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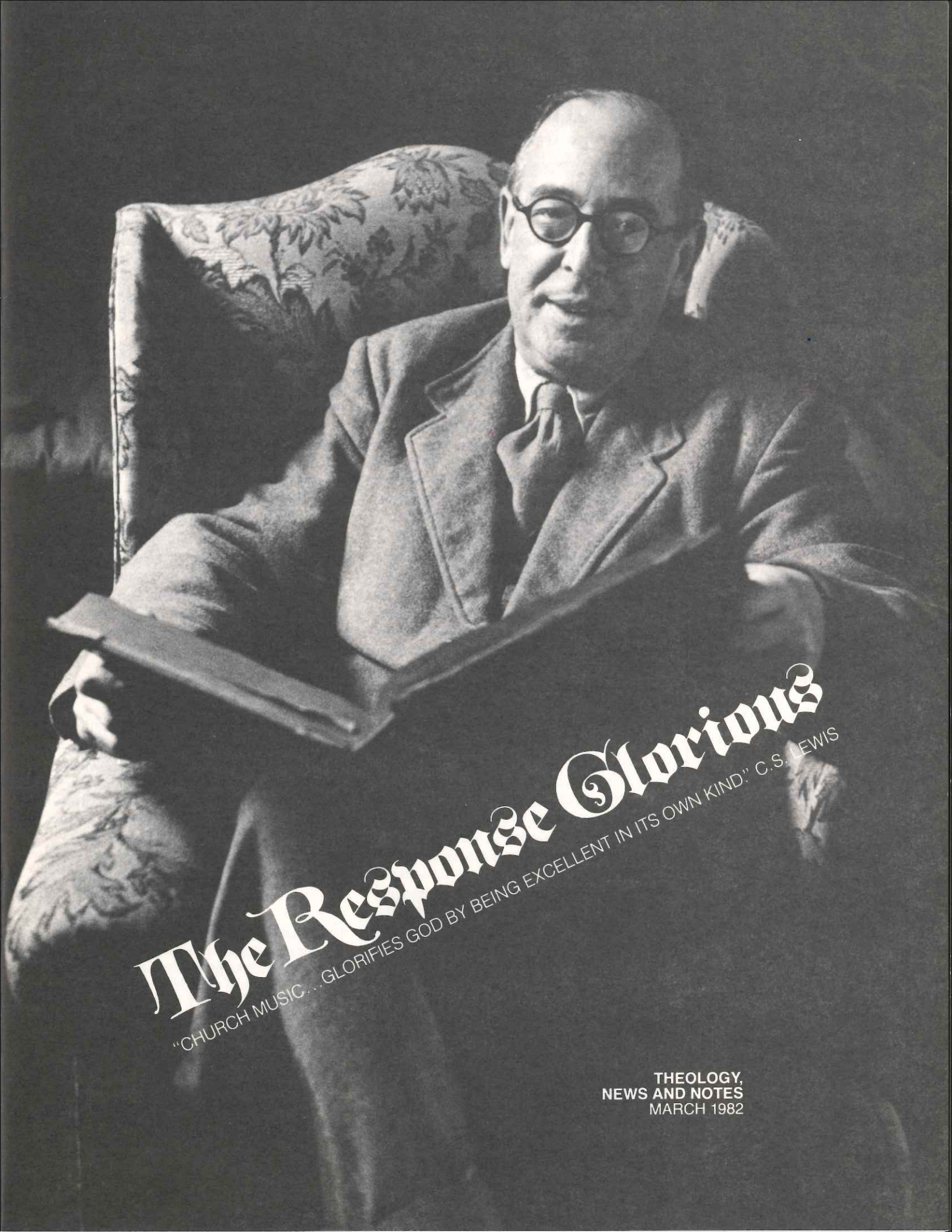
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The Response Glorious

"CHURCH MUSIC... GLORIFIES GOD BY BEING EXCELLENT IN ITS OWN KIND." C.S. LEWIS

THEOLOGY,
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MARCH 1982

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Editorial

ROBERT N. SCHAPER

It may seem surprising that Fuller has published an alumni journal on church music. We had so little to say on the subject during the study of our former students. How is it that we now instruct? Church music still does not have a high priority in our teaching, but I am hopeful that the articles and ideas presented in this issue will spur us toward a new awareness and utilization of the ministry of music. I appeal to the innovative genius of our school that has responded so creatively in the past to the changing ministries of the church. I claim for us the insight to be self-critical and to move expeditiously as we now explore a greater commitment to the study, practice and power of music. Certainly we have among our faculty, students and alumni the musical interests and resources that could contribute to such a new commitment and understanding.

Those of us working in worship and liturgy are well aware of the significance of church music. As a teacher of preaching I am aware of the primacy of the sermon, but as dean of the chapel I am also well aware of the place and potential of music in the life and worship of the church. There are probably more people spending more time on music than on any other activity of the church. Hymns have always been the major part of the liturgy of most Protestant churches. In many instances music is about all that takes place besides the sermon. Preachers have a nagging suspicion that though their preaching may eventually become the attraction to outsiders to attend their services, the initial impressions are most significantly made through music.

We are all self-styled critics of music. Even C.S. Lewis, who professed virtually no "music appreciation," donned the critic's cap occasionally for an analysis and critique of the style and substance of church music. His article is reprinted in this issue.

"We know what we like," and for many of us that is reason enough to decide what is "good" or "bad" music for the church. But if our judgements are based solely on taste, the task of creating a full-orbed music program that does not raise the hackles of some parishioners is almost impossible. Strangely enough, people seem much more eager to criticize the music of the service than the sermon. Congregations may nod blankly at the horrible exegesis of an unskilled preacher, but will rise in righteous indignation to an organ offertory, a new hymn or a choir selection that they decide to be unacceptable.

A seminary has the obligation to maintain a theological as well as an aesthetical concern in the teaching and practicing of church music. At Fuller we try to insert theological norms for biblical preaching and evangelical integrity. We should be equally concerned about the sensitive and appropriate use of music in the church. The Seminary should encourage people to see music not only in an emotional context, but in a theological context as well. We must raise questions about the text of songs and their relationship to the worship of the church.

We readily recognize the potential of music to engulf us in so many areas of our lives. It soothes us in elevators. It excites us in movies. It pounds at us at rock concerts.

—to page 23



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"Tradition" is a polarizing word. One group wants to do things the "right" way, the way they have always been done, while another group wishes to discard tradition precisely *because* it is the way things have always been done. Unfortunately both groups tend to argue from emotions, rarely realizing the background that authorizes "tradition" or the abuses that negate it.

Church music has often been a focal point for such arguments. Music is a strong tool of worship on two levels. On the one hand it is perceived and judged for its individual and emotional impact, and on the other it is a wonderful way to communicate common faith.

The Reformed tradition measures music with the same "yardsticks" it uses for other elements of worship. When the Reformers declared the pre-eminence of the Word as *the* yardstick, many ritualistic elements of worship were discarded, but singing, for the most part, was retained. Why? The primary reason is because it could communicate the Word.

... The young must be trained and educated in the Scripture and God's Word daily, so that they may become familiar with the Bible, grounded, well-versed, and skilled in it . . . For such, one must read, sing, preach, write and compose.¹

A secondary yardstick of the Reformed tradition is that of the participation of the people. Worship is not the sole domain of the priest; it is the offering of the people. This may be described as the *κοινωνία* of the congregation. *Koinonia* — *κοινωνία* — is not just passively sharing in the effect of an element of worship but the active participation therein. It is the individual's contribution to worship as it relates to the whole congregation and to God.

These two yardsticks, then, comprise a Reformed standard to which our worship music should conform. Then how do our common musical practices stand up?

Congregational Singing

In order to conform to the first yardstick — the Word — the early Reformed church attempted to restrict singing to Scriptural passages, particularly the Psalms. There is evidence that Luther's hymnody made some inroads into the more somber practices of Calvin and Knox, but for the most part, the Psalter was the norm.

However, music tends to be a very subjective art form, so it is hard to restrict its more personal forms of expression. The

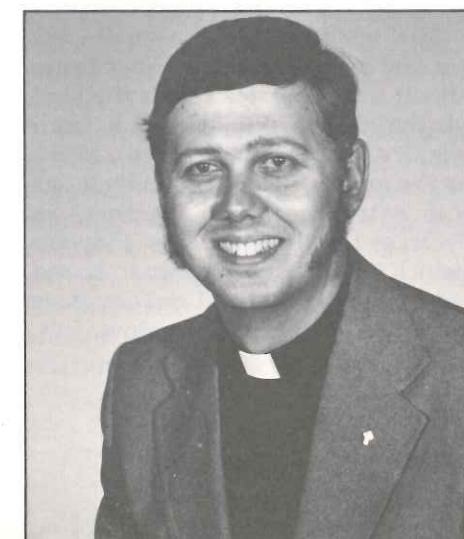
emotionalism of music taken alone is a dangerous thing, but channeled into the framework of the Word of God, it can be a constructive factor. The power of the Holy Spirit working in human lives is an affirmation of the validity of the Word. Then what could be more natural than using melody and harmony to assist in the expression of the experience of faith?

So, first came hymns that paraphrased Scripture, and then by the middle of the nineteenth century a full and authorized hymnody of personal and Scriptural expression was in use. It is at this point that we can begin to measure modern use of hymnody. The old hymn tunes usually take the blame for the lagging popularity of hymn singing, but archaic language can also be a stumbling block for the average young worshipper today. While the standard American church hymnal is printed in English, it may be possible that some of the "traditional" hymns are not in the current American vernacular.

We are all aware of the problem of sexist language and are beginning to treat it, but how many hymnal editors concern themselves with words which once were the poetic vogue but now have lapsed into obscurity? It is not just the use of "thee" and "thou" that obstruct comfortable participation since many people of all ages enjoy some use of these formal addresses. Most young worshippers, though, haven't the vaguest idea of the meaning of words like "deign," "vouchsafe," "fain," or "vaunt." A pastor or church musician (endowed with reasonable skills) could make an effort to modernize problematic lines of hymns by printing the verses in the order of service for the congregation.

One could make a case for raising the literary standards of our congregations, but the fact remains that if something cannot communicate, it should be revised or replaced.

Even if a hymn is understandable, it is



GRAY

Music in the Reformed Tradition

THOMAS GRAY

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"...we should be very careful that our ears be not more attentive to the melody than our minds to the spiritual meaning of the words..."

not a cohesive part of the rest of the worship service if it fails to fulfill the worship standard of the Word. The pastor should select hymns that amplify or restate the Word as read and preached. The purpose of this is not to submit to a rigid legalism but to enable the congregation to have their part in the proclamation of the Word.

Two characteristics of Christian singing emerge from the New Testament. It must be filled with the Holy Spirit, and it must be the expression of a conscious faith. It is not a question of making music for its own sake, but of expressing the word of God.²

Here is the true blending of the standard of the Word and music.

One of the first things many people think of upon hearing the word "hymn" is the tune, not the text. Since hymns are meant to be sung, the tune can make the difference between a hymn which contributes to the sense of *koivwóia* and one which does not.

Here, education plays a part — not "highbrow" musical education, but the simple, common knowledge of various hymn tunes. Some hymn tunes are too difficult for a congregation with average musical ability. Others fall flat simply because they are not taught by constant use. People do not learn hymn tunes out of thin air; they learn them through repetition under the guidance of a confident, enthusiastic leader whether that be the organist, choir director or pastor. Still other tunes fail because they lack musical quality or integrity.

Probably the most successful tunes of the past and the present are those with a "folk" flair which blend melodies and rhythms that are easily learned and retained. Look in your hymnal and see which tunes you sing out more readily. Chances are the tunes you select will include ones like "Slane" (Be Thou My Vision), "Amazing Grace," "Cwm Rhonda" (Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah), and many Christmas carols. The qualities of such tunes are dignified and even majestic without being too difficult to assimilate. This is the kind of music that Calvin extolled which "both lends dignity and grace to sacred actions and has the greatest value in kindling our hearts to a true zeal and eagerness to pray."³ Or, as Erik Routley says, they are tunes which "nobody need claim to be too cultured to respect . . . and nobody does claim to be too uneducated to enjoy . . ."⁴

So much for the "traditional" hymnody, but what about the new songs of the church? The same yardsticks must be used to measure these. Songs largely made up of exclamations of praise like "alleluia" or "maranatha" certainly can have a place in our worship, however a steady diet of these or of overly simplistic and repetitive songs come up short when measured with the yardstick of the Word. If we do not accept shallow preaching, why accept shallow hymnody?

A good text as well as a bad one affects singers in different ways. A deeply meaningful text can encourage an attentive singer to react to what he or she is singing and how it relates to the rest of the worship service. A shallow text doesn't offer much for reflection and can force the singers, perhaps unwittingly, to concentrate on the tune, harmony or rhythm. Focusing here, instead of the text, can enfold the singer in the emotions of the moment, confusing a purely musical experience with a spiritual one. Calvin worried that particularly attractive settings could obscure the Word.

... we should be very careful that our ears be not more attentive to the melody than our minds to the spiritual meaning of the words . . . such songs as have been composed only for sweetness and delight of the ear are unbecoming to the majesty of the church and cannot but displease God in the highest degree.⁵

Language is not only important to understanding a text, it is also necessary for congregational participation. Many of us might feel uncomfortable, even put off, by inserting a Latin word or phrase into a hymn even if it could be justified. Many parishioners are just as put off by including cliché Christian jargon. While "washed in the blood of the Lamb" or "thank God, I'm saved" can increase the sense of *koivwóia* for some, it can just as easily destroy it for others. The same applies to non-standard English. Words like "ain't" or "gimme" or "gonna" are as far away from some people as "deign" and "vaunt" are from others. The standard of worship is not the lowest common denominator of a congregation's inclinations and abilities, rather, it is the best common denominator by drawing what is good and acceptable from the old and the new.

Choirs

The early Reformed churches worshipped without choirs. It was as if the new liberty of congregational singing made a choir of the entire congregation, and that was indeed the case for many years. However, congregational singing declined especially in the Scottish and American Presbyterian churches. Precentors or deacons were appointed to lead congregational singing, but their style of leadership provided slow and dull singing limited to just a few tunes. Congregations bored with or indifferent to the singing often created disturbances by singing tunes other than the one being led or by trying to talk over the din of the "singing."⁶

The situation had so deteriorated by the mid-eighteenth century that one Scottish minister told a General Assembly that

... no words in Scripture better described his feelings when the congregation's exercises in praise came to an end, than those which at the beginning of the twentieth chapter of Acts record the quelling of the riot of the Ephesians in defense of their worship of Diana: "After the uproar was ceased . . ."⁷

And what a riot it must have been, according to contemporary accounts:

(The minister) stooped over the pulpit to hand his little book to the precentor, who then rose and calling aloud the tune . . . began himself a recitative of the first line on the keynote (and the tune was) taken up and repeated by the congregation; line by line he continued the same fashion, thus doubling the length of the 'exercise' for really to some it was no play — serious severe screaming quite beyond the natural pitch of the voice, a wandering search after the air by many who never caught it, a flourish of difficult execution and plenty of tremolo lately come into fashion. The dogs seized this occasion to bark (for they always came to the kirk with the family), and the babies to cry. When the minister could bear the din no longer, he popped up again, again leaned over, touched the precentor's head, and instantly all sound ceased. The long prayer began . . .⁸

The first Reformed choirs were formed from the congregation in order to lead congregational singing and raise musical standards in worship. They were established with great difficulty and controversy, but eventually they grew into a new "tradition" of the church and increased their role to include the singing of anthems and responses. It is important to remember,

though, that the choir's purpose in the Reformed church is to encourage the participation of the congregation.

Choirs can be an addition to the sense of *koivwóia* in worship and can effectively proclaim the Word. They can present a worship offering that can be authorized by a congregational "Amen," but there are a few things to follow in order for that "Amen" to be forthcoming.

First, the choir should be representative of the congregation. Musical *koivwóia* is a sharing of fellowship in music, not a performance/audience relationship. Choirs made up of professional singers cannot be blamed for emphasizing performance over *koivwóia* since they are hired to a job rather than wedded to a fellowship. "From this, moreover, it is fully evident that unless voice and song, if interposed in prayer, spring from deep feeling of heart, neither has any value or profit in the least with God."⁹ It is so much better, even at the expense of perfection, to receive and share in the musical offering from a part of our own fellowship.

Professional or semi-professional leadership is usually necessary for choirs since they must draw upon specific musical skills. Here, too, one must be careful to ensure that the choir's leader is sensitive to and participates in the *koivwóia* of the church. Otherwise the leader can take the music of the church and place it on the pedestal of performance.

Second, the choir must be able to be understood. Communication is vital to the sharing of the Word. Few choirs can be easily understood while singing. Choirs can practice their diction and will be inclined to do so if they realize the importance of understanding the Word. However, even that is to no avail when the complex counterpoint of voice against voice obscures the text of some anthems. Anthems in foreign languages are useless to the listeners, and in these cases the congregation can only react to the musical effect of the anthem. The problem, though, can be remedied to great degree by printing the words of all choral music in the order of worship.

Third, the Word must be proclaimed by the choir every time it sings. Pastor and musician must work together planning worship so that the anthem fits into and encourages everyone's worship. A well-written anthem can coincide with the Scripture texts or the sermon topic. If the anthem is not based upon the text or has no relation to the topic, it can be moved to a

... the choir's purpose in the Reformed church is to encourage the participation of the congregation.

Christian Song and Music — Some Reflections

ROBERT P. MEYE

Robert P. Meye is dean of the School of Theology and professor of New Testament Interpretation at Fuller Theological Seminary. He earned a B.A. degree at Stanford University, B.D. and Th.M. degrees from Fuller and a D.Theol. degree from the University of Basel, Switzerland. In addition to numerous articles he has written *Jesus and the Twelve* and contributed to *Birth Control and the Christian*.

Introduction

The subject of Christian song and music is so large — I am understanding this fact more and more! — that there is no way in which one can do justice to the theme in limited scope. Hence, what follows are merely "Reflections" on Christian song and music, which, I believe, are well grounded in the New Testament. To facilitate reference to that larger reality referred to in the New Testament as "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" — let alone music itself, which is also recognized in the New Testament (e.g. Ephesians 5:19) — the reflections herein use the simple expression "song" or "music" or "songs and music" — on the understanding that it is not easy to differentiate psalms, hymns and spiritual songs in the New Testament.

The reflections are especially prompted by the belief that typical Christian experience so far outruns typical Christian reflection on songs and music that more work needs to be done. What I mean is this: Christians sing. They sing universally. They break into song — Christian song — with the feeling that it is the right and proper thing to do. For all that, my experience of Christian people as they engage in the use of song suggests that there is a widespread (almost universal) assumption that songs are, for all their meaningfulness, a pleasant option. Hence, they may be used to "fill in" until a service of worship begins. Or, one may "not feel like singing" — and therefore feels himself/herself freed from any necessity of singing.

These reflections are also offered in the conviction that reflection can outrun — and thus inform — experience. It is thus hoped that these reflections will not only enhance Christian understanding of the vital role of songs and music in Christian faith but also promote more vigorous Christian singing and music-making in their God-ordained dimensions.



MEYE

The Vital and Obligatory Role of Songs and Music for Christian Faith and Life

Even a cursory examination of Holy Scripture demonstrates the vital role of song and music as a reflection and expression of faith. This is surely true of Old Testament faith. The Psalter is by any measure one of the most used Old Testament documents — and for good reason. In the Psalms, there is a full-orbed expression of faith, as faith experiences the baffling ups and downs of life, and above all the glory of God. The Psalms — as good articles on the subject will indicate — are by no means confined to the Psalter. Hence, what we see is the whole range of Israel's experience enshrined in the Psalter. Because the Psalms do express that life so richly, they spill over into other literary forms throughout the Old Testament.

The New Testament reflects this prominent role of song and music in its own way. From the beginning of redemptive history to consummation, saints are seen singing and making a joyful noise to the Lord. The early chapters of Luke celebrate in hymnic form the coming of the Messiah. And Jesus the Messiah incarnates the faith of Israel when he leads his small flock of disciples in singing a psalm on the occasion of the Last Supper (Mark 14:26 par.).

The Church of the Messiah — the body of Christ — continues to sing as it is born. Paul underscores this fact in his description of worship in the young church at Corinth:

What then, brethren? When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification (1 Corinthians 14:26).

It is not unimportant that pride of place is here assigned to the singing of a hymn in this listing of edifying Christian activities. Paul and Silas demonstrate the centrality of singing when, though captive in a Philippian jail, they respond to their captivity by "praying and singing hymns to God" (Acts 16:25). One should notice here that hymns find their place alongside of prayer as a Christian response to crisis — a partnership that merits special observation.

Two Pauline letters further underscore this recognition of the central function of songs and music in Christian faith. Ephesians 5 and Colossians 3 — which offer parallel material — each lead the Christian reader/hearer up to a climactic point in which songs and music are then underscored and emphasized. In both of these sections, the reader is first called to a full

Christian lifestyle (Ephesians 5:1, 2; Colossians 3:1-4). Following this appeal, great stress is naturally placed upon both Christian attitudes and Christian actions, with special emphasis upon the word which issues from one's mouth (Ephesians 5:4, 6; Colossians 3:8, 9-10, 13). Each passage concludes with a call to thankfulness — which is to be expressed in the heart (Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16) and in word. The final call in both texts is to offer this hearty, concrete expression of gratitude in songs and music. One should not miss the fact that this call to the exercise of "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" is attached to a list of ethical mandates. Thus, one's obedience in worship parallels and is conjoined to one's obedience in all of life. Christian existence is one indivisible whole.

At the canon's close, the saints of God, who have entered into heavenly glory, are depicted as "singing saints." Two references will suffice. In Revelation 5, the four living creatures and the 24 elders sing a "new song" of praise. Again, in Chapter 15 we read that those who have "conquered the beast and its image" . . . "sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb" (Revelation 15:2-3). If God's will is to be done on earth as it is in heaven — and this is surely the understanding of the New Testament authors — then singing and music must have a correspondingly dominant place in Christian worship in the church in history.

Two important theses emerge from this review: Thesis 1 — Song and music is a vital part of Christian existence; Thesis 2 — Song and music is a mandated part of Christian existence. These two theses are interrelated in the same fashion that other critically important "biblical realities" are interrelated. That which the Bible lifts up, it also imposes upon us. Two prime examples of this may be seen in (a) the Lordship of Christ and (b) the theme "Love." Christ is of course central in New Testament faith. Hence, Christians are called to the imitation of Christ, to put on Christ, to have the mind of Christ. What God has done is not only good and for our benefit, but because God is God, we are enjoined to receive the benefit as from the Lord. Love appears in the same manner. According to such passages as 1 Corinthians 13 and

Galatians 5:22, love must be viewed as of primary importance. Correspondingly, the strongest mandate of the New Testament is to "love one another." Now, if we understand that both on earth and in heaven, God has so shaped Christian life that songs and music occupy a vital role in it, then we can also be sure that we *must* engage in this activity.

The obligatory nature of Christian songs and music must be underlined in order to encourage a more mature use of and more vigorous reflection upon them by the Christian church and by individual Christians. It is inadequate to devote immense amounts of energy to such (important) themes as the Word, prayer, and the church, but to neglect the important (biblically so) themes of Christian song and music.

If there is anything apt to "quench the spirit" of some Christians, it is the very thought of obligation and discipline. The quest for autonomy in the spiritual world is even more energetic than the quest for autonomy in the political realm. However, the "greening" of our faith will open our eyes to a better way, a way in which God both gives and asks for our song. Why should we sing? We sing because it is the free act of a redeemed person; but we should also sing because it pleases God so to receive our praise for his grace and bounty beyond measure. We sing not as servants, but as sons and daughters of God.

Some Theses to Encourage Further Reflection Upon Songs and Music

Martin Luther, as much as any single Christian leader, understood the importance of hymns and contributed to Christian hymnody in a way that (at least today) springs all confessional boundaries. Luther also made famous the "thesis" — having nailed a few of them to a famous door! Before proceeding further, I would like to post some theses that I have been framing, i.e., upon which I am still at work. I will come back to some of them in the next section. However, I simply place them here as the result of one person's further reflection upon hymns and songs — reflections forced upon me by recognition of the vital and critical place of songs and music in Christian faith.

Some of the theses surely need further refinement — if not also simplification and clarification. Other worthy and important

. . . hymns find their place alongside of prayer as a Christian response to crisis . . .

Music has an eschatological cast, both in that it participates in the fullness of the Spirit already in this age, and in that it expresses the praise of God in the age to come.

theses could be offered. What is offered may at least serve to promote a more vigorous discussion than is typically the case.

1. Biblical faith presents us with a picture of humankind (created in the *image of God*) as a maker of music.

2. As is the case with all of our works, the musical offering of mind, voice and hands can be brought as a holy offering to God, or placed in the service of self and that which stands against God.

3. The believer in God, who bears the renewed image of the Creator in Christ Jesus, is *commanded* to bring songs and hymns and spiritual songs to the Lord; this is an essential act of the servant of the Lord.

4. Music, insofar as it is a reflection of the image of God who is Spirit, can be viewed as a specifically *spiritual* act or event.

5. The chief mode of this spiritual music-making issues in and calls forth praise to God for all that God is and all that God has done.

6. Music is particularly suited to be a vehicle for the worship of God in that it encourages the offerer to bring *all human faculties* — mind and body and spirit, viz., the whole person — into that act of worship. In uniquely involving *all* that we are, it thus lends itself to the highest reaches of human effort and joy.

7. Because music offers a full expression of our praise to God, it stands in a particularly close and harmonious relationship — a complementary relationship — with all other aspects of worship. Thus, in its richest and highest form, it may simultaneously express the Word of God, prayer to God, and manifest the reality of the people of God.

8. In that music uniquely involves the whole person in an act of praise, it is a particularly suitable vehicle to contribute to *corporate* faith and praise also; at the same time, the individual, because of this fullness, may uniquely benefit from songs and music.

9. Music shares in Christian experience generally as an activity involving our most thoughtful reflection, but also calling for the hearty abandonment of the self to God in 'the ecstasy of worship.' God is beyond

words and there is that in our song which may be beyond words — whether it is simply 'the music of the soul,' or the unintelligible expressions offered to God as the Spirit mysteriously moves in us.

10. Songs and music may be at once the most disciplined and most free act of the Christian person, and are thus an acted parable of Christian faith.

11. In that we will always be *creatures created in the image of God*, music will continue to have its place beyond the end of the age, when the saints of God are gathered to be with God forever. Music has an eschatological cast, both in that it participates in the fullness of the Spirit already in this age, and in that it expresses the praise of God in the age to come.

Toward a Richer Experience of Songs and Music in the Church

In this third and final section I want to make some practical applications which may or may not emerge from the former two sections. Above all else, I am especially interested in the development of a congregational matrix which is more richly fed by its experience and understanding of Christian song and music.

A. In many ways music offers a parable of faith. We have already seen that Christian song calls forth the hearty response of the *whole person* to what God is doing. I may exercise heart and mind and body in singing — and that is good. But what of those who can't sing or don't feel like singing? They too are included here. After all, who is it that can really pray or understand the mysteries of the Word of God; and who fully bears the burden of Christian community? We are all learners in these things — and often feel ourselves to have all too little maturity in them. Our "state of the art" here may be more like our (imagined) immature ability in singing than we recognize. For all that, it is important that we meditate and pray and bear — and sing! And the "weak" singer needs to see that this is but a piece of a much larger pattern — and that he/she is exhorted even to sing, inability or mood notwithstanding.

Hymns and songs are also a mirror of the faith in that their exercise both underlines God's work for us (objective) and expresses our own commitment to God (subjective). Precisely in drawing attention in the gratitude of song to the great acts of God, we can give the fullest personal expression to the meaningfulness of that work of God for us. Just there we are most fully free and

most fully bound — the situation of the authentic disciple of Christ.

Again the way in which the congregation engages in the singing of the great hymns of the faith underlines the *certitude* of Christian faith. Such singing is a far truer sign of the nature of faith than learned discourses which major on the silence of God and the uncertainties of faith! One cannot (with body, soul and mind) heartily and gratefully sing that which is unknown or in considerable doubt! The hymns of the New Testament, and the hymns of the church, are first of all expressions of the certainty of faith — and in that they are parables of New Testament faith. As Adolf Schlatter once remarked, the first mark of Easter faith was *certainty*.

B. Many persons in the congregation are weak in prayer — for whatever reason. A chief reason is often that they have not yet really begun to pray. Such persons need to see Christian hymns and songs as prayer — for so hymns and songs often present themselves to us. They need to realize that the richest (if unconscious) prayers that they have offered may well be incarnated in the hymns they have sung. But they will also need to be shown the discrepancy between this prayer in song and their prayer in the closet. Nonetheless, there is help and encouragement here. The final step is to seize the hymn more consciously as one's own prayer. One can also, apart from the instance of singing, pick up the hymnal and use it to assist in prayer. Once these exercises are seriously begun, one is in a strong position to advance further in prayer.

Christian understanding — and praying — can be further encouraged in seeing that hymns embody the word of God written which should always be a primary reference point in our praying. Many Christians would be amazed to discover how "Word-conscious" many hymns are. In any number of hymns, almost every line will be a direct statement from, or a paraphrase of, Scripture. The congregation may be taught to pray through singing the hymnal as a step toward praying through the Word written. The hymnal and hymnody can assist the individual to move to more effective private prayer.

C. One of the most "practical" effects of songs and music in Christian perspective is to be seen/experienced in their relationship to the community of faith. Who has not found himself/herself drawn closer to another in the mere(?) singing of a great Christian hymn? I can still remember standing with two brothers from other continents at the great Congress in Lausanne in 1974 and feeling myself drawn closer to them in singing in the Stadium there. Our ability to sing together became a door to further acquaintance. Christian singing offers its own assistance (however one would gauge its actual role) to the formation of Christian community.

I have another experience in mind. As an officer of the United States Navy, I once welcomed a young Korean officer aboard my own ship for six months of training. His English was child-like and my Korean was still-born. For all that, when we discovered one another to be Christians, one of our chief instruments of fellowship and mutual support (in a situation where vital Christian faith was rarely visible) was singing together around a portable organ. Music was an instrument which helped us to realize our oneness in the family of God. Who knows the degree to which music has filled this role over the centuries?

Often enough it has been observed that the hymnal is the most ecumenical document of Christendom since the canon. Thus, at every level, hymns and songs are instrumental in placarding and facilitating Christian fellowship and unity — within single cultural settings and across all cultural boundaries.

Recognition of this leads to our closing comment. Among the most prominent signs of the central role of Christian hymns and songs in the New Testament are those creedal formulations in the New Testament, which students of the New Testament believe to have been framed as hymns in or for the earliest Church. One very prominent exemplar of these "hymns" is the so-called "Christ-hymn" in Philippians 2:5-11. Christian faith is basically formed and shaped by such hymnic expressions; the faithful gather, and find themselves called to gather, at the feet of Jesus in response to such hymns. Can there be any more profound statement regarding the importance of Christian hymns than their ability to lift up Jesus Christ and unite us in him? ■

...the way in which the congregation engages in the singing of the great hymns of the faith underlines the *certitude* of Christian faith.

Music in Worship: A Dialogue with Ministers of Music

ROBERT SCHAPER, DAN BIRD, ROGER HICKS

Integrator Robert N. Schaper asked two well-trained and highly-experienced ministers of music to assess some of the current problems and prospects in church music. Daniel F. Bird is minister of music at Lake Avenue Congregational Church in Pasadena. He studied music at Wheaton College and received a master's degree in choral music at the University of Southern California. Before coming to Pasadena, he served as minister of music at churches in the Los Angeles area and in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. He has directed national church music workshops, served as musical consultant for televised church programs and arranged two books of choral hymn intonations. Roger W. Hicks is minister of music at the First Baptist Church of Phoenix, Arizona. He received a master of music degree from Westminster Choir College at Princeton, New Jersey after studying at Nyack College, Nyack, New York. He has served as minister of music at churches in California, New Jersey, Georgia and Ontario, Canada. His articles on church music have appeared in several publications, including *The Alliance Witness*, *Presbyterian Journal*, *Journal of Church Music* and *Christian Life*.

ROBERT SCHAPER: A church musician is a very strategic part of a church staff. What do you think are some of the good and bad things that are going on or should be going on in the relationship of pastor and church musician?

DAN BIRD: There has to be a deep level of respect and integrity between the pastor and the musician. Of all the staff people in a church, I think the minister and the minister of music have more in common at a very basic level of personality. They might be different in other areas, but there is in both a basic desire to perform, in the best sense of the word. That desire to perform is a part of their leadership, a part of their gift, and a call from God. It can be a source of contention at times, too.

SCHAPER: You think that in order to fulfill his calling in a church, the musician has to be a kind of "up-front" person who shares



HICKS

leadership and performance with a pastor?
ROGER HICKS: I believe that's becoming all the more important today. I think that a church musician who is really successful has to look at his work as a ministry, and needs to be open to sharing that ministry with the pastor. I see this happening in most churches today where there's a real ongoing ministry. The musician considers himself to be a minister more than he considers himself to be a musician, and consequently the pastor and the musician are able to work together in the spirit of ministry.

SCHAPER: Does this mean that the relationship is one of shared responsibility or delegated responsibility? Let's get right to the nitty-gritty of it. To plan a service for next Sunday does the musician select the hymns? Should the pastor have a veto power over the anthem?

HICKS: I feel the ultimate decision, of course, rests with the pastor. The way we've been doing it is that the order of service starts with me, the music director. I will outline the service including the choice of hymns, the responsive reading, and various components of the service. Then the service outline goes to the pastor who looks it over and makes any necessary adjustments. And then the final form is approved by the staff.

SCHAPER: Do you do this on the basis of the sermon subjects that he's submitted to you?

HICKS: We have not done that very often. I've often wished for that kind of situation. I've been intrigued with the Lake Avenue Church in Pasadena. I like to listen to the service on Sunday mornings, and I've been intrigued at how everything ties together. The prayers and songs all lead into the upcoming items.

BIRD: That's due to the fact that there, and in churches in general, ministers of music are becoming increasingly involved in the entire ministry and worship of the church. In the past they were musically trained and may have had a pastor's heart,



BIRD

but there was quite a role difference between the pastoral staff and the minister of music. This caused some division psychologically. Now there is more of the *ministry* approach. The person being called to the church not only has a minister's heart and is trained musically, but he is involved theologically and is becoming more aware of his responsibility as a minister of music.

SCHAPER: Are you saying that an effective minister of music must be theologically aware and biblically oriented to be able to select and perform music which will enhance the message of the church service?

BIRD: Definitely. I have not had seminary training, so I must do a lot of reading. I must listen and I must ask questions. I must be involved in the information that I need to know to minister correctly. I learn from my brothers and sisters, and they learn from me.

HICKS: I really believe the day is past when you simply have a *musician* — quote unquote — in the church.

BIRD: It's still all too prevalent, and that's lamentable. A lot of churches across the country are still looking only for a *musician* to do the work. At Lake Avenue, however, the minister of music has a great deal of leadership responsibility for creating the thematic tie-in for the service itself. I know in advance what the title of the sermon is going to be. Then two weeks before the service we have the pastor's outline, and that's wonderful. So I'm able to choose hymns and anthems. I do this not to be cleverly thematic. We're not going to tie everything to the particular sermon subject — that gets a little bit too clever, and then you're not realizing worship in its totality. But we do tie music in as much as possible. Then we meet as a worship team — the pastor, myself and a few other staff members — to discuss and revise it. I agree, however, that the senior pastor has the final judgment no matter whether there's a worship team or not.

SCHAPER: Roger, let's say a church needs a musician. They don't need another pastor. They need someone who can take care of the musical aspects of the church's life. Would they have trouble with a musician who is not theologically trained?

HICKS: I don't think there would necessarily be trouble there. I think it depends, of course, on the involvement that particular individual has within the total life of the church. There are many churches today who employ a part-time music director — a person who is a Christian and has a good

Christian character. But it's more effective if a person can come in with a real understanding of what they are there to do, and that is to help people grow in their spiritual expression through the medium of music.

SCHAPER: Well, you people have been very cordial about the necessity of the music minister being sensitive to churchly concerns. What if the pastor has very little understanding of what it means to function as a church musician? Is that a problem?

HICKS: Yes, I have seen that become a great problem. Sometimes the pastor really doesn't understand that there is a growth process in music. He doesn't understand or appreciate the aesthetics of music. He doesn't understand or appreciate how a person can grow spiritually through various types of music. As an example, maybe the pastor grew up on the nineteenth century gospel song and he limits his understanding to the gospel song. He doesn't understand why the music director wants to do the classics or wants to do contemporary music as a part of the total picture. For that reason I think it's very important in the pastor's educational background to have this type of training and understanding and personal appreciation for various styles of music, in the same way that the musician is asked to understand the ministry.

BIRD: Right. This is where the seminary can really help us in the future if it will confront the students with this whole idea of the *ministry* of music. This is such an important and predominant tool in the congregation's expression. It's a gift that's been given us to give back to God. Of all the areas in the church, the pastor may feel a little more insecure in music than in any other area. He can get a handle on Christian education, he can get a handle on discipleship, but it's hard for him to get a handle on music and this can cause some insecurity problems. Also, all of us have particular musical tastes that are quite definite. If we gauge our ministry of music on our musical tastes and don't look for other foundations for it then we're in trouble too.

SCHAPER: If you could say just one sentence to pastors about their attitudes toward church music or musicians, what would it be?

HICKS: Let's work together as a team to encourage and enable members of the Christian body to mature in their spiritual expressions.

... ministers of music are becoming increasingly involved in the entire ministry and worship of the church.

We (ministers of music) can find ourselves being either faddists or museum curators.

SCHAPER: Let's switch now to talk about what you see as the most important trends in the development and promotion of church music.

BIRD: We church musicians are faced with an onslaught of music coming from the commercial Christian world nowadays, and of course the media, including television, are also influencing the general public. So congregations are listening to this and are really calling on us to duplicate the music they hear on the media. I think the word "balance" is a key word here in choosing the music. Understanding what is appropriate at certain times and *what* we want to minister and *how* we want to minister with that music is very important for us.

HICKS: I have a pet expression here. We can find ourselves being either faddists or museum curators. I think these are the extremes we see taking place in the current church music scene. This can be an exciting possibility for us. We have all these types of music available, and we have sophisticated equipment, too — sophisticated reproduction equipment and sophisticated sound equipment. All sorts of things are coming out today primarily as a result of "commercial music," but we need to steer that in the right direction.

SCHAPER: Let me focus that a bit. You're saying that the music scene is being profoundly influenced by what people see and hear in media. Do you think that in another 20 years every church choir will have one microphone for every participant and look like a TV commercial?

HICKS: I think TV will heavily influence church music. If we church musicians are wise, we will take great advantage of it in the best possible way, allowing TV to be only one part of the total music scene. We are in competition with secular entertainment and we need to present the gospel in a relevant way musically. I think it's Don Fontana who uses the expression "music with 'wow' in it." We need to present a musical ministry that has "wow" in the best sense of the word, that's truly going to get to the heart of the person, not simply to be dramatic or showy.

BIRD: Motivation is very important here. I don't think the church has discovered in any sense of the word what I'd call "radical evangelism," especially in my area of music. I'm concerned about how we can minister through music in a radical way. Maybe that means really investing in the very contemporary methods and instruments and electronic equipment, etc.

SCHAPER: Let me just push that a little bit. It seems to me that you're talking about entertainment. You're talking about people who deliberately set about to entertain. That means that no one ever looks sad; everybody's handsome. You don't have any poor people or poorly shaped people. You surely would not ask that the ministers all duplicate that approach. How do we respond to media styles?

BIRD: One of the things I think we need to make clear here is that we are trend *followers* and not trend *setters*. I believe we follow musical trends. We are not setting any trends; we are not creating our own voice. At one time the church was a trend setter, and secular music was influenced by church music. I think it's time to take steps to create trends and a unique sound and voice in the church. Otherwise we do fall into the trap of duplication and we become entertainment centers, especially in the musical area.

HICKS: There's a real fine line to be drawn here. Some time ago I took a poll at the church on this thing of entertainment in Christian music, and I asked the simple question: "Do you believe entertainment has a place in Christian music?" We had been grappling with this thing a little bit here and the responses that came back were quite interesting. In my background I had shied away from the word "entertainment," but I believe I had a wrong concept of entertainment. If you look up "entertainment" in the dictionary, you'll find it's simply that which holds a person's attention, or is an interesting or positive diversion, something of that nature.

SCHAPER: Pleases.

HICKS: Pleases, yes. But because something is entertaining does not mean it is without value. The sermon should be entertaining, in the best sense of the word, if it's going to lead a person to Christ. But it must go beyond mere entertainment to spiritual edification.

SCHAPER: All right, I'm sure this discussion could go on for a long time. But now, let's move the topic from the *role* of music to the *availability* of music. Is there music being written and published in all different styles?

HICKS: The biggest problem I find is having the finances and the time to do the amount of music I would like to do. There is so much rolling off the presses now.

SCHAPER: Of course the expense of music is a real problem, is it not?

BIRD: Yes it is. I'm especially aware of that from doing my yearly budget. But at the same time, I'm finding an enormous amount and variety of quality music available. Anyone willing to search for music can find it, very well arranged and written by some very talented people.

SCHAPER: Luther appealed to the German artists to come forward and produce evangelical hymns so that the church would provide for its musical enrichment from within its own life. Do you have any experiences at all with things arising from within your own church congregation? Do you look for ways in which the musical abilities of your own people are encouraged?

BIRD: This is one of the most important questions you could ask me: How do I facilitate and equip the talented lay people in my church to come forward and take steps toward being trend setters? I think it must happen in the local church. At Lake Avenue I want to start a fine arts team. There are needs in worship planning in the area of drama. We need lyricists, we need orchestrators, we need arrangers, composers, conductors, and they're all there. They're all there, but until recently, we have neglected the artists in the church. That's beginning to change. Now, we have a young man writing an original musical presentation for the children's choir. We have dramatists that are going to create a drama team that can be used in the worship service. In all of this — music, drama, and so on — I see myself as an equipper, not just a leader as the minister of music.

HICKS: One of the greatest current challenges that a minister of music faces today is to be a facilitator and to bring forth the artist from within the congregation.

BIRD: It's risky and you have to be willing to take a back seat as a leader yourself and let these people conduct; let these people write and compose. I love to compose, but for instance, for a service held recently, I asked a young musician to write a two-minute meditation for the oboe and organ. He wrote one and it was staggeringly beautiful. It's risky, but you're encouraging the expression of the gifts of God.

HICKS: That's a different way of enabling people to give spiritual expression through the sphere of music.

SCHAPER: Well what if Mrs. Jones comes with a piece that she has worked on very long and hard? You look at the music, and you know it will absolutely fracture a service if you put it in. Aren't you facing the great problem of having to veto the efforts of good and sincere people?

BIRD: Well, first of all you set up a fine arts team which you select yourself. These must be people who are trained in the areas of drama, composing, song writing, script writing, etc. Still, you are going to get the Mrs. Joneses who have written a hymn, and I've gotten some recently . . .

HICKS: But you have a committee that deals with that.

BIRD: Yes, right. And I'm not so sure that there aren't periods of time in a particular service in which those songs could be incorporated. If they're just awful, then I think the best thing to do is to be up front with that person in a very loving way.

SCHAPER: How do you feel about soloists?

HICKS: Soloists are very important in our concept of the worship service. This enables individuals to have personal expression. I don't tell soloists all the time what they're going to sing, just as we wouldn't tell the pastor the type or subject of his sermon. I know in advance what the solo is going to be and I think there have only been a couple of times when it just didn't fit the occasion and wasn't appropriate. Sometimes soloists give me their repertoire, and then I will schedule them to fit in certain services. This year the church has purchased each soloist two vocal collections. I've gone through each of the books matching the songs with the soloists, both in personality and voice. Then I have tentatively scheduled soloists and have had them prepare in advance. If they feel a certain song just isn't them, then they certainly have the liberty and flexibility to change to another one or to bring their own ideas. We are selective in the sense that they are auditioned in advance.

SCHAPER: I must pick up on that. Do you conceive of the solo as being a kind of ministry of the word of God that roughly parallels the sermon?

HICKS: Yes, I do.

BIRD: I appreciate Roger's concept of assisting soloists. I think we as ministers of music need to take an active, positive role in helping soloists understand their voice capabilities and the type of literature they can sing. They want us to be interested in what they're doing. My own feeling about literature is that soloists in the church

One of the greatest current challenges that a minister of music faces is to be a facilitator and to bring forth the artist from within the congregation.

The sanctuary choir is a voice of the congregation, and it's an enabler of the congregation.

should lean more toward the simple. I have problems, except on special occasions, with a soloist doing an aria from an oratorio or from some larger work. Most of the time I appreciate solos that have very clear and simple statements, musically and textually.

HICKS: This is something we are able to accomplish this year in choosing the repertoire.

SCHAPER: Do you think every church should have a choir?

HICKS: No, I don't. My philosophy of the choir sees it as an expression of the total congregation. But it is able to do a type of music that the people who are sitting in the pews do not have the talent or the interest or the time to prepare. Every church does not have that type of personnel in the church and every church isn't interested in having that type of art form as a spiritual expression.

SCHAPER: This almost goes back to our question of competing with the entertainment media. How can a group of volunteers compete on the same level with people who are paid and spend their whole life developing a skill?

BIRD: A choir is a rehearsal group, but they are first and foremost fellow worshippers in the service. I think the New Testament forms the congregation as a choir, — choir #1. I always call them choir #1, and the sanctuary choir is choir #2. The sanctuary choir is a voice of the congregation, and it's an enabler of the congregation. But I agree with Roger that every church does not have to have a choir. I'd rather have no choir than to have something that's going to distract me from God and my worship experience.

SCHAPER: What are the responsibilities of the music minister to the congregation?

HICKS: It takes a certain amount of time for me to get to know a congregation. No two congregations are identical. I find that a church congregation will have a personality just like an individual will have a personality. A great extent of my music ministry will be geared toward the personality of that congregation. I feel that in order for an individual or a congregation as a whole to be able to worship effectively they need to be able to do it most of the time in a familiar form. Consequently the music which is presented to them — as an expression of them — needs to be in a familiar form, something which they can understand.

BIRD: I agree with that. There's a responsibility to give them a sense of security in their worship. There's a need to be sensitive to that which is familiar to them, and then also to give them an element of surprise, and I think that should be on a weekly basis in the service. This brings up the whole point of the structure of the service and how it serves the congregation. The bulletin is one of the only means by which we inform our people about worship. It is not just a list of what we're going to do for the morning; it is a teaching tool for worship. Not everything we do in the worship service is worship and they need to know that. We listen, we pray, we worship. There are different things we do, and the congregation needs to know those different things. Each service needs an element of surprise — a change. Maybe one Sunday the choir will do a response. The next Sunday the congregation will do a response.

HICKS: We become very dull when we as church leaders or the worship service itself becomes predictable.

SCHAPER: So how can you talk about security and still be unpredictable? It seems to me the essence of security is to know exactly what's going to come next and be able to feel quite comfortable about that.

BIRD: At our church now, the format of the bulletin is basically the same each Sunday. There is usually the element of high praise at the beginning. You always have a choral introit and a hymn of praise and a prayer of praise. Those are things the people hear every Sunday. But the other elements of the service change.

HICKS: I sense this matter of security more in the form of expressions rather than the order. People need to be pushed a little beyond where they are right now.

SCHAPER: Do you think it's important to print texts of anthems and responses?

BIRD: Anything you can do to assist the congregation in that worship service should be done. Texts should be printed because sometimes, in certain types of music, the words don't come across as much as they should. We strive for excellence in articulation, but a lot of times an anthem is so poetic that even if you could understand all the words, the congregation wouldn't really grasp that poem. For instance, one anthem of this sort is "My Eternal King." If it's not printed, it's very difficult to understand.

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It came as something of a shock to me to discover that the New Testament has very little to say about worship in general and about music in particular, except that it is, by its very nature, obsessed with revealing to us the One who is the object of worship and the audience for whatever we do in acts of praise.

In the Old Testament the approach to God is carefully choreographed in an intricate ritual in which each move is set and woe betide the reckless man who dares to be innovative. Though there were moments of extemporaneousness — as when David danced before the Lord as the Ark was brought to Jerusalem — it would appear that such moments were untypical as far as public worship was concerned and that only someone with the stature and genius of David could get away with spontaneity of this kind. The dimensions of the Temple, the descriptions of the vestments and ordination ceremonies for the priests, and the elaborate descriptions of the sacrificial ceremonies all attest to the scrupulous care and preciseness which lay at the heart of Jewish worship. The awesome Creator God must be approached at a distance in an atmosphere of opulence and mystery, always corporately, as the Sabbath or a high holy day indicated, for Jehovah was the God of the nation and his involvement with this particular people gave them their uniqueness.

The music that was used on these occasions and some of the instruments that helped to create it are lost to us, unless melodies have filtered down to become tunes that we use today and our modern instruments are lineal descendants of such strange sounding items as the sackbut and the kinnor. But we still have intact the lyrics of the songs that were sung, for the Book of Psalms is exactly that, the collection of sacred texts which were used in Temple worship.

It is, as I have said, surprising that with this extensive stress on the forms and style of worship and music in the Old Testament, so little should be said by way of instruction in the New Testament. Apart from the intimation that the early church used "psalms, hymns and spiritual songs" (Ephesians 5:19) with its instruction to "Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord," and Paul's stress upon singing in the spirit and singing with understanding, the second half of the Bible is curiously silent about the form worship should take or the particular type of music that should be used.

I cannot help but feel that this omission is deliberate. For when the Epistles were written they were published not just for one age or a single culture but for the whole world as it would develop throughout the centuries. Having created us different from one another, God takes delight in the fact that though our theme is the same our variations have infinite possibilities for doing that which is new and innovative.

Unfortunately, being by nature both lazy and conceited, we seem to have avoided this challenge and, believing that "good taste is that which exactly coincides with our own," so many of us like to think that the form of worship and the style of music to which we are accustomed is sacrosanct and superior to all others. So that in our mind's eye we see God in Anglican or Methodist or Charismatic terms as if he revels in what we say and sing and turns a critical eye and ear toward our less sophisticated and less informed brethren. If we had our way every church would practice a rigid conformity. But the liberty God has given us is surely an invitation for each gathering of Christians to follow its own inherent creativity and to provide forms of worship and musical material that suit the need of a particular congregation with a particular historical background.

At this point I need to correct an impression I may have given. I am not advocating a policy of "anything goes" when it comes to the conducting of services and the choice of anthems, solos and hymns. I abhor the banality and irreverence of so much that one hears today. We must maintain the highest standards when it comes to the worship of God, for surely this act of presenting ourselves to him in the presence of his people is the supreme moment of the week, symbolizing as it does a style of life in which Christ has possession of us. During the past few years I have had the opportunity to attend num-

Truth, Taste and Tolerance

BRYAN J. LEECH

Bryan J. Leech held pastorates in Massachusetts, New Jersey and California before embarking on a second career as a freelance writer, composer and broadcaster. Born in Buckhurst Hill, Essex, England, he attended London Bible College before coming to the United States. He studied at Barrington College in Providence, Rhode Island, and North Park Seminary in Chicago, and was ordained in the Evangelical Covenant Church of America. He is the author of 100 published anthems and songs, including "The Hiding Place" which has been recorded several times and performed at London's Royal Albert Hall. He has contributed music to the "Haven of Rest" radio program and the "Hour of Power" telecast from the Crystal Cathedral. He is also an editor of *Hymns for the Family of God* from Paragon, and has completed the companion for that volume.



LEECH

. . . a quality text will be more than true, it will have elements of surprise and touches of verbal magic, so that even by themselves the words sing and lift the spirit.

bers of churches of different denominational affiliation, almost all of them avowedly evangelical, and in each of them if the preacher had uttered a word of heresy doubtless an inquisition would have followed forthwith. Yet, I often had the lurking doubt that if heresy were written in verse form and sung to a rousing tune everyone would have sung it with gusto and a vibrant "amen" at the end. Which is another way of saying that we do not give the same scrutiny to the lyrics that we sing or which are sung to us that we give to our examination of sermonic content. Because a solo vaguely mentions Jesus or an anthem has a nice sentimental sound to it we tend to give it our approval, even when it may have minimal theological content and be badly written in the bargain. The question we must ask is this: "Is it true?"

Of course, a quality text will be more than true, it will have elements of surprise and touches of verbal magic, so that even by themselves the words sing and lift the spirit. Lyrics for Christian use, even where they don't quote Scripture literally, should always reflect the ideas and reverence for God contained in the Bible. This does not mean that they must use a dated "language of Canaan" vocabulary, loaded down with cumbersome and outmoded words, but that whatever is expressed in modern idioms should be expertly and sensitively written. The rhymes should come naturally, the sense should be clear. For a song lyric is different from a poem. We can spend limitless time puzzling over a set of obscure verses, but we cannot sing words to God that we cannot comprehend as we sing them. Therefore, a good song or anthem text is one that is readily understood in the time it takes to hear or to sing it.

We now come to the question, "What sort of music is suitable for use with a sacred text?" With a few exceptions which I will mention later, almost any style of music can be wedded to sacred lyrics, provided only that it enhance those particular words and intensify their meaning. For there is no such thing as sacred music. There is music which has become associated with religious words, but the melodies and harmonies could just as easily have been married to secular lyrics. For example, we think of Bach as a writer of religious music, but his compositions for the organ are not markedly different from his chorale works in terms of musical style, for all of his music is an expression of Johann Sebastian Bach, whether or not it had a specifically religious purpose.

Similarly, Handel, a composer that so many regard as perhaps the greatest writer of "sacred" music, actually perfected his craft and polished his genius preparatory to "The Messiah" by writing a series of popular operas and acquiring a reputation as a kind of Richard Rodgers of his day. That he should create a masterpiece in so short a time is remarkable, except that one can almost hear him getting ready for it in many of the "secular" compositions of his earlier career. Certainly the text of the "Messiah" drew out of Handel music of unparalleled excellence, but again it was *better* music, not music of a different style.

Are there types of music which can never be married to sacred words? Yes, I think there are, because what music does is to create a mood, to intensify the meaning of words like someone underlining a play script with a red pen to add emphasis to important phrases. It would be difficult, therefore, to think of Christian words which would be enhanced by acid rock, simply because the feeling generated by that sound is abrasive, rebellious and hostile. Similarly, it seems to me that Barber Shop Quartet music also has a limited use because it generates a feeling of light-heartedness and amusement which is contrary to the seriousness and intense emotion needed for the average sacred song. It can be delightful as entertainment, but I question its use in a church service.

Having said that, it seems to me that there is really no limit to the use of a variety of types of music within the church. Some of us prefer traditional, so-called "serious music" for worship, music that is meditative and quiet. Yet many subjects which Christian lyricists are seizing upon these days demand the exuberance and rhythmic intensity of some of the contemporary sounds. Thus, the issue is really a matter of taste in two senses. It is a matter of choosing music of whatever style that is the best of its kind, and secondly it is a matter of taste as far as the pastor, church musicians and congregation are concerned within a local fellowship.

What does concern me is the musical snobbery one finds in many of our churches where a certain kind of music is felt to be the "in" kind. Some churches are entirely backward looking. In their view nothing good has been written since Handel. Perhaps some of them dream of the day when each member will be so musically sophisticated and so brilliant at sight-reading that

copies of Beethoven's "Missa Solemnis" will be given out instead of bulletins and the congregation will perform the masterwork in place of the usual liturgy.

Ministers and ministers of music are, by their very titles, the servants of the church. Yet so often the implication is there that to be a Christian one must be a lover of classical music. We forget that many of our people have lowbrow tastes, that some are not musical at all (C.S. Lewis, for all his brilliance, was deficient in that area) and that one can be a very serious and devout follower of Jesus Christ without having that particular bent.

On the other hand there are churches that seem to take an inverse form of pride from their lack of pretension in preferring music that is current, subjective and overly-simplistic as far as the lyrics are concerned. Some churches overstress youth music. Others seem to cater only to the taste of middle-aged and older people, completely ignoring the preferences of their more youthful members.

To me, the ideal church, musically speaking, is one in which music is drawn from all traditions and all eras, where the mix is eclectic and varied, catering to a wide variety of tastes. So that in any given service of worship there is something to satisfy the devout classicist and something to please the one with nothing more than a liking for a good tune. Not only does such an approach give a richness to the music program but it also teaches us a very important practical lesson, a lesson about love.

In his eloquent letter to the Corinthian church St. Paul defines love as that quality "which suffers long and is kind," which "does not boast and is not proud." So often we expect our churches to reflect our likes and dislikes and we're extremely vocal if things don't go our way. Yet so often the things we insist upon, important as they may seem to be, are really peripheral matters, for what is really vital is that we learn to love and respect and support people with tastes quite different from our own. For the only thing that needs to be held in common for a genuine church to exist is Jesus Christ and the truths of his death and resurrection. Anything else held in common is really a bonus, an extra, a nonessential but nice addition.

If I had to select a substitute for my faith in Christ, I think that I would choose music. I have known moments in my life when the right musical sound has completely altered my mood. If I feel sluggish, a

rollicking Sousa march can get me going. If I feel settled here in this country, the mere recollection of "Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing," (the end-of-term hymn at preparatory school), can usher me back into my boyhood and make me long for all things English. If I feel emotionally dry, playing Vaughan Williams' "Fantasia on a theme by Thomas Tallis" or Brahms' "Variations on a theme by Haydn" or a dozen other classical favorites can help to replenish my inner being.

But the fact that I would choose it as a religious substitute, if I had to make this hypothetical choice, teaches me not only what a sublime help music is to faith, but also how dangerous it can be as a replacement for true religious experience. Those of us who use it in the church must always beware of it becoming an end in itself when it should be the means to leading us into the very presence of God. We must never worship music. We must use music skillfully and carefully in the worship of God.

Music has great power over us. It can fill us with joy, excitement, resolve, love, peace and all the finer emotions. For some it is indeed a religion, a natural high without any harmful side effects. Except that, in producing synthetic spiritual experiences, it is ultimately very damaging. It can be so deeply satisfying that we fail to realize that what has happened to us is not a work of the Spirit but simply the natural phenomenon of the human mind and emotions responding to pleasurable sensation. Certainly God gave melodic sound to us as a sublime part of his creation, but he never intended the gift to be preferred to the Giver.

As we prepare ourselves to perform music in our churches, as we select the pieces that will be used and as we educate our people in the art of worship, we must always seek to bring to the Lord the best that we can together with the determination to seek communion with him through the total worship experience. We must serve God and the people before we serve ourselves. And we can do this by asking of a particular composition, is it true? Is it authentic? Does it have substance? Secondly, is it in good taste whatever the style may be? Does the music suit the sense of what is being expressed? And finally, whatever our personal likes happen to be, we can go beyond them by stretching ourselves, by exposing ourselves to the new and the different. Truth, taste and tolerance — that's what we need. ■

. . . the ideal church, musically speaking, is one in which music is drawn from all traditions and all eras, where the mix is eclectic and varied, catering to a wide variety of tastes.

On Church Music

C.S. LEWIS

It is probably very diplomatic to select someone who is dead and distant to be a devil's advocate. C.S. Lewis is certainly all of the above. Yet he was and continues to represent so much more. Well known for contributing vitality, imagination, character and wit to the Christian faith, Lewis was also not above or beyond critiquing and correcting what he viewed to be questionable Christian practice — even in the realm of church music. His critiques of the place and practice of church music were frequently so clear and strong, that they seemed to rebuke the very idea of music. "The hymns," he once wrote in a letter to Erik Routley, "are mostly the dead wood of the service."

But from an overall perspective Lewis was not so much demanding that music be cut out of worship, but rather, that music be expressed in an accurate, meaningful and theologically-sound context. An aesthetic experience, he cautioned, is not primarily a religious experience. His critiques and concerns about music are offered in this article, reprinted from "On Church Music," *Christian Reflections*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967, pp. 94-99.

I am a layman and one who can boast no musical education. I cannot even speak from the experience of a lifelong church-goer. It follows that Church Music is a subject on which I cannot, even in the lowest degree, appear as a teacher. My place is in the witness box. If it concerns the court to know how the whole matter appears to such as I (not only *laicus* but *laicissimus*) I am prepared to give my evidence.

I assume from the outset that nothing should be done or sung or said in church which does not aim directly or indirectly either at glorifying God or edifying the people or both. A good service may of course have a cultural value as well, but that is not what it exists for; just as, in an unfamiliar landscape, a church may help me to find the points of the compass, but was not built for that purpose.

These two ends, of edifying and glorifying, seem to me to be related as follows. Whenever we edify, we glorify, but when we glorify we do not always edify. The edification of the people is an act of charity and obedience and therefore in itself a glorification of God. But it is possible for a man to glorify God in modes that do not edify his neighbour. This fact confronted the Church at an early stage in her career, in the phenomenon called 'speaking with tongues'. In I Corinthians xiv, St. Paul points out that the man who is inspired to speak in an unknown tongue may do very well, as far as he himself is concerned, but will not profit the congregation unless his utterance can be translated. Thus glorifying and edifying may come to be opposed.

Now at first sight to speak with unknown tongues and to sing anthems which are beyond the musical capacity of the people would seem to be very much the same kind of thing. It looks as if we ought to extend to the one the embargo which St. Paul places on the other. And this would lead to the forbidding conclusion that no Church Music

is legitimate except that which suits the existing taste of the people.

In reality, however, the parallel is not perhaps so close as it seems. In the first place, the mode after which a speech in an unknown tongue could glorify God was not, I suppose, the same as the mode after which learned music is held to do so. It is (to say the least) doubtful whether the speeches in 'tongues' claimed to glorify God by their aesthetic quality. I suppose that they glorified God firstly by being miraculous and involuntary, and secondly by the ecstatic state of mind in which the speaker was. The idea behind Church Music is very different. It glorifies God by being excellent in its own kind; almost as the birds and flowers and the heavens themselves glorify Him. In the composition and highly-trained execution of sacred music we offer our natural gifts at their highest to God, as we do also in ecclesiastical architecture, in vestments, in glass and gold and silver, in well-kept parish accounts, or the careful organization of a Social. And in the second place, the incapacity of the people to 'understand' a foreign language and their incapacity to 'understand' good music are not really the same. The first applies absolutely and equally (except for a lucky accident) to all the members of the congregation. The second is not equally present or equally incurable perhaps in any two individuals. And finally, the alternative to speech in an unknown tongue was speech in a known tongue. But in most discussions about Church Music the alternative to learned music is popular music — giving the people 'what they like' and allowing them to sing (or shout) their 'old favourites'.

It is here that the distinction between our problem and St. Paul's seems to me to be the sharpest. That words in a known tongue might edify was obvious. Is it equally obvious that the people are edified by being allowed to shout their favourite hymns? I am well aware that the people like it. They equally like shouting *Auld Lang Syne* in the streets on New Year's Eve or shouting the latest music-hall song in a tap-room. To make a communal, familiar noise is certainly a pleasure to human beings. And I would not be thought to despise this pleasure. It is good for the lungs, it promotes good fellowship, it is humble and unaffected, it is in every way a wholesome, innocent thing — as wholesome and innocent as a pint of beer, a game of darts, or a dip in the sea. But is it, any



LEWIS

more than these, a means of edification? No doubt it can be done — all these things can be done — eating can be done — to the glory of God. We have an Apostle's word for it. The perfected Christian can turn all his humblest, most secular, most economic, actions in that direction. But if this is accepted as an argument for popular hymns it will also be an argument for a good many other things. What we want to know is whether untrained communal singing is in itself any more edifying than other popular pleasures. And of this I, for one, am still wholly unconvinced. I have often heard this noise; I have sometimes contributed to it. I do not yet seem to have found any evidence that the physical and emotional exhilaration which it produces is necessarily, or often, of any religious relevance. What I, like many other laymen, chiefly desire in church are fewer, better, and shorter hymns; especially fewer.

The case for abolishing all Church Music whatever thus seems to me far stronger than the case for abolishing the difficult work of the trained choir and retraining the lusty roar of the congregation. Whatever doubts I feel about the spiritual value of the first I feel at least equally about the spiritual value of the second.

The first and most solid conclusion which (for me) emerges is that both musical parties, the High Brows and the Low, assume far too easily the spiritual value of the music they want. Neither the greatest excellence of a trained performance from the choir, nor the heartiest and most enthusiastic bellowing from the pews, must be taken to signify that any specifically religious activity is going on. It may be so, or it may not. Yet the main sense of Christendom, reformed and unreformed, would be against us if we tried to banish music from the Church. It remains to suggest, very tentatively, the ways in which it can really be pleasing to God or help to save the souls of men.

There are two musical situations on which I think we can be confident that a blessing rests. One is where a priest or an organist, himself a man of trained and delicate taste, humbly and charitably sacrifices his own (aesthetically right) desires

and gives the people humbler and coarser fare than he would wish, in a belief (even, as it may be, the erroneous belief) that he can thus bring them to God. The other is where the stupid and unmusical layman humbly and patiently, and above all silently, listens to music which he cannot, or cannot fully, appreciate, in the belief that it somehow glorifies God, and that if it does not edify him this must be his own defect. Neither such a High Brow nor such a Low Brow can be far out of the way. To both, Church Music will have been a means of grace; not the music they have liked, but the music they have disliked. They have both offered, sacrificed, their taste in the fullest sense. But where the opposite situation arises, where the musician is filled with the pride of skill or the virus of emulation and looks with contempt on the unappreciative congregation, or where the unmusical, complacently entrenched in their own ignorance and conservatism, look with the restless and resentful hostility of an inferiority complex on all who would try to improve their taste — there, we may be sure, all that both offer is unblessed and the spirit that moves them is not the Holy Ghost.

These highly general reflections will not, I fear, be of much practical use to any priest or organist in devising a working compromise for a particular church. The most they can hope to do is to suggest that the problem is never a merely musical one. Where both the choir and the congregation are spiritually on the right road no insurmountable difficulties will occur. Discrepancies of taste and capacity will, indeed, provide matter for mutual charity and humility.

For us, the musically illiterate mass, the right way is not hard to discern; and as long as we stick to it, the fact that we are capable only of a confused rhythmical noise will not do very much harm, if, when we make it, we really intend the glory of God. For if that is our intention it follows of necessity that we shall be as ready to glorify Him by silence (when required) as by shouts. We shall also be aware that the power of shouting stands very low in the hierarchy of natural gifts, and that it would be better to learn to sing if we could. If any one tries to teach us we will try to learn. If we cannot learn, and if this is desired, we will shut up. And we will also try to listen intelligently. A congregation in this state will not complain if a good deal of the music they hear in church is above their heads. It is not the mere ignorance of the unmusical that really

Neither the greatest excellence of a trained performance . . . nor the hardest . . . bellowing from the pews, must be taken to signify that any specifically religious activity is going on.

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resists improvements. It is jealousy, arrogance, suspicion, and the wholly detestable species of conservatism which those vices engender. How far it may be politic (part of the wisdom of the serpent) to make concessions to the 'old guard' in a congregation, I would not like to determine. But I do not think it can be the business of the Church greatly to co-operate with the modern State in appeasing inferiority complexes and encouraging the natural man's instinctive hatred of excellence. Democracy is all very well as a political device. It must not intrude into the spiritual, or even the aesthetic, world.

The right way for the musicians is perhaps harder, and I, at any rate, can speak of it with much less confidence. But it seems to me that we must define rather carefully the way, or ways, in which music can glorify God. There is, as I hinted above, a sense in which all natural agents, even inanimate ones, glorify God continually by revealing the powers He has given them. And in that sense we, as natural agents, do the same. On that level our wicked actions, in so far as they exhibit our skill and strength, may be said to glorify God, as well as our good actions. An excellently performed piece of music, as a natural operation which reveals in a very high degree the peculiar powers given to man, will thus always glorify God whatever the intention of the performers may be. But that is a kind of glorifying which we share with 'the dragons and great deeps', with the 'frosts and snows'. What is looked for in us, as men, is another kind of glorifying, which depends on intention. How easy or how hard it may be for a whole choir to preserve that intention through all the discussions and decisions, all the corrections and disappointments, all the temptations to pride, rivalry and ambition, which precede the performance of a great work, I (naturally) do not know. But it is on the intention that all depends. When it succeeds, I think the performers are the most enviable of men; privileged while mortals to honour God like angels, and for a few golden moments, to see spirit and flesh, delight and labour, skill and worship, the natural and the supernatural, all fused into that unity they would have had before the Fall. But I must insist that no degree of excellence in the music, simply as music, can assure us that this paradisaic state has been achieved. The excellence proves 'keenness'; but men can be 'keen' for natural, or even

wicked, motives. The absence of keenness would prove that they lacked the right spirit; its presence does not prove that they have it. We must beware of the naive idea that our music can 'please' God as it would please a cultivated human hearer. That is like thinking, under the old Law, that He really needed the blood of bulls and goats. To which an answer came, 'Mine are the cattle upon a thousand hills', and 'if I am hungry, I will not tell thee.' If God (in that sense) wanted music, He would not tell us. For all our offerings, whether of music or martyrdom, are like the intrinsically worthless present of a child, which a father values indeed, but values only for the intention.¹ ■

[¹Before this article was written, Lewis was invited by the Rev. Mr. Erik Routley to become a member of the panel of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland to whom new hymns are submitted in order that their merit might be assessed. As could be expected, Lewis refused. However, his answers to the request are published (with Mr. Routley's letters) as 'Correspondence with an Anglican who Dislikes Hymns', *The Presbyterian*, VI, No. 2 (1948) pp. 15-20. (The two letters from Lewis, dated 16 July 1946 and 21 September 1946, are printed over the initials 'A.B.')

Music in the Reformed Tradition

—from page 5

different position in the worship service so that it makes sense. Praise anthems can begin a service of worship, and they can even motivate the congregation to more spirited participation in the first hymn. Other anthems are obvious responses to prayer, to the reading of the Word, or to the giving of offerings. Putting such anthems in the proper place can "drive home" the point of what we are doing in our worship. Such usage of anthems can honestly elicit an "Amen" from the congregation.

Congregational singing and choirs vary greatly from church to church today, but this is not a cause for despair. There is no single musical tradition in Reformed churches. Instead, we have the remnants of a succession of musical practices, often borrowed, ever being added to. Those who feel this diversity is a curse attempt to make their favorite practice into an authorized tradition by either lining up on the side of "high church" or "low church." Those who find this diversity a blessing

have used it to welcome a diversity of people into their fellowship, worshipping in unrestricted *koivwóia*, and sharing the Word.

Music can, and often does, divide worshippers, but its purpose is to bring them together.

The liturgy is the shared activity of the people. No other sign brings out this communal dimension so well as singing . . . Many individual voices can actually be fused together, so that they blend and follow the same rhythm, only one voice is heard — that of the group. This brings out a very strong feeling of unity and of belonging.¹⁰ ■

FOOTNOTES

1. Martin Luther, *Works*, vol. 53, p. 62.
2. J. Gelineau, S. J., article in *The Study of Liturgy*, ed. Jones, Wainwright and Yarrod, Oxford Press, New York, 1978, p. 445.
3. John Calvin, *Institutes*, III; 20; 32.
4. Erik Routley, *Church Music and the Christian Faith*, Agape, Carol Stream, Illinois, 1978, p. 137.
5. Calvin, *loc. cit.*
6. A good account of singing in the eighteenth century Reformed churches of America can be found in *A History of Music in New England* by George Hood, published by Wilkins and Carter, Boston, 1846.
7. Millar Patrick, D. D., *Four Centuries of Scottish Psalmody*, Oxford University Press, London, 1949, p. 143.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 141.
9. Calvin, *op. cit.*, III; 20; 31.
10. Gelineau, *op. cit.*, p. 441.

Alum News

Where Oh Where Did They Go?

Some of our alums are missing. They know where they are, but for some reason we do not. If you happen to know where any of these alums are located, please let us know by sending their addresses to the director of alumni and church relations. Thank you.

M.Th. 1968

José-Maria Blanch
Eric Gregory Lemmon

B.D. 1968

Stephen Lim
William H. Walker

M.A.Miss. 1968

David Lloyd Rambo
Wayne Curtis Weld

M.Th. 1969

Kenneth James Harry

B.D. 1969

Robert Harry Lanning

M.R.E. 1969

Michael Alton McCormick

M.A.Psych. 1969

Nikola Boris Andonov
R. Bon Gabriel
William Clinton Pickering

M.A.Miss. 1969

Robert William Hill
J. Stanford Shewmaker
Toshihiro Takami
Hazel Tunstead Watson

M.Th. 1970

David John Williams

Ph.D.Theo. 1970

George Oliver Wood

B.D. 1970

Mark E. Kenoyer, Jr.
John Henry Schroeder
Barbee Lee St. John
Gary Harold Lovejoy

Ph.D. Psych. 1970

Jack Elmo Wright, Jr.

M.A.Miss. 1970

Ebbie C. Smith
Bathineni Venkata
Subbamma
Francis Vincent Tate
Rodney W. Venberg

Alumni Directory

Have friends from Seminary faded out of your picture? We may be able to bring them back into focus with a soon-to-be-released alumni directory. It will help you identify those long- or recently-lost classmates by last name, maiden name, residence, class year and school. In short, it will provide everything you need to make your re-introductions. Watch the mail for more information on this upcoming alumni publication. If you do not wish to have your address included with your name in the directory, please contact the alumni office as soon as possible. ■

Alumni Giving Increases Again

One of the many blessings Fuller receives each year is the generous and growing financial support from its alumni. By the end of February 1982, alumni giving totaled more than \$58,000, almost doubling the amount received at the same time last year. This money will help underwrite Seminary programs and student scholarships, and provide crucial support as the Seminary grows, faculty members are added, and inflation shrinks an already-small dollar.

We are completing our spring alumni "phonathon," which in the past has brought in more than half of annual alumni gifts to the Seminary. We deeply appreciate your response to our calls and your continued support of the ministry which God has given us. ■

Alumni News

The alumni news section of *TN&N* is the primary vehicle for transmitting news of our former students to the Seminary and the rest of the alumni association. In these columns you will read about the significant events — including marriages, births, deaths, publications and new jobs — of many of your former classmates. We fear, however, that we miss much of this vital information. We need you to help us stay on top of all alumni happenings by sending us information that you would like published in a future issue of *TN&N*. Be sure to include the *who, what, when, where* and *why* and we'll do our best to get out the story. Write to the director of alumni and church relations. ■

Placement Opportunities

These churches or organizations have contacted Fuller for assistance in filling vacancies. If you are interested in any of the possibilities please contact Anne Maldoon, Placement Office, Fuller Theological Seminary.

Open Bible College is looking to fill two positions: 1)

Business Administrator and 2) Director of College Relations. For more information contact Dennis M. Schmidt, Academic Dean, 2633 Fleur Drive, Des Moines, Iowa 50321.

Christian Education Director in the Lancaster Presbyterian Church, Lancaster, New York (suburb of Buffalo). The church is committed to worship, nurturing, and reaching out. Areas of responsibility include youth work, teacher administration, counseling and nurturing.

Director of University Ministries in the First Presbyterian Church of Bellingham, Washington. More than 200 students involved weekly. Director is responsible for all activities of the college program, Bible studies, retreats and leadership training. Also will be involved in parish activities such as preaching, counseling and assisting in Sunday worship.

Director of Evangelism for a small church in Boise, Idaho. Starting salary is \$13,000 with benefits. Need some experience in evangelism.

Director of Youth & Christian Education at the First United Methodist Church in Winter Park, Florida. Membership of the church is 1400 with average attendance of 400. This is a church with a vision and the leadership is strongly committed to the Bible as the final authority.

Associate Pastor at the First United Methodist Church in Santa Ana, California. Work will be particularly with young adults, single and married.

Assistant Pastor at the First German Congregational Church of Arvada, Colorado. This is an independent, non-denominational church with average attendance of 500. Responsibilities include coordinating and maintaining a family ministry and assuring spiritual and social growth within the church family.

Campus Minister (part-time) at the First Congregational Church of Riverside (at the University of California). Promote community and Christian experience among students, faculty and administrative staff.

Christian Education Director at the Faith Reformed Church, Portage, Michigan. Will coordinate youth programs, education and study programs for children.

Pastor of Bennet Community Church, Bennet, Nebraska. Congregation is made of youth-oriented people with a broad outlook. Membership is 450.

Associate Pastor of Discipleship and Evangelism at the Bethany Baptist Church, Omaha, Nebraska. Will give leadership to church's ministry of developing spiritual maturity within believers and bringing those outside Christ into fellowship with him and the church.

Pastor at Bethany Baptist Church, American Falls, Idaho, in the heart of a rich agricultural area. Church membership about 80 with total ministry to about 120. Sunday School for all ages, youth clubs.

Editorial

—from page 2

It gratifies us in the symphony hall and it isolates us in our headphones. We should also recognize the power of music in our worship and theology. We probably learn more about theology from music than from any other source, and we certainly remember truths we sing better than those we hear.

Part of my reading for this issue was a recently revised book called *Church Music and the Christian Faith*, by Erik Routley, organist, hymnologist and musicologist at Westminster Choir College at Princeton. One section of the book was especially germane to our study of music. Routley suggests that the ultimate objective of music is not simply to create beautiful, transfiguring and exciting moments, but to contribute to the maturity of the listeners and make them more intensely and meaningfully alive. Routley also suggests that, in accord with the spirit of Jesus, we should not look first for the error in music, but for the creative energy in music and celebrate it.

In all of his suggestions and ideas, Routley calls for creative and disciplined attention by Christian musicians to the two traditions that impinge on them — music and the church. Since each tradition has such a long and well-developed history, it is a demanding thing to be conversant in and true to both.

It is hoped these articles will help you better understand the tradition of music and its potential for worship in the church. Even more, it is hoped this issue will inspire you to exercise and call for the kind of leadership the church needs in this important ministry. ■

Music in Worship . . .

—from page 14

HICKS: I look at that as similar to the way the pastor will have the congregation follow as he reads the Scripture. He could just stand there and read Scripture, but as we in the congregation follow along in that Scripture reading it becomes more personal.

SCHAPER: That's a good analogy.

HICKS: And I think that can apply to the text of an anthem too.

SCHAPER: Do you have any ideas that would help a person to prepare for those occasions when instrumental music is played in the church? Here is a time when no message — at least a Scriptural message — is being presented. What attitude or frame of mind should a person have during these times?

HICKS: Music has been created by God and we should be able to hear God as the creator of this even though there's not a text there. As we listen to the harmonies, as we listen to the sound of a particular instrument, especially the beautiful sounds of an organ, we can relate to that as a creation of God.

BIRD: I like that Roger, because I think that there's been a lot of controversy over this issue. Some people feel that all instrumental music should be a *hymn* tune — something that brings a text to mind. An excess of neutral music or untexted music might be wrong, but I don't limit the area of music as a gift from God to hymn tunes alone. The Psalmist often speaks of a glorious praise offering to God that is just sound, cymbals, drums. ■

We probably learn more about theology from music than from any other source, and we certainly remember truths we sing better than those we hear.

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