between the findings and the research provided, as well as considerations of limitations, further study, and conclusions as to how charismatic worship forms have influenced the evangelical church in the 21st century in the United States.

Summary of Findings

The twenty-first century has witnessed rapid growth of Pentecostalism globally. So much so that nearly five hundred million – nearly one quarter of the world’s Christians – identify as charismatic worshipers; the movement shows no signs of stopping. This historical study revealed that the most consistent features of charismatic worship that have influenced evangelical churches are identified as diverse, yet recognizable, outward expressions in corporate worship and music making in the form of praise and worship. The major influences of these practices have moved across denominational lines through mass media as songs from influential charismatic churches make their way into the evangelical community. With the aid of the praise and worship movement, evangelical churches all over the United States have had to decide what kind of worship methodology, philosophy, and theology they will communicate to their people, and if a decision to change the worship culture is valuable enough for the future of their

\[\text{340} \text{ Ingalls and Yong, } The \text{ Spirit of Praise, } 1.\]

\[\text{341} \text{ Ibid.}\]
worshipers. Because of the choices that autonomous churches have made over the last twenty years, worship has become much more diversified in the evangelical community.\textsuperscript{342}

Studies have also found that the culture today is hungry for authenticity. The Millennial generation, that is the current young adult population from 25-39 years of age, desire to be around authentic people in all aspects of their lives.\textsuperscript{343} With the explosion of social media and the influence of Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, the generation today can learn more about a boss, an employee, a pastor, a worship leader, or business well before ever meeting them face to face. Because of this critical nature and instant information, self-portrayal must match up both online and offline.\textsuperscript{344} Therefore, the level of authenticity in worship expression must match with the heart of the worshiper. Likewise, the theology of worship that is taught to the congregation must match with the verbal, musical, and experiential outcomes of worship practices.

Research also indicated that there is historical evidence and validity that makes charismatic worship forms more than a trend or a fad. The exponential growth of the charismatic movement has ushered in an entirely new era of Christian worship. It is unavoidable for evangelical churches to dismiss. In 2012, it was stated that nearly fifty percent of Protestants have at least some affiliation with the charismatic renewal.\textsuperscript{345} Eight years later, the percentage is even higher. Because of the addition of the “Third Wave” (a non-Pentecostal charismatic movement) that allowed charismatic gifts of the Spirit to be a sign of salvation rather than a

\textsuperscript{342} Towns and Whaley, \textit{Worship Through the Ages}, 356.


\textsuperscript{344} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{345} Towns and Whaley, 359.
requirement for salvation, namely glossolalia, there is a growing energy in charismatic worship expression and non-denominational churches that adhere to this theological understanding.\textsuperscript{346}

Barna concluded:

\begin{quote}
We are moving toward a future in which the charismatic-fundamentalist split will be an historical footnote rather than a dividing line within the body of believers. Young Christians, in particular, have little energy for the arguments that have traditionally separated charismatics and non-charismatics. Increasing numbers of people are recognizing that there are more significant arenas in which to invest their resources.\textsuperscript{347}
\end{quote}

Over forty percent of non-denominational churches claim to be charismatic; seven percent of Southern Baptist Churches and six percent of mainline protestant churches are charismatic.\textsuperscript{348}

Although there are still theological differences between the charismatic and mainline protestant churches, the differences become more secondary and even tertiary in theological importance for many believers who desire to worship expressively.

One of the major reasons for embracing the charismatic movement in the evangelical church is the desire for numerical and spiritual growth. As mentioned in previous chapters, the charismatic hermeneutic is to embrace all people groups and the marginalized. The body of Christ is made up of people from all tribes; therefore, to be culturally current is to welcome multiethnic and multicultural diversity. Don Williams wrote:

\begin{quote}
To open to fresh moves of the Spirit and the full gifting and participation of the body of Christ is to leave pulpit-centered, altar-centered, controlled worship. Our unity is not our uniformity. Paul calls us not to create unity in the body by adopting one culture or approach to worship, but to maintain the unity of the Spirit already given. All things must be subject to the authority of God’s Word and the life of the Spirit. For Protestants, the church is to be continually reformed and reforming.\textsuperscript{349}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{348} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{349} Paul Basden, \textit{The Worship Spectrum}, 47.
For the evangelical tradition, the findings are clear that there is a greater sensitivity to adapting worship to the surrounding culture.\textsuperscript{350}

Finally, the findings show that in the transitions of evangelical churches to more charismatic worship environments, there is a major emphasis on the Holy Spirit in worship. Traditional, fundamental evangelical churches, for decades, desired to put an emphasis solely on the Word of God as the basis for worship. However, within the last twenty years, many evangelical churches have some to admire the benefits of Holy Spirit driven worship in corporate settings. One of the major findings in this study discovered the longing that corporate worship participants had for an authentic and intimate connection with God through the Holy Spirit. Therefore, many of the songs that have been added to the repertoire in evangelical churches have included several lyrics that invite this type of worship theology into their methods.

Significance of the Findings

The influences of charismatic worship forms in the evangelical church are highly recognizable. However, understanding the motive and desire to transition a traditional church to incorporate these forms in corporate worship settings has found a disconnect. The findings in this study are useful to developing or redeveloping a biblical worship theology that church leaders, staff, and volunteers can teach their congregations. By removing the stigma of extreme charismatic worship forms, many evangelicals have opened their hearts and churches to accepting outward expressions and emotional engagement not encouraged in the past.

\textsuperscript{350} Towns and Whaley, \textit{Worship Through the Ages}, 362.
Research Question 1 was significant because this study unmasked evidence of charismatic worship forms that introduced change in congregational songs. These songs and the worship repertoire that shifted to more contemporary music gave rise to a triune-centric worship experience for the worshiper, as well as allowing the lyrics of these songs to give permission to outward expression and emotional engagement. This information is important in understanding the whole biblical theology of worship and how that applies to the culture today. As pastors, worship leaders, and church laity desire to teach new worship songs and practices, there must be a time for theological development in understanding the transitions taking place. This research aids in discovering that information.

For many years, the added songs of the contemporary genre were thought to be the source of moving from traditional to modern. It was also used to reach younger generations and meet the need for an inclusive, blended style. However, for many evangelical churches, that is where the reasoning stopped. It has been in the last twenty years that worship leadership has sensed a missed opportunity to welcome the Holy Spirit into corporate worship settings. The development of a full understanding of the triune God and a rightful place for Father, Son, and Spirit to be active in times of worship takes shape in these widely accepted charismatic influences in evangelical churches.

Research Question 2 permitted this research to explore the changes and transitions made in some traditional evangelical churches in an attempt to produce optimally creative and casual environments, including but not limited to, stage design, lighting, sound, visual enhancements, stage communicators, and platform wardrobe.

What the research was able to determine was that the transition to a modern stage and contemporary design was based more on a culturally relevant model and method than a
charismatic change in worship forms, per se. It is evident many traditional, blended, and modern evangelical churches have desired to upgrade and update their church facilities for relevance. Platform wardrobe also falls under this criterion. The dress comfort level of a congregation is based more on the cultural relevance than the nature of their worship expression. Although, the research indicated that more of the contemporary and casual dress codes were found in more expressive and charismatically influenced houses of worship. Furthermore, a church can have a charismatic stage communicator without the communicator being a charismatic worshiper. The difference in this question is that it is based more on methodology than philosophy. Every culture, every church, and people group have a way of doing things. The methods used are the systems they devised. In the same way, pastors, worship leaders, and church leaders must discover their communities and cultures to determine if the method for reaching the lost and keeping the believer discipled in Jesus is worth this kind of transition. Technology is useful, but it is not for everyone in every place. This research is important in understanding that culturally relevant transitions are necessary, but a single transition for one church is not cookie cutter for the masses.

Throughout this study, various charismatic influences that have penetrated many evangelical churches over the last twenty years have been revealed. As the century moves forward and younger generations begin to pick up the mantle of leadership in the local church, there are three defining conditions that will navigate the future of evangelical churches and the influence of the charismatic movement therein. First, more charismatic houses of worship in the United States will begin to surface with new music, methodologies, and appeal. For many years, Hillsong has been the leader in raising the bar for charismatic Christianity. However, over the past twenty years, influence from charismatic churches within the United States has grown and
become more popular and accepted. Evangelical churches in the United States can relate better to some of these music producing houses of worship because of accessibility, proximity, and relatability.

A second factor concerning the future of charismatic influence in the evangelical church will be the up and coming church leaders that have been trained theologically and musically in schools that have a more inclusive worship environment. Despite the school’s denominational connection, faculty and students alike may not have come from the same affiliation. Furthermore, as schools of music continue to open up worship degree programs, a return to biblically accurate worship practices, theologies, and philosophies will be taught and experienced in the classroom and in corporate campus worship settings. As the century moves on, these students will become worship pastors, lead pastors, and denominational leaders. Therefore, their training and influences will have a major impact on the future of the evangelical church.

The third factor to consider is that charismatic practices and the Third Wave movement have become more acceptable in many evangelical traditions. Studies today show that evangelical leadership welcome the charismatic renewal into their theologies. C. Peter Wagner stated, “We see the Third Wave as serving church traditions that come from a Reformed theology that haven’t been involved in ministry in the supernatural. We teach how this kind of ministry can be carried out in a non-charismatic church without being divisive. And we don’t stress tongues.” As the influence of a renewed emphasis on the Holy Spirit becomes prominent in evangelical worship environments, charismatic worship practices like supernatural ministry has the potential to follow.

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There is no way to know for sure how the culture of worship practices will shift in the upcoming decades. What is clear, however, is that charismatic influences will continue to be one of the leading factors in church revitalization. Worship practices in the evangelical church across the United States will undoubtedly shift again. When they do, and transitions are made, the prayer for every church leader should be that it will bring every believer to a deeper level of worship and devotion to the Triune God.

Limitations of the Study

The acknowledgement for certain limitations of this study is noted. Conclusions were drawn regarding research and the following limitations should be considered:

1. The amount of research given in this area of study over the last twenty years is limited. Even though the historical context of the charismatic movements is well versed, it is the impact and influences of those movements that has infiltrated the traditional evangelical churches that is lacking. Furthermore, although there is substantial research regarding Contemporary Christian Music that is only a piece of the literature that has allowed these influences to stake claim in the liturgy of the evangelical church.

2. The limitation of this study also includes the lack of verbal, written, or expressed intentions from church leadership to address the emphases, influences, and expressions of charismatic worship forms for their personal and corporate worship theologies, philosophies, and methodologies. The additions of songs and stage communicators that attract certain cultures are embraced, but the motivation is hardly attainable for the purpose of this research.
3. A quantitative approach could have been beneficial in discovering some of the motives and methodologies of some church leaders in developing more of a charismatic environment for their congregations.

4. Another limitation of this research is the individual accounts that were researched could be assumed as biased based on the perception of both those who witnessed the experience and by the researcher of this historical study.

Recommendations for Future Study

The following recommendations are made for future study based on the findings and limitation of this study:

1. The influences of charismatic worship in the traditional evangelical church as a whole is just beginning. The long-term impact of these worship forms on the global church body has yet to be discovered. Future study in another score of years could be beneficial in understanding its full impact.

2. Case studies of churches that are transitioning to a more contemporary and charismatic worship environment would be beneficial for research. Perhaps, studies that involved surveys and interviews could determine its impact. A study that is conducted through the transition process would benefit church leadership and other researchers greatly in the future.

3. A future study in understanding the failures and victories in adapting to charismatic worship forms could give understanding to church leaders and researchers in developing the pitfalls and successes in how to manage this type of transition and the communication in developing a corporate worship theology for the local congregation.
Conclusion

There is a major desire to understand the direction of worship liturgy in the American evangelical church culture; however, the consideration of corporate worship in the evangelical church has been left to individual interpretation. This research was important for understanding congregational worship in the local evangelical church in America and can determine the theology, liturgy, and philosophy of worship and its practices. There is a desire in many worshiping believers today to experience the presence of God in times of corporate worship. The emphasis of the Holy Spirit in song and speech, the changing environments that can enhance the worship liturgy through sight and sound, the passionate communicator of the Word of God has all compiled to the what are known as some of the fastest growing churches in America. Furthermore, younger generations are deciding for themselves in masses how important these influences are to them and their families. It is of no surprise that there are extreme practices on both the traditional evangelical and Pentecostal evangelical spectrums. However, the authenticity that is desired from Millennials and Generation Z Christians today are discounting some of the manipulation, persuasion, and fake tactics of the luring devices that some churches have used in the past. Biblical influences of the charismatic worship forms that have transitioned many of the traditional evangelical church in the 21st century has deepened the heart of worship for countless generations to come.
Bibliography


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