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Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Interrogating the Notion of Indigenous Worship in the Light of the 'Worship War' Debate

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A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, for the degree Master of Music (MMus).

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ABSTRACT

The subject of Christian church music has sparked controversy for centuries. In this dissertation I highlight the most recent discussion about the 'worship war' debate, namely the infiltration of contemporary popular music into what once was considered a sacred arena. I explore some of the shortcomings of Contemporary Church Music with the intention of answering two questions: Is there a style of music that is most appropriate for Christian worship and that best represents Christian identity? and, How can South African Christians express their own unique cultural identity in their Church Music? I seek proof of the link between musical choices and demographics in three Evangelical churches in Johannesburg via insights gained in a worship questionnaire and series of interviews. I conclude that music has the ability to construct both identity and a sense of place and that Contemporary Church Music (CChM) is distinct from contemporary secular music in two ways: its purpose and the identity of the musicians and congregants who participate in its performance. Addressing the latter, I explore a demographics model and conclude that every congregation boasts a unique identity which is affected by music, church history and cultural upbringing. I argue that Indigenous Worship is critical in answering both questions.

DECLARATION

I declare that this Dissertation is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Master of Music by Dissertation in the Wits School of Arts, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or any examination in any other University.

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15 February 2009

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Table of Contents

Preface 12

Introduction: An Overview of the Beaten Track 15

Music in the Bible *15*

Early Hymnody *16*

Music and Contemporary Christianity *17*

Hymnody *19*

Gospel Music *21*

Contemporary Christian Music *23*

Conclusion *24*

Chapter One: Theorising the Role of Music in the Christian Church 26

1.1 Sacred vs Popular *26*

1.2 Music and the Politics of Place *28*

1.3 Musical Connotation *31*

1.4 Music and the Construction of Identity *33*

1.4.1 Demographic Identity *41*

1.5 Conclusion *43*

Chapter Two: The 'Worship War' Debate 44

2.1 Introduction *44*

2.2 A Question of Importance *44*

2.3 The Argument in a Nutshell *46*

2.3.1 Dangerous Drums *49*

2.3.2 Dangerous Decibels *52*

2.3.3 Dodgy Doctrine *53*

2.3.4 Impertinent Instruments *54*

2.3.5 Evangelism Explosion *56*

2.4 The Counter-Argument *56*

2.5 Conclusion *58*

Chapter Three: New is Good; Old is Better 60

3.1 Introduction *60*

3.2 Practical Points *60*

3.2.1 Where Have All the Wordsmiths Gone? *60*

3.2.2 Rhyme Scheme *62*

3.2.3 Metre *64*

3.2.4 Contemporary Language *64*

3.3 Theological Orthodoxy *66*

3.4 Songs of Silence - It's What They Don't Say *68*

3.5 The Servant vs. The Ego - The Role of the Worship Leader *70*

3.6 Conclusion *73*

Chapter Four: Indigenous Worship **76**

4.1 Introduction *76*

4.2 Indigenous Choices *77*

4.3 Worship Questionnaire *79*

4.3.1 Musical Preference *84*

4.3.2 Personal Information *85*

4.4 The Local Church *87*

4.4.1 Case Study: Music at Honeyridge Baptist Church (HBC) *87*

4.4.2 Case Study: Music at Christ Church Hillbrow (CCH) *92*

4.4.3 Case Study: Music at Christ Church Midrand (CCM) *96*

Chapter Five: Discussion **103**

5.1 Response to Musical Style *103*

5.2 Views on Worship *104*

5.3 Establishing Identities *105*

Chapter Six: Conclusion **108**

6.1 A Question of Style *108*

6.2 A Question of Identity *110*

6.3 Closing Remarks *111*

Epilogue **113**

Appendix A: Music Scores **114**

Appendix B: Questionnaire Results **123**

Christ Church Midrand: 08h00 Service Responses *123*

Christ Church Midrand: 09h30 Service Responses *127*

Christ Church Midrand: 18h00 Service Response *131*

Honeyridge Baptist Church: 18h00 Service Responses *135*

Christ Church Hillbrow: 18h00 Responses *140*

Appendix C: Interview Manuscripts **145**

Interview with Bishop Martin Morrison *145*

Interview with Dr. Tim Cantrell *154*

References **161**

On-line References *166*

List of Figures

Figure Number	Page
Figure 1-1: An extract from "Planning and Leading Worship that Connects".	*40*
Figure 1-2: CCLI Table	*41*
Figure 3-1: Rhyme Scheme of 'Amazing Grace'.	*62*
Figure 3-2: Rhyme-scheme of 'Here I am to Worship' by Tim Hughes.	*63*
Figure 4-1: An extract from www.saddleback.com	*78*
Figure 4-2: Images from www.saddleback.com	*78*
Figure 4-3: An image from www.saddleback.com	*78*
Figure 4-4: Honeyridge Baptist Church's logo.	*87*
Figure 4-5: Responses from HBC to Question 1: What is Worship?	*89*
Figure 4-6: Musical style preferences at Honeyridge Baptist Church.	*91*
Figure 4-7: Responses from HBC to Question 2.	*91*
Figure 4-8: A picture of the Christ Church Hillbrow Care Centre.	*92*
Figure 4-9: Responses from Christ Church Hillbrow to Question 1: What is worship?	*94*
Figure 4-10: Responses from Christ Church Hillbrow to Question 2.	*95*
Figure 4-11: Musical style preferences at Christ Church Hillbrow.	*96*
Figure 4-12: The Auditorium at Christ Church Midrand.	*96*
Figure 4-13: Responses from CCM to Question 1.	*99*
Figure 4-14: Responses from CCM to Question 2.	*101*
Figure 4-15: Musical style preferences at CCM.	*101*

List of Musical Scores

Title	Page Number
In Christ Alone	*114*
There is a Day	*115*
Light of the World	*116*
Over All the Earth (Lord, Reign in Me)	*117*
What to say, Lord?	*118*
Amazing Grace	*120*
When the Music Fades (Heart of Worship)	*121*

List of Tables

Table Number **Page**

Table 4-1. The order of importance of various aspects of a church service to the congregation at Honeyridge Baptist Church. *90*

Table 4-2. The order of importance of various aspects of a church service to the congregation at Christ Church Hillbrow. *95*

Table 4-3: The order of importance of various aspects of a church service to the congregation at Christ Church Midrand. *100*

For Gordon

...without whose love and support this would not have been possible.

Preface

It was in August 2006 when I attended a church music conference at the London School of Theology that I first heard of the concept of *Indigenous Worship.* Cathy Townley defines it thus:

> Indigenous worship is a unique experience that evolves when combining the existing talent pool at the local church with the demographic mix of the surrounding geographical area in which the local church exists (Townley 2002b).

As a music student I had been exposed to issues of authenticity in performance practice but it was only recently in my capacity as Director of Music at Christ Church Midrand that I realised how often musicians feel obliged to strive to perform a piece of music in the same way as it is performed on CD and DVD recordings. With most contemporary church music being distributed by major publishing houses in the UK, Australia and the USA, it concerned me that South African Christians seemed to rely on music from other countries and that there is a shortage of South African church music.

In my own congregation I have watched the growth of a real 'rainbow nation' community where people of many ethnic and racial groups attend the same church service and are united by their Christian faith. While cultural differences exist, they seem to be blurred during times of worship and communal singing. I am aware, however, that not enough of the songs that we sing reflect the demographics of our particular congregation. A suspicion that the same was true for other churches in South Africa led me to embark on this study. Thus, my first question: how can South African Christians express their own unique cultural identity through church music?

The term 'worship wars' is used to describe the tension that exists in many churches on the subject of church music. Conflicting opinions over what style of music should be used in services can be linked to generational preference, familiarity or deeper moral questions of Christian identity and associations. Given that most debate on the subject is a result of the rise in popularity of contemporary music, some authors attribute a moral status to certain styles of music and the instruments associated with them. This is not a new concept as even the ancient Greeks attributed moral status to certain instruments, modes and rhythms (Cozma 1998). Still others explore the heart of worship and argue in favour of

a clearer theology of worship in approaching issues of contemporary music in the church. Thus my second question: Is there a style of music that is most appropriate for Christian worship and that best represents Christian identity?

Readers who feel alienated by the issues I am confronting may not be church goers or may attend a church where the music is kept traditional and unaffected by contemporary trends. Christ Church Midrand is a church where the theology is traditional and orthodox but the way it is presented is current and contemporary. In this dissertation I explore some of the main arguments in the 'worship war' debate and aim to find solutions in the concept of Indigenous Worship.

In the Introduction, I provide the reader with an overview of some of the historical issues that have presaged the current debate. The information I have included, I consider relevant in that it demonstrates the differences in opinion that have existed over the centuries on various aspects of the subject. This introduction stretches from reference to music in Scripture through to the Reformation, the conception of spirituals and gospel music up to the current age of contemporary music.

In Chapter One I detail the aim, rationale and methodology of this study. Chapter Two includes a detailed exploration of the 'worship war' debate. While few academic sources make reference to this impassioned conflict within contemporary Christianity, the most thorough work on the subject is found in popular books that enjoy the readership of Christian musicians or lay people. It is for this reason that many of my sources do not adopt a scholarly style of writing. In Chapter Three, I explore some of the most commonly identified shortcomings of Contemporary Church Music.

Chapter Four is an exploration of the notion of Indigenous Worship as defined by Cathy Townley. Using her definition as a basis, I build upon it to suit the particular purpose of this study. I include case studies of three Evangelical churches in which I explore their understanding of worship, music and identity. As I explain in more detail in Chapter One, Evangelical churches submit to the authority of Scripture in its entirety as opposed to authorities of tradition, reason or experience. I chose Christ Church Midrand because I serve in its music ministry. Honeyridge Baptist Church is familiar to me because of my family's involvement in it; it also provided a different demographic make-up. For this same

reason, I included Christ Church Hillbrow, which belongs to the same denomination as Christ Church Midrand, that being The Church of England in South Africa.[1]

The theoretical framework I have employed throughout is built upon Simon Frith's (1989) and Martin Stokes' (1994) notions of *place* and *identity* respectively. I argue that music is critical in establishing both entities and as such is worthy of the debate to which it has given rise.

[1] The Church of England in South Africa (CESA) is a denomination that belongs to the global Anglican Church; however, in South Africa, it is separate and distinct from the Church of the Province.

Introduction: An Overview of the Beaten Track

Music plays an important part in the Christian church service. In traditional churches it is used to navigate the congregation through a series of rituals and in so doing, create a sense of atmosphere and order. In less traditional, more Pentecostal churches, music is used to a greater extent to heighten emotions, with which comes of course a strong sense of atmosphere. Whatever the style of service, music is influential and has been the subject of dialogue since the inception of the church. What follows is an abbreviated introduction to the debates surrounding church music, as they can be traced throughout history. My purpose is to provide the unversed reader with some background to this topic. Only information that is of particular relevance to this study has been included.

Music in the Bible

> …Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
> Praise him with the harp and lyre,
> Praise him with tambourine and dancing,
> Praise him with the strings and flute,
> Praise him with the clash of cymbals,
> Praise him with the resounding cymbals.
> Let everything that has breath praise the LORD...
>
> - Psalm 150 (The Holy Bible)

As early as Exodus 15, Moses sang a song of victory and praise to God after the Israelites crossed through the parted waters of the Red Sea before it closed on Pharaoh and his army. Moses was followed by Miriam, his sister, who

> ...took a tambourine in her hand, and all the women followed her, with tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang to them: Sing to the Lord, for he is highly exalted. The horse and its rider he has hurled into the sea (Exodus 15:21-22).

The Psalms are filled with songs, some by anonymous writers and many by King David. These were written for what in the New International Version of the Bible is termed the ‘music director’ of the time and would have been intended for both individual expression

and communal singing.[2] The Psalms express a variety of emotions such as fear, doubt, frustration, praise and worship. They provide a useful blueprint for contemporary song writers who tend to focus on the expression of joy and praise and neglect some of the emotions which are more difficult to express publicly such as doubt, fear and sadness.

Paul, one of the apostles and early founders of the Christian church, is recorded to have sung hymns in prison (Acts 16:25-26). He encouraged Christians to "be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with all your heart…" (Ephesians 5:19-20).

Early Hymnody

The psalms, hymns and spiritual songs of which Paul speaks have been interpreted in various ways throughout history. St Augustine defined a hymn as follows, "For it to be a hymn, it is needful for it to have four things – praise, and praise of God and these sung, and sung by a congregation of people" (quoted in Scholes 1987, 497). In the book, *And Now Let's Move into a Time of Nonsense*, Page includes an excerpt from what he terms the earliest complete hymn that was written by Clement of Alexandria in the second century (2004, 9), however, Fortescue argues for "another kind of hymn that goes back to the very dawn of the Christian religion" (2007, 31). Early Christians, he asserts, relied on the psalms to provide the text with which they would praise God because the New Testament was still being written. Christians in Greece sang texts of the psalms as well as "impromptu words of their own, praising God, through Christ, as the Spirit moved them". They would not have been familiar with the diatonic scale, so it is unclear how they would have sung these short prose songs (ibid).

In tracing the development of hymnody in Catholicism and Eastern Orthodoxy, Fortescue highlights the contrasting approaches towards hymnody found in the East and West in the first six centuries.

> While Greeks were filling their hours with troparia written by contemporary people, the West was sternly rejecting almost everything that was not holy scripture. So, for the first six centuries or so, the chief difference in the office between East and West was that in the East it was made up largely of the prose poem, while in the West it was nearly all from the Bible...The Eastern people were poetic, exuberant, emotional. The

[2] At the beginning of some of the Psalms, a note is given as to who composed the psalm and in some cases for whom it was written. Psalm 109, for example, is marked, "For the director of Music" (Holy Bible, New International Version).

> Roman was none of these things. He was naturally reserved, very conservative of the old tradition, shy of new ornament (2007, 31).

In the fourth century, under the leadership of Arius, deemed a heretic by the broader Christian church, poems were written on Christian themes. These words were then fitted to the contemporary sailors' songs and songs of travelers. It was not so much the tunes and the associations they stirred that were of concern to the Christian church at this time but rather that Arius "insinuated his impious ideas into simple hearts by the charm of his music" (ibid). Other mainstream Christian poets also made use of metrical song. Synesios of Cyrene and Gregory of Nazianzos in the fifth and fourth centuries respectively used old Greek lyric meters in their hymn-writing. Byzantine chant manuscripts, dating from the ninth century, reveal the use of metrical schemes of Greek poetry, following which, much like the contemporary Christian music of our time, unrhymed verses of irregular length and accentual pattern were employed (Bewerunge 1913). In the Roman Catholic church through to the twelfth century, various forms of plainsong coexisted, with standardisation of Gregorian chant liturgies only being established in the twelfth century (ibid).

Music and Contemporary Christianity

In his book, *The Sound of Light,* Don Cusic outlines the significant role that Martin Luther and John Calvin played in planting the roots of contemporary Christianity as it is practised today. Luther's decision to become a monk at age 22 bore similarity to Paul's conversion as described in Acts. Luther was returning from Erfurt when he ran into a storm. Luther's experience is described in Cusic:

> Lightning struck a nearby tree, which seemed to Luther a warning from God that unless he gave his thoughts to salvation, death would surprise him unshriven and damned… so he made a vow to St Anne that if he survived the storm, he would become a monk (2002, 10).

After being ordained a priest in the Catholic Church in 1507, Luther went on to argue a doctrine of 'justification' by faith in Christ and His atonement for all people as opposed to the Catholic doctrine of salvation by good works and by the sale of indulgences. He was struck by the passage in Romans 1:17 (The righteous shall live by faith). Luther also fought for the establishment of a national church in Germany and for a break of ties with Rome. Pope Leo charged Luther with heresy but he would not submit to papal rule and in

1520 Luther declared that “no man could be saved unless he renounced the rule of the papacy” (2002, 12). This was the start of the Reformation in Germany.[3]

Jean Chauvin (John Calvin) was a humanist until he was exposed to some of Luther’s work. The Reformation was underway in France, and Calvin soon caught Reformation fever. It was in France, where he was arrested and released a number of times, that he started his work on what became a most influential resource for the establishment of the Reformed Church, a treatise titled *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. Although Calvin did not know Luther personally, he had read many of Luther’s books; both men agreed on the principle of “justification by faith”. It was their personalities and approach to life that made them so different. Luther is described as being “warm, outgoing, and lov[ing] life and music”, while Calvin is described as “more introverted, cold and ordered, lacking a sense of humour or a noticeable appreciation for beauty in life or art” (2002, 20). While Luther encouraged believers to write their own hymns of expression of faith and to sing them when gathered together, Calvin saw music as a distraction and believed that only scriptural texts should be sung (ibid). This debate over the purpose of church music as either an accompaniment to individual expression, or purely scriptural text, is still evident today.

Despite the enthusiasm with which Luther encouraged the writing of hymns, it was the Calvinist view – that only Psalms should be sung, and not hymns – that set the course for what became general practice in Britain. Psalms were arranged for singing and were known as the Metrical Psalter. All other singing was frowned upon. According to Page, it was in the seventeenth century that a Baptist minister named Benjamin Keach first changed this practice. He was influenced by a passage in Matthew 26:30, “When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives” (Holy Bible, NIV). The passage is referring to Jesus and his disciples at The Last Supper. Keach felt that Jesus had led by example and he directed his congregation to sing a hymn after communion. He went on to

[3] In 1509, Henry VIII ascended to the throne in England. When Luther broke away from the Catholic Church, Henry VIII published his Assertion of the Seven Sacraments asserting that “the whole Church is subject not only to Christ but…to Christ’s only vicar, the pope of Rome. Luther published his reply in 1525, calling Henry VIII a “King of lies… by God’s disgrace King of England” (ibid, 12).

publish *Spiritual Melody*, which was one of the first collections of hymns intended for use in corporate worship,[4] an act that caused a split in his denomination (Page 2004, 11).[5]

The rise of the Evangelical church in England and the United States in the Eighteenth Century ensured the success of congregational singing because the focus within the Evangelical church was placed on the personal knowledge and experience of salvation. People who experienced this wanted to sing about it and there was therefore a demand for songs that accommodated personal expressions of faith.

Hymnody

The early English hymn-writer, Isaac Watts (1674 - 1748), wrote over four hundred hymns, such as “When I survey the wondrous cross”. He believed that hymns should be a personal expression of faith.

He is quoted by Page as having said,

> I would neither indulge any bold metaphors, nor admit of hard words, nor tempt the ignorant worshipper to sing without understanding (ibid, 12).

John Newton (1725 - 1807) was the captain of a ship engaged in slave trade between Britain, West Africa and the West Indies. At the age of 25 he underwent a dramatic conversion to Christianity and abandoned the slave trade after which he wrote the hymn “Amazing Grace”, based on an American folk melody called “Virginia Harmony”.

On the subject of writing hymns, he said,

> There is a style and manner suited to the composition of hymns which may be more successfully or at least more easily attained by a versifier than a poet. They should be Hymns, not Odes, if designed for public worship, and for the use of plain people (ibid).

The increase in demand for personal expressions of faith was a slow process in the United States as a result of the strict adherence to the Calvinist view by the Puritans, who settled in New England. Also influenced by the Reformation, two types of music emerged in

---

[4] *Corporate* here refers to a gathering of people. The term, *Corporate Worship* is used to describe a church service setting.

[5] *Denominations* are categories into which Christianity is divided. Most protestant denominations agree on the important issues pertaining to salvation; however, it is disagreements on non-gospel issues that usually cause splits amongst churches.

reformed churches: The chorale (which was a Lutheran tradition) and the psalm tune (of Calvinist origins). Don Cusic records that

> The first book published in America was *The Whole Booke of Psalms Faithfully Translated Into English Metre*, commonly known as *The Bay Psalm Book*. It appeared in 1640 in the Plymouth colony in Massachusetts and contained the first version of psalms made by the Americans and used in American churches. The question of whether hymns ("Psalms invented by the gifts of godly men") were to be included in church services was raised in the preface with the decision reached to sing only psalms or other paraphrases from passages in the Bible (2002, 34).

The later settlers in New England brought with them the hymns of Isaac Watts and subsequent Methodist settlers in New Jersey imported the hymns of Charles Wesley, both proficient composers of hymns. Interestingly, Isaac Watts received the same resistance to the use of his hymns in churches in America as he had encountered in England; what counted against them, apparently, was their element of "human composure" in expressing heartfelt emotions rather than strict adherence to the texts of the Psalms (2002, 36).

An important event in church history, as recorded by Cusic (2002, 36-37), was the Great Awakening; an "infusion of religion into society, producing laws that eliminated some of the exploitation of the poor as well as injecting a genuine spirit of revival into the souls of a great number of people". One of the leaders of this movement was the evangelist George Whitefield. While his teachings were clearly Calvinist in doctrine, he freely shared the gospel message in every sermon, which associated him with Armenian teachings.[6] Another characteristic difference in his teachings from those of Calvin was his association with hymn singing. During his visit to America at the time of the Great Awakening (c. 1740) hymn singing flourished and crowds were attracted to Methodist meetings because of the charm of the music and enthusiastic singing. This tradition developed through the eighteenth century, until the introduction of the denominational hymn in the nineteenth century. It is interesting to note that at this point there was still great controversy associated with the use of any musical instrument in church. Cusic points out that even the tuning fork was disguised to resemble a psalm book. While the bass viol was often used as an accompanying instrument, it caused "great controversies and schisms" (2002, 38). It was in Boston, Massachusetts in 1814 that the congregational hymn was first recorded as

[6] Armenian Teachings are those relating to the doctrines of Jacobus Arminius (Latinised name of Jakob Hermandszoon, 1560–1609), a Dutch Protestant theologian, who rejected the Calvinist doctrine of predestination. His teachings had a considerable influence on Methodism.

being accompanied by flute, bassoon and cello. Thereafter the organ gradually became accepted as a ‘proper’ instrument for congregational accompaniment.

As church music began to be influenced by secular music in the eighteenth century, churches either moved with the trends or adopted a Calvinist approach by prohibiting the use of instruments in sung worship. The Lutheran and Catholic churches placed emphasis on a designated group of singers who would sing to the congregation. These groups developed into larger choirs making use of more elaborate melodies and harmonies. It was this independence of church music (no longer simply serving the purpose of leading a congregation, but rather standing alone as an art form) that paved the way for Gospel music and solo performers and, ultimately, the rise of Contemporary Christian Music.
Charles and John Wesley introduced popular, secular tunes with new words into hymnals. Page (2004, 13) lists some of John Wesley’s rules for congregational singing:

- Sing lustily and with good courage.
- Do not sing too loudly and drown out other people.
- Sing in time.
- Above all, sing spiritually.
- Aim at pleasing God more than yourself.

Hymn-singing soon spread through the evangelical Anglican churches in Britain. By the end of the nineteenth century, hymn-writing was an industry, with hymns being written in their thousands. Percy Dearmer is quoted in Page as having calculated that there were over 400 000 hymns in use at the end of the century (2004, 15).

In America, the folksy influence on secular music at the time was particularly well employed by the Baptist churches that sang songs set to folk tunes. These factors, along with the Great Revival of the nineteenth century, also set the scene for the rise of Southern Gospel Music in the twentieth century.

Gospel Music

The slave trade in America brought about a new style of Christian church music, which was strongly emotional in its expression. Amongst African American slaves, the songs that were sung, called spirituals, often had double meanings that would speak of the hope of a new life after death, actually implying hope for freedom from slavery. These songs often had as their subject the story of Moses leading the Israelites out of captivity. In the interest of brevity, information on the change in American doctrine regarding the slave trade and

slavery which was instigated by Christians will be omitted here; however, it is relevant to note that some white slave owners in America took their black slaves to Christian camp meetings where the latter would hear the gospel being preached, learn hymns and choruses and take them back home to their own church meetings. While every effort would be made to accurately reproduce these songs, they would nevertheless be learnt in an individual way and not be recalled perfectly. As a result, changes in tunes, rhythm and lyrics would occur. Cusic records that “Musicologist and folk music collector George Pullen Jackson noted in the early part of the twentieth century that most spirituals sung by black slaves originated from the British folk song tradition” (2002, 94). Nevertheless, regardless of their origins, the spirituals sung by black American singers expressed the powerful emotions and tensions they felt as slaves. Page aptly quotes from some of the spirituals to show how they captured hidden messages and provided a source of comfort. For example:

> Ev’rybody talkin’ ‘bout heaven
> ain’t going there (2004, 14).

Church services in black American communities challenged the self-controlled order that many white mainline churches in the North of America (like the Baptist and Methodist) looked to pass on. The Holiness Movement in particular, which was the black branch of the white Pentecostal Movement in America, was characterised by physical, vibrant singing which built up in momentum and energy as the preacher preached.

With the rise of radio and recordings in the twentieth century, music could be preserved and it could also be spread around the world. Recording companies travelled through the southern states of America searching for quartets and soloists to record; however, black gospel artists did not receive airplay on radio stations and in the depression years it was particularly difficult for black gospel singers to get publicity; it was the white gospel artists who were afforded regular broadcasts while black artists had to rely on recording opportunities in order to distribute their songs.

Gospel music, in white circles, sounded very much like its secular counterpart, country music. Cusic notes that the only difference between the two genres was that country musicians could charge an entrance fee to their performances but gospel musicians could not (2002, 238). Gospel music was Christian music, written by Christians for performance to other Christians. By the 1950s, gospel music was making it onto the pop charts and it

seems that it was here, in the early 1960s, in America, that the divide between music for the church and music for commercial listenership narrowed and eventually merged.

Contemporary Christian Music

Perhaps as a reaction to the World Wars and the war in Vietnam, an undercurrent in the lyrics of secular songs suggested the search for love, peace and meaning. Songs like, “All we need is love”, “To everything turn, turn, turn” (based on a passage from the book of Ecclesiastes), “Here’s to you Mrs. Robinson, Jesus loves you more than you will know” by Simon and Garfunkel, Elvis Presley’s rendition of “How great thou art” and “Oh, happy day” seem to have ushered in an era where secular artists used music to express spiritual concerns, doubts and fears as never before. Christians too were affected by the wars and young believers started what was known as the “Jesus Movement”, and enthusiastically shared their faith. In 1976, Jimmy Carter, an Evangelical Christian who referred to himself as “born-again”, was elected president of the United States. There was a revival in church attendance, with one in three Americans considering themselves to be “born again” and hence active in their practice of the Christian faith in 1976. In response a new kind of church music developed (Cusic 2002, 279).

Hymn writing decelerated in the twentieth century, as hymns were no longer considered popular. In the era of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones, the guitar became fashionable and this set the stage for the modern-day chorus. Choruses were more up-beat in tempo, and written by and for the people. They were folksier in sound and usually did not have more than two or three verses and a chorus (Page 2004, 17). The composition of Church Music was no longer reserved exclusively for the classically trained organist or composer. Anyone could write a chorus and these choruses were compiled into collections like *Songs of Fellowship* and *Mission Praise*, which are still in use today. Praise and Worship, as it was called in the 1980s and 1990s, was contemporary music written by Christians for Christian services. Increasingly, guitars and drums replaced the organ, leading to the birth of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM). Artists and bands like Amy Grant, “Jars of Clay”, Michael W. Smith, “Sixpence None the Richer”, “dc Talk”, “Third Day” and others began to write songs of personal expression and faith that were sold as albums for home listening and in the car, or wherever one could find a tape or CD player. Some of these songs were used in church services too. “The words were straightforward and the meaning sincere in these new worship songs that seemed to pull on the heartstrings of the contemporary church” (Page 2004, 16).

Similar to the tele-evangelist craze of the 1980s and early 1990s, Christian gatherings became popular in the last years of the twentieth century with events like *Stoneleigh*, *Passion for Your Name*, *Spring Harvest* and other Christian conventions attracting thousands of people each year. These events are also used as a platform for new Christian artists and their songs.

The latest development on the Christian Church Music scene is the Worship Song. Writers like Chris Tomlin, Matt Redman, Darlene Zschech, Graham Kendrick and Tim Hughes write worship songs that are compiled in collections such as *Spring Harvest* and *Soul Survivor*. Recently, recordings of a number of contemporary arrangements of traditional hymns have been released by artists such as Graham Kendrick and Chris Tomlin; new modern hymns have been written by composers like Stuart Townend and Keith Getty.

Conclusion

Despite the dramatic changes that church music has undergone over the decades and even centuries, two contrasting views on the purpose of church music prevail. They can be traced back to Calvin and Luther and, before that, to the contrasting views between the Christian churches in the East and West. Calvin believed that music should be used in the church as an accompaniment to the singing of purely scriptural texts. Some of his followers argue that preaching is more important than singing, and that music in a church service is a ‘starter’ in preparation for the ‘main course’ (the preaching). Despite the fact that there are numerous references in the Bible to Christians singing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, certain groups of people within the Christian church still choose to sing only traditional hymns.

Luther’s view was that music is emotive and could be used to assist the congregation in responding to their experience of God; music and singing should be viewed as an important tool for teaching scriptural truths.

In the journal article, “America’s (Previous) Worship Wars”, David Music argues that debate over the subject of church music has taken different forms over the years. He highlights a number of issues that manifested themselves in American churches, namely “Regular Singing vs. the Old Way”, “The Use of Musical Instruments” and “Scientific Music

vs. Yankee Psalmody" (Music quoted in Olsavicky 2007, 52-54). Goins highlights the current tension that exists between "emotional worship vs. intellectual worship" and "traditional worship vs. contemporary worship" (1999, 1).

Many authors argue that a better understanding of Christian *worship* is sufficient to dispel arguments over the practical decisions that are made on a weekly basis. This is the view I take in this dissertation, not defending a particular style of music but rather arguing that the choices a church makes regarding both its worship and its music will shape its identity.

Chapter One: Theorising the Role of Music in the Christian Church

1.1 Sacred vs Popular

The subject of music in the church has had a history of conflict; the result both of its ability to express emotion and the subjective responses it evokes. In this dissertation I argue that music does not only happen in a society but "a society… might also be usefully conceived as something which happens in music" (Stokes 1994, 2). Using this theory as a foundation I hypothesise that every congregation is a sub-culture in which music is practised, thereby providing the potential for acquiring its own unique identity.

I explore the shift in classification of church music as separate from secular music according to historical scholarship and more recent musicological debate. I highlight the apparent coalescence of musical styles (and the associated cultural aspects of dress and instrumentation) in the last third of the twentieth century that has come to be called Contemporary Church Music (CCM). For many Christian authors and religious leaders the divide remains unsatisfactory. At the heart of most of the objections against the inclusion of popular music into the church is an objection to the so-called 'unchristian' elements of popular culture. Kogan refers to the "discourse of the classroom (with its focus on a subject matter) and the discourse of the hallway (with its focus on one's feelings about a subject matter" (Frith 1991, 103). Traced back to Martin Luther and John Calvin, debate over the role of music in the church has taken many forms. Originally the conflict centred on whether the sung text of a church service should be based purely on Scriptural texts, or whether songs expressing personal emotion should also be included.

The argument against the use of popular contemporary music in the church is labeled the 'worship war' debate. Reference to the phrase 'worship war' dates back three decades and is referred to by both academic scholars and popular authors.

Frith argues that academic approaches to popular culture "still derive from the mass cultural critiques of the 1930s and 1940s" (ibid, 103). The Frankfurt School, thinkers influenced by Karl Marx, and Theodor Adorno and his followers have made the most important contribution in this respect. Marxist critiques of contemporary popular culture view it in the light of the production and circulation of commodities. The Frankfurt School

focuses on the organisation of mass production and the psychology of mass consumption, concluding broadly that, “If it’s popular it must be bad”. Frith states that Adorno “developed a number of concepts to show that this must be so” (Frith 1991, 103). In the same way popular Christian authors and academic writers alike argue that contemporary church music has been ‘dumbed down’ in order to cater for a population that has grown up with popular culture. In *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*, Dawn argues that contemporary songwriters have popularised their language to woo modern Christians (Dawn 1995, 185). She quotes Myers, who likens cultures with types of food preparation. He argues that high culture, in which Western Classical Music and hymns find their home, can be compared with gourmet food; folk culture that is akin to choruses and folk tunes is the equivalent of traditional home cooking. Popular culture is the equivalent of fast food (Myers quoted in Dawn 1995, 185). In response to Kaplan’s assertion that, “To recognise that how much you get out of an art experience depends on how much you put into it is not moralistic but strictly aesthetic”, Dawn replies, “But popular art will not allow too much to be put into the experience; one doesn’t have to work too hard at listening to modern popular singers, which is why more people prefer them to the classical composer” (ibid, 185).

I argue that the adoption of popular culture into the church is a result of the nature of contemporary culture. The mixing of musical styles occurs in many spheres of society today, reflecting a global mix of cultures and traditions, as well as new forms of expression. I undertake a thorough interrogation of the ‘worship war’ debate in an effort to identify its presence in South African churches. I conduct case studies of three Evangelical churches in and around the city of Johannesburg. These three churches were chosen for their varied demographic make-up as well as the relationship I have with each of them. By means of qualitative and quantitative research methods, I analyse how the three communities have selected music for sung worship. A questionnaire was distributed to members of all three churches to compare the opinions and responses of congregants in churches where the demographics differ. As a participant-observer, I have an interest in the process by which music is chosen and how a particular repertoire reflects the demographics of a church community. By observing a number of sung worship sessions at Honeyridge Baptist Church, participating in the worship at Christ Church Midrand and interviewing members of the worship team at Christ Church Hillbrow, I draw various conclusions, which I compare with the results obtained through the questionnaire.

I build upon Cathy Townley's explanation of what she terms 'Indigenous Worship'. In the context of this dissertation, Indigenous Worship does not refer to the traditional hymns sung by African congregations since missionary times, but rather it directs the church towards an awareness of its unique identity.

> Indigenous worship is a unique experience that evolves when combining the existing talent pool at the local church with the demographic mix of the surrounding geographical area in which the local church exists (Townley 2002b).

The identity of some South African churches will inevitably be more Western while others are more African. I argue that an awareness of a church's demographic make-up is essential to grasping its identity. I therefore assert both that music is influential in establishing and maintaining identity and that identity can be manipulated through music. The theories of identity used in this research are anchored in the work of ethnomusicologists Simon Frith and Martin Stokes.

1.2 Music and the Politics of Place

Giddens defines place as "the physical setting of social activity as situated geographically" (Stokes 1994, 3). Stokes goes on to argue that place is far more than a geographical location. It is susceptible to manipulation through the medium of music and can even be created in music. "The places constructed through music involve notions of difference and social boundary" (ibid).

In any gathering of people, especially where there is a mixture of generations and ethnicities, different musical preferences result in a potential minefield. Coupled with stylistic preference is the additional burden of a variety of expectations as to what constitutes *church*. For some, church means an ornate and sacred building that is separate from routine existence. People who hold to this view usually place emphasis on historical church music practice in which the chosen canon of sung music is hymnal in style. The instruments associated with hymnody are organs, pianos and other Western Classical instruments. For this congregation, the church building can sometimes be viewed as a sanctuary invoking various behavioural norms relating to demeanour, dress code and possibly other things that relate to the particular space (Blanchard 2006, 23).[7] A

[7] There is reference to the church being a sanctuary in "Can We Rock The Gospel?" Contributors to the book seem to be of the opinion that the church building itself demands behaviour that is distinct from the outside world. As Dr. Tim Cantrell points out in his interview, there is a fine line between treating a church building with respect and elevating it to a position of importance that is not warranted in Scripture.

contrasting view of church is that it constitutes a gathering of people and that the building is of secondary importance to the purposes for which Christians gather; worshippers may be dressed very casually and may appear less obviously reverent in their 'owning' of their worship space.

While the view of *church* that is being employed in this study is one of human community rather than geographic location, there are shared associations with the event of 'going to church' that invoke a sense of place. The tradition, in many churches, of dressing respectably suggests the importance of the occasion. Grandeur, decorum and respect are important to traditionalists, while more relationship–orientated congregations may pay little attention to setting and respectability.

The act of music making and singing collectively in church is distinct from every-day experience. Because of this, services designed to cater for seekers may deliberately not include communal singing.[8] The practice of singing collectively is authorised in Christian Scripture as a means of encouragement and is as such a norm for Christians. The sound of hymns being played as members of a congregation enter the building creates an atmosphere and social boundary that reinforces a sense of community and some of the purposes of church-going. It not only establishes church culture; it also unites or divides the congregation. Deciding upon musical repertoire is as much a political decision for a church as is its geographic location. The politics of place as suggested in the sub-heading revolve around decisions made regarding the nature of the social norms of a particular gathering; these depend on denomination, as well as historical practice, preaching style and the culture of the community to which the church belongs. (This culture will also profoundly influence the preference for musical styles).

Singing occurs on most occasions in every Christian church. The introduction of contemporary instruments and contemporary music into services creates a sense of place that is not as distinct from the outside world as some would like, although it remains entirely different in purpose. It is this apparent blurring of the distinctions between sacred and secular spaces that bothers the detractors of contemporary music (see Blanchard and Lucarini 2006); they argue that the associations already attached to certain genres are

[8] The term *seeker* is used to describe people who are probably not yet convinced of the Christian faith, but who are seeking a spiritual home.

inappropriate in the religious setting. Ironically, it is this same rapprochement between sounds appropriate for both religious and everyday life that draws seekers into a habit of church going: for them the playing down of the sense of difference and the devotional in defined Christian spaces makes services more appealing and minimises the social boundary so often encountered by newcomers.

Stokes argues that music does not simply reflect culture. “Rather, [it] provides the means by which the hierarchies of place are negotiated and transformed” (Stokes 1994, 4). In line with Stokes’s argument, styles of Christianity are signified in their musical choices. A service that opens with a solo played on a pipe organ, followed by a traditional hymn, is clearly anchored in traditional conventions laid down by the church over hundreds of years. Alternatively, one that opens with the driving beat of a band is bound to be more seeker-focused and contemporary. The hierarchies of place within each church are different. As the name implies, a seeker-focused church prioritises the attraction of new, unchurched people into the community over the continuation of tradition. In a section entitled “The Seeker Service: Evangelism and Worship” in Redman’s *The Great Worship Awakening,* the author sheds light on this subject, both current and historical. He explains that many churches have set aside established musical traditions and liturgies in an effort to become more acceptable to skeptical seekers.

> By setting aside traditional styles of liturgy and music, pastors and service planners hope to appeal to seekers through creative communication media – drama and the visual arts, but above all music and non-traditional preaching (2002, 2).

Music becomes a primary tool in the quest to attract new congregants; it can be described as having an ability to create accessible and attractive routes from one place to another; a community can both be confined within the walls of a church and yet surrounded (and defined) by a sense of the contemporary. This is not to say that a church is not modern by nature; rather that music has the ability to define a space as contemporary or traditional. Stokes asserts that:

> Amongst the countless ways in which we ‘relocate’ ourselves, music undoubtedly has a vital role to play (Stokes 1994, 3).

The connotative power of music has a powerful role to play in this relocation.

1.3 Musical Connotation

The associations and images that music calls to mind can be so powerful that they inspire and uplift the congregation. Such songs usually become favourites because they provide a unique ‘vocabulary’ for expressing particular sentiments. An example of such a song is “In Christ Alone” by Stuart Townend and Keith Getty (2001, Thankyou Music). It is listed as the most popular song in UK churches and the second most popular song in Australian and Singaporean churches for February 2007 to March 2008 (http://www.ccli.co.za/owners/top25.cfm, accessed 28 January 2009). A copy of the music score is included in Appendix A of this thesis. The lyrics express Christian truths in a way that was unique at the time it was released. Categorised as a ‘contemporary hymn’, the melody and lyrics stir connotations of hope and victory. It is manageable for congregations to sing and has been translated into Dutch, Latvian, Swedish, Norwegian and Afrikaans. The song consists of four verses with something of an Irish feel. The melody rises in the middle of each verse to the upper dominant of the key, imparting a feeling of victory and exhilaration when sung by a large congregation.

When songs evoke unpleasant connotations or imagery, it can be problematic. In May 2007, “Kwêla”, a television programme on SABC2, documented the dissatisfaction Christians experienced when a South African minister set Christian lyrics (for use in church services) to secular, popular songs. One of the songs he had chosen was Robbie Wessels’ “Leeu Loop” (Lion Walk). In its secular version, this song is linked with a music video showing the artist dancing in blue tights with scantily clad ladies around him. Despite its popularity, the song’s relocation into the sacred repertoire sparked major controversy. The practice of merging religious text with secular tunes is not a new one: tradition has it that Charles Wesley used familiar tavern tunes for some of his hymns. Cusic notes that it became common practice in nineteenth-century America to put religious verses to the melodies of ballads. At the time, this was not sanctioned by the Puritan leaders of New England who described ballads as ‘filthy songs’ (2002, 65).

Associations are much stronger when reinforced with powerful graphic images. Many churches have moved away from using the traditional songbook and the somewhat dated over-head projector with transparent films. In a recent poll conducted by Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI), it was recorded that as few as 14% of the African

churches on their records still make use of an over-head projector with transparencies, 11% make use of a published songbook and 71% use computer-operated projectors (www.ccli.co.za, accessed 15 May 2008). The modern PC-operated projector can be kept out of sight and is far more powerful. It can project a range of images, movie clips and slide shows. In some larger churches, words can be presented on the screen with live video footage of the music team in the background. Some people find this off-putting, complaining that their attention is drawn away from God and towards the musicians. At Christ Church Midrand, the screen is used for the words of songs and prayers together with thematically chosen pictures or photographs in the background. But when pictures evoke such a strong or inappropriate emotional response that the congregation feels manipulated, there may be cause for concern. I was one of many congregants who experienced such feelings at a concert held to raise funds for a missionary in Kosovo. A guest artist had arranged to have a series of images projected in the background while we sang a song entitled, “There is a day”. The words are included below:

There is a day

Words and Music by Nathan Fellingham. Copyright 2001 Thankyou Music.

Verse 1
There is a day that all creation’s waiting for
A day of freedom and liberation from the earth.
And on that day, the Lord will come to meet His bride
And when we see Him
In an instant we’ll be changed.

Verse 2
The trumpet sounds and the dead will then be raised
By His power never to perish again
Once only flesh, now clothed in immortality
Death has now been swallowed up in victory.

Chorus
We will meet Him in the air
And then we will be like Him
For we will see Him as He is, oh yeah.
Then all hurt and pain will cease and we’ll be with Him forever
And in His glory we will live
Oh yeah, oh yeah.

Verse 3
So lift your eyes to the things as yet unseen
That will remain now for all eternity.
Though trouble’s hard it’s only momentary
And it’s achieving our future glory.

The lyrics of the song speak of hope but the images chosen by the guest artist consisted mostly of disturbing images of war, maimed children, bloodshed, terrorism and hopelessness. These did not seem in keeping with the sentiments of the song. On the contrary, they were highly manipulative, pulling the congregation into a negative rather than uplifting mood.

There is no doubt that associations cause one to mentally relocate oneself, as Stokes observes. When listening to Wessels' "Leeu Loop", many congregants identify it as belonging in a different and secular space: perhaps the living room at home or a party on a Saturday night, but definitely not in a church. For others the song is simply inappropriate in any circumstances. To use it to encourage powerful congregational singing is totally unacceptable. This example illustrates how intensely music is related to identity.

1.4 Music and the Construction of Identity

With the birth of radio and recordings, the social function of music has changed radically. Stokes points out that social activities that occurred in conjunction with musical activity have been peripheralised and the few that still exist, like social dances, concert attendance and listening to CDs at home, "fit into gaps created by work, or at least, the working day" (1994, 2). In this sense the gathering of a congregation at church on a Sunday is unusual in that a day is set aside where people gather together, not exclusively for, but significantly around, music-making and corporate singing. In this sense, I argue that music informs Christian identity because it is such an integral part of Christian cultural practice.

Given that the musical styles that are broadcast on radio, television and recorded on popular CD albums represent various brands of popular culture (examples being radio stations that play "all the hits, all the time" and stations that play the Top 40 songs on a weekly basis), I argue that cultural identity is informed by the music of the time. Moreover, because popular music is a manifestation of popular culture, so much of who we are, e.g. our fashion, way of speaking and the way we perceive life, can be affected by music. As Stokes puts it: "Music is clearly very much a part of modern life and our understanding of

it, articulating our knowledge of other peoples, places, times and things, and ourselves in relation to them" (Stokes 1994, 3).

I argue, therefore, that where a contemporary style of music is adopted in a church, this has a profound effect on its identity. Not only will current contemporary music affect a congregation's preferences in styles of music used for singing but it will also contribute towards creating a 'place' in which the congregation feels comfortable. Frith confirms that people within contemporary society are so familiar with the surrounding music that they "like or dislike a song immediately – move to a rhythm, respond to a melody or voice – without needing to know how or why or where it was made" (Frith 1989, 9).

Later in this dissertation I examine the results of a questionnaire in which congregants list their preferred styles of music. In some cases, the styles to which they are exposed on their favourite radio stations correspond with those they enjoy singing at church. What is familiar to them affects their tolerance and preference of church music styles.

The question of identity in a church setting is most powerfully articulated when someone feels alienated by the music. Alienation may be experienced as a result of language or cultural/stylistic barriers or, more complexly, by the assumption on the part of a new congregant that he/she may know the songs sung at church. Some people relate strongly to music they know, and may have known since childhood. Frame argues that "hymnody is his language of worship; it is the language of his heart's conversation with God. To lose the hymns one has grown up singing is, therefore, no small thing" (Frame 1996, 117). For others, a contemporary style signifies being part of a more modern church community that reflects familiar cultural trends. Whatever the personal preference, my research confirms that a style of music with which congregants feel comfortable affects their choice of church.

Stokes uses the example of a private collection of CDs to illustrate the ways in which music can be used "as a means of transcending the limitations of our own place in space… Music does not then simply provide the marker in a prestructured social space, but the means by which this space can be transformed (1994, 4). Indeed, Stokes argues, a personal collection of CDs is a significant marker of personal identities:

> CDs bought and owned indicate the various selves we possess and the moral and physical boundaries we put in place as individuals (1994, 4).

In the same way that the presence of certain CDs in our private collection indicates our moral and physical boundaries, so too does the absence of others suggest how we perceive ourselves. Stokes points out that

> A moment's reflection on our own musical practices brings home to us the sheer profusion of identities and selves that we possess (1994, 4).

From observation, however, the profusion of identities present amongst the members of a congregation does not appear to be reflected in the music chosen for them. Results from the questionnaire I distributed at Christ Church Midrand in 2007 indicated that 56% of the congregation were White and 27% were Black. The rest of the congregants were either Coloured, Indian or East Asian. This diversity of race is not adequately reflected in musical choice at Christ Church Midrand. However, this situation is not unique either in this country or other parts of the world. From my observation of a number of South African churches, most songs have been chosen from collections published by major Christian publishing houses – these are English songs most often written in a contemporary style. Informal discussions with church musicians from Belfast, Addis Ababa and London have revealed the same trend in these places. While the scope of this dissertation does not allow for exploration into the representation of all language and ethnic groups in South African churches, I have observed that amongst Afrikaans-speaking Christians there is frustration that not enough contemporary church songs are written in their language.

If a personal CD collection indicates the numerous identities possessed by one person, as Stokes argues, then how much more does a congregation possess a variety of identities expressed in personal CD collections or preferred radio stations? The way in which music informs church society is significant because it aids the establishment of a collective identity. In a sermon entitled "Relevance and Irrelevance in Music: The Now Of Worship", Goins remarks on the fact that his four children ranging from 29 to 16 years of age all have their own listening sensibilities and tastes. "They have four different CD collections, and do not appreciate each others' music. So which is the most appropriate musical expression in worship for youth culture? Is it alternative rock, middle-of-the-road pop, hip-hop, folk music, swing, heavy metal, black gospel, ska or country?" (1999).

In communities where cultural practices are directly associated with music, a particular genre or even specific song can be a powerful tool in creating identity, as Stokes points out:

> The insistent evocation of place in Irish balladry or the 'Country and Irish' heard on juke-boxes in bars in Ireland and amongst migrant communities in England and the United States is a striking example, defining a moral and political community in relation to the world in which they find themselves (Stokes 1994, 3).

In the same way, though on a larger scale, just as migrant workers, refugees and tourists can be transported momentarily to their homeland by hearing music that reminds them of their country and, ultimately, their collective identity, so too does church music have the power to create a collective identity by transporting congregants into a time of common purpose and experience. The purpose of such an experience is described in most Christian churches as "worship".

Denominations of Christian churches are characterised by different styles of worship. A detailed exploration of 'worship' reveals that music is not its primary vehicle. However, for now, I use the term to refer to the sung section of the church service. The Pentecostal church movement is known for its charismatic and contemporary worship, setting a benchmark against which some less Charismatic churches compare themselves. Other churches are more concerned with using music to create atmosphere. Music, and in most cases dance, can transform an ordinary gathering of people into a crowd who sing and move with one purpose. Waterman argues that

> It is important that music and dance…are not just seen as static symbolic objects which have to be understood in a context, but are themselves a patterned context within which other things happen (Waterman quoted in Stokes 1994, 5).

This quotation raises two important issues. Firstly, that it is in singing and music-making (and the resultant dancing in some churches) that worship is perceived to have happened. Secondly and concomitantly, it is in the context of music-making and singing that 'other things happen' (Stokes 1994, 5). Music communicates more than the lyrics of expression attached to it. Apart from creating effective associations, music also stands for cultural leadership and reflects the history from which the style originated. Hawn argues that the Western church has a responsibility to include music from other cultures in order to "reflect an ethical choice that seeks to stem the tide of Western artistic hegemony" (2007, 16).

While it seems important that the music selected should reflect the demographics of a church community, the risk of gimmickry and inauthenticity must also be addressed. Stokes insists that "what is important is not just musical performance, but *good* performance, if music and dance are to make a social event happen" (1994, 5). *Good* musical performance also shows respect to the minority cultures whose music is being performed.

Because people encounter diverse language or cultural barriers (especially in countries like South Africa), pressure is placed on churches to cater for the needs of all members of the congregation despite their different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. Music proves crucial here, but also makes certain demands. Singing traditional African songs in an English church only does the congregation justice if the level of performance is good. The robust performance of music representing diverse ethnicities unites the congregation and at the same time draws attention to the cultural barriers that exist between the church community and the outside world. Stokes emphasises this point:

> I would argue [therefore] that music is socially meaningful not entirely but largely because it provides a means by which people recognise identities (1994, 5).

While the act of worshipping God as a community of diverse people unites the congregation and separates it at the same time from the rest of the secular world, a sub-culture is formed. Every church constructs its own unique social and cultural boundaries, dependent upon the particular mix of races, cultures, economic groupings and other factors that emerge in a particular time and place.

In a study on ethnic identity, Davies identifies two sets of boundaries within ethnic groups. I argue that these are also relevant to the church context. While not particularly related to religious identity, Davies' study provides a useful frame of reference here. Firstly, "social and geographic boundaries of the group define who is a member and who is not" (1982, 384). While many Christian communities tend to be inclusive of people from various social categories and economic brackets, there is no doubt that language, style of preaching and location are all equally important factors in attracting worshippers to a particular church. Johannesburg, for example, does not yet have a sophisticated public transport system, thus people with cars are able to join congregations not necessarily in their immediate location. There are, however, a large number of people who walk to church because they

don't have private transport. In such cases, the local church embodies the culture of the suburb in which it is located. When Christ Church Midrand first moved onto their current property, the surrounding area featured equestrian estates. The demographics of the suburb have changed rapidly over the last five years however, and the surrounding area is largely residential with town house complexes being most prevalent. This fact has affected the demographics of the church community, transforming it from a predominantly white, English-speaking group to a diverse multi-racial community in which many cultures and languages are represented. The suburb of Hillbrow, in which Christ Church Hillbrow is situated, is another such example. The church attracts refugees from Zimbabwe, emigrants from Nigeria, and South Africans from all over the country who seek employment in Johannesburg. A number of films have been made about this suburb, so notorious for its violence.[9] The majority of people who live in Hillbrow belong to a lower economic bracket, and it is unlikely that the Christians amongst them can travel far to services. For security reasons it is equally unlikely that residents in other suburbs would choose to travel into Hillbrow.

Secondly, Davies identifies the "moral boundaries of the group, which define what is acceptable and characteristic behaviour of the members, and what is unacceptable behaviour, characteristic of outsiders" (ibid). From general observation, Pentecostal churches place great emphasis on the sung worship section of a church service, which can last between forty-five minutes to two hours. Such services usually have less rigid divisions into periods of singing, prayer and teaching. Public display of emotions is considered normative. If the congregation feels 'led by the Spirit' to continue singing, the order of events will be adjusted. Spontaneous clapping, and in some churches the use of flags and ribbons for 'spiritual dancing' occur. Music is used to create a particular atmosphere. During prayers, a keyboardist may play softly in the background to set the mood for the next song. Speaking in tongues is often encouraged, again with musical accompaniment.[10]

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[9] The films *Jerusalema* (2008) and *Hillbrow Kids* (1999) have captured the harsh reality of life in Hillbrow.

[10] *Speaking in tongues* is the action of speaking in a language, usually foreign to the individual. It is referred to in the Bible in the book of Acts when the apostles spoke in tongues during the time of Pentecost as well as in other instances as instructions to the early church. The practice is encouraged in the Pentecostal church from which it derives its name. Many Evangelical churches do not encourage the practice, maintaining it was a practice that was specific to the time of the apostles.

While some exceptions exist, Evangelical churches tend to be more conservative in their display of emotions and music has a vital role to play in this trend. In particularly conservative churches, it has been my experience that the curtailment of music results in a less emotive service. To demonstrate how various churches structure their services and incorporate music, I have included an extract from David Peacock's seminar entitled "Planning and Leading Worship That Connects". Not one of the service orders in Figure 1-1 is employed by churches included in this study, but they demonstrate typical structures and are thus instructive within the context of my study.

A Contemporary Music Driven Structure

- Welcome
- Notices
- Song (Lively)
- Song (Even more lively)
- Song (Wild)
- Song (Quieter)
- Song (Even quieter)
- Open prayer
- Song (Quiet)
- Song (Quiet)
- Reading and Talk
- Song (Controlled)
- Prayer Ministry Time with songs (Quiet)
- Service gradually closes

A Liturgical Order

- Invitation to worship and greeting
- Approach to worship prayer
- Praise - music and prayer
- Psalm - sung or spoken
- Old Testament Reading
- Canticle
- Creed
- Intercessions
- Hymn
- Sermon
- Prayer
- Hymn with offering
- Benediction

A Free Church Order

- Approach to worship and prayer
- Praise - hymn/song and prayer
- Confession prayer and assurance of God's mercy
- Children's talk
- Song for children to leave
- Old Testament reading
- Hymn
- New Testament Reading
- Hymn
- Offering and Notices
- Intercessions
- Hymn
- Sermon
- Prayer
- Hymn
- Benediction

Figure 1-1: Peacock, D. 2006. An extract from "Planning and Leading Worship that Connects".

In many Evangelical churches, there is less clapping and far less congregational interjection during the preaching. In the three Evangelical churches included in this study, music plays an important role and occurs in every service. Stokes emphasises the role music plays in 'embodying' social identity, when he writes:

> Musics are invariably communal activities, that bring people together in specific alignments, whether as musicians, dancers or listening audiences. The 'tuning in' (Schutz 1977) through music of these social alignments can provide a powerful affective experience in which social identity is literally embodied (1994, 12).

Stokes also points out that in many tribal communities, music and dance are the only means by which the wider community appears to itself. I propose that the same is true in many church communities. Often congregations are divided into age categories for various church activities. Children attend Sunday School during the main service and the youth sometimes have their own service too. Because the music at the start of every Sunday service is the common denominator for every subgroup, it plays an important role in uniting the otherwise separated community. One of the important agents in 'tuning in' during this time of singing, is the text of the music. The words of song items, congregational songs and prayers unite the congregation and are therefore critical in establishing a congregation's collective identity.

1.4.1 Demographic Identity

Frith explains that, for some, music is the paramount expression of human creativity, "for others the symbolic affirmation of Western cultural tradition" (1989, vii). It is a reality that Western influence is evident in much of the church music in use around the world. Christian Copyright Licensing International records the most frequently sung songs in each continent within certain periods. Evidence of the dominance of Western tradition is evident in the most recent list of the top five songs that were sung in Africa for a given period:

Song	Author	Country of origin
1. Shout to the Lord	Darlene Zschech	Australia
2. Lord I lift Your name on high	Rick Founds	USA
3. Come, now is the time to worship	Brian Doerksen	UK
4. Above all	Lenny Le Blanc/Paul Baloche	USA
5. Ancient of Days	Jamie Harvill/ Gary Sadler	USA

Figure 1-2: The top five songs as recorded by CCLI between 1 April and 30 September 2007 for the continent of Africa.

The shortage of worship songs written by South Africans first inspired my interest in the subject of Indigenous Worship. In *Preparing Sunday Dinner*, authors Yod Er, Kropf and Slough (2005, 41) argue that an understanding of a church's demographics is critical in leading praise and worship that connects with the community. They suggest that the demographic identity of a congregation is likely to affect the performance of a church's repertoire. Too many songs in a foreign language may hinder heartfelt expression as too much focus is required on pronunciation. Songs that are slow and repetitive may lose their intended impact. Songs that are more contemporary will be accessible to congregants who listen to pop music; others may have aversions to singing hymns because of the style of music. The authors propose that attention should be paid to the following aspects of a demographic: Social Connections, Life Stages, Education, Economic Class, Languages, Expressive Styles, Spiritual Types, Personality Types and Theological Accents (2005, 41). This subject is explored in greater detail in Chapter Four.

1.5 Conclusion

The incorporation of popular music into the Christian Church has resulted in a culture of mass-consumption to some extent, whereby churches around the world all sing the same songs. That most songs are English is part of Christian church tradition - most hymn-writers were English-speaking and so many hymns were translated into other languages much later. Evidence of this is still present in Africa where Christian communities sing traditional hymns in African vernacular. However, the current trend of adopting contemporary popular music as the style and culture of choice is a subject of some debate. Whilst many contemporary songs are translated into African, European and Asian vernacular resulting in an apparent consideration of ethnicities other than those belonging to the Western world, current practice begs an answer of the question of identity. If a church strives to include all people within their community, a thorough demographic enquiry is necessary.

In this chapter I argued that music constructs identity and place. The choice of whether to use traditional or contemporary music unites or alienates individuals within a congregation. Since society is formed in the process of music-making, I propose that music is a tool for determining the culture of a church. The fashion, language and cultural practices associated with a particular style of music determines who will stay and who will leave. The connotative capacity of a particular piece of music, Stokes argues, is able to transform a geographic location by stirring memory and emotion. There is a danger of mistaking the uplifting effect of certain styles of music with worship. Adjectives such as ‘contemporary worship’ are used to describe the music at certain churches. However, I argue that music is only one of the vehicles for worshipping God. A more detailed exploration of worship is covered in Chapter Five.

Before undertaking a thorough investigation of demographic identity is undertaken under the heading “Indigenous Worship”, I explore some of the most controversial arguments against the incorporation of contemporary music into the church in the next chapter, entitled “The ‘Worship War’ Debate”.

Chapter Two: The 'Worship War' Debate

> *Some of my colleagues within CESA (Church of England in South Africa) look quite disparagingly upon music because they think that its really just the starter for the main course - which is the preaching of the Word. Now of course the preaching of the Word is critical but I think the Word is taught and sung and prayed through music; so you are praying and you are teaching and you are communicating through music and the words of music.*
>
> (Bishop Martin Morrison, Rector of Christ Church Midrand)

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter I examine the 'worship war' debate, exploring some of the main reasons why there is opposition to the use of contemporary music in the church. Besides issues of theology and ethics, the infiltration of popular culture into what has historically been regarded a high culture divides opinion, particularly when it comes to the use of instruments like drums and guitars in the accompaniment of hymns and songs. While some work has been done on the subject in academic journals, much of the discussion that follows is found in the writings of popular authors who enjoy the readership of Christians around the world. The argument against popular culture is based largely on John Blanchard and Dan Lucarini's *Can We Rock the Gospel?* (2006). Both are respected theologians whose work is available in South Africa, and known to many local Christians. I summarise the book's argument so as to clarify the main issues in the debate and also the firmly held opinions it evokes. A second important source, and a counter-argument against that presented in *Can We Rock the Gospel?* is John M Frame's *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defence* (1997). In it he defends the use of contemporary music in the church, often confronting Blanchard and Lucarini' s favoured position.

2.2 A Question of Importance

The phrase 'worship war' has been coined by a number of authors to describe the debate that has arisen regarding the role and type of music used in the contemporary Christian church. Carson points out that "...the sad fact of contemporary church life is that there are few subjects calculated to kindle more heated debate than the subject of worship" (2002, 11). David Music outlines the terrain covered in this debate in his book, *America's Worship Wars* (York 2003), asking the following questions:

- Is the purpose of worship to evangelise the lost or to lead believers to communion with God?
- Is sacred music set apart from other music only by a religious text or should it have a special character?
- Are certain styles or practices off limits because of their associations either with the world or with other Christians whose beliefs are not in accord with our own? (Music 2007, 56).

That instrumental accompaniment is an integral part of most worship services is an accepted fact, although not all church leaders view it as of much significance, as is evident in Bishop Morrison's comment heading this chapter. This is a minority view, however, and for most Christians, both leaders and congregants, the music component of a service is of critical importance and interest. Frame reminds Christians that music matters not only to mortals but also to God.

> One of the most wonderful things that Scripture says about music is that when we sing, the Lord Jesus is singing with us (See Ps 22:22, Zeph. 3:17; Rom. 15:9). Our God is a singing Lord, one who joins us and leads us in triumphant song (Frame 1996, 114).

Augustine of Hippo is attributed as stating "Whoever sings to God in worship, prays twice" (Wren 2000, 1). Wren interprets this as meaning that by singing praise or prayer, we "add something to the utterance" (2000,1). Hughes affirms that "the very act of singing God's Word, or singing scriptural truth about God, is intrinsically edifying because music is so easily remembered" (Hughes quoted in Carson 2002, 168). There is also sufficient evidence in Scripture to conclude that the church should celebrate the presence of music within its institution (Psalm 49, Psalm 50 and Colossians 3).

There is a danger, however, of placing so much emphasis on music that the focus on worship is lost. I quote at length the dilemma that preacher Mike Pilavachi found himself in, and how it impacted for all congregants on the profundity of their worship experience:

> ... At first, it was difficult to put our finger on the problem. On the surface, everything was just fine: the musicians were tuning their instruments and the sound-men were getting out of bed on time. Each service contained a block of songs that focused on the cross and gave people the chance to get down to business with God. To make this easier, the music was (nearly) up-to-date, the chairs had disappeared and the lights were low - What better atmosphere for young people to worship God?

> Yet, we seemed to have lost the spark. We seemed to be going through the motions, but I noticed that although we were singing the songs, our hearts, were far from Him. Was it Matt Redman's [the worship leader's] fault? I listened. He wasn't singing any more off notes than usual. Then one day it clicked; we had become connoisseurs of worship instead of participants of it.
>
> In our hearts, we were giving the worship team grades on a scale from one to ten: 'Not that song again,' 'I can't hear the bass,' 'I like the way she sings better.' We had made the band the performers of worship and ourselves the audience.
>
> We had forgotten that we are *all* the performers of worship and that God is the audience. We had forgotten that sacrifice is central to biblical worship. We are called to offer our bodies as living sacrifices - this is *our* spiritual act of worship (Romans 12:1). We are called to offer our sacrifice of praise (Heb. 13:15).
>
> We were challenged to ask ourselves individually, 'When I come through the door of the church, what am I bringing as my contribution to worship?' The truth came to us: worship is not a spectator sport, it is not a product moulded by the taste of the consumers. It is not about what we can get out of it; it is all about God.
>
> We needed to take drastic action. For a while, in order to truly learn this lesson, we banned the band. We fired Redman!
>
> Then we sat around in circles and said that if no one brought a sacrifice of praise, we would spend the meeting in silence. At the beginning we virtually did! It was a very painful process. We were learning again not to rely on the music (Extract from "When the Music Fades: Eternal Truths Behind The Heart of Worship", written by Paul Martin (2006)).

Finding a balance between too much and too little emphasis on sung worship is thus a challenge for any pastor and his community. Then there is the equally important decision of what music to choose, regarding both theological appropriateness and representativeness. Obviously different cultural, social, geographical and linguistic profiles within the global Christian community have different musical needs.

2.3 The Argument in a Nutshell

In the following section, I delineate the main points that have defined the 'worship war' debate, drawing battle lines between those who believe that the church should retain the Christian music practices developed during the last centuries, and those who argue that we live in a radically different era and should therefore take cognizance of new musical tastes and practices. It is important, protagonists of this position argue, that the contemporary church reflect the global spread of the church and also the strongly popular tastes of younger generations.

In *Contemporary Worship Music: A Biblical Defence,* Frame, who represents the latter body of opinion, lists some of the arguments he has encountered against the use of contemporary music. What he calls Contemporary Worship Music (CWM) is the same as Contemporary Church Music (CChM), and both terms occur in books on the subject. Drawing largely on Wells' books *No Place for Truth* (1996) and *God in the Wasteland* (1996), he categorises the antagonistic position against Contemporary Worship Music (CWM) according to established sociological world-views. While his presentation of these views may be deemed simplistic by academic theorists, they are nevertheless useful for those wanting an overview of the discursive terrain:

> Subjectivism: The concern that CWM is preoccupied with the worshipper rather than with God.
>
> Humanism: The concern that CWM does not set forth the Sovereign Lord of Scripture but rather praises a god made to the specifications of human beings, who exists to meet human need.
>
> Anti-intellectualism: CWM tends to be simpler than traditional hymnody... It makes fewer intellectual demands on the worshipper. It does not presuppose high levels of education, a love for high art, or theological sophistication. In the minds of the critics, this simply reflects the anti-intellectualism which they find in Contemporary Worship generally – a 'dumbing down' of Christian Worship.
>
> Psychologism: Much of the appeal of CWM is in the emotions it illicits: ecstatic joy, with clapping and shouting, feelings of closeness (sometimes romantic, in the critics' estimation) with other worshippers and Jesus.
>
> Professionalism: In ways suggested above, CWM strikes some observers as manipulative, as one technique for getting people to come to church and keep coming. It has been used in churches that have grown big; therefore it is recommended for churches that want to become bigger. It is one way of…'marketing' the gospel.
>
> Consumerism: CWM seems to be a way of giving people what they want rather than what they ought to have…Because entertainment is almost the ultimate consumer commodity, CWM turns praise into entertainment.

> Pragmatism: CWM seems to be justified as part of a programme of church growth. Advocates of CWM point to the growth of churches that use this style of music rather than to biblical principles to justify its use.
>
> Temporal Chauvinism: Advocates of CWM… have sometimes spoken harshly of the historic traditions of the church. They have too eagerly set aside time-tested traditions as if wisdom began with their generation…therefore they have abandoned the great hymns of past generations in favour of ephemeral pop-style music, as if the highest virtue were in being up-to-date (1997, 51).

To a large extent, the arguments cited above cover the position taken by theologians and church practitioners who criticize Contemporary Church Music. John Blanchard and Dan Lucarini in *Can we rock the gospel?* (2006) exemplify this position, with their criticism of the inclusion of some contemporary instruments and the implied unchristian lifestyles and more formal theological and ethical flaws that they argue ensue. Rock music, the generic term and category they seem to assign to popular church music, is simply not appropriate in church halls; more even, it verges on being unchristian in their view. It has a history of rebellion, narcotics and illicit sex from which it cannot be divorced;[11] therefore Christians should have no part in it for fear that their very identity as men and women of God might be at stake (2006, 74).

While a position such as this may be written off as deeply conservative, Blanchard and Lucarini do nevertheless represent a certain body of opinion. Although history reveals that there has always been debate around music, Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) brings with it new and undoubtedly serious issues, issues that preachers and church music directors have had to confront over the last three or four decades. As stated, the authors

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[11] Blanchard and Lucarini's condemnation of rock is based on a reading that can see no distinction between the music and the behaviour of some of its most famous performers. They are not alone in this, at least amongst a public that has explored it more openly. Popular music theorist Simon Frith tells us that some people "hear in their [the rockers'] music an explicit denial of the values of [Western cultural] tradition: for them, music may mean the sound of protest, rebellion and even revolution (1989, vii). Cusic reminds us that anti-Vietnam war sentiment and the Civil Rights Movement in America provided fuel for the counterculture that found expression in rock 'n' roll in the 1950s. Many rock musicians in the 1950s through to the 1970s pursued an anti-establishment identity in response to war and racism, condemned as the "enemy of 'pure' music" (Cusic 2002, 280). It must indeed be acknowledged that the music was founded in the 'good' intentions to "make love, not war" of the peace era. For many young musicians, underlying the anti-establishment sentiments associated with rock 'n' roll was "an idealism, an attempt to make life – and the United States – the way they thought it should be" (ibid, 279). The ideology associated with rock music at its inception formed the basis for musicians to fashion their own styles and readings of music and themselves - hence Heavy Rock, Country Rock and a variety of tributary genres.

under discussion focus primarily on what they categorise as rock, although more discriminating theorists contend that they are in fact using the word as an umbrella term to accommodate a myriad other contemporary popular musical genres. Hard rock, pop, soft rock, psychedelic, experimental, folk rock, country rock and many others all fall in this general category, in their view, and are all potentially dangerous for dedicated Christians. Thus:

> In the contemporary worship music movement, much has been made of the diversity of music styles, yet it seems that the vast majority of contemporary worship music used in churches around the globe is one form or another of rock (2006, 16).

Frith (1989, viii), in his preface to *World music, politics and social change*, highlights the fact that all music is subject to social, psychological and philosophical undercurrents. Blanchard and Lucarini (2006) concur that this is particularly evident in the case of rock music, given its anti-establishment legacy. In a document that covers 249 pages, these authors detail examples of people whose lives are less than exemplary who have been involved in some way with the performance of rock music. Christians, they insist, should not put themselves, namely their Christian identity, at risk. What it is in particular that these two writers find threatening in rock music, I detail in the following sections.

2.3.1 Dangerous Drums

Blanchard and Lucarini turn first to the question of instrumentation, and most particularly drums. Their fear is that drumming puts the worshipper into a passive, hypnotised state, undermining the Christian value of self-control, on both the rational and moral level. The Christian should be independent-minded, in control of his or her life and present in the reality of day-to-day existence, they argue. They support their position by citing the concurring opinions of two radically different individuals, Professor William Shafer, a non-Christian sociologist, and the late Jimi Hendrix, a rock guitarist with a drug problem that ultimately cost him his life. Both attest to the fact that rock music renders the individual passive, and out of control of his or her identity. Shafer writes that “...what is undeniable about rock is its hypnotic power. It has gripped many young people around the world and transformed their lives” (2006, 54). Talking about his own experience as a musician, Jimi Hendrix asserted that, “Atmospheres are going to come through music, because the music is a spiritual thing of its own. You can hypnotise people with the music and when you get

them at their weakest point, you can preach into the sub-conscious what you want to say" (2006, 54).

These are powerful views and useful to Blanchard and Lucarini's argument. In their diatribe against drums, the authors tell us what is anthropologically and scientifically well known, namely that these ancient instruments have a direct effect on the body, because of our innately rhythmic construction, both internally (we are controlled by the pulse of heartbeat and blood pressure) and in synchronization with the universe. This is a generally accepted fact, as is the fact that drums speak to the body in a way that no other instrument can. Drumming, Blanchard and Lucarini conclude, is trance-inducing, again a fact confirmed by ex-rock musicians and participants in drum-circles:

> Over the years, drumming in various drum circles…I have become more and more *entranced* with the experience (2006, 56).

An ex-rock musician writes:

> To get into rock, you have to give into it, let it inside, flow with it to the point where it consumes you, and all you can feel or hear or think about is the music (ibid).

That constant repetition invokes a less active, `hypnotic' kind of listening has also traditionally been accepted as true. Certain kinds of meditative music in the East, and diverse modern Western styles such as those composed by the American Minimalists Steve Reich, Philip Glass and Terry Riley, etc. are confirmation of this, and much has been written about it. Repetition, not only as a structural unifier, but also as a means of quieting the mind (adapted from John Cage) is thus not unique to rock. It is an element of all music. Even the old-fashioned hymn makes use of repeated chord and melodic structures for every stanza and in some hymns these amount to six or seven.

De Waal (1994), in "Does Music Induce or Affect a State of Trance in Certain Professed Christians?", explores the results of recent research into the relationship between music and trance. She refers to Rouget's work in Brazil which finds that the *candomblé* sect make use of 6/8 rhythms with varying tempi to trigger trances. Rouget also explores the use of rhythm to induce trance in Southern India:

> The dancers are first of all drawn into an easy rhythm with which they identify completely and thus sink into a sort of hypnotic half-sleep. The musicians then create a shock by means of several violent drum strokes and embark on a new, much more complex rhythm. After hesitating an instant, the dancers are taken

> over by this new rhythm without even consciously willing it. In some of them, this provokes a trance state and a complete loss of self-control, as though the rhythm were a kind of spirit that had possessed them. This trance state is characterised by insensitivity to pain, complete loss of modesty, and visionary perceptions (Rouget 1985, 80).

This ethnographic report, just one of thousands conducted over the last century, suggests that there is much more to trance and induced loss of self-control than can be attributed purely to rhythm or repetition. There are examples cited of people entering a state of trance while listening to slow sung lines of classical poetry. Some are able to enter a state of trance in silence. Ferschiou investigated possession dances performed by women in Tunisia, finding that "the women who listened to *dhikr,* chanted in the neighbouring room by the men, fell into a state of trance as the rhythm accelerated" (Rouget quoted in De Waal 1994, 27). In "Music and Trance", Becker notes that while the gamelan ensemble is used as an aid in the "Barong/Rangda" ritual of Bali, volunteers willingly seek a trance state. Interestingly, it is not the percussive ensemble that initially aids them on their journey: "all the participants are put into trance at the temple to long, slow vocal lines of classical poetry sung in unison by a chorus of women from the village" (1994, 43). Here trance is not affected by drums or repetition; the vital ingredient is an active willingness to enter a state of trance.

Returning to Blanchard and Lucarini's position: they quote Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones who, in his book "Preaching and Preachers", discusses the effect of music (any type of music) on human emotions and the mind:

> We can become drunk on music – there is no question about that. Music can have the effect of creating an emotional state in which the mind is no longer functioning as it should be, and no longer discriminating. I have known people to sing themselves into a state of intoxication without realizing what they were doing (Blanchard and Lucarini 2006, 57).

This passage suggests, therefore, that a person may be induced to enter a trance against his or her will. However, there is plenty of evidence refuting this. De Waal believes, more moderately, that music and trance are traditionally linked because music is usually present at trance sessions; however, she insists that it is also the case that only certain people are attracted to trance. In a chapter entitled "Manifestations of Trance", she concludes that:

> The individual who is orientated towards trance and thus experiencing physiological, psychological or emotional disruptions, will gravitate toward the milieu of possessed persons, and will be present at their ceremonies. Since

> these ceremonies are accompanied by music, he becomes impregnated with the musical atmosphere of these sessions (1994, 31).

Tempering this, and coming to her ultimate conclusion, she quotes Rouget:

> Music can sensitise and awaken a subject to an awareness of trance or possession, but this, however "does not mean that music is responsible for the psychological disturbances he encountered which led him to follow this path (Rouget quoted in De Waal 1994, 32).

Also in concurrence with Rouget's *Music and Trance*, Judith Becker, in "Sounding the Mind: Music and Trance," (1994) asserts that heavy, fast drumming and repetitious melodic phrases are not necessarily the cause of trance.

> [Rouget] demonstrated that, given the right cultural expectations, any kind of music, whether it be vocal or instrumental, can be associated with trance states (Becker 1994, 41).

It seems clear, then, that while there is credible evidence in *Can we rock the gospel?* that repetitive drumming and the chanting of mantras are trance-inducing, it is equally clear that only people who want (or are culturally encouraged) to go into trance-states will do so when listening to repetitive drumming or any other hypnotic-type music. Gregory Rouget, Judith Becker and Michael Winkelman all analyse the role of the brain in entering a trance state and all three conclude that the desire and ability to do so is the result of learnt cultural behaviour.

2.3.2 Dangerous Decibels

Blanchard and Lucarini object, as do many others for different reasons (such as medical specialists of the ear, and also particularly sensitive listeners) to the volume at which rock music is played. They cite in particular the degree of amplification involved in big concerts. While a pneumatic hammer generates 94 decibels, they argue, at the average rock concert decibel readings of 130 are reached, leaving many fans with hearing loss and rendering any verbal content inaudible (2006, 58). Many listeners agree with them here, even if only because it seems logical to want to hear the words of a song.

When it comes to the question of the Christian event, it is critical that all texts be audible. At the heart of Evangelical Christianity is the belief that the Bible is the means by which God communicates with mankind. Every part of the Evangelical church service is designed to be heard: "The term Evangelical has been applied since the sixteenth century

to Christians who emphasise the personal appropriation of salvation and the spiritual importance of the reading of scripture" (Frame 1996, 44).

While all Christians would presumably agree that church is about audible communication, it is nevertheless a sweeping generalization to assert that all rock music is played at such high levels that nothing meaningful can be heard.

2.3.3 Dodgy Doctrine

> *Christian rockers are simply copying and imitating a music style that was created and inspired by men who in their lust for freedom…have rejected the God of the Bible.*
>
> *(Blanchard 2006, 62)*

The above constitutes one of Blanchard and Lucarini's most extreme criticisms of Contemporary Church Music. The genre of rock and the worship of God are fundamentally incompatible, they suggest; any attempt to reclaim the genre of rock music for God is doomed to failure. In trying to do so, Christian musicians inevitably copy secular rock bands, and put themselves at risk of acquiring other unchristian habits. They list a number of bands whom they deem to be surrogates of their secular equivalents - suggesting in the course of their argument that this trend is unique to the genre of rock. "Jars of Clay", they complain, sound just like "REM", "Sixpence None the Richer" like "Nirvana" and "Third Day" like "Lynyrd Skynyrd" (2006, 64).

What Blanchard and Lucarini do not mention is that the relationship between sacred and secular music goes back as far as medieval times. There are numerous examples of tunes being transferred from the one category to the other, as were instruments and settings. The hymns included in Bach's great Passions may not actually represent a transfer from sacred to secular, but nevertheless they show how popular, high and art culture were enmeshed, coming from the canon of everyday Protestant hymnody of the time. In the nineteenth century it became a major trend for classical composers to draw on folk or popular music (Schubert, Brahms and Mahler) and in the twentieth century the folk traditions of numerous countries on the periphery of the European mainstream were analysed, appropriated and worked over (Bartok, Stravinsky, Elgar etc). This kind of borrowing and appropriation has been written about extensively by musicologists, rarely with any sense of denigration. In a different and simpler way, it can be observed that basic

chordal structures and verse forms occur, almost identically, in both popular and sacred song. Tracing the particular provenance of a song or hymn may be interesting, but it has nothing to do with its suitability as a worship song. The more important criterion is whether it enhances the communication of the Christian message. Thus there is no Biblical foundation for suggesting that creative utterances in the secular world should not be taken up and adapted for the Christian service (barring issues of copyright of course).

Quite another point is whether Christian bands accused of imitating secular groups live lives that are less than exemplary in Christian terms. Although this might seem quite irrelevant to this discussion, Blanchard and Lucarini do in fact choose to take it up, in the cause of attempting to prove that rock music has attached to it the virus of unchristian living.

The authors begin their onslaught by referring to a particular incident relating to Bono of U2. This musician, if asked, would probably call himself a Christian. However, in 2005 at the band's Madison Square Garden concert, he allegedly chanted, "Jesus, Jew, Mohammed – all true" (2006, 70). It is of course not possible to know exactly what Bono meant: whether he was proposing that these religions are all true to their respective believers, or whether they are all true in the eyes of a shared God. Perhaps the singer intended this remark as a critique of the exclusivity of Christianity? Christians would probably agree that Bono's comment indicates that he does not understand what it means to be a Christian (and he is by no means the only professed Christian to be guilty of this), but this is surely a different point. Bono and U2's music is not generally played in any mainstream Christian church, but again this is an interesting but not really relevant fact. I cite this only to point out how confused Blanchard and Lucarini's argument becomes, when they attempt to attach morals to music - or is it to musicians?

2.3.4 Impertinent Instruments

The presence of an instrumental band in the twenty-first century church service is increasingly common. Some traditionalists continue to feel offended, complaining that this is disrespectful of the history of the church, and its chosen sacred instruments - hence the titling of this section, 'Impertinent Instruments'.

Blanchard and Lucarini discuss the entry of ‘rock’ instruments into the church, in a section entitled, “Crossing the Rubicon”:

> The barbarians, as it were, once so distant a threat on the frontier, had crossed the Rubicon and were now at the gates of the city. Rock music was no longer only an evangelistic tool to be used in order to reach those who would never darken the doors of the local church (2006, 13).

The justification for introducing such apparently disrespectful and impertinent resources as electric guitars, drums and amplifying systems into the church is, the writers complain, to attract new worshippers. (It is particularly difficult to understand their reasoning here). Megachurches are the worst, apparently:

> [One of the studies Scott Thumma, a professor of sociology at Hartford Seminary, conducted] found that church growth was strongly related to the use of electric guitars. It’s not surprising that megachurches have a full worship band with drums, guitars and an electric keyboard (2006, 13).

In my own quest to discover the benefits of using contemporary instruments, I asked both Dr. Tim Cantrell (Senior Pastor of Honeyridge Baptist Church) and Bishop Martin Morrison, (Rector of Christ Church Midrand) to comment. Both cautioned strongly against Blanchard and Lucarini’s rather dogmatic stance:

> **Dr. Cantrell:** I’m fine with being dogmatic when your dogma is clearly linked with Scripture but where Scripture allows freedom, I think we have to be less dogmatic.

Cantrell did admit, however, that he found drums distracting when used as accompaniment to hymns; “...congregants need to remember that the greatest instrument is themselves, the congregation - the voice of God’s people”. Ultimately what Christians need to ask of all kinds of instrumentation, Dr. Cantrell concluded, is: “...does it honour God, is it excellent, and does it contribute to congregational worship or not?”.

Bishop Morrison, Rector of Christ Church, Midrand, is also far more open to modern sounds than Blanchard and Lucarini:

> **Bishop Morrison:** If you look in the Bible, they were contemporary. They used the musical instruments of the day which are listed, in Psalm 150 and Psalm 149. I think that that is what we must do.

Instruments, he continued, are neither Christian nor non-Christian. All cultures have their own instruments and these are the obvious medium through which to pass on the Christian message; through the sounds that people know and understand. This is a very modern view, in which all identities are recognized and can contribute to the indigenous sound of a particular culture and even congregation, as I argue in my final chapter.

2.3.5 Evangelism Explosion

Blanchard and Lucarini are at their weakest when they argue that there is not one single example in the Old Testament of music being used to communicate Judaism to the heathen, and that there is no record in the New Testament of the early church using music for evangelistic purposes. They imply that music should be used by Christians for the act of worship and not for Evangelism: "…all music references are to the church at worship" (2006, 234). This, I would argue, is not a particularly informed or considered supposition: there are many modern activities in which the church is involved that are not specifically mentioned in the Bible, but which serve a valuable purpose. For example, serving tea and coffee after a service in an effort to encourage fellowship, and Sunday School lessons for children in which they are nurtured to understand Christian doctrine from a young age.

2.4 The Counter-Argument

Many of the flaws in Blanchard and Lucarini's argument are centered around dogged denials of the multi-faceted role that music has in the past and continues to play in sacred worship. Augustine of Hippo wrote many centuries ago that when we sing to God, we "pray twice" - we add something special to the words that we are communicating (Wren 2000, 1). This double form of prayer occurs no matter what the style of music, and rock is no exception. Blanchard and Lucarini seem to fail to understand that rock music is just another style of communicative language: for many people it is their best means of expression, the way in which they are best able to participate in the celebration of God. Suggesting that rock music is itself morally wrong is not only specious but also robs a generation of its own chosen means of expression.

Challies, in an attempt to unpick Blanchard and Lucarini's logic, begins by pointing out errors in their understanding of the term 'rock' music:

> They do point to a wide variety of forms of music they would associate with the moniker "rock music," and these range from folk and pop all the way to death metal and gangster rap. They quote lyrics and describe artists who barely brush the keys of pianos alongside those who tear relentlessly at distorted and amplified electric guitars. They discuss the Hymns category of Christian music "where you can find Jars of Clay rocking out on 'It is Well With My Soul'". So clearly even this song, which I believe has only acoustic guitar, bass and subtle drums, is categorised as rock music (2006, amazon.com Customer Review, accessed on 29 March 2008).

In short, as Challies exemplifies, to categorise all these different sounds, styles of music, functions and situations is almost like saying that Western Classical Music and Classical Music are one and the same thing, making no distinction between period, genre, style or instrumentation. It is to ignore the difference, for example, between Punk Rock, which is characterised by anti-establishment lyrics, and Pop, which is commercially driven both in its melodiousness and its focus on topics such as love and relationships. When we think of Folk Rock, to cite another example, we think of clean instrumentation and minimal twelve-string guitar strumming; Hard Rock, on the other hand is characterised by the use of electric guitars (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rock_music, accessed 23 September 2008).

Blanchard and Lucarini flounder similarly, to the point of being downright contradictory, when they say that while there is no such thing as 'Christian Music', certain instruments have an inherently moral or immoral status. The reader is left floundering too, as is the worship leader seeking advice. In their search for what they would regard as 'appropriate' music for the Christian service, Blanchard and Lucarini stipulate ultimately that it should give the believer "a repentant view of man's depravity" (2006, 236). In attempting to work out exactly what the authors mean, readers of this statement will conclude that it really skirts the issue. It is true that few amongst the contemporary canon of songs address the question of sin (I discuss some of the shortfalls of contemporary worship songs in the next chapter), but this is only one of the purposes of church music. In broad terms, it seems that Blanchard and Lucarini disapprove of anything to do with popular music and popular culture, from the instruments – viz. the inclusion of numerous letters from congregants who hate drums and amplified guitars - to the beat, the volume and the fact that much of it references the secular/commercial environment. In the end, the only conclusion can be that their argument is one-sided, their critique largely squeezed out of the words and actions of non-Christian rock musicians.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has largely been devoted to Blanchard and Lucarini's critique of rock music in *Can we rock the gospel?* Published in 2006, it is not the most recent of such critiques, but it is probably the most comprehensive in its tackling of the potential (and actual) ills of Contemporary Church Music. It has been amply reviewed, and its opinions exposed for what many consider an inability to confront the nature of modern life and culture, both sacred and secular, and the changed needs of the Christian Church post the fall of colonialism and Western cultural hegemony. It would, nevertheless, be a mistake to entirely write off their contribution to the body of literature devoted to the 'worship war': the issues they raise are, even if they require greater insight and flexibility, issues with which every Christian community should grapple. Tim Challies observes of these authors:

> They…[point] out some of the hypocrisies in the Christian music industry, not the least of which is tours emphasizing worship sponsored by secular companies. All of these are good and worthwhile emphases. Yet it seems to me that they simply cannot defend their case (2006, amazon.com Customer Review).

Turning in conclusion to Stokes' assertion that "...music is socially meaningful not entirely but largely because it provides means by which people recognise identities and places, and the boundaries which separate them" (1994, 5), rock music, as a broad generic term, does invite connotations of a particular identity. Some of its musicians have and still do believe that being a `rocker' includes a way of living and thinking that is contrary to Christian practice. However, not all rockers cultivate this mythical and arguably dangerous identity, even if their music, dress and performance style suggests otherwise. Rock music (the style) and rock culture (the lifestyle) must be separated. It is the culture associated with rock music rather than the musical genre itself that offends Christian morality. Rock music in itself is both versatile as a style and also a vehicle for different meanings, from the rebellion and narcissism associated with it, to more conformist and even profoundly religious sentiments that have been conveyed through it.

As a final comment, it seems worth reiterating that Christian identity exists in the integrity of the message, not in the style in which it is musically accompanied. This is of course not to deny the power of music in itself, and also its ability to mark place and community. As Cohen writes:

> Music plays a role in producing place as a material setting compromising the physical and built environment; as a setting for everyday social relations,

> practices and interactions; and as a concept or symbol that is represented or interpreted...The dynamic interrelationship between music and place suggests that music plays a very particular and sensual role (Cohen quoted in Leyshon et al. 1995, 433).

Music in the church thus works powerfully in conjunction with other aspects of Christian worship to promote Christian identity, as a particular space and also as a particular way of being in the world. The ‘worship war’ debate has forced the church to reconsider the relationship between music and worship, but it has by no means suggested that music is not a crucial part of Christian celebration. Nor is it likely that contemporary music will be abandoned in churches where it works well in underlining the identity of a particular group of people: many congregations enjoy praising God to the accompaniment of guitars, keyboards and drums, and feel unified by it. Equally, there will always be churches that prefer to use what is traditional and familiar.

Chapter Three: New is Good; Old is Better

> *We live, we are often told, in a museum culture, clinging on to artefacts of the past because we cannot invent appropriate ones ourselves.*
>
> (Frith 1989, vii)

3.1 Introduction

This statement raises the question as to whether anything new is ever valued. Is it perhaps human nature to appreciate something only in retrospect or is it rather that we cling to what we know? It seems, from talking informally to congregants at Christ Church Midrand that, regardless of the generation to which they belong, they prefer the music with which they have grown up. Frame writes: “One’s hymnody is his language of worship; it is the language of his heart’s conversation with God. To lose the hymns one has grown up singing is, therefore, no small thing” (1996, 117). In response to a question in my Worship Questionnaire about how often a new song should be introduced, one respondent wrote:

> New is good; old is better.

Whether this opinion is based on resistance to `the new’ or a genuine critique of Contemporary Church Music constitutes the basis of this chapter. Nick Page’s *And Now Let’s Move into a Time of Nonsense* (2004) in which the author asks practical questions related to choice of music, song writing and lead singing, provides me with an anchor for my investigation.

3.2 Practical Points

> *Worship is more than just words...It’s not just dry recognition of fact. It’s also about feeling the truth...The problem is that, if the words aren’t giving us any deep truth, then the emotion is all we’ve got.*
>
> (Page 2004, 31)

3.2.1 Where Have All the Wordsmiths Gone?

There is something awe-inspiring about a masterly painting or a well-constructed poem. Some contemporary worship songs are beautifully crafted and, in many cases, arguably

surpass the ancient hymns in their ability to provide a meaningful worship vocabulary for Christians today. There are others that rely on a rhythm section, varied instrumentation, a decent amplifying system and an enthusiastic crowd. Is it possible that hymn writing belonged to an age in which writing and poetry were considered art forms? Page argues for this in a chapter entitled, “From Poet to Pop-star: How We Got Into This Mess”. He points out that hymn writers lived in an age of poetry and many of them “published their work as books of poetry to be read and pondered on” (2004, 26).

> Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley did not write the music; they were lyricists. They were poets in a time when poetry was a major art form (2004, 37).

Page goes on to assert that it is because contemporary musicians presume to be both lyricists and musicians that the singer-songwriter model has led to a dilution of quality. He observes:

> Part of the problem is that we have changed from the poetry approach to the pop singer model. In previous times, hymns didn’t just inspire worship, they taught the congregations something about God...Hymns were the product of a society where poetry was still a major art form...Today the predominant model for verse-writing is the pop song. Poetry might be struggling but rock n’ roll is here to stay. Today’s worship songs are written by people steeped in pop and rock music traditions. Songs are not published as poems to be read, but tunes to be played...In poetry, what matters are the words - the metaphors, the images, the rhythm and the structure. In pop songs what matters is the melody, the hook, the beat. Pop songs want a tune that sticks in your brain. It doesn’t matter to them if the lyrics are nothing more than ‘A wop-bop-a-lum-bam-bop’ (2004, 37).

Page raises a common concern over the quality of lyrics in contemporary music. Striving for excellence in everything he or she does, it could be argued, is part of the Christian’s identity. However, as Page notes, many *hymns* are no longer in use and didn’t survive more than a couple of years for the same reason – namely weak lyrics. “Percy Dearmer counted 400 000 hymns that were in use at the end of the nineteenth century and his opinion was that only 200 of those were really good” (Page 2004, 15). It is a possibility that contemporary Christians are filtering through some excellent and also some weak songs. However, will the latter survive the next century? The question is whether there are any contemporary songs that will survive over a hundred years.

Dr. Cantrell has given this topic considerable thought. When I questioned him about his selection of contemporary songs at Honeyridge Baptist Church, he explained why he thought that some of Keith Getty and Stuart Townend’s modern hymns are so popular:

> [They are] great because they're so simple and not distracting. They don't confuse people and take five weeks to learn. Whereas with some of the contemporary songs it's hard to know when to come in and how to sing along; that would be the main concern. Sometimes they are just shallow. God is a God of folk culture and high culture and I suppose even pop culture. Some aspect of that can be redeemed for His glory as well. So it's fine to have a simple Matt Redman song that's very folksy - "It's all about you, it's all about you", but God's people need a balanced diet. They need a broad enough diet to be stretched and to love God with all of their minds.

Page confirms that certain elements of what he calls `good poetry' are lacking in many contemporary songs. In doing so, he identifies three important elements of a good hymn (2004, 117).

3.2.2 Rhyme Scheme

Page suggests that traditional hymns were easier to sing and remember because they had a predictable rhyme-scheme. Using letters from the alphabet to indicate a rhyme scheme, the lyrics of two songs are included below:

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound	A
That saved a wretch like me	B
I once was lost but now I'm found	A
Was blind but now I see	B
'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear	C
And grace my fears relieved	D
How precious did that grace appear	C
The hour I first believed	D
Through many dangers toils and snares	E
I have already come	F
'Tis grace that brought me safe this far	E
And grace will lead me home	F
The Lord has promised good to me	G
His word my hope secures	H
He will my shield and portion be	G
As long as life endures	H

Figure 3-1: Rhyme Scheme of 'Amazing Grace'. Lyrics by John Newton. Copyright: Public Domain

Light of the world You stepped down into darkness	A
Opened my eyes, let me see	B
Beauty that made this heart adore You	C
Hope of a life spent with You	C
Refrain:	
So here I am to worship	
Here I am to bow down	
Here I am to say that you're my God	
You're altogether lovely	
Altogether worthy	
Altogether wonderful to me	
King of all days, oh so highly exalted	D
Glorious in heaven above	E
Humbly You came to the earth You created	F
All for love's sake became poor	G

Figure 3-2: Rhyme-scheme of 'Here I am to Worship' by Tim Hughes. Copyright: 2002 Thank You Music

Newton's lyrics for "Amazing Grace" follow a traditional structure and rhyme scheme, while Hughes' lyrics do not. According to CCLI (Christian Copyright Licensing International), however, 'Here I am to Worship' was one of the most popular songs for 2007. For the region of Africa, it was the sixth most frequently sung song in Christian churches between April and September of 2007 (CCLI Africa Website www.ccli.co.za, accessed on 21 April 2008).

While Page may be accurate in his assumption that rhyme-scheme aids memory, both contemporary poets and composers have long since stretched the boundaries and even totally abandoned conventional notions of structure. Traditionalists in the church, however, continue to propound the view that good poetry requires fixed metric and rhythmic structures, judging many contemporary song texts as downright bad. They groan about lack of recognizable rhythm and metre in contemporary songs. I have noticed with interest, nevertheless, that young children easily learn and memorise all four verses of a contemporary song. Perhaps these are the styles of writing that they will hold dear as they grow older? Or perhaps, as they have been exposed to less structured poetic and musical forms in this new century, they will retain greater openness to songs that may become even less structured?

3.2.3 Metre

Metre refers to the rhythm of a line of poetry. Page argues that crowds of people require predictable lines of words with the same number of syllables in every line in order to ensure good congregational singing.

> Stretching the syllables or cramming more in is perfectly okay if you're the singer of the song. You know what's coming up, you've rehearsed it, you know where the adjustments have to be made. But congregations don't have that luxury. They have to stop thinking about the words and start thinking about how to fit the words in (Page 2004, 64).

As new songs are introduced more frequently in the church setting, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the lay congregation to manage the rhythmic fluctuations and irregular phrasing. Arguably, this was seldom a problem in the days of only hymns. An example of a modern asymmetrical scheme is Hillsong's "What to say Lord?" on their album *Supernatural.* Its rhythmic challenges require considerable practice. **"**Heart of worship" is also demanding, particularly in the second verse. The line "…No-one could express how much you deserve" contains several rhythmic complexities not easy for a congregation to get right Nonetheless, it ranked No. 10 on CCLI's Top 25 list (www.ccli.com, accessed on 1 May 2008). What is in the balance therefore in choosing a repertoire, is what a congregation can manage and what they may take to, despite the complexities. Both these features are fundamental to good community singing.

3.2.4 Contemporary Language

Most church songs make use of 'religious' words or metaphors in an attempt to sound more 'spiritual'. Page decries the metaphor of a refining process, pointing out that it is tired and clichéd. This metaphor compares the spiritual transformation of Christian converts with the removal of impurities in the lengthy refining process of gold. Quite simply, he argues, this comparison no longer has any impact (2004, 95).

He also criticizes the incorporation of biblical jargon that is not in everyday use. Words like 'seek', 'extol', 'fortress' and 'Thy' reinforce the notion of church as something dated, something not relevant to the life of the contemporary Christian. Worst of all, he continues, such language alienates congregants who simply do not come across these words in their every day communication (Page 2004, 96).

On the subject of lyrics, Frame asserts that worship songs have a responsibility to fulfill both a horizontal and a vertical purpose: “[Their purpose is] honouring God and edifying people” (1996, 135). To support this, Frame quotes from the Bible:

> So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? (1 Corinthians 14:9).

He proposes that the church keep abreast of contemporary music and language in order to communicate to the younger generations. On the other hand, he acknowledges that this is a loss for older people.

> One’s hymnody is his language of worship; it is the language of his heart’s conversation with God. To lose the hymns one has grown up singing is, therefore, no small thing (1996, 117).

Hence both older and younger generations should be considerate: the younger generation should sympathise with their elders; the older generation should accept that youth ought not be deprived of their own language of worship either - “those forms of God’s word intelligible to them, by which they can best grow in Christ” (1996, 117).

In *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*, Dawn accuses contemporary song writers in general of dumbing down their language to cater for contemporary listeners:

> “To recognise that how much you get out of an art experience depends on how much you put into it is not moralistic but strictly aesthetic”. But popular art will not allow too much to be put into the experience; one doesn’t have to work too hard at listening to modern popular singers, which is why more people prefer them to the classical composer (Dawn 1995, 185).

Dawn not only denigrates popular culture, but seems unaware of the depth of study devoted to it (popular culture) by many academics. Her assertion, along with fellow writer Myers, that popular music is not music at all but rather a byproduct of a simplistic culture, may be strongly condemned by popular music theorists who have devoted years of study to the topic. Dawn, on the contrary, considers only those characteristics appropriated from high culture as of any value in contemporary music.

In both secular and religious culture contemporary societal norms and practices crucially influence the music of the time. A true understanding of place must inevitably encourage a more accepting view of contemporary popular music. Frame, in response to Dawn’s

concerns, wonders why she does not provide a single example of Contemporary Church Music that is ‘too dumb’. Reviewing her book, *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*, he argues that while many Contemporary Worship Songs are ‘not particularly memorable’, this is not true for all of them:

> Let’s get down to specifics, if Dawn will not. What about Michael W Smith’s “How Majestic Is Your Name?” Is it resigned sentimentality? Does it lack roots, depth, sustenance? The first part comes literally from Psalm 8:1, and the rest is Psalm language. Do we want to suggest that God’s Word is less than adequately deep?...As with many musical traditions, it is much easier to criticise CWM in general than in particular (1996, 136).

I asked Bishop Martin Morrison whether he considered traditional hymns to be superior to contemporary songs:

> **Bishop Morrison:** I think every generation has good songs and bad songs both in terms of the lyrics and the music. The bad songs of two hundred years ago have died; they haven’t survived, so it’s not to say that there weren’t any bad songs then - there were. To say that you can’t have contemporary people writing good music now is absolute nonsense. It actually denies the work of the Holy Spirit. Surely the Holy Spirit still is active and surely the Holy Spirit still gives gifts to Christians in terms of writing music and writing lyrics. I don’t buy that argument at all.

3.3 Theological Orthodoxy

Theological orthodoxy is another criterion according to which a repertoire for congregational singing should be monitored. However some churches patently fail here, and are open to widespread criticism when they schedule the songs of songwriters known for writing lyrics that embrace what is known as `liberal theology’.

Described as a mega-church, Hillsong, Australia has been accused of promoting a prosperity-gospel message as well as allowing less than theologically correct lyrics in their worship songs. Ian Carmichael writes in the January 2007 issue of *The Briefing*, a Christian journal published by Matthias Media, that Christians should place a ban on Hillsong songs for the following reasons:

> 1. When we sing their songs, we endorse a church whose teachings we disagree with.

2. When we sing their songs, we contribute financially to the propagation of "harmful teaching".

3. When we sing their songs, we compromise our theology.

"Personally," he concluded, "I think these three reasons are sufficient for us to place a blanket ban on Hillsong music in our churches" (*The Briefing* 2007,15).

Whether certain church music should be banned because it is supplied by or sourced at an institution with differing doctrines is highly debatable; however, the issue of theological orthodoxy is one that will always arise. I asked Dr. Cantrell at Honeyridge Baptist Church whether there are any songs that he excludes from the church's repertoire:

> **Dr. Tim Cantrell:** Definitely. This past Sunday we had a chorus that's quite nice and singable "Lord, reign in me". My wife and another friend's wife asked, "but, what about that part, 'Lord reign in me again'?" Does that mean that we haven't let God reign in us over the week-end and now we're asking Him to reign in us again?" Also that Matt Redman song, "Heart of worship"; that's a song we wouldn't sing here because I don't think it would be healthy to assume that the whole congregation needs to say that they totally forgot what worship was all about.
>
> So, most of our leaders are pretty discerning. We would only talk out something where the music was definitely distracting, or where we believed the message was unbiblical. In general we're cautious of songs that come out of certain camps like Vineyard, Hillsongs...but we would never say, "well because it's from there therefore, we would never sing it", unless it was from a heretic, but if it's from just a shallow less mature Christian group, we would be more cautious than we would be of hymns that have stood the test of time. Some of them are sounder than others doctrinally, but generally they're much more proven, both in style and content.
>
> "Above all powers" is a fine example. We love that song and we love the tune...in fact, Riaan who was our music director omitted that song because he found that it was difficult to get consistency in how to play it and sing it, I think that's what bothered him. But I have definite concerns about the end of the chorus, "You thought of me, above all". All of the sudden, this great God-centered song, suddenly has a punch line that is a self-centered line: that Jesus thought of me even above God. This is the opposite of what we see in Scripture. Romans Chapter Three: Jesus died to demonstrate God's glory; it's all about God ultimately...and only us being saved for God's sake. And even the idea, "Like a rose trampled on the ground", doesn't quite fit with John 10: No-one takes my life from me, I lay it down. Rather than just a rose, that sort of just gets trampled, is a victim and can't do anything about it. It's bearable, but it's not as truly biblical as we would prefer. There was one song that our worship leader did two weeks ago - another Hillsong song, "This is my desire to honour you", and I let him do it, because once a year I can tolerate that song, but generally, it's just weak poetically. That's another factor: Does it honour God in terms of its lyrics and its content? Quality and excellence, you know. Philippians 4:8 is a big verse: Whatever is true, pure, noble, right, pure, lovely, excellent, honourable and admirable, think on these things. So we don't want to be bringing to God, like Malachi says, our left-overs or our seconds, anything but our best.

Despite the objections Dr. Cantrell has to certain songs for theological or doctrinal reasons, he does not ban songs just because they were composed by certain writers. He is open-minded in assessing each song for its merit, using as his criteria Philippians 4 - "...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable - if anything is excellent or praise-worthy - think about such things".

Interestingly, Dawn also refers to Philippians 4:8, arguing that most contemporary songs are not pure, right, admirable or excellent. Trends in popular culture that she most abhors are the discouragement of reflection, instant gratification and stating the obvious. Popular music also encourages sentimentality, she complains, celebrates fame, reflects the desire of self and relies on spectacle, tending to violence and prurience (Dawn 1995, 188). Dawn does not cite any specific examples as evidence. Traditional hymns, in her view, take their values from traditional/folk and high culture, embodying the timeless and encouraging reflection. They require training, she reminds us, in that they are imbued with the created order, content and form of high culture. While much of what Dawn says may well be true, it is important to note her total bias towards traditional hymns in a time when contemporary song writing has an accepted place (ibid).

3.4 Songs of Silence - It's What They Don't Say

Within the body of Contemporary Church Music, there are few songs that focus on serious subject-matter such as penitence, admission of guilt, God's wrath and sin. In an effort to be more seeker-friendly, some churches prefer to focus in their singing on celebrating God's love and forgiveness. In pointing this out, Dawn again cites the influence of popular culture, and its almost exclusive emphasis on entertainment rather than edification and education (1995, 188). Many churchgoers are not being taught theology, she asserts, and the situation in most churches is far worse than many would admit. Referring to Jane Healy's *Endangered Minds*, she complains that many churchgoers today are less intelligent and less well-informed than their predecessors. Healy's research on the diminishing intelligence of school pupils in the United States applies to contemporary adult congregations too, Dawn insists:

> If we wish to remain a literate culture, someone is going to have to take responsibility for teaching children at all socio-economic levels how to talk, listen and think…before the neural foundations for verbal expression, sustained attention and analytic thought end up as piles of shavings under the workbench of plasticity. Students [or worship participants] from all walks of life now come with brains poorly adapted for mental habits that teachers [churches] have traditionally assumed. In the past, deep wells of language and mental persistence had already been filled for most children by experiences at home…Now teachers must fill the gaps before attempting to draw 'skills' from brains that lack the underlying cognitive and linguistic base [churches must fill gaps in foundational faith and its language] (Dawn 1995, 6).

It may be true that many congregants lack necessary foundational theological knowledge, especially in churches where the true gospel message has been replaced with more 'popular' prosperity or less-confrontational messages of love and peace. It makes sense that where the gospel is preached, there will be more care about the theological content of songs. Of concern though, are churches that have 'watered-down' the gospel message. Many of the authors cited in my research comment on this. If the majority of congregants at a particular church are not reading the Bible in their own time, they will not in turn gain a proper understanding of it, nor understand the notion of Christian identity.

The last question on my Worship Questionnaire asked which was the most memorable book/article/website/journal congregants had read. Most respondents left this space blank. There may be a variety of reasons for this, perhaps topped by the fact that the reading of books has largely been replaced by watching television. This in turn places pressure on churches to see to it that congregants are taught the Bible in the limited time offered in services and Bible study classes. It becomes even more important, therefore, to ensure that the songs that *are* sung are songs that explain the gospel message clearly and accurately. In some churches, it may be the closest the congregation will ever come to hearing the gospel.

While contemporary song collections are published with subject categories at the back to assist worship leaders in choosing songs on a variety of topics, it seems that songs reflecting on personal experiences of God dominate times of sung worship. With the pop music model determining the style of so many contemporary worship songs, there are fewer introspective songs available for inclusion in a church's repertoire. In my interviews with Dr. Tim Cantrell and Bishop Martin Morrison, I asked about the importance of having songs that cater for a range of emotions and circumstances. Bishop Morrison confirmed

the trend in contemporary churches to encourage lively singing. This, in turn, generally affects the subject matter as up-beat songs seldom focus on sin or repentance.

> **Bishop Morrison**: If you are the rector, you generally want more up-beat songs, just from a gathering-of-God's-people point of view; you want to focus on the positive rather than the negative. There can be a tendency that one just emphasises the positive and perhaps you can have too few songs which will give words to some of the other emotions. I think we sing a number of songs that express the brokenness of this world. I think more where the lack is within contemporary Evangelical music is that it will be mainly focused on me and my walk with God, whereas we should actually sing songs which in a sense reflect the depth of Christian theology. So we don't have lots of songs on Christian conversion, on Christian mission or justice or reaching out to the poor and the disadvantaged. We've probably got a lot on the person of God, but we don't have a lot on heaven. I'm not sure if you can have too many songs on hell; but I think that the bulk of our music is quite personal. It could be a little wider in terms of the issues that it covers, rather than just emotions. So the answer is yes, I think one does need to look at the songs and say which songs touch which emotions or help to express certain emotions and where are we lacking. There may be even a broader scope of things that we could include in our music.
>
> **Dr. Cantrell:** I think the Psalms would be the first solution to this; if we sang more of the Psalms - that's God's book. It gives a much wider expression. I totally agree with what you said from Matt Redman. I began this year in January with a two-part series from Psalm 90, which is a very sombre Psalm - it used to be read at funerals and I think in my introduction, I spoke about a guy from Westminster Seminary who wrote an article called, "What songs do miserable Christians sing?" He talks about how very few songs are in a minor key. I agree. I think we're very deficient in that area.

Frame echoes Cantrell's praise for the richness of content and variety in the Psalms: "In the Psalms, there is a wonderful balance of reverence and joy, sadness and celebration, intellect and emotion, grace and judgment" (1996, 135). It is this balance and also wealth of variety that should be reflected in a church's song repertoire.

3.5 The Servant vs. The Ego - The Role of the Worship Leader

> *At times it's hard to see even a speck of God for the great beam of self-obsession obscuring the view.*
>
> (Page 2004, 44)

Perhaps so as to help the congregation in following the more complicated structure of the contemporary worship song, or simply in keeping with the pop model, every church that includes CChM as one of its styles has a worship leader. In the past, church choirs, with the help of a conductor, led the congregation in hymn singing. This was possible because of the simplicity of the traditional hymn. Because CChM is based so closely on the pop

model (verses, choruses and bridges) the structure is less standard and the congregation needs help as to when to come in and when to be quiet.

That worship leaders can be seen by the congregation is potentially problematic. Also, because of the nature of the instrumentation and the fact that it requires amplification, worship leaders' voices often dominate the congregation. Some congregants interpret this as narcissism. Of course this is not always the case. How musicians carry themselves, their body language and their on-stage personality influence how they are perceived. Owens acknowledges the problem thus:

> Congregations often inaccurately perceive soloists as egotists...It is extremely difficult for talented persons to appear humble (Owens 1996, 14).

However, there are times when greater modesty would be more appropriate. Page (2004) comments on the narcissistic poses Christian artists strike for their CD album covers. Blanchard and Lucarini take further exception to the fact that Christian performing artists are treated like rock stars, almost displacing the primary focus on God. The cult of the performer is deeply entrenched in Western Classical Music, it must be noted. From the time of the Baroque onwards, and reaching a peak in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, soloists, be they singers, instrumentalists or conductors, have become used to the adulation of the music-loving public, not only in performance but in their private lives. One has only to think of stars such as Maria Callas, Vladimir Horowitz and, more recently, Luciano Pavarotti. Seen from a compositional point of view, Christian music such as the Bach Passions and Handel's *Messiah* relied on individual voices to give expression to the most passionate and tragic moments of the Christian narrative and doctrine. These might be considered moments that encourage attention on the music and the individual soloist rather than God.

The role of music within the church community differs of course from the examples cited above; and yet there is little doubt that the status of the soloist has been influenced by this great musical tradition. Worship leaders need to understand the innate conflict between the musician as soloist and the musician as Christian. Knowing how to play and how to sing without drawing unnecessary attention to him or herself requires planning and practice. It also requires an understanding of the role and constructed identity of a worship leader.

It must be noted in the first place that the term ‘worship leader’ is inherently problematic beyond the realm of music practice. The implication that it is the lead singer rather than the minister or pastor who is leading the congregation in worship is of course entirely erroneous. Speaking at a worship leaders’ conference in South Africa in 2005, Matt Redman reminded participants of this. Ministers set an example for the rest of the church to follow in the way they live, in their respect for others and their participation in worship services. Redman criticizes ministers who go through their sermon notes during the singing, exhorting them rather to be engaged in heartfelt singing, and thereby setting an example to the rest of the congregation. Worship is every Christian’s responsibility, not merely an entertainment opportunity, or a narcissistic exercise for the worship leader. Worship is in any case not something that can be turned on and off like a switch. Worship leaders, like congregants, need to be aware that worship is not an event; it is a continual way of life for a Christian.

Many musicians enter the music ministry believing they are fulfilling a lifelong dream as an on-stage performer. They soon discover that leading a worship team requires rigorous behind-the-scenes work, nurturing a team of different personalities, musical talents and abilities. In the face of such challenges and commitment, potentially frustrated rock stars soon leave to seek their fortunes elsewhere. Charles King, quoted in Carson, insists:

> Our worship is our work at what we do for God’s glory. In a very real Biblical sense, Thursday rehearsals are a “worship time”. Worship is giving God his due with the devotion of our bodies, time and energy… It is not only the musical work, but our heart’s and our life’s connection to what we sing… Making music in corporate worship is never for ourselves, but always to draw others into the joyous understanding of what we have learned and sing (Carson 2002, 192).

As Owens observes, worship leaders are supposed, first and foremost, to serve: “…neither God nor people measure our success or effectiveness by how much we know or earn, but by what we know and how we share” (1996, 12). At a *Passion for Your Name* conference in the UK, Martin Layzell (2006) gave a talk entitled, “Developing the worship at your local church”. He stated that Music Directors should ‘aim to do themselves out of a job’, suggesting that they:

- Develop skills by organising workshops, thereby inspiring people. Offer lessons and encourage people to practice.
- Pastor and mentor your teams by taking an interest in the lives of the people in your team.

- Encourage your team to develop a thick skin when facing the congregation's criticisms.
- Develop communication by meeting individually.
- Recruit people with a gift of worship: people who don't leave for coffee immediately, but who are servant-hearted and who help with the mundane tasks too.

Being able to share knowledge and experience to the benefit of the team is clearly important. In his presentation, Layzell also dealt with the complaint that the music team draws too much attention to itself by being positioned centre-stage. In his words: "[The worship team] is in front to get a picture of God's people – not the other way around" (ibid). Thus the leader must be sensitive to the congregation's needs as well as the pastor's vision for the church. In recalling a visit to a church where the congregation listened passively for twenty minutes to a praise team, Frame exhorts:

> Worship leaders need to give more attention to how Christian Worship Music should function…I do not believe that such periods of listening are always inappropriate, but I do believe that God's people ought to spend a major amount of time participating actively, actually singing God's praise (1996, 136).

3.6 Conclusion

I quoted Stokes earlier as stating that music does not only happen in a society but "a society…might also be usefully conceived as something which happens in music" (Stokes 1994, 2). Church music is able to affect the formation of a particular community by either edifying the church with theologically sound lyrics or starving it with superficial lyrics that do not teach gospel truths. In order to properly establish a Christian identity, churchgoers need to thoroughly understand Christian theology. In this they should be aided by solid weekly tuition on the fundamentals of the gospel. Songs should cover a diversity of themes and range of emotions, embracing also the difficult topics of suffering, hardship, God's wrath, human sin and resultant need for reconciliation with God. There should be a balance between songs that cover these deeply spiritual, yet fundamental issues and songs that call people together joyously in Christian celebration. Most theologians believe that the Psalms, in their expressive range and eloquence, offer a good model for building a canon of worship songs, and could be used more frequently. While their language may be dated and the structure unpoetic, the Psalms offer contemporary song writers infinite opportunity for creative and effective writing.

Through the act of music-making, Christians construct an edifice of their identity. This is evident in the variety of cultural norms that are manifest during times of sung worship. Choice of music also influences choice of church, as is evident in all the sources I have quoted in this chapter. Blanchard and Lucarini (2006) and Marva Dawn (1995) argue rather controversially that popular culture fails Christian purposes, all three exhorting Christians to choose worship that is rooted in music belonging to a high culture at best and folk culture at worst. They argue that the incorporation of contemporary popular styles of music has resulted in an 'identity crisis' amongst Christians. I mounted the counter-argument that popular music is an inevitable reflection of the culture in which we live. Every period and style of music can claim both superior and inferior music, and this applies to worship songs too.

Nick Page offers a complementary approach to contemporary music, while highlighting some of the many shortcomings of CChM, namely: the seemingly simple lyrics employed in many contemporary songs and the lust for fame of some worship leaders. I conclude that the temptation to glorify self is present in any style of music and therefore worship leaders need to understand their role as one of serving. John Frame, in defence of Contemporary Church Music, argues that every generation needs music to which it can relate. He asserts that the hymns/songs with which people grow up constitute their language of worship. He argues that understanding and respect are necessary amongst people whose tastes and style preferences differ. Perhaps an obvious statement, it is common for certain generations to feel marginalised because they cannot relate to the chosen musical style.

The 'worship war' debate has given rise to questions such as: Why Christians sing; why the church gathers and how it worships. Doug Goins, in a sermon entitled "Relevance and Irrelevance in Worship" (1999), points out that the first murder recorded in Biblical history was that of Abel by his brother Cain, the result of conflict over what was acceptable worship. In some churches, 'worship' has been limited to the act of singing on a Sunday when in fact scripture teaches that worshipping God should encompass all of life. The act of worship is intrinsic to Christian identity and is as such important in the life of every church. In the next chapter I look at ways of moving forward - asking, "Where to from here?" It is obvious that contemporary music reflects the identity of many congregants, but

I argue that not all congregants are or feel part of this group identity. In Chapter Four I argue, as a response to this, for a model of Indigenous Worship.

Chapter Four: Indigenous Worship

> *Indigenous worship is a unique experience that evolves when combining the existing talent pool at the local church with the demographic mix of the surrounding geographical area in which the local church exists.*
>
> (Townley 2002b).

4.1 Introduction

The term 'Indigenous' is most often used to describe natives of a particular place and their historical practices. Townley's use of the term transfers this and extends it to include the demographic variety of a particular church and the particular musical talent that exists there. Thus any church is capable of creating Indigenous Worship simply because of its unique congregation. Peacock commented on Townley's definition at the London School of Theology's summer conference (2006), agreeing that Indigenous Worship means that worship is no longer 'one size fits all'. Rather than relying solely on printed music and recordings that 'teach' the church what their worship should sound like, Indigenous Worship should explore the new and the local and add them to the already known.

In this Chapter I argue that the music to which a society is exposed affects its tastes in Church Music. Thus, the popular music that surrounds congregants in their daily lives will no doubt play a part in defining a congregation's identity. I test this belief by questioning the congregants at three Evangelical churches in Johannesburg.

Indigenous Worship creates the possibility for churches to nurture talent amongst their own members. Many hire professional musicians to achieve the sound they are looking for (no doubt first heard on a CD recording), but Indigenous Worship demands that each congregation's demographic make-up be assessed before decisions are made regarding what music should be sung.

Before introducing my specifically South African case studies, and to show how potent the recognition of indigenous culture can be in creating a church's identity, I look first at two interesting examples in America. One embraces hip-hop and the other allows congregants to make their own musical choices.

4.2 Indigenous Choices

Often when new churches are 'planted' or started, they run the risk of being replicas of the churches from which church planters originate[12]. "Redeemer", a Presbyterian church in New York City, has been instrumental in assisting people with the vision to plant new churches in urban cities. Al Barth, a founder of Redeemer, spoke at a Word Alive Conference in Johannesburg in which he stressed how important it is that the style of service reflects the demographic nature of the community for which it was intended (Barth 2008). One of the challenges he faced was to welcome young men from the Bronx who listened to hip-hop into his church. Because of the negative connotations associated with hip-hop lifestyle, many African American preachers were reluctant to include this music in their church services (ibid). As is the case with those who decry the use of rock music, these worshippers did not believe that hip-hop could be redeemed for Christian use. Interestingly, Al Barth recalled that the "Hip-Hop Church" was very successful although there was always an understanding that eventually people attending this or any other genre-specific church would need to be mainstreamed into existing churches – in order to avoid the misconception that going to church is all about individual culture or music preferences. His aim was thus the promotion of a 'biblical doctrine of church', that is, that church attendance is about being part of a Christian community and not a genre-specific one at that. An advert on the Hip-Hop Church's website (www.hiphopchurchny.com, accessed 8 June 2008) describes a national tour in the United States as the "No Profanity Hip-Hop Anniversary Tour".

At "Saddleback", a church in Southern California, congregants choose the style of service best suited to them by attending any one of a variety of "worship venues", each with its own style of music. Some may consider this extreme and argue that it breeds consumers rather than worshippers. Through careful consideration and planning, however, such innovations are without doubt attracting the unchurched.

[12] The verb *plant* is commonly used to describe the act of starting a new church.

SADDLEBACK CHURCH Lake Forest, California

Main Service is our venue for those looking for a Saddleback style of praise and worship with a full band.
Praise is our venue for those who prefer to spend a little longer singing songs and features the Saddleback Gospel Choir. Praise! Meets in Venue Tent 3.
OverDrive is our venue featuring a rock 'n roll music style. This venue is for those that like their worship loud. OverDrive meets in Venue Tent 2
Ohana Come for the worship... Stay for the sounds of the islands. Experience hospitality and hugs. Learn to worship through signing or hula. Room 404 near the Beach Cafe and island huts.
Elevation is our venue for all singles. Elevation's service is Saturdays at 6:30pm in Venue Tent 2 . You'll get the same great message along with live music.
Passion Join us for a time of expressive worship and heartfelt praise. The look and feel is younger than our main service and more intimate.
El Encuentro Worship with music in Spanish and listen to the live message in either English or Spanish. El Encuentro meets in the Plaza Room.
Traditions Enjoy a lower volume worship experience with a mix of classic hymns, old favorites, and cherished choruses. The message is videocast on the big screen for great viewing.

Figure 4-1: An extract from www.saddleback.com in which details are given of the various styles of music that are available.



Figure 4-2: Images from www.saddleback.com showing their various music teams.



Figure 4-3: An image from www.saddleback.com of the venue for the El Encuentro service.

Olsavicky criticises some of the steps taken by church leaders to encourage church growth in an article “The Church Growth Movement and Its Impact On 21st Century Worship”. He refers to the notion of Indigenous Worship and lists “5 Essentials of Indigenous Worship”:

- Visual: I must have my sight-sense affected - symbols are metaphors for the message.

> • Sound: There must be sound all of the time.
> • Technologically Advanced: Requires a well-supported team.
> • Participatory: People want to join in and be welcomed.
> • Indigenous Music: These people want the music of their lives (2007, 74).

Olsavicky's claim that "people want the music of their lives" motivated me to send out a questionnaire that asked about tastes in contemporary secular music, most frequented radio stations and most favoured styles of church music.

4.3 Worship Questionnaire

My questionnaire was strongly influenced by Yod Er et al's book, *Preparing Sunday Dinner*. In a chapter entitled, "Who's coming to dinner?", the authors compare meeting together on a Sunday with preparing a meal for a family. Every chapter title provides a metaphor for a particular stage of service preparation. The authors argue that congregations share a culture, history and identity that affects their patterns of communication, social activities, beliefs, values and interests (2005, 42 - 43). They view each congregation as a sub-culture within a larger society, with its own peculiar habits and ways of worshipping. Understanding the identity of a congregation is important for worship leaders because they need to "nurture a culture that supports worship authentic to our time, place and heritage" (ibid, 44). Effective worship leaders "frame the congregation's praises, confessions and prayers to communicate the social and cultural truth of people's lives" (ibid, 44). In order to achieve this, Yod Er et al (2005) propose that attention be paid to the following aspects of a congregation's demographics: Social connections, Life stages, Education, Economic class, Languages, Expressive styles, Spiritual types and Personality types.

> Social Connections - refers to their marital status, their home towns, their ethnic backgrounds and their places of employ at a superficial level but deeper than this, social connections refer to the social groups that congregants associate with and who they look to for a sense of belonging.
>
> Life stages - refers to what age category they fall into as this is likely to affect their tastes in music and the degree of participation in singing the congregation is likely to enjoy. It also assists church leadership in choosing songs that provide an adequate vocabulary of expression for its members.

Education - refers to how many children in the congregation are in pre-school, primary school and high school, what percentage of the congregation has matriculated and what percentage of the congregation has completed tertiary education.

Languages - refers to how many of the congregation read, at what level they read, how much they read and what they read.

Expressive styles - explores what body postures people in the congregation use during worship.

Personality types - asks the following questions:

- How do members of the congregation describe services that move them deeply?
- How many worshipers are outgoing, thrive in groups, enjoy personal interactions, and tend to be expressive?
- How many people need to be drawn in to activities, find ways to break off from larger group activities to smaller conversations and tend to calculate their responses?
- Is our music style tilted towards the needs of extroverts or introverts?

Using these categories as a starting point, I formulated my own Worship Questionnaire, separating it into two sections: Musical Preference and Personal Information. An explanation of each section follows:

Worship Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions by placing an X in the block beside the option that best describes your view. If necessary, select OTHER and briefly give your view. Please do not place your name anywhere on this questionnaire. It is strictly anonymous.

Musical Preference

1. What is worship?

- ☐ Worship is a time of singing in which we enter into God's presence
- ☐ Worship is best experienced when singing
- ☐ Worship is how we live as Christians
- ☐ Other _____

2. The music and songs at your church make you feel...

- ☐ Emotionally / Spiritually uplifted
- ☐ A part of a community
- ☐ Alienated
- ☐ Other _____

3. How important is it for you to attend a church where you feel comfortable with the style of music?

- ☐ Very important: I don't like singing music to which I cannot relate
- ☐ Not that important: Church is separate from everyday life
- ☐ Not that important: I appreciate all styles of Christian music
- ☐ Other _____

4. Language

- ☐ I would like to sing Christian songs in my home language : _____
- ☐ I like singing songs that are popular around the world and that are English
- ☐ I don't mind what language as long as I understand what I'm singing
- ☐ Other _____

5. New Music

- ☐ I think a new song should be introduced once a month
- ☐ I think a new song should be introduced twice a month
- ☐ I think a new song should be introduced every week
- ☐ Other _____

6. Please rank the following in order of importance to you: (1 = very important)

- ☐ A contemporary style of music
- ☐ A catchy tune
- ☐ Decent lyrics
- ☐ Not too challenging for the local music team

Worship Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions by placing an X in the block beside the option that best describes your view. If necessary, select OTHER and briefly give your view. Please do not place your name anywhere on this questionnaire. It is strictly anonymous.

Musical Preference... continued

7. Rank the following aspects of a church service in order of importance to you when you choose a church: (1 = very important and 14 = least important)

- ☐ Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music
- ☐ Preaching that is practical and challenging
- ☐ Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)
- ☐ Comfortable seats
- ☐ Good coffee
- ☐ A style of music that you like
- ☐ Being able to stand still and sing
- ☐ Meeting with friends
- ☐ A beautiful building
- ☐ A warm and inviting atmosphere
- ☐ Food after the service
- ☐ Distance from home
- ☐ Secure parking
- ☐ Other _____

Personal information

Please complete this section as thoroughly as possible. It is intended to establish the demographics of your church community.

8. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

9. Race: ☐ Black ☐ Coloured ☐ East Asian ☐ Indian ☐ White ☐ Other

10. Nationality _____

11. Marital Status: ☐ Single ☐ Married ☐ Living with a partner ☐ Separated ☐ Divorced ☐ Widowed

12. The area in which you live is: ☐ Suburban ☐ Urban ☐ Rural ☐ Township ☐ Other

13. Do you have children? ☐ Yes and their ages are_____
☐ No

14. My age is: _____

15. The highest grade I passed at school was: _____

16. After school I studied at/am studying at: ☐ University ☐ Technikon ☐ Other

17. I have the following professional qualification: ☐ Undergraduate Degree ☐ Post-graduate degree ☐ Diploma ☐ Certificate ☐ Other _____

Worship Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions by placing an X in the block beside the option that best describes your view. If necessary, select OTHER and briefly give your view. Please do not place your name anywhere on this questionnaire. It is strictly anonymous.

18. My home language is: _____

19. My ability to read English is: ☐ Fluent ☐ Good ☐ Weak ☐ I can't

20. My ability to speak English is: ☐ Fluent ☐ Good ☐ Bad ☐ I can't

21. The language that is sung most often during praise and worship at your church is: _____

22.How often do you read the Bible on your own? ☐ Once a day ☐ More than once a week ☐ Seldom ☐ Never

23. How do you access the news? ☐ Radio ☐ Newspaper ☐ TV ☐ Word-of-mouth

24. What style of music do you like? _____

25. Which radio stations do you listen to most often?

_____

_____

26 Which of these best describes you?

☐ Talking one-on-one OR ☐ Talking in a group of people

☐ Expressing your feelings OR ☐ Keeping your feelings to yourself

27. Which of these describes you?

☐ Quick to react OR ☐ Careful before responding

☐ Need to be invited to join an activity OR ☐ You invite people to join an activity

28. The best book/ magazine/ web-site/ journal/ article/ comic you've read lately is:

_____

Thank you for your time.

Alongside most of the questions, I provided a tick box with the intention of limiting responses to an option that best described individual opinions. Where the options did apply, a box marked ‘other’ provided space for a short elaboration. I discovered, on collating the responses, that some people had selected two of four options if they felt that both applied. Some selected ‘other’ but did not elaborate. It is for this reason that the results provided in percentage format do not add up to a hundred. In many cases, respondents neglected to answer the questionnaire in its entirety; however, I recorded the responses as I found them.

4.3.1 Musical Preference

This first section of the questionnaire focussed on the music at the church attended as well as a definition of worship. There is an understanding amongst some Christians that worshipping God should encompass all of life; however, as was discussed in the previous chapter, some consider worship to be an experience that best takes place through music. This question was posed to ascertain the prevalence of each view. Where there is a strong inclination towards one of the options, I draw conclusions as to why that might be.

It is generally agreed that music has an emotional effect on listeners and I was interested in how congregants experience this. More than simple enjoyment, Christians express feeling, when singing certain songs, sometimes being moved to tears but always being affirmed of their faith. I described this as spiritual upliftment. Even though congregants may not know each other personally, singing together in agreement has the effect of uniting a community; much like Stokes’ description of the effect that a simple jukebox tune has on migrant workers - reminding them of home (Stokes 1994, 3). I allowed for congregants who did not feel spiritually uplifted to express their differing sense of being part of a community. However, I also made allowance for the fact that taste preferences can induce a sense of alienation, if the music is unfamiliar or is perceived as inappropriate. To further confirm this, I asked how important it is to congregants to feel comfortable with the style of music at their church.

As a number of congregants at Christ Church Midrand and Christ Church Hillbrow speak English as a third and even fourth language, I considered it important to obtain responses

to the fact that services are conducted in and most songs sung in English. This information would prove useful in the establishment of a model for Indigenous Worship.

To establish how important music is when compared with a number of other church activities, I asked respondents to prioritise musical style as one among many other components of a service. My feeling was that if music is a high priority in choosing a church, then it would be interesting to discover whether churches with a high attendance are home to contemporary songs. It would also raise questions as to a church's view of worship. Perhaps too great an emphasis was being placed on musical style.

4.3.2 Personal Information

This section was based largely on the criteria relating to demographic profile provided by Yod Er et al. If an adequate representation of each congregation's identity could be gained, then a connection between musical choices and demographics could be established. My main interest here was whether or not churches were engaged in Indigenous Worship. Based on Dawn's hypothesis that congregations are no longer as knowledgeable of Scripture, I included questions on preferred reading material as well as how often congregants read the Bible on their own. Dawn's assertion that congregants are primarily consumers of popular culture also prompted me to ask for musical style and radio station preferences. I hoped to prove that contemporary society is marked by its musical choices and exposure.

Questions on academic qualifications were intended to gauge the general level of education amongst congregants and could be useful in determining whether a different level of education leads to different musical preferences, although this possibility is not explored in this report. Levels of education as well as ability to speak and read English affect the level of understanding of preaching and singing content. I thought it useful to determine whether proper understanding on a linguistic level is taking place before gauging how well theological principles are processed intellectually.

I asked two broad questions, taken from Yod Er et al, relating to personality types - bearing in mind that this is not a study in psychology but rather a study in cultural upbringing. I wanted to explore the cultural preferences that manifest themselves in times of sung worship. Merriam points to the "functionality of music in African culture" (1962, 122),

suggesting that black African people are comfortable with the process of music-making in a social setting. Most importantly, social gatherings like weddings, funerals and birth ceremonies are accompanied by expressive communal singing. African work songs and gum-boot dancing inspired mineworkers during apartheid years: just two examples of how important active music-making is to many black African people. White South Africans who are influenced by European traditions tend to be more reserved in their participation. This is a generalisation; it is not possible to categorise people as either introverted or extroverted without proper psychological testing; however, I decided to ask a single question that might give some indication as to how easily or not different individuals were able to make contact with their fellow congregants. Thus respondents were asked whether they tended to be more comfortable in one-on-one situations, or within larger groups. I believe responses to this might act as an indicator as to whether congregants were relatively out-going and able to enjoy an uninhibited church environment. Other questions regarding proactivity in relation to communication and activities would also provide important information about desired styles of service and music making.

4.4 The Local Church

The three local churches included in this study were: Honeyridge Baptist Church, Christ Church Hillbrow and Christ Church Midrand. All three were excited about being part of this study. In an effort to determine how the identity of a congregation features in the choice of music, I interviewed a representative from each of the churches: The Senior Pastor of Honeyridge Baptist Church, Dr. Tim Cantrell, Bishop Martin Morrison of Christ Church Midrand, and from Christ Church Hillbrow I conducted informal discussions with a group of choristers and on a separate occasion an Australian missionary working at Christ Church Hillbrow, Ans van der Zwaag.

A case study of the music habits of each of the three churches follows:

4.4.1 Case Study: Music at Honeyridge Baptist Church (HBC)



Figure 4-4: Honeyridge Baptist Church's logo (www.honeyridge.co.za, accessed 11 February 2009).

There are three services at Honeyridge Baptist Church every Sunday at the following times: 08h00, 10h00 and 18h00. All three services adopt a similar style of music and are held in the main church building. During the 10h00 service, there is a separate meeting for children from Grades 1 to 7, in which they sing children's songs. There is a service for teenagers at 18h00 in a separate venue from the adults where the music is contemporary in style. The teens have a resident band that practices from 15h00 to 18h00 before the service.

The only slight variation in styles of music at the three main church services occurs as a result of the five to six rotating worship teams led by different singers. While they sing some contemporary choruses, most songs are older and more traditional hymns. This stylistic preference is accounted for in the results of the questionnaire presented on page

90. Honeyridge also has a church choir consisting of approximately forty singers. The choir rehearses once a week and is trained to sing in harmony.

Dr. Cantrell explained that Honeyridge is governed by elders who asked him to take over the chairmanship of the worship committee. This they found to be just another forum for discontent and Dr. Cantrell decided to give individual weekly oversight to the worship leader for that week:

> He has to run his service order liturgy by me and I give final approval to that. We have basic guidelines that he must follow - minimum number of hymns, length of time, scripture readings and types of prayer to involve. There is still quite a bit of freedom for each worship leader. We're still pretty Baptist, but probably more on the formal end of Baptist, although definitely not high church. So I think the buck stops with me. I do bear the final responsibility for what we do Sunday to Sunday and how our people worship. We have a worship document that the church uses - it's a superb document...it would be good to update it but previous leaders have developed it and the principles and the philosophies are some of the practices here at Honeyridge.

While I had observed a number of church services at Honeyridge and had a good idea of the style of music that was dominant, I was interested to know how Dr. Cantrell perceived their music choices:

> It's blended - is probably the term that's been used. Again it predates me, although I'm supportive of it. It depends again on who's doing the labelling. Some would say it's non-charismatic, it's more formal, but I think the best word would be, (well I hope it would be) a biblical style: not *the* biblical style, but *a* biblical and blended style of English, Western music that blends the traditional hymn-orientated and the contemporary choruses and hymns, and I hope, the elements that you find in Colossians 3 in terms of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

The Honeyridge Identity

The questionnaire was distributed on Sunday 6 January 2008 and 94 questionnaires were completed and submitted.

Social Connections: The majority of respondents were English-speaking white South Africans. 18% of respondents were Afrikaans. 59% were married and lived in either urban or suburban areas in Johannesburg.

Life Stages: The average age of the congregation was 41 years and 63% have children. Judging by the average age of their children (22 years), the majority of respondents were mature adults with children either already working or studying.

Education: The majority of the congregation had completed Grade 12 at school and 22% studied further towards obtaining a post-graduate qualification. 31% had studied after school but not necessarily at University.

Languages: 80% of the congregation was English-speaking while 18% spoke Afrikaans as their home language. In general, the congregation saw themselves as fluent speakers and readers of English. The vast majority of respondents accessed current news by means of the television (95 percent) and only 45% through newspapers. In terms of exposure to Scriptural text, 66% of the congregation said they read the Bible once a day.

Expressive Styles: In general, the congregation is reserved and does not incline towards moving around and clapping to the music. Out of 14, this option ranked tenth at Honeyridge.

Personality Types: 66% reported to be emotionally/ spiritually uplifted by the music at Honeyridge. 74% preferred talking in a one-on-one setting than in a group of people, 54% preferred keeping their feelings to themselves and 80% expressed the need to be invited to join an activity as opposed to being the one to invite others to join activities. In general, this information paints a picture of a reserved congregation.

When asked for their views on worship, Honeyridge congregants responded as follows:

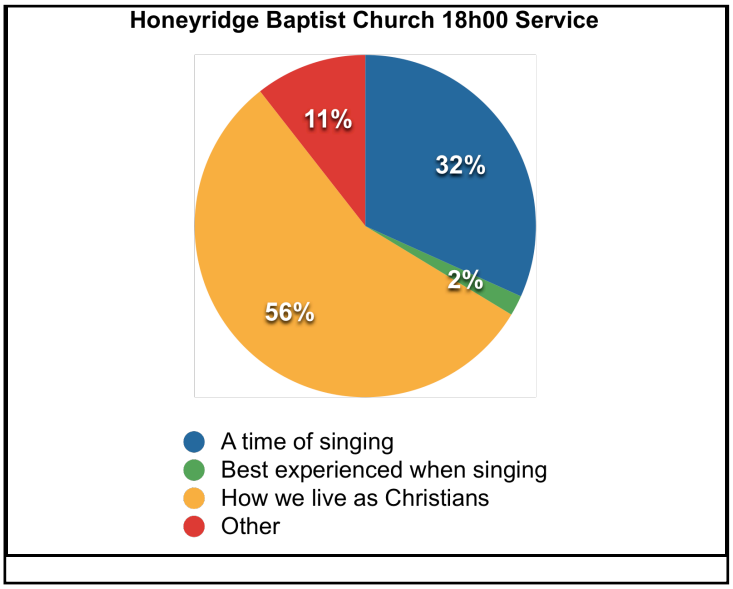


Figure 4-5: Responses from HBC to Question 1: What is Worship?

Some of the comments that were added next to ‘Other’, were:

- The highest form of worship is the preaching of God's Word.
- How we live should be worship-filled but church [provides] a time in which we can focus on God.
- Singing is part of worship; focusing on God and honouring Him.

Music ranked high in order of importance alongside other criteria for choosing a church:

Table 4-1. The order of importance of various aspects of a church service to the congregation at Honeyridge Baptist Church.

Rank the following in order of importance to you when choosing a church	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	10
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	2
Comfortable seats	9
Good coffee	12
A style of music that you like	4
Being able to stand still and sing	7
Meeting with friends	5
A beautiful building	11
A warm and inviting atmosphere	3
Food after the service	13
Distance from home	6
Secure parking	8
Other	14

The styles of music that are preferred by Honeyridge congregants are clearly laid out in Figure 4-6 below:

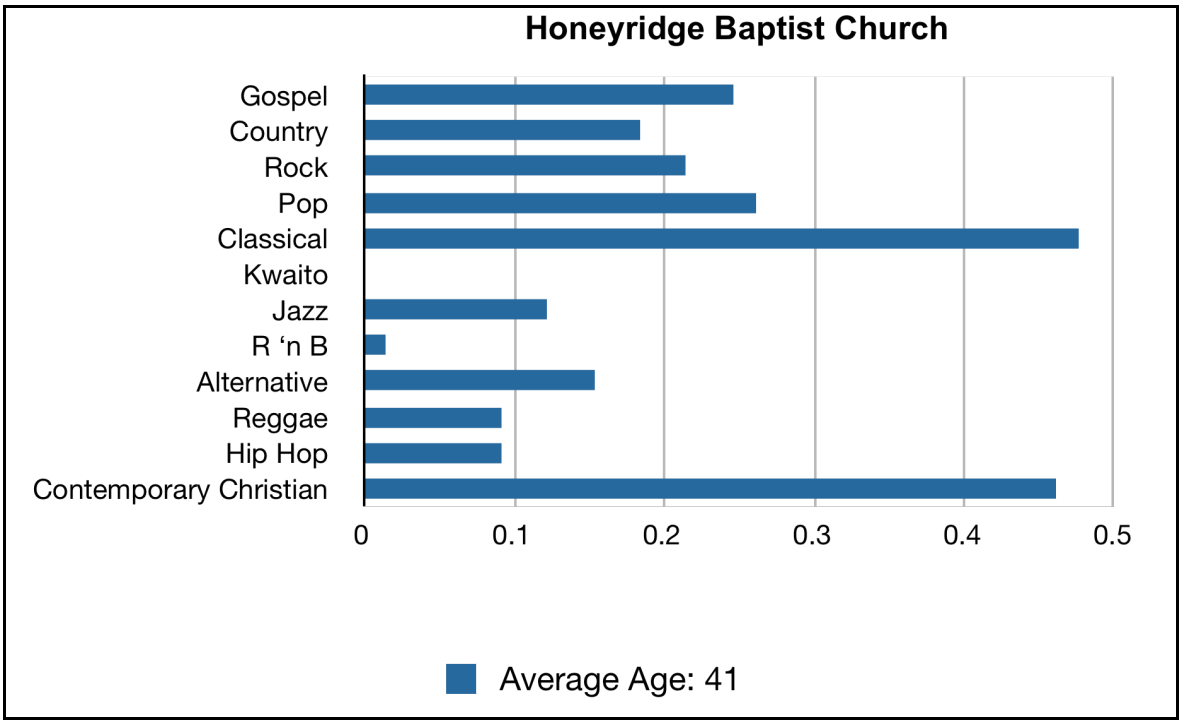


Figure 4-6: Musical style preferences at Honeyridge Baptist Church.

Classical music is preferred by the majority of congregants and this is evident in the choice of songs on a weekly basis. While the majority of congregants identified some form of emotive experience when participating in musical worship, a number elaborated on the particular feeling:

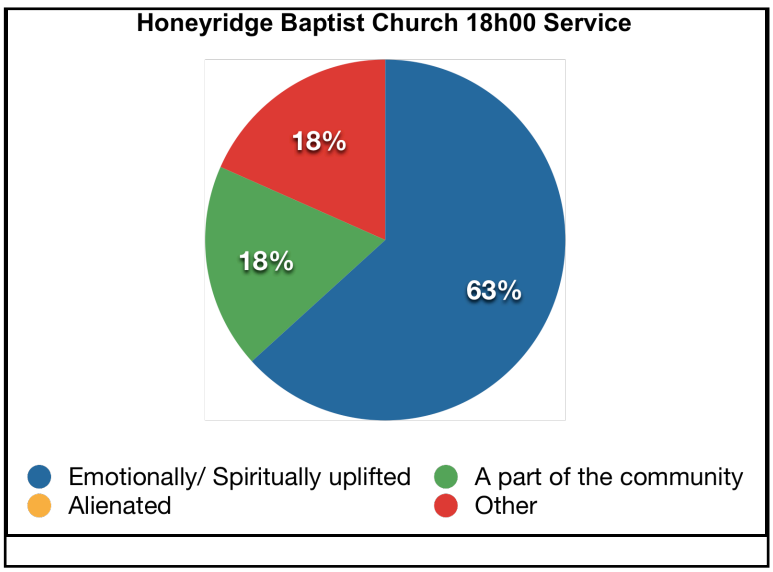


Figure 4-7: Responses from HBC to Question 2.

Some of the comments listed alongside 'Other' by Honeyridge congregants were:

- The music makes me feel sad. It is too worldly.
- It puts me in the mood to worship and prepares me for the service.
- Humbled.

4.4.2 Case Study: Music at Christ Church Hillbrow (CCH)



Figure 4-8: A picture of the Christ Church Hillbrow Care Centre (www.5cees.co.za, accessed 11 February 2009).

There is only one service at Christ Church Hillbrow at 09h30 on Sunday mornings. Ans van der Zwaag explained that an evening service is not feasible because Hillbrow is a very dangerous suburb. The church attracts Africans from other countries who live in Hillbrow as well as locals. The church boasts a Care Centre that is dedicated to looking after homeless children/youth, many of whom form part of the congregation. A slogan on the choir's uniform reads:

Christ Church Hillbrow
The Church Where Africa Meets

Services are conducted and most songs are sung in English. The choristers explained to me (in an informal discussion that I had with three members) that many of the congregants do not speak local South African languages. The minister at CCH, Rev Adjith Sunker, preaches in English. Contrary to my assumption, it is not the case that English songs had infiltrated this community in a hegemonic fashion. Rather, English songs offered this truly multi-cultural, multi-racial congregation the opportunity to understand each other. The music at Christ Church Hillbrow is a combination of English contemporary songs, choruses and traditional hymns that have been translated into some indigenous African languages.

Ans van der Zwaag explained to me that many of the congregants come from extremely under-resourced backgrounds and difficult circumstances. Ans leads a women's fellowship on a weekly basis in which singing plays an important role. The Christ Church Hillbrow choir was formed from members of this fellowship. She admitted, rather shyly, that the choir hardly ever rehearses (in the formal sense of the word). They don't need to because the harmonies and rhythm come so naturally to the group. They understand each other's circumstances and are able to sing together with ease.

In general, music is an extremely important part of the weekly service at Christ Church Hillbrow. Times of singing last up to forty minutes at times. Ans explained to me that music serves the purpose of temporarily lifting the congregation out of their circumstances. As was the case during the time of the slave-trade in America, music is able to stir up unity amongst the congregants - they do not feel as though they are on their own. It is for this reason that much of the music sung at Christ Church Hillbrow focusses on gratitude, heaven and other positive themes of hope.

The Hillbrow Identity

The questionnaire was distributed on 23 September 2007 and 49 questionnaires were completed.

Social Connections: Amongst the respondents, 47% were South African, 24% Nigerian and 12% Zimbabwean. There were also people from Uganda and other African countries. The majority lived in Hillbrow but a significant percentage came from one of the townships in and around Johannesburg. 31% of respondents were married with the rest being either single, living with a partner, widowed or divorced.

Life Stages: The average age of the congregation was 33 years and 55% had between one and four children. The average age of the children was 11 years. Members of this congregation appear to be younger on average than those at Honeyridge. Also, many are parents of school-going children and are exposed to different styles of music as a result.

Education: While a significant majority of the congregation had completed grade 12 at school, some had only completed grades 9, 10 and 11. 12% reported to have completed post-graduate qualifications and 6% had finished undergraduate degrees only.

Languages: The church service at Christ Church Hillbrow is conducted in English and in general the congregation appears to read and speak English well if not fluently. 31% read the Bible daily although 31% seldom read it at all. While there was a relatively high percentage of congregants who access the news through newspapers when compared with the congregation at Honeyridge Baptist, 71% just watched television. This congregation, like Honeyridge Baptist, is thus exposed to popular culture in television programmes and advertising.

Expressive Styles: In contrast to Honeyridge Baptist Church, this congregation views moving around and clapping to the music as highly important. When asked to rank various components of the church service in order of importance, some aspect of music featured in the top three places.

Personality Types: Congregants at Christ Church Hillbrow are emotionally moved by the music that they sing. 94% of the congregation responded that the music at their church makes them feel emotionally/spiritually uplifted. While half of the congregation expressed the need to be invited to join an activity, the same percentage felt comfortable with expressing their feelings. In general the congregation at Christ Church Hillbrow finds the need to express itself very important.

When asked for their views on worship, the Hillbrow congregation responded as follows:

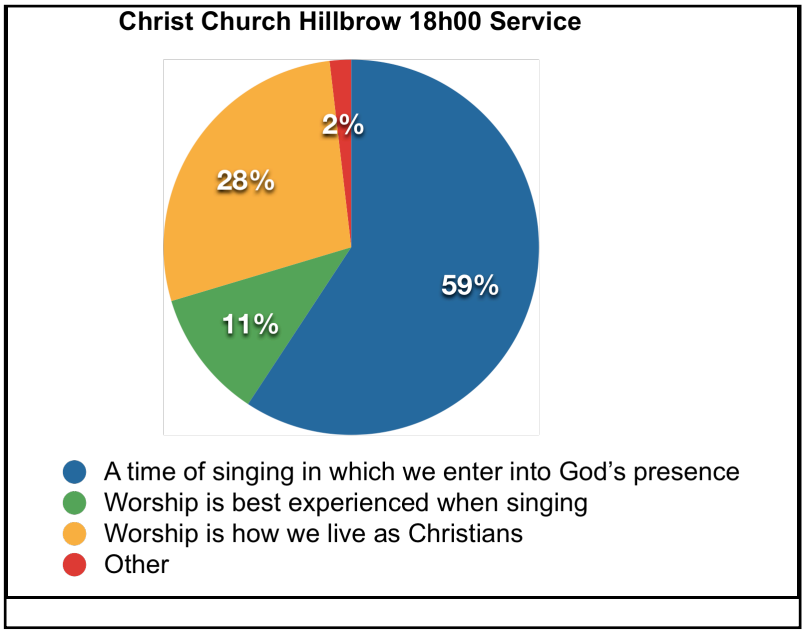


Figure 4-9: Responses from Christ Church Hillbrow to Question 1: What is worship?

Music also ranked high in importance to this congregation with musical style featuring in fourth place alongside varied criteria when choosing a church:

Table 4-2. The order of importance of various aspects of a church service to the congregation at Christ Church Hillbrow.

Rank the following in order of importance to you when choosing a church	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	3
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	2
Comfortable seats	10
Good coffee	11
A style of music that you like	4
Being able to stand still and sing	7
Meeting with friends	6
A beautiful building	9
A warm and inviting atmosphere	5
Food after the service	12
Distance from home	8
Secure parking	10
Other	14

It is no surprise that for this congregation, music was experienced as highly emotive:

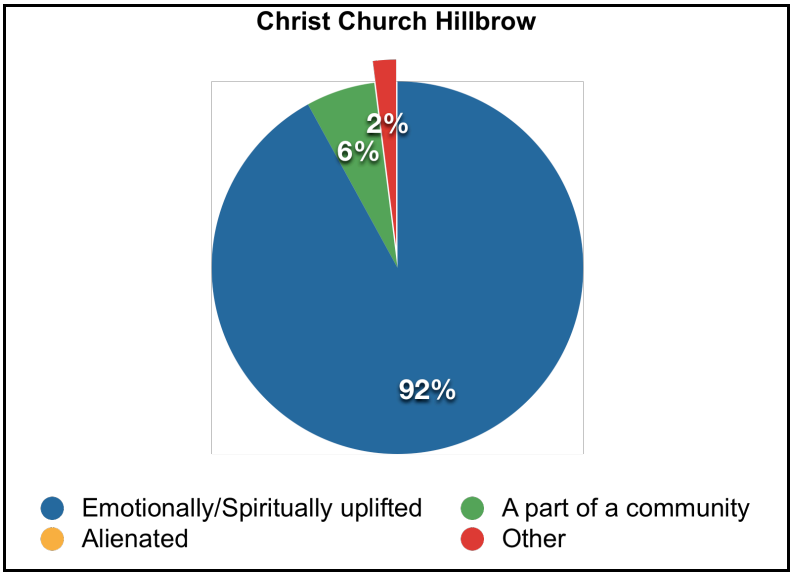


Figure 4-10: Responses from Christ Church Hillbrow to Question 2.

No comments were listed by those who selected ‘Other’.

Their favourite styles of music are listed in the figure below:

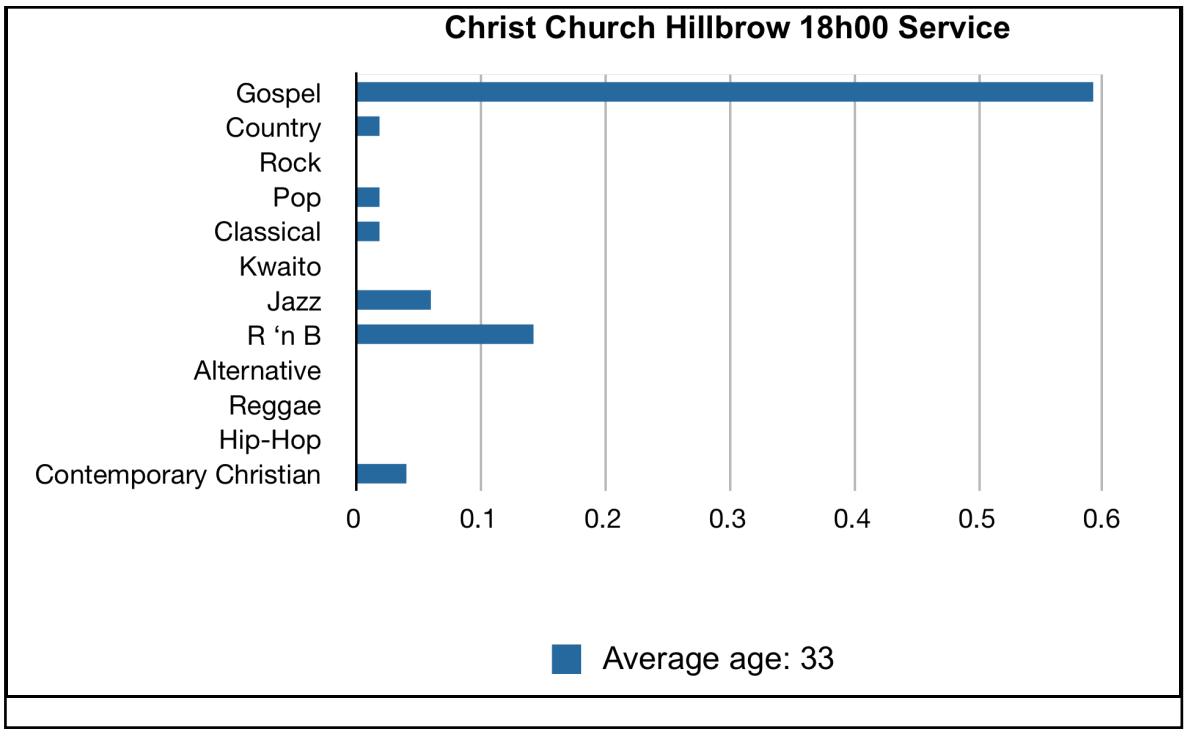


Figure 4-11: Musical style preferences at Christ Church Hillbrow.

4.4.3 Case Study: Music at Christ Church Midrand (CCM)



Figure 4-12: The Auditorium at Christ Church Midrand (www.christchurchmidrand.co.za, accessed 11 February 2009).

There are three Sunday services at Christ Church Midrand: an 08h00 service, a 09h30 service and a 18h00 service. The 08h00 service is held in a small hall whereas the other two take place in the main auditorium. There is an upright piano and the music is more traditional in style than at the other two services, including more hymns than modern choruses and songs. There are usually between 80 and 120 people at this service.

The 09h30 service is held in the auditorium and is a family service. Many young parents bring their children. On a typical Sunday morning, there is at least one guitarist [acoustic], a bass guitarist, a pianist, a keyboardist, a flautist/recorder player, a trumpeter, a drummer, a lead vocalist, a backing vocalist and on special occasions, a small choir. The music at this service is best described as contemporary with one hymn being sung at the end of the set of songs, just before the sermon. The auditorium seats 800 people when full, but on average, approximately 500 people attend this service each week.

The 18h00 service attracts many more young adults than the morning service, although the total number of congregants is significantly less; partly because many church members have families and prefer not to go out at night. A contributory reason is the increasing danger of traveling around Johannesburg after dark.

The music at Christ Church Midrand plays a very important role in all three services in line with rector Bishop Martin Morrison's beliefs. He described his involvement in the music ministry as follows:

> My involvement in the music would be probably two-fold: Firstly, as rector I would take final responsibility for the music as with anything else. I will obviously delegate responsibilities as I have done by appointing a music director and various other people who are involved in the music. Secondly I have an interest in music and I have a bit of music background myself, so I meet with [the music staff] and from time to time with the other musicians to talk through the styles and so on.

Different choices of songs are made for each service based on the varied groups of congregants that each attracts. The early service attracts mostly older congregants, the average age being 45 years. The music is traditional and there is usually a pianist and two singers who lead the singing. Results included in the appendices reveal that the preferred style of music amongst congregants at this service is Classical, however, only 30 people completed this questionnaire and therefore, I opt to focus on the results of the 09h30 service which yielded a response from 120 congregants, and thus warranted a more

thorough analysis. The evening service attracts young adults and therefore the music is contemporary and more lively than the other two. Because there are fewer people who attend the 18h00 service, new musicians are given the opportunity to play: there is slightly less pressure than the morning service. The 09h30 service attracts the largest number of congregants and is the most varied in terms of demographic profile. Bishop Morrison commented on the role music has to play at Christ Church Midrand in establishing the desired church culture:

> I think what is important is that a church should have a culture of being evangelistic - of trying to reach out all the time. [An evangelistic] culture will affect your standards, whether you're committed to excellence, to trying to do things well so that you don't embarrass the gospel. It has to do with the gardens, with the buildings, with the architecture, with the preaching – can non-Christians understand what you say? Do you explain things and avoid just using in-house terminology? If you use terminology (which is fine), you need to explain it. The same thing applies to music - you want it to reach your community. One of the ways of doing that is through music. Are you thinking about that? What is the dress of the stewards at the door - the people up on stage? If you make them dress in a way which is culturally odd, you are saying to people that to join this church you need to be culturally odd - which is nonsense. The tension I think, which is not just in music but in church in and of itself is that strictly speaking, church is for God's people - the family of God's people meeting together - that is the biblical concept of 'church', but you also have the responsibility of God's people being witnesses and preaching so that people hear the gospel. You want your 'seeker' not to be put off by the ethos or culture of the church. If they're going to be put off, it should be by the gospel. So, a balance is necessary, and that creates a tension, but I think it's important that your leaders and the church understand that this is a place they can feel comfortable bringing non-Christian people to – the music has a great part to play in achieving that.

The Midrand Identity

The questionnaire was distributed on Sunday 23 September 2007. With 24 September being a public holiday in South Africa, a large portion of the congregation were away, however, 123 questionnaires were completed at the 09h30 service. This congregation comprised of 56% white and 27% black people with the rest of the congregation consisting of Indian, East Asian and Coloured people.

Social Connections: 64% of this congregation was married and 20% unmarried. The vast majority of respondents live in suburban areas in and around Johannesburg.

Life Stages: The average age of this congregation was 38 years of age and 67% of the congregation reported to have between one and five children. The average age of their children was 16 years.

Education: 51% of respondents had completed a University degree and 31% a post-graduate qualification.

Languages: While a majority (66%) of the congregation were English-speaking, a variety of home languages were evident amongst the rest of the respondents. Afrikaans, Sotho, Zulu, Xhosa, Setswana, Tsonga, French, Portuguese, Siswati, Swahili, Shona, Chichewi and Sepedi were all listed as home languages. 80% of the congregation described themselves as fluent speakers and readers of the English language. Only 2% reported to be weak in both those skills. 38% claimed to read the Bible every day and 27% reported to read it seldom.

Expressive Styles: Clapping and moving while singing was considered unimportant to this congregation, ranking it eighth.

Personality types: 73% felt that the music at church moved them emotionally and/or spiritually; however, the congregation appears to be reserved in that they too prefer to be invited to join an activity and are cautious before responding.

When asked for their views on worship, the Midrand congregation responded as follows:

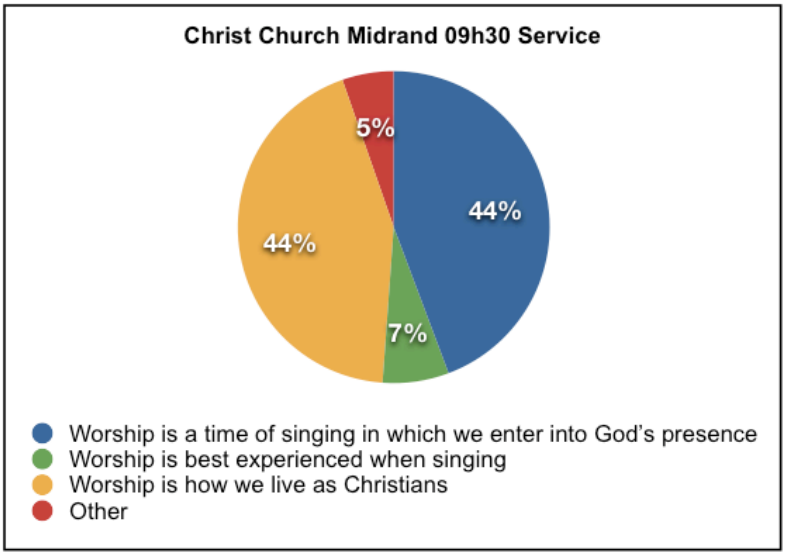


Figure 4-13: Responses from CCM to Question 1.

Some of the comments listed under 'other' include:

- We are already in God's presence
- It is our conversation with God
- Worship sets the tone for us to be receptive to God's word

Musical style ranked fourth alongside other criteria when choosing a church:

Table 4-3: The order of importance of various aspects of a church service to the congregation at Christ Church Midrand.

Rank the following in order of importance to you when choosing a church	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	8
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	2
Comfortable seats	8
Good coffee	11
A style of music that you like	4
Being able to stand still and sing	7
Meeting with friends	5
A beautiful building	10
A warm and inviting atmosphere	3
Food after the service	12
Distance from home	6
Secure parking	9
Other	13

While expressing an emotive response to the music, Midrand congregants also found the music to be unifying in that it created a sense of community:

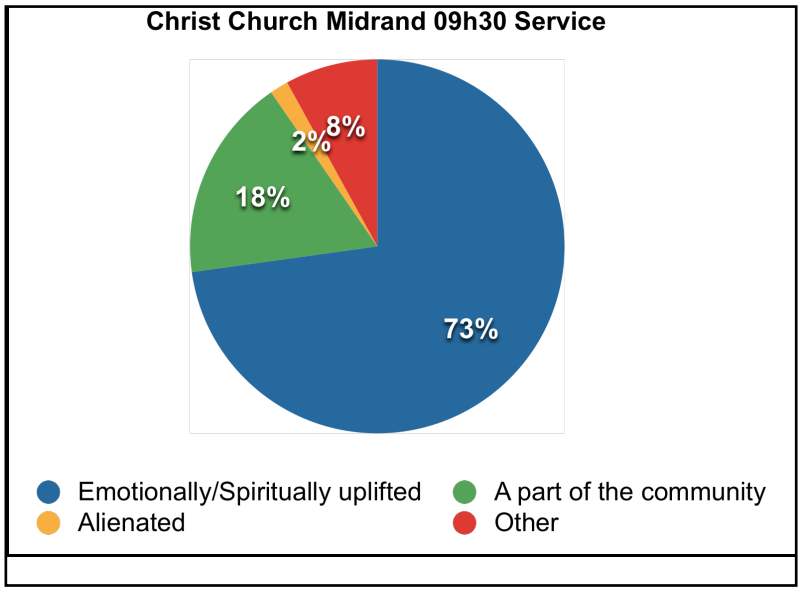


Figure 4-14: Responses from CCM to Question 2.

Some of the comments listed under 'Other' by CCM congregants were:

- Close to God.
- Frustrated because there are too many [songs] that I don't know.
- Receptive to God's word.

The musical style preferences as expressed by Christ Church Midrand congregants are listed below:

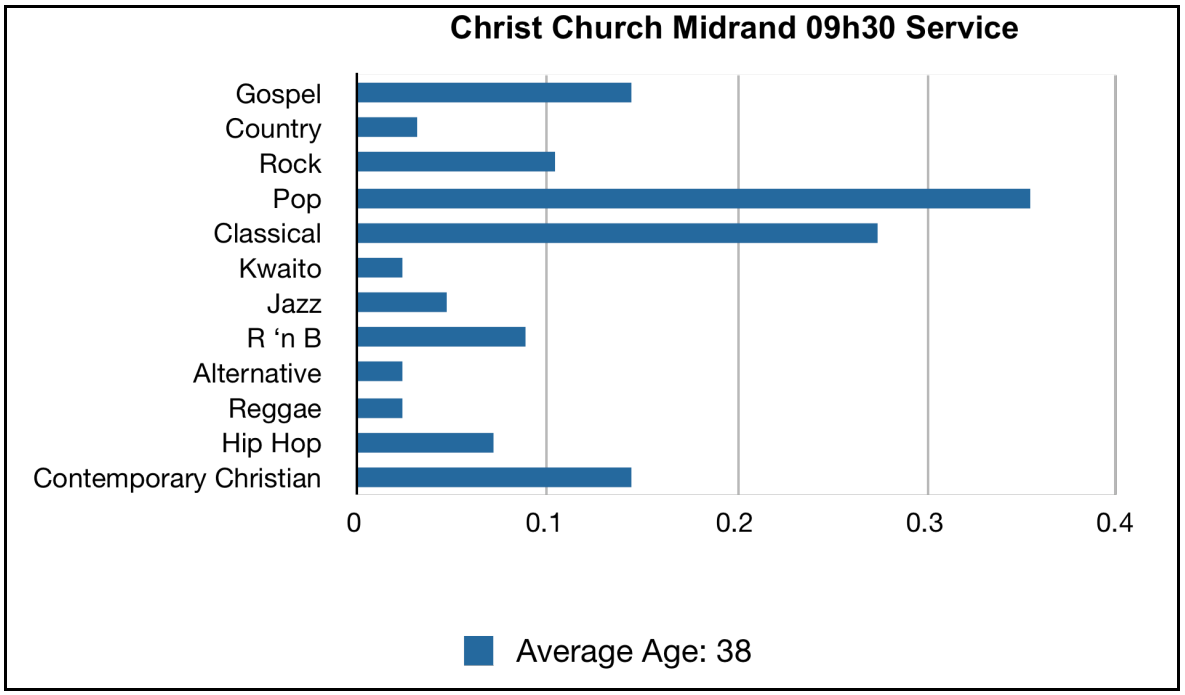


Figure 4-15: Musical style preferences at CCM.

Discussion of these results follow in the next chapter.

Chapter Five: Discussion

In an effort to explore South African Christian cultural identity, I proposed the notion of Indigenous Worship, detailing the worship choices made by three Evangelical churches. The three churches included in this study are very different social communities. While there are certain commonalities, there are clearly discernible distinctions in their income brackets, average ages, proximity to the centre of Johannesburg (now an area renowned for violent crime and poverty) and lastly, racial make-up.

5.1 Response to Musical Style

The members of Honeyridge Baptist Church appear to be reserved in their responses to music (refer to Table 4-1), confirming Dr. Cantrell's description of the church as "a conservative, Evangelical, Bible-teaching church" (Interview conducted with Dr. Cantrell). One of the ways in which a conservative culture is established is in the singing of hymns, and a preference for Western Classical Music. This preference was confirmed in the results of Worship Questionnaire in which 48% of congregants prefer Classical music. At Christ Church Hillbrow, gospel music is the most preferred genre and, as Ans van der Zwaag explained, times of singing last up to 45 minutes. Music thus unites the congregation at CCH and, in keeping with the nature of Gospel music, (with its big choirs and up-beat rhythms) excites the congregation about their faith. That they are given the opportunity to move and clap to the music was highly rated by CCH congregants. This, I would argue, is owing to the fact that music and movement are almost synonymous in African cultures. At Christ Church Midrand, while Pop and Classical styles of music were listed as favourites at the 09h30 service, other style preferences also emerged, such as Rn'B and Gospel. This reflects the presence of a large number of black African congregants who enjoy the style. Surprisingly, though, very little emphasis was placed on moving and clapping in this church. I would argue that this is because the variety of style preferences is not yet being used to its full potential at CCM. The style of music that is adopted is contemporary, yet does not always encourage a great deal of movement. If more extroverted behaviour is desired, it could be encouraged by including more music in a Gospel, Rock and RnB style. Collins confirms this in "Musical Feedback: African America's music in Africa", when he recalls the introduction of African American styles of music into Africa by way of old wax cylindrical records: "...Black styles were far more popular with African audiences than Western classical music introduced by the

colonials" (Collins 1996,26). In the same way, when traditional African songs are sung at Christ Church Midrand, the otherwise static congregation claps, moves and sings whole-heartedly. Results for the 08h00 and 18h00 services are included in the Appendices but were not included in this study because too few congregants completed the questionnaire at these two services to draw reliable conclusions. It is interesting to note, however, that at these two services Classical music was the preferred musical style for most respondents. Fortunately, the 08h00 service features mostly traditional hymns at CCM and thus provides a time for those who prefer this style of music to worship.

It was interesting to note that at Christ Church Midrand and Christ Church Hillbrow the genre of Contemporary Christian Music was not listed as a very popular musical style preference (15% at the 09h30 service at Christ Church Midrand and 4% at Christ Church Hillbrow). Perhaps the reason for this is that contemporary Christian music is still relatively unknown to many Christians. However, its secular counterpart ranked higher up. Also, it must be considered whether the general public is aware of the technical distinctions between the genres listed on the questionnaire. In conversation with members of each congregation, there seemed to be a misconception that 'gospel' music includes any style of music with a Christian message. In completing the questionnaire, some participants did not answer this question and others left question marks. What was clear however, was that in all three churches musical style as a general criteria ranked fourth as being of great importance to these congregations. Although not as important as the preaching of the Word, music was clearly a priority to most congregants - perhaps in different ways, but important nonetheless. Thus I have concluded that music is an important tool in the expression of cultural identity - confirmed also in the ways in which congregants behave during times of singing. It is also clear that in these particular Evangelical churches, adequate study of Scripture is important to the congregation. This fact must affect the songs that they sing - the depth of the lyrics and the focus on the gospel message.

5.2 Views on Worship

At Christ Church Hillbrow, the majority of congregants viewed worship as "a time of singing in which we enter into God's presence". This, I argue, is because the congregation feels united and contented with their musical environment. More so than for any of the other congregations, music offers temporary relief from the otherwise difficult circumstances in which they find themselves and 'relocates' the congregation (Stokes 1994, 3). Here

geographic location is less important than the nature of the event in creating a sense of place. The kind of atmosphere may be attributed to the celebratory style of music but on a deeper level, it is the act of worship that is primary in establishing a sense of place.

Contrary to the view expressed by CCH congregants, the congregations at HBC and CCM viewed worship as a way of life. They consider worship to extend beyond times of music making. The following definitions of worship were offered by the leaders of these churches:

> **Dr. Cantrell:** The definition of worship would be something along the lines of, our response to all that God is through obedience and surrender of our lives in the broadest sense of the word and showing His workmanship in our lives and privately and corporately and musically and every way in which we respond. Romans 12:1, laying our lives on the altar and prostrating ourselves literally and figuratively; just total surrender to Him and showing His work to one another and to the world.
>
> **Bishop Morrison:** Worship is 24/7. That's what the Bible says in Romans 12:1 and 2. "Present your bodies as living sacrifices", so that is a twenty-four-seven activity. The word 'worship' in the Bible is generally not spoken of in terms of when God's people gather. It is generally spoken of in terms of your life, which will include what you do when you gather. So I think we've kind of hijacked the word a little bit, so for many people worship will mean when they sing in the church on Sunday, which it includes, but it's much wider than that - it's twenty-four-seven.

5.3 Establishing Identities

I would argue that Honeyridge Baptist Church successfully reflects the identity of its congregation. My questionnaire established that HBC churchgoers were predominantly White, Western congregants who appear to feel at home with the music. Dr. Cantrell expressed a sincere awareness of the need to adapt to people of other cultures in ways that do justice to their needs:

> There are quite a few Indian, African folks here. But it's hard for me to know how to adapt to them without doing it in a way that's artificial or that would not be divisive, so for now I think we'd rather just say clearly that this is our brand - I don't really like that word - but it's common around here... For our main services, we have to [ask], what's going to best edify the whole church?

On the face of it, the music repertoire of Christ Church Midrand has not reached its potential in representing the congregation's demographics. That 40% of its community is non-Western and non-white should be better reflected in the church's musical choices. A single African vernacular hymn/chorus is scheduled less than once a month currently.

Closer examination of the questionnaire, however, reveals that 71% of Black congregants whose home language is not English do not mind in which language they sing as long as they understand what they are singing. 9% of these same congregants prefer to sing English songs, perhaps for the same reason that English songs are scheduled at Christ Church Hillbrow. From this I conclude that the non-Western African congregants who attend CCM on a regular basis have Western cultural aspirations. For them, it is both acceptable and enjoyable to sing English songs. I also conclude that the musical styles to which they are exposed on the radio have affected their tastes in church music. This is evident in the particularly high percentage of respondents who enjoyed popular and classical music (Figure 4-15). Jones highlights the shift in musical preference amongst black African people in “Folk Music in Africa” (1953, 36), identifying two distinct groups: those who “cling mainly to the indigenous music” and those who “have been in school and have given birth to a sort of quasi-African, quasi-European music which is equally popular” (ibid). This same distinction is clear amongst black congregants at Christ Church Midrand where I have noticed a tension between traditional culture as manifested in the exuberant singing of African choruses and Western cultural aspirations as manifested in dress, contemporary music style preferences, language and the adoption of Western cultural practices. In order to adequately represent this congregation, careful consideration must be given to the multitude of cultural practices present.

The choristers from Christ Church Hillbrow expressed the same practical reality that Dr. Cantrell mentioned in his interview, an extract of which follows:

> In the church at Polokwane, where we were at, it was quite mixed, almost 50/50 but all the songs were in English. I still think some of that is just a contemporary reality, otherwise what language would you choose? There are just so many African countries that represent so many languages.

In a church like Christ Church Hillbrow the question of which language to speak is important because of the number of non-South Africans who attend. The church body has chosen English out of necessity because Africans from other countries do not understand local South African languages.

These findings lead me to conclude that it is out of practical necessity that many African churches choose to worship in English, making it clearer why so much contemporary church music is sourced from the same places - it is practical and convenient to sing music

that is readily available. There is a window of opportunity, however, for black African Christians to write songs in their own vernacular. I have met many Afrikaans-speaking Christians who have expressed a desire to sing more contemporary songs in their own language. Awareness of this is vital to the establishment of Indigenous Worship.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

In this dissertation I set out to answer two questions: Is there a style of music that is most appropriate for Christian worship and that best represents Christian identity? and How can South African Christians express their own unique cultural identity in their church music?

Based on my findings from the Worship Questionnaire, an interrogation of the 'Worship War' Debate and an investigation into the notion of Indigenous Worship, I draw the following conclusions:

6.1 A Question of Style

In Chapter Three I referred to Dawn's advocation of a model of 'high and folk culture' as the goals for which churches must strive. I interrogated the argument that some churches have dumbed down their worship to cater for contemporary Christians, accustomed to popular culture. I explored some shortcomings of Contemporary Church Music and concluded that despite a frequent lack of traditional rhythmic and metric scheme, (perhaps through a shortage of professional training in poetry and composition), many Contemporary Church Music songs have gained popularity and are used in churches around the world. Frame argues that it is of greater importance that all congregants sing the songs with which they grew up (a form of vocabulary with which they are familiar) than engaging in the artistic merits or demerits of the music of different generations (Frame 1996, 117). To this end, I conclude that while every church has their own preferences regarding musical style (whether contemporary or traditional), it is of greater importance that the style reflects the demographic make-up of that congregation. Page confirms that the hymns/songs that congregants have made part of their unconscious heritage constitute their language of worship (Page 2004, 31).

Music has the ability to create a sense of place. Given that the view of *church* that is being employed in this study is one of a group of worshippers gathered with a common purpose, as opposed to a geographic location in which 'worship' takes place, I would argue that music either creates a sense of 'place' in which people feel that they are able to worship God in a way they feel comfortable with or they feel alienated. Therefore, congregants respond to music not only on an emotional but also on a theological and spiritual level. Page suggests that music enables Christians to 'feel the truth' (2004, 31). Because of its

emotive power, music is able to enhance the words of songs and add meaning to them. He proposes that worship songs help the singer to feel closer to God, not that God is distant at other times, but that the singer can "experience him both emotionally and intellectually" (ibid). Roberts refers colourfully to the experience in which a person responds to music on both an emotional and theological level as 'the liver shiver' (2002, 92). He explains that the danger of church music being assessed according to its ability to induce 'the liver shiver', is that it causes the focus to shift from the importance of worshipping God to mere entertainment. He argues that associating a certain style of music with an encounter with God, leads to undue importance being placed on style as opposed to the truth expressed in the lyrics. Christians are exhorted not to rely on their emotions for assurance of their salvation but to live by faith.

Based on the three churches' views of worship it seems safe to conclude that it is in the purpose for which Christians gather that a church community finds its Christian identity. In much the same way that singing traditional hymns is not of itself an indication of a personal relationship with Christ, so too the singing of contemporary songs does not define the singer. It is the purpose for which music is sung that determines a congregation's identity and in so doing creates a sense of place.

> ...A time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks (Holy Bible, John 4:23).

Goins argues that Jesus' answer points to the fact that only through a relationship with Him, can mankind truly worship the God of the Bible. While this notion of 'true worship' may be offensive to some in a contemporary culture in which many things are considered relative and open to personal interpretation, it is indicated in the words of Jesus, who is the object of Christian worship, that there is a notion of 'true' worship; surely then being a true worshipper is something for which all Christians strive? Of importance to this study then is the identity and place that Goins argues is necessary for worship; it is an identity of being in relationship with Christ. Once this is established, all other areas of a Christian's life will be affected (1999).

Under the heading, "The importance of worship", Frame observes:

> Redemption is the means; worship is the goal. In one sense, worship is the whole point of everything. It is the purpose of history, the goal of the whole Christian

> story. Worship is not one segment of the Christian life among others. Worship is the entire Christian life, seen as a priestly offering to God. And when we meet together as a church, our time of worship is not merely a preliminary to something else; rather, it is the whole point of our existence as the body of Christ. (1996, 11)

Roberts asserts that the Christian concept of worship is not possible without knowing the Lord Jesus himself, without the help of the Holy Spirit who reveals God to us, nor without knowledge of the truth (2002). Page defines worship as “real life” (2004, 22). I conclude that there is danger in placing too great an emphasis on music as a time of worship. Worship is a way of life for the Christian and sung worship merely a highlight.

6.2 A Question of Identity

Stokes’ argument that “a society might also usefully be described as something which happens in music” proves useful in concluding that music performed in a particular church informs its identity (1994, 2). I interrogated this in local congregations by way of a questionnaire and informal and formal interviews and discovered that it is vital to take a congregation’s demographics into account in attempting to practice Indigenous Worship.

Bernard Broere contributes a chapter to *World Music, Politics and Social Change* in which he explores the problem of genre in contemporary music. In particular, he is concerned with the difficulty in drawing distinctions between popular music and folk music in his study area - Colombia. Frith observes that “Musics in Narino, [Broere’s] study area, are not labeled and distinguished from each other according to formal musical characteristics but in terms of use and context” (Broere quoted in Frith 1989, 102). Contrary to Blanchard and Lucarini’s view that Christians, when performing Contemporary Church Music, are simply mimicking the identity of secular artists, I argue that they are trying to find an identity that allows for both modernity and also the eternal values of Christian Worship. I conclude that Contemporary Church Music *is* distinct from secular contemporary music in its purpose.

The notion of *church* applied in this study is one of human community rather than specific geographic location. It is here too that church music finds its purpose: music is fundamental in directing a congregation’s focus on their purpose for gathering - which is to worship God. When Christian music is performed, however, regardless of style, it should demand an identity separate and distinguishable from a secular rock identity. I conclude

that it is when music or stylistic preference becomes the main goal of a service over worshipping God, that Christian identity loses its focus. For this reason, I do not use the results of my questionnaire to present a case in favour of Contemporary Church Music or traditional hymns per se, but rather to propose that each congregation must be examined to find the style/s of music that best represent(s) its identity. I conclude, therefore, that rather than placing limitations on musical styles, Christians should focus on the ways in which they conduct their lives - namely, in keeping with accepted Christian identity.

Based on the information that I have gathered in this dissertation I conclude that there is no *one* appropriate style of music for Christian worship. Every style has advantages and disadvantages. There are also general considerations to be made when compiling a church repertoire; while it is impossible to keep everyone happy, Christian worship should take into account the entire community. Chosen styles should represent most age-groups, racial groups and should feature both traditional and contemporary music. The best way for a South African church to express its unique cultural identity is first to express a Christian identity and then to seek to understand and best represent the particular congregation. In the process, I have no doubt, they will sing the 'heart music' of their congregants and achieve Indigenous Worship.

6.3 Closing Remarks

It has been two and a half years since I first encountered the concept of *Indigenous Worship.* I have built on the idea and transferred it into a context for which it was possibly never intended; but it is a much-needed concept in Evangelical churches in South Africa, given our great diversity. In focussing on the style of music that is best for sung worship, I believe many churches have 'lost the plot'. While it is good and right to ensure that sung worship edifies the church, it must edify the whole church. In churches where only traditional hymns are allowed, I believe there is a risk of idolatry. While the Christian Bible is clear that there is one God, one Way, one Truth and one Life, the suggestion that there is one style, one canon and one instrumental arrangement denies the wondrous diversity of creation: many tribes, many tongues, many emotions, many experiences and many words.

It would not surprise me if there were scores of unknown potential song-writers in South Africa who fill the rows of churches each week. While song-writing requires skill, there

exists a wealth of talent in every congregation. At the heart of Townley's *Indigenous Worship* is the call to churches to draw from the talent-pool of the local church. At the heart of my argument in favour of Indigenous Worship is the call to connect.

There is a need in many South African churches for an inclusive style of worship that communicates to people of all cultures that they are welcome. Perhaps the most useful insight here is offered by Michael Hawn:

> For the church musician, singing cross culturally is not a matter of political correctness. Singing across living cultures is a matter of hospitality. Our congregations often have a variety of ethnic constituencies within a three-five mile radius of our place of worship. Singing the heart music of others displays a lyrical response to the commandment to love God and love one's neighbour (Hawn 2007, 15).

Epilogue

Charles King, a Pastor of Worship and Music wrote:

We enjoy a rare and glorious privilege ... to sing God's praises and his Word in the assembly of His people. But is this worship? Yes and no.
Music-making, even music-making that is supremely centered on the biblical revelation of our glorious God, is not by itself authentic worship. It may be idolatry, it may be self-centered, it may be culturally significant, it may even be extraordinarily emotional. But when is music-making worship?
It is no secret that those who prepare and lead also get the greatest benefit from their labours. There are three elements of worship in this task:

Labours: Our worship is our work at what we do for God's glory. In a very real biblical sense, Thursday rehearsals are a "worship time"! Worship is giving God his due with the devotion of our bodies, time and energy.

Preparation: Our worship is what we do with our hearts and hands. "Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? He who has clean hands and a pure heart...such is the generation of those who seek him" (Psalm 24). So for us it is not only the musical work, but our heart's and our hand's connection to what we sing.

Leading: Making music in corporate worship is never for ourselves, but always to draw others into the joyous understanding of what we have learned and sing. Leading is worship when it is "the fruit of lips that confess his name" (Hebrews 13).

Ours is a special joy and obligation. May we become "living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God".

Sing on! (Carson 2002, 192).

346. In Christ alone

apo 1 (D)

teadily

Is 53:5; Mt 27:42; Jn 1:5, 9; 10:28; 15:26; Acts 2:32-33; Rom 5:9; 8:1-2, 38-39; 1 Cor 15:28; Eph 2:20; 3:18; Phil 2:7-8; Col 1:27

Stuart Townend
& Keith Getty



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2. In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fulness of God in helpless babe!
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save:
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied -
For every sin on Him was laid;
Here in the death of Christ I live.

3. There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious Day
Up from the grave He rose again!
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine -
Bought with the precious blood of Christ.

4. No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me;
From life's first first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny.
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand;
Till He returns or calls me home,
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand!

1539. There is a day

Rom 8:19, 21; 1 Cor 15:51-54; 2 Cor 4:17-18; 1 Thess 4:16-17; 1 Jn 3:2; Rev 21:4

Nathan Fellingham

Gently rhythmic



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2. The trumpet sounds and the dead will then be raised
By His power, never to perish again.
Once only flesh, now clothed with immortality;
Death has now been swallowed up in victory.

3. So lift your eyes to the things as yet unseen,
That will remain now for all eternity.
Though trouble's hard, it's only momentary,
And it's achieving our future glory.

419. Light of the world

(Here I am to worship)

Ps 95:6; Song 5:16; Jn 1:3, 11; 8:12; 9:25; 2 Cor 8:9; Phil 2:8-9

Tim Hughes

po 2(D)

th feeling

Verse E(D) Bsus4(A) F♯m(Em)

1. Light of the world, You stepped down in-to dark-ness,

E(D) Bsus4(A) A2(G) E(D) Bsus4(A)

o-pened my eyes, let me see beau-ty that made this

F♯m(Em) E(D) Bsus4(A) A2(G)

heart a-dore You, hope of a life spent with You.

Chorus 𝄋 E(D)

So here I am to wor-ship, here I am to

B/D♯(A) E/G♯(D)

bow down, here I am to say that You're my God.

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SoF3

Asus2(G) E(D)

And You're al-to-ge-ther love-ly, al-to-ge-ther

B/D♯(A) E/G♯(D) *1. 3.* A(G) *3. To Coda* ⊕ A2(G)

wor-thy, al-to-ge-ther won-der-ful to me.

2. A(G) *Bridge* B/D♯(A) E/G♯(D) A(G)

And I'll ne-ver know how much it cost to see

B/D♯(A) E/G♯(D) *1.* A(G) *2.* A(G)

my sin up-on that cross. And I'll ne- that cross.

D.S. al Coda Asus2(G) ⊕ *Coda* E(D)

So here I am to

2. King of all days,
Oh so highly exalted,
Glorious in heaven above;
Humbly You came
To the earth You created,
All for love's sake became poor.

1498. Over all the earth

2 Cor 10:5; Col 3:15; Rev 11:15

(Lord, reign in me)

Brenton Brown



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2. Over every thought,
Over every word,
May my life reflect the beauty of my Lord;
'Cause you mean more to me
Than any earthly thing,
So won't You reign in me again.

1598. What to say, Lord?

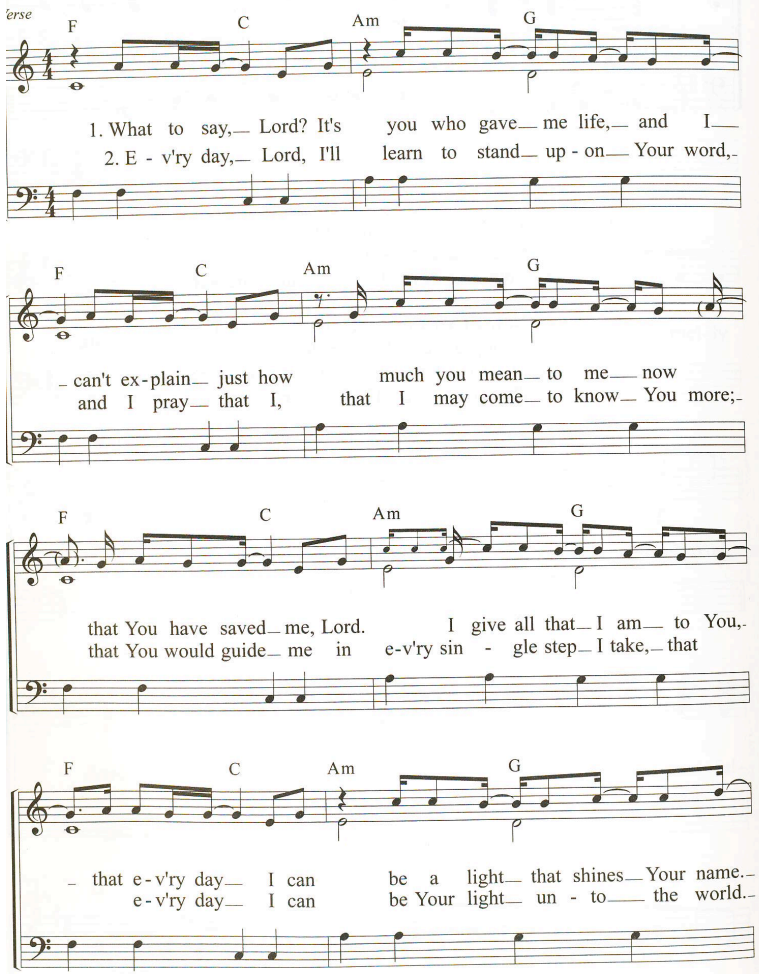
(Every day)

Mt 5:14, 16; Gal 5:25

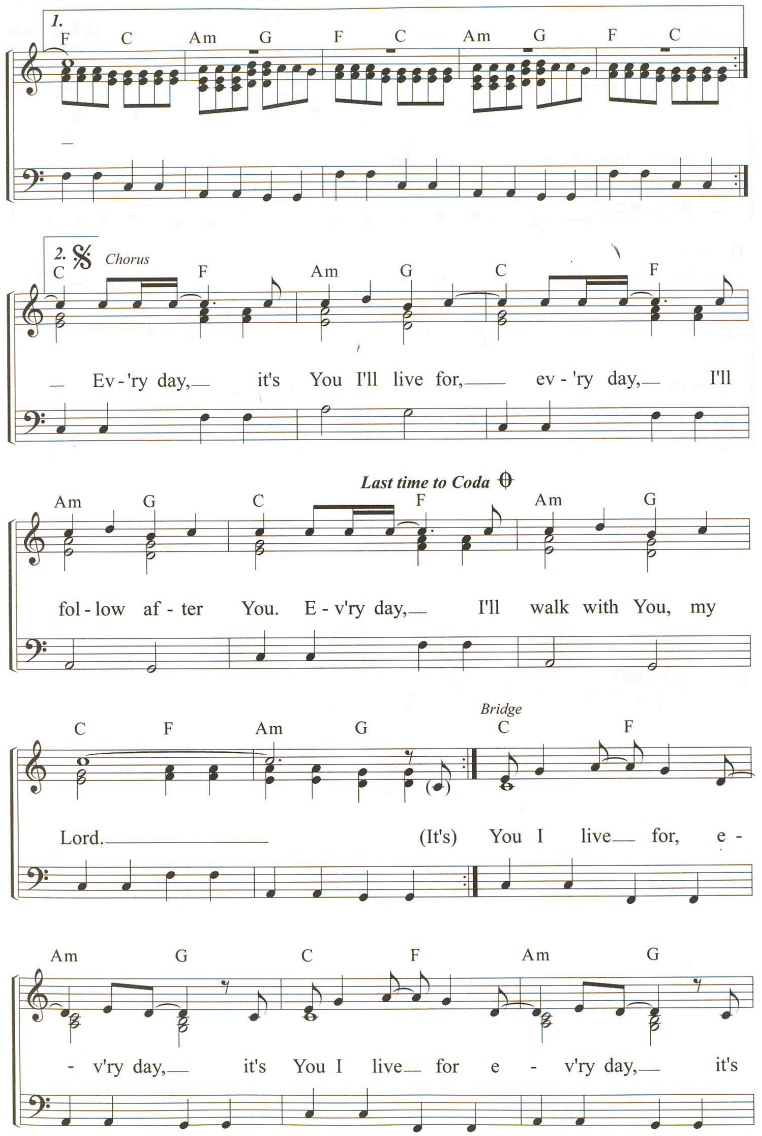
Joel Houston

With life

Verse



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D.S. al Coda
C F Am G C F Am G
You I live for, e - v'ry day.
Coda
Am G N.C.
walk with You, it's You I live for e - v'ry day.

18 Amazing grace

AMAZING GRACE CM



2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed.

3. Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come.
'Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

4. The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

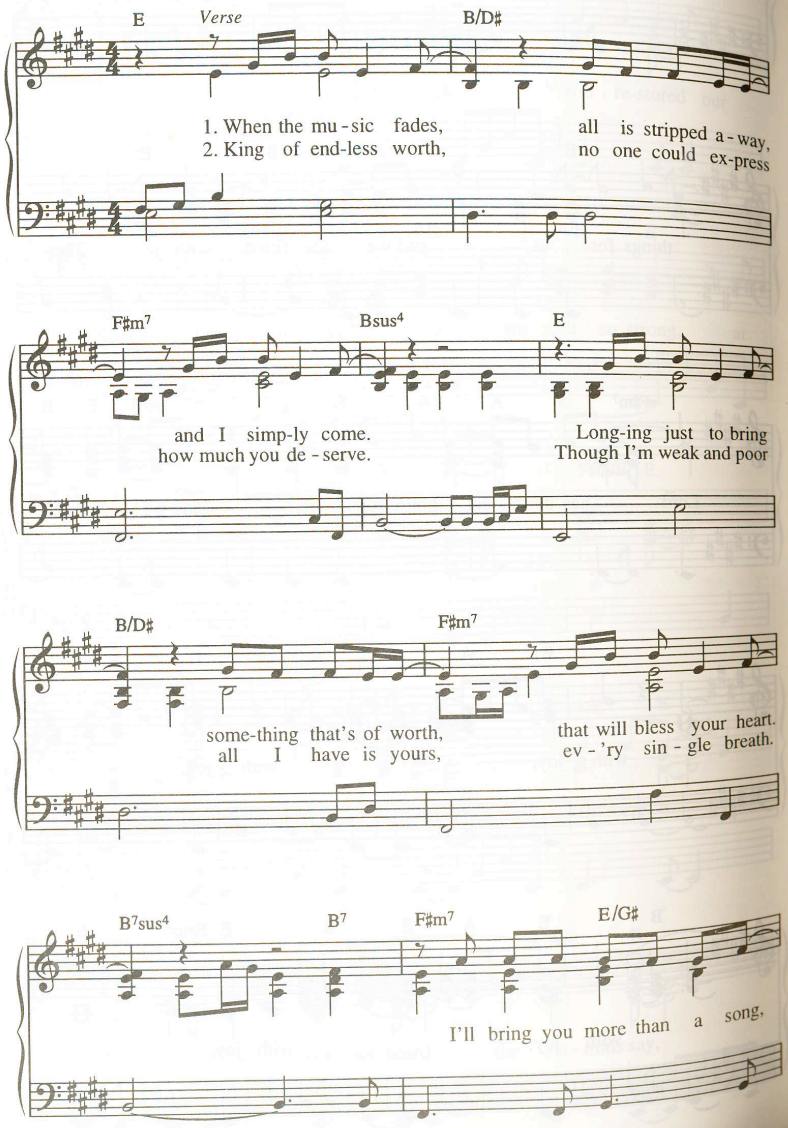
5. Yes, when this heart and flesh shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess within the veil
a life of joy and peace.

6. When we've been there a thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we first begun.

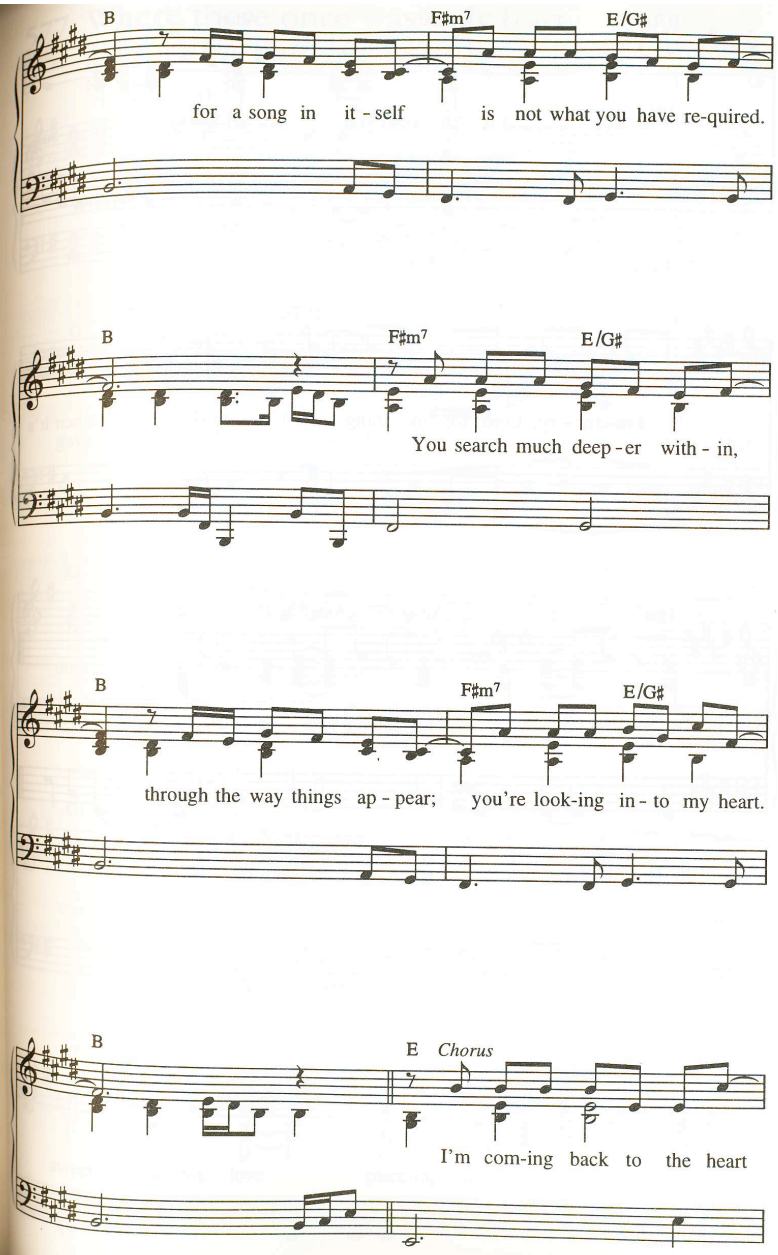
Words: vs. 1–4: John Newton alt, v.5: John Rees
Music: American folk melody arr. Richard Lloyd

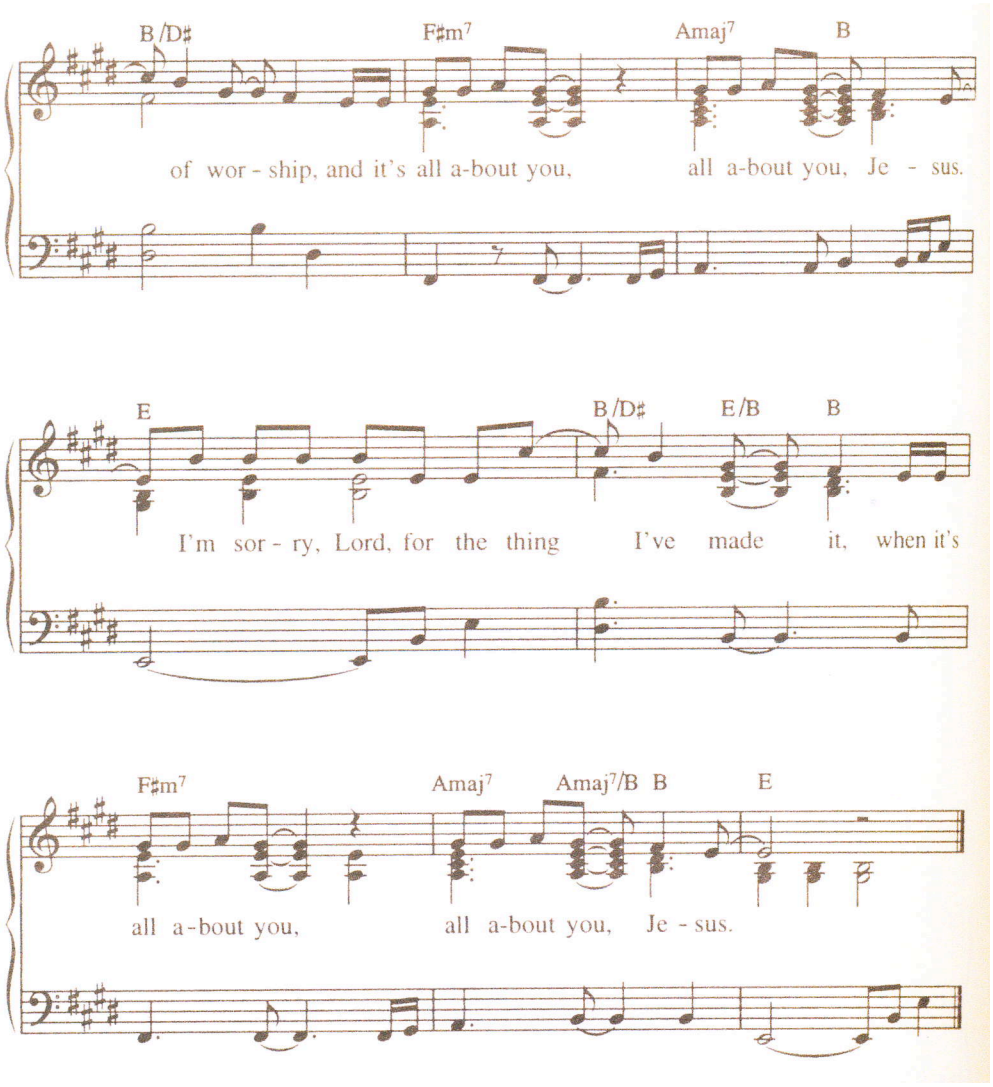
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576 When the music fades
(The heart of worship)



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B/D♯ F♯m7 Amaj7 B
of wor - ship, and it's all a-bout you, all a-bout you, Je - sus.
E B/D♯ E/B B
I'm sor - ry, Lord, for the thing I've made it, when it's
F♯m7 Amaj7 Amaj7/B B E
all a-bout you, all a-bout you, Je - sus.

Appendix B: Questionnaire Results

Christ Church Midrand: 08h00 Service Responses

CHRIST CHURCH MIDRAND 08h00 SERVICE	Percentage
1. What is worship?	
Worship is a time of singing in which we enter into God's presence	41%
Worship is best experienced when singing	9%
Worship is how we live as Christians	64%
Other	5%
2. The music and songs at your church make you feel...	
Emotionally / Spiritually uplifted	86%
A part of a community	27%
Alienated	0%
Other	0%
3. How important is it for you to attend a church where you feel comfortable with the style of music?	
Very important: I don't like singing music to which I cannot relate	50%
Not that important: Church is separate from everyday life	0%
Not that important: I appreciate all styles of Christian music	50%
Other	0%
4. Language	
I would like to sing Christian songs in my home language	18%
I like singing songs that are popular around the world and that are English	27%
I don't mind what language as long as I understand what I'm singing	59%
Other	0%
5. New Music	
I think a new song should be introduced once a month	50%
I think a new song should be introduced twice a month	18%
I think a new song should be introduced every week	18%
Other	14%
6. Please rank the following in order of importance to you: (1 = very important)	
A contemporary style of music	2
A catchy tune	3
Decent lyrics	1
Not too challenging for the local music team	4
7. Rank the following aspects of a church service in order of importance to you: (1 = very important)	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	9
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	2
Comfortable seats	7
Good coffee	11
A style of music that you like	4
Being able to stand still and sing	8
Meeting with friends	5
A beautiful building	10
A warm and inviting atmosphere	3
Food after the service	12
Distance from home	6
Secure parking	7
Other	13

8. Gender:	
Male	36%
Female	59%
9. Race:	
Black	9%
Coloured	0%
East Asian	5%
Indian	5%
White	73%
Other	5%
10. Nationality	
RSA	73%
Lesotho	5%
Swaziland	0%
Zimbabwe	0%
Botswana	0%
Mozambique	0%
Malawian	0%
Nigeria	0%
Ugandan	0%
Congolese	0%
Rest of Africa	5%
UK	5%
USA	0%
India	5%
Europe	0%
Other	0%
11. Marital Status	
Single	23%
Married	55%
Living with partner	5%
Separated	0%
Divorced	14%
Widowed	0%
12. The area in which you live is	
Suburban	68%
Urban	18%
Rural	5%
Township	5%
Other	0%
13. Do you have children	
Yes	64%
Child 1 (Average Age)	23
Child 2 (Average Age)	20
Child 3 (Average Age)	8
Child 4	
Child 5	
Child 6	
No	32%
14. Age	
Average	45

15. The highest grade I passed at school was:	
	12
16. After school I studied at	
Univeristy	64%
Technikon	14%
Other	0%
17. I have the following professional qualification	
Undergraduate Degree	32%
Post graduate Degree	27%
Diploma	36%
Certificate	18%
Other	9%
18. My home language is	
English	64%
Afrikaans	0%
Sotho	5%
Zulu	9%
Xhosa	0%
Setswana	0%
Tsonga	0%
Ndebele	0%
Venda	0%
Shona	0%
French	9%
Igbo	0%
Luganda	0%
Other	5%
19. My ability to read English is:	
Fluent	82%
Good	18%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
20. My ability to speak English is:	
Fluent	86%
Good	14%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
21. The language that is sung most often during praise and worship at your church is:	
English	100%
Afrikaans	0%
Sotho	0%
Zulu	0%
Xhosa	0%
French	0%
Other	0%
22. How often do you read the Bible on your own	
Once a day	41%
More than once a week	50%
Seldom	9%

Never	0%
23. How do you access the news	
Radio	77%
Newspaper	55%
TV	68%
Word of Mouth	23%
Internet	9%
24. What style of music do you like?	
Gospel	14%
Country	5%
Rock	14%
Pop	5%
Classical	27%
Kwaito	0%
Jazz	0%
R&B	0%
Alternative	0%
Reggae	0%
Hip-Hop	0%
Contemporary Christian	5%
25. Which radio stations do you listen to most often?	
Highveld 94.7	23%
Talk Radio 702	9%
Classic FM	23%
RSG	5%
Jacaranda	5%
Y FM	5%
Kaya FM	5%
Metro FM	9%
5 FM	9%
SAFM	9%
Radio Pulpit	5%
Radio 2000	0%
Motswedi FM	0%
Rainbow FM	0%
Impact Radio	0%
Radio Zulu	0%
Umhlobo Wenene	0%
Kwekwezi FM	0%
26. Which of these best describes you?	
Talking one-on-one	82%
Talking in a group of people	18%
Expressing your feelings	36%
Keeping your feelings to yourself	36%
27. Which of these describes you?	
Quick to react	45%
Careful before responding	50%
Need to be invited to join an activity	41%
You invite people to join an activity	50%
28. The best book/magazine/web-site/ journal article /comic you read lately is:	

Christ Church Midrand: 09h30 Service Responses

CCM 09h30 Service	
1. What is worship?	
Worship is a time of singing in which we enter into God's presence	47%
Worship is best experienced when singing	7%
Worship is how we live as Christians	46%
Other	6%
2. The music and songs at your church make you feel...	
Emotionally / Spiritually uplifted	73%
A part of a community	18%
Alienated	2%
Other	8%
3. How important is it for you to attend a church where you feel comfortable with the style of music?	
Very important: I don't like singing music to which I cannot relate	63%
Not that important: Church is separate from everyday life	2%
Not that important: I appreciate all styles of Christian music	29%
Other	4%
4. Language	
I would like to sing Christian songs in my home language	19%
I like singing songs that are popular around the world and that are English	21%
I don't mind what language as long as I understand what I'm singing	62%
Other	2%
5. New Music	
I think a new song should be introduced once a month	51%
I think a new song should be introduced twice a month	23%
I think a new song should be introduced every week	7%
Other	16%
6. Please rank the following in order of importance to you: (1 = very important)	
A contemporary style of music	2
A catchy tune	2
Decent lyrics	1
Not too challenging for the local music team	3
7. Rank the following aspects of a church service in order of importance to you: (1= very important)	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	8
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	2
Comfortable seats	12
Good coffee	11
A style of music that you like	4
Being able to stand still and sing	11
Meeting with friends	5
A beautiful building	13
A warm and inviting atmosphere	3
Food after the service	14
Distance from home	6
Secure parking	10
Other	7
8. Gender:	

Male	40%
Female	55%
9. Race:	
Black	27%
Coloured	3%
East Asian	2%
Indian	6%
White	56%
Other	1%
10. Nationality	
RSA	82%
Sotho	0%
Swazi	2%
Zimbabwean	1%
Botswana	1%
Mozambiquan	0%
Malawian	1%
Ugandan	0%
Congolese	2%
Rest of Africa	1%
British	2%
American	0%
Indian	0%
European	1%
Other	1%
11. Marital Status	
Single	20%
Married	64%
Living with partner	5%
Separated	0%
Divorced	5%
Widowed	2%
12. The area in which you live is	
Suburban	76%
Urban	15%
Rural	3%
Township	0%
Other	2%
13. Do you have children	
Yes	67%
Child 1 (Average Age)	11%
Child 2 (Average Age)	13%
Child 3 (Average Age)	16%
Child 4 (Average Age)	10%
Child 5 (Average Age)	15%
Child 6	
No	1%
14. Age	

Average	38
15. The highest grade I passed at school was:	
16. After school I studied at	
University	51%
Technikon	15%
Other	19%
17. I have the following professional qualification	
Undergraduate Degree	21%
Post graduate Degree	31%
Diploma	21%
Certificate	12%
Other	5%
18. My home language is	
English	66%
Afrikaans	7%
Sotho	4%
Zulu	5%
Xhosa	2%
Setswana	2%
Tsonga	2%
Ndebele	0%
Venda	0%
French	2%
Igbo	0%
Luganda	0%
Other	9%
19. My ability to read English is:	
Fluent	81%
Good	13%
Weak	1%
I can't	0%
20. My ability to speak English is:	
Fluent	80%
Good	13%
Weak	2%
I can't	0%
21. The language that is sung most often during praise and worship at your church is:	
	English
22. How often do you read the Bible on your own	
Once a day	39%
More than once a week	27%
Seldom	27%
Never	2%
23. How do you access the news	

Radio	56%
Newspaper	37%
TV	66%
Word of Mouth	11%
Internet	4%
24. What style of music do you like?	
Gospel	15%
Country	3%
Rock	10%
Pop	35%
Classical	27%
Kwaito	2%
Jazz	5%
R n' B	9%
Alternative	2%
Reggae	2%
Hip Hop	7%
Contemporary Christian	15%
25. Which radio stations do you listen to most often?	
Highveld 94.7	35%
Talk Radio 702	18%
Classic FM	15%
RSG	0%
Jacaranda	12%
Y FM	5%
Kaya FM	6%
Metro FM	13%
5 FM	14%
SAFM	6%
Radio 2000	4%
Motswedi FM	0%
Rainbow FM	1%
Impact Radio	8%
Radio Pulpit	5%
Radio Zulu	0%
Umhlobo wenene	0%
Kwekwezi	0%
26. Which of these best describes you?	
Talking one-on-one	59%
Talking in a group of people	35%
Expressing your feelings	41%
Keeping your feelings to yourself	41%
27. Which of these describes you?	
Quick to react	31%
Careful before responding	59%
Need to be invited to join an activity	44%
You invite people to join an activity	28%
28. The best book/ magazine/ web-site/ journal article/ comic you read lately is: Varied	

Christ Church Midrand: 18h00 Service Response

CHRIST CHURCH MIDRAND 18h00 SERVICE	
1. What is worship?	
Worship is a time of singing in which we enter into God's presence	38%
Worship is best experienced when singing	3%
Worship is how we live as Christians	65%
Other	0%
2. The music and songs at your church make you feel...	
Emotionally / Spiritually uplifted	71%
A part of a community	35%
Alienated	0%
Other	3%
3. How important is it for you to attend a church where you feel comfortable with the style of music?	
Very important: I don't like singing music to which I cannot relate	56%
Not that important: Church is separate from everyday life	0%
Not that important: I appreciate all styles of Christian music	35%
Other	9%
4. Language	
I would like to sing Christian songs in my home language	12%
I like singing songs that are popular around the world and that are English	21%
I don't mind what language as long as I understand what I'm singing	65%
Other	3%
5. New Music	
I think a new song should be introduced once a month	56%
I think a new song should be introduced twice a month	18%
I think a new song should be introduced every week	6%
Other	21%
6. Please rank the following in order of importance to you: (1 = very important)	
A contemporary style of music	2.7
A catchy tune	2.7
Decent lyrics	1.4
Not too challenging for the local music team	3.4
7. Rank the following aspects of a church service in order of importance to you.	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	10
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	4
Comfortable seats	9
Good coffee	11
A style of music that you like	7
Being able to stand still and sing	8
Meeting with friends	5
A beautiful building	11
A warm and inviting atmosphere	5
Food after the service	11
Distance from home	9
Secure parking	9
Other	7
8. Gender:	

Male	47%
Female	50%
9. Race:	
Black	9%
Coloured	0%
East Asian	0%
Indian	0%
White	82%
Other	6%
10. Nationality	
RSA	85%
Lesotho	0%
Swaziland	0%
Zimbabwe	0%
Botswana	0%
Mozambique	0%
Rest of Africa	0%
UK	3%
USA	0%
India	0%
Europe	0%
Other	6%
11. Marital Status	
Single	29%
Married	47%
Living with partner	6%
Separated	0%
Divorced	12%
Widowed	3%
12. The area in which you live is	
Suburban	82%
Urban	6%
Rural	6%
Township	0%
Other	0%
13. Do you have children	
Yes	59%
Child 1	18
Child 2	15
Child 3	12
Child 4	18
Child 5	18
Child 6	
No	38%
14. Age	
Average	42
15. The highest grade I passed at school was:	

	12
16. After school I studied at	
Univeristy	53%
Technicon	15%
Other	24%
17. I have the following professional qualifiaction	
Undergraduate Degree	47%
Post graduate Degree	24%
Diploma	35%
Certificate	15%
Other	6%
18. My home language is	
English	English
19. My ability to read English is:	
Fluent	100%
Good	0%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
20. My ability to speak English is:	
Fluent	97%
Good	3%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
21. The language that is sung most often during praise and worship at your church is:	
	English
22. How often do you read the Bible on your own	
Once a day	29%
More than once a week	50%
Seldom	15%
Never	3%
23. How do you access the news	
Radio	56%
Newspaper	18%
TV	53%
Word of Mouth	15%
Internet	9%
24. What style of music do you like?	
Gospel	9%
Country	3%
Rock	9%
Pop	29%
Classical	35%
Kwaito	0%
Contemporary Christian	12%
R ‘n B	3%

25. Which radio stations do you listen to most often?	
Highveld 94.7	32%
Talk Radio 702	15%
Classic FM	32%
RSG	3%
Jacaranda	6%
Y FM	0%
Kaya FM	0%
Metro FM	3%
5 FM	9%
SAFM	6%
Impact	15%
Radio Pulpit	9%
26. Which of these best describes you?	
Talking one-on-one	56%
Talking in a group of people	35%
Expressing your feelings	47%
Keeping your feelings to yourself	41%
27. Which of these describes you?	
Quick to react	32%
Careful before responding	62%
Need to be invited to join an activity	38%
You invite people to join an activity	53%
28. The best book/magazine/web-site/ journal article /comic you read lately is:	

Honeyridge Baptist Church: 18h00 Service Responses

HONEYRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH 18h00	Percentage
1. What is worship?	
Worship is a time of singing in which we enter into God's presence	35%
Worship is best experienced when singing	2%
Worship is how we live as Christians	62%
Other	12%
2. The music and songs at your church make you feel...	
Emotionally / Spiritually uplifted	66%
A part of a community	19%
Alienated	0%
Other	19%
3. How important is it for you to attend a church where you feel comfortable with the style of music?	
Very important: I don't like singing music to which I cannot relate	57%
Not that important: Church is separate from everyday life	2%
Not that important: I appreciate all styles of Christian music	28%
Other	13%
4. Language	
I would like to sing Christian songs in my home language	20%
I like singing songs that are popular around the world and that are English	32%
I don't mind what language as long as I understand what I'm singing	47%
Other	4%
5. New Music	
I think a new song should be introduced once a month	64%
I think a new song should be introduced twice a month	16%
I think a new song should be introduced every week	4%
Other	17%
6. Please rank the following in order of importance to you: (1 = very important)	
A contemporary style of music	2
A catchy tune	3
Decent lyrics	1
Not too challenging for the local music team	4
7. Rank the following aspects of a church service in order of importance to you.	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	10
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	2
Comfortable seats	9
Good coffee	12
A style of music that you like	4
Being able to stand still and sing	7
Meeting with friends	5
A beautiful building	11
A warm and inviting atmosphere	3
Food after the service	13
Distance from home	6
Secure parking	8
Other	14
8. Gender:	

Male	48%
Female	52%
9. Race:	
Black	1%
Coloured	1%
East Asian	0%
Indian	0%
White	98%
Other	0%
10. Nationality	
RSA	96%
Lesotho	0%
Swaziland	0%
Zimbabwe	0%
Botswana	0%
Mozambique	0%
Malawian	0%
Nigeria	0%
Ugandan	0%
Congolese	0%
Rest of Africa	2%
UK	1%
USA	0%
India	1%
Europe	0%
Other	0%
11. Marital Status	
Single	29%
Married	59%
Living with partner	2%
Separated	0%
Divorced	5%
Widowed	4%
12. The area in which you live is	
Suburban	84%
Urban	16%
Rural	0%
Township	0%
Other	0%
13. Do you have children	
Yes	61%
Child 1	22
Child 2	22
Child 3	22
Child 4	40
Child 5	49
Child 6	
No	39%

14. Age	
Average	41
15. The highest grade I passed at school was:	
	12
16. After school I studied at	
University	53%
Technikon	16%
Other	31%
17. I have the following professional qualification	
Undergraduate Degree	34%
Post graduate Degree	22%
Diploma	31%
Certificate	11%
Other	5%
18. My home language is	
English	80%
Afrikaans	18%
Sotho	1%
Zulu	0%
Xhosa	0%
Setswana	0%
Tsonga	0%
Ndebele	0%
Venda	0%
Shona	0%
French	0%
Igbo	0%
Uganda	0%
Other	1%
19. My ability to read English is:	
Fluent	94%
Good	3%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
20. My ability to speak English is:	
Fluent	91%
Good	7%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
21. The language that is sung most often during praise and worship at your church is:	
English	97%
Afrikaans	0%
Sotho	0%
Zulu	0%
Xhosa	0%
French	0%
Other	0%

22. How often do you read the Bible on your own	
Once a day	66%
More than once a week	26%
Seldom	7%
Never	1%
23. How do you access the news	
Radio	69%
Newspaper	45%
TV	95%
Word of Mouth	29%
Internet	9%
24. What style of music do you like?	
Gospel	25%
Country	18%
Rock	22%
Pop	26%
Classical	48%
Kwaito	0%
Jazz	12%
R&B	2%
Alternative	15%
Reggae	9%
Hip-Hop	9%
Contemporary Christian	46%
Rap	
25. Which radio stations do you listen to most often?	
Highveld 94.7	35%
Talk Radio 702	25%
Classic FM	34%
RSG	11%
Jacaranda	11%
Y FM	2%
Kaya FM	0%
Metro FM	2%
5 FM	5%
SAFM	9%
Radio Pulpit	15%
Radio 2000	3%
Motswedi FM	0%
Rainbow FM	0%
Impact Radio	0%
Radio Zulu	0%
Umhlobo Wenene	0%
Kwekwezi FM	0%
Way of the Master Radio	3%
26. Which of these best describes you?	
Talking one-on-one	74%
Talking in a group of people	19%
Expressing your feelings	38%
Keeping your feelings to yourself	52%

27. Which of these describes you?	
Quick to react	52%
Careful before responding	83%
Need to be invited to join an activity	80%
You invite people to join an activity	51%

28. The best book/magazine/web-site/ journal article /comic you read lately is:

Christ Church Hillbrow: 18h00 Responses

Christ Church Hillbrow 18h00 Service	Percentage
1. What is worship?	
Worship is a time of singing in which we enter into God's presence	65%
Worship is best experienced when singing	12%
Worship is how we live as Christians	31%
Other	2%
2. The music and songs at your church make you feel...	
Emotionally / Spiritually uplifted	94%
A part of a community	6%
Alienated	0%
Other	2%
3. How important is it for you to attend a church where you feel comfortable with the style of music?	
Very important: I don't like singing music to which I cannot relate	37%
Not that important: Church is separate from everyday life	4%
Not that important: I appreciate all styles of Christian music	53%
Other	4%
4. Language	
I would like to sing Christian songs in my home language	12%
I like singing songs that are popular around the world and that are English	20%
I don't mind what language as long as I understand what I'm singing	69%
Other	0%
5. New Music	
I think a new song should be introduced once a month	33%
I think a new song should be introduced twice a month	18%
I think a new song should be introduced every week	39%
Other	8%
6. Please rank the following in order of importance to you: (1 = very important)	
A contemporary style of music	2.7
A catchy tune	3.4
Decent lyrics	2.9
Not too challenging for the local music team	3.5
7. Rank the following aspects of a church service in order of importance.	
Being able to move around and clap my hands to the music	3
Preaching that is practical and challenging	1
Professional presentation (Bible reading, notices, music and preaching)	2
Comfortable seats	10
Good coffee	11
A style of music that you like	4
Being able to stand still and sing	7
Meeting with friends	6
A beautiful building	9
A warm and inviting atmosphere	5
Food after the service	12
Distance from home	8
Secure parking	10
Other	
8. Gender:	

Male	57%
Female	41%
9. Race:	
Black	82%
Coloured	16%
East Asian	0%
Indian	0%
White	0%
Other	0%
10. Nationality	
RSA	47%
Lesotho	0%
Swaziland	0%
Zimbabwe	12%
Botswana	0%
Mozambique	0%
Malawian	2%
Nigeria	24%
Ugandan	6%
Congolese	0%
Rest of Africa	4%
UK	0%
USA	0%
India	0%
Europe	0%
Other	2%
11. Marital Status	
Single	47%
Married	31%
Living with partner	10%
Separated	2%
Divorced	6%
Widowed	2%
12. The area in which you live is	
Suburban	18%
Urban	43%
Rural	4%
Township	24%
Other	8%
13. Do you have children	
Yes	55%
Child 1 (Average)	11
Child 2 (Average)	12
Child 3 (Average)	7
Child 4 (Average)	11
Child 5	
Child 6	
No	45%

14. Age	
Average	33
15. The highest grade I passed at school was:	
	12
16. After school I studied at	
Univeristy	24%
Technicon	16%
Other	31%
17. I have the following professional qualifiaction	
Undergraduate Degree	6%
Post graduate Degree	12%
Diploma	24%
Certificate	31%
Other	10%
18. My home language is	
English	10%
Afrikaans	4%
Sotho	0%
Zulu	12%
Xhosa	6%
Setswana	10%
Tsonga	0%
Ndebele	8%
Venda	2%
Shona	2%
French	0%
Igbo	22%
Luganda	4%
Other	8%
19. My ability to read English is:	
Fluent	53%
Good	39%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
20. My ability to speak English is:	
Fluent	47%
Good	45%
Weak	0%
I can't	0%
21. The language that is sung most often during praise and worship at your church is:	
English	84%
Afrikaans	2%
Sotho	2%
Zulu	6%
Xhosa	0%
French	0%
Other	2%

22. How often do you read the Bible on your own	
Once a day	31%
More than once a week	16%
Seldom	35%
Never	6%
23. How do you access the news	
Radio	22%
Newspaper	41%
TV	73%
Word of Mouth	10%
Internet	0%
24. What style of music do you like?	
Gospel	59%
Country	2%
Rock	0%
Pop	2%
Classical	2%
Kwaito	0%
Jazz	6%
R&B	14%
Alternative	0%
Reggae	0%
Hip-Hop	0%
Contemporary Christian	4%
25. Which radio stations do you listen to most often?	
Highveld 94.7	6%
Talk Radio 702	0%
Classic FM	0%
RSG	0%
Jacaranda	0%
Y FM	8%
Kaya FM	14%
Metro FM	22%
5 FM	0%
SAFM	2%
Radio Pulpit	4%
Radio 2000	0%
Motswedi FM	8%
Rainbow FM	6%
Impact Radio	4%
Radio Zulu	2%
Umhlobo Wenene	2%
Kwekwezi FM	2%
26. Which of these best describes you?	
Talking one-on-one	51%
Talking in a group of people	18%
Expressing your feelings	49%
Keeping your feelings to yourself	18%

27. Which of these describes you?	
Quick to react	18%
Careful before responding	65%
Need to be invited to join an activity	41%
You invite people to join an activity	22%
28. The best book/magazine/web-site/ journal article /comic you read lately is:	**Varied**

Appendix C: Interview Manuscripts

Interview with Bishop Martin Morrison

RECTOR OF CHRIST CHURCH MIDRAND

Date: Tuesday 18 September 2007

Time: 12h00

Please could you describe your position at the church in which you are involved: I am the rector of CCM which means that I am responsible for the church and the running of the church both legally and spiritually. I receive a licence from the Presiding Bishop of CESA to hold office at this particular church so I am accountable to him and to our denomination.

Please could you describe your involvement in the music ministry at your church: My involvement in the music would be probably two-fold: Firstly, as rector I would take final responsibility for the music as with anything else. I will obviously delegate responsibilities as I have done by appointing a music director which is yourself and various other people involved in the music. But secondly I have an interest in music and I have a bit of music background myself. So I meet with yourself and Andrew and from time to time with the other musicians to talk through the styles and so on.

On that topic, could you perhaps give us some information as to what sort of musical background you have: My musical background would be that um, I learnt the piano when I was in primary school and in high school, I did my grade 8 in classical music and I did theory up to I think, grade 5, so that was quite a big part of my life as a child and a teenager. And then, of course, I enjoy music, my family enjoyed music. We often had music around the home. And then my present family, my wife and two children enjoy music. But it's very mixed, very eclectic, so there's classical, rock all kinds. My wife Jean has especially eclectic taste so she'll listen to Gypsy music and Hungarian, she'll listen to South American Masses, so I've been exposed to all of those.

What is the predominant style of music that is sung at your church and why have you chosen that style? The predominant style would be contemporary. I think we've chosen that style because I think that is where the majority of people are at in our culture. Who knows how many radio stations there are? 50? And I would think that the vast

majority of those would play contemporary music, which tells me that that is where people are. So my question isn't so much "What do people in the local church want?", that's only half the population I'm thinking of. I'm thinking, "What do people who are not in the church want?" Not just what do people in the church want. And I think that the vast majority of people want contemporary music. Also when I look at modern, contemporary, up-to-date evangelical churches in our country and around the world…that is where they are. So, one doesn't want to choose a narrow be it, say Country Western that is a narrow group, or jazz or even classical, that is a relatively narrow group. One can include those from time to time, but I think the dominant group would be contemporary.

How involved are you in providing direction to the music team as to what songs should be sung, what style of music should be used and which songs should be avoided? Perhaps the music people will say I'm too involved, I think it's just right, but they may have a different opinion, but I'm very involved because I think that the implications are huge that the music is critical and the music sets the tone. That's the first thing, almost, that people who come to our church will see. So for me, the music is not just the starter before the main course. The music is part of the main course, so that's where we are. Music will set your image and your culture. It's just how it is, whether one likes it or not. That is how it is. So when we were at Christ Church Pinetown last week, the choir at SYNOD had two song items. The first song item was, "From sinking sand He lifted me", now that's 50 years old, so you immediately set the tone that this church is for old people, who like those old songs. Now, they were sincere and genuine and I'm sure they're wonderful Christians, but they've set the wrong tone. You leave a message straight away with your music as to who you are and who you are trying to reach. And in that sense, that's important to me in terms of your Evangelistic out-reach, your reaching people in the community. You want them not to be put off by the style or the packaging, or the ethos. If they're going to object, they must object to the gospel, not the style.

Just on that point could you give us some background as to what the average age-group of people in this church is that you are trying to attract and the area in which you are based? Yes, I think we've always said that Midrand is a growing area and the vast majority of people who live in Midrand are young adults or young families, so it's sort of 20 to 40. That is your main target group because that is the dominant group in Midrand, so we are targeting that group and we are reaching that group. So I think we are getting it right in terms of our programmes, our activities, our music…that we are reaching the target

group that we are getting, um which is also multi-racial, we are getting the Black, White, Indian population of Midrand in that frame-work.

Do you have any opinions on churches that are opposed to using those instruments?

Yes, I do have a strong opinion about that, because I think they're wrong. If you look in the Bible, they were contemporary. I would have thought they used the musical instruments of the day and they listed, in Psalm 150 or Psalm 149 I think, they list lists - a whole bunch of [instruments], some of which I don't recognise, which obviously must have been the [instruments] they used in those days. So in the Bible, they used the contemporary instruments of the time, and I think that that's what we must do. Um...and if you go to India, you will use whatever instruments people are using there to make music and if you were to work amongst the aborigines in Australia, I would think that you would do the same thing. You would use the kind of instruments that are predominant in the culture. I don't think that the instruments are Christian or non-Christian per say, I think instruments are neutral, they are generic; what matters is the words, what kind of words you have.

I read an interesting article a few months ago where the writer said that God was responsible for creating the materials that we use to make instruments, but that it wasn't actually God who created the instruments and that we have a responsibility as Christians to make sure that the materials we use are used to make instruments to worship Him. Do you have any opinions on God's role in choosing instruments, in having made instruments, um, that sort of thing.

Yeah, I would think that it is entirely up to us. There are many areas which the Bible doesn't speak to not because it is ignorant or because God has left something out. If the Bible doesn't say something about it, what the Bible is saying is that we must use our God-given wisdom to make wise decisions, which may probably vary from situation to situation, that it's a matter of wisdom. The Bible doesn't say, don't use these instruments, but use these...what the Bible is saying, I think, is that you can use any instrument. God has made the material, and we can use our minds, so it doesn't matter what instrument. I don't have a problem with that whatsoever.

What is your position on the singing of hymns at church. There is obviously a wealth of hymns available; there are these hymns available, there is a tradition of singing hymns at church. What is your position on singing hymns at church?

The traditional hymns that we have within the Christian church, are part of the heritage of the Christian church. For the most part, they have survived because of normally their words; that there is a richness which has survived, whereas thousands of hymns have not survived and normally that is because the words, the vocabulary which is used and the thoughts behind the words. I don't have a problem with it [hymns], what I have a problem with is if we're not creative in perhaps composing different music to the same words, or perhaps finding different arrangements and using different instruments. So if we're just going to sing hymns with the organ or the piano, well, I think that's boring. It's just plain boring and it's not creative. I think one should try to use the same music with different arrangements, different instruments, and sometimes write new music for them. There is value in us singing hymns which are known throughout the world, so that there is certain uniformity. So if you sing "Great is Thy Faithfulness", you pretty much pick that up all over the English speaking world, so you won't be totally cut off or out of it when you go to other places. So there's a place for it, but I still think that it should be a small element or component of your repertoire, not a dominant component.

There is a view amongst some authors and church leaders that contemporary music dumbs down in order to cater for the contemporary church community, and that hymns were written with a great deal of thought by intelligent people, by well-known composers. Do you have any opinions on contemporary church music that is being sung today.

I think every generation will have good songs and bad songs both in terms of the lyrics and in terms of the music. The bad songs of two hundred years ago have died, they haven't survived, so it's not to say that there weren't any bad songs in terms of music or lyrics then...there were, they have just died. To say that you can't have contemporary people writing good music now is absolute nonsense. It actually denies the work of the Holy Spirit. Surely the Holy Spirit still is active and surely the Holy Spirit still gives gifts to Christians in terms of writing music and writing lyrics. So to say that anything that's modern can't be sung is denying the doctrine of the work of the Holy Spirit and the fact that it gives gifts. But you'll find good and bad songs now and good and bad songs then, so to

say that any age has the edge on writing music really does deny the giftedness of God's people by the Spirit. But you'll find good and bad both now and then, so I don't buy that argument at all.

Are you aware of the debate surrounding the use of Contemporary Christian Music in church services. Have you come in contact with these issues? Are the issues surrounding the use of Contemporary Christian Music a big thing do you think for ministers in Johannesburg today? Is it something that people give a lot of thought to, do you give a lot of thought to them or is it something that you haven't really heard much about?

Well, I think um... you've introduced me to some of the issues with the stuff that you have sent me and that I have read, but I am quite obviously aware of different views. Different ministers in different churches have different views, so there is a great deal of debate and discussion which I think is probably a good thing because it means that people take it seriously, that music is serious and it matters to the church, so I am aware of some of the issues, but not all of them, because that's not the world I live in all of the time. Some of my colleagues within CESA look quite disparagingly upon music because they think that that's really just the starter for the main course, which is the preaching of the word. Now of course the preaching of the Word is critical but I think the Word is taught and sung through music as well so...and prayed, so you are praying and you are teaching and you are communicating through music and the words of music. So there is a great deal of debate and there's a great deal of discussion which I'm reasonably aware of.

Since the 1960s and 1970s there has been a rise of contemporary Christian groups - soloists and bands - that have started recording music for recreational listening but it would have a Christian content. Sometimes that music is used in the church. What is your opinion on bands that create music [for commercial and recreational purposes]?
Some feel that Christian music should be reserved for worshiping God in the church setting.

No, I don't agree with that at all. I think that music communicates and the secular world knows that and that's why they use music so I think that there's a place for Christian musicians, professional musicians, singers, bands, groups to make music. I think there's a

place for [that type of music] in all situations. In fact Deuteronomy 6 tells us that when you're bringing up your children you are to surround them with Christian truth, you are to write it on the doorposts and on the...so it's almost advocating Christian graffiti - but your children are to be surrounded by Christian truth. So I think one of the ways in which you do that is to have music which has Christian lyrics playing in the car or playing at home, um...I don't listen that carefully to the lyrics when I'm listening to music, but that's a personal thing. My two daughters and Jean do. They will pick up the words and the lyrics so I think it's wonderful to have Christian music playing at home, playing in the car because it's Christian truth. You're surrounding yourself with Christian truth. So I think it's great. I think it's fantastic.

How important do you think it is to train church leadership in choosing styles of music that suite the demographics make-up of their church community.

Well, I think what is important is that a church should have a culture of being evangelistic, of trying to reach out all the time. So that culture will affect your standards, whether you're committed to excellence, to trying to do things well so that you don't embarrass the gospel. So it has to do with the gardens, with the buildings, with the architecture, with the preaching - that non-Christians can understand what you say, you explain things, that you don't just use in-house terminology. If you use the terminology which is fine, you need to explain it and the same thing applies to music - which you want to reach your community. And one of the ways of doing that is through music. So you're thinking about that. What is the dress of the stewards at the door, the people up on stage. If you make them dress in a way which is culturally odd, you are saying to people that to join of this church you need to be culturally odd - which is a nonsense. The tension I think, which is not just in music but in church in and of itself is that strictly speaking, church is for God's people - the family of God's people meeting together, so that is the biblical concept of 'church' um, but you also have the responsibility of God's people being witnesses and preaching so that people hear the gospel, not the other side of the coin of trying to make the church not off-putting to non-Christian people at the same time, but it is a bit of a tension.

OK, so you would say then that you need to create a good balance between catering for your own church community of believers, and also being acceptable to people on the outside who may be seekers?

Correct. So you want your seeker not to be put off by the ethos or culture of the church. If they're going to be put off, it should be by the gospel.

So there is a balance that does create a tension, but I think it's important that your leaders and the church understand that this is a place they can feel comfortable bringing non-Christian people to - which includes the kind of music you have.

They often speak of the lyrics of your songs that you sing as creating a vocabulary for the members of your church community to be able to express certain feelings and to be able to express their love and worship of the Lord. Do you think that the music that we sing as a church congregation provides an adequate vocabulary of expression for a range of emotions and for facing many different types of circumstances in life?

I think we do, though I'm sure we can do better, like we can do better in many things. I think music and the lyrics do are important in giving people words to express their different emotions and feelings. That's why I think it is good to mix different styles. I think the dominant style should be contemporary but we dip into other styles like hymns and classical [music] because there will be words there, there will be lyrics there that will help us.

Are there any emotions or circumstances in life that you think could be touched on a bit more in the lyrics of songs that we sing? For example when we had the September 11th crisis many years ago Christians felt that there weren't any songs that suitably address the range of emotions that people would have been feeling at that time. We had "It is well with my soul" and not much else, and that [was one of the events that] sparked Matt Redman's writing of "Blessed be Your name". Do you have any thoughts on that?

I think that's a good comment. If you are the rector, you generally want more up-beat songs, just from a gathering of God's people point of view, you want to focus on the positive rather than the negative. There can be a tendency that one just emphasises the positive and perhaps you can have too few songs that will give words to some of the other emotions. I don't think that that is true of us.

I think we do have a number of songs that will express the brokenness of this world. I think more where the lack is within contemporary Evangelical music is that it will be mainly focused on me and my walk with God, whereas we should actually have songs which in a sense reflect the depth of Christian theology. So we don't have lots of songs on Christian songs on Christian mission or justice or reaching out to the poor and the disadvantaged. We've probably got a lot on the person of God, but we don't have a lot on heaven. I'm not sure if you can have too many songs on hell. But I think that the bulk of our music is quite personal, which one understands, but it could be a little bit wider in terms of the issues that it covers more than just emotions. So the answer is yes, I think one does need to look at the songs and say which songs tough which emotions or help to express certain emotions and where are we lacking, but there may be even a broader scope of things that we could include in our music.

Could you please define what Worship means to you?

Worship is 24/7. That's what the Bible says in Romans 12:1 and 2. "Present your bodies as living sacrifices", so that is a 24/7 activity. The word Worship in the Bible is generally not spoken of in terms of when God's people gather. It is generally spoken of in terms of your life, which will include what you do when you gather. So I think we've kind of hijacked the word a little bit, so for many people worship will mean when they sing in the church on Sunday, which it includes, but it's much wider than that - it's 24/7.

Do you have any closing thoughts on church music in general?

Well, I think that we have great music here at Christ Church Midrand and we have great people here heading it up like yourself and others. I think that, in my mind, we are pretty much where we ought to be. I think that the teams aim for excellence and it shows. I think many churches don't. That it's sad if they don't and if they don't give thought to it and if they don't put attention and money into it. I think it's a tragedy. I think charismatic churches are streaks ahead of the Evangelical churches in terms of seeing it as a bridge into the culture and as very important, whereas there are many Evangelical churches that don't. So I'm very grateful for what we have here. But it is critical. I think it's a critical way of reaching people and reaching people's hearts. It does give expression to you emotions which I think it should. I think sometimes the people who are critical of modern music and modern words and so on are the kind of people who don't have any interest in poetry. The words

are poetry. And sometimes they are criticizing it from a what is it a left, a right brain, so they miss out on that.

Thanks Martin. Thank you for your time.

Pleasure.

Interview with Dr. Tim Cantrell

SENIOR PASTOR AT HONEYRIDGE BAPTIST CHURCH as of June 2005.

Date: 19 September 2007

Time: 15h00

Please could you describe your musical background, if any?

Short answer. I have no musical abilities unfortunately. I love to sing, but my wife is much more the musically trained one. We're deficient in that area in my family. I love hymns, yeah but no musical skills.

Could you please describe your involvement in the music ministry at your church, and by that I don't necessarily mean playing an instrument, but what sort of guidance and role you play in the music at your church.

Right, well the elders asked when I arrived that I take over chairmanship of the Worship Committee, as it was called at the time, who consisted primarily of the worship leaders of which we have, as I think you know, five to six who rotate on a monthly basis, and there were a few other technically skilled people. That committee was phased out because we found that to be an unnecessary committee and just more of a forum for opinions and discontent or whatever and we realised that rather I would give the weekly oversight to the worship leader for that week, he has to run his service order liturgy by me and I give final approval to that. He has no doubt basic guidelines that he must follow - minimum number of hymns, length of time, scripture readings, types of prayer to involve. There's still quite a bit of freedom for each worship leader. We're still pretty Baptist, but probably more on the formal end of Baptist, as you've probably seen; definitely not high church. So um, yeah, I think the buck stops with me. I do bear the final responsibility, well, with the others, but primarily me. What we do Sunday to Sunday, how our people worship, um, because our church has a good heritage. Maybe I should give you the worship document that the churches use, thankfully, it predates me and I haven't touched it because it's a superb document and there's few things that I would change. It would be good to update it but previous leaders have developed and the principles and the philosophies are some of the practices here at Honeyridge.

Please could you describe your particular Baptist church, just for the record. Christ Church Midrand would be described as an Evangelical, Reformed church. How would you describe Honeyridge?

Yeah, it probably depends on what the multiple choice options were. I was also think of us as an Evangelical church with Reformed convictions though we don't tend to use that label because of the way it's misunderstood. We would say that we are a conservative, Evangelical, Bible-teaching church.

What is the dominant style of music that you sing at your church and why have you chosen that style?

It's blended - is probably the term that's been used. Again it predates me, although I'm supportive of it. It depends again on who's doing the labeling. Some would say it's non-charismatic, it's more formal, but I think the best word would be, well I hope it would be a biblical style , not the biblical style, but a biblical and blended style of English, Western music that blends the traditional hymn-orientated and the contemporary choruses and hymns, and I hope, the elements that you find in Colossians 3 in terms of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. We also, when we say blended, would mean the element of psalms, the more hymnic and then the contemporary, which includes modern hymns and choruses. So forth.

Are there any songs that you avoid for any particular reason when you give oversight to worship leaders? Any comments on that? Are there any criteria?

Definitely. We have a situation here now - something that I also inherited - of different leaders and for now I think I need to make the best of that. So they're not going to be as versed in music, sacred music as a church might need, in the long run. I'm trying to be discreet. But we meet with worship leaders every now and then and go through any songs that we have questions about doctrinally. This past Sunday we had a chorus that's quite nice and singable "Lord, reign in me". My wife and another friend's wife asked, "but, what about that part, 'Lord reign in me again'?", does that mean that we haven't let God reign in us over the week-end and now we're asking Him to reign in us again?"

Also that Matt Redman song, “Heart of worship”, yeah, that’s a song we wouldn’t sing here because I don’t think it would be healthy to assume that the whole congregation needs to say that they totally forgot what worship was all about.

It’s fine to confess sin and well, I believe in corporate confession but not in that way. I think that’s not what you see as a Biblical way... um I don’t know. I’d need to get into that another time. So, most of our leaders are pretty discerning. So we would only take out something where the music was definitely distracting, distracted from the message, or where we believed the message was unbiblical. It’s probably been almost two years since we’ve had a good chat as leaders, it’s overdue, and where we said there’s a few...in general we’re cautious of songs that come out of certain camps like Vineyard, Hillsongs... but we would never ad hominum say, “well because it’s from there therefore, we would never sing it”, unless it was from a heretic, but if it’s from just a shallow less mature Christian group, we would be more cautious than we would be of hymns that have stood the test of time and still need to be...some of them are more sound than others doctrinally, but generally they’re much more proven, both in style and content.

If you want an example, “Above all powers”, we love that song and we love the tune...in fact, Riaan, who was our music director omitted that song because he found that it was difficult to get consistency in how to play it and sing it, I think that’s what bothered him. But I have definite concerns about the end of the chorus, “You thought of me, above all”. All of the sudden, this great God-centered song, suddenly, the punch-line is a self-centered line that Jesus thought of me even above God uh, which is the opposite of what we see in so many Scriptures. Romans Chapter Three: Jesus died to demonstrate God’s glory; it’s all about God ultimately... and only us being saved for God’s sake. And even the idea, “Like a rose trampled on the ground”, doesn’t quite fit with John 10: No-one takes my life from me, I lay it down. Rather than just a rose, that sort of just gets trampled, is a victim and can’t do anything about it. That’s bearable, but it’s not as truly Biblical as we would prefer. There was one song that our worship leader did two weeks ago, um, another Hillsong song, “This is my desire to honour you”, and I let him do it, because once a year I can tolerate that song, but generally, it’s just weak poetically, cause that’s another factor: Does it honour God in terms of its lyrics and its content? Quality and excellence, you know. Philippians 4:8 is a big verse: Whatever is true, pure noble, right, pure, lovely, excellent, honourable and admirable, think on these things. So we don’t want to be bringing to God, like Malachi says, our left-overs or our seconds, anything but our best.

What is your position on using contemporary instruments in church services. In John Blanchard's book and a few others, authors have said that drums, guitars, even pianos and keyboards are perhaps out-of place in the church.

I haven't read that book. I'd be interested to although I think he seems to take a much harder...my impression is he might be more dogmatic on some of those things than I believe. I'm fine with being dogmatic when your dogma is clearly linked with Scripture but where Scripture allows freedom, I think we have to be less dogmatic. Some of these things I'm still thinking through. I mean lately I've noticed that the drums at times in some of our hymns especially are distracting and I realise that people need to be more and more persuaded that the greatest instrument is God's people, the congregation - the voice of God's people. But generally, I think that our people sing well and are continuing to sing better in terms of heart -felt passion and worship. So no, none of these instruments that you've just listed are forbidden. We don't see any Biblical reason to forbid them. You need to ask of them the same questions that you ask of any instrument: does it honour God, is it excellent, and does it contribute to congregational worship or not.

One of Blanchard's reason for being opposed to the use of these instruments is that, he feels, that the instruments affect the style of worship. So he describes a Matt Redman concert in which all the girls are screaming and going wild and he makes the point that the instruments encourage that behaviour and that it is inappropriate in 'the sanctuary'. I think he used those words.

Well that's a tough one, because technically, the sanctuary is now us, God's people. There's a biblical temple and the new covenant and yet there is still something special about the place where God's people meet and that's a fine line.

The next question, you have covered very well. I'm not sure if you have any more comments on this topic. What is your position on singing hymns in church?

The more the better but still it's not the only. It's wonderful but it's not the only form of songs that God has given us.

Were you aware of any debate surrounding the use of contemporary music in church services and I'm speaking specifically here of ... Michael W Smith has released a new album and then people sing those songs in church. Some people would have a problem with that for some of the reasons that you listed. One of the authors that I read was Marva Dawn said that we are dumbing down in order to cater for people today. Do you have any comments on that?

I've heard good things about her material. Most of her things have resonated well with me. I have read a few things of hers. One of the first questions is... with these song is... I think a lot of these songs seemed to enter the church through Keith Green in the 70s. These songs that are written for performance, which I don't think would be wrong, or for special song items (that's often a very different form of music than songs that were written, like most of the modern hymns - for congregational singing - we love some of the modern hymns by Keith Getty and Stuart Townend) Those are great because they're so simple and not distracting. They don't confuse people and take 5 weeks to learn. Whereas with some of the contemporary songs it's hard to know when to come in and how to sing along. That would be the main concern and sometimes they are just shallow. So it's fine. God is a God of folk culture and high culture and I suppose even pop culture. Some aspect of that can be redeemed for His glory as well. So it's fine to have a simple Matt Redman song that's very folksy - "It's all about you, it's all about you", but God's people need a balanced diet. It's tricky, but yeah, that's a whole 'other discussion. They need a broad enough diet to be stretched and to love God with all of their minds. There definitely is debate. There have been numerous debates [at Honeyridge] and I think the key to surviving those and avoiding the major 'worship wars' was strong eldership. Godly, humble but strong eldership who gave clear leadership to the congregation and didn't allow divisive or contentious elements to come in, so that really helped protect the church from a lot of confusion and conflict.

How influential do you think the music that is sung in a church is in attracting or driving away specific members of the congregation?

Yeah, in terms of... I think it can have a huge role, whether we like to admit it or not. I think the music has a big role, it just doesn't mean that's what ... therefore, what do you do about that? That's the bigger... the more debatable area. I don't ... We would not say because music has such a huge influence for people today in choosing a church, does it

mean therefore we give them what they want or we make music as central as they think it should be because they're not the head of the church, Christ is and their word is not our chartered document. Scripture is our chartered document. So we have to be driven by theology and by principle rather than by a consumerism and human demands.

How important do you think it is to train church leadership in choosing styles of music that suits the demographic make-up of the church community?

It's so funny that you ask. We were just discussing this in our staff meeting this morning. Because we're working as a staff through some material on understanding racism and cross-cultural relationships biblically. [ ] But um, yeah you have to factor it in. Our church here is mostly white, Western. There are quite a few Indian, African folks here. But it's hard for me to know how to adapt to them without doing it in a way that's artificial or that would not be divisive, so for now I think we'd rather just say clearly that this is our brand - I don't really like that word - but it's common around here and this is our philosophy and what we stand for and when the Lord brings some of these folk of other cultures into leadership of the church, or some of the music groups, and they have suggestions of how it could be done, an African song - we occasionally have an Afrikaans song item or something because we have quite a few Afrikaans people here, I'm very open to that, you know. In the church at Polokwane, where we were at, was quite mixed, almost 50/50 but all the songs were in English. I still think some of that is just a contemporary reality, otherwise what language would you choose. There are just so many African countries that represent so many languages. Let them bring a song item on occasion in their language, as long as there is also interpretation given, which Scripture is clear about. Let them do that. Or for that matter, let them have a special evening of teaching us how the Zulu people worship God, but for our main services, we have to say, what's going to best edify the whole church. There's not easy answers to all that. When you get them, let us know.

Do you think the music you sing at church provides an adequate vocabulary of expression of a range of different emotions. If not, do you have any thoughts on how important this is and how it could be remedied. The question comes out of listening to Matt Redman speak about the day of the September 11th attacks when the church asked what does it sing today. They maybe had It is well with my soul and they didn't really have much else. I'm interested in how well we provide a vocabulary for the congregation.

I think the psalms would be the first solution to this. If we sang more of the psalms - that's God's book. It gives a much wider expression. I totally agree with what you said from Matt Redman. I began this year in January with a two-part series from Psalm 90, which is a very sombre Psalm - it used to be read at funerals and I think in my introduction about a guy who wrote an article that you should try and get a hold of if you haven't already, from Westminster Seminary called, "What songs do miserable Christians sing?" I forget his name but I could probably find it for you. He talks about how very few songs are in a minor key. I agree. I think we're very deficient in that area.

Define what worship means for you.

As I understand it biblically? **Yes.** The definition of worship would be something along the lines of, our response to all that God is through obedience and surrender of our lives in the broadest sense of the word and showing His workmanship in our lives and privately and corporately and musically and every way in which we respond. Romans 12:1, laying our lives on the altar and prostrating ourselves literally and figuratively just total surrender to Him and showing His work to one another and to the world.

Any other thoughts on church music in general?

I have probably rambled enough already.

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