Examining contemporary congregational song – beyond sung theology

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ABSTRACT

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What Christians sing as they worship is a focus of considerable attention in the contemporary church and yet it has been a contentious issue at almost every period of Christian history. Since the mid-twentieth century, significant social, cultural, and technological changes, all against a backdrop of increasing global consciousness, have affected the way music functions and the ways opinions about repertoire and performance practices are formed.

The primary focus of this project is the analysis of eight songs composed between 1983 and 2001. The essential question is how musical analysis contributes to a greater understanding of the nature of contemporary congregational song and various performance practices. This project will focus on analysis of harmonic structures as the major element. This will provide a framework from which comparisons of other musical elements can lead to a greater awareness of the issues of music and worship, and of music and theology. Developing a greater understanding of how music works enables more receptive and discerning listening and participation.

The more difficult aspect of congregational song, that of it being not just ‘sung theology’, can be explored to some degree from a clearer understanding of the musical and textual components and their interrelationship. Various writers are contributing significant insights to how music itself provides meaning and thus how the singing of congregational songs contains and conveys meaning. As Don Saliers suggests,

‘(t)he question of meaning in music hinges on the interaction between order, sound, and the range of other senses – visual
kinetic, gestural – it conjoins…. Music is not therefore simply an ornament of something already understood, such as a text.¹

Taking account of a range of perspectives, the analysis and comparison of the songs can contribute to a more constructive critique of contemporary trends and what happens when congregations sing.

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ABBREVIATIONS

CCM  Contemporary Christian Music
CWM  Contemporary Worship Music
CCLI  Christian Copyright Licensing International
TIS  *Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II*
Chapter 1

Introduction and background to the project

In place of the drama of creation, reconciliation and redemption, which is the work of the triune God, another drama is staged. We have a monologue of the soul, or a duologue between the soul and God.¹

What Christians sing as they worship is a focus of considerable attention in the contemporary church and yet it has been a contentious issue during almost every period of Christian history. Since the mid-twentieth century, against a backdrop of increasing global consciousness, significant social, cultural, and technological changes have affected the way music functions and is perceived. Matters of local or regional concern are set in a broader context which can become of particular significance for the wide-ranging Christian church communities and organisations. Music is one such matter.

This project examines the current repertoire and practices of congregational song, the involvement of all participants singing together in a worship setting, in contemporary Australia. The implication that all will be involved has a long history represented extensively in the Hebrew and Christian scriptures and throughout Christian history. The term congregational song will be used to refer to any type of music intended for communal singing in corporate worship.² There are worship settings in which the term is used but in which the conditions do not necessarily encourage a positive communal sense.


Therefore this definition of congregational song does not describe uniform circumstances or practices. The decline of communal singing is noted in the broader cultural context and this has influenced perceptions of congregational singing in church activities. Elizabeth Smith points out that “Australians do not often sing in public”. As this project will consider the repertoire and practices of mainline Anglican and Protestant congregations, it is likely that there is a greater degree of uniformity than if a wider view were to be taken. The implications of this will be explored further in relation to the analysis of the selected song repertoire. The realities of communal congregational singing will also be considered in relation to the performance aspects of worship practices.

The mood for change has been significant throughout the second half of the twentieth century in most areas of life and culture, and the church has not been exempt. The quote at the commencement of this chapter described the changes in hymn texts which Karl Barth had observed and which indicated some of the origins of trends which would become even more pronounced. The broader cultural impetus for change could be described in terms of the “Western cultural revolutions of the 1960s and 1970s centred on reactions against the domination of reason-based duty, against the head-dominated, cold, calculating qualities of the rational”.

Against this background three specific elements which gained momentum from the 1960s can be identified as “liturgical renewal, ecumenical sharing

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and the charismatic movement”.⁶ These influences have been important for music repertoire and practices with strong opinions promoting substantial changes particularly for the worshipping life of Christian communities.

One of the initial responses in this process has been to admit that the English-language Western church needed to “set aside its inherited traditions as irrelevant to the cultural needs and concerns … of non-Christian people in North America”.⁷ In that many aspects of Australian life and culture are influenced by trends and ideas from the northern hemisphere, similar responses have been observed here. There are parts of the mainline churches for which this has become a major issue with important outcomes for congregational song. With the benefit of hindsight it has been observed that “one of the central problems in the worship life of churches today is precisely the fact that so many of our culturally shaped assumptions … go unchallenged and unrefined by the church”.⁸

The past five decades have seen an overwhelming quantity of new song material increasingly available, in various formats, for particular denominations, across denominations, and for local church congregations. This new and varied repertoire features an assortment of alternative terms to the word ‘hymn’ – song, gospel, scripture chorus, chorus, praise and worship, modern hymn, contemporary – all perceived to have varying meanings. It is the intention of this project to consider the current range of song material, not

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necessarily in the detail implied by all these terms. Rather it will be examined more broadly, using categories which speak specifically to the nature and function of the musical forms.

The ways in which new material is accessed have changed significantly over the past fifty years in that printed collections, such as a hymn book, are for many no longer the primary sources of congregational repertoire. The availability of material from online sources has enabled a worldwide repertoire to be accessed more easily. At the same time this can mean repertoire is not assessed as rigorously as has been the case in printed hymn book compilations, particularly since the mid-nineteenth century. The main modern period of hymn book production commenced with the publication of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1861, “by far the most influential hymn book in the English–speaking world”.9 These changes to the manner in which music is disseminated are a result of the state of the music industry and its associated consumer influences, a result not predicted even fifty years ago.

Historically the repertoire of hymn book collections has been presented in notated scores which are read and interpreted as the basic intention of the composers. Musical literacy is essential to this process. A large body of song repertoire is still distributed by this means thus requiring musicians with some basic training, though not necessarily professionals, to read the score and learn their part, and then also teach others. Recent printed collections have also attempted to encourage and support a wider musical literacy, with editions providing the melody for each text implying that this will assist members of the congregation. Song collections are now also more likely to

include chord symbols for guitar or keyboard players to use, indicating a more inclusive practice.

There is now also a quantity of material disseminated by what Kenneth Hull calls “recorded transmission”\footnote{Kenneth Hull, "Music Wars, Neuroscience, and Self Psychology," Liturgy 24, no. 4 (2009): p. 25.} which in this form is part of the music industry and often supported by online resources. This has changed some of the ways in which music is understood. The availability and marketing of the recorded form has resulted in music becoming a commodity, an integral part of material culture.\footnote{Albert Borgmann, Power Failure - Christianity in the Culture of Technology (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press, 2003), p. 31.} While the recorded transmission may seem similar to the ‘oral transmission’ of folk music, the difference here is in the high level of authority attributed to the recorded format. The recorded version – usually in audible or increasingly visual format\footnote{Music is often accessed by means of visual presentations such as are available on “YouTube”.} – remains identical each time it is heard, thus differing significantly from the folk tradition where variations would occur as the song was taken up in new situations.

This produces expectations different from, in many ways, performances of the printed scores of a hymn book, where changing circumstances such as available resources and even musicians’ opinions may influence how the song will be presented. This can result in a wider range of traditions available for performance, one which has accumulated over a longer time span than the fifty years under consideration here. For a local congregation or parish, the level of competence of local musicians and the availability of certain instruments can have influenced particular practices and interpretations. This can also have a bearing on perceptions as to what practices, or even songs,
are considered appropriate and acceptable. Authority here can be assigned to local traditions and conditions and the strength of allegiances to such local practices cannot be underestimated. With songs known primarily from recorded sources this version becomes the authority.

Another cultural factor which has influenced this aspect of presentation of congregational song is the technology now available for data projection, combined with large screens which can then appear to render the hymn book obsolete. This procedure has become increasingly more common in mainline congregations in the past two decades and is regarded as essential for congregations using internet-based repertoire, providing the easiest form for displaying lyrics for congregational song.

As a result, the selection of appropriate music for worship has been the subject of an ongoing and often heated debate since the mid-twentieth century. The debate has focused on this range of song types, the sources used, and the authority of different traditions. The solution at a local congregational level is often considered to be a matter of deciding on preferred styles of music. These can be styles which are perceived to be acceptable to the congregation or used to target a particular demographic for which a worship service is being scheduled. This is one of the critical areas of discussion coming from within the sub-cultures of church groups.\(^\text{13}\)

There is much encouragement in the church growth literature for local congregations to find a niche in the local 'church market'. Part of targeting the selected group is about finding the best match of music to attract and keep the

particular members of that niche congregation.\textsuperscript{14} Attempting to follow the directions of the popular music repertoire is becoming less straightforward with the increasing focus on smaller niche markets.\textsuperscript{15} This can complicate the search for the best musical fit, particularly in respect of generation-based groupings.

Popular writing has referred to this process of deciding on the ‘best music’ as the “worship wars”\textsuperscript{16} with at least one article even declaring an unequivocal win to guitars and the new repertoire, over the organ and the “traditional” repertoire.\textsuperscript{17} The specific consequence is that the scene has become clouded with strong opinions about musical style and presentation, from which assumptions have been made about the nature of worship, and the role of music. Music is often seen primarily as a marketing tool for a local church and even as a means of identifying the presence of God in worship.\textsuperscript{18} Many of the opinions expressed could be classified as coming from within church culture and practice as evidenced in some in-house journal articles.\textsuperscript{19}

This situation is one in which little critique is made beyond matters of individual or specific group preferences. Popularly expressed opinions concerning ‘good’ or ‘bad’ music, appropriate or inappropriate music, are

\textsuperscript{14} Bob Jackson, \textit{The Road to Growth - towards a thriving Church} (London: Church House Publishing, 2005), p. 63.

\textsuperscript{15} Brown, \textit{Inclusive yet discerning: navigating worship artfully}, p. 6.


\textsuperscript{17} Michael S Hamilton and Steve Rabey, “The triumph of the praise songs - How guitars beat out the organ in the worship wars,” \textit{Christianity Today} 43, no. 8 (1999).


\textsuperscript{19} see page 37.
expressed in terms of preferences for specific styles. General characteristics are attributed to these styles, depending on perceptions as to what worship is about. Thus a new influence is present, “a sociological phenomenon: the growing self-empowerment of congregations – at least in some denominations – whereby congregants themselves wish to decide what they will sing.”

As a result it can seem that expressions of taste or preference can in fact become the “arbiter of value.” An even more recent cultural influence is now evident in the newer digital storage devices such as the iPod, which allow for an increasingly individualised and personalised experience of music. This is considered to have implications for how the communal activity of congregational song will be viewed and how repertoire is selected.

The purpose of this project is to explore and analyse a range of the contemporary song repertoire. This is intended to go beyond superficial labeling and analyse what the musical aspects indicate about how congregational song works. The repertoire to be analysed is selected from the period of the last thirty years. The purpose in the first instance is to analyse the musical structures and texts and then to note the ways in which these work together. This analysis can provide a framework in which to make comparisons which can be productive of a greater awareness of the issues of music and worship, and of music and theology. Developing a greater


understanding of how music works enables more receptive and discerning listening and participation.

Analysis of the song materials will provide a way for examining what congregational song can mean and this project will demonstrate that this is a multi-layered issue. The more difficult aspect of congregational song, that of it being not just ‘sung theology’, can be explored to some degree from a clearer understanding of the musical and textual components and their interrelationship. However as Don Saliers suggests,

\[\text{[t]he question of meaning in music hinges on the interaction between order, sound, and the range of other senses – visual kinetic, gestural – it conjoins. … Music is not therefore simply an ornament of something already understood, such as a text.}\]

Because of the multi-layered dimensions that will become evident, this project will not necessarily come to any firm conclusions about ‘good’ or ‘bad’ music. However the purpose of the analysis is to enhance the attempt to develop a more constructive critique of contemporary trends.

The importance of identifying the musical issues is to take the discussion about music – and worship – beyond terms such as ‘traditional’ or ‘contemporary’. These terms have resulted more from oppositional tactics within church sub-cultures rather than from a careful analysis of the factors involved. The tensions between what are considered opposing sides in this debate appear to focus on music styles and performance practices. These tensions are often expressed in ways reminiscent of sectarian debates and divisions, with neither side able to accept the viewpoint of the other.\footnote{Paul Westermeyer, "The Future of Congregational Song," \textit{The Hymn} 46, no. 1 (1995): p. 7.} One of the major reasons for this, as in many other debates, is that the criteria are not

\footnote{Don E Saliers, \textit{Music and Theology} (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), p. 8.}
easily recognised or defined to the satisfaction of all concerned. It is the purpose of this project to explore more substantial criteria in the light of the issues which arise from the musical analysis.

This will entail analysing melodic and harmonic structures and showing how these relate to overall song forms. No matter what the musical style may be, many of the musical elements are the same and this will be a significant factor in comparing a limited but representative range of song examples. Melodic structure will be related to the setting of text. Analysis of texts will examine structure as well as content. Consideration of music and text combined will lead to examination of the many layers of function and meaning. The practical aspects of congregational song can then be reviewed on the basis of analysis and the intended function in the liturgy. The approach used in this project is directed towards the need for “interdisciplinary discussions about the practice of worship” proposed by Witvliet.\textsuperscript{26} It is such an approach that has continued to be absent from many of the investigations of the “worship wars”.

This project will investigate musical repertoire in the English language, selected primarily from \textit{Together in Song} and representing the Protestant and Anglican practices in the Australian context. The reason for omitting current musical practices in the Roman Catholic setting from this discussion is that to a large degree the repertoire used focuses primarily on the Eucharistic service for which there are specific parameters. In Protestant and Anglican settings there is a range of types of service or worship structures. It is in this context that music has effected and been part of significant changes in liturgical practice and content, and in thinking about music and theology.

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In looking at the literature relating essentially to hymnody or congregational song, certain writers stand out as providing a significant level of analysis of the song material itself. While much has been written about the lyrics of congregational song as being a simpler issue to discuss in terms of meaning and theology, there is much more to be understood. However, this project is examining the music as the starting point in order to explore some of the broader dimensions to the meaning of congregational song. Most of the literature considered has been written in North America or the United Kingdom while some specific viewpoints have been developed in the Australian context.

The work of renowned hymnologist Erik Routley covered many aspects of music and the church. His writings specifically on hymnody, although mostly published some forty years ago, still provide insights relevant for consideration in the current context. In particular his approach to the analysis of hymn tunes in *The Music of Christian Hymnody - A study of the development of the hymn tune since the Reformation, with special reference to English Protestantism* explores the way the music contributes to the meaning of the song. His last work, *Christian Hymns Observed*, expands on the notion that “hymn tunes are the folk songs of the Christian faith”.

The significance of Brian Wren’s work is not only in his hymn texts but also in his writing about the nature of congregational song. *Praying Twice: the Music*

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and Words of Congregational Song\textsuperscript{28} presents an extensive analysis of current repertoire and practices which provides a comprehensive background for this project. Similarly comprehensive is the collection of essays edited by Woods and Walrath\textsuperscript{29} which investigates many aspects of both text and music of the ‘praise and worship’ sub-genre of Contemporary Worship Music. This aspect of contemporary congregational song repertoire and practice is relevant to this study of music in the mainline churches.

In considering material written in Australia there is a small range dealing with some specific topics. Brian Fletcher’s recent history of the Australian Hymn Book Committee contributes useful background to the facts relating to the selection of songs for this project.\textsuperscript{30} Macquarie University’s Head of Contemporary Music Studies, Mark Evans, has produced an extensive review and analysis of recent contemporary congregational song from the perspective of its position within the study of popular music or particularly vernacular forms.\textsuperscript{31} Dealing with the specifics of the influence and popularity of Hillsong Music, E H McIntyre’s article “Brand of Choice: Why Hillsong is winning Sales and Souls”\textsuperscript{32} explores these aspects of the megachurch phenomenon. David Cole’s short article\textsuperscript{33} is significant for providing clarity

\textsuperscript{28} Wren.


\textsuperscript{30} Brian H Fletcher, \textit{Sing a new song: Australian hymnody and the renewal of the Church since the 1960s} (Canberra, Australia: Barton Books, 2011).


about the way hymns work in terms of combined text and music, drawing clear connections with the work of Susanne Langer.  

C Michael Hawn has created a unique resource that examines the range of music available from a broad multicultural perspective. Specifically relevant to this project is his examination of “sequential” and “cyclic musical structures” and how these function in worship. The significance of recent writings by Saliers and Begbie is in the adding of new dimensions about how music works and how congregational song might be experienced. Both writers examine a broad range of musical experience in relation to issues of faith and theology.

Referring to the opening quotation from Karl Barth, a lengthy footnote describes what he perceives to be the gradual decline in the lyrics of hymnody over the centuries since Luther’s hymns of Reformation times. The features which Barth highlights are inevitably linked to the philosophical and cultural context of the various ages as his analysis moves through each century. In particular he notes an increasingly subjective hymnody emerging during the eighteenth century: “confession and proclamation have given way to religious poetry”. This progression through the nineteenth century demonstrates ways in which the “objective content” of the hymn, inherited from the Reformation tradition has become more about a “religious inwardness and

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36 Chapter 1, page 1.
37 Barth, p. 254.
moral seriousness”. Barth argues that “the history of the hymn reveals to us the inner secularization which has taken place”.  

This connects to some of the misgivings expressed about contemporary music and practices which appear to some to be condoning the styles of popular music as a product of a secular music industry. While Barth’s overview cannot relate directly to the current situation some seventy years later, it nevertheless establishes the importance of taking a long historical view of the development of hymnody, a point not evident in many recent writings. The placement of today’s congregational song in its historical as well as cultural context has relevance for this project because it brings an essential perspective to the investigation. The texts of congregational song need to be examined in terms of considering a broader context of ideas, particularly of contemporary cultural influences.

Christian Hymns Observed by Erik Routley focuses attention on hymnody or congregational song. Routley’s last book, it provides “an astonishing sweep of commentary, an overview of where we have come from and where we were in the 1980s.” This short essay acknowledges that “what is needed for the improvement of hymnody just now is not exhaustive knowledge but an insight into what happens when people sing them.” Written in 1980, this proves to be a significant statement in the context of what Routley saw at what he considered the end of the twentieth century and in the light of what has eventuated since.

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38 ibid., p. 257.
39 Routley.
41 Routley, Christian Hymns Observed, p. ix.
Routley’s opening chapter makes the case for hymns being “communal song” with “a good deal in common with folk song”.\textsuperscript{42} This provides a significant framework in which to consider current congregational song, as the focus is more on the manner in which the whole song functions. Just as folk songs include those which “survived through many generations and whose origins are buried in mystery”, so too songs which operate in the same way are of more recent and known origins.\textsuperscript{43} In that folk song “celebrates what means most to the folk”\textsuperscript{44} so the way hymns are used and viewed in our current setting demonstrates strong allegiances not just to the song but in a sense to its ‘story’ which includes all those who sing it.

A further significant point made by Routley is that “folk hymnody is community hymnody: it is the folk song of an identifiable religious group – and that it’s the identifiability that matters”.\textsuperscript{45} In reviewing specific streams of folk hymnody through their history in the United Kingdom and North America the effect of strong patterns of identity is found to be associated with certain repertoire. Routley quotes examples of the Welsh hymn tunes, the Appalachian melodies and the Black Spirituals.\textsuperscript{46} Examining the effects of nineteenth century hymnody on that of the early twentieth century has led, in Routley’s view, to what is now “the study of hymnology”.\textsuperscript{47} It also contributes to an understanding of some of the issues of historical context and origins for

\textsuperscript{42} Routley, p. 1.
\textsuperscript{43} ibid., p. 2.
\textsuperscript{44} ibid., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{45} ibid., p. 64.
\textsuperscript{46} ibid., p. 66.
\textsuperscript{47} ibid., p. 67.
today’s church. Such an analysis needs to be extended to include the congregational song of the church in the 21st century.

The term “hymn explosion”, which is acknowledged as Routley’s creation, is first applied to describe the “enormous Anglican hymn-explosion” which was the “result of the Oxford Movement” but also contributed to by “people who were theologically far away from its center”. It is from this intense vitality of 19th century English hymnody ... that the foundations of modern hymnody were laid ... that hymnals took their familiar shape ... far more tunes became known ... that the idea of the hymn as something the lay Christian really possessed was born ... and that the seeds of all the modern congregational sense of hymnody were sown.

One of the critical points for this project is that if the hymn is indeed the “congregation’s folk song”, it has “to have its own tune ... it has to be a community song”. Routley describes this process, admirably assisted by the emergence of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1861, and particularly how this became part of a wider social phenomenon: “everybody was singing hymns”. These developments become pertinent to observations made about the influence today of the hymnody of former times and in particular of the perceptions which surround it.


49 Routley, *Christian Hymns Observed*, p. 56.

50 ibid., p. 57.

51 ibid., p. 58.

52 ibid., p. 55.

53 ibid., p. 59.
An earlier work by Routley, *The Music of Christian Hymnody*, provides a detailed analysis of a significant number of hymn tunes since the first soundings of the Reformation. A total of 208 tunes are included as an appendix and there are references to many more. The Prologue includes an introduction to music analysis with the hymn tune *Hanover* in terms of four musical categories: melody, harmony, rhythm and metre. Also mentioned is a fifth category, the discipline imposed on the tune by the sense of the words to which it is set. This we shall find to be an intricate subject, and we shall find also that the application of this discipline is entirely inconsistent in history; at times it is carefully applied, at other times it is ignored.

The scope of Routley’s analytical survey indicates the value of such a study in its varying historical contexts, both culturally and musically.

The early streams of the Lutheran chorale and the Genevan Psalter influenced English hymnody in different ways at different times. The evolution of congregational participation from unison singing to the provision of harmonies occurred within these different traditions. Musically significant is the fact that while the early melodies were predominantly modal, this evolution demonstrates the shift to what is now known as tonality. In particular, the work of Louis Bourgeois for the Genevan Psalter provides pertinent

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55 ibid., p. 6.

56 ibid., p. 30, 32.

57 ibid., p. 25.

58 Louis Bourgeois: it is believed he lived c. 1510 – c. 1561.
examples of the emergence of melodies based on the common chord and harmonised in four parts. Routley claims Bourgeois is “the architect of the modern hymn tune because he anticipates the principle of “harmonic melody … (and) with this goes the principle of modulation”.\textsuperscript{59} These elements contribute to “the principle of continuous melody carrying an uninterrupted argument from beginning to end and shaped to a climax.”\textsuperscript{60}

Routley’s analysis of the various musical elements across the span of the past 400 years demonstrates the ways in which these have featured at different times, with not always good effect. His description of the “debased coinage of Victorian hymnody”\textsuperscript{61} covers a range of examples illustrating the various ways in which musical elements became redirected. More precise details had already been provided by Routley in \textit{The Church and Music}\textsuperscript{62} concerning the absence of significant counterpoint which lead “the superficial listener to think of music as plain ‘melody and bass’”, along with a new emphasis on melody.\textsuperscript{63} An understanding of tonality also became more simplified, including the “presupposition … that ‘major’ is normal and ‘minor’ is abnormal”.\textsuperscript{64} These factors further illustrate some of the perceptions surrounding the repertoire under consideration in this project and the need to analyse the elements of contemporary congregational song.

\textsuperscript{59} Routley, \textit{The Music of Christian Hymnody}, p. 33.

\textsuperscript{60} ibid., p. 33.

\textsuperscript{61} ibid., p. 134.


\textsuperscript{63} ibid., p. 175.

\textsuperscript{64} ibid., p. 176.
A collection of essays in memory of Erik Routley includes John Wilson’s “Looking at Hymn Tunes: the Objective Factors.” Publication of this volume occurred at the beginning of the period under consideration here, the early 1980s. This essay by Wilson is significant for this project in that it outlines ways of analysing and evaluating hymn-tunes. There are indications in the opening paragraph concerning opinions being expressed about hymn-tunes, of subjective assessments about what one might ‘like’, while Wilson is looking for more objective criteria.

“Two broad headings ... are those of ‘singability’ and ‘memorability’.” Both these characteristics resonate with Routley’s assertions about hymns and folk music. Thus Wilson examines four elements of any tune: melodic outline, rhythm, harmony, and structure. The significance of the background of English folksong is seen in his comments about the influences of the pentatonic scale in hymn-tunes. His comments about the vocal range of melodies, particularly the use of climax, or ‘summits’, can be applied in the analysis that is the core of this project.

Wilson’s analysis of the harmonic structure of hymns takes into account that, over the centuries, many tunes have in fact come from traditions of unaccompanied singing. He considers harmony a “resource” to achieve

66 ibid., p. 123.
67 ibid., p. 126.
68 ibid., p. 129.
69 ibid., p. 137.
70 ibid., p. 140.
the best effect for the hymn-tune and the experience of singing. In looking at the structure of hymn-tunes, Wilson notes that “the appeal of the Structure of the tune as a whole, will be largely subconscious, but is no less important”.\textsuperscript{71} This point indicates a sense of the approach of this project which will examine many issues that often go unnoticed in the singing but which are critical to the effectiveness of the experience.

Brian Wren’s extensive work, \textit{Praying Twice: the Music and Words of Congregational Song}\textsuperscript{72} is arguably the most extensive examination of the topic in the timespan under consideration. The primary focus is on congregational song, taking a viewpoint from across biblical history, and thousands of years of church history through to the present. His claim that “congregational song is an indispensable part of Christian public worship”\textsuperscript{73} is worked out in a thorough analysis of current repertoire and practices. Congregational song is not just words and music and what it is can be explored from the saying attributed to St Augustine: “Whoever sings (to God in worship), prays twice.”\textsuperscript{74} Wren’s book explores the nature and function of congregational song with the primary concern as to its place in Christian worship.

Chapter One is entitled “Through all the Changing Scenes of life: Glimpses of Congregational Song”. In this Wren constructs vignettes of congregational singing working in reverse through history, from 1970 back through the centuries to the first Christian century and beyond to the worship practices of

\textsuperscript{71} ibid., p. 141.
\textsuperscript{72} Wren.
\textsuperscript{73} ibid., p. 2.
\textsuperscript{74} ibid., p. 1.
ancient Israel. This is not a journey with which many are familiar but it asks two relevant questions: “What did the people sing congregationally in worship?” and “How did people experience the songs they sang?” These questions are significant for this project in that song analysis will examine how the structure of music combined with text works to create that experience.

Wren’s work is a comprehensive exploration of many aspects of the current world of congregational song against the background of over two thousand years of communal song. Wren’s definition of congregation song is significant:

anything sung by a group of people assembled to worship God, not as a presentation to some other group, but as a vehicle for their worship. The content, musical style, and liturgical function of such songs can be quite varied, but if it is group singing, community singing, it is congregational song.76

From this definition Wren’s view of congregational song is all-inclusive and the range of criteria by which he explores and evaluates a wide range of material encourages a critical look at this repertoire and the necessary music practices.

Outlining some of the ways in which congregational song has ebbed and flowed and while “recovered and reinvigorated”77 by the Reformation, Wren analyses reasons for the decline in congregational singing in recent decades. He analyses the many ways in which music and song operate, its cultural contexts, possible meanings, philosophical function in time, and its

75 ibid., p. 4.
76 ibid., p. 48.
77 ibid., p. 50.
autonomous yet ambiguous power." Wren asserts that "congregational song is in trouble … because our culture undermines it through social mobility, performance-oriented popular music, electronic discouragement, and over-amplification." 

In discussing the meaning of congregational song Wren states that this meaning "lies in the appeal of its music … (that) the tune has its own work to do, not independently of its lyrics, but autonomously in relation to it." Furthermore this is a reminder "that congregational song, like church music in general, is a functional art." Thus Wren sees it as "necessary to examine the relationship between tunes and lyrics", "to renegotiate the balance of power between tune and text" and suggests several general principles. This is a key issue for this project.

Wren’s analysis of the world of Contemporary Worship Music demonstrates "its variety of meanings and styles." He acknowledges that although the term "contemporary" has been taken over with a specific meaning for this context, he works with the repertoire which has resulted. In Chapter Four there is a useful and careful analysis of the way contemporary popular music works, its embedding in our culture, the issues of taste, and the matter of sacred and secular. He examines the problems of inculturation and the need

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78 Wren, p. 66.
79 ibid., p. 53.
80 ibid., p. 68.
81 ibid., p. 76.
82 ibid., p. 77.
83 ibid., p. 68.
84 ibid., p. 131.
to be culturally educated.\textsuperscript{85} Wren’s view is that “using contemporary worship music is both evangelical opportunity and evangelical obligation”\textsuperscript{86} yet it should be given a “critical welcome”, taking into account the performance practice issues and the approaches necessary to its use.\textsuperscript{87}

However in taking a positive view of Contemporary Worship Music Wren makes the important point that in the oppositional debates about ‘contemporary’ and ‘traditional’, the so-called ‘traditional’ hymn repertoire does not represent the world of classical music which may be seen as opposite to that of popular or pop music.\textsuperscript{88} Wren’s examination of what is ‘contemporary’ is significant for this project. He outlines his conclusion that “the biggest problem with contemporary worship music is not the music, but the lyrics that come with it”\textsuperscript{89}. As a writer of hymn texts, Wren’s attention to the matter of “male-dominance God-language” is encouraging of “a careful scrutiny to the lyrics”\textsuperscript{90} as well as the music.

While the main theme of this book is the lyrics of congregational song the thorough analysis also takes account of the music to which the lyrics are set. However no detailed analysis of musical structures is included. The matters of meaning and significance in congregational song become more complex with the recognition that the music of a song “has its own autonomous meaning

\textsuperscript{85} Wren, p. 157.
\textsuperscript{86} ibid., p. 158.
\textsuperscript{87} ibid., p. 161.
\textsuperscript{88} ibid., p. 159.
\textsuperscript{89} ibid, p. 166
\textsuperscript{90} ibid., p. 166
and emotional impact” and that increasingly in our contemporary culture, music can “override the lyrics”.\(^91\)

In the final chapter Wren explores further the implications of music and text for the way theology is done through worship, through music. For this purpose he explores a wider definition of theology and ways of knowing that include the nonverbal and he looks at how theology can be done through music, drama, and the visual arts.\(^92\) Overall the background of Wren’s work provides a significant framework where the “matrix of meaning, namely, the interplay between the context in which the song is sung, the melody chosen, and its tempo, harmonization, and accompaniment style” can be explored.\(^93\)

*The Message in the Music – studying Contemporary Praise and Worship*\(^94\) is a collection of essays analysing the repertoire of what is generally known as “praise and worship” music or Contemporary Worship Music. The editors, Robert Woods and Brian Walrath, are both practitioners and academics in the field of CWM. They have brought together eleven writers who each analyse one aspect of this repertoire. What is particularly interesting for this project is the fact that the 77 songs comprising the sample constitute the ‘top 25’ songs from 1989 to 2005 listed on the Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) website.\(^95\) CCLI is the organisation which handles licence fees for royalties of songs reproduced for worship. This has become a significant service for churches using a variety of song repertoire from a number of

\(^91\) Wren, p. 168.

\(^92\) ibid., p. 364.

\(^93\) Dwight Vogel, notes taken at a presentation at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Evanston, Illinois, July 1993; quoted in Wren, ibid., p. 79.

\(^94\) Woods and Walrath, eds.

\(^95\) http://www.ccli.com/Support-LicenseCoverage/Top25Lists.aspx
sources rather than a printed hymnal where the editors have usually attended to matters of copyright.

This organisation operates in North America but also in Australia (and elsewhere) and churches with licences are required to maintain records of all material used. This data is sampled by CCLI twice each year and lists are then compiled of all songs used. This list then reveals which songs have received greatest use. In this way the ‘top 25’ songs can be listed on the website. Woods and Walrath indicate in their introduction that there are currently over 150,000 songs listed for use under this agreement. The lists used for this survey were from churches in the United States of America and these “yielded 825 potential songs to review (but) … only 77 different songs appeared between 1989 and 2005” as comprising the top 25 over the fifteen year period. Thus each chapter’s author uses these songs for analysis according to a specified theme.

This data reveals that in spite of the abundance of songs available only a comparatively small number actually register as most used. It is also significant to note that while there is an assumption about CWM being in contemporary popular music styles, many of the 77 songs are from earlier decades and are accordingly examples of simpler, and in some sense, more dated musical styles, yet still in use. By referring to the current top 25 list for the United States some ten songs from the 77 are still in the top 25 up to seven years later:

96 Woods and Walrath, p. 18.
97 ibid., p. 19.
98 CCLI website as cited above, list for February 2012.
This indicates some ways in which this sample is a very eclectic one and this is explored further in the various analyses in this collection of essays.

The overall approach of the writers assembled by Woods and Walrath is particularly significant for this project in that analyses of songs are included rather than reference to examples within a broader, more general critique. The 10 chapters provide a comprehensive examination of many aspects of CWM. However even with that degree of detail what is lacking is a holistic approach where the various elements are examined in terms of what the total effect for any one song might be. Thus what is crucial to this project and to an effective critique is the consideration of the interplay of different aspects or musical elements such as text, and melody, and form.

The book is divided into two sections, the first seven chapters focusing on the content of the lyrics, while chapters 8 – 10 focus on musical content and styles. In the various chapters examining the lyrics, each takes one specific theme such as “to what extent do the songs facilitate praying and worshipping

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the Triune God?”100 Other themes include the ideas of the American romantic ideal expressed through CWM, issues of righteousness and justice, the exploration of pain and suffering, and the mission of the church.101 Some aspects of these themes will contribute to the consideration this project will give later to the lyrics of congregational song.

In chapter 8, Bert Polman deals with a major concern for congregational song of any style or genre, that of its practical suitability for communal singing. The chapter is titled “Praise the name of Jesus: are all praise and worship songs for the congregation?”102 In setting the parameters for this analysis, Polman provides an interesting explanation of CWM, as being a “broad category of church music” of which the largest group “are those known as Praise and Worship (P-W) songs, often associated with praise teams as primary leaders.” Furthermore with its roots in “artist-oriented Contemporary Christian Music (CCM), P-W music has swept through Western Christianity since the early 1970s and quickly has become a global worship phenomenon”.103

Each of the writers tends to use their own categories for the various types of CWM. For example, in Polman’s examination of the 77 songs he eliminates from the list those which he does not consider authentic P-W.104 These criteria may seem arbitrary such as the song being composed or having


101 Woods and Walrath, p. 22.

102 Bert Polman, "'Praise the Name of Jesus': Are all praise and worship songs for the congregation?," Woods and Walrath, p.130.

103 ibid., p. 127.

104 ibid., p. 130.
copyright before what is generally considered the emergence of the genre – for example, “This is the day”. Also “White gospel”, “modern classic hymnody”, or arrangements of classic hymns are eliminated. With the remaining 65 songs the analysis focuses on melodic range, rhythms, features of the instrumental accompaniments and formal structures. The final analysis results in 42 songs being considered suited to congregational singing.

The melodies of the 77 songs are analysed in chapter 9 with five extremely detailed criteria. While many of the specifics are familiar to students of music composition, some apply only to what is recognised as a feature of popular music idioms, such as the “hook”. Some conclusions are based on an appreciation of a particular function or context for this repertoire where certain emotional moods or responses are considered desirable.

A similar sense of a specific context is evident in chapter 10, which is a survey of the musical styles from a historical perspective. The songs are grouped “into decades based on copyright dates” although two songs are found to have inaccurate dates and are excluded from this chapter’s considerations.

105 ibid., p. 132.
106 ibid., p. 131.
107 ibid., p. 134.
109 ibid., p. 142.
111 ibid., p. 153.
This approach relies on certain stereotyped features within the range of musical elements of “rhythm, melody, harmony, instrumentation, texture, and form and ... how they were expressed during each decade.”\textsuperscript{112} While more than one style may be present in any one decade it is asserted that there is usually one predominant style.\textsuperscript{113} This is not necessarily a productive way to examine what influences are operating on the development of musical styles.

This results in the observations that until the 1990s “much of CWM … is still lagging stylistically behind the contemporary popular music of its day” but “there are signs that it is catching up.”\textsuperscript{114} However it is in the 1990s that Brady notes that CWM “had finally come of age; the majority of the composers … were actually writing worship songs in the current musical styles of the day.”\textsuperscript{115} These styles could be represented by “Shout to the Lord” by Hillsong’s Darlene Zschech which is analysed in this project in Chapter 4. Since the turn of this century it is most likely that the field is characterised by increasing diversity\textsuperscript{116} - this diversity is already present in the range of material considered in this collection of essays.

The concluding chapter by well-known writer John D Witvliet\textsuperscript{117} provides a summary, review, and recommendations regarding the previous chapters.

\textsuperscript{112} Brady, p. 154.
\textsuperscript{113} ibid., p. 155.
\textsuperscript{114} ibid., p. 160.
\textsuperscript{115} ibid., p. 161.
\textsuperscript{116} ibid., p. 162.

The significance for this project comes not only from the analysis of the songs but in what is omitted. There is little attempt to consider holistically how the music works, although this is finally referred to by Witvliet in this last chapter.

Witvliet outlines some possible future directions for “scholarship, songwriting and public worship”\textsuperscript{118} and explains what he terms an “implicit balanced-diet thesis”.\textsuperscript{119} Compared to an edited hymn book collection the “vast majority of contemporary music publications offer songs that are mostly alike, with no attempt to sort them by theological themes or corresponding liturgical actions”.\textsuperscript{120} A significant observation is that this mostly homogenous situation is contributed to by the means in which this repertoire is disseminated.\textsuperscript{121} Witvliet’s emphasis is on a multi-faceted approach to the ongoing challenges of these aspects of congregational song. This will be born out in other ways in this project.

Overall this collection of essays makes significant progress in assessing contemporary praise and worship repertoire but there is still much to consider and assess beyond this specific category.

In a similar vein \textit{New Harmonies - Choosing Contemporary Music for Worship} by Terri Bocklund McLean focuses on the CWM repertoire for congregational use. Her claim is that “music is the most definitive expression of the

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
  \item Brady, p. 167.
  \item ibid. p. 171.
  \item ibid., p. 171.
  \item ibid., p. 171.
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contemporary or alternative worship experience.” The aim of her study is to develop and demonstrate the use of four “filters”, a set of criteria which will assist in selecting and effectively using contemporary worship songs. A specific point scale is developed for the filters of “assessing theology, matching our music to our mission, evaluating the songwriting, and plugging our music into our worship.” The straightforward approach identifies “lyric content (as)… the single most important factor in determining which songs we use in worship.”

Chapter 4 outlines “Filter Three: Evaluating the Songwriting” with examples available on an accompanying CD-ROM. The ideas in this chapter demonstrate the attitudes to situations in which only CWM is used for worship. Useful analysis is provided as to the elements of song form, melody, harmony, and lyrics and these are the basis for using the “filter” to evaluate new material for a congregation. McLean uses the phrase “highest and best use” as an overall guide to ensure songs contribute effectively to the flow of worship. Significantly the songs are related to discussion of the context or form of worship that will be used. With a focus totally on CWM there is little consideration of traditional hymnody other than as a comparison. This approach demonstrates the specific sub-cultural nature of this repertoire, particularly with its focus on worship leaders, their skills and roles.

123 ibid., p. 10.
124 ibid., p. 10.
125 ibid., p. 13.
126 ibid., p. 60.
In *Music and Theology*,\(^{127}\) Don Saliers’ contribution to the discussion about worship, theology and the arts takes a broader approach, hoping to “show how music may also be a key to the understanding of theology”.\(^{128}\) This approach goes beyond the usual considerations of melody and text:

That there is theology in hymn texts is obvious. What is less obvious is what kind of theology this may be said to be. Even less obvious is how musical settings contribute to the theological sense of the text.\(^{129}\)

Saliers’ commentary on several hymns takes into account the combination of melody, harmony, text and form in achieving the whole purpose of the song. This is the style of analysis used in this project. Saliers comments on the need for “a reconsideration of the primary role that sung theology – as prayer, proclamation, and imaginative exploration of religious belief – has in religious communities.”\(^{130}\) This project is exploring this possibility that ‘sung theology’ is not just the idea of melody carrying words but also what music says theologically by virtue of its existence and function in worship.

Saliers draws on the work of Jeremy Begbie and his proposal that “the study of music enriches theological thinking about basic Christian doctrines”.\(^{131}\) Begbie’s extensive explorations provide a basis for considering the whole effect of the repertoire of congregational song. In particular the matters of “music’s intense intertwining with time” combine with music also being embedded in other aspects of the “sonic order” – “sound-producing materials,

\(^{127}\) Saliers.
\(^{128}\) ibid., p. vii.
\(^{129}\) ibid., p. 35.
\(^{130}\) ibid., p. 40.
\(^{131}\) Saliers, p. 12.
sound waves, the human body”.\textsuperscript{132} This takes the discussion to a number of levels while investigating musical meaning in the experience of song.

In considering the musical situations within Australian churches there have mostly been brief descriptive pieces or observations made about the practices and attitudes towards hymnody or congregational song. A substantial and recent work by historian and Anglican Brian Fletcher, \textit{Sing a new song – Australian hymnody and the renewal of the church since the 1960s}\textsuperscript{133} outlines the work of the Australian Hymn Book Committee. This has occurred over more than four decades as two editions of the collection have been published. This book is based on the records of the committee as it worked through the processes of not only selecting material but also of playing a key role in the rise and spread of ecumenism in Australia. In setting out the details of this process the writer draws attention to the importance of hymnody,

the fact that they are sung, rather than spoken, raises questions about music, which embeds itself deeply into the minds and hearts of worshippers. Indeed it is the combination of words and music that give hymns their unique force as a form of spiritual enrichment.\textsuperscript{134}

This book provides background information and context for this project in that most of the repertoire to be examined is taken from the second edition of this hymn book.

Macquarie University’s Head of Contemporary Music Studies, Mark Evans\textsuperscript{135}, has provided the most significant body of work to date about Australian

\begin{footnotesize}
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    \item Fletcher.
    \item ibid., p. vi.
    \item Evans.
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congregational song. He writes from his experiences of worship in Sydney Anglican churches and in churches like Hillsong during the last decade of the twentieth century. His academic study of popular music underpins his intention to locate “contemporary Christian music within the more general discourses on popular music.”\textsuperscript{136} Hence this book, \textit{Open Up the Doors – Music in the Modern Church}, highlights issues of sacred and secular from the viewpoint of allowing popular music styles to be used in worship. In this context his work is focused on the vernacular production of music, “music of the everyday”\textsuperscript{137} and its importance in the lives of those who experience it in their particular worship settings.\textsuperscript{138} The title phrase, “open up the doors”\textsuperscript{139}, refers both to the blessings of joining with the heavenly chorus but also of opening church music practices to the influence of the outside world, and particularly to a process of “academic critique and rigour.”\textsuperscript{140}

Evans’ contribution to the development of a critique then needs to be taken up with a wider frame of reference. Like many other writers, the discussion of music and hence worship occurs mainly within a designated sub-culture which effectively compares examples within a sub-genre. For Evans this is music which he calls “contemporary forms of congregational song.”\textsuperscript{141} The critique which he wishes to apply is a worthwhile one in terms of the nature of Contemporary Worship Music, that of finding its place in the studies of contemporary popular music. Where it is not relevant to this project is in the

\textsuperscript{136} ibid., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{137} ibid., p. 12.
\textsuperscript{138} ibid., p. 13.
\textsuperscript{139} ibid., p. 3; this is a quotation from the song “Did You Feel the Mountains Tremble?” by Martin Smith (1995; EMI Christian Music Publishing)
\textsuperscript{140} ibid., p. 3.
\textsuperscript{141} ibid., p. 87.
statement of Evans’ view that the music repertoire produced by such as Hillsong Music Australia could be considered to represent “the sound of Australian Christianity.” It is important for this project to recognise and consider the broader range of repertoire which is used in many churches. In addition it could be noted that much of the repertoire which Evans treats as congregational song can seem to be more soloistic and performance-based than communal, as will be discussed.

Mark Evans’ work includes a degree of analysis of the repertoire within the extensive range of material under consideration. In particular he examines the “theomusicological frameworks for congregational song analysis”. While this includes examination of the usual musical elements of melody, harmony, rhythm, structure, dynamics, texture and timbre, Evans draws on ideas specific to the study of popular music. These include references to “the perception of the musical work … and to the esthetic level of operation (which) refers to the experience and perception of music by the listener/audience.”

This affirms the importance of context in a broader consideration of how the song repertoire works.

Evans’ analysis of the theological content of the lyrics can provide some comparisons with this project. However the categories of song listed reveal a methodology located almost exclusively within the ambit of use of the Pentecostal or charismatic churches – song-types are categorized as “anointing, body unity, call to worship, credal, holiness, judgment, salvation”,

142 Evans, p. 93.
143 ibid., p. 110.
144 ibid., p. 112.
to name only some.\textsuperscript{145} The analysis provides examples of how effective the various songs may be with attention to particular popular stylistic features. Throughout, Evans is making observations as to the effectiveness of the genre in terms of local practices and the areas neglected in lyrics being sung, particularly relating to “social justice … and judgement”\textsuperscript{146} Overall Evans expresses alarm at the lack of diversity within this repertoire\textsuperscript{147} which will be pertinent to the assessment of the songs being analysed in this project.

Amongst other Australian writings is a short in-house assessment, \textit{Brand of Choice: Why Hillsong is Winning Sales and Souls}. This focuses on the repertoire and practices of Hillsong, Australia’s most noted mega-church.\textsuperscript{148} Through a survey of Hillsong’s worship practices and music repertoire, McIntyre highlights some of the ways in which contemporary music styles and products are essential to Hillsong’s aims to “enhance religious experience”.\textsuperscript{149} This research is significant for developing an understanding of the role and nature of this mega-church in Australia, particularly through its music. The use of this repertoire in mainstream denominational settings could be well-informed by this work in that it shows insights into the influence of the principles of the music industry. It also reveals some of the assumptions now made about the experience of music in worship which connect with some of the analysis in this project.

\textsuperscript{145} Evans, p. 114.
\textsuperscript{146} ibid., p. 160.
\textsuperscript{147} ibid., p. 164.
\textsuperscript{148} McIntyre.
\textsuperscript{149} ibid., p. 190.
The importance of how music works in relation to text is summarised well in a short article by David Cole\textsuperscript{150} drawing on the work of Susanne Langer.\textsuperscript{151} Pivotal to any discussion of hymns or songs of any genre is an understanding that “music certainly brings added depth and meaning to the words, but it can bring a multitude of additional meanings precisely because it is music and not words.”\textsuperscript{152}

This is significant as the selected songs are analysed, not just musically, but in terms of how they function for a congregation and how they are perceived. This is one of the critical issues for this project in terms of how or whether a final assessment can be made about how a particular song works and what it can mean.

In considering this need for critique Frank Burch Brown’s writings on aesthetics and the arts in worship make a significant contribution to what he terms “finding a compass” in the middle of a “sea of options”.\textsuperscript{153} Published in 2009, this more recent volume, \textit{Inclusive yet discerning: navigating worship artfully}, takes account of particular trends, such as the phenomenon in many congregations to be looking to “catch the new wave”.\textsuperscript{154} Brown analyses the range of responses that he labels as “four ineffective habits in approaching art and worship” and then proceeds to explore the role of the arts in worship that acknowledges its “potential joy and transformative role”.\textsuperscript{155}

\textsuperscript{150} Cole.

\textsuperscript{151} Langer.

\textsuperscript{152} Cole, p. 17.

\textsuperscript{153} Brown, \textit{Inclusive yet discerning: navigating worship artfully}, p. 3.

\textsuperscript{154} ibid., p. xiv.

\textsuperscript{155} ibid., p. 11.
Brown’s pursuing of a way for worshipping Christians to accept a greater diversity in their use of the arts is initially confronting to the fact that “[t]astes in music and art – especially in worship – reflect and create genuine differences, culturally reinforced.”\(^{156}\) In addition to this issue Brown describes how “conflict between various norms for church art” arises from the ways in which different personnel involved in the selection of art and music “mix various kinds of criteria.”\(^{157}\)

Significant for the approach taken with this project is the observation “that, for several centuries now, the church has rarely made full and ‘inspired’ use of the arts at their best.”\(^{158}\) This loss of connection, particularly with contemporary developments in the arts has not been assisted by the emergence of ‘Contemporary’ Worship Music – in its broadest sense – as the world of the popular arts has been dissipated by commercial influences and interests.\(^{159}\) This has the effect of leaving church music even further from what might be considered mainstream.

Thus, Brown argues for a development of “ecumenical” taste\(^{160}\) which becomes a key point of view after considering the analysis of the song repertoire selected for this project.

\(^{156}\) Brown, p. 21.
\(^{157}\) ibid., p. 39.
\(^{158}\) ibid., p. 40.
\(^{159}\) ibid., p. 7
\(^{160}\) ibid., p. 61.
Chapter 3

Introduction to methodology: categories of songs

Hymns are delightful and dangerous things …
songs for unmusical people to sing together.\(^\text{161}\)

The development of congregational song over the past thirty years in particular has resulted in a focus on the matter of identifying categories or ascribing descriptors to various types of music. This chapter will explore ways of categorising congregational song and explain two categories to be used for this project.

One result of the hymn explosion in its various forms was the use of the term ‘song’ as opposed to ‘hymn’, thus demonstrating to some degree assumptions as to what a hymn is. The origin of the term as a “song of praise or adoration of God”\(^\text{162}\) predates the Christian era and Christian history records many and various types of hymns – “psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs”\(^\text{163}\). Early records indicate the singing of canticles which has also been a feature of different parts of the post-Reformation church.

A greater variety of music for worship has emerged in this time span and it was noted by one commentator in 1990 that the word song could include “the Sankey chorus, the contributions of the charismatic movement, the folk-songs … from the Iona Community, and the Taizé music … to name but some”.\(^\text{164}\)


\(^{163}\) Ephesians 5: 19.

The 1980s also saw “an avalanche of ... music-books”, for example Mission Praise (1983) and Songs of Fellowship (1985) in the United Kingdom.\textsuperscript{165} Significant also was the emergence of published material from Graham Kendrick as an important influence here in Australia. It was also observed that hymnody referred to as ‘traditional’ was “by no means static”\textsuperscript{166} and that traditional and music in more popular styles were both represented within the expanding repertoire.

In the current context it is more useful to adopt the term “congregational song”\textsuperscript{167} as including any material used for communal singing in Christian worship. Wren details some seven functional genres of congregational song in hymns, choruses, rounds, refrains, chant, ritual song, and spirit singing.\textsuperscript{168} These genres are “differentiated by musical idiom as much as by their lyrics”.\textsuperscript{169} In addition these genres can be viewed differently according to the worship context and how the terms are used.

Underlying these various genres is the influence of what is referred to as ‘popular music’, although “there has been a consistent time-lag between a musical fashion in the secular world and its adoption by Christian music”.\textsuperscript{170} The significant difference in the 1950s and 60s, for the beginning of the period of the hymn explosion, was the cultural context of social upheaval and in particular the emergence of a noticeable youth culture. The major implication

\textsuperscript{165} Wilson-Dickson, p. 241.
\textsuperscript{166} Dunstan, p. 25.
\textsuperscript{167} Wren.
\textsuperscript{168} Wren, p. 100 – 106.
\textsuperscript{169} Wren, p. 100.
\textsuperscript{170} Wilson-Dixon, p. 240.
for music, both inside and outside the church has been the pervasiveness of "popular mass culture" which results in strong opinions about musical preferences. During the 1960s Erik Routley was attempting to make sense of what he termed "alien forms of music" against the background of previous centuries of hymn repertoire. At the beginnings of the "hymn explosion" Routley observed that "churchmen's reactions to alien forms of music are often conditioned by social forces which are insufficiently recognised for what they are". Insufficient critique may be the result of many factors but perhaps not least the seeming diversity of the new material which was being created. The lack of suitable criteria or categories by which to assess the changes is being reviewed in this project.

Defining a particular style or genre of music as sacred or secular is sometimes used in this context. However, the significant issue here is that the gradual process of the inclusion of popular-based music styles in worship has not been as a resolution of the sacred – secular dichotomy but as a part of the quest for relevant forms of expression in worship.

The most prominent goal of many musicians ... is to provide music in the musical and textual language of their people, people whose sensibilities are shaped primarily by popular and commercial forms of music.

172 Wren, p. 134.
174 Routley, p. 108.
One category used by some writers is that of “Christian music”.\(^{176}\) Wilson-Dickson describes his extensive study as “The Story of Christian Music - from Gregorian chant to Black Gospel…an illustrated to guide to all the major traditions of music in worship”. Such a study includes large-scale works which are settings of liturgical or scriptural texts but not envisaged for public worship. At the same time the history of hymnody is included. This is clearly still within what has been referred to as the Western music tradition. The use of the term ‘Christian’ music in this sense can refer to a broad range of music with texts of Christian origin, not just hymnody. However it doesn’t necessarily imply a clear definition of music which might be regarded as Christian.

‘Christian’ is also applied and specifically integral to the term ‘Contemporary Christian Music’, known as CCM and recognised as “inspirational music”.\(^{177}\) It is essentially in its North American origins a “Nashville-based Christian pop, rock and worship music industry” with recordings “released by overtly Christian recording companies”.\(^{178}\) As contemporary rock or pop music, this phenomenon has arisen from a range of activities of the 1960s and 70s including the American Jesus movement, “intended to serve Christian evangelism, apologetics and entertainment”.\(^{179}\) By the end of the 1980s CCM was a well-established industry\(^{180}\) and with major artists extending their influence, including to Australia.


\(^{177}\) Dowley, p. 231.

\(^{178}\) ibid., p. 231.

\(^{179}\) ibid., p. 232

\(^{180}\) ibid., p. 232.
‘Contemporary Worship Music’, CWM, is a major category within the CCM industry which has gained widespread support in Australia as well as worldwide. Some of its features have been alluded to in the materials reviewed in Chapter 2. The use of CWM has been facilitated by the ready availability of data projection technology and specifically designed software, primarily used in Pentecostal churches but also in some mainline churches.

The use of the word ‘contemporary’ cannot realistically be debated other than to accept that it has been part of the labeling of the products of this Christian music industry for at least two decades. There is within the Contemporary Worship Music category further styles and types; Webb’s classification defines six categories: “country, jazz and blues, rock’n’roll, contemporary liturgical, praise and worship, and alternative”. ¹⁸¹ The greater challenge has come from the term contemporary also being used by mainline churches to describe styles of worship services where CWM is the dominant musical style.

The word ‘traditional’ has come to prominence in discussions and debates about music and worship.

Years ago, it would have been unthinkable that two adjectives, contemporary and traditional, would so thoroughly captivate the imagination of the church... No other words dominate the worship landscape like contemporary and traditional. ¹⁸²

These two terms tend to be considered as opposite to each other in this process and have generated an excessive level of emotion and division in

¹⁸¹ Richard Webb as quoted in Wren, p. 131.
certain parts of the mainline church. It is important to recognise that “much of the polarization stems from the ambiguity of the terms themselves”.\(^{183}\)

In its simplest form of such current usage the word ‘traditional’ refers to hymn repertoire prior to the mid-twentieth hymn explosion, or to refer to hymns as opposed to songs. Strong opinions have developed often accrediting lower standards to one or the other. Lionel Dakers in reviewing the changes in English hymnody was writing in 1999 that

> in the less traditional arena we are today confronted with an enormous groundswell of choruses and worship songs, many of them undoubtedly the work of well-intentioned people, but so often deficient in basic literary and musical skills.\(^{184}\)

The two terms could be used to demonstrate differences such as ‘older traditional hymns’ being more doctrinally focused with contemporary music primarily stressing feelings.\(^{185}\)

From another viewpoint, ‘traditional’ has come to mean what is negative about certain worship practices and its music. A significantly held opinion is that traditional hymns represent the classical music tradition\(^{186}\) which is considered no longer useful for current worship practices. Strong opinions have been expressed that artistic forms used in worship need to be culturally relevant and that “classical music – and traditional church music in general – is a relic

\(^{183}\) ibid., p. 284.

\(^{184}\) Routley and Dakers, *A Short History of English Church Music*, p. 125.


of a dying past”. Thus the use of the word ‘traditional’ has resulted in confusion about high art and aesthetics, assuming that certain practices are determined by these criteria. One aspect of this division is that it may rarely be acknowledged that diversity was also a feature of the repertoire used prior to the 1950s, as demonstrated in the origins of Hawn’s seven streams of congregational song. Such discussion is not necessarily based on an accurate assessment of the music and does not contribute to understanding how congregational song works.

Two categories for this project

As this project is based on examining examples of musical repertoire two broad categories, without entirely precise boundaries, will be used: the ‘chorale – hymn’, and the ‘folk – rock’ song. At this point these categories do not take into account the function of a particular song or the nature and subject of its text. It is also important to consider that these two categories do not represent ‘art’ or ‘classical’ music versus ‘popular’, or ‘traditional’ versus ‘contemporary’.

For this approach these terms mean that the nature of the musical structures will be examined without unnecessary reference to style. Observing how congregational song functions musically and the interplay with the text can contribute to the development of a more effective critique. These categories demonstrate different ways in which harmonic structures are devised and thus have various effects on the way song, and particularly communal song,

187 Brown, Good taste, bad taste, and Christian taste: aesthetics in religious life, p. 235
functions. In particular it becomes an issue for how congregational song is accompanied and also how it is perceived.

The category of **chorale – hymn** is basically defined by its four-part vocal harmonisation. Within this category of songs it is important to consider the harmonic rhythm, the pace at which chord changes occur in the structure of the piece, and how the melodic phrases and then text relate to this. The recent history of hymn collections have seen such melodies mostly harmonised with, on average, one chord per beat of melody, particularly in simple duple time. Thus the harmonic rhythm is moving almost with every beat, which can result in equal attention being paid to melody and harmony. The pace or tempo of the song must also take account of pace of the chord changes, the shifting of the harmonies.

The second main category is that of songs which have a more **folk - rock** harmonic structure, essentially one chord per bar accompanying a melody for unison singing. In this sense it is possible to observe the connection between folk music and rock music\(^\text{189}\) and to see how the guitar is an instrument particularly suited to accompanying this music. Recent popular assumptions about congregational song have often revolved around which instruments should be used or which personnel should be in charge.\(^\text{190}\)

The purpose in using these two musical categories is to examine the basic musical structures of how the songs work. Although the starting point is the

\(^{189}\) The development of rock music initially emerges from two folk styles, country music - at its simplest with patterns of three or four chords - and the blues with its even more sparse harmonic structure.

\(^{190}\) Hamilton and Rabey.
harmonic structure it will also highlight the ways in which rhythm is integrated into the pace of chord changes particularly in vocal music and the importance of rhythm in popular folk and rock music. John Leach outlines an historical development he observes, starting with early plainsong or plainchant being essentially only melody, the next era of hymns – Reformation and since – being dominated by harmony, and now this third era, where “rhythm is paramount”.  

However it is possible and sometimes important to differentiate further between what is popularly identified as rhythm and a focus on a strong, even exaggerated accompanying rhythmic pattern such as that provided by a drum kit.  

To a significant degree it is the pace of the chord changes which defines the nature of the rhythmic framework. For example, Wren observes how “‘contemporary worship music’ has many variants, (yet) almost all of it is ‘written with a backbeat and inner pop rhythmic structures in mind’”.  

This analysis will take account firstly of the harmonic structure as the key criteria in understanding how the folk – rock category also functions. The rhythmic implications will be examined within this framework.

### Chorale – hymn

For the several hundred years to the mid-twentieth century, a hymn tune could predominantly be described as a melody for a strophic text, with or without a refrain and that would have included the majority of examples for congregational singing. The origins in the protestant tradition are known initially in terms of the Lutheran chorale of which collections were first

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191 Leach, p. 7.

192 This will be discussed in Chapters 5 and 6

193 Wren, p. 131.
published in 1524, comprising only text and melody. Such songs, hymns, have most recently been published in arrangements for four-part vocal performance such as a choir could lead. In terms of particular influences on the hymn-singing traditions here in Australia, it has been noted that there was significant enthusiasm for community singing in nineteenth century England. This encouraged congregational singing, particularly in the sense of owning the repertoire and also resulted in an enthusiasm for congregational part-singing.

The chorale - hymn is represented in its early form by the chorale, where although existing initially as melody with text “lends itself to enrichment through harmony and counterpoint”. A tune such as *Nun Danket*, by Johann Crüger, for the text “Now thank we all our God”, is typical of the outstanding Lutheran repertoire of the seventeenth century. The chord indications are added to this version of the score to indicate the pace of the changes:

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195 Dowley, p. 214.
197 Grout, p. 230.
198 TIS, no. 106.
199 Wilson-Dickson, p. 87.
Similar approaches originated with the Genevan Psalter from early Reformation times, taking one well-known example, *Old Hundredth* for the paraphrase of Psalm 100.\textsuperscript{200}

The harmony is devised to make interesting part-singing to support the melody, and with strict rules of composition to ensure suitable movement of parts, and within the appropriate vocal range for each voice type – soprano, alto, tenor, and bass. The harmonisation by J S Bach of so many chorale tunes has always been the benchmark for this style. This harmonisation is of the *Passion Chorale*\textsuperscript{201} from the *St Matthew Passion*:

\textsuperscript{200} TIS, no 59; in this case the tune is from the French Genevan Psalter of 1551.

\textsuperscript{201} TIS, no. 339.
As this was largely the form published in hymn collections in recent times it has also been the basis for keyboard accompaniment for such melodies. One advantage of this has been the relative simplicity of the process of accompanying such hymns, particularly for amateur players. It has also meant that a degree of improvisation is required to make the four-part harmony form any more interesting, or to play in a more pianistic style.

This particular fact has also contributed to the current perception of what a hymn is. Based on this simple four-part form, it can be considered a limited musical form. This can particularly be the case when compared to the more expansive structure of a rock song with layers of harmony and rhythm supplied by different timbres. It should be noted however that a similar effect of timbres and multiple parts can be achieved to some degree on a pipe organ.

This vocal style of arrangement of melody and harmony has been applied to various types of melodies. For example, the Irish traditional melody *Kingsfold*,\(^2\) first appeared as a hymn tune in the English Hymnal of 1906, arranged and harmonised by Ralph Vaughan Williams, where it was used for the words by Horatius Bonar, “I heard the voice of Jesus say”. The four-part vocal score takes what is probably a much older folk melody now made available most fittingly for these words.\(^3\)

\(^2\) TIS, no. 585.

Many tunes thus harmonised can also be accompanied with less chord changes, as demonstrated by the choice of chords shown in the melody edition of *Together in Song*:

![Chord Diagram](image)

Comparing the two slightly different harmonisations provides an insight into what the harmonic rhythm and pace can achieve, particularly with respect to the level of focus on melody.

The four-part vocal harmonisations were also a feature of the ‘white gospel’ hymns of the nineteenth century in such collections as those of Sankey and Moody. Although constructed with much simpler harmonies\(^\text{204}\) an example such as the tune for “What a friend we have in Jesus”\(^\text{205}\) illustrates the very repetitive harmonic part-writing:

\(^{204}\) Dowley, p. 183.

This chorale-hymn category can also include chant forms of song, such as Anglican psalm chants, short songs or chants from the Taizé or Iona communities:

The interpretation and performance of songs harmonised in this way focuses on the phrase structure, with each phrase usually ending with a cadence or chord progression outlining the melody. Instrumental accompaniment of this style of song needs to allow for phrasing of the words and breathing of the singers. Tempo can vary greatly and seemingly arbitrarily from consideration of the acoustic of the building to the decisions of the accompanying instrumentalists.

Not all hymn tunes prior to the mid-twentieth century hymn explosion were published in this form. A well-known tune such as *Sine Nomine* by Ralph

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206 TIS, “Jesus, remember me”, no 730.
Vaughan Williams for the text by William Walsham How, “For all the saints” is published for unison singing with a keyboard accompaniment which incorporates the melody. Most publications then also include a four-part harmonisation to be used as a contrast with three of the verses.

Similarly, more recent tunes have been published with four-part harmonisation such as this tune *St Lucia* composed in 1987 by Colin Brumby, well-known Australian composer. The text is by Englishman, Luke Connaughton, “The voice of God goes out to all the world”.\[207\]

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\[207\] TIS, no. 282.
Songs from the Christians in non-Western countries also demonstrate features of this category of chorale – hymn. *Thuma mina*\(^{208}\) is a song from South Africa in which the harmony parts are important to the way it is sung in its original settings:

**Folk – Rock**

Since the mid-twentieth century, the second category to be used in this project, **folk – rock**, has become more prominent for songs for congregational singing. Culturally this can be linked to the establishment of the guitar as a popular instrument in rock and folk music styles of the 1950s and 60s. But it

\(^{208}\) TIS, no. 749.
is also the result of a range of influences from within the church as well as the external culture.

This category may appear to be far too diverse and can also include songs often labeled 'hymns', but the basic musical features depend on the nature of the harmonic structure. Generically, folk – rock is based on a strict rhythmic pulse created by regular chord changes, in its most basic form at the beginning of each bar. The forward movement of the harmony is indicated by the rhythmic patterns used to play an instrument such as guitar. This song, “A new commandment”\(^{209}\) is a simple chorus of unknown origin showing harmonic rhythm with chord changes mostly on the first beat of the bar:

\[
\begin{align*}
&D \quad \text{Bm} \quad \text{Em} \quad A \quad j \\
&\text{New commandment I give unto you that you love one another as I have loved you, that you love one another}.
\end{align*}
\]

It was also given a four-part harmonisation:

\[
\begin{align*}
&D \quad \text{Bm} \quad \text{Em} \quad A \quad j \quad D \quad \text{Bm}
\end{align*}
\]

Recent hymnals include melodies that are not harmonised for four vocal parts but rather have a keyboard-style arrangement as accompaniment with chord

\(^{209}\) TIS, no. 699.
symbols provided which can be used by guitarists or keyboard players. While a steady beat and rhythmic pattern can be provided by strumming a guitar, a similar effect can be produced on piano or keyboard instrument, often with a steady pulse created by repeated chord patterns or bass patterns. “Feed us now” written by Robin Mann in 1976 demonstrates how a simple bass line provides this ongoing rhythmic component:

A chordal pattern in the bass can also provide a strong rhythmic structure as well as outlining the harmony:

In songs using this type of harmonic framework there are often seeming gaps between phrases or lines of the text. “Here I am, Lord” demonstrates this particularly at the end of the second line of text, at bars 8-9. The melodic

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210 TIS, no. 538.
211 TIS, ‘God sends us his Spirit’, no. 412
212 TIS, no. 658.
phrase technically ends on the first beat of bar 8 but the keyboard part continues to fill out the two bars of harmony until the next phrase:

This indicates the way in which the harmonic structure creates a basic framework into which the melody and hence the text fit. This is important for considering how the songs are accompanied for communal singing. The steady beat must be maintained as the harmonic structure continues beyond where melody and text may appear to stop. The phrase structure is outlined by the musical framework rather than only the melody and text.

It is this strict adherence to the tempo set for a song, particularly when a larger group is involved in singing which seems to support the use of larger instrumental ensembles. Initially, the use of guitars can seem essential to providing appropriate accompaniment. This is often augmented by bass guitar, drum kit, and electric keyboard in the style of a basic four-piece rock band.

A significant part of current congregational repertoire is still more essentially based on older folk repertoire. The keyboard accompaniments which are provided in current printed hymn collections will usually take account of the style of melody as in this example of an older Irish folk tune. The text which
uses this setting, “Inspired by love and anger”\textsuperscript{213} is by John L Bell and Graham Maule.

Melodies in this generic style of folk – rock can be simple as in the previous example, basically diatonic and with steady rhythmic movement. Much of the new repertoire of the early decades (1960s and 70s) was more folk-style in character. By the 1980s, songs were borrowing more from the popular rock ballad styles resulting in the possibility of syncopated motifs being a feature in the melodic line. In this example, “The Power of your Love”\textsuperscript{214} by Australian Geoff Bullock, the rhythmic pattern of the melody features the last quaver of the bar anticipating the downbeat, occurring several times in each of the main phrases – the last note in bars 1, 3, 5:

\begin{verbatim}
1 Lord, I come to you:____ let my heart be changed, re-newed,
2 Lord, un-veil my eyes:____ let me see you face to face,

1 ______ flow-ing from the grace that I found____ in
2 ______ the know-ledge of your love as you live____ in
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{213} TIS, no. 674.

\textsuperscript{214} TIS, no. 685.
Rhythmically, if performed accurately, this simple syncopation gives a greater accent to the following downbeat where the chord change occurs and is a common feature in popular music. This can be achieved satisfactorily with a solo singer but not always with a group and this has proved challenging for some experiences of congregational singing. This can imply greater reliance on the recording of the song where the melody is learnt aurally.

Another usually melodic feature of more recent popular music is the ‘hook’ which is a short motif often including the title or iconic phrase of the text which draws attention to the song. The same song, “The Power of your Love” demonstrates a simple example in the setting of the title phrase in the final two bars of this excerpt. This phrase or motif also uses the syncopated device which is a feature of this song:

The same phrase occurs at the end of the refrain:
The placing of these two phrases contributes to the function of the hook. A similar device in this song is a subsidiary hook which is used to start each phrase of the refrain.

![Musical notation of the refrain](image)

Some commentators see this adoption of popular music features as evidence of congregational song closing the gap between the secular music world and that of the church. However in most instances these are simple devices like having been present in some popular and folk music over the past century - for example the simple syncopations of ragtime.

![Musical notation of the refrain](image)

This last song is an example of how this folk – rock category can be more dependent on the accompaniment and the steady rhythmic pulse. The pace or tempo at which the song is performed can then be determined more by stylistic interpretation, the type of rhythmic pattern for guitar, keyboard or drum kit. The relatively fragmented nature of the melody for the text is delivered over five bars of harmonic structure – “flowing from the grace - that I found - in you”:  

![Musical notation of the refrain](image)
This song also illustrates a feature of the treatment of the texts for a more rock type of song. The effect of short fragments of melody can seem to disconnect the ideas being expressed and this can be a significant factor when examining text.

While greater melodic complexity might be a feature of more recent rock styles, there is evidence that for much of the current folk-rock category of congregational song harmonic structures or chord progressions have remained simple. The chords used to harmonise this song, “The Power of your love”, remain within the key of A major – A, D, E, F♯m7, C♯m7, Bm7 – and are used conventionally. For a more folk-style song such as “Feed us now” the chords are essentially simple but also include the minor versions of dominant and subdominant chords making a more colourful structure, indicating a more creative use of the folk–rock elements:

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215 TIS, no 538.
In conclusion, the use of musical analysis, by means of using these harmonically-based categories, can contribute to an understanding of the essential features of congregational song. These features do not require the use of other popularised terminology in order to focus on developing an understanding of effective congregational singing. These categories will be used in the analysis of the selected song repertoire.
Chapter 4

Analysis of selected songs

The song repertoire of the past thirty years demonstrates a more established stage for the hymn explosion. This is exemplified through substantial collections being published and newer repertoire being included in broader collections such as those for denominational and also for ecumenical use. Of particular significance in Australia was the publication of the *Australian Hymn Book* in 1977\(^{216}\) which coincided with the formation of the Uniting Church in Australia. This book thus became, in effect, an instrument of that union for many congregations. While major influences in repertoire were still from overseas ‘mother’ churches, there was an increasing awareness and gradual inclusion of Australian-composed repertoire. The sale and therefore usage of this new hymn collection reached a significant marker with over one million copies sold.\(^{217}\) Particularly significant were the new hymn writers and composers introduced to a wider range of congregations, along with repertoire previously limited to use by one denomination being available and welcomed into others.

One of the features of this first edition is that the collection was generally considered a conservative one. Approximately only twenty-five percent of the songs were composed in the twentieth century. This conservatism in the midst of the hymn explosion was the result of the ecumenical nature of the hymn book project, the intention being “to include as many points of view as


\(^{217}\) Fletcher, p. 107.
possible”.  The situation with the second edition, *Together in Song*,\(^{219}\) is one in which the ecumenical relationships of the committee were even more well established and significant trends had become more accepted. Approximately fifty percent of the material in *Together in Song* has emerged either or both as text and tune in the second half of the last century.\(^{220}\) Therefore this collection can be considered more representative of the best repertoire available.

**Song selection criteria**

The criteria for the songs to be analysed is firstly that they have been written in the past thirty years, with texts in English, and the selection is representative of a range of material published in that time.

Thus in choosing songs for this project from *Together in Song* there is the potential to demonstrate a variety of musical examples, both in terms of text and music. The songs selected are also considered to be in use across mainline Protestant and Anglican parishes and, with one exception, are all published in *Together in Song*. The aim in restricting the selection of material in this way is to evaluate a representative sample, songs which could conceivably be used in several differing settings, although primarily in mainline congregations.

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\(^{218}\) From a conversation with D'Arcy Wood, 7 December 2011


The two basic categories\textsuperscript{221} of song upon which this project is based are represented although the merging of influences from either category to the other is now more evident. It will be demonstrated that this is significant not only from a historical perspective but also in terms of where congregational song might now be considered to be situated in the broader context of musical styles and culture. While the musical elements will be considered as the distinguishing feature initially, sources, structure and content of the texts will also be analysed.

Other criteria reflected in the selection include songs for a variety of liturgical situations, different examples of the ‘short song’ or ‘chorus’ phenomenon, and songs where the composer is also author of the text. In considering non-Australian repertoire it has been important to look at some of the more recent influences on congregational song in this country. Thus composers and authors from the United Kingdom and North America are included.

While considering material now available in \textit{Together in Song} it is possible to recognise the significant ecumenical contribution and the importance of this in the broader life of the Australian church. In addition, \textit{Together in Song} is now available as a software resource, \textit{Parish Edition Software}, first released in 2006. Three versions released since that date have made available an additional forty songs. Sources other than print are an important influence across former divisions, such as denominational ones. The use of recorded collections to disseminate new material has become increasingly popular and

\textsuperscript{221} Chorale – hymn, folk – rock, as outlined in chapter 3.
has received promotion from organisations such as Hillsong Church in Sydney.\textsuperscript{222}

Several of the selected songs demonstrate the more recent trend for text and music to be created by the same person. Songs written in this manner by composers such Graham Kendrick, Robin Mann, Darlene Zschech, Marty Haugen and John Bell are a link to the way various contemporary popular songs are also created, a combination of text and music that is unique to each song. This has previously been considered the exception rather than the rule to song or hymn writing for Christian worship. It can also be noted that this is a feature for newer hymnals. By contrast the relationship between melody and text was for many centuries defined by a comparatively restricted range of formats and interchangeable tunes.

One of the examples will demonstrate this possibility for optional tunes. Strophic texts usually adhere to a certain metrical pattern of syllables. For example what is known as common metre alternates eight and six syllables per line\textsuperscript{223} and there are various tunes available to use for any one hymn text. It was not until later in the nineteenth century with the publication of \textit{Hymns Ancient and Modern} (1861) that “the immense popularity of the book married tunes to words much more firmly”\textsuperscript{224}, a state of affairs still demonstrated with congregations today where the memory of a hymn is locked into the experience of a specific melody.

\textsuperscript{222} Hillsong Church, http://au.hillsongmusic.com/

\textsuperscript{223} An example of common metre is the text of “Amazing Grace”.

\textsuperscript{224} Wilson-Dickson, p. 136.
Australian writers and composers are represented by Mann and Zschech, but also significantly by Elizabeth J Smith who has primarily written hymn texts to fit with established and known tunes – the song selected for analysis below, “Holy Spirit, go before us”, is a good example. There is also a strong counter-cultural element to many of Smith’s texts. The influences of the Australian context are evident particularly in the work of Mann and Smith while Zschech’s work is specific to the Pentecostal church and demonstrates more internationally recognised influences in the ‘praise and worship’ style.

Also included in the selection is an example of the work of New Zealand writer Shirley Erena Murray whose work has wide international recognition and has also been a significant influence for Australian writers. Many of Murray’s texts are the product of collaboration with composer Colin Gibson, also from New Zealand. The one selected here is noted particularly for the exploration of our relationship with God’s wider creation.

The short song or refrain created interest in the 1960s and 70s as evidenced perhaps most significantly for Australia in the New Zealand publications of Scripture in Song. This influence has continued in much contemporary writing and composing, “Shout to the Lord” being a more recent example. However the form has also been in evidence within a variety of traditions and is also represented in this project with a song by John Bell. It is also worth noting this was not a new phenomenon for certain parts of the Christian church with ‘choruses’ having been published earlier in the twentieth century.

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228 Dowley, p. 239.
The ecumenical consciousness which was a particular feature of the second half of the last century has resulted in many songs being sung across denominational lines. The production of an ecumenical collection such as *The Australian Hymn Book* and its successor has generated interest in the richness of other Christian traditions. This selection of songs demonstrates this in the work of Lutheran Robin Mann, and Anglican priest Elizabeth Smith being informed by her early experience of the Churches of Christ. Similarly Marty Haugen’s songs developed in his work with different denominational traditions. Graham Kendrick and the duo of Townend and Getty belong to an increasing number of more freelance musicians and writers whose work is taken up by many different congregations and denominations and largely spread through online networks and recordings.

Elizabeth Smith and Shirley Murray represent contemporary women song writers. Their work is also significantly representative of the stronger trends in some parts of the church for song texts to reflect more recent scholarship which investigates the way language forms our view of God, particularly in relation to gender and male hierarchical structures.

The more recently noted work of UK musicians Stuart Townend and Keith Getty will be considered with one of their songs which has featured in the ‘top 25’ of the CCLI charts for several years in Australia as well as in the United Kingdom and North America. This is now a common way for congregations to organise access to a range of material. At the same time it provides congregations and musicians with a perception as to what is popular and considered worth using. The song “In Christ alone” by Townend and Getty is

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229 Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) as discussed in Chapter 2: http://www.ccli.com/
used by many mainline congregations and along with these other factors makes it a suitable song to include in this analysis.

The eight songs selected for this project are listed in chronological order:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>writer/composer - date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When his time was over</td>
<td>Robin Mann (published) 1983</td>
<td>TIS 357230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather us in</td>
<td>Marty Haugen 1983</td>
<td>TIS 474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shine, Jesus, shine</td>
<td>Graham Kendrick 1987</td>
<td>TIS 675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout to the Lord</td>
<td>Darlene Zschech 1993</td>
<td>TIS 738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch the earth lightly</td>
<td>Murray / Gibson 1992</td>
<td>TIS 668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Spirit, go before us</td>
<td>E J Smith /Hopson; text - 1993</td>
<td>TIS 420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the body of Christ</td>
<td>John Bell 1998</td>
<td>TIS 791231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Christ alone</td>
<td>Stuart Townend/Keith Getty 2001</td>
<td>Mission Praise232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variety in text and music will be demonstrated by detailed analysis of the songs. What is particularly important to this project is the way in which music combines with text. The way in which congregational song is perceived to work is the result of centuries of conditioning to the Western European tradition of tonality and melodic construction. This will be demonstrated in the

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230 TIS = *Together in Song*

231 This song, TIS 191, is available from Version 2 of the *Parish Edition Software* released in 2008.

song analysis. The range of texts used for this selection will also demonstrate more recent issues about contemporary use of language.

It is significant to compare the list of songs selected with the “seven streams of congregational song” proposed by C Michael Hawn in a recent edition of The Hymn. Hawn’s analysis outlines different sources for congregational song in current use, “the most diverse of any era in the history of the church.” These streams are listed as:

Stream 1 - Roman Catholic Liturgical Hymnody
Stream 2 - Protestant Contemporary Classical Hymnody
Stream 3 - African American Spirituals and Gospel Songs
Stream 4 - Revival/Gospel Songs
Stream 5 - Folk Song Influences
Stream 6 - Pentecostal Songs
Stream 7 - Global and Ecumenical Song Forms

Hawn’s analysis arises from a project surveying the content of North American hymnals published between 1976 and 1996, a time span which overlaps with the one under consideration here. It is an attempt to reflect on and organise the “variety and quantity of the flood of new materials available to the church since the mid-1960s.”

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234 Bishop Joel Martinez in a sermon in 1996 quoted by Hawn, ibid., p. 17.


236 ibid., p.17.
The metaphor “streams of song” indicates several traditions which are “particular sources of faith, a particular expression of piety”. The metaphor allows for great variety across the streams and for change within each and interchange between. Hawn’s aim in examining congregational song in this way is that those who gather in Christian worship “may enrich their prayer by expanding the number of streams from which they draw”. In similar vein one of the outcomes of this project, though from the approach of detailed musical and text analysis, is to provide a way for developing an expanding and inclusive repertoire.

Hawn explains the limitations of his model in that it “focuses on the breadth rather than the depth of current congregational song practice”. This is similar to the breadth which is represented in the songs selected for this project. Hawn’s seven streams are also based in the experience of North American church for which Stream Three, African American Spirituals and Gospel Songs, has become of increasing importance in hymn collections since the mid-twentieth century.

The other six streams are represented in the list for this project, illustrating at the same time the diversity of influences on contemporary Australian congregational repertoire as well as the similarity of “sources of faith” and “expressions of piety”. However this project is exploring other issues which are beyond these streams. The songs under consideration here also demonstrate what Hawn points out in terms of influences occurring across

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238 ibid., p. 20.
239 ibid., p. 21.
240 ibid., p. 20.
The study of Hawn’s categories allowed him to distinguish particular patterns across the streams as well as those specific to one or more streams. Some of these patterns will be reflected in the analysis and commentary in this project.

Thus the eight songs listed can be seen as examples of six of Hawn’s streams:

Stream 1: Gather us in;
Stream 2: Touch the earth lightly; Holy Spirit, go before us;
Stream 4: Shine, Jesus, shine;
Stream 5: When his time was over;
Stream 6: Shout to the Lord;
Stream 7: This is the body of Christ.

**Analysis of the songs:**

*When his time was over*\(^{242}\)

This is a song for Holy Week with words and music by Robin Mann (born 1949) who is a prominent South Australian singer-songwriter and member of the Lutheran church. Mann has had a significant career as a “leading contributor to congregational song over thirty years”.\(^{243}\) His work in producing the *All Together* series through the Lutheran Publishing House has resulted in 509 songs in five volumes of which at least 80 are his own compositions.\(^{244}\)

\(^{241}\) Ibid., p. 23.

\(^{242}\) TIS, no. 357.

\(^{243}\) Hawn, ”’Where wide sky rolls down’: finding an Australian voice in congregational song,” p. 203.

\(^{244}\) Ibid., p. 203.
This series was influential in making new congregational material available particularly during the 1980s and 90s, and this song was first published in *All Together Again* in 1983.

Mann’s work is represented by some eight songs in *Together in Song*. Most of these demonstrate his typically folk style of song composition, with lyrics which are simple in format while often linked strongly to a liturgical context. Accordingly, Mann’s work aims at being singable, for community congregational use, in “ordinary language” and drawing on the “heritage of Lutheran hymnody”.

Musically this is a folk-style song with regular chord changes and simple melody thus being in the folk – rock category defined for this project. The melody with the key signature of D minor uses the natural form of the minor scale, the Aeolian mode, with the flat seventh degree and a narrow range of only seven notes.

The four-phrase 16-bar form is extended interestingly with a two-bar interlude in the accompaniment at the end. This encourages a reflective point between the verses and finally at the conclusion of the song. The harmony is created essentially by the broken chord quaver pattern in the bass of the keyboard.

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245 ibid., p. 203.

246 ibid., p. 204.
part which also contains a strong bass line outlining the chord changes, mostly twice each bar.

\[ \text{Dm} \quad \text{Dm/C\#} \quad \text{Dm7} \quad \text{Dm6} \quad \text{Bb} \quad \text{C} \]

This provides a useful accompaniment at a simple level in a congregational context, keeping the beat structure going at a steady pace throughout. It is an accompaniment effect which could also be achieved on guitar. The pattern and the bass together create a framework for the melody and the effect of a moderate walking pace such as might come to mind in the Palm Sunday procession or the various journeys contained in the Passion narratives.²⁴⁷

The pattern of the melodic phrases, a-a-b-b/a, provides for a contrast and climax in the third and fourth phrases with the use of the one chord G minor in bars 9 and 13 producing a pause in the otherwise steady motion of chord changes. Of particular interest harmonically is that each phrase concludes with the same chord progression or cadence, B♭ – C – Dm at the end of each line:

This creates a stability against which the melody fits, even the third line with its small-scale seeking of a higher melodic climax. The use of natural minor scale with the chord C major on the flat seventh is probably more common and perhaps acceptable in folk-style and rock repertoire than more classically formed melodies. The preceding B♭ chord creates a parallel three-chord movement which is counter to the sense of strong harmonic movement usually found with plagal or perfect cadences. The three-note upward move of the bass line in this cadence sits well with the stepwise descent of the melody to the tonic with the exception of phrase three. This harmonic structure and movement creates its own sense of a strong progression along with the use of the natural minor scale.

Melodically the use of this modal or minor scale is not as unusual as might be expected, considering there is often a reaction which regards the use of a minor key as signifying a less happy mood for a song or instrumental piece. However it is also possible to register a sombre mood and limited melodic range as being desirable and appropriate to the reflective nature of the text. At the same time there is a need to go beyond simple labels such as ‘happy’ or ‘sad’. There are significant examples of congregational song written in the minor key and for some of more folk origin, the use of the natural minor scale is not uncommon.

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248 Compare with melodies such as “Scarborough Fair” or the composed folk-style melody for “Sounds of Silence”.

249 Chords IV or V leading to the tonic.

To consider two examples: the natural minor melody for *Theodoric* is originally from the sixteenth century source *Piae Cantiones* of 1582 and is now used for an Advent carol text by Frederick Pratt Green.\(^{251}\) Similarly the tune *The Secret* by John Bell for the Christmas song “Pull back the veil”\(^{252}\) features the natural minor scale contrasting with a major key section but concluding in the minor.

The use of the natural minor scale for this song works to draw attention to the combination of text and music with its less predictable harmony. The first verse of this song sets the scene of the Last Supper, reflecting back to the Palm Sunday narrative.

When his time was over the palms lay where they fell.
As they ate together he told his friends farewell.
Jesus, though you cried out for some other end,
love could only choose a cross
when our life began again.

The melody for the first two lines is identical and simple in its effect, using only the first five notes of the scale and returning to the tonic at the end of each phrase.

The gentle melodic climax of phrase b comes in bar 9, the G minor chord holding the pace for that bar, with step-wise motion to the highest note C and concluding on the dominant A while the harmony returns to D minor. Repeating this climax in bars 13 and 14 with only one chord per bar supports this sense of tension and is resolved in the final sub-phrase of bars 15-16, derived from the melody of bars 2-4, and carries, and thus emphasises what becomes a refrain in the text: “when our life began again”.

\(^{251}\) TIS, “Long ago, prophets knew”, no. 283.

\(^{252}\) TIS, no.326.
Each of verses two, three and four focuses on an aspect of the crucifixion narrative, the betrayal and trial, responses from onlookers, the thief’s request. The line “when our life began again” concludes each verse, operating as a refrain but each verse also contains at least one preceding line which focuses on our response or compliance in Jesus’ death:

Secretly they planned it, with money changing hands;
in the quiet garden a kiss betrayed their man.
Priests and elders tried him. Soldiers crowned him king.
*We were in the crowd that day*
*when our life began again.*

Women wept to see him; he said, ‘Don’t weep for me.’
Many laughed and mocked him: ‘Forgive them, they don’t see.’
Jesus, please forgive me, you know what I am;
*I was one who nailed your hands*
*when our life began again.*

There was one who asked you, ‘Remember me this day.’
Jesus, when I’m dying, remember me that way;
*when my life is over, be with me, my friend,*
*like the thief upon the cross,*
*when our life began again.*

The pace of the melody is determined by the harmonic structure, allowing for the whole bar note at the end of each phrase which is a typical pattern for a folk or rock song where the accompaniment keeps the beat going for what is the musical phrase. There are other rhythmic patterns which could have been developed for these lyrics but this particular one achieves its ends well in terms of music and text, and thus the total effect. The simplicity of harmony, and the rhythmic pattern and shape of the melody defines this effect for a song for quiet reflection while allowing for the dramatic elements of the narrative.
Referring to Hawn’s seven streams, this song would probably find its place in Stream 5 with predominantly folk song influences. But as noted previously the whole category of congregational song is essentially one about a ‘folk music’ of the faith, songs which ordinary people can access with relative ease. This song demonstrates accessibility across several “streams” and by its inclusion in Together in Song is regarded as contributing to contemporary mainstream experiences.

**Gather us in**

Marty Haugen (born 1950) is the writer of both text and music for this reflection on the subject of coming together for worship. This song was first published in 1983 and used initially by Roman Catholic congregations, being included in Gather Australia and now more widely available in Together in Song. Haugen has worked with various traditions and his work now has wide acceptance.

Here in this place new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away,
see, in this space, our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.
Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.

The text is in two clear sections which is mirrored in the melody. This song is presented for unison melody with a manageable keyboard accompaniment which provides a strong outline of the harmony and harmonic changes. Essentially composed in compound duple time, two chords per bar sets a

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253 TIS, no 474.

steady pace throughout the song with motion maintained by the keyboard part and providing ‘fill’ at the end of the first and second sections, features which place the song in the folk – rock category.

Harmonically the song is more than a formulaic use of conventional harmony while essentially working within the key signature of D major. Three of the four phrases actually use a scale based on D but with C and F naturals each time which is the Dorian mode:

As a result, chords include D major and A major, but also C major, G minor and D minor.
The phrase structure is balanced with the first phrase comprising two 2-bar sub-phrases (a1 – b1). This example shows bars 1 – 6 for sub-phrases a1 – b1 – a1:

The second phrase (bars 5 – 10) comprises sub-phrase a1 followed by a 4-bar phrase b2 which includes a short bar of only three quavers:

The strong cadence on the tonic D at bars 8 – 10, with two bar keyboard fill marks a distinct half-way point.

The second section of the song, the third major phrase c1 – c2, bars 11 – 14, makes use of the D major scale but still with a C major (flat 7th) chord.
There is a sense in which the contrasting phrase c, bars 11 – 14, works almost like a refrain but leads to the re-statement of the second major phrase a1 – b2 concluding in the same way as the first section. The text also appears a little like a refrain with three of the four verses starting this line with “gather us in…” This third phrase might also appear to present a form of climax in that it takes the melody to its lowest point so this is not an upper more emotional climax. At the same time the harmony has a strong sense of the A major (dominant) chord as a contrast to the D tonality of the rest of the song. The A major chord is otherwise not used in a cadence to the tonic which is always preceded by the C major chord.

The text has a certain freshness of expression which possibly had a particular impact in the 1980s when more substantial examples of folk – rock songs in worship were emerging. It invites an expansive reflection on coming together in a space with the symbolism of new light contrasting the darkness. There is a list of those who are called to gather: young, old, lost, forsaken, blind and lame, “called to be light to the whole human race”. In coming together the third verse looks ahead to the receiving of the elements of bread and wine and the sending out “to be salt of the earth”. The final verse claims God’s kingdom to be here “in this space” where the people have gathered.
This song, like Robin Mann’s work, is indicative of new repertoire of the 1980s which focused on the liturgical context for mainline congregations. The intention was to provide music in the folk – rock styles which were perceived to have more popular appeal. As well as perhaps denoting a less formal approach to music for worship, the musical style also suited a more contemporary text, in everyday language. Texts were also more substantial and in these two examples, are well-matched with the music. The direct relation between text and music can be viewed in terms of the composer also as writer of the lyrics, which in these two songs, is a creative and effective one.

Shine, Jesus, Shine\textsuperscript{255}

This is probably regarded as one of the ‘classic’ songs of the past thirty years, one of a large body of work, with both words and music by Graham Kendrick.

This song is a prayer for revival . . . and I think ‘Shine, Jesus, shine’ caught a moment when people were beginning to believe once again that an impact could be made on the whole nation (of Britain).\textsuperscript{256}

Written in 1987, this is a typical soft rock ballad, and thus fits the folk – rock category under consideration here. It requires a steady beat or rhythmic part throughout, and thus is dependent on accurate accompaniment which can be achieved simply with a competent keyboard player. Kendrick (born 1950) rose to prominence in the 1980s and by the end of the twentieth century was “probably the best known composer of contemporary worship songs and choruses in the English language”.\textsuperscript{257} One commentator notes that this song

\textsuperscript{255} TIS, no 675.

\textsuperscript{256} Milgate and Wood, \textit{A Companion to Together in Song: Australian Hymn Book II}, p. 479.

\textsuperscript{257} ibid., p. 669.
“represents a new generation of hymns” and is perhaps even “more complex than the typical 1980s pop song”.

The song is presented in Together in Song as a melody for unison singing with piano-style accompaniment, thus taking it beyond the experience of four-part chorale-style singing.

This version of the accompaniment is relatively simple but requires accuracy with the syncopated rhythmic motif to start and to establish the steady pulse, something the average church organist does not always achieve. The 4-bar introduction for the first verse is a chord progression and gives no indication of the melody to follow. This is a typical departure for songs regarded as ‘praise and worship’. Accepted practice is usually for a ‘play over’ of part or all of the song when being introduced for congregational singing, meant to be a reminder of the melody and to give a clear indication as to where the verse begins. Perhaps this is an indicator of the ways in which a sense of what congregational song may have been changing at this time.

This song is a simple example of the folk – rock style that consolidated in congregational song during the 1980s. Harmonically this song predominantly uses the three primary chords, along with minor secondary chords, the harmonic changes functioning predictably within the tonic key of A major. The

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258 Brady, p. 159 - 160.
chord changes occur on the first and third beats of each of the first eight bars of the verse. The harmonic pace changes for bars 9 – 12 and for the chorus to one chord per bar.

Verse bars 1 - 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C♯m</td>
<td>F♯m</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C♯m</td>
<td>F♯m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(bars 9 – 12)

| G | E | G | E |

The chord progressions form predictable patterns, for example bars 1 – 2 repeated in bars 3 – 4 and similarly for the two phrases in bars 5 – 8. The pattern for the chorus is a four chord 4-bar pattern used four times with changes for the cadences:

**Refrain:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>Bm</th>
<th>E7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(cadence)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bm</td>
<td>G</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bm</td>
<td>E7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(cadence)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Bm</td>
<td>E7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(interlude)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In this way the harmonic rhythm changes for the refrain, providing a contrast between verse and refrain which can be explored further in relation to the melody and text.

The melody of the verse which is twelve bars in length\textsuperscript{259} follows a standard pattern of phrases, a-a-b-b for the first eight bars. The harmony for phrase a is very conventional: A – D – A – E. The sequence for phrase b is contrasting, D – E – C\# – F\#. yet not outside appropriate progressions within the key of A major. One of the features of the song is the unusual sequence created at the end of the verse. The final four bars of the verse (bars 9 – 12) show an unpredictable shift to the chord G which is equivalent to a flat seventh chord:

\begin{center}
\textbf{phrase c – bars 9-12}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image.png}
\end{center}

The harmonic pace changes to one chord per bar, a 2-bar sequence of G major followed by E major which is the dominant. This creates an extended tension both in the chord progression and the harmonic pace which is followed by a strong resolution on the first beat of the refrain on the tonic chord of A major which has not occurred since the first two phrases of the verse.

The mood of the melody for the verse is flowing, almost folk-like with mostly step-wise motion or intervals of 3\textsuperscript{rd} or 4\textsuperscript{th}. Rhythmically the verse is

\textsuperscript{259} Not including the two bars shown as introduction in this version of the score.
straightforward with simple motifs in each of phrases a and b thus making for easy communal singing:

The melodic range for the verse is narrow, only across the interval of a sixth or six consecutive notes, but the refrain shifts its range from the highest note of the verse to become the lowest note of the refrain:

The climax of the verse is actually the lowest melodic motif, used twice in the last four bars – the repeated 4-note two-bar phrase: “Shine on me” as quoted above for bars 9-12. This motif, phrase c, is entirely new material at this point, rhythmically and melodically. This creates significant yet quiet tension with a narrow pitch range over the unexpected harmonic progression of G major – E major. This contrasts dramatically to what has gone before and what comes next.

Along with the shift in pitch range for the refrain, the significant shift in the position of the melodic line at the end of the verse from a low B adjacent to the lower tonic A to C♯ a 9th higher creates the impact of the opening of the chorus:
This melodic motif is the hook for the song, yet it is pre-empted in the closing four bars of the verse, even in the text as well with “shine on me”. For the particular effect in the refrain it is developed with slightly foreshortened rhythmical structure, anticipating the first beat of the second bar in an example of a commonly used syncopated motif. This dramatic change may seem to have become formulaic, an effect that has been used in other songs.\(^{260}\) The simple syncopation of this hook motif is a particular feature of this song and the only difference between the style of rhythmic patterns in verse and refrain.

The melodic hook for the phrase “Shine, Jesus, shine” is then used for each melodic phrase of the refrain but the text is not repeated but is rather replaced by a similarly structured phrase:

\[
\text{blaze, Spirit, blaze}
\]
\[
\text{Flow, river, flow}
\]
\[
\text{send forth your word}
\]

The melodic structure of four almost identical phrases, \(d - d^1 \cdot d - d^2\) is set to a basic 4-chord riff, \(A – D – Bm – E\), with the second phrase revisiting the \(G – E\) motif and the last phrase foreshortening to resolve on \(A\) at bar 16 of the refrain. The highest note of the melody follows the hook motif, with the tension being maintained by repeated use of the same phrase shape and

\(^{260}\) For example, *Shout to the Lord* which will be considered next.
released only at the end of the second phrase (with another G major chord) and on the final chord:

At the conclusion of the refrain there is a return of the opening accompaniment chordal riff:

This then leads on to the next bar with the two bars at the beginning, completing a 31-bar form in total. In this sense the instrumental bars are essential to the way the song works and is typical of the folk – rock category where it is the harmonic structure which determines the overall effect.

The lyrics, as initially envisaged by Kendrick were a call to mission, and without the refrain would not perhaps have had such an impact. The use of the “light/dark” motif moves from the darkness of a sinful world, to personal darkness in the second verse, and to the kingly brightness of Jesus’ glory in verse three. Throughout, Jesus is invited to “shine on me”, while there is use of both single and plural personal pronouns: “set us free… set our hearts… I come to… I may enter… search me… shine on me”.

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Compared with later examples of CWM in a soft rock ballad style, these lyrics are straightforward, lacking in obvious clichés from other songs or unconnected quotes from scripture. There is a degree of linear progression of ideas such as is usually found in the traditional stanza format, the first verse making a statement of Jesus’ role in bringing love, light, and truth to us, the second verse claiming personal salvation. Verse three speaks of our growing likeness to Jesus and our role in showing this through our lives for the sake of others till the land is full of God’s glory, grace, mercy and light, and our hearts are on fire with his Spirit.

There is possibly a brief connection to Hebrew scripture images, of grace and mercy flowing like a river which could be connected to Amos 5: 24.261 Compared to some contemporary songs, even of the 1980s, there are some archaisms in the text, such as “in the midst”, “send forth”, “glory to glory”, while overall the structure of the verses indicates a single statement or thought in each line, and each connected to the next. The words of the song are addressed variously to the “Lord”, to “Jesus”, the “Father”, “Spirit”, providing connection with the Trinity and acknowledging varying roles, something not always evident in more recent repertoire.262

This song is generally classified in the CWM scene as a ‘hymn’ because of its strophic form, connecting to pre-1950s origins. As well, the melodic phrases are continuous, leaving no space for improvisation other than at the end of the refrain. The melodic structure also makes it relatively easy to follow for congregational singing. A more conventional assessment might label it as a hymn because of its primary address to God throughout the text.

261 “But let justice and fairness flow like a river that never runs dry”. (CEV)

262 Ruth, p. 33.
Musically, the song is dependent on the harmonic rhythm with the pattern of chord changes, two per bar for the verse and basically one per bar for the refrain, giving the refrain a less intense movement which is integral to its effect of expansive praise. The harmonic vocabulary is significant in its inclusion of the unexpected as well as standard progressions. These features, along with the resulting melodic structure are significant in creating a song which has possibly defined an anthem-like status to the formulae implicit in the form and which will be referred to with other examples.

**Shout to the Lord – My Jesus, my Saviour**

Generally known by the title ‘Shout to the Lord’, this chorus by Darlene Zschech of the large Hillsong congregation in Sydney was written in 1993. It has been called “the world’s most popular worship song”. Whether this is true or not, there is no doubt that it is sung frequently in many countries.

This song registers as one of the 77 most-used songs administered by CCLI over a fifteen year period to 2005, and is regarded as a significant song in the coming of age of Contemporary Worship Music when “the majority of the composers in the 1990s were actually writing songs in the current musical styles of the day”. Brady considers this song to be “the slick, radio-ready pop style” while composed strictly for congregational use. This song is also considered the “watershed moment in Hillsong Church’s

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263 TIS, no. 738.
265 Woods and Walrath, eds., p. 18. This song was most recently listed as no. 9 on the Australian charts.
266 Brady, p. 161.
267 ibid., p.161.
268 ibid, p. 160
global aspirations, it would appear that this ‘stamp’ achieved the aim of bringing HMA onto the international Christian stage”.

As another song in the folk – rock category its inclusion in *The Australian Hymn Book, Together in Song (1998)* indicates a nation-wide acceptance and its incorporation in a variety of worship situations. It is probably the main song from the Hillsong recording company that is currently known and used in mainline churches. An initial analysis will work from the published score which is presented as a 32-bar through-composed song with piano-style accompaniment and simple bass line, with chords in the right hand part. The syncopation is contained in simple short quaver patterns balanced with straight crotchets or minims and thus it is not difficult to work out, particularly if one has heard the recorded version, which is largely assumed. It requires a steady pulse throughout in the style of a basic rock beat.

![basic syncopated motif:](image)

As this song is deliberately intended for congregational singing, appropriate criteria can be applied in making an analysis and assessment. The overall music form is a binary 32-bar song form, falling neatly into two musical sections, the halfway point cadencing on a dominant chord, the second part sounding like a refrain to an initial verse, except there are no further verses. The song is largely dependent on its musical structure for its success.

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269 Evans, p. 121. HMA is Hillsong Music Australia
In the sense that the song is a single piece of text, it could be classified a ‘chorus’, the short, repeated chorus being one of the most prevalent forms of “praise and worship” or CWM in its earlier stages. The text is set out as 19 lines which scans to fit the 32-bar form. Wren describes the chorus form as a short statement not necessarily in verse\(^271\) and this song is a typical example of recent forms:

My Jesus, my Saviour Lord,  
there is none like you;  
all of my days I want to praise  
the wonders of your mighty love.  
My comfort, my shelter,  
tower of refuge and strength,  
let every breath,  
all that I am,  
ever cease to worship you.  
Shout to the Lord, all the earth;  
let us sing power and majesty,  
praise to the King.  
Mountains bow down  
and the seas will roar  
at the sound of your name.  
I sing for joy at the work of your hands;  
for ever I'll love you,  
for ever I'll stand.  
Nothing compares to the promise I have in you!

The harmony for the song comprises only five chords, the three primary triads, relative minor chord F\(\#\)m, and G major - A, D, E, F\(\#\)m, G - with the changes varying from one to two per bar, fitting in with the pace of the melody.

\[
\begin{array}{c|c|c|c|c}
\text{bars 1 - 8} \\
\text{A} & \text{E} & \text{F\(\#\)m} & \text{E} & \text{D} \\
\end{array}
\]

\(^{271}\) Wren, p. 101.
What can be called the verse section, bars 1-16, is two 8-bar sections, in which the second 8 bars are the same as the first, with the ending varied to finish the verse on the upper dominant rather than the lower. The chord progression is the same for each phrase section, interestingly featuring the use of the G major chord in bar 7 in much the same way as in “Shine, Jesus, shine”.

The chord progression for the second or refrain section is based on a simple two-bar pattern, A – F♯m - D – E in the first four-bar phrase:
As Evans notes, this “is founded on the classic ‘ice-cream change’ chordal pattern … factors combined with an extremely conjunctive melody and small range (a fifth) make the chorus strong powerful and catchy as a result”.\textsuperscript{272} This chord progression, known in harmonic theory as I-vi-IV-V, originated in the rock music of the 1950s and is a formula recognized as producing a strong sense of harmonic movement particularly when repeated as in this example.

The second phrase of the, “mountains bow down…” requires a slight variation of the chord pattern, $F\#m - D - E - F\#m - E$:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{chord_diagram.png}
\end{center}

The refrain section is fifteen bars long with an additional instrumental/chord change to complete the 32-bar form and feel:

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{refrain_diagram.png}
\end{center}

Important for congregational use is the melodic range of a song and this song sits well in the normal vocal range apart from the striking first phrase where the 3-note ascending sequence appears firstly from the 3\textsuperscript{rd} of the tonic chord,

\textsuperscript{272} Evans, p. 121. Evans uses the term chorus for the second section of the song.
then on the dominant chord but at an octave lower than might be expected particularly as it is followed by the tonic an octave above. This leap gives emphasis to the words of the second phrase, “Lord, there is none like you”, “Lord” being on the highest note, and can also be seen to generate emotional energy and add “a special character to the melody”, particularly when compared to the rest of the mostly step-wise motion.

The lower sequence for the words “my Saviour” provides a more intimate feel to the statement which heightens the confident declaration of the next phrase, “Lord there is none like you”.

The melodic range of the verse section sits mostly around the upper tonic (A) using essentially 4-note descending motifs from the A or from the dominant E. The contrast for the refrain section is again focusing on the upper tonic A with a narrower 3-note chant-like motif to start, which then moves to the upper climax note C# in the second of four sub-phrases.

273 Evans: “one of the lowest notes in congregational song”, p. 121.

274 Jansen, p. 145.
The first 8 bars of the second section are repeated except for the final phrase being shortened which emphasises the focus for the ending, “in you”. Although the range of the refrain melody is only a fifth, the movement of the chord progression creates the forward momentum and final resolution.

The hook is a four-note and four word simple motif:

```
A    F♯m

Shout to the Lord, all the earth;
```

This occurs at the beginning of the four melodic phrases of the refrain, although the words “Shout to the Lord” occur only once. This is a similar pattern to the refrain for *Shine, Jesus, shine*.

```
A    F♯m

pow - er and maj - es - ty, praise
```

```
F♯m

Mount - tains bow down and the seas
```

```
F♯m

Noth - ing com - pares to the prom -
```

Another contributor to the impact of the refrain is the contrast to the verse, “an excited slightly faster chorus follows a low-set, reverent stanza”.²⁷⁵

²⁷⁵ Jansen, p. 144.
There is a sense of the refrain being a response to the verse, reinforced by the identical use of the melodic motif of the hook no fewer than six times in this second section. This emphasises the somewhat triumphant command to “shout to the Lord” and makes the hook all the more memorable. Interestingly for such repetition of the hook musically is the fact that the key phrase, “shout to the Lord”, is not repeated.

This song is a good example of a wider context that has emerged for its musical impact, as wherever this song is included in worship, there is probably an awareness of its global status, a connection with the Hillsong church in Sydney, and its overwhelming popularity.

**Touch the earth lightly**

This song with lyrics by Shirley Erena Murray (born 1931) and music by Colin Gibson (born 1933) represents a significant point in contemporary congregational song. Murray and Gibson are New Zealanders who have produced a significant amount of song material together and separately. The *Together in Song* Committee was keen to include songs which deal with the environment from a modern standpoint, as distinct from traditional hymns dealing with creation. Not many were found, but this one is a valuable inclusion.

This song achieves that end successfully through the insightful text and simple musical setting. The text sets the scene with plain-speaking language and two identical half-stanzas:

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276 TIS, no. 668.

Touch the earth lightly,
use the earth gently,
nourish the life of the world in our care:
gift of great wonder,
ours to surrender,
trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

Musically what could be considered a simple folk-style tune is harmonised in four parts yet the harmonic pace and nature of the melody allows it to function to some degree as a folk song might. So this is an example of where the two categories of chorale – hymn and folk – rock might seem to coincide or overlap.

Set in compound triple metre\textsuperscript{278}, the harmonic progression is almost identical to that of Pachelbel’s “Canon in D” which is usually in a simple quadruple metre. The major differences are in the inversions of some of the chords

\textsuperscript{278} The time signature of 9 crotchets to the bar is a useful aid to reading the score and achieving an appropriate pace.
which in this case create a bass line descending almost entirely by step. So while there is sense of familiarity to the sound, with three beats in a bar the chord changes occur mostly on only the first and second beats, producing a simple lilting effect:

bars 1 - 4

\[
\begin{array}{cccccc}
B_b & F & Gm & Dm & E_b & F7 & B_b & Cm & F
\end{array}
\]

The melody is two almost identical 4-bar phrases which could be outlined as two 1-bar sub-phrases a – b, followed by a 2-bar phrase c. The overall structure would then be: a – b – c; a – b – c\(^1\) and the harmonic progression is the same for each of the four-bar phrases with the last bar concluding on the tonic:

Harmonically the rhythm is propelled forward with the repeated chords and it is important in performance that the sense of three beats in a bar is not lost. The suspension in the bass part on the second beat also keeps the harmony moving forward as it resolves on the third beat:
One unusual feature of this setting is the possibility for singing the second verse in the minor key which is indicated by the key signature in brackets. Thus the harmony becomes:

\[
\begin{array}{|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
B_{\flat} & m & Fm & G_{\flat} & D_{\flat} \\
E_{\flat} & m & F7 & B_{\flat} & Cm & F \\
\hline
\end{array}
\]

This creates a more contrasting mood for the second verse which describes human culpability in the polluted and endangered state of the earth:

   We who endanger,  
   who create hunger,  
   agents of death for all creatures that live,  
   we who would foster  
   clouds of disaster,  
   God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

The return to the major key after verse two can create a more optimistic mood in which to contemplate the possibility of action and God’s over-riding call to care for the world:

   Let there be greening,  
   birth from the burning,  
   water that blesses and air that is sweet,  
   health in God’s garden,  
   hope in God’s children,  
   regeneration that peace will complete.

   God of all living,  
   God of all loving,  
   God of the seedling, the snow and the sun,  
   teach us, deflect us,  
   Christ re-connect us,  
   using us gently and making us one.
Melodically the range and shape of the tune demonstrate a different approach to tension and resolution. The range is just over an octave, and works around the upper tonic:

![Musical notation](image)

The phrases appear in a descending fashion with the highest note D occurring in the first sub-phrase followed by what becomes a characteristic interval of a 4th or 5th, descending or ascending:

**Phrase a**

![Musical notation](image)

The second sub-phrase reverses the step motion and copies the descending interval:

**Phrase b**

![Musical notation](image)

Phrase c starts with a sequence from the b phrase but reverses the interval to return to the tonic before repeating the interval and extending the motif to the end of the phrase.

**Phrase c**

![Musical notation](image)
The final phrase c1 is altered and concludes on the third degree of the scale which usually creates a less-finished sense, a softer ending:

```
phrase c1
```

Like the work of Mann and Smith, the lyrics are simple in a conversational sense yet explore images with freshness, and juxtapose ideas in ways which challenge. The fact that the melody starts almost from its highest point and concludes almost at its lowest takes the singers on a different path from so many other contemporary congregational songs. In this sense the melody reflects the challenge to our ideas of what is usual, similar to the intent of the text. At the same time the simplicity of many aspects of this song, particularly the absence of text and musical clichés contributes to its powerful effect.

**Holy Spirit, go before us**279

This text by Elizabeth Smith (born 1956) was written in the first instance for the tune *Blaenwern*280 but now appears in *Together in Song* to *Maria’s Tune*. Her published works are mostly written with existing tunes in mind. Smith’s stated aim has been to provide easily-accessed material in simple language and always using inclusive language.

This (song) was written to get a respectable theology of evangelism into singable form. It is the Holy Spirit who does the

279 TIS, no. 420.

280 TIS, no. 590.
work of evangelism. It is up to us to go where the Spirit has prepared the way, and to open our mouths and speak as the Spirit gives us words. And the Spirit of justice and peace must shape our Christian communities so that our good news is never empty rhetoric, but finds its fullness in practical, loving mission to all in need.  

The initial tune, *Blaenwern*, is a simple version of the chorale – hymn, more in the style of a revival hymn. Presented usually in F major, the tune composed by William Penfro Rowlands during the Welsh Revival (c.1904-5) became more widely known when included in the songbooks for the Billy Graham Crusades. Therefore, as a tune well-known to many congregations, its use with this set of words will carry some of that musical meaning with it, perhaps a stronger confidence in its shape and intent. This tune is used for the text “What a friend we have in Jesus”, which expresses trust in God and accessibility to God through prayer and perhaps creates an association for any other text which uses it.

The tune set in *Together in Song* was selected specifically for this collection. *Maria’s Tune* is a folk-style tune with a wider harmonic range than many examples. It demonstrates the impact of a very simple structure in triple time in which the harmony operates differently in carrying forward the tune and hence the lyrics.


The resulting effect for the singer is that, as text and melody function together, each tune provides a different experience, which is both objective and subjective and one which brings the singers’ assumptions into play.

It is a simple 16-bar tune, based on the 2-bar rhythmic pattern stated in bars 1-2 and containing all the rhythmic material:

This pattern is repeated in sequence a step lower for the second phrase (a1):

The third phrase (b), bars 5-6, uses the same rhythm pattern with an inversion of the quaver upbeat followed by the leap of a 6th taking the melody to the C♯
upper climax before returning to a fragment of the second phrase (a2) and a
descending phrase to pause on low E.

The end of this phrase is harmonised by a C major chord, which, while a little
unexpected, works well to avoid predictability and leads to the A7 chord on
the upbeat to return to the tonic D for bar 9. This harmonic progression
creates an effective sense of movement, with a balance of primary and
secondary chords and particularly when compared with the alternative tune
(below).

bars 1-8

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D</th>
<th>Em</th>
<th>A7</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(bar 8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>F♯m</td>
<td>Em</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 bars repeated with ending
bars 15-16:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Em</th>
<th>A7</th>
<th>D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The overall structure falls neatly into two 8-bar sections, almost identical
except for the last two bars, where instead of the C chord the harmony moves
directly to A7 to conclude on the tonic chord D major. The range of the tune,
low C♯ to high C♯, fits well for congregational singing. The key of D major
matches the gentle nature of the tune. The repetition of the 8 bars creates a
climax in each half of the tune, matching well with the text.

Verse 1:
Holy Spirit, go before us,
every mind and heart prepare
for good news of life in Jesus,
for the joyful hope we share.
Gently lead the lost to safety,
gently teach them Wisdom’s way,
till they come to seek you gladly,
till we find the words to say.

Each of three verses explores two main points in the 8-line stanzas: the role of the Holy Spirit (verse 1) to prepare people to receive the gospel, to lead them gently till they see it for themselves, (verse 2) to empower Christians to speak of Christ, to witness to God’s faithfulness and salvation, (verse 3) to remind us of the Spirit’s constant presence, to remind all of the gospel message of justice, the model of servant hood in bringing in God’s kingdom.

This tune is also a good match for the text with no dramatic leaps, or attention-seeking climaxes. The keyboard style accompaniment provides a simple bass line, setting up a drone for the first four bars and continuing this octave-based pattern throughout:

It is useful to compare this setting with the one which originally connected for the author, Blaenwern. It is usually harmonised in four vocal parts which, with mostly one chord per bar and a very simple chord selection, can sound repetitive.
As a 32-bar melody it is technically twice as long as *Maria’s Tune* but takes the same length of time to sing. There is a constant rhythm pattern through the first section, four 4-bar phrases with an a-b-a-c structure, and the fourth phrase cadences on the tonic.

The second half of the melody makes phrases d and d1 a stronger contrast moving to the climax in bar 23 and again in bar 25, from which the melody falls. The concluding phrase c is the same as fourth phrase.
The two 16-bar sections are more dissimilar than for the Maria’s Tune, the phrases d and d1 being in sequence and introduce a new shape and lead to the upper climax note of high D. The comparisons demonstrate some of the issues of how text and music work in terms of the nature of the chords selected and the pace of the harmonic changes. At the same time there is a contrast between the simple folk style of Maria’s Tune and revival style tune of almost a century before.

**This is the body of Christ**\(^{283}\)

With words and music by John Bell (born 1949) this short song represents an expanding range of congregational song repertoire with specific liturgical purposes in mind. Two ecumenical communities, Taizé in France and Iona off the west coast of Scotland, have developed repertoire which features short repetitive song. The work of both communities has developed significantly since the mid-twentieth century with a strong vision for “bringing together the divided parts of the church”.\(^{284}\) In this sense short songs enable a wide range of people to participate quickly and effectively in communal singing. The


nature of worship in these two communities focuses strongly on contemplative practices and thus many of the songs have a quieter devotional focus. In addition the Iona community collections have included short songs from the church worldwide as in *There is One Among Us – shorter songs for worship* collected and edited by John Bell, in which this song was first published.

This text is specifically for singing during the reception of Holy Communion with a number of repetitions determined by the singers:

This is the body of Christ,
broken that we may be whole;
this cup, as promised by God,
true to his word, cradles our Lord:
food for the good of the soul.

John Bell observes that “as long as this process is relaxed and people feel free to enter and leave the song as appropriate, a text sung by all can be an enriching experience” at this point of the service.\(^{285}\) This is an example of another type of category which Hawn explains as “cyclic musical structures”.\(^{286}\) Thus while the text appears as particularly simple and short, it is significant in the way that the musical structure is developed by repetition, creating an extended form.

The setting in triple time is a simple one which demonstrates the way in which the oral tradition of learning songs can be used for congregational and hence communal singing. This is a feature of the Iona and Taizé experience and extends to the use of repertoire which has evolved in this way, songs from cultures in which musical notation has not been essential.

\(^{285}\) John L Bell, *There is One Among Us - shorter songs for worship* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Worship Group, 1998), p. 82.

\(^{286}\) Hawn, *Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally*, p. 231.
The harmonic rhythm is clearly established with one chord per bar with a suspension note keeping the pace where the last note of the phrase is extended and the chord essentially remains the same, as in bars 3-4:

The harmonic progressions follow usual patterns in the key of F major:

The chord progressions for the first two phrases move away from the tonic carrying the text forward. The melody for phrases a and b uses the same rhythm pattern, with a rising sequence for the second phrase b:
Lines three and four of the text create an extended phrase – bars 9 to 16 – repeating the sequence a step higher, then adding a similar motif which is used twice:

It is these melodic devices which make the tune easy to recall and to learn without notation. The final 4-bar phrase matches the rhythmic pattern of the first three phrases but uses a simple falling third motif to resolve on the tonic.

The four-part vocal harmonisation is very simple but includes more harmonic interest than the one-chord-per-bar pattern, for example, with passing notes in the bass line in the final phrase adding a stronger sense of a dominant-to-
tonic cadence to conclude. The repetitive homophonic harmonies contribute to the sense of the rhythmic pulse, particularly effective in that it moves through a range of progressions in the twenty short bars. It is the ongoing sense of beat created by the harmony which indicates the category of folk-rock, similar to other folk melodies which have been harmonised for four-part singing. Within this framework this simple song highlights the successful combination of text and music, the mood of the text most aptly connected to the descending melodic motifs and the steady chord changes.

Any sense of climax in the melody is created in the middle section of bars 9 to 16 not only by the highest note on the word “true” in bar 12 but also in the effect of the extended phrase with its particular rhythmic and melodic motifs. This section concludes strongly on the dominant chord which allows the final phrase to resolve calmly.

This song is a good example to use in any type of congregational setting. It can be sung without instrumental accompaniment with the vocal harmonies keeping the pulse. It can be accompanied by solo instruments. This highlights the contribution this repertoire can make from a combination of ancient ideas and sources with the ways in which music can operate in the contemporary cultural context.287

287 Harrison, p. 12.
This song published in 2001 is the result of collaboration between English Stuart Townend (born 1963) and Irish Keith Getty (born 1974) who, along with Keith’s wife Kristen, have become well-known in Australia over the past decade in addition to their higher profile and reputation in the United Kingdom and in North America. As songwriters, composers and performers their work and song material may seem to fit mostly into the practices of worship leaders in a CWM setting. However this song is typical of repertoire included in services of more mainline congregations, perhaps able to be accompanied by keyboard as much as by instrumental ensemble.

This song is published in Mission Praise where it appears as melody with a manageable keyboard accompaniment. In this arrangement it is in in the key E♭ which means the voice range of the melody is more suited to communal singing. The melody has a relatively wide range and would not be as suitable in the original key of G major.

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288 Complete Mission Praise, no. 1072.

289 The original and other versions of the song are available online from sources such as http://www.musicnotes.com
An indication of the use of this song in Australia is provided by the local CCLI data which lists it as number two over the past two years. It has now reached the number one position in 2012. This song is representative of the “emerging” voices mentioned by Hawn and is often labeled as a “modern” or “contemporary” hymn perhaps due to the formal stanzas fitting a sixteen-bar melody and without separate refrain.

The process of creating this song is well-documented on the respective websites of Townend and Getty. The melody was one of several composed by Getty and sent to Townend in the hope of his producing texts. It

292 www.worshiptogether.com
293 http://www.stuarttownend.co.uk/; http://www.gettymusic.com/
is described as a Celtic-style melody and is basically pentatonic\textsuperscript{294} which contributes significantly to a sense of simplicity.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{melody.png}
\caption{Melody of \textit{In Christ alone}.}
\end{figure}

This aspect can be compared to other well-known pentatonic melodies such as \textit{Amazing Grace} or \textit{Slane}.\textsuperscript{295} The pentatonic scale is traditionally known for its prevalence in the folk repertoire. The range and notes for the melody in the key of E\textsubscript{b} are:

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{range.png}
\caption{Range of the melody in E\textsubscript{b}.}
\end{figure}

As a melody in triple time it is less easily associated with rock music with its almost inescapable quadruple metre.\textsuperscript{296} The harmonic basis to this song demonstrates a blend of chorale – hymn and folk – rock elements which is becoming more prevalent in examples of current congregational song-writing. Simpler harmonisations of this song which indicate a more folk – rock interpretation are available from online sources.

\textsuperscript{294} The melody includes the 7\textsuperscript{th} degree of the scale used once in the sixth line.

\textsuperscript{295} \textit{Slane} (TIS, no 547) also includes the leading note twice in the third phrase.

\textsuperscript{296} Most rock or popular music is in simple quadruple time.
The harmonisation of a pentatonic melody can be achieved in simple terms with the three primary chords and this is the case with this song. Two secondary chords – Fm7 and Cm7 – are used only briefly and are often omitted from other versions. The harmonic rhythm is set up typically for this song in the first two bars, chord changes occurring on the first and third beats of the bar which creates a lilting effect for most of the song:

bars 1- 4

| A♭ | E♭ | A♭ | B♭ | E♭/G | A♭ | Fm7 | B♭ | E♭ |

Other songs in triple time being analysed in this project demonstrate the tendency for just one chord per bar. In this sense the rhythm established by two chords in most bars creates a sense more akin to the chorale – hymn than might first be deduced. This is where some of the ‘emerging’ voices of more recent hymnody are perhaps drawing on former traditions to create songs within what might be perceived as the ambit of CWM. However it is probably not conceivable that a four-part harmonisation of this melody would be included in song collections.

The melody commences with two 1-bar sub-phrases, the second growing out of the first with a similar upbeat. However the answering phrase b is one unit where the upbeat commences on the third beat, rather than the quaver before, and along with the chords changing on each beat in bar three, it almost alters the perception of the accent when the text is taken into consideration:
The use of additional chords in bar 3 of this arrangement creates an unpredictable change of harmonic rhythm which becomes central to the experience of this song as this phrase occurs three times: phrase b in an overall a/a1 – b; a/a1 – b; c – d; a/a1 – b structure. Each time phrase b cadences on the tonic it creates a settled effect. If the harmonic structure is considered in terms of four 4-bar phrases then all but phrase three, c – d, cadences on the tonic. This is a structural feature more like the chorale – hymn rather than the folk – rock category yet the basically simple use of one of the primary triads on the first beat of each bar plus the simple pentatonic melody produces the folk feel.

If considered as an overall sixteen bar form it is similar to many other melodies, chorale – hymn tunes included, and this creates the experience of being a conventional melody in that sense. Each of the eight lines of each verse scans identically as eight syllables per line, making for a thoroughly strophic setting, again a feature of a blend with the chorale - hymn category.

Verse 1:
In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
this Cornerstone, this solid Ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{bar 3-4} & \\
& \begin{array}{c}
E_b \\
A_b (E_b/G) F_m7 \\
A_b /B_b \\
E_b
\end{array}
\end{align*}
\]
My comforter, my all in all,  
here in the love of Christ I stand.

The overall melodic structure is simple yet it contains features more like the songs of Zschech and Kendrick in its emotive intention through the build up to and use of an upper climax in lines five and six, phrases c and d. The first half of the melody uses a narrow pitch range and moves more by step or small intervals and returns to this range for the last phrase. The contrast occurs in that the pitch range shifts in the c-d phrases taking in an octave range, including the upper climax:

The triadic intervals in phrase c prepare for the octave leap at the beginning of phrase d (bar 10) from which the melody returns by step and finishes as did phrase c. This use of the upper melodic climax is not unlike that which occurs in Slane in which both melodies return to the predictable relaxed sense of the concluding phrase. The octave leap tends to emphasise the text at this point while lines five and six rhyme clearly in all verses also drawing specific attention to the text in the climax phrase:
verse 1: What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are stilled, when striving cease!

verse 2: till on that cross as Jesus died, the wrath of God was satisfied,

The two particular lines in verse two have attracted attention and theological discussion. Noted writer Christopher Wright has mentioned this in his investigation of God's anger and comments that these lines “could be modified to a greater biblical fullness of meaning”:

... till on that cross as Jesus died
God's wrath and love were justified.

The phrase “in Christ alone” almost functions as a hook, being used as the start to the first two verses. A second type of hook or refrain line occurs in the last line each verse, with the exception of verse 3. The text is more prominent with the third occurrence of phrase b and also delivers a sense of a formula:

verse 1: 'here in the love of Christ I stand'
verse 2: 'here in the death of Christ I live'
verse 3: 'bought with the precious blood of Christ'
verse 4: 'here in the power of Christ I stand'

For this song, the main musical effect is in the carrying of the text with its strong Celtic and pentatonic melody and the harmonic pace.


298 ibid., p. 133.
The songs selected for analysis have represented not only the two categories devised for this project but have also demonstrated recent trends in congregational song. In particular there is a sense in which influences merge. Yet the uses of harmonic rhythm as a framework have proved to be a significant criterion to examine. The analysis has focused on the musical and text elements which are basic to an understanding of how the music works. Some reference has been made to the implications of this analysis which will now be examined in greater detail in the following two chapters.
Chapter 5

Summary of the musical and text elements

The analysis of the previous chapters demonstrates many of the features of current congregational repertoire with a focus on harmonic structure, particularly the harmonic rhythm or pace of chord changes. While some reference has been made to musical style, the essential criterion has been to examine the way in which harmonic structure creates the two broad categories of chorale – hymn and folk – rock. Melodic and rhythmic elements have been related to the harmonic structure as essential to the way each develops and functions. Text has been analysed in its relation to melody and harmony.

Harmonic features

It is worth noting that the harmonic vocabulary in all eight examples remains rooted in the Western traditions of tonality. Songs in each of the two broad categories are using the same aspects of key structure, primary and secondary triads, major and minor keys, and occasional modulations. While this is not unexpected, it is significant when discussions of congregational song focus on matters of stylistic differences as if these are insurmountable. The “harmonic language” of contemporary congregational song demonstrates current usage of the tonal system, regardless of different styles. How styles differ can be viewed from this common perspective.

299 Evans, p. 112. There is a significant body of work from twentieth century composers such as Olivier Messiaen, Karlheinz Stockhausen, which goes beyond these harmonic parameters. The repertoire under consideration here has not been directly influenced.
Recent influences such as the blues and folk music of the past century can be seen as in two of the songs analysed. *When his time was over* and *Gather us in* both demonstrate effective use of a more modal sense of scale and key with the use of flat seventh chords. Of the songs which use these chord progressions, one is in the minor key (*When his time was over*) and the other in the major key (*Gather us in*). At the same time, the resulting parallel chord progression at the cadence points in the Mann example, $B\flat - C - Dm$, could be connected stylistically to features of late Romantic music such as in the harmonic structures of Claude Debussy.

In the Graham Kendrick song, *Shine, Jesus, shine*, a similar progression occurs in the four bars at the end of the verse:

The $G$ chord is the flat seventh of the A major key while here it is used as a chromatic link to the dominant chord $E$. The melodic fragment could have been harmonised differently with just the $E$ major chord. This unexpected progression creates greater contrast and stronger movement towards the A major chord at the beginning of the refrain.

This simple device is thus significant in creating harmonic interest. However most of the harmonic vocabulary of mainline congregational song as analysed is predictable. This element of predictability is one which a song ought to have, according to McLean, particularly in terms of “certain resolutions of certain chords”\(^\text{300}\). Using a limited range of harmonies makes the music

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\(^{300}\) McLean, p. 47.
simpler to perform and thus suited to settings where professional musicians may not be available. In this sense the less complicated musical structures indicate a broad principle of accessibility.

In examining harmonic structures, this repertoire can also be seen to be in continuity with the previous three hundred years of musical practice and the span of hymn-singing in the post-Reformation tradition. The major difference in current harmonic usage is in the pace of chord changes as outlined in the various examples of the folk – rock category. It is important to note that the musical stream of folk music is part of the same span of musical history and just as influential as that which may be called ‘classic hymnody’. The increasing prominence of the harmonic structure of this folk – rock pattern comes from the ongoing development of popular musics of the past century. Rock music in its simplest form, and from which it has evolved over the past sixty years, is a combination of the country music styles of the early twentieth century with the blues, which had already given rise to jazz.

As an all-pervading presence in popular culture, rock music provides an unavoidable influence. It is worth noting Quentin Faulkner’s observation that “church music is (now) on the fringe of modern musical creativity. It sets no trends; it only follows trends established by the surrounding culture”.\textsuperscript{301} This can apply to popular music as well as to what are considered higher art music forms. Moreover, it could be considered important to the role of music within the church that it reflects the trends, making obvious connections for those who participate. Even those songs which might be perceived to be more based on popular styles\textsuperscript{302} use standard harmonic structures largely evident in


\textsuperscript{302} \textit{Shine, Jesus, shine} and \textit{Shout to the Lord}
most of the popular repertoire. At the same time and across the same time span, the development of jazz as more of an “artistic genre” has probably achieved greater acceptance than what is commonly known as “pop music”. However from the examples studied the pervasive influence of folk – rock is well in evidence.

The harmonic structures of folk-rock have gradually created expectations about how this music works, largely supported by the evolving culture of the music industry. This is also connected to a part of the music industry entirely focused on producing Christian Contemporary Music and Christian Worship Music. In Australia this is popularly represented by Hillsong Music Australia with its now extensive worldwide sales and recognition. Hence from that perspective, the repertoire of folk – rock congregational song may now be compared to the wider world of popular music. This becomes significant in observing the practices which are considered essential for its performance in church. The harmonic framework is elaborated with a “backbeat and inner pop rhythmic structures” which become significant for accompanying these songs. The importance of analysing harmonic structures will then be to examine the implications for melodic structure.

**Melodic features**

From the analysis of melodies several features can be seen to distinguish further the two categories of chorale – hymn and folk – rock. For the chorale – hymn it could be assumed that the melody exists before the harmony is

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304 Evans, p. 97.

added. Historically the emergence of congregational song in the early years of the Reformation saw examples initially available as melody with text. Many early hymn melodies were “originally intended for singing unaccompanied in unison”. The added harmony parts may not be seen as necessary to performance of the melody. Many of these melodies can still be effectively performed unaccompanied, without vocal harmonies or instruments, as has been the tradition of several parts of the church.

Thus the harmony can be considered from one viewpoint an accompaniment and the skillful organist or keyboardist will attend to this task with reliability as well as imagination. It is important to recognise this fact, that effective instrumental accompanying is required for congregational song to be successful in achieving its end as communal singing. At the same time the realisation of the four-part vocal harmony added to the hymn tune is more than an accompaniment or embellishment, but rather an opportunity for extended participation by singers. Thus the dimension of communal singing is strengthened and expanded. This is an important aspect of the hymn-singing traditions inherited from nineteenth century England which can be seen to have significance for English-singing congregations in Australia.

The melodies of chorale – hymns considered in chapter four illustrate these features of structure and possibilities for performance. This is the body of Christ; Touch the earth lightly; Holy Spirit, go before us to the tune Blaenwern could be sung effectively unaccompanied by either instruments or

306 Wilson, p. 136.

307 Wilson-Dickson, p. 65. Calvin forbade the use of instruments and the practice of singing in harmony.
voices. *In Christ alone* could also be satisfactorily performed in this way particularly on account of its use of the pentatonic scale.\(^{308}\)

At the same time as seemingly optional, the harmonic structure for the chorale – hymn category creates a strong sense of forward movement through time. Chord changes create this sense of pace as well as the sequence of chords contribute to this. The combination of melodic shape and supporting harmony is significant for creating tension and thus for considering how text is set. The pace of harmonic changes connects with the obvious feature of climax in the melody which is also resolved harmonically.

For example in *Touch the earth lightly*, the upper melodic climax occurs in the first bar, supported by the root position tonic chord of \(B^\flat\). The rest of the phrase then moves away from this strong statement of the tonic. The overall descending nature of the melody comes to its lower melodic climax in the last note in bar 4. This is at the end of the first four-bar phrase harmonised by the dominant chord F.

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
\text{Gr. Capo 3} & B^\flat(G) & F(D) & Gm(Em) & Dm(Bm) \\
\text{Eb(C)} & B^\flat(G) & Cm(Em) & F(D) \\
\end{array}
\]

The repetition of this phrase for the second section of text results in the concluding note a tone higher and harmonised by the tonic chord.

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\(^{308}\) The pentatonic scale is recognised as allowing a melody to sound well without harmony.
Most everyday experiences of melody focus on the build-up of tension to an upper climax and its resolution. Also more typically this climax occurs towards the end of a melody for greatest effect – for example *Sine Nomine.*

Other examples in the selection examined here are conventional in this respect. In *Maria’s tune* the almost identical two halves of the melody repeat the upper climax in the third phrase. For the song *In Christ alone* the upper climax could be noted as extreme where an octave leap in the melody of the third phrase creates and resolves tension simultaneously. At the same time the shift of harmony to the A♭ chord on the first beat at bars 9 and 11 creates a strongly contrasting phrase in which the melodic climax occurs.

Occasionally – and famously – a melody will focus the tension and resolution on a lower climax:

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309 TIS, no. 455.
This melody adapted from Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony features the third line where the lower climax occurs on the last note of the phrase and the harmonic pace has changed.

For songs in the folk – rock category, the placement of the melodic climax will usually fall where the harmony is sustained for more than one beat and so the resolution can function differently. The resolution of the climax may be more focused on the next chord change. In *Shout to the Lord* the lower melodic climax is particularly notable as occurring in the second bar with the dominant chord for the whole bar. As has been observed, this provides a stronger contrast to the next line of text which is set almost an octave higher.

This phrase is heard twice in the first section of this song and is significant in creating the mood. It also contributes to the sense of contrast with the melodic range of the refrain which moves to focus on the upper tonic.

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310 TIS, no. 698.
There is then less tension in the refrain section due to the limited pitch range and the formulaic chord pattern, creating more of a chant-like repetitive effect for the entire second section.

The use of a low melodic climax also occurs in *Gather us in* where the specific sub-phrase focuses on the descending interval of a fifth which imitates the opening sub-phrase motion in bar 2 but much lower:

bars 12-14

Thus, rather than creating a significant climax, the harmonic structure combined with the melody contributes a contrasting four-bar section before the final phrase repeats the second phrase with its strong tonic ending.

The harmonic structure works in a similar fashion with the song *When his time was over*. The pace of the chord changes is varied to hold the mood with the G minor chord for the whole of bar 9. Therefore the melody line makes a simple shift with the two higher notes with the four bars of this phrase contrasting with the previous two identical phrases.
It is this lack of a dramatic melodic or harmonic climax combined with a well-constructed melody which contributes towards this song being more interesting than sensational or dramatic.

The simple structure of the melody for *This is the body of Christ* features the first three phrases in ascending sequences. The movement to the climax phrase in bars 12-13 is heightened by the use of the A major chord (bar 10) which has a strong resolution to the D minor chord (bar 11).

The shape of the melody then descends from the highest note with two similar sub-phrases. This extended phrase creates a whole 8-bar phrase to balance the first 8 bars and finally concludes on the dominant chord C. The final four bars function as a “tag” using the same rhythm pattern as the opening phrases, with a different but repeated motif. The cadence of sub-dominant to tonic is a less dramatic progression, creating a softer ending and resolution to the intensity of the previous phrase.

This chant provides an effective illustration of the way in which the two categories have merged in this cyclic song form. The harmonic pace of one chord per bar is appropriate for the melodic length and shape. The vocal
harmony parts are available for performance as the song is repeated in the liturgical setting. Each repetition allows participants to be included in various ways, creating the total experience.

One particular feature for songs in the folk – rock category is the way in which the melody can relate to the harmonic structure in terms of more fragmented phrases or motifs, due to the irregular metre of the text. For the opening two bars of *Shout to the Lord* the melodic sub-phrases start on the second beat of each bar. Where simple quadruple time becomes the norm for rock-based styles the text will be made to fit:

The conclusions of some phrases can also leave seeming extra beats which are essential to the harmonic structure. This example, also from *Shout to the Lord*, shows how the harmonic pace continues across the end of the sung phrase with the chord changes and how the melody accommodates to that:

This is a significant feature in the singing of more rock-style repertoire. The nature of this text is such that the fragmenting of sub-phrases fits the underlying harmonic structure.
One of the significant aspects of the melodies for congregational song is the vocal range or compass. It is important that mostly untrained singers are able to sing in a comfortable part of the voice. Hymn book compilers and editors have paid more attention to this matter in recent times. Many songs are no longer sung in four-part arrangements and so the compass of a melody will usually have been re-located “within the voice range of all members of a congregation”. The melodies of the song examples analysed have largely been in accord with this principle. However the melodies for In Christ alone and Shout to the Lord are of a much wider range than an octave yet still thought acceptable for congregational singing.

Text

Turning to a consideration of text, it has been noted that traditionally the term “hymn” denoted the text of a congregational song. There has been a sense in which it is considered to exist primarily as text: “[t]hat it may be sung is secondary to its essential character as a work of poetry”. The extensive indices which are part of a collection such as Together in Song demonstrate the focus on text. These indices are designed to assist in the selection of music for worship, outlining the content or theme of a song in terms of its appropriateness for the seasons of the liturgical calendar or a particular scripture reading, theological or doctrinal theme. It has thus been generally understood that “the meaning of a hymn (is) … situated exclusively in its text”.

311 Lawrence Bartlett, in “Editors’ Introduction” to Together in Song, p. xvi.


The opening quotation in Chapter 1 from Karl Barth (on page 1 above) reflects concerns about the content of the texts of hymnody. Barth perceives an increasing subjectivity developing over time, particularly since the eighteenth century.\textsuperscript{315} Significant critique about recent developments in congregational song has focused on the soundness of texts, the obvious targets being examples of Contemporary Worship Music.\textsuperscript{316} The primary concern is about theological meaning. This is often expressed in terms indicating concern that “the primary goal should be the delivery of an identifiable message”.\textsuperscript{317} There is strong opinion from more evangelical commentators that “singing is a ‘word’ ministry – it’s not a ministry of worship… singing is one of the prime ways it actually happens”.\textsuperscript{318} This viewpoint maintains a simplistic idea of congregational song with particular influence among writers of Contemporary Worship Music.

The focus on text can be demonstrated through an historical survey of material. As hymn and psalm repertoire developed post-Reformation, texts and tunes were interchangeable. The publication of \textit{Hymns Ancient and Modern} (1861) and its subsequent development and influence on English language hymn-singing resulted in a specific tune being attached to a certain text. This has contributed significantly over intervening time to current ideas about congregational singing and a shift in consciousness to identifying a ‘hymn’ with the tune as much as with the text. In this way the texts of congregational song may seem to have become of lesser importance and this has implications for the way texts are now viewed.

\textsuperscript{315} Barth, p. 254.

\textsuperscript{316} Routley and Dakers, p. 125.

\textsuperscript{317} Jones, p. 96.

\textsuperscript{318} Evans, p. 19; quoting Philip Percival, Director of Emu Music, Sydney.
However it is not the literal meaning of a text which is the only concern. As Wren outlines there are many dimensions to meaning, not least “what the singers understand themselves to be expressing”. Russell Yee comments on the category of “significance, the import of the meaning to particular people at a particular time and place”. It is the significance of texts and their musical settings which will vary and at the same time create greater importance for shared experiences. In this way congregational song has been a major carrier of theology, in its more recent history “a sung theology that changed the world”. Thus an evaluation of song texts is of critical importance to find the broader meanings and implications.

The core of Wren’s critique of congregational song is explained in terms such as: “a good congregational song lyric is devout, just, frugal, beautiful, communal, purposeful, and musical”. These criteria demonstrate a more holistic approach than what might normally be applied to an individual song. These criteria also encourage an assessment across the total repertoire used by a congregation. McLean’s criteria are developed essentially for the CWM repertoire focusing on the importance of lyrics with a points system for “Assessing Theology”. The criteria listed represent the types of songs that comprise CWM repertoire rather than applying to a broader range of lyrics.

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319 Wren, Praying Twice, p. 173.
322 Wren, Praying Twice, p. 189.
323 McLean, p. 117.
Gail Ramshaw provides eight simple questions which can be asked in assessing text. The starting point is about the “address” of the song, how, or whether, God is addressed and how God is represented. One of the earliest references to Christians singing was in terms of their being observed to gather “and to sing a hymn among themselves to the Christ, as to a god”. The second question is about how the Bible is then used, and this has become a particular subject for debate and discussion in the time span under consideration for this project.

In this regard the *Scripture in Song* repertoire has been of considerable significance in its contributions to the hymn explosion, commencing in 1968. Even though there are parts of the church where these mostly short songs are still used there is probably more awareness that in many instances, sentences or phrases were extracted from scripture without substantial recognition of their context. To what extent biblical references or quotations are used “biblically” becomes a significant criterion. Some songs may focus on a particular image, metaphor or story and develop ideas further. For example, *This the body of Christ* takes an element of the gospel narrative – the institution of the eucharist – while reflecting on our response and including a simple reference to the moment of incarnation in the phrase “cradles our Lord”.

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325 Wilson-Dickson, p. 28.


328 Matthew 26: 26.
Ramshaw’s third question is to examine the theological content, how the meaning of the Bible is interpreted particularly with reference to developing understanding in the current context. This idea of contemporary interpretation can be explored through the use of metaphor – the fourth question – which can direct the minds of the singers to what might seem almost impossible to describe, the nature of God. It can also expand the imagination and Ramshaw states that “the perfectly chosen metaphor helps the text embrace a wide range of human experience.”

The matter of inclusive language – Ramshaw’s fifth question – has received substantial attention over the period under study. Brian Wren’s expansive work *What Language Shall I Borrow?*... examines not only gender-based ideas about God but also the difficulties of the “relative imprecision” of God-language. It can be observed that not all current song texts illustrate a satisfactory development of ideas about references to God, or the avoidance of older forms of the English language as taken from the King James Version of the Bible. The sixth question asks “what is the implied description of the human being?” which encourages a consideration of the possible range of human experience and emotion. This is significant in analysing the perceptions of the functions of congregational song, how those singing are being described and what their role might be in relation to the subject and content of the text. For example the song may be expressing confession, praise, or reflection on the scriptures.

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329 Ramshaw, p. 18.


331 ibid., p. 70.

332 Ramshaw, p. 18.
In addition to referring to Ramshaw’s simple criteria, there are particular trends in text construction observed in the eight songs for this project. Several of the texts demonstrate a straightforward use of everyday language. Robin Mann’s *When his time was over* achieves his stated aim of producing songs in “ordinary language” and could be seen to connect to that aspect of his Lutheran heritage in Luther’s promotion of the vernacular. It is observable that Mann’s construction of text is more conversational while still achieving a satisfying poetic style in terms of internal form for each stanza and for all stanzas.

Earlier texts by Mann illustrate similar stylistic features:

```
Feed us now, Bread of life,
in this holy meal;
let us know your love anew:
we hunger for you.
Feed us now, Bread of life,
come and live within;
let your peace be ours today,
Lord Jesus, we pray.
```

As described in Chapter 4, these texts combine the description of events – as in the scripture reference and also in the action of the liturgy – with reflection and response. In *When his time was over*, scriptural ideas are paraphrased effectively while the refrain line “when our life began again” takes the story from its original setting to a point of contemporary identification within the drama of the post-resurrection experience. It places the singer in the narrative, and this is highlighted particularly in the third verse:

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I was one who nailed your hands
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334 TIS, no. 538
when our life began again.

Within the narrative structure of each verse there are short phrases of address to Jesus, petitions which emerge from the scriptures:

Jesus, please forgive me, you know what I am; (verse 3)

Jesus, when I’m dying, remember me that way; (verse 4)

The refrain “when our life began again” becomes a metaphor for the mystery of resurrection and atonement, that into which the community has entered.

Much of Marty Haugen’s work has been directed to the framework of the eucharist and the song examined in Chapter 4, *Gather us in*, illustrates Ramshaw’s eighth question concerning liturgical appropriateness. It is often sung as an introit or at the transition point before the eucharistic prayer. In terms of address to God, the text is a combination of description of what happens as Christians gather as community, and of petition to God to bring this community together on God’s terms. So direct address to God is in the second person and, while sparsely distributed throughout the text, is implied throughout; it is the action of God to gather the community:

Here in this place new light is streaming,
now is the darkness vanished away,
see, in this space, our fears and our dreamings,
brought here to you in the light of this day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken;
gather us in, the blind and the lame;
call to us now, and we shall awaken,
we shall arise at the sound of our name.335

The four verses contain many theological themes, all interpreted as the means of and reasons for gathering. Verse one has a salvation theme, of

__________________________

335 TIS, no. 474, verse 1.
light driving out darkness, the searching and struggle of humanity in its “fears and dreamings”, the range of humanity – “lost and forsaken”, “the blind and the lame” – who are called to gather. Verse two also notes the diversity of those who form the community, of all ages, of the communion of those who have gone before, of the ongoing covenant to be God’s chosen, the taking on of gospel values which are reminders of Mary’s song:

Gather us in, the rich and the haughty;  
gather us in, the proud and the strong;  
give us a heart so meek and so lowly,  
give us the courage to enter the song.

Verse three focuses on the act of communion and God’s call, again, to recapture our purpose as community:

Here we will take of the wine and the water,  
here we will take the bread of new birth,  
...  
Give us to drink the wine of compassion,  
give us to eat the bread that is you;  
nourish us well, and teach us to fashion  
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.

Verse four contains a strong implication for being God’s kingdom in the present, of taking the energies of the eucharistic community to make a difference in the world – the “salt of the earth” of verse three.

Not in the dark of buildings confining,  
not in some heaven light years away,  
but here in this space, the new light is shining,  
now is the kingdom, now is the day.

This comprehensive text is inclusive in language and intention and while expressed in everyday-sounding language, it draws extensively on phrases

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337 TIS, no. 474, verse 4.
which resonate with scripture. Both the Mann and Haugen texts illustrate a simple approach to language and an embedded sense of scripture.

Smith’s text, *Holy Spirit, go before us*, is similar in intent and style. It features direct address to the Holy Spirit and reference to the singers as “us”, providing a strong communal focus. The stated purpose is to present a “theology of evangelism”\(^{338}\) so the text focuses on Spirit-led actions by the Christian community.

```
Holy Spirit, go before us,
every mind and heart prepare
for good news of life in Jesus,
for the joyful hope we share.
Gently lead the lost to safety,
gently teach them Wisdom’s way,
till they come to seek you gladly,
till we find the words to say.\(^{339}\)
```

It is significant to observe the extent of the detail contained in such a song text: the development of each idea, exploring simple statements, the use of interesting turns of phrase, and the extended stanza form. This is typical of what has been identified as the traditional hymn text form, treating the more expansive topics of Christian faith and doctrine. The impact of this song is in its use of everyday language, and the coherence and the linear progression of the ideas.

Shirley Erena Murray is an outstanding writer of texts for congregational song and *Touch the earth lightly* explores a significant contemporary topic. The

\(^{338}\) Smith, *Songs for a Hopeful Church: Words for Inclusive Worship*, p. 70. (as noted in chapter 4)

\(^{339}\) TIS, no. 420.
first line is an Australian Aboriginal saying and the mood of the song is indicated in the gentle opening of both text and music. The text of this song illustrates another carefully constructed progression of ideas, moving from observations of the natural world to the fourth verse of praise and petition to God. The second verse, as noted in Chapter 4, is a stark contrast to the first, as it confesses to violence against creation on the part of humanity. The third verse describes the hope of a balance in our interaction with the natural world, while the final verse focuses on God’s presence and of Christ’s redemptive role in bringing all into a unity and fulfillment.

This is a good example of a new direction taken by some writers of congregational song in the past thirty years, particularly including a more prophetic insight. Rather than fitting neatly into categories or dealing with finely-tuned questions such as Ramshaw’s, this example of Murray’s work taps into Wren’s broader concept of being “devout, just, frugal, beautiful, communal, purposeful, and musical”. Wren’s commentary on this hymn highlights the imperatives of the first stanza: “Touch! … Use gently! … q Nourish!” and these contrast with the “light unstressed endings” of each line. This is a feature of all but the second stanza where the words of accusation are placed at the end of each line: “endanger … hunger …disaster”. These endings have been enhanced by the melodic line and shape with the falling interval of the fifth:

\[\text{Melodic Line:}\]

\[\text{Bm(G)} \rightarrow F(D) \rightarrow Gm(Em) \rightarrow Dm(Bm)\]

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The text of *In Christ Alone* was written in response to the existence of the melody which is now a more common occurrence. Stuart Townend and Keith Getty have co-written a number of high profile songs as well as writing and performing separately. This could be viewed as part of newer 'breed' of singer-songwriters which has been a phenomenon of the popular music industry for some decades. Due to the strict structure of the original Celtic-style melody the text scans as eight syllables per line for each of the eight lines of each of the four stanzas. It is significant to note that there is no direct address to God in any form. Whereas it is providing a comprehensive description of Christ's atoning sacrifice, the focus falls on the last two lines of each verse as the singer claims these as a personal benefit.

The text of this song is an example of a more developed text if compared with other examples of CWM. Thus the strict stanza and strophic form such as this allows for greater development of ideas through each verse and through four verses in total. There is a sequence of ideas focused on individual salvation through “Christ alone”. While the text is expansive it is also more derivative rather than contemporary in its vocabulary, particularly when compared with texts by Smith, Murray, and Haugen.

This phenomenon is not uncommon with the repertoire of CWM with this example relying on more archaic vocabulary from hymns of previous eras with phrases such as “bursting forth in glorious day”, and “when fears are stilled and strivings cease” which do not have a current resonance. The sense, vocabulary and construction of this song are not dissimilar to others such as this well-known gospel hymn composed in 1834:

> My hope is built on nothing less
> than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
> I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

Refrain:
On Christ the solid rock I stand,
all other ground is sinking sand.\(^{343}\)

Unlike examples of other composers and writers this text does not offer significant new insights or fresh expressions of the faith journey. However it is interesting to note from the perspective of the CWM repertoire this song is regarded as a “classic hymn”.\(^{344}\)

The text of **Shine, Jesus, Shine** provides a different response in the emerging repertoire of the 1980s. Hawn places it in the stream of “Revival/Gospel songs”\(^ {345}\) which takes account of Kendrick’s observation as to its reception in the optimistic context of revival. It is a combination of petition to God for revival and for a personal experience of renewal. In the verses God is addressed as “Lord”, “Jesus”, “Light of the world”, while the refrain includes address to the “Spirit” as blazing fire. To the direct address of the refrain:

Shine, Jesus, shine…
blaze, Spirit, blaze…

is added the phrase “Flow, river, flow” in a third matching construction. These three phrases form the text for the musical hook to which is added “send forth your word” for the fourth phrase.

\(^{343}\) Edward Mote; in the public domain.


The scriptural connections are in obvious phrases such as “Light of the world” and in the last line of the refrain combining “word” and “let there be light” in references from Genesis 1 and John 1. The phrase “Flow, river, flow” could be linked to the text in Amos, “let justice roll down like waters”346 and also continue with the image in “flood the nations with grace and mercy”. Verse 3 contains references to the story of Jesus’ transfiguration:

As we gaze on your kingly brightness  
so our faces display your likeness,  
ever changing from glory to glory:  

Theologically there is a focus on personal salvation in verse 2, including phrases from Psalm 139: “search me, try me”. This verse also uses what appear more as clichés with “awesome presence” and “into your radiance”. These contrast with the previous two songs considered where a similar informality was achieved but with a greater depth of text.

Apart from verse 2 the text explores the relationship with Jesus for the whole community: “shine upon us”, “set us free”. Yet as shown in verse 3, the final line of each verse – which is also a version of the “hook” – returns to focus on “me”:

As we gaze on your kingly brightness  
so our faces display your likeness,  
ever changing from glory to glory:  
mirrored here, may our lives tell your story —  
shine on me, shine on me.

There is an obvious fit for this song in the observance of the Feast of the Transfiguration but as pointed out earlier, the musical repetition in the melody of the refrain makes it a song for less than frequent use.

346 Amos 5: 24.
These six texts discussed so far in this section illustrate the category Michael Hawn uses of “sequential musical structures”\textsuperscript{347} where each stanza takes its place, contributing to a developing whole. A careful progression of ideas contributes to a structure that is “inherently literary in form”,\textsuperscript{348} which is another significant criteria for evaluating such texts in a broader context. By contrast Hawn uses the category “cyclic musical structures” for those songs which use a brief text and can occur in a variety of musical styles, such as the next two songs to be considered.\textsuperscript{349}

\textbf{Shout to the Lord} demonstrates a genre of text where the process of composition of both text and music are likely to have happened simultaneously. Instrumental improvisation is often the basis for composition ideas, firstly establishing a harmonic structure with which text and melody are then formed. Certain performance traditions can also be part of the way such music is created, “kinaesthetics rather than artistic logic is often the key to why music sounds the way it does”.\textsuperscript{350} Musicians of different levels of proficiency use the patterns of known chords and melodies to experiment in forming a new composition.

The melody presents as a regular 32-bar form, two sixteen-bar sections with two eight-bar phrases. The two sections are often referred to as verse and refrain even though there is in effect only one verse. The text is more irregular with some internal rhymes but is largely dependent on the musical structure for its effect. This is a good example of a song where words and

\textsuperscript{347} Hawn, \textit{Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally}, p. 225.

\textsuperscript{348} ibid., p. 228.

\textsuperscript{349} ibid., p. 231. Hawn takes this term from the work of ethnomusicologist Andrew Tracey.

\textsuperscript{350} Evans, p. 17, quoting B Johnson, "Watching the Watchers: Who do we think we are?", (1998). http://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/jazz/Arch/BJAR.
music make a total package, where the seeming irregularity of the format of the text is absorbed by the flow of the harmonic structure and the melody. Thus the sense is made more in a speech-like way, which is a feature of this popular-style-based genre. As an example of a short chorus-style song it is longer than the usual form with its two distinct text and musical sections.

The text demonstrates many of the features of CWM, commencing with the intimate, personal relationship with God, something not new for congregational song, although more in evidence proportionately in this type of repertoire.\(^{351}\) This is an expected feature in Pentecostal/charismatic worship settings. The forms of address to God are individual and personal: “My Jesus, my Saviour Lord” but also included are “comfort”, “shelter”, “tower of refuge and strength”, with hints of images from the Hebrew scriptures.

Evans classifies the song as “the most famous Salvation song of the modern era”, a large category in the CMW repertoire, reflecting what is seen to be the strongly evangelical source of so much of the repertoire. Theologically there are statements about God’s love, God’s power and majesty, and also power by means of images of the natural world, thus making the song from Evans’ viewpoint “biblically grounded”.\(^{352}\) This is balanced with various ways that the singer will respond:

\begin{verbatim}
I want to praise, 
let every breath, all that I am 
Never cease to worship you.

I sing for joy… 
for ever I’ll love you, 
for ever I’ll stand.
\end{verbatim}

\(^{351}\) Evans, p 137.  
\(^{352}\) ibid, p. 121.
The key opening line of the refrain section, “Shout to the Lord” is referenced to Psalm 98\textsuperscript{353} and is more often used as the title of the song rather than the opening line. The fact that this text hook is not repeated beyond this first phrase of the refrain means that the repetition of the melodic motif is not as obvious. However the extent to which this song is based in scripture is more in terms of occasional phrases.

Evans notes a balance in the structure of the text:

The balance of the song is also seen in the structure of the verse, where the first two lines speak of the character/title/attributes of Christ, while the next two personally respond to those. Likewise the first half of the chorus is praise, the remainder response.\textsuperscript{354}

This provides an insight to one aspect of the composition of this song, a sense of a linear progression of ideas existing from one section to the next. However within that structure the impression is more of a collection of smaller pieces of varying nature, size and substance, which are worked into a larger form as they are combined to make a song. Although this song now has a level of acceptance in the mainline church under consideration here, the lyrics strongly represent the Pentecostal individualised experience of God.

\textit{This is the body of Christ} is a simpler example of the cyclic musical form. The text fixes the song as a response with the act of communion and illustrates Hawn’s major point that “cyclic musical structures unite organically with ritual actions themselves as they are taking place”.\textsuperscript{355}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{353} ibid., p. 121.
\item \textsuperscript{354} ibid., p. 121.
\item \textsuperscript{355} Hawn, \textit{Gather into One: Praying and Singing Globally}, p. 231.
\end{itemize}
repetitions of the song in any one performance will depend on the ritual action and the response of the singers. Sometimes a leader will provide a signal to conclude the singing or there will be an intuitive response by the singers. The essential feature of a song such as this is that the text can be learnt from a leading group or individual as the song progresses. There are different ways in which the form allows for the community to join in, with voices and instruments.

By reviewing the features of harmonic and melodic structure it is possible to observe the ways in which both operate to contribute to experiencing and expressing the meaning of text. At the same time the analysis of the structure of texts contributes to the understanding of meaning through particular devices such as placement of rhymes, organization of verses, and the use of a refrain. Thus music and text can work together to focus attention on the text in certain ways.

**Combining music and text**

Progressing from this analysis, it has been noted that the matching of music and text is important. Wren provides a range of descriptions of the degrees to which text and music will relate effectively, from disconnection to unity:

> When music is well-matched to its text “the music dramatizes, explains, underlines, ‘breathes life’ into the words, resulting in more meaning than the words themselves could express” and a more powerful effect than text or music alone.\(^\text{356}\)

The songs analysed represent matching of music and text in varying ways.

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Reference has been made to the simple harmonic and melodic structure of *When his time was over* as suitable to the mood and reflective intention of the lyrics. *Gather us in* demonstrates a similarly effective match of music and text, with the compound time creating an energy along with the harmonic changes on each beat. What is significant for these two songs and for three of the other examples is that music and text are created by the one person. As this is now a more prominent feature of congregational song, there can be a stronger assumption that the intent of the text will be matched with that of the music from the start of the composition process. However, although this does not necessarily mean that the most effective match will be achieved in such cases, there is usually only one tune available for the text.

Two of the songs analysed provide examples where the text was devised with a specific melody in mind. Elizabeth Smith’s *Holy Spirit, go before us* was analysed in terms of both the originally intended tune, *Blaenwern*, and that selected by the Australian Hymn Book committee, *Maria’s Tune*. These two tunes are significantly different and provide an example of comparing the idea of suitability of musical structure and effect with that of the text.

The structure of Smith’s text is clearly in two equal sections making a careful exploration of the theme for each verse. *Maria’s Tune* matches this in terms of formal structure with two almost identical sections. So in this sense it may contribute to understanding this aspect of the text. With this tune, the upper pitch climax in the melody occurs twice at the same point of each section of text. For *Blaenwern* there are also two clear sections but the second section begins with a move towards a higher climax which places this at a different point of the text.

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357 *Shine, Jesus, shine; Shout to the Lord; This is the body of Christ*
The text for *In Christ alone* was written for the tune provided by Keith Getty. Interestingly the strict metrical nature of the tune, and the text, means that other tunes which are listed in a hymn book index as 88.88D could also be used for this text.\(^{358}\)

### Meaning in congregational song

The example of *Holy Spirit, go before us* demonstrates some of the varying effects of congregational song and that the change of tune may create a different experience of the text. Wren quotes Dwight Vogel’s “matrix of meaning” where

> the meaning and significance of a congregational song depend on … the interplay between the context in which the song is sung, the melody chosen, and its tempo, harmonization, and accompaniment style.\(^{359}\)

At a simple level the significance of context is experienced in the life of a particular congregation. In taking on a specific song the congregation begins to create its own context and significance for that song. This “matrix of meaning” refers to a more holistic view.

From this point the issue to consider is how congregational song is a “functional art”, the ways in which it is used creating this sense of function or purpose.\(^{360}\) Essentially music functions in time. Philosopher Susanne Langer explains music in terms of its “creation of virtual time” as “the essence

\(^{358}\) TIS, p. 1004.

\(^{359}\) Dwight Vogel, quoted in Wren, *Praying Twice*, p. 79.

\(^{360}\) Wren, p. 76.
Thus as the singing of the community moves through time and thereby through the liturgical form, the basis of its function is in terms of how time is used. While music similar to congregational song may be observed to have different functions, the singing of the community is of particular significance because it is an integral part of worship. In that worship or liturgy is an event in time, congregational song is thus embedded in this whole practice or experience of time. Saliers makes a point that is pivotal to understanding the role or function of any music in worship: “music is not an ornament … (it) is not something we insert or apply to the liturgy, or add on to a web of words and actions … music is an embodied form of praying”.³⁶³

Furthermore as functional art, congregational song exists primarily as a “living practice”.³⁶⁴ By considering how harmonic pace and structure works and also how this carries melody and text, this project is attempting to demonstrate some of the ways in which this living practice operates. It is common from a popular culture viewpoint to consider a song as an object, a product. It is of primary importance to work with the experience of singing in worship as an “action” whose musical parameters have been examined in terms of the repertoire. Begbie explains a “threefold pattern – music-making/text/music

³⁶¹ Langer, p. 125.
³⁶² ibid., p.125.
³⁶⁴ Saliers, Music and Theology, p. 12.
hearing” where “text” is seen as the result of the music-making process. In a sense this is a ‘product’ but one which is an ‘action’. What is also significant for the experience of music-making as congregational song is that the part of the process that is hearing is also assumed by the “makers”. Thus in a cultural and social way ‘music making’ and hearing music become almost the same process; the ‘performers’ are also the ‘audience’.

Another dimension to the function of congregational song in both context and practice is to examine the meaning of the music independently of text – the nonverbal meaning. So while it has been affirmed that the words of congregational song are important, the essential nature of the music is the dimension of time it occupies. To approach congregational song in this manner is to take a much broader view and to consider what happens when congregations sing. This process can also highlight the area of nonverbal aspects of all the arts in worship.

Langer makes the significant point about text as being “virtual memory”: “[t]he different meanings of the words used, and their juxtaposition, are thought to set off within the hearer a pattern of responses that spring from a sense of the past – from the subjective memory.” Thus it can be considered that music and text are working at different levels but also that “virtual time and virtual memory are closely related, memory, after all, having to do with what happened in time past.”


The most significant part of Langer’s explorations is that when

words and music come together in song, music swallows words; not only mere words and literal sentences, but even literary word-structures, poetry. Song is not a compromise between poetry and music … song is music.\textsuperscript{368}

This is the dilemma for congregational song in particular. Such is the all embodied active experience of singing as community that the matter of words - and theology as such - can be overlooked due to the power of the ‘song’. In the recent history of congregational song this can be seen to

account for the tenacity with which some congregations might hold to hymns whose words express inadequate theology, or continue to draw spiritual comfort from sung services which are liturgically anachronistic.\textsuperscript{369}

This also accounts for the critical ways in which music causes text to be retained. So while the theology of text is significant, the dimensions beyond text are particularly significant and will be investigated in the next chapter.

\textsuperscript{368} Langer, p. 152.

\textsuperscript{369} Cole, p. 26.
Chapter 5 provided a summary of the main musical and text features of the selected repertoire. From that information the examination proceeded to how text is carried by the musical structures and also to a consideration of how text is absorbed by the music as it becomes song. Thus in attempting to find how meaning works for the repertoire of congregational song, the analysis points beyond the verbal meaning and the usual assumptions about the explicit theological meaning of the text.

This refers in some ways to what Wren has described as the “ambiguous power of music”. It becomes important to examine questions which, according to Saliers, highlight the elements at work:

[t]hat there is theology in hymn texts is obvious. What is less obvious is what kind of theology this may be said to be. Even less obvious is how musical settings contribute to the theological sense of the text.

As a result, congregational song works in ways not often considered precisely because it is song; it is more than music and text. It is the song and the practices which create it which contribute to theological meaning.

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This chapter will examine major themes within the scope of how congregational song is essentially a communal action or activity. One theme arising out of the musical analyses is that of how to accompany congregational song. Another important theme is that of the emotional experience of singing which connects to issues of both musical practice and context. A broader look at text in its cultural context will also contribute to an understanding of the communal nature of the singing experience. Begbie offers a timely reminder that “music never reaches us on its own”. Thus a more holistic view of congregational song can then lead to a specific examination as to how music and theology interact, and then mutually contribute to the experience not only of worship, but to the formation of the faith community.

The communal nature of congregational song is an imperative on account of worship being the gathering of the Christian community. It is therefore significant to examine what happens when a community sings together. Initially, as singing is an action, the experience can incorporate the individuals into community. Wren describes it that,

as we sing together we belong to one another in the song. We agree, in effect, not to be soloists, self-absorbed meditators, or competitors, but to compromise with each other, join our voices as if holding hands, listen to each other, keep the same tempo, and thus love each other in the act of singing.

The nature of this communal experience is not to deny our individual identity but rather to create, through singing together, the way in which we “belong to one another in Christ.” Guthrie expresses it in terms that singing “is an

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374 Wren, *Praying Twice*, p. 84.

375 ibid., p. 85.
enactment of the differentiated unity of the body of Christ”.\textsuperscript{376} For example this has been noted in the text of \textit{Gather us in} and also explored through the music and the function of the song. This action is not a passive one, such as might be experienced singing along to a recorded song. It is “participatory knowledge” that through song

we share in the life and activity of the church. We learn – we come to \textit{know} – its ways, not by having these articulated for us verbally and conceptually, but by participating in them … a kinesthetic understanding of what the church \textit{is}, by taking part in what the church \textit{does}.\textsuperscript{377}

In examining the action of singing together it is important to explore its formative role, one which is communal as well as individual. In this sense, what is sung has wider implications than the obvious and immediate function of singing, or of the singing as a contribution to worship. To return to the idea of congregational song as “sung prayer”, and to state again Saliers’ emphasising that “music is not an ornament … not something we insert or apply to the liturgy”, whatever form that liturgy might take.\textsuperscript{378}

In looking for criteria by which to evaluate the communal aspect of congregational song the musical elements have certain capacities which must be considered. One practical challenge is to establish how a song is able to be sung effectively by all the community rather than only by a specially rehearsed ensemble. Of first importance usually is the compass or range of the melodies which has been detailed in Chapter 4. Most of the eight song

\begin{footnotes}

\footnotetext[377]{ibid., p. 396.}

\footnotetext[378]{Saliers, “The Integrity of Sung Prayer,” p. 292.}
\end{footnotes}
melodies fit within a comfortable range for untrained singers. Those songs which have a wider range – *Shout to the Lord*, and *In Christ alone* – would be considered accessible after the congregation reaches a point of familiarity. Both songs have a certain energy or emotion which encourages the singing, even across a comparatively wider range.

It has already been noted that there is predictability in the harmonic vocabulary of most of the selected songs, the normal sounds of almost any style of accessible music of the Western tradition as outlined in chapter 5. Another element which has been considered is the potentially complicating use of syncopated motifs in the melody line. The most challenging of the examples considered would be the refrain section of *Shout to the Lord* and this song is largely typical of current songs in this style. In this example the accent implied by the first and third beats of the bar is shifted to the quaver preceding each of those beats. In practice a congregation often develops its own approximation of the rhythmic pattern for a line such as this:

![Musical notation]

In developing a critique, one significant matter not considered in depth to this point is the accompanying of congregational song. Mentioned in chapter 5 was Dwight Vogel’s “matrix of meaning” which included “accompaniment style” as one of the interconnecting aspects which contributes to overall musical meaning. In the task of encouraging the community to sing,

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379 Dwight Vogel, as quoted in Wren, *Praying Twice*, p. 79.
providing appropriate accompaniment or musical leadership is critical to an effective outcome. It is not only about keeping time and setting pitch but also of encouraging and enabling the singing in the way the accompaniment is presented.

In evaluating or commenting on the development of congregational song over the past fifty years it is often noted that the organ has been displaced from a position long held. However the widespread use of the pipe organ or harmonium for local parish congregations only dates from the mid-nineteenth century. It is interesting to observe the records which indicate that its introduction was not without controversy and largely coincided with the introduction of hymn singing in Anglican parishes. In recent times, local parish congregations are less likely to have installed a pipe organ in a new church building, but rather use a piano or electric keyboard instrument. One particular advantage for worship environments with any keyboard instrument is that the volume level can easily be adjusted to suit the size of the congregation and the building. This can be significant when considering other options for accompaniments.

All the songs examined in this project can be appropriately accompanied by a keyboard instrument alone. Some of the more complicated rhythmic patterns would need to be articulated clearly, while some also have accompaniments written specifically for keyboard. Several of the songs could be accompanied satisfactorily by guitar alone – When his time was over; Shine, Jesus,

382 ibid., p. 41.
shine; Holy Spirit, go before us; In Christ alone. One of the practical issues for such accompaniments is the provision for the singers of a clear melodic lead, either by voice or melody instrument.

Another issue is that of the tempo or pace of the song. This becomes more significant with the trend to add a drum kit to instrumental ensembles for worship. If the song is perhaps not conceived with this as a possibility it can sometimes be difficult for players to find an appropriate pattern. As a result a song such as Gather us in can be performed at a slower pace to accommodate a waltz-like drum pattern in triple time which can reduce its effectiveness.

Songs such as Shine, Jesus, shine, and Shout to the Lord have been composed with a percussion-based ensemble in mind. As Hull explains, for “praise choruses, the vocal line is typically dependent on the instrumental accompaniment”. The harmonic framework and the pace of the chord changes are supported and elaborated upon by the drum kit. This combines with the other instruments to create “a sense of being carried along, completed, and contained by the instrumental music … (sustaining) the expressive character of the song.” As described in chapter 5 the more fragmented phrases of melody are secure in this underlying harmonic structure.

The inclusion of percussion-based ensembles in worship is seen to relate to the fact that “music with a beat’ is now an integral part of the cultural milieu in

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384 ibid., p. 19.
which we live.”\textsuperscript{385} Wren states that “music with a beat is not a ‘language’ we need to learn, but ... a cultural form in which we need to work, and with which we wish to converse, in open yet critical dialogue”.\textsuperscript{386} An important aspect for the critique is the suitability of the ensemble for a particular song and its capacity to encourage and support the communal singing.

Most of the eight song examples could have the singing enriched by the use of a variety of percussion instruments, though not necessarily a drum kit. Many worship ensembles are exploring the use of hand-drums and other instruments such as those used in Latin-American or African ensembles. These instruments allow for more flexibility in providing for accent and also create a wider range of tone colour, without basing the song in an unrelenting formulaic rhythmic pattern. For example the mood and function of the song, \textit{When his time was over}, could well be supported by a hand-drum used primarily on the first beat of each bar, with occasional claves and finger cymbals scored to play in different verses.

The enthusiasm for percussion-based ensembles is representative of how “for great numbers of people in our culture, music ‘with a beat’ is so deeply embedded in their consciousness”.\textsuperscript{387} It is possible however to note from the analysis that harmonic rhythm and pace are basic elements to this song repertoire. The addition of a drum kit provides standardised tone colours and largely functions as an embellishment of the basic rhythmic structure, particularly for simple quadruple time. The drummer also has the opportunity to provide a ‘fill’ at the end of a melodic phrase where the structure continues.


\textsuperscript{386} Wren, \textit{Praying Twice}, p. 153.

\textsuperscript{387} Longhurst, p. 26.
It could be suggested that the cultural embedding of music “with a beat” is as much about timbre as rhythmic patterns. At the same time a song such as *In Christ alone* demonstrates how some contemporary worship songs are composed in triple time which is not as common for rock music. This is a small indication of how the range of contemporary song within church culture can still follow a course of its own.

The criterion of supporting and encouraging communal singing is often overlooked in terms of the volume of sound produced by an instrumental ensemble. McLean notes that in many worship settings where there is up-front leadership, amplified sound and visual focus on the band, it is not surprising that the song of the people quietly dies, and a ‘sit back and enjoy the show’ phenomenon takes over unless the leaders work intentionally against this dynamic.\(^{388}\) McLean also suggests that a “full drum kit should be used only when the building is large enough to accommodate the sound without forcing the overamplification of all other instruments for an effective sound mix.”\(^{389}\) A similar experience can occur with the unrestrained resources or insensitive use of a pipe organ or amplified keyboard instrument.

One of the challenges for the worship ensemble which usually includes one or more singers is that the ‘up-front’ placement often indicates a change in relationships to that of performers and audience. This also contributes to a more passive response for what might be intended as congregational song. If the music is presented as performance music then participation becomes that of audience rather than congregation. In this sense the role of context – from

\(^{388}\) McLean, p. 102.

\(^{389}\) ibid., p. 97.
Vogel’s “matrix of meaning”\textsuperscript{390} – is contributing a significantly different perspective on the activity of communal singing and thus the meaning of the songs and the singing experience. As noted by Brian Wren, “performance-oriented popular music, electronic discouragement, and over-amplification” is undermining our understanding of and participation in congregational song.\textsuperscript{391}

The issue is as much about what is perceived to be happening as about the actual physical effects. In a live music situation, the featured singers/soloists are inevitably amplified, “so the sound is bigger than life, and the person who makes it is regarded as bigger than life”.\textsuperscript{392} As certain types of CWM songs have become increasingly soloistic there is also the tendency to defer to the recorded experience of the song and the nature of the sound can persuade the singer that their “own voice has little value”.\textsuperscript{393} In this sense the congregation becomes more of an audience singing along in the style of a popular music concert experience.

One particular musical aspect which is in evidence in a song such as \textit{In Christ alone} is the sense that the song has been composed more as a solo performance song. In the first instance of becoming aware of the song, it is likely to be a solo performance that would be accessed from an online source or recording. Secondly the score available for download states that the original key is G major. It was noted in Chapter 4 that this does not allow for a practical vocal range if encouraging communal singing. Thus it is important that church musicians are able to select and access the more suitable key such as in \textit{Mission Praise}. This situation is also an example of how soloistic

\textsuperscript{390} Vogel; as quoted in Wren, \textit{Praying Twice}, p. 79.

\textsuperscript{391} ibid., p. 53

\textsuperscript{392} Westermeyer: p. 6.

\textsuperscript{393} Wren, \textit{Praying Twice}, p. 52.
and performance-oriented repertoire can add to a lessening of the communal enthusiasm for singing. This dilemma is also rooted in the understanding of authority which is attributed to the recorded version as mentioned above, thus diminishing the value of a ‘performance’ which does not seem to match it.

A positive contribution to community-building and formation through congregational song can be attributed to the use short songs or examples of Hawn’s “cyclical musical structures”. It is specifically the form of the song and the singing practice which demonstrate this potential. A song such as *This is the body of Christ* can easily be learnt as the singing occurs, led by one or more singers. The action of singing can also be embedded in the liturgical action which is implied in the text.

This holistic situation takes on dimensions not necessarily obvious from a glance at the score of the song, such as aspects of the power of song, the embodied act of singing, and careful attention to the context and function of the song and the singing. Recent local research has also contributed to a better understanding of the ways in which communal singing promotes wellbeing and community connectedness which can be recognised as positive contributions to Christian community and formation.

In considering the role of the community in congregational song, Jeremy Begbie explores an expanding world about music and theology which takes account of not just what appears to be the human construction from the

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musical elements. While music is a series of connections, of interrelationships – such as melody and harmony create – it is also part of the sonic order, the physicality of sound in the world, such that it moves beyond our local understanding. Thus while the repertoire analysed is very much grounded in the traditions of Western tonal music, it uses the same raw materials as music from any other tradition. This view can enable the singers to recognise what they bring to the music-making, to appreciate a greater dimension to what they experience. The position of familiarity with our own traditions also enables us to be drawn “into its own sound patterns”, such is its power. This is particularly important for congregational song where a limited but familiar number of variations in forms and functions can provide a very specific type of expectation.

Another dimension of Begbie’s view is that because of this interconnectedness, “[m]usical sound patterns get related to a whole range of things that make up the context of our hearing them”. Social and cultural conventions, as mentioned above, are always part of the connections in the music-making process. Thus the structures of text and music which have been analysed “operate in their own distinctively musical ways”, while also being part of complex contexts.

One of the major and popular meanings assigned to music is that of expressing emotion, feelings, or of creating moods. At the basic level as “time art”, “music evokes emotional responses because it mimics bodily movement and the ebb and flow of emotional states”. Begbie identifies “the emotional

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396 Begbie, Resounding Truth, p. 54.
397 ibid., pp. 54-57.
398 Wren, Praying Twice, p. 64.
power of music … (as) probably its single most controversial feature” with evidence across the centuries from Plato, Augustine and Calvin to our current debates about music and worship.\(^{399}\) The use of music to create or change mood is one of its most obvious uses and one of the primary ways in which it is understood by many people.\(^{400}\) This factor is significant in considering how congregational song is experienced and the expectations that are created for it.

Begbie explores a vast array of recent ideas that provide useful insights for the purposes of music and worship.\(^{401}\) The analysis of musical examples enables recognition and understanding of the way in which musical sound patterns contribute to predictable responses which can be identified as specific moods or emotions.\(^{402}\) However Begbie’s suggestion is that “music can be emotionally valuable because, among other things no doubt, it embodies emotional qualities in a \textit{concentrated} way”. As a result of this concentration, “music can play its part in \textit{educating, shaping, and reshaping us} emotionally”.\(^{403}\) This can be significant theologically in that it orients our response in worship towards developing a greater understanding of the process and our involvement.

While it is usually understood that music has to do with emotion, feeling, and passion, it is essential for congregational song that the context and function provide the guidelines for interpreting and evaluating these aspects of the

\(^{399}\) Begbie, \textit{Resounding Truth}, p. 294.

\(^{400}\) ibid., p. 294.


\(^{402}\) ibid., p. 349.

\(^{403}\) Begbie, \textit{Resounding Truth}, p. 302.
experience. The broad range of music currently available both in and beyond church cultures demonstrates how simple it can be to settle on a specific type of music which fulfills a perceived requirement in terms of emotion. As Saliers noted in his seminal essay in 1981: “this is why the search for adequate musical forms is problematic: precisely because it is so easy to confuse depth of emotion with intensity of immediate feeling”.  

The tendency to interpret feelings or emotions as essential to an experience of belief is a result of a highly individualised culture. Emotions are important in singing together but are essentially about forming and expressing “those emotions which constitute the very Christian life itself”. The experience of singing together, in its ambiguity and multiple layers of meaning is about the broader sense of language and sound within the liturgical setting. The focus on emotions is about those “deeper patterns of life which go beyond merely ‘feeling’ them or being aroused to a certain mood”.

Several writers have noted over the period of time under consideration that increasingly the range of emotions expressed in worship songs is less representative of these “deeper patterns”. Australian Mark Evans has commented notably on the lack of diversity of themes in much of the contemporary worship song repertoire. The songs analysed in this project exemplify a range of themes, and therefore emotions, from reflective narrative to ecological concerns, from doctrinal expressions about the work of the Holy

404 Saliers, "The Integrity of Sung Prayer," p. 293.
405 ibid., p. 293.
406 ibid., p. 293.
407 ibid., p. 296.
408 Evans, p. 164.
Spirit to quiet reflection at receiving of communion. “Thus (it is intended that) great sung prayer gives us emotions proper to life before God”.409

It can be seen that the nature of communal singing as congregational song is “not primarily concerned with moods or with ‘private’ feelings”.410 The experience of our singing will be part of the formative experience of worship which is therefore viewed essentially as communal. It is significant to reflect that “one of the most prominent images of worship developed in the Christian tradition depends on two musical metaphors: musical harmony and unison singing”.411 These are key ideas which relate to musical analysis but are part of the sense in which the experience of singing, and in particular its embodied nature, are links to each other and to the natural world.

The reality of what happens when we sing in a contemporary communal worship setting can often seem to focus on how the singing is perceived or what assumptions are made about a song or its function. Just as the analysis has explored the musical suitability of these eight songs it is also important to note the degree to which the texts are ‘communal’ or ‘congregational’. Chapter 5 presented ways in which the various song texts work, including how the text might match with the music and how context is presented with the package of both as song. Another aspect of text needs to be explored, the point of view of the writer or singer, in relation to the intention to create a communal experience of congregational song.

410 ibid., p. 296.
This particular issue often noted with the texts of contemporary worship songs is the degree to which the use of “I” rather than “we” can give the impression that the singing is a personal and individual experience. In many song examples it is possible to find clear expressions of what has been described as a “deep hunger for intimate relationship”, coming from broader “cultural and social forces”. Hull claims that the “‘praise and worship’ culture can ... be seen as the expression of a narcissistic worldview”. Dawn also explains this trend as being a result of a “technological society (which) increasingly isolates us from one another, with a resulting focus on individual selves and needs, not the good of the community”. While this is more evident in some types of song repertoire there are also implications for the ways in which song repertoire and worship practices are understood.

The text of *In Christ alone* illustrates this point but also demonstrates that the sense of the text can resonate as a communal expression. It can be read that the “I” is representing the statement of the community: “here in the love of Christ I (we) stand”. Similarly, the opening line of *Shout to the Lord*, “My Jesus, my Saviour”, demonstrates this while parts of the rest of the text may be sung more as a communal statement of praise: “let us sing power and majesty”.

Another dimension to this is explored by Bryon Anderson to the effect that “in singing a hymn (or song) we engage in a ritual practice that makes claims upon us individually and in community”. This allows for another expansion

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413 ibid., p. 21.


415 Anderson, p. 208.
of the concern as to what is happening in the singing experience. Anderson describes this in terms that

if our singing is a form of participative knowing through which we come to know ourselves and our place in the world, then our singing is a context in which past and present encounter each other, meaning and self-understanding are transformed, and tradition engages the future.\footnote{ibid., p. 208.}

Thus in evaluating how text contributes to the experience of congregational song the focus needs also to be on a broader sense of its communal purpose.

Each of the themes explored in this chapter contributes to an understanding of the formative nature of and the process which is congregational song. “While singing may … teach and inform faith about theological doctrine, its primary drive is to form and express faith in the realities about which worshipping congregations sing”\footnote{Saliers, \textit{Music and Theology}, p. 61.}. 
Chapter 7

Conclusion - beyond sung theology

This project has examined the contemporary repertoire and practices of congregational song with an analysis of selected songs. These eight songs illustrated the range of more recent repertoire currently used in mainline congregations. This chapter will review the purpose of the project from the point of the analysis and the conclusions which have been drawn at the various stages and what these conclusions can indicate overall for contemporary congregational song.

The significance of musical analysis is that it encourages a greater understanding at the point of contact and response for the singing community. While it may not appear that this information is essential in order to engage in the experience, it provides an important starting point for understanding what happens in the singing experience.

Various aspects of the analysis provide clear indications as to how the musical elements function in forming the experience of a song. The importance of harmonic rhythm and pace as the framework in which the song is situated demonstrates the inescapable experience of the song as an event in time – “music is fundamentally something done”.\textsuperscript{418} The analysis demonstrates also how music combines with the powerful dimensions of text to create song, Langer’s significant contribution to our understanding.

\textsuperscript{418} Begbie, \textit{Resounding Truth}, p. 56.
Thus as singing happens in time, creating this unique form we know as song, specific concerns can move from the song as a cultural artifact or product to the essential action that is liturgy or worship. Thus the analysis has been linked to the communal imperative that is both worship and congregational song. The ways in which the music is formative of community and also the faith of the community have been explored. This is recognised to be beyond the mere carrying of meaning represented in the text. Saliers’ concern with the nature and integrity of “sung prayer” can be seen to be grounded in the “language (that) is not merely that of intellectual assent, but forms the sensibility and the very soul of worship”.\footnote{Saliers, “The Integrity of Sung Prayer,” p. 297.}

Song analysis has also led to an exploration of the practices inherent in the action of congregational song. The ways in which the musical elements work to create the song imply certain practices. The importance of these practices and the role of instrumental accompaniments or vocal leading can be understood initially for the purpose of “encouraging the people’s song”.\footnote{Wren, Praying Twice, p. 99.} Other elements can be seen to intrude when the primary functions of congregational song are misunderstood.

It can be observed that the initial response to the singing of a song may be a highly individual and personal one. It may be seen to focus on the perceived meaning of the text and a sense of mood or emotion. The analysis of the eight examples has demonstrated much wider and deeper levels of activity and understanding. These contribute to an evaluation of the meaning of congregational song as a practice and to the process of establishing criteria for song selection.
The process of analysis has also linked to the ways in which “music is very context friendly”\textsuperscript{421} Such issues of context contribute to the multi-layered experience that is congregational song. These factors are revealed in the responses to singing and yet are part of the broader context “determined by the cultural formation that people bring with them into worship”.\textsuperscript{422} In exploring the connections between the music and the various issues of context, a secondary point to this project has been to highlight the need for appropriate criteria by which to select and use congregational song.

Different musical and textual features have been examined and these provide a basis for a wider and more in-depth consideration. It has been demonstrated that the various factors which comprise congregational song require “an approach that is both \textit{multidisciplinary} and \textit{multileveled}”.\textsuperscript{423} Practical judgments about music in worship and particularly congregational song need to be made against this complex and multi-layered background. By contrast much of the evaluation of worship music or congregational song is observed in terms of what is thought to be “good” music.\textsuperscript{424} In the time considered to be the hymn explosion over the past fifty years, matters of taste or judgments about what is “good” have become dissipated in a culture well beyond the influence of the church.\textsuperscript{425}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Begbie, \textit{Resounding Truth}, p. 57.
\item Dryness, p. 100.
\item Begbie, \textit{Resonant Witness}, p. 7.
\item Ian Jones and Peter Webster, “The Theological Problem of Popular Music for Worship in Contemporary Christianity” http://sas-space.sas.ac.uk/2434/ (accessed December 2010).
\item Brown, \textit{Inclusive yet discerning: navigating worship artfully}, p. 5.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Thus in working through the analysis of congregational song repertoire it has been noted how song and text work, not just in the practical details but acknowledging that this process then highlights a broader and deeper scenario. Frank Burch Brown’s observation about the importance of “how faith is creatively expressed and enacted … not only what is believed or done” helps explore this broader and deeper process. Brown’s primary response to the question of finding what is “good” is expressed in terms of developing “ecumenical taste” in an increasingly diverse range of repertoire. “Our goal as it concerns worship in human communities is to encourage greater diversity and inclusion, combined with greater discernment and discipline”. 

The process of musical analysis is essential to understanding the diversity of the repertoire, finding the criteria which assist with discernment, and encouraging the discipline which leads to inclusion. As quoted earlier from Erik Routley: “what is needed for the improvement of hymnody just now is not exhaustive knowledge but an insight into what happens when people sing them”.

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426 ibid., p. xv.
427 ibid., p. 61.
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## APPENDIX

Scores of songs analysed in Chapter 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>writer/composer - date</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When his time was over</td>
<td>Robin Mann  (published) 1983</td>
<td>TIS 357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gather us in</td>
<td>Marty Haugen  1983</td>
<td>TIS 474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shine, Jesus, shine</td>
<td>Graham Kendrick 1987</td>
<td>TIS 675</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shout to the Lord</td>
<td>Darlene Zschech 1993</td>
<td>TIS 738</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Touch the earth lightly</td>
<td>Murray / Gibson 1992</td>
<td>TIS 668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Spirit, go before us</td>
<td>E J Smith /Hopson  text - 1993</td>
<td>TIS 420</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the body of Christ</td>
<td>John Bell 1998</td>
<td>TIS 791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Christ alone</td>
<td>Stuart Townend/Keith Getty 2001</td>
<td>Mission Praise</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When his time was over

Words: additional permission required. Available from LiценSing & CCLI & Word of Life
1. When his time was over the palms lay where they fell.  
   As they ate together he told his friends farewell.  
   Jesus, though you cried out for some other end,  
   love could only choose a cross  
   when our life began again.

2. Secretly they planned it, with money changing hands;  
   in the quiet garden a kiss betrayed their man.  
   Priests and elders tried him. Soldiers crowned him king.  
   We were in the crowd that day  
   when our life began again.

3. Women wept to see him; he said, ‘Don’t weep for me.’  
   Many laughed and mocked him: ‘Forgive them, they don’t see.’  
   Jesus, please forgive me, you know what I am;  
   I was one who nailed your hands  
   when our life began again.

4. There was one who asked you, ‘Remember me this day.’  
   Jesus, when I’m dying, remember me that way;  
   when my life is over, be with me, my friend,  
   like the thief upon the cross,  
   when our life began again.

Robin Mann  
1949–

Words and music © R. Mann

Words: additional permission required. Available from LicenSing & CCLI & Word of Life
Gather us in

1. Here in this place new light is streaming, now is the darkness
2. We are the young, our lives are a mystery; we are the old, who
3. Here we will take of the wine and the water, here we will take the
4. Not in the dark of buildings con-fin-ing, not in some heav-en

van-ished a-way see, in this space, our fears and our dream-ings,
years for your face; we have been sung through out all of his-tory,
bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daugh-thers,
light years a-way, but here in this space, the new light is shin-ing,

1. I brought here to you in the light of this day.
2. called to be light to the whole hu-man race.
3. call us a-new to be salt of the earth.
4. now is the king-don, now is the day.
1 Here in this place new light is streaming,
2 We are the young, our lives are a mystery;
3 Here we will take of the wine and the water,
4 Not in the dark of buildings confining,

vanished away, see, in this space, our fears and our dreamings,
yearn for your face; we have been sung through all of history,
bread of new birth, here you shall call your sons and your daughters,
light years away, but here in this space, the new light is shining,

brought here to you in the light of this day,
called to be light to the whole human race,
call us anew to be salt of the earth,
own is the kingdom; now is the day.

Gather us in, the lost and forsaken; gather us in, the
Gather us in, the rich and the haughty; gather us in, the
Give us to drink the wine of compassion; give us to eat the
Gather us in, and hold us forever; gather us in, and

blind and the lame; call to us now, and we shall awaken,
proud and the strong; give us a heart so meek and so lowly,
bread that is you; nourish us well, and teach us to fashion
make us your own; gather us in, all peoples together,

we shall arise at the sound of our name.
give us the courage to enter the song.
lives that are holy and hearts that are true.
fire of love in our flesh and our bone.

Words and music by permission G. I. A. Publications Inc, Chicago, Illinois. Marty Haugen
All rights reserved. 1950--
Shine, Jesus, shine

SHINE, JESUS, SHINE 9.10 10.6 and refrain

Graham Kendrick

(\(\text{\#} = 104–112\))

UNISON

1 Lord, the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness, shining;

Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us, set us free by the
truth you now bring—shine on me, — shine on me,

Refrain

Shine, Je-sus, shine—fill this land with the Father’s glory;

blaze, Spi-rit, blaze—set our hearts on fire.

Flow, ri-ver, flow—flood the na-tions with grace and mer-cy:

send forth your word, Lord, and let there be

Last time

light...
1. Lord, I come to your awesome
  presence,
  from the shadows into your radiance;
  by your blood I may enter your
  brightness:
  search me, try me, consume all my
darkness —
  shine on me, shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine, ...

2. Jesus, Light of the world, shine up-on us, set us free by the
thought you now bring — shine on me, shine on me.

Refrain

Shine, Jesus, shine, fill this land with the Father's glory;

blaze, Spirit, blaze, set our hearts on fire.
Flow, river, flow.

3. As we gaze on your kingly brightness
  so our faces display your likeness,
ever changing from glory to glory:
mirrored here, may our lives tell your
story —
  shine on me, shine on me.

Shine, Jesus, shine ...

Graham Kendrick
1950–

Words and music © Thank you Music administered by Scripture in Song
Shout to the Lord

My Jesus, my Saviour Lord, there is none like you;
all of my days I want to praise the wonders of your mighty love.

My comfort,
my shelter, tower of refuge and strength, let every breath,

all that I am, never cease to worship you.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth; let us sing

power and majesty, praise to the King.

Mountains bow down, and the seas will roar at the sound of your
Words: additional permission required. Available from CCLI

SHOUT TO THE LORD

(D = 80-88)

A

E

F\m

E

My Jesus, my Saviour Lord, there is none like you,

D

A

D

A

F\m

all of my days I want to praise the wonders of your

G

D

Es4

E

A

E

mighty love.

My comfort, my shelter,

tower of refuge and strength let every breath,
My Jesus, my Saviour Lord,
there is none like you;
all of my days I want to praise
the wonders of your mighty love.
My comfort, my shelter,
tower of refuge and strength,
let every breath,
all that I am,
ever cease to worship you.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth;
let us sing power and majesty,
praise to the King.

Mountains bow down
and the seas will roar
at the sound of your name.
I sing for joy at the work of your hands;
for ever I'll love you,
for ever I'll stand.
Nothing compares to the promise I have in you!

Darlene Zschech
(1993)
Words and music © 1993 D. Zschech/Hillsong
Music, Australia
1. Touch the earth lightly,  
   use the earth gently, 
   nourish the life of the world in our care: 
   gift of great wonder, 
   ours to surrender, 
   trust for the children tomorrow will bear.

2. We who endanger,  
   who create hunger, 
   agents of death for all creatures that live, 
   we who would foster clouds of disaster, 
   God of our planet, forestall and forgive!

3. Let there be greening,  
   birth from the burning, 
   water that blesses and air that is sweet, 
   health in God’s garden, 
   hope in God’s children, 
   regeneration that peace will complete.

4. God of all living,  
   God of all loving, 
   God of the seedling, the snow and the sun, 
   teach us, deflect us, 
   Christ re-connect us, 
   using us gently and making us one.

Shirley Erena Murray
1931–
*Alternative key signature and accidentals are for verse 2 only
Holy Spirit, go before us

MARY'S TUNE 87.87 D

1. Holy Spirit, go before us, every mind and heart prepare for good news of life in Jesus, for the joyful hope we share.
2. Holy Spirit, come and help us, give us words to speak of Christ. Teach us how to tell all people: deepest darkness can be light!
3. Holy Spirit, stay to show us how to serve as Christ served. May our words of love be grounded in love's actions, first and last.

Hal H. Hopson
1933–

420
Reproduced with permission

Reproduced with permission

MARIA'S TUNE 87.87 D

420

Hal H. Hopson
1933

Reproduced with permission
Alternative tune for text “Holy Spirit, go before us”

Blaenwern 87.87 D

William Penfro Rowlands
1860–1937

Reproduced with permission
This is the body of Christ, broken that we may be
whole; this cup, as promised by God, true to his word,
cradles our Lord: food for the good of the soul.

This song may be repeated one or more times

Words: additional permission required. Available from LicenSing & CCLI & Word of Life
This is the body of Christ, broken that we may be whole; this cup, as promised by God, true to his word, cradles our Lord: food for the good of the soul.

Words: additional permission required. Available from LicenSing & CCLI & Word of Life
In Christ alone

Steadily

In Christ alone          Words: Stuart Townend
Music: Keith Getty

1 In Christ a-lone my hope is found, He is my
    light, my strength, my song; this cornerstone, this solid
    ground, firm through the fiercest drought and
    storm. What heights of love, what depths of peace, when fears are

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In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song;
this cornerstone, this solid ground,
firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace,
when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!
My Comforter, my All in All,
here in the love of Christ I stand.

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

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

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