



RIPON COLLEGE CUDDESDON

Christian congregational music: local and global perspectives

I-3 September 2011

Acknowledgements

Conference Programme Committee

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Thursday 1st September

10.00 Registration & coffee	Common Room
11.00 Welcome/opening address Martyn Percy (Ripon College Cuddesdon)	Graham Room

11.30-1 Keynote plenary session I: Performing theology through music
(Graham Room)
Chair: Monique Ingalls (University of Cambridge)
Martin Stringer (University of Birmingham) - Worship, transcendence and muzak: reflections on Seigfried Kracauer's 'the hotel lobby'
Carol Muller (University of Pennsylvania) - Embodied belief: performing the theology of a South African messiah

1.00 Lunch	Dining Hall
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2-3.30 Panel session I

Re-forming Identities	Replacing Binaries	Performing Identities
Chair: Tom Wagner Graham Room	Chair: Gesa Hartje Colin Davison Room	Chair: Jeffers Engelhardt Seminar Room
Laryssa Whittaker (Royal Holloway) The healing people need more than ARVs: HIV-positive musicians and the Christian church in South Africa	Deborah Justice (Indiana University) No, your worship music is repetitious: subjective hearing, the worship wars, and congregational identity	Marzanna Poplawska (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) Contemporary musical practice of Catholic and Protestant churches in Central Java, Indonesia
Muriel E. Swijghuisen Reigersberg (Independent Scholar) Australian Aboriginal Christian choral singing and the formation of post-colonial identities through performance: "We go forward with our singing"	Joyce L. Irwin (Colgate University) "Worship wars" in Baroque and Enlightenment German Lutheranism	Frances Wilkins (University of Aberdeen) Strengthening identity through community singing: praise nights in north-east Scotland's deep sea missions
Allan F. Moore (University of Surrey) Reflections on the church musician as servant	Lap Yin (Tommy) So (University of Manchester) How song language difference affects musical worship experiences among Chinese christians in UK	

3:30 Tea Common Room

4 – 5.30 Keynote plenary session 2: The politics of congregational singing (Graham Room)

Chair: Deborah Smith Pollard (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

June Boyce-Tillman (University of Winchester) - Tune your music to your heart – singing and power

Melvin Butler (University of Chicago) - Reclaiming Haiti: Pentecostalism and the theopolitics of musical performance

7.30-9 Roundtable: Music and Christian Congregation Graham Room

Tala Jarjour (New York University Abu Dhabi – NYC), moderator

Melvin Butler (University of Chicago)

Jonathan Dueck (Duke University)

Jeffers Engelhardt (Amherst College)

Gesa Hartje (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg)

Martin Stringer (University of Birmingham)

Despite its prevalence, the concept of *congregation*, be it understood as the act of (usually) worship or as the group of Christians who carry it out, is hardly universal. While it might be widely accepted that the definition of *congregation* may vary slightly between one tradition and another, the variations of this concept become more pronounced when factors such as culture and place influence the communal religious and musical practices of a given community. Moreover, such variation gains added significance within a given community as a result of displacement and/or demographic changes internal to the life of the community or in relation to its wider social context. This roundtable approaches congregational music by revisiting the concept of *congregation*. We discuss the collective musical practices of a given religious community in considering variables introduced by culture, society and place.

Friday 2nd September

8.30 Breakfast

Dining Hall

9.30-11.00 Keynote plenary session 3: Imagining Community through praise & worship music

(Graham Room)

Chair: Martyn Percy (Ripon College Cuddesdon)

Gesa Hartje (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg) - (Hillsong) United through music: how Praise and Worship music helps create a fictive evangelical community

Monique Ingalls (University of Cambridge) – Bringing worship to the streets: defining Canadian Christianity through public praise & worship

11.00 Coffee

Common Room

11.30-1.00 Panel session 2

Imported Traditions Chair: Carolyn Landau Graham Room	Technology and Transformation Chair: June Boyce Tillman Colin Davison Room	Managing Meaning Chair: Jonathan Dueck Seminar Room
Hetta Potgieter (North-West University) Hymn singing in Sesotho/Setswana speaking churches in South Africa: a process of claiming and reclaiming	Esther R. Crookshank (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary) 'I love to tell the story': narrative, ownership, and canon in writing hymnic history	Will Boone (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) Participation and transformation in congregational song at one spirit-filled African American church
Jan Hellberg (Åbo Akademi University) Ritual strategies and the localisation of worship music in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia	Anna Nekola (Denison University) 'I'll take you there': the promise of transformation in the marketing of worship media	Mark Porter (St Aldates, Oxford) The sacramental function of congregational music in worship
Hao-Yu Huang (National Taiwan University) When Western Christianity meets Taiwanese Aborigines: a case study on the Presbyterian use of Atayal hymns	Peter Hill (University of California, Davis) Will denominational hymns become a thing of the past?	

1.00 Lunch	Dining Hall
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2.00-3.30 Panel session 3

Transnational Christian Musics Chair: Monique Ingalls Graham Room	Negotiating New and Old Chair: Deborah Smith Pollard Seminar Room	Contested Histories & Invented Traditions Chair: Melvin Butler Colin Davison Room
Tom Wagner (Royal Holloway) ‘A beautiful exchange’: corporate branding and musical placemaking in Hillsong’s utopian narrative	Kinga Povedák (University of Szeged) New music for new times(?), debates over Catholic congregational music in Hungary	Paul Gameson (University of York) Psalm-singing during the Siege of York, 1644: a case study for religious, political and musical frictions during the English Civil War
Anne Harrison The appeal and international use of Music of the Taizé Community	Kate Maxwell (Middle Tennessee State University) Sword of the Lord Publishers: American Fundamentalist Independent Baptists and congregational music	Michael Webb (Sydney Conservatorium of Music) Singing <i>salvesen</i> and social transformation: Historical and cultural perspectives on a gospel hymn tradition in a small Melanesian island community
E. Wyn James (Cardiff University) German chorales and American songs and solos: contrasting chapters in Welsh congregational singing in the Victorian era	Birgitta J. Johnson (Syracuse University) Balancing evolving liturgies: traditional and contemporary music in an African American megachurch	Stephen Shearon (Middle Tennessee State University) What is Gospel music?: thoughts on a problematic term

3.30 Tea	Common Room
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4.00– 5.30 Keynote plenary session 4: Tradition and innovation in American and Australian church music

(Graham Room)

Chair: Melvin Butler (University of Chicago)

Deborah Smith Pollard (University of Michigan-Dearborn) - Praise and Worship in the urban churches of the U.S.

Mark Evans (Macquarie University) - Tracing the transcultural songlines of contemporary congregational music

6.00 Dinner	Dining Hall
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7.30 Reception	Common Room
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Saturday 3rd September

8.30 Breakfast	Dining Hall	
9.30-11.00 Keynote plenary session 5: Togetherness and difference in Christian singing (Graham Room) Chair: Martin Stringer (University of Birmingham) Jonathan Dueck (Duke University) - Origins or artifacts: tracing affect and artifice in Mennonite hymns Jeffers Engelhardt (Amherst College) - Congregational singing, Orthodox Christianity, and the making of ecumenicity		
11.00 Coffee	Common Room	
11.30-1.00 Panel session 4		
Radically Different Chair: Martyn Percy Seminar Room	Charismatic Manifestations Chair: Tom Wagner Colin Davison Room	Performing Identities Chair: Birgitta Johnson Graham Room
Colin Campbell (North-West University) Church music in the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa in an age of mission: new approaches	Blenda Im (Yale Institute of Sacred Music) The impact of the introduction of Praise and Worship music at New Haven Korean Church	Mikie Roberts (University of Birmingham) (Re)Shaping Caribbean identity: Hymnody as a construct of the Caribbean church's identity
Anna Swynford (Trinity School for Ministry) The Ancient-Future movement: moving beyond the worship wars	Gordon Adnams (Redeemer University College) “Really worshiping”: a mode of being-in-song-in-singing.	Michael Chen Hybridized traditions and racial identity politics in two American churches
J. Andrew Edwards (Wycliffe College, University of Toronto) Christ as true music: Charles Wesley and Joseph Ratzinger on musical perfection	Sarah Eyerly (Butler University) 'Their mouths were filled with blood': the musical alchemy of the Eighteenth-Century Herrnhute	Jo-Ann Richards (Jamaica Theological Seminary) Can I be simultaneously truly Jamaican and truly Christian?

1.00 Lunch	Dining Hall
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2.00-3.00 Panel session 5

Changing Auditory Practices	Music and the Nation	Defining “Our” Music
Chair: June Boyce-Tillman Graham Room	Chair: Mark Porter Colin Davison Room	Chair: Martin Stringer Seminar Room
Ian Mann (De Montfort University) Connected congregations: new technologies and evangelical music	Basil Considine (Boston University) Christian evangelization and Séga music in Mauritius	Amy Lynne Engelsdorfer (Luther College) Open and affirming: music and inclusiveness in the United Church of Christ
Clive Marsh (University of Leicester) Is it ‘all about the words’?: whether congregations should be taught how to listen to contemporary popular music	Edward R. Sywulka (Boston University) Negotiating identities in song: Bolivian worship in America	Lance J. Peeler (John Wesley Honors College and Wesley Seminary) Wesleyan songs and wesleyan identity

3.00 Tea

Common Room

3.30-5.00 Closing roundtable - “Looking forward”

Graham Room

Martyn Percy (Principal, Ripon College Cuddesdon), moderator

Deborah Smith Pollard (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

Mark Evans (Macquarie University)

Monique Ingalls (University of Cambridge)

June Boyce-Tillman (University of Winchester)

Abstracts (keynote sessions)

June Boyce-Tillman (University of Winchester)

Tune your music to your heart – singing and power

This title is taken from a story of John Wesley's encounter with an out-of-tune singer. In this keynote I will examine how far the 'performed' theology of singing in church is in tune with the thinking/singing of a congregation or the community of church and how far these may or may not coincide. I will draw in particular on songs and hymns using inclusive language and addressing radical theology in the area of social justice and how these are received in various contexts. It will draw this together with the entry into the religious experience via musicking; this will use a phenomenographic model of the spiritual experience in music showing how the area of values can intrude on the entry into the spiritual experience drawing on people's accounts of this experience. It will look at how the value systems implicit in our relating of theology and music encourage or discourage people from participating fully in worship.

Melvin Butler (University of Chicago)

Reclaiming Haiti: Pentecostalism and the theopolitics of musical performance

This presentation explores the musical theologies of Pentecostal Christian congregations in Haiti and its diaspora. It analyzes the performative strategies through which Pentecostals situate themselves within Haiti's multifaceted religious arena. I argue that congregational singing serves a politics of identity in which perceptions of cultural authenticity, national belonging, and divine favor are at stake. Central to my discussion are the contrasting modes of ritual worship espoused by three Pentecostal groups: "Heavenly armies" employ indigenous musical practices unique to their liturgical frame; "Church of God" assemblies embrace konpa (i.e., commercial dance music); and "Body of Christ" congregations adhere strictly to North American styles. Each group uses heated musical activity to embody conflicting versions of religious nationalism, while striving to "reclaim" Haiti from the social and supernatural adversaries they have in common. This project thus sheds light on a broader musical theopolitics through which Pentecostalism, Protestantism, Catholicism, and Vodou are renegotiated and cast as emblematic of an ideal Haiti.

Jonathan Dueck (Duke University)

Origins or artifacts: tracing affect and artifice in Mennonite hymns

"Worship wars" are often couched in identity politics and their references to origins; indeed much ethnomusicological and musicological work on the church is devoted to finding origins for particular musics and practices. Origins present powerful ways to narrativize identity and to sacralize through storytelling. But, as Clifford, Appadurai, Barth and Gans seminally argued, origins cannot really be posited without drawing sharp boundaries; they are weapons in worship wars. This paper presents an alternate framework for historicizing church music practices that are embedded in difference and identity conflict; I suggest that the most characteristic church musical activities are acts of making, of fabrication. We make music from the materials we have at hand in a particular place and time. This means that origins are always sites of borrowing and revision; at the same time, church musics present a site of meaning and encounter with God and fellow worshipper that can be deeply authentic (here understood as experientially and feelingfully real, not originary). I explore this

perspective through three stories of North American Mennonite music-making: shape-note singing in the Shenandoah Valley; hymns emerging from the encounter between a Swiss missionary and a Native American convert; and of Kernlieder songs through which Canadian Russian Mennonites recall their journey through Russia. In each case, I begin by describing a recent performance and the sets of meanings and feelings attending it. I then trace the borrowings and makings attending these songs, pointing out to the broader contexts that presented the materials for each song to the church musicians that made them. Each story spans difference—racial, geographic, political, and cultural. In telling these stories this way, I try to hold together the acts of making and borrowing that are embedded in the songs with the real and feelingful senses of sacrality, of meaning, and of story that attend their performances now. I draw these threads together in a set of comments on musical "artifacts," songs imagined as made from materials at hand. I suggest contexts in which I hope this perspective will be useful, drawing on my ethnographic fieldwork focused on "the worship wars": a historiographic perspective that begins with authentic feelings and traces them materially could invite storytelling and exchange, a more irenic frame for mediating "worship wars" and church identity politics.

Jeffers Engelhardt (Amherst College)

Congregational singing, Orthodox Christianity, and the making of ecumenicity

In this talk, I begin by discussing the origins, theologies, and meanings of congregational singing in Orthodox Christianity - its rootedness in the conciliar ideals of Orthodoxy, its relationship to other Christian musical practices, and the forms of religious subjectivity and practice it articulates. Congregational singing is exceptional in Orthodoxy, and I endeavor to situate that exceptionality in the context of Christian congregational practices more broadly.

I then turn to Estonia for a historical and ethnographic examination of Orthodox congregational singing. In tracing the complex genealogies of "Kui suur on Siionis, me' Jumal" ("How Great Is Our God in Zion"), one of the most popular of Estonian Orthodox riimilaulud (strophic, rhymed congregational songs), I show how Orthodox sonic theologies and the historical particularity of Orthodox practices and social circumstances come together in the sounds of worship. The story I tell here is how a particular melody and set of texts sustains Orthodox practice from tsarist-era conversion movements in the 1840s until the present day.

The final part of my talk turns toward the ecumenicity of this same song and its place in Protestant and charismatic Christian practices in Estonia. This ecumenicity articulates different ideas about the voice, texts, and ecclesiology while highlighting the cultural and social forces that make ecumenicity thinkable and spiritually efficacious. In terms of the conference theme, I conclude with thoughts on how the ecumenicity of congregational singing is essential in the development of an emerging ethnomusicology of Christianities.

Mark Evans (Macquarie University)

Tracing the transcultural songlines of contemporary congregational music

Christian music has long been a migrational and often colonizing musical force. Historically problematic for its proselytizing, homogenizing aspects, contemporary church music now uses mass media and the global music industry to achieve similar effects. The difference in focus revolves around how the music today seeks to

inculcate Christian practices of musical consumption worldwide, as well as provide a huge economic platform for its producers.

This paper considers the migrationary flow of music from Hillsong Church in Sydney, Australia. After first briefly considering its role within various Australian churches, the paper goes on to trace the music of Hillsong Church in a South African Zulu church, to the foreshores of Vanuatu, and within different churches in parts of Scandinavia. It considers the ways in which the music has been adopted, used and received in these churches. The paper argues that Hillsong music, and indeed much of the music from the global Christian ‘brands’, is no longer strictly about message; the music portrays notions of religious freedom but essentially projects a cultural experience that seeks to sit alongside the everyday world of Everyman. What is of most interest here, is the way that a particular Australian Christian music crosses geographical and theological borders around the world. The effects of this migration are considered through detailed interviews with participants around the world, those involved in producing the music internationally, and those in Australia responsible for ensuring its transcultural appeal. The paper will also analyse the musical performance of songs around the world, seeking to ascertain the musical and lyrical alterations necessary for vibrant migratory practice to exist.

Various positive and negative effects of this migrationary music will be explored, ultimately seeking to discover whether the very projection of religious freedom contained in the music (musically, textually and culturally) is robbing churches the chance to build a local, vibrant, relevant musical culture.

Gesa Hartje (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg)

(Hillsong) United through music: how Praise and Worship music helps create a fictive evangelical community

Praise and Worship Music has over the course of its existence become a global phenomenon. Originating in the United States, it is today a genre that is prevalent in the musical choices of many evangelical churches worldwide. While of course each region is generating its own output of songs, some sources have gained international influence. Among them is the band Hillsong United, a group associated with the youth program at Hillsong Church in Sydney, Australia. Their songs reach an evangelical audience beyond the church pews as the Christian music industries have pushed Praise and Worship music strongly over the last years turning it into a thriving market with a growing audience. Consequently, worship leaders are turning into mega stars, putting faces to songs that were previously not associated with particular individuals, and creating a repertoire of well-known tunes.

It is this repertoire that evangelical churches share across denominational and national borders, evoking the impression of an existing “evangelical community” from both the in- and the outside despite all prevailing disparities. This and other consequences resulting from the transnational distribution of Praise and Worship music today shall be examined more closely in the talk, pondering specifically on recent developments in the United States.

Monique Ingalls (University of Cambridge)

Bringing worship to the streets: defining Canadian Christianity through public praise & worship

This paper explores congregational music used in a setting outside the church where a diverse gathering of Christians across denominations and ethnicities seeks to “bring

praise and worship to the streets.” Cultural anthropologists and ethnomusicologists have shown that festivals, parades, and other public cultural spectacles are important sites in which communities demarcate their boundaries and attempt to expand them by claiming public space. Music plays an important role in enabling participants to create, contest, and negotiate multiple identities in these spaces. This paper explores music in Toronto’s annual Jesus in the City parade in which Christians, mainly from Afro-Caribbean, Asian, and Eastern European immigrant communities, take their message to downtown Toronto in a Carnival-style procession with church-sponsored floats featuring live and recorded music, singing, and dancing. This paper explores how these Christian Canadian immigrants use musical performance to negotiate their religious, ethnic, and national identities. Interviews with parade organizers and musicians evidence what Michael Ashkenazi has called the “productive polysemy” of festival parades (1987), reflecting the differing—and sometimes conflicting—ways participants understand the interrelationship of these various identities. Musical choices make audible these tensions, as churches variously sing popular praise and worship songs to represent a unified, global Christian community; perform songs and dances that assert distinct ethnic identities; or engage in creative genre-mixing both to critique Euro-Canadian cultural imperialism and to challenge essentialism within their own churches. In showing how Canadian Christians use musical performance in the public arena to negotiate concerns within their own communities and represent their religious group to the broader society, this paper strongly suggests that exploring religious performance in the public arena must involve close listening to congregational music.

Carol Muller (University of Pennsylvania)

Embodied belief: performing the theology of a South African messiah

In 1967 South African religious studies scholar Pippin Oosthuizen published what would become a highly controversial book: *The Theology of a South African Messiah*. The controversy mostly circulated around the question of whether Isaiah Shembe, the “South African Messiah” was Christian or not. Based on his reading of Shembe theology culled from the published book, *Izihlabelelo zamaNazaretha* (1940), the hymns and prayers of the Nazaretha, Oosthuizen argued that the name “Jesus” rarely appeared in the 242 hymns proving that the words of the prophet pointed to a post-Christian era of belief in this South African community. Those who claimed Oosthuizen was wrong suggested that he made the claims because he lacked knowledge of Zulu traditional rhetoric in which the actual name of a powerful leader was rarely mentioned—mostly the leader was lauded through a series of praise names that spoke of extraordinary power and action: Leopard, Eternal one, Lord, Servant of Suffering, Mighty Father, Liberator, or Jehovah on one hand. On the other, there were many places in the Shembe hymns that resonated with biblical sources.

In the 1980s Oosthuizen responded to the critique of his interpretation by asking Shembe follower and ethnomusicologist Bongani Mthethwa to create a new and complete translation from Zulu to English of *Izihlabelelo zamaNazaretha*. Oosthuizen was seeking a translation that was sensitive to cultural nuance and linguistic complexity. In 1992 I began working with Bongani, a few months before he was murdered. I completed the work, and added a compact disc titled “In Their Own Words” a document that conveys the sounds of the hymns in the traditional style and through a series of transformations as the members added organ accompaniment, electronic keyboard, new arrangements, gospel renditions of the

sacred repertory of song and dance, with commentary by Bongani and other members of the Nazaretha community.

In this paper, I use Shembe Hymns (2010), to reflect on what the relationship between theology and performance might look like from the perspective of ethnomusicology. Where do we find the specifically theological, i.e. the systematically articulated and debated structures of religious thought in the kinds of communities ethnomusicologists have traditionally worked in? What if the “theological” exists only in the ephemerality of performance, constituted in individual bodies and memories. How does the published book of songs, the singing book, open up possibilities for the inclusion of marginal theologies inside Christian canons? What is the relationship between performance and theology anyway—is theology able to be performed? I will respond to these larger ruminations by using Shembe Hymns as my case study.

Deborah Smith Pollard (University of Michigan-Dearborn)

Praise and Worship in the urban churches of the U.S.

They can be found standing before a few or before thousands in churches and auditoriums across the country. With microphones in hand, they speak and sing words of praise with musical accompaniment that might be provided by a commercially produced music track, a single keyboardist, or an eight-piece band. Their lyrics are given to the congregation in call and response style, projected on a screen, or printed in the church bulletin. Individually, they are called praise and worship leaders, while collectively—as few as two or as many as a dozen in number—they are referred to as praise teams. Their mission: through example and exhortation, to move congregants from passive observation to active participation in the worship experience so that they might usher in and experience the presence of God.

Currently the label “praise and worship” is used within the Christian Church in reference to a particular musical repertoire and mode of performance that emerged during the last decades of the twentieth century. Generally, praise and worship music is used during the opening period of a worship service, gospel musical or concert; however, its rising popularity has led to its use at other times as well. In some instances, entire services and events are built around praise and worship music.

While it would seem to be a benign set of rituals, especially since it is a church-oriented musical form, praise and worship has created its share of controversies. Many of its supporters view it as a “move of God” as well as a welcome break from the traditional devotional service that preceded it, thanks in large measure to its perceived and actual innovations. In contrast, others ask whether the rise of praise and worship is a case of “bandwagoning,” or possibly a situation in which an older tradition that was never fully understood is being replaced by “a phenomenon that has been copied without spiritual insight.” Some charge that praise and worship has sidelined age-old musical repertoires, middle-aged and elderly deacons in some denominations, and placed in the spotlight the under 40 praise team with its new sounds and terminology.

In reality praise and worship is neither as completely new as some would suggest nor as destructive to traditions as others assert. In my presentation, I would argue that an examination of the music presented and the intentions expressed by those involved in praise and worship in Detroit’s Black Churches as well as within the national gospel industry reveals that the perception that there has been a complete generational shift is incorrect. Indeed, praise and worship leaders and teams

frequently incorporate this genre as a “new layer” that enhances rather than replaces the African, African American, and Hebraic rituals that already exist within the Black Church. The result is a devotional mode that meets the spiritual demands and musical needs of many contemporary Black congregations.

Martin Stringer (University of Birmingham)

Worship, transcendence and muzak: reflections on Seigfried Kracauer’s ‘the hotel lobby’

In 1927 the German Scholar Seigfried Kracauer produced a collection of essays on the Mass Ornament in the Weimar Republic. In this book there is an essay comparing the hotel lobby as a social space with the Christian congregation. Among other points Kraucauer states that ‘In tasteful lounge chairs a civilization intent on rationalization comes to an end, whereas the decorations of the church pews are born from the tension that accords them a revelatory meaning. As a result, the chorales that are the expression of the divine service turn into medleys whose strains encourage pure triviality, and devotion congeals into erotic desire that roams about without an object.’

There has been an ongoing discussion over the last thirty years about the most appropriate form of environment for worship, whether of music or the physical environment, that is often presented in terms of a decline in ‘transcendence’ or ‘mystery’. This is a debate that has probably generated more heat than light. At the end of my Sociological History of Christian Worship I say ‘I am convinced that comfortableness and the illusion of intimacy is the gravest danger faced by contemporary Western liturgy’ but I have no real justification for this, apart perhaps from my own personal preferences or prejudices.

Theologically the basis for my stance is rooted in the work of Aiden Kavanagh, among others, and his opposition between the suburban dinner party and the paschal lamb being slaughtered on the butcher’s slab in the heart of the city. Sociologically I have been looking for a way to interrogate the issues involved in this debate from a more objective theoretical position. I think Kracauer’s paper may provide a context for doing that. In this paper therefore I am going to explore these questions through the lens of Kracauer’s congregation and hotel lobby, placing the focus specifically on chorales of the divine service and medleys of pure triviality, in order to offer a sociological critique of comfortableness and intimacy in contemporary Western worship.

Abstracts (panel sessions)

Gordon Adnams (Redeemer University College)

“Really worshiping”: a mode of being-in-song-in-singing.

In the context of researching the experience of congregational singing, I asked participants, “What is happening inside you as you sing?” One of the most interesting themes to emerge was a juxtaposition of experiences interviewees called “just singing” and “really worshiping.” The former was expressed as a negative state while the latter seemed to be the major goal of those who prefer choruses over hymns. Based on several interview transcripts, this paper will offer some phenomenological reflections on this juxtaposition, positing the concept “really worshiping” as a mode of being-in-song-in-singing. In addition, the words used by these singers as they described “really worshiping” may provide insight into a theology of worship and church embedded in this particular experience of congregational singing.

Will Boone (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) Participation and transformation in congregational song at one spirit-filled African American Church

The church band continued to play as the small group of singers stepped off the stage and the master of ceremonies stepped onstage. “Come on!” He exhorted the congregation. “Lift your voices together. If you want God to change something in your life, we gotta be on one accord. Everybody open your mouth!”

For believers at Faith Assembly Christian Center, a Pentecostal-influenced African American church in Durham, North Carolina, creating an atmosphere of unified spiritual focus, or “one accord,” is essential to effective worship. Singing together as a congregation is one of the most common ways of creating this atmosphere. Yet, within the structure of worship services at Faith Assembly, there is no formal space dedicated to congregational singing. In this paper I explore this apparent paradox.

Based on extensive fieldwork, interviews, and film, I analyze moments of congregational singing at Faith Assembly, looking at the way it emerges from the more concert-like performances of the church’s praise team (small group of singers). Whether embedded in a song, or performed as an extended coda, congregational singing always breaks the boundaries of pre-determined form. It is inherently transformational. I argue that, at Faith Assembly, congregational singing and the idea of transformation are inextricably bound. To build time for congregational singing into the every-Sunday order of events would be to remove the potential for experiential confirmation that spiritual work is being done. Ultimately, I contextualize these ideas within broader understandings of a black aesthetic that places great value on improvisation and transformation in musical performance. I show how, for believers at Faith Assembly, this black aesthetic is inseparable from spiritual practice.

Colin Campbell (North-West University)

Church Music in the Dutch Reformed Church of South Africa in an age of mission: new approaches

The history of the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC) in South Africa spans well over 400 years. Its most notable feature and criticism came during the formation of the apartheid ideology and the implementation thereof by the South African government.

The DRC, being labelled the ‘State Church,’ had its membership from the largest part of the white Afrikaans-speaking population in South Africa. It was also responsible for the justification of apartheid on Biblical grounds. This is a notion to which Alan Roxburgh in his book *The sky is falling!??* refers to as “a debased, compromised, derivative form of Christianity that is not the gospel of the Bible at all”.

Amongst the political unrest of the 1980’s, the worship wars era broke out in the DRC. This continued well into the 2000’s. Theologically, the DRC found in itself a serious identity crisis from 1994 – 2000, culminating into a re-definition of the church’s purpose within the South African context towards a missional paradigm.

The researcher has interviewed pastors and musicians in 15 DRC congregations, from various geographical regions across South Africa. All of these congregations were partners in the Southern Africa Partnership for Missional Churches’ first five years project, or were already establishing missional theology in their congregations flowing out into missional activities.

This paper will contextualize the radical shift in theological paradigm taking place from the end of the 1990’s, from the ‘historical’ theocratic model towards that of mission. It will also investigate the influence of mission in a more open and embracing approach towards different musical styles as a functional part in liturgy, in different types of liturgies and contexts.

Michael Chen (Independent Scholar)

Hybridized traditions and racial identity politics in two American Churches

Amongst the many fractures in the religious music ecosystem of the United States are the racialized boundaries around musical genres traditionally identified as part of the African-American Christian tradition: Negro Spirituals, Black Gospel, et. al. However, Spirituals, Gospel, and other musical forms indexed as African-American are increasingly being adopted for regular use by churches without a large African-American population in their congregations. In so doing, these churches have appropriated what is understood to be the quintessential music of the African-American Church in an attempt to create a liturgy that celebrates diversity, racial harmony, and a theology of multiculturalism.

This paper draws upon an ongoing ethnographic study at two predominantly-Caucasian churches in the Chicago metropolitan area of the United States: Willow Creek Community Church, an influential megachurch in the South Barrington suburb of Chicago, and LaSalle Street Church, a mid-sized church close to Chicago’s commercial center. While each of these two churches have independently conceived of their respective project to pursue multiculturalism through music, the theological rationales and underlying discourses surrounding their projects are very similar. By analyzing the cases of both churches, this paper will explore how each church attempts to navigate the difficulties of racial identity politics, the creative challenges in intentionally grafting separate musical traditions together in the attempt to create a new hybridized tradition, and the general challenge inherent in performing a theology of multiculturalism in liturgical music.

Basil Considine (Boston University)

Christian evangelization and Séga music in Mauritius

Christian evangelization has a long history of confrontation with the séga music of Mauritius. In 1834, universal emancipation freed the island's large African slave population, removing social and political barriers to missionary outreach. At the same time, this emancipation erased legal restrictions on the practice of séga, a music and dance tradition popular with the former slaves and often characterized by strong sexual overtones and content. Christian missionaries to the island seized upon séga as a point of opposition, portraying a dualistic relationship between Christian life and the practice of séga. Hymns, sermons, and tracts decried its "corrupting" influence, while séga songs responded in turn with more explicit lyrics. This pattern of mutual hostility continued for more than a century, with the practice of séga gradually declining and the African-Kreol population becoming Christianized.

The independence of Mauritius in 1968 set off a resurgent interest in "Mauritian" identity and séga in particular. As séga songs became part of the broader national identity, Christian opposition to the genre as a whole declined, to the extent that séga-styled songs were integrated into liturgical services.

This paper examines the historical relationship between séga and Christianity in Mauritius, with particular reference to the role of ethnic and national identity in their current coexistence. It details changes in musical experience and practice on the island, especially in the post-Vatican II era, and highlights current trends in the séga-Christian song continuum. Christian music and practice on the island is also placed in context with the larger musical and religious landscape of Mauritius.

Esther R. Crookshank (Southern Baptist Theological Seminary)

'I love to tell the story': narrative, ownership, and canon in writing hymnic history

How can the story of the church's song be responsibly written today from cultural, theological, and historical perspectives? Questions of how, why, and to whom the church sings and has sung across geography and time must be addressed afresh by those engaged in the writing of a hymnology survey textbook for ministry students. Two issues that must be addressed by church music professors engaged in training ministers--due to the radical changes in students' church backgrounds and ministry contexts--are: 1) the need to acquaint students and their congregants with a corpus of texts and tunes often absent from modern worship, as well as with a multivalent cultural context by which students can connect with these hymns personally, culturally, and theologically; and 2) the need to locate the historical narrative of Christian congregational song within a framework of cultural, global, and political questions related to globalization, commodification, political power, lived piety, and personal spirituality that equips students to articulate and pursue further questions of their own. This paper will first survey organizational approaches in the leading hymnology textbooks in current use in US theological institutions. The second section will discuss three core questions in the context of specific hymnic examples from diverse historical and world hymn traditions: How, by whom, and for whom are meanings of hymns constructed?, What cultural work does a hymn accomplish?, and, To whom does a hymn belong?

J. Andrew Edwards (Wycliffe College, University of Toronto)

Christ as true music: Charles Wesley and Joseph Ratzinger on musical perfection

While Methodists are generally recognized for more libertarian liturgical inclinations, recent developments in Catholic liturgy are widely perceived as in tension with the current magisterium. Yet an examination of authoritative sources within each tradition reveals a deeper theological convergence, despite a radical methodological divergence. At the advent of popular music criticism, Charles Wesley brought his distinctively theopoetical voice to express a peculiarly conservative musical aesthetic based upon his own theological insights into early Methodist doctrinal controversies. As his elder brother, John Wesley, took control of the Methodist movement and steered it toward his own thoughts on the doctrine of "Christian Perfection," Charles retired to a life with London's social elite, where he expressed his distinctive theological approach to the issue through the poetical lens of musical performance. In doing so, he championed a puritanical baroque over against the emerging trends of classicism. Pope Benedict XVI's critique of contemporary popular music, on the other hand, is rooted in an argument against a particular use of post-Kantian aesthetics, one that need not be held absolutely and for all time. This paper demonstrates how, in radically different ways, both Charles Wesley and Pope Benedict XVI have articulated christologies in explicitly musical terms, advocating thereby distinctively conservative aesthetics. Yet it is Charles Wesley who asserts his musical aesthetics on absolute grounds, while Pope Benedict critiques musical praxis through a more pragmatic and historical relativism.

Amy Lynne Engelsdorfer (Luther College)

Open and affirming: music and inclusiveness in the United Church of Christ

In 2001, First United Church – United Church of Christ in Bloomington, Indiana was a very small congregation in a very large church. That fall, its new pastor had his congregation sing a song each Sunday: "In this place among these people God is worshiped, God is praised...We are living the Gospel story; lives are changed and mountains moved. Won't you come and work among us? You are welcomed, you are loved." The members believed in this song's text, and took it as a personal mission statement. By 2008, they had doubled their membership and had expanded their outreach to include special programs for the elderly, shut-ins, and the homeless. While certainly many factors were responsible for this explosive growth, music was absolutely a vital and integral one.

In this paper I will use First United Church as a case study of how musical choices serve to create an identity and a mission, first at the local level, then at the denominational level, and finally at the universal level which is united in Christ. The United Church of Christ (UCC) creates this unity through diversity, especially in its hymnody. The New Century Hymnal, the UCC's official hymnal, is diverse not only in its use of inclusive language in older hymns, but its use of newly-composed hymns as well as hymns derived from a number of cultural and geographical backgrounds. Hymns such as "Called as Partners in Christ's Service" and "Sihahumb' ekukhanyen' kwenkhos" demonstrate how local churches are challenged to see beyond their walls to the entire community of Christ, and inspire them to communicate with one another to create better understanding amongst themselves.

Sarah Eyerly (Butler University)

'Their mouths were filled with blood': the musical alchemy of the Eighteenth-Century Herrnhute

Like many religious communities throughout history, members of Moravian communities crafted rituals of self-transformation that arrested participants through the senses. Two decades before the emotionally charged poetry, art, and music of the Sturm und Drang, and the publication of Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768), Moravians charged their hymns and rituals with emotional and sensual metaphors designed to transform without mediation by the rational mind. Believers longed to be caressed and cradled inside Christ's body, pierced and gashed by thorns and nails, their mouths overflowing with blood. They sang together softly, prostrate upon the floor, meditating upon graphic representations of the suffering Christ. In the ecstasy of these communal rituals, worshippers improvised hymns. Improvisation was a religious practice, and demonstrated a commitment of body, mind, and soul to the community. Improvisation silenced the rational mind, so that the singer could channel Christ into their body and sing with his voice. Worshippers were encouraged to feel the "vibrations" of this divine voice, as a collective body, through the wooden boards of the floor. Improvised singing cast an aural boundary around the community. Those who channeled the divine voice were physically transformed, blood, sinew, and bones, into the crucified body of Christ, and marked with the Lammes-blut [Lamb's-blood]. The transformed "bled through the mouth," shedding the blood of the Lamb upon their fellow worshippers. In so doing, they connected the inward (physical) and outward (spiritual) realm into one harmonious creation. In the words of one hymn, "Their mouths were filled with blood, and they sang together in joyful union with the heavenly spheres."

Paul Gameson (University of York)

Psalm-singing during the Siege of York, 1644: a case study for religious, political and musical frictions during the English Civil War

The composer William Lawes (1602-45) was one of Charles I's favourite composers, writing music for church and stage, and Charles is said to have mourned his death in the Battle of Rowton Moor in September 1645. Amongst Lawes' sacred music is an unusual collection of psalms which combine the declaimed manner of the Court verse anthem – and associated with the High Church movement – with the texts and tunes of Sternhold and Hopkins' metrical psalms - with more Puritan connotations. It is difficult to imagine a context for the singing of these psalms until one reads an oft-quoted passage from Thomas Mace's *Musick's Monument* (1676), which includes a striking account of church services in York Minster during 'the great and close siege' of York in 1644. This paper will examine the context of congregational psalm singing during the period before considering Lawes' psalms in more detail, specifically how they offer a unique musical insight into the political, social and religious frictions of the day.

Anne Harrison

The appeal and international use of music of the Taizé Community

The distinctive sung repertoire of the ecumenical Taizé Community in France emerged in response to particular pastoral needs, as well as being influenced by the ethos of the Community and reflecting aspects of the twentieth century Liturgical Movement. Characterised by the repetitive singing of short musical units, often enriched with optional parts for cantors and instruments, material from Taizé is now to be found in the published liturgical music resources of many denominations and in many parts of the world, as well as being made available through the Community's

own publications and recordings. The songs are used at large international gatherings and in small prayer groups in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Americas, Australia and New Zealand. This paper will explore some of the factors behind the music's broad appeal, comment on several songs written by Taizé brothers in the last few years, and discuss some of the ways in which the repertoire is used by congregations and individuals.

Jan Hellberg (Åbo Akademi University)

Ritual strategies and the localisation of worship music in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia

Ritual strategies and the localisation of worship music in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia

This presentation is a first version of the third article (of three) in a licentiate thesis that deals with the process of localisation in the music culture of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia. Practices and repertoire imported from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland have long dominated the music culture of this church, but the use of local musical means of expression is increasing. In the presentation, I will revisit the two previous articles and develop their lines of thought through by using ritual strategies as an analytical tool.

In the first article I explore how meanings that church members attribute to certain music-cultural phenomena, as well as the diverse cultural group identities that church members adhere to, interact in shaping their motivation to promote localisation in the music culture of the church. In the second article I use disaffection to describe church members' discontent with the cultural relevance of means of musical expression in the church. Through an analysis of musical structure and performance practice, I attempt to discern what elements of musical performance are sites for disaffection.

A conclusion in the previous articles is that the process of localization is slower concerning the worship service than concerning other occasions in the church. In the presentation, I will examine empirical material through a discussion of ritual strategies, such as separation and sanctification, fixation, formalisation, classification, archaism, mystification and anti-structure, in order to explore whether this analysis can help to understand why the process of localisation of the music culture of the church is slower in the liturgical setting.

Peter Hill (University of California)

Will denominational hymnals become a thing of the past?

As congregational populations of protestant mainline churches in the United States are dwindling, denominational identities are changing. Mainline churches struggle to maintain attendance as religious practices in the United States evolve. Less people who grew up in mainline protestant faiths are staying with that same religion and more are changing faiths or dropping regular Sunday attendance altogether. As a musical tool of worship, American hymnals are responding to these changes.

Church music resources have become more high tech as have styles of worship music. Websites can change the key signature and instrumentation of a piece of music, whether traditional or non-traditional, at the click of a button. Choir directors need no longer consult a paper resource to find the latest popular worship

song, but only find it online. These new technologies may be contributing to paper hymnals demise in the near future.

My paper will posit that the canon of hymns created by the latest generation of hymnals is getting larger and is influenced by similar forces that are causing changes in denominationalism in the United States. The canon common to mainline protestant denominations is getting larger as the differences between denominations and their hymnals become smaller. For my dissertation, I am researching this canonicity by creating a database of hymns within mainline protestant hymnals and interviewing recent hymnal editors. In my paper, I will discuss how hymnals are responding to changes in denominationalism, changes in technology, what kinds of hymns and songs make up this new canon and what this says about hymn canon for the 21st century.

Hao-Yu Huang (National Taiwan University)

When Western Christianity meets Taiwanese Aborigines: a case study on the Presbyterian use of Atayal hymns

The colonization of Taiwan under Japan ended after World War II. A mass conversion of Taiwanese aborigines to Christianity began approximately from this period onwards. This was not a one-way transformation, through which Christian beliefs took place of old ones. Rather, the new religion became integrated into the traditional aboriginal culture. The Presbyterians, one of the major denominations in the mission to Taiwanese aborigines, have gradually adapted aboriginal tunes into hymns. What are the factors that caused this development? In which ways were traditional tunes collected and compiled into Christian hymns? And, how should we interpret this phenomenon alongside the scholarly views that Western missionaries of this era had contempt for the aboriginal culture?

My analysis of relevant documents and sources suggests that different tribes chose to adapt aboriginal elements under different circumstances. It is thus important to note the variations in local contexts. For this reason, instead of proposing a grand theory covering the conversion process of all Taiwanese aborigines, my research focuses on one single tribe, the Atayal, for deeper understanding of this complicated and dynamic process of religious and musical acculturation. This paper traces the story of the Canadian missionary Clare Elliot McGill (1919-1996) and his Atayal colleagues, who compiled the first Atayal hymnal. It has two parts: The first discusses the reasons for editing a hymnal which includes hymns with Atayal traditional tunes, as well as the backgrounds of its editors. The second part of the paper looks into the sources of Atayal tunes in several versions of Atayal hymnals, and analyzes the transformation of the “Atayal tune hymns” in seven versions of the hymnal, edited between 1958 and 2007.

Blenda Im (Yale Institute of Sacred Music)

The impact of the introduction of Praise and Worship Music at New Haven Korean Church

New Haven Korean Church (NHKC), located in Hamden, Connecticut, is a vibrant Presbyterian (PCUSA) congregation founded by Korean immigrants in 1973. Three liturgies take place in the main sanctuary every Sunday, each commencing at 8.00am, 9.30am and 11.40am. The eclectic mixture of praise & worship, hymns, and choral

music sung during the third service is the focus of this ethnographic and theological study.

In particular, I seek to critically examine the impact of praise & worship at NHKC. What was the rationale behind the church's decision to integrate this particular musical stream into Sunday worship? Nearly two years after the formation of NHKC's praise band, how have praise & worship songs prompted celebrants to affirm and/or re-negotiate their religious identities? What are the perceivable links between praise songs, audible public prayer, and glossolalia? Finally, where do these musical and liturgical practices lie in relation to PCUSA's official theologies, and how might such performed and official theologies work together to enrich congregants' religious identities?

My ethnographic work, to be carried out in Summer 2011, will be informed by readings in Reformed theology and charismaticism. Through this case study I hope to identify points of intersection between Presbyterianism and charismaticism, and explore the possible relevance of the term "Presbyterian Charismaticism" to contemporary North American and Korean Christian contexts.

Joyce L. Irwin (Colgate University)

"Worship wars" in Baroque and Enlightenment German Lutheranism

Many of Johann Sebastian Bach's cantatas consist of operatic arias, polyphonic choral sections and chorales, from which one might conclude that congregational participation was well integrated with the music of choir and soloists in the church music of 18th-century Germany. Spokesmen of the time, however, reveal deep divisions between defenders of cantata-style church music and advocates of congregational singing. Pietists tended to criticize elaborate church music both because its complexity was incomprehensible to ordinary people and because the heights of musical virtuosity were often not balanced by spiritual depth in the performers. Orthodox writers sometimes responded scornfully to such criticism, implying that it issued out of ignorance and a hatred of music.

The "worship wars" of Baroque and Enlightenment German Lutheranism raise many issues that continue to be divisive in our own day: is it more important to achieve artistic excellence for the praise of God, thereby according the respect due to the Most High, or to engage the whole congregation in the singing of hymns that they find uplifting? Is the song of the heart or the song of the voice more essential? Is music among the most spiritual of human activities or a concession to human frailty? Interestingly, the composers of church cantatas often used libretti that are indistinguishable in content from Pietist hymns, and some Pietist hymns were elaborate vocal solos. This suggests that the two sides might have found common ground if they had been willing to recognize that the answers to the divisive questions are not "either/or" but "both/and"

E. Wyn James (Cardiff University)

German chorales and American songs and solos: contrasting chapters in Welsh congregational singing in the Victorian era

The mid-nineteenth century saw significant attempts among Welsh Nonconformists to supplant the rather disorderly hymn-singing which had characterized the period of fervent religious revivals in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, with a more disciplined congregational singing. Important milestones in those reforms were

the development of the cymanfa ganu ('singing festival') and the promotion of the Tonic Sol-Fa system in the 1860s. Such reforms would contribute to Wales being increasingly described as 'the Land of Song' from the 1870s onward, to the growth of a flourishing choral tradition, and to the rise of a significant group of amateur hymn-tune composers.

A central figure in this reform movement was the radical newspaper editor and Calvinistic Methodist minister, John Roberts ('Ieuan Gwyllt'; 1822–77). In 1859 he published an extremely influential hymn-tune book which aimed at setting new high standards and which emphasised the key criteria of simplicity and dignity for selecting hymn-tunes. He had become strongly influenced by the music of Bach and Mendelssohn, and included in his book many tunes of German origin.

The 1870s saw the publication of Welsh versions of items from Ira D. Sankey's *Sacred Songs and Solos*. These catchy, rather sentimental gospel songs, akin in many ways to those of the music hall, became very popular in their new Welsh attire. The translator of those sacred songs into Welsh was none other than Ieuan Gwyllt, promoter in the 1860s of a more disciplined, dignified style of hymn-singing. This paper will outline his life and work, and explore the reasons why he should have promoted in turn two types of hymn-tune which were so very different in style and ethos.

Birgitta J. Johnson (Syracuse University)

Balancing evolving liturgies: traditional and contemporary music in an African American megachurch

Practitioners and scholars alike are noting that for many African American churches the prominence of contemporary gospel and the growth of praise and worship music has posed a big challenge to music ministries who seek to provide sacred music that reaches today's diverse congregations while still presenting time-honored songs of the historic Black Church. Like large churches of the past, today's megachurch music ministries have the resources to provide a diverse repertoire to meet the musical preferences of their congregants. However, the lure to primarily provide contemporary music and neglect older genres is great partially due to the same availability of resources and contemporary music's ability to draw and retain members. Furthermore, many African American congregants have grown up with contemporary gospel in liturgical and non-liturgical settings due to the sub-genre's popularity in secular urban culture over the last forty years. The explosion of gospel-influenced praise and worship music over the last twenty years is not surprising given the genre-crossing popularity of pioneering contemporary gospel figures and contemporary Christian music songs since the late 1970s. Instead of inciting a "worship war" many worship leaders, choir directors, and pastors believe that some contemporary sacred styles bring additional lyrical perspectives and theological components to the stylistic and thematic diversity already present in much of the African American sacred music tradition. Based on ethnographic research at the Faithful Central Bible Church in Inglewood, California, this paper delineates several ways one African American megachurch works to provide a balance between honoring musical traditions and meeting the spiritual needs of a contemporary urban congregation.

Deborah Justice (Indiana University)

No, your worship music is repetitious: subjective hearing, the worship wars, and congregational identity

In much of the rhetoric of the late-20th-century Worship Wars, “traditional” and “contemporary” worship musics emerge as dichotomous, with particular musical elements articulating aesthetic and theological differences between these two styles. While mainline Protestant congregations have historically heard such musical differences as negotiating denominational proximity, today congregations attempting to accommodate both “contemporary” and “traditional” musics often struggle to perceive fundamental unity beneath stylistic differences. Hearing unison or even harmony presents a challenge as congregants tend to subjectively judge worship music style on the presence versus absence of certain musical criteria, i.e. “Traditional” hymns feel formal, but ‘contemporary’ choruses seem informal.”

However at Hillsboro Presbyterian, a typical mainline congregation in Nashville, Tennessee, both “contemporary” worshippers and “traditional” service-goers find counter-intuitive commonality by labelling the other service’s style of music with the same epithet: repetitive. Not finding their own music repetitive, congregants subjectively reinterpret the meaning of repetition between “contemporary” and “traditional” contexts. “Contemporary” worshippers positively liken singing praise choruses repeatedly to mantras, which “traditional” worshippers find “shallow” and “boring.” “Contemporary” singers weary of the higher verse count of many “traditional” hymns, whereas “traditional” worshippers extol the lyrics’ copious theological content.

Subjectively hearing repetition highlights the interplay between personal subjectivities and the cultural context of Worship Wars binaries, illustrating Hoffman’s “communal base of individual life” in which individuals and congregations depend on the broader religious community to fully form identity. Applying Rommen’s ethics of style and Titon’s hermeneutic phenomenology to feedback interviews from my fieldwork, I demonstrate how contrasting manifestations of the shared dislike of repetition within “contemporary” and “traditional” worship allows us to analyze how local congregations subjectively hear meaning.

Ian Mann (De Montfort University)

Connected congregations: new technologies and Evangelical music

Since Old Testament times when the singing of Israel was accompanied by lyres, harps, tambourines, sistrems and cymbals, technology has helped shape practices of hearing, listening and audition in congregational singing.

Technological developments have enabled the design of new instruments to lead and accompany congregational singing, facilitated the dissemination and recording of congregational music through writing and printing, and enhanced the congregational experience of singing through architectural design.

Modern computer and electronic technologies are continuing to revolutionise Christian congregational music. Internet technology gives easy, instant and global access to a wide range of songs, hymns and music. Electronic instruments and amplification have put the leading and accompaniment of congregations into the hands of enthusiastic amateurs.

Through the personal experience of the author as a Church Elder and as a Technologist, a case study will demonstrate how these technologies impact on the

process of congregational singing, from repertoire audition to the point of use. With particular reference to Evangelical churches it will consider how

- Audition from a global repertory is facilitated by Internet applications and websites such as Spotify, LastFm and YouTube.
- Church musicians use Internet portals such as WorshipCentral.org and leadworship.com to gain access to established but distant church musicians in order to learn and orchestrate new repertoire.

The benefits, limitations and potential pitfalls of using these technologies will be examined giving a picture of how technology is shaping 21st Century congregational singing.

Clive Marsh (University of Leicester)

Is it ‘all about the words’?: whether congregations should be taught how to listen to contemporary popular music

Evidence shows that popular music of many forms ‘works’ in different ways, but that listeners respond to feelings, to the physicality of the music, to the invocation to dance, to the ritual/communal context, to the sounds/soundscape created, or to the evocation of memory as much as (more than?) lyrics. If this is so, then what are the consequences for the use of popular music in relation to Christian faith? Especially for word-centred forms of faith, what happens when it is assumed or stated that words don’t matter too much? With reference especially to the question of what role, if any, recorded, secular, popular music can be used in worship or in small group Christian experience, this paper will examine critically what it means to ‘listen to’, to ‘consume’ or ‘use’ popular music as part of life-experience. It will go on to focus upon the potential place of listening to secular, popular music as part of Christian spirituality and discipleship. The specifically theological issues which arise will be drawn out, as well as the practical questions about how much preparation may be needed to enable congregations to ‘hear’ what is being ‘said’ (with or without words), or to ‘participate in the performance’. The paper explores the extent to which the interaction between ‘music as text’ and the listener as receiver /participant may override concerns about authorial intention and lyrical content. It concludes by assessing the consequences of the investigation both for Christian popular music and for wider societal ‘use’ of contemporary music within popular culture.

Kate Maxwell (Middle Tennessee State University)

Sword of the Lord Publishers: American Fundamentalist Independent Baptists and congregational music

Sword of the Lord Publishers (SOTL), located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee, is a publishing company associated with the fundamentalist independent Baptist tradition in the United States of America. As one branch of American Christian fundamentalism, independent Baptists seek to defend the “fundamental” doctrines of Protestant evangelical Christianity from the encroaching threats of modernity, secularization, and ecumenicalism. Though SOTL does not deal primarily in musical products, I propose that the company plays a strong part in forming a united musical identity among American independent Baptists.

Due partly to the absence of a denominational headquarters, the bimonthly SOTL newspaper has played a crucial role in defining and uniting the musical beliefs of independent Baptists across America since its inception in 1934. Within its pages,

respected fundamentalist leaders praise the hymns and gospel songs associated with the nineteenth-century revivals of Dwight L. Moody as badges of correct doctrine, evangelistic usefulness, and church heritage, and encourage their continued congregational use both explicitly, in articles dealing with music in the church, and implicitly, when presenting the lyrics of these songs as supporting evidence for other doctrinal arguments. On the other hand, SOTL contributors condemn congregational worship utilizing more recent "secular" music styles such as rock and roll as a symptom of worldliness and ecumenicalism.

In addition to the SOTL newspaper, this presentation will discuss SOTL offerings such as Soul Stirring Songs & Hymns, a hymnal compiled by SOTL and widely used in independent Baptist congregations across America, and Patch the Pirate CDs, which use music to instill fundamentalist values in children, as they illustrate and influence fundamentalist musical attitudes.

Allan F. Moore (University of Surrey)

Reflections on the church musician as servant

This paper develops from the combination of two levels of my own personal experience: intensive theorisation and analysis of the aesthetics embedded in 'popular music' practice (my 'day' job); and practical considerations related to the provision of music for use by one particular (dynamically changing) congregation over more than a decade. It will relate to the second, fourth and fifth themes addressed by the conference, but will focus on understanding the issues arising from this one particular situation. These issues revolve around at least three potential sites of contradiction. The first concerns what we might call quality of execution. Why is there disagreement over whether proficient provision of music enables spiritually enriching worship? The second concerns what we might call quality of material. Why does the same disagreement appear over the use of, for example, music by Felix Mendelssohn or by Matt Redman (both appropriately played). The third concerns the quality of musicians leading worship. Why, again, is there disagreement over, for example, the appropriateness of choir leadership, and of insisting on performative competence? Three potential 'solutions' will be proposed, the first based on questions of commitment, the second on replacing binary oppositions with assumptions of continua, and the third in terms of the creation of a monolithic taste public.

Anna Nekola (Denison University)

'I'll take you there': the promise of transformation in the marketing of worship media

The early 2000s have been described as a revival in God-centered worship and living marked by shifts from traditional hymnody to pop-infused Praise & Worship music, from sermons to multimedia communications, and from attendance to experience. Churches across denominations have participated in this change to varying degrees, sometimes with new musics and a casual atmosphere, or by "blending" styles in an attempt to engage a wider demographic or attract new members. The Christian media industries have not only provided materials to help church leaders implement changes to worship services but have also supplied the greater consumer marketplace with products, especially audio/video recordings of worship music, designed to encourage and enhance one's "lifestyle" of worship outside of church.

Through an examination of advertisements for these products, as well as album cover art and other marketing discourses, I argue that the worship music industry promises to effect a dual transformation: to transform any secular space into a sacred "sanctuary," and to transform the listener spiritually by transporting her into the presence of God. Marketers have long claimed to bridge distance and provide other transformative experiences to their consumers, but the specifically religious experiences that these worship products promise have profound implications for contemporary Christian religious ideology and practice. They work to reinforce the ongoing privatization of religion, participate in the ongoing redefinition of "worship" from a traditionally corporate to an increasingly individual act, and position the consumption of goods and services as the key to individual spiritual autonomy. This paper analyzes how these marketing discourses, in their emphasis on individualized spiritual ecstasy through a modern technological sublime, work to normalize charismatic practice and theology within mainline Protestantism.

Lance J. Peeler (John Wesley Honors College and Wesley Seminary)

Wesleyan songs and Wesleyan identity

The Wesleyan Church, founded in the Holiness Movement, has historically focused on gospel hymns and revival songs for its music. A core group of songs is considered by Wesleyans to be "Wesleyan songs"—so much so, that some Wesleyans are surprised that others outside the Wesleyan Church know them. I will explore the hymns that Wesleyans consider the standard for Wesleyan hymnody, doing some study with Wesleyans to identify these hymns, and doing some examinations of the content of these hymns themselves. I will focus on the songs that grew to popularity before the rise of contemporary music, as these hymns have continued to be sung in Wesleyan churches, both those that use solely hymns and those that have a more blended service. I will argue that Wesleyans utilize a group of common hymns to help sustain their particular belief system, and thereby create a unique identity.

Marzanna Poplawska (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

Contemporary musical practice of Catholic and Protestant churches in Central Java, Indonesia

This paper discusses the contemporary musical practice of Catholic and Protestant churches in central Java, Indonesia, in relation to several factors: the history of Christian presence in Indonesia, the theory and practice of inculturation, and the issues of Javanese/Indonesian Christian identity. As Christian church in Indonesia has been transformed into an indigenous and autonomous church, so was Christian music transformed into one that includes indigenous artistic expressions. I will discuss the usage of central-Javanese gamelan orchestra in the accompaniment of newly-composed hymns as an example of specifically Javanese, localized artistic expression. I will interpret this practice through the prism of the theory of inculturation—a concept known in anthropology under such names as indigenization, contextualization, and acculturation—that became popular in the 1970s due to the efforts of African bishops and theologians. Inculturation, as defined by Aylward Shorter, is “the creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and a culture or cultures.” It is a two-way process: the local culture is transformed by the religious message, and Christianity itself is also transformed by culture in a way that allows that message to be formulated and interpreted anew. I will demonstrate that the presence of gamelan in Javanese churches can be viewed

equally as a result of historical processes, promotion of inculturalisation practices, genuine human creativity and conscious effort to develop a distinct indigenous Christian identity. Not to be alienated from their cultural and social environment but being both “fully Indonesian” and “fully Catholic” has been a goal for many Christians in Indonesia—a goal that is manifested especially clearly through music.

Mark Porter (St Aldates, Oxford)

The sacramental function of congregational music in worship

Taking as a starting-point the Christian concepts of ikon and sacrament I will argue that music within the context of congregational worship takes on some of the functions of both. As a congregation seeks to engage with God through music, this music itself serves to mediate aspects of that relationship, to some extent determining the nature of the worshipper's relationship to/with God within the service, but also potentially having a broader effect on their implicit theological conceptions and ideals beyond the setting of the worship service. This idea will be developed with reference to different styles of worship within the church today, addressing some of the battles of the worship wars but not limiting itself to these polarities. I will examine the reluctance of much of the contemporary church to talk about music in a way that bestows it with a great deal of significance and argue that, given the range of functions suggested, this is unwise and needs to be taken more seriously than it is.

Hetta Potgieter (North-West University)

Hymn singing in Sesotho/Setswana speaking churches in South Africa: a process of claiming and reclaiming

Hymn-singing, being a very personal and also communal form of expression, has evolved like all forms of singing – especially when it came into contact with other cultures. In the multi-cultural South African environment, the effects are even more visible. The Sesotho hymnal Lifela tsa Sione is used by the Batswana. The singing style encountered in four different churches in North-West Province illustrates an evolving style of hymn singing found in historical western churches in South Africa today. This style shows a new identity, which is influencing European hymn singing. In claiming or reclaiming an identity, positioning oneself in relation to the “Other” is a process that includes the “Other”; as Nzewi (2009) puts it: the “Other” is a dialect of “Me”. Once an identity had been established, the process of (inevitable) cross-cultural pollination has to be considered. The so-called traditional African “choruses”, have similarities with the music from Taizé and have been incorporated in ecumenical worship.

The aim of this paper is to examine the process of claiming an imported cultural object like a hymn for one's own culture, making it your own, converting an existing hymn or creating one in a form that one's community can associate with. It is also a matter of claiming an identity – of cultural affirmation. Reclaiming in the sense of having lost something, getting it back – is applied to the practice of hymn singing. The Western style of singing the missionaries taught and prescribed, took something away from the people they wanted to convert and by adaptation by the people themselves over a long period, it was found again.

Kinga Povedák (University of Szeged)**New music for new times(?), debates over Catholic congregational music in Hungary**

In this paper I give an overview of the contemporary Christian music phenomenon in Hungary and the way it affected the Catholic congregational music scene.

Contemporary Christian music appeared in Hungary in the 1960s. In a unique period of Hungary when religion was suppressed and rock and roll was denounced, the merging of the two, Christian rock music was even more disapproved during the communist regime. For many, contemporary Christian music was more than simply music; it indicated opposition against the political system. Thus contemporary Christian music was an alternative music not only from a clerical but also from a political point of view. This new style has been a topic of great controversy in various ways since its beginnings. By many it is considered the most effective instrument for spreading Christianity among younger generations. However, many opponents dislike that this modern church music rooted in popular culture entering the realm of Christianity.

My paper focuses on the conflicts that had characterized the past decades and to explore the complex phenomenon as the appearing new styles transformed a variety of expressions and practices of religiosity and formed new communities which seem to express their faith in a new/alternative way. The debates over the style of church music have not stopped in the past decades. Even younger generations indicate a need for qualitative selection.

Jo-Ann Richards (Jamaica Theological Seminary)**Can I be simultaneously truly Jamaican and truly Christian?**

Can I be simultaneously truly Jamaican and truly Christian? As a Christian Jamaican missionary who has studied and applied ethnomusicology in West Africa, the Americas and the Caribbean, I have observed cultures grappling with the task of answering the question: "Who am I?" through their choices of music expressions in corporate worship. There is a struggle between needing to establish their religious identity, and needing to connect with their cultural ethnic identity.

This paper will explore some of the issues that have influenced and still to some extent influence this struggle in Jamaica using the writer's personal experience as a Jamaican evangelical Christian as a point of reference. The main issues to be examined are the question of who really is a Jamaican, in the face of diverse Jamaican identities as expressed in our national motto "Out of many, one people", and the matter of justice as equality in the worship space as a determinant guiding the choices made in musical expressions of corporate worship in Jamaica. This latter plays a major role in the discussion, as the music preferences and language of the minority is what is used most often in congregational music.

The paper proposes solutions that should enhance the development of true expressions of worship in places where there is currently what could be described as a schizophrenic attitude to the Christian corporate worship reality in Jamaica. The ultimate vision is for an embracing of each member group in the worship space as being of equal value before God in Christ, and therefore providing space for each group to express themselves in worship in ways that are culturally relevant to them.

Mikie Roberts (University of Birmingham)

(Re)Shaping Caribbean identity:

Hymnody as a construct of the Caribbean church's identity

November 1971 was a watershed moment which saw the first major Caribbean ecumenical gathering within the region. Its aim was to formulate and articulate a new vision and direction for Churches in the Caribbean. It was decided then that the Churches need to take “new directions...in the areas of theology, worship...including the possibility of the production of a Caribbean Hymnal.” This dream was eventually realized in 1981 with the publication of the Caribbean’s first hymnal *Sing A New Song No. 3*. This anthology is significant because its contents are exclusively of Caribbean origin. Additionally, although there is a plethora of writings on the new direction of theology in the Caribbean, there has only been one Caribbean ecumenical hymnal that has been published.

For the leaders of the Caribbean churches to have mooted the need for a Caribbean hymnal affirms the position taken by noted Caribbean theologian, Kortright Davis who postulates that “music, to be sure, is the Caribbean voice of God.” What then might God be saying to the Churches in the Caribbean through these new hymns about their Christian regional identity? What attitudes and postures were taken relative to the introduction of these new Caribbean hymns? What new images and representations of the Caribbean and its people were advanced through these hymns? Finally, to what extent did this new hymnal further the cause for the construct of a Caribbean identity which was a matter of regional priority from as early as the 1960’s?

These questions serve to inform the main thesis of this paper: Caribbean hymns contributed to the (re)shaping of Caribbean identity by constructing a regional ecumenical identity. By exploring the philosophy that governed the Caribbean Conference of Churches who published the hymnal, sociological theories on identity, the history of the hymnal itself and its content we will determine how *Sing A New Song No. 3* contributed in (re)shaping the regional identity of the Caribbean Church from an ecumenical perspective.

Stephen Shearon (Middle Tennessee State University)

What is Gospel music?: thoughts on a problematic term

The term “gospel” is used freely today in scholarly discussions about sacred music to refer to cultural and performance traditions, performance styles, and repertoires. But what does “gospel” mean? The answer, it seems, depends on context. The auditor or reader, furthermore, not the one using the term, is usually responsible for figuring this out. “Gospel” might refer to an African American tradition, a European American tradition indigenous to the rural South, a European American tradition indigenous to the urban North, one of many traditions outside America influenced by one of those three, contemporary Christian or worship music anywhere in the world, or simply all Christian music employing a western vernacular musical style. In short, the term is unclear. This is so for many reasons. Perhaps the most obvious is general ignorance of both its history and some of the musical traditions to which it refers. The result has been, and is, a lack of rigor in research on gospel music. If “gospel” can be almost anything, we don’t have to know what, in fact, it was and is.

In this presentation, I propose, first, that we view the various “gospel” traditions as part of a single phenomenon: “the gospel phenomenon”—a development that emerged in the 1870s, became a musical juggernaut in the later nineteenth century, and was then adopted and adapted by various Christian cultures around the world.

We should then identify those factors that distinguish gospel song from other types of vernacular Christian song. Finally, we should develop a nomenclature, specific to each tradition, that acknowledges the history of the phenomenon and the various traditions that have adopted it.

Lap Yin (Tommy) So (University of Manchester)

How song language difference affects musical worship experiences among Chinese Christians in UK

This study investigates how overseas Chinese (Hong Kong) students in UK perceive musical worship with English songs. It focuses on a medium sized Evangelical Christian fellowship which forms part of a Chinese church in Manchester.

It is found that a good number of the fellowship attendees preferred English songs instead of Chinese ones, often suggesting that they find English songs easier for them to express feelings.

This paper explores the reasons why some Chinese Christians prefer musical worship with songs of a non-mother tongue language. It suggests various possible reasons: grammatical issues inherent in Chinese language; pronunciation issues occurring when Mandarin songs are being sung in Cantonese; the different theological basis of songs from different generations of Chinese and English Christians; and the difference in music genres (e.g. rock/ Cantonese-pop) used in Chinese and English songs. The author also intends to further investigate the role of postmodernist thought in altering the younger generation's expectations in musical worship, and how this might affect their preferences towards songs in different languages and genres.

Muriel E. Swijghuisen Reigersberg (Independent Scholar)

Australian Aboriginal Christian choral singing and the formation of post-colonial identities through performance: “We go forward with our singing”

This paper will examine how Australian Aboriginal Christian identities are shaped through choral singing in multiple performance contexts. The paper will draw on the research outcomes of PhD research in applied ethnomusicology conducted in collaboration with the Lutheran Aboriginal Australian community of Hopevale, Northern Queensland, Australia. It will discuss how Indigenous performers shape their sense of religious identity on a continent where, by and large, Indigenous people are still labouring under stereotypical pre- and misconceptions as to what it ‘means’ to be Indigenous. The discussion will focus on performative examples in both local and trans-local settings. I shall demonstrate how the Indigenous Australian Christian singers of Hopevale used Christian choral performances to shape their own identities depending on context, thereby challenging the stereotypical identities imposed on them from both within and without their own community. Their deliberate, performative decisions were able convey their strong Christian faith in a non-confrontational manner whilst highlighting Indigenous Australian diversity. I will argue that it is through public choral performances such as these, that both audiences and performers are able to gain a fuller understanding of Australian post-colonial history and that this in turn could potentially have an indirect, positive impact on how Indigenous people are perceived within the media, tourism and governmental institutions.

Anna Swynford (Trinity School for Ministry)

The Ancient-Future movement: moving beyond the worship wars

American congregations and leaders affected by the recent ‘worship wars’ have often found it difficult to move beyond a polarizing debate largely centered on personal preference – a stalemate between those who prefer four-part hymnody led by organ and piano to those who prefer “Christian Contemporary Music” led by a five-piece band. The problem partly emerges out of distinctly Evangelical theology, which stresses individuality and personal experience and largely rejects (or at least ignores) church history.

Amongst some American Evangelicals, the “Ancient-Future” movement, so named by Robert Webber in the late 1980s, has emerged as one helpful framework in navigating the worship wars. Especially popular among American Anglicans, this movement seeks to create a future for Evangelicalism based on appreciation and resourcing of the past. By applying its ideals to congregational music, some Anglican churches have dodged the worship wars. These churches choose music not solely based on personal preference, but out of the “Ancient-Future” theological framework.

This paper will examine how two large Anglican churches of similar sizes and theological convictions have responded to the worship wars. The Falls Church in Falls Church, VA, in response to diverse worship styles and preferences, offers four services each Sunday, each with vastly different musical styles. Church of the Resurrection, in Glen Ellyn, IL, greatly influenced by the “Ancient-Future” movement, has chosen to incorporate a wide variety of styles in each of their services. By using a plethora of music in each service, from Anglican chant to gospel music, they have moved beyond the standard “traditional/contemporary” divide, and provide an example of one possible solution to the worship wars.

Edward R. Sywulka (Boston University)

Negotiating identities in song: Bolivian worship in America

This paper examines a number of ways that Bolivian church leaders used music in the renegotiation of transnational relationships. The conservative urban Protestant churches of Bolivia had depended largely on English hymns translated into Spanish for their worship since the early twentieth century when North American Protestant missionaries began work in Bolivia. I focus on one city where, in the late 1960s, the success of a large urban youth ministry led to a proliferation of Spanish-composed music for worship. A number of these same musicians, pastors, and missionaries, however, soon found themselves translating some of the new music from Spanish into English, taking a series of three successful tours in the 1970s to the United States in order to perform “Bolivian” music at various locations, most of which were churches. The songs chosen for English translation in these concerts served to redefine the relationship between Bolivian and American Christians, and between Bolivian and Latino Christians. Through language and musical style, the musical performances both furthered Bolivian Christian autonomy from American Christian oversight while strengthening ties with U.S. supporters and gaining potential supporters.

Data have been collected from interviews in Bolivia and the U.S., written records, published reports, photographs, and musical recordings. Significant attention is given to the musical arrangements as recorded by the ensemble. Textual and musical

analyses reveal the ways identities are referenced and affected within performance. This case study shows one localized expression of worship significantly formed by transnational relationships while displaying agency in renegotiating those relationships.

Tom Wagner (Royal Holloway)

'A beautiful exchange': corporate branding and musical placemaking in Hillsong's utopian narrative

While consumer culture facilitates the rapid expansion of Evangelical network churches, it also presents a unique set of challenges to the creation and maintenance of the sense of community that is vital to their success. As a collection of integrated 'sub-communities', a network church must balance 'local' and 'global' sensibilities in managing its 'corporate' identity. One way of doing this is to engage in a specific set of discourses that are simultaneously identifiable at different levels of 'locality', a branding practice known as 'placemaking'.

This paper investigates the ways in which the Australian network church Hillsong discursively manages the locative aspects of its corporate identity through musical practice. Famous for its worship style, which depends on deft use of technology and compelling rock music, Hillsong discursively shapes its musical worship in ways that are recognizably Evangelical but unique to both the Hillsong Network and its local churches. In doing so, it appears to provide the aesthetic material, structure and opportunity to produce and integrate corporate, local and personal identity narratives.

Music's role in the understanding of community is multivalent; it defines and operates on the different levels of locality that compose the Hillsong brand community. The style, presentation, and visibility of the various worship groups in the Hillsong network articulate these localities, creating often conflicting discourses about community that maintain the essential paradox on which Hillsong's utopian narrative – the story essential to its brand – rests.

Michael Webb (Sydney Conservatorium of Music)

Singing *salvesen* and social transformation: Historical and cultural perspectives on a gospel hymn tradition in a small Melanesian island community

Salvesen ami is a Christian hymn-based performance genre developed over the early decades of the 20th century in the central islands of Vanuatu (formerly New Hebrides). The core repertoire of *salvesen ami* songs derives from an eclectic range of late 19th century gospel hymnals. The genre incorporates elements of both indigenous customary dance and military drill. This paper traces *salvesen ami* to its origins among ni-Vanuatu men and women who were exposed to Sankey and other gospel songs while labouring on Queensland (Australia) sugar cane plantations in the late 19th century, and where they learned Tonic sol-fa notation through the evangelizing activities of the Queensland Kanaka Mission established in 1886. It describes *salvesen ami* performance practices in the Maskelyne Islands off the southeast tip of Malakula among the only community that continues to practice *salvesen ami*, for whom it has become a "sacred tradition." Finally, the paper briefly discusses the musical transformation of *salvesen ami* hymns and considers the genre's historical and contemporary meanings for Maskelyne Islanders.

Laryssa Whittaker (Royal Holloway)

The healing people need more than ARVs: HIV-positive musicians and the Christian church in South Africa

As the HIV-positive population has grown in South Africa, Christian churches have struggled to respond to the epidemic and those living with the virus. HIV is primarily sexually transmitted in the South African epidemic, making it a difficult terrain for churches to navigate without seeming to endorse permissive attitudes toward sex. Consequently many church leaders have condemned promiscuity and declared HIV/AIDS the judgment of God for sinful behaviour, calling people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHAs) to repent and seek physical healing. Because of the normative moralities of the Christian community, many Christians see an HIV-positive status as inherently incompatible with Christianity, often resulting in the exclusion of PLWHAs from their communities of faith. Since Christianity is mainstream and intricately enmeshed with Zulu identities, such marginalization can be far-reaching.

This paper presents performers and activists who have emerged from church backgrounds and identify as Christian, but now speak and sing about HIV/AIDS in contexts both inside and outside the church, sometimes directing critique toward the church. By including Christian music in their performance, they perform Christianity and reframe the meaning of an HIV-positive status, contending that their identity as HIV-positive is not mutually exclusive of their Christian or Zulu identities, and bringing together spiritual and physical ontologies to reframe health and healing. In so doing, they seek to reclaim Christianity as a resource for PLWHAs and assert the Christian identity against a stigmatized HIV-positive identity. Finally, it might also be argued that working within the theological parameters of Christianity, they use HIV to reassert theologies of grace, with possible implications beyond the immediate context of their activism.

Frances Wilkins (University of Aberdeen)

Strengthening identity through community singing: praise nights in north-east Scotland's deep sea missions

In the fishing communities of North-East Scotland, evangelical hymn singing has performed a fundamental role in strengthening and reflecting religious, regional, and occupational identity among its singers. This has been magnified within the Deep Sea Mission centres of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen (RNMSDF), which were particularly active during the twentieth century and continue to function in a reduced capacity to the present day. In North-East Scotland, the main fully-functioning centre is in Peterhead, a town whose economy continues to rely heavily on the fishing industry. In addition to providing accommodation and spiritual guidance for fishermen and fishing families, the centre holds weekly 'Praise Nights' which consist mainly of congregational hymn singing. These 'Praise Nights', once regular features of Deep Sea Mission centres in the British Isles, are the only religious events in the community where all are welcomed regardless of religious conviction or denomination. At these events, emphasis is placed less on religious belief and more on group cohesion, and this has led to a strong community ethos and the fostering of local fisher identity.

In this paper the importance of Praise Nights, in the spiritual and musical lives of North-East Scottish and Northern Isles fisherfolk will be explored. Of particular interest will be the interdenominational nature of the gatherings, the reflection and reinforcement of fisher identity and values, and the hymn repertoires sung (with

particular reference to the subject matter within them). Extracts from interviews with participants (conducted during fieldwork between 2005 and 2009) will be used to illustrate the importance of these gatherings in terms of congregational singing and community identity.