

Sing and Make Music to the Lord

A study exploring how the musical practice of the Methodist Church impacts the faith and evangelism of its congregations

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Abstract

In 2020, the Methodist Church of Great Britain committed to a five-year evangelism strategy which hoped to develop the discipleship of its existing members and re-ignite evangelism within the Methodist Church. As a denomination which has been known for its use of hymn-singing as a way of teaching theology, encouraging prayer and explaining faith, this thesis explores how congregational singing fits into the evangelism of the modern Methodist Church. A study was done on a sample of churches in the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District which explored how congregational singing helps individuals to feel connected to God, ready to serve God and transformed to be missional Christians. The project contained two questionnaires: one which collected data from congregations and another which collected information about the musical practice of the participating churches. This research method enabled cohesive exploration of how different forms of congregational singing elicit different congregational responses around evangelism. Whilst the data showed that congregational singing was effective within the church, data analysis found a number of areas which need reflection on by the Methodist church as it continues to invest in evangelism.

Authors Declaration

I declare that this thesis is a presentation of original work, and I am the sole author. This work has not previously been presented for a degree or other qualification at this University or elsewhere. All sources are acknowledged as references.

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Why Congregational Singing?

An introduction to the history of hymnody and congregational singing in the Methodist Church of Great Britain

Since the start of the Methodist Movement, the congregational singing of hymns has been considered a key part of Methodist identity and drew people into the movement.¹ Within the twenty-first century the Methodist Church still has an authorised hymnbook and most churches have retained the traditional service structure of having five hymns alternating with other liturgical elements.² However, is the congregational singing in modern Methodist Churches helping grow the faith of its congregants and inspiring its congregations to go out and be evangelistic? This thesis explores the role of congregational singing, in Methodist Churches, in ‘helping worship within the gathered community connect people to God and transform them for mission to the world. [And] be inspired through worship to serve God in daily life.’³ To understand where the Methodist Church is now, this introduction includes a brief history of congregational singing, both generally and then more specifically within the Methodist context.

Why Congregational Singing?

The history of hymn-singing is complicated and covers a vast history, going back as far as Old Testament times. Whilst it is unknown to what extent music was incorporated in worship and prayers, the Book of Psalms is recognised as a book of poems and songs and there is also mention of hymns within the New Testament. For example, Mark 14:26 reads ‘When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives’ and Colossians 3:16 says ‘let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts’.⁴ However, whilst there are over 2000 years of history which could be covered, this section will briefly consider the history of congregational singing and church music that led to the Methodist Church’s involvement with congregational singing.

¹ Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, (London: Hymns Ancient and Modern, 2011), vii.

² Martin V. Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody: Theology, Heritage and Experience*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 154.

³ Jude Levermore and Trey Hall, ‘God for all: The Connexional Strategy for Evangelism and Growth,’ (conference paper, Methodist Conference 2020, June 25- Jul 2nd:2020 MC/20/38), 8.

⁴ Mark 14:26 (New Standard Revised Version); Colossians 3:16 (New Standard Revised Version)

Prior to delving into the musical practice from Elizabethan England onwards, when understanding how the Methodist Movement came to embrace hymnody, there needs to be an understanding of the denomination that introduced congregational singing and hymns to John and Charles Wesley: the Moravian Church.⁵ While traveling to America, John Wesley witnessed a group of Moravians gather together each evening to sing. It was, however, when the boat experienced a storm and the Moravians continued to sing together, that John and Charles Wesley recognised the potential of congregational singing in encouraging and building spiritual strength.⁶ John Nuelsen writes that the German singing was ‘a slice of human experience, a confession of salvation by faith and, of trust in God amid all kinds of difficulties and in face of imminent death’ and this is reiterated by a Bishop of the Moravian church whose ‘remarks suggest that singing and the hours of song were to him the focal points of spiritual and congregational life. He felt that they were ways to a genuine expression of enthusiastic pietistic faith and therefore a measure of the spiritual condition of the congregation’.⁷ It was recognition of this spiritual value and personal experience that resulted in the explosion of Methodist hymnody.⁸ Whilst the Methodist practice of congregational singing will be delved into shortly, it should be noted here that a lot of the historical practices and uses of hymnody within the Methodist Church originate from the Moravian tradition, as highlighted by the academic Martin Clarke. Clarke comments in his book *British Methodist Hymnody: Theology, Heritage and Experience* that the historic Methodist practices of using hymns as devotions, the way John Wesley would structure his hymnbooks and the way that the Methodist movement would sing at all gatherings, are all practices that were also seen within the Moravian church, indicating that Wesley picked up these practices.⁹

Whilst the discovery of hymnody was new for the Wesley brothers, within Germany, hymn-singing had been a feature of congregational worship since the Lutheran Reformation, with Nuelsen commenting that ‘in Germany, the Church hymn supported the reformation, in England the necessary spirit was missing’.¹⁰ Luther himself ‘adapted his hymns of folksong melodies which had become a part of the very flesh and blood of his people’, ensuring that people were singing in their

⁵ John L. Nuelsen : *John Wesley and the German Hymn*, translated by Theo Parry, Sydney H. Moore and Arthur Holbrook. Translator's transcript printed by Mantissa Press, Keighley – 1972, 12

⁶ ‘What is Distinctive about Methodism: Born in Song’, *The Methodist Church*, n.d., accessed April 16, 2024, <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about/what-is-distinctive-about-methodism/born-in-song/>

⁷ Nuelsen, *John Wesley and the German Hymn*, 22; Friedrich Blume, *Protestant Church Music: A History* (W.W. Norton, 1974), 600

⁸ Nuelsen, *John Wesley and the German Hymn*, 22

⁹ Martin V. Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody: Theology, Heritage and Experience*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), 38-39

¹⁰ Nuelsen, *John Wesley and the German Hymn*, 13.

vernacular language and to a tune that they knew.¹¹ However, whilst hymns were missing within English church culture, there was a form of congregational singing that started to appear during the reign of Queen Elizabeth. When the Book of Common Prayer was published in 1549 psalms were set out for Sundays and feast days to be read in English (contrary to the previous Latin) and, over time these became musical.¹² In the first instance, a form of chant was created in which ‘the worshippers sang the first part of a line from the selected psalm on a sustained pitch, with harmonic support resolving this harmony in a series of chords beneath the final syllables’.¹³ However, the music written was mostly chordal and homophonic meaning it was, therefore, written in a way that was not as accessible for congregations as it required a level of literacy.¹⁴ It is suggested, by researcher Andrew Gant, that Queen Elizabeth saved church music as her reign ‘laid the technical and liturgical groundwork for the top-end musical composition’ due to her recognising, and being willing to find, a middle ground between the Catholic musical practices of the reign of Queen Mary and the scarcity of music within the reign of King Edward VI.¹⁵ There became an evident split between the musical practices of cathedral and parish churches with cathedrals having the resources to form choirs that performed evensong.¹⁶ This meant that that cathedral congregations remained silent and listened to choirs for the duration of worship.¹⁷ Contrastingly, parish churches never fully regained choirs and instead congregational singing developed due to the growth of the devotional music making that was happening within people’s homes.¹⁸ Psalm-singing was a practice intended to be devotional and included psalms that were translated, and paraphrased, from Hebrew into English rhyme and metre.¹⁹ Due to the growing popularity of this devotional practice, Queen Elizabeth granted permission for these to be sung within churches before and after services and this was the start of congregational singing within the Anglican Church.²⁰

The biggest barrier in the growth of congregational singing within the Anglican Church was the mindset that hymns were written from ‘human composure’ and were not the ‘direct word of God, as revealed in the Bible’.²¹ Consequently hymn writing and singing was something that

¹¹ Nuelsen, *John Wesley and the German Hymn*, 12

¹² Andrew Gant, *O Sing to the Lord: A history of English Church Music*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 84.

¹³ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody in Print and Practice*, 196.

¹⁴ Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody in Print and Practice*, 197.

¹⁵ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 106-107.

¹⁶ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 142-143; Dowley, *Christian Music*, 113.

¹⁷ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 142-143; Dowley, *Christian Music*, 113.

¹⁸ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 142-143; Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 110.

¹⁹ Timothy Duguid, *Metrical Psalmody in Print and Practice: English ‘singing Psalms’ and Scottish ‘psalm Buiks’, c.1547-1640* (London: Routledge, 2016):5.; Dowley, *Christian Music*, 121, Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 111.

²⁰ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 110.

²¹ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 241.

remained outside of the Anglican Church and within non-conformist worship.²² One of these hymn writers was Isaac Watts, who started to compose a hymn each week that linked with his sermon, thus enabling his congregations to take part in a response to his preaching.²³ For Watts, the reason for his compositions was due to his frustration around poetry within the metrical psalms written by Sternhold and Hopkins, with Watts quoted saying ‘To see the dull indifference, the negligent and thoughtless air, that sits upon the faces of the whole assembly while the psalm is on their lips might tempt even a charitable observer to suspect the fervour of inward religion’.²⁴ For both Watts, and later the Wesleys, the potential for congregational singing to ‘express something personal and individualistic about religious faith,’ was noticed and recognised as something that was not being utilised within the Anglican Church.²⁵

Whilst the Methodists ‘did not invent massed congregational singing’ or hymnody, it is important to understand this history and context when considering what happened within the Methodist movement.²⁶ It was the continued emphasis on congregational singing within the Methodist Church, and the dedication to the publication of hymnody, that enabled hymnody to spread far and wide throughout all denominations.

The Methodist Church and Congregational Singing

In contrast to other denominations, hymns play an important role in teaching the theology and doctrine of the Methodist Church, and therefore, the Methodist Church authorises its hymnody.²⁷ A. Raymond George describes the authorisation of hymnbooks as the following: ‘While the use of the hymn book is not compulsory, the Methodist Conference authorises it just as, like most other churches, it authorises the service book; so that the hymn book, as in some other churches, has an official status’.²⁸ The authorisation of hymnbooks mean that, when people engage with congregational singing within the Methodist Church, they are also gaining an understanding of the theology and doctrines of the Methodist Church.²⁹ Whilst there have been numerous hymnbooks

²² Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 241.

²³ Dowley, *Christian Music*, 124.

²⁴ Dowley, *Christian Music*, 123.

²⁵ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 262.

²⁶ Gant, *O Sing to the Lord*, 266.

²⁷ J. Ernest Rattenbury, *The Evangelical Doctrines of Charles Wesley's Hymns*, (London: Epworth Press, 1941), 63.; Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 185.

²⁸ A. Raymond George, ‘The use of hymns in churches, Methodism’ in *Singing the Faith: Essays by members of the Joint Liturgical Group on the use of Hymns in the Liturgy*, ed. Charles Robertson (Canterbury: Canterbury Press, 1989), 136.

²⁹ Methodist Church, ‘Faith and Order Committee: Section B – Texts,’ (Conference paper, Methodist Conference 2008): 4, Accessed Mar 29, 2022 Conference Reports 2008 (methodist.org.uk)

published since the start of the Methodist movement, there are a select few that are considered authorised and they are: the *1780 hymnbook* with the *1874 supplement*, the 1933 hymnbook titled *The Methodist Hymn book, Hymns and Psalms* (published in 1983) and most recently *Singing the Faith* which was published in 2011.³⁰ The authorisation status of these hymnbooks has not been removed which means that each of these hymnbooks can be considered a statement of the theology and doctrines of the Methodist Church.

However, whilst authorisation is something that continues to exist today, the significance of this has changed with practices around congregational singing, and hymnbooks, changing. A sign of this can be seen in how hymnbooks have changed structure. Hymnbooks have moved away from structures that aided personal devotion and the study of hymns, towards a structure which helps those leading worship find hymns that fit certain themes. The devotional study of hymns was a practice that John Wesley introduced to the Methodist Church following his study and translating of German Moravian hymns, and letters and diary entries written in the nineteenth century suggests that this practice was passed onto those involved in the Methodist movement.³¹ The practice of devotional studies continued in the publishing of the *1933 Methodist Hymnbook*, which saw a publication of a devotional manual, and is still evident today with the *Methodist Prayer Diary* showing a hymn for each day.³² However, it is the structure of the *1780 hymnbook* which emphasises the devotional nature of this hymnbook as it appears to follow the journey of a Christian, with the headings indicating travel from Sinner to Believer and also emphasises some key aspects of Christian thinking, such as the characteristics of God.³³ It therefore suggests that, as an individual studies and reads this hymnbook, their faith might develop. The structure of the hymnbook also suggests that it was not created for communal singing, as the last section of the hymnbook is titled 'For the Society' implying that the rest of the hymns are not for this use but instead for personal prayer and study.³⁴

³⁰John Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*, 18th Edition (London: Conference Office, 1805); John Wesley, *A collection of Hymns for the Use of People called Methodists with a New Supplement* (London: Henderson, Rait and Fenton [reprint of c. 1784 (originally published in 1877)]); Methodist Conference Office, *The Methodist Hymn-book with tunes*, (London: Novello and Company Limited Printers, 1954 [originally published in 1933]); Methodist Publishing House, *Hymns and Psalms* (London: Methodist Publishing House, 1983); Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, (London: Hymns Ancient and Modern, 2011).

³¹Nuelsen, *John Wesley and the German Hymn*, 37; Martin Clarke, 'Hearing and Believing: Listening Experiences as Religious Experiences in Nineteenth-Century British Methodism', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, 17 (2020) 382

³²Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 197; The Methodist Church, *Hidden Treasures: Prayers for every day of the year* (Norwich: Methodist publishing, 2023)

³³Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 17.

³⁴Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*

This is in contrast to the structure of *Singing the Faith* which is organised around themes that would be helpful for someone leading worship, such as 'The adoration of God'.³⁵

Whilst this introduction to Methodist hymnody might suggest that Methodists consider hymns to be an opportunity to study the theology of the church, this is not the case. In the foreword of the *1780 hymnbook*, and in a document called 'Directions for Singing', John Wesley highlights the potential for hymnbooks to be used for experiencing God.³⁶ The penultimate sentence of the foreword to the *1780 hymnbook* reads: 'I would recommend it to every truly pious reader, as a means of raising or quickening the spirit of devotion; of confirming his faith; of enlivening his hope; and of kindling and increasing his love to God and man'.³⁷ For Wesley, hymns were supposed to uplift and encourage its readers and singers, suggesting that hymns have a role in the developing of an individual's faith and, therefore, indicates that they may encourage individuals to share their faith. For example, the Charles Wesley hymn 'O for a thousand tongues to sing', which is published with 10 verses in the *1780 hymnbook*, contains verses such as:

4. He breaks the power of cancelled sin

He sets the prisoner free,

His blood can make the foulest clean,

His blood availed for me.

7. Look unto him, ye nations, own

Your God, ye fallen race,

Look, and be saved through faith alone,

Be justified by grace.³⁸

Not only do these lyrics express Methodist theology but they are also powerful and affirming statements of faith. Wesley wanted hymns to confirm a person's faith and to provide a space for people to be hopeful and rejoice in God. This is reiterated in his 'Directions for Singing' which were published in the hymn book *Select Hymns with Tunes Annext*. These directions include instruction to 'Sing lustily and with good courage', to 'Sing Modestly' and 'sing in time' but Wesley ends these instructions saying:

³⁵ Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, v-vi.

³⁶ Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*, iv.; John Wesley, *Select hymns with tunes annext : designed chiefly for the use of the people called Methodists* (London: [s.n.], 1761), 266.

³⁷ Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*, iv.

³⁸ Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*, Hymn 1

Above all sing spiritually. Have an eye to God in every word you sing. Aim at pleasing him more than yourself, or any other creature. In order to this attend strictly to the sense of what you sing, and see that your *Heart* is not carried away with the sound, but offered to God continually; so, shall your singing be such as the *Lord* will approve of here, and reward when he cometh in the clouds of heaven.³⁹

If Christians in the twenty-first century Methodist Church always sang to these instructions, then music would have a role in their evangelism, because it would be part of their offering to God and a way that congregants would embrace, experience and share their faith. But Wesley's instructions also tell congregants to 'Sing modestly' and to 'Sing in Time' indicating that at singing spiritually has a place in congregational singing and not individual singing.⁴⁰ So, whilst hymnbooks contain theology and can be studied devotionally, for Wesley, that was not their only purpose, for they were also to be sung.

Musical Practice

When discussing hymnbooks, it is interesting to consider how they were printed, and a selection of different images are included within the Appendix that show this.⁴¹ There have always been hymnbooks of words, and of words and tunes, with the main difference being that hymnbooks used to be more condensed then they are now which could be due to printing costs.⁴²



Figure 1 - A collection of hymns with Supplement (1877) 'O for a Thousand Tongues'

Whilst hymnbooks have changed very little, the musical practice of hymnody has varied over the years. Records from the nineteenth century indicate singing was either unaccompanied, or accompanied by an individual or group of portable instruments, which worked well in a period of time when preaching varied from being within a building and on a field.⁴³ Whereas, in the nineteenth century, Methodist Churches favoured the organ.⁴⁴ Clarke notes that organs 'were not regarded as

³⁹ Wesley, *Select hymns with tunes annex*, 266.

⁴⁰ Wesley, *Select hymns with tunes annex*, 266.

⁴¹ See Appendix 8

⁴² See Appendix 8

⁴³ Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 140.

⁴⁴ Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 140.

luxuries only to be contemplated when debts had been cleared' which highlights that, for Methodist Churches, music was not an add-on but instead a crucial element of church life.⁴⁵ Choirs were also prevalent within Methodist churches although Clarke suggests that they were not always warmly received. Clarke writes: 'although choral singing had occupied a place in some Methodist worship since the eighteenth century, it was more slowly and less ubiquitously accepted than congregational singing', however as the nineteenth and twentieth centuries progressed, they became more common.⁴⁶ It is important to note though that, whilst choirs did sing anthems, they never replaced the practice of congregational singing within services.⁴⁷

Nowadays, most churches still adhere to the practice of services containing around five hymns interspersed between other elements of worship such as prayers and the sermon, although churches that have the skills for contemporary worship may follow a structure that contain 'larger blocks of music-making...at the start and end of the services.'⁴⁸ It is thought by some that this form of worship is more flexible as it is less prescriptive than a traditional Methodist service, however there is no evidence to support this claim.⁴⁹ Overall, the musical practice of congregational singing within Methodist Churches has varied and changed over time.

Overview of the study and Conclusion

Congregational singing often forms a central part of worship within Methodist Churches, however, as a church that is 'called to be a growing, inclusive, evangelistic and justice-seeking Church,' how effective is the congregational singing, happening in Methodist Churches, in encouraging its congregations to be evangelistic and helping the church to grow?⁵⁰ This thesis is examining the role of congregational singing to enable, encourage and inspire congregations to be evangelistic. To provide a base for this thesis, the first chapter will provide a definition of evangelism that will be used throughout this study, drawing on information from historical resources and other academic literature, whilst also analysing the Methodist Church of Great Britain's evangelism strategy called 'God for All'.⁵¹ The second chapter is a literature review of Christian congregational music studies which will provide an understanding of the field of research that this thesis is falling within.

⁴⁵ Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 147.

⁴⁶ Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 144.

⁴⁷ Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 145.

⁴⁸ Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 154.

⁴⁹ Clarke, *British Methodist Hymnody*, 155.

⁵⁰ 'Homepage', *The Methodist Church*, n.d., accessed April 16, 2024, <https://www.methodist.org.uk/>

⁵¹ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All'.

This thesis, however, does not revolve around historical research, but rather a research project that happened in the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District (YNE District) in November 2023. Previous research had found no evidence of any practical studies on the role of congregational singing within the twenty-first century Methodist Church, and it was felt that, as the Methodist Church claims its roots are in congregational singing, this gap in research was something that needed to be filled. As a result, a questionnaire-based study was developed, piloted and launched which collected information about the role of congregational singing on the congregations in a sample of churches in the YNE District. Following the chapters as described above, the remainder of this thesis is a write up of this study, including the methodology, analysis and discussion of the data collected before a final conclusion which will make a number of recommendations to the Methodist Church.

Whilst this thesis is an academic piece of work, the motivation for this study is due to a personal commitment to the Methodist Church. I grew up in the Methodist Church before becoming a member in 2013, I am an accredited Local Preacher and I have worked for Methodist Church since 2020. I am currently employed and a trustee of YNE District, meaning that I have a pre-existing relationship with the District involved in the study. It should also be noted that I received funding from both the YNE District and the Methodist Church of Great Britain to do this research as they recognised the potential benefit.

A personal reflection on the state of congregational singing in the Methodist Church is that in the majority of churches that I visit as a Local Preacher within the York Circuit, congregational singing lacks passion and zeal. On occasions, I have experienced the power of Methodist congregational singing at events such as Methodist Conference and as a lay attendee at Presbyteral Synod. Whilst I think that some Methodist Churches have forgotten the reason for congregational singing, I am a strong believer in the power of music in the development of a person's faith. I believe that I have encountered God on two notable occasions, both of which were during times of congregational sung worship, and music continues to be a way that I believe God speaks to me and provides me with peace, comfort, joy and strength. The Methodist Church is a shrinking church, but my hope is that this research provides an interesting insight into the musical practice of congregational singing and evolves into a period of reflection by the Methodist Church. So, whilst this is an academic piece of work, there is a personal motivation that should be acknowledged.

Defining Evangelism and putting it into context

Before delving into the role of congregational singing and evangelism, there needs to be an understanding of what is meant by evangelism. Evangelism is a word which has seen many definitions, varying from the etymological background to the practical exercise, however, to apply evangelism to hymnody it was felt that some work was needed to clarify the definition for this thesis. To formulate this definition this chapter is going to look at the etymological definition and Biblical background of evangelism before looking at the work of William Abraham who considers the practical application of a theological and biblical evangelism. The definition of evangelism will be formed through a conclusion of the etymological and biblical background alongside the theological work of William Abraham and this definition will then be applied to the twenty-first century Methodist Church.

Etymology and Biblical Background

When looking at the etymological background of the word evangelism, the definition seems quite straightforward. The Oxford Dictionary explains that the word 'evangelise' comes from 'the late middle English' but has roots in 'ecclesiastical Latin *evangelizare*' and also from Greek '*euangelizesthai*, from *euangelos*'.⁵² The definition of 'euangelos' is "'bringing good news", from *eu-* "well" [and] *angelein* "announce"' and, with this background of the word meaning to 'announce', evangelism has often been interpreted as being about proclamation.⁵³ However, as will be later explored, academic William Abraham argues that true evangelism is more complex than just proclamation and that, while the word evangelism is not mentioned within the Bible, the instructions given to the disciples indicate that proclamation is not the only way to evangelise.

An important passage used when talking about evangelism in the Bible is Matthew 28: 16-20, 'The Great Commission', which reads as follows:

Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. When they saw him, they worshiped him, but they doubted. And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the

⁵² Oxford Learners Dictionary 'Evangelize', *Oxford Learners Dictionary*, n.d. accessed June 20 2023 <https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/evangelize?q=evangelise>

⁵³ 'Evangelize'; William Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism* (Michigan: W.B. Eerdmans, 1989), 41.

Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”⁵⁴

The Great Commission follows the resurrection of Jesus in the book of Matthew and is often used as an example of what the church should be doing: making disciples and teaching people about God. However, contrary to some interpretations of the etymological definition of evangelism, it suggests that evangelism is more than just proclaiming the good news and instead that evangelism is about creating disciples and teaching them about God. This practice of evangelism is seen within the early church where evangelism was based ‘in the eschatological activity of God, which was inaugurated in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth and continued in the acts of the Holy Spirit’.⁵⁵ This is evident when you look in the second chapter of the Book of Acts which reads:

They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.⁵⁶

This followed a proclamation from the disciple Peter, and it shows that church was not just about listening and automatically being a believer, but it was about giving to those who had less, about fellowship and about encouraging a relationship with God. This is picked up on by Elizabeth Moreau who comments that ‘the evangelistic spread of Christian faith through the earliest converts and their successors, was the outcome of their experience of and participation in the dawn of God’s rule,’ suggesting again that it was the experience of witnessing the eschatological activity of God that was the main fire for the growth of the early church.⁵⁷ Whilst the members of modern church were not witnesses to Jesus, so the origination of its evangelism cannot have the same eschatological base, it should consider how being witnesses to Jesus impacted the way that the early church evangelised. The early church did not just form from a proclaimer but from the communities

⁵⁴ Matthew 28:16-20 (New Standard Revised Version).

⁵⁵ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 92.

⁵⁶ Acts 2: 42-47 (New International Version)

⁵⁷ Elizabeth Moreau, ‘The Logic of the Creed in Evangelism’, in *The Logic of Evangelism Revisited*, ed. Michael Gehring, Andrew Kinsey, Vaughn Baker, Lawrence William, Abraham William (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers), 77

that spent ‘time in communal worship and praise of God, sharing together the sacred gift of food, and offering kindness and hospitality to others’.⁵⁸ This is seen throughout the New Testament in the letters written to new churches, which are often about the community being created and sustaining a community that believes in God. It is also important to consider the chronology of the New Testament briefly because, whilst the modern church looks at passages such as ‘The Great Commission’ as a passage telling them how to evangelise, for the early church this was written whilst they were already growing and could instead be interpreted as ‘an affirmation of what they found themselves doing’.⁵⁹ The ‘Great Commission’ was not what triggered them to start spreading the word of God, but instead the ‘Great Commission’ was their witness and experience of Jesus. So instead of the ‘Great Commission’, George R. Hunsberger suggests that ‘these texts are [an] “evangelising warrant”’ justifying the work that was already happening.⁶⁰

It is also important to consider the language used in the Bible compared to the language used by churches today, with Hunsberger saying ‘that neither the expression “to extend” nor “to build” is ever used in the Bible to indicate the way we should see our responsibility regarding the reign of God’.⁶¹ He goes on to point out that Christians are instead called to extend the Kingdom of God, not to go out and build a church.⁶² Whilst passages like Matthew 28: 16-20, and Acts 2 are used to show that Christians are called to evangelise, if one looks at their language there is no comment about growing a church, but instead about ‘making disciples’ and sharing in fellowship with one another. This could counter some interpretations of evangelism seen within the recent modern church.

When considering all of this, it seems understandable that evangelism is not just about proclaiming but instead holds complexities. Instead of focusing on growing Sunday congregations, if churches took a biblical understanding of evangelism there might be more focus on creating disciples, community, and fellowship, further suggesting that experience, witness, and relationships are crucial to the forming of communities. However, if one takes the etymological definition of ‘bringing good news’, it could be understood that through creating communities and evangelising

⁵⁸ Paul Chilcote, ‘The integral nature of worship and evangelism’, in *The Study of Evangelism*, ed. Paul Chilcote and Lacey Warner (Michigan: William B. Eedmans Publishers, 2008), 3t

⁵⁹ George R. Hunsberger, ‘Is there Biblical Warrant for Evangelism’ in *The Study of Evangelism*, ed. Paul Chilcote and Lacey Warner (Michigan: William B. Eedmans Publishers, 2008), 4g/h.

⁶⁰ Hunsberger, ‘Is there Biblical Warrant for Evangelism’, 4g/h.

⁶¹ Hunsberger, ‘Is there Biblical Warrant for Evangelism’, 4i.

⁶² Hunsberger, ‘Is there Biblical Warrant for Evangelism’, 4i.

through witness and experience, one is still ‘bringing good news’ even if the focus is not on proclamation.

Theology of Evangelism

Whilst the Bible might indicate that evangelism should take a multidisciplinary approach, this has not always been acted upon with the ideas of proclamation and evangelists being central to some historic evangelism strategies. Frustrated by the disconnect between the Bible and the practical display of evangelism, William Abraham published the book ‘The Logic of Evangelism’ which looked to bridge this gap and offer an interpretation of evangelism with a theological background and practical application.⁶³ The subsequent book became a crucial work in the understanding of modern theology and evangelism, and thus forms a substantial part of this definition of evangelism.

Compared to the conventional understanding of evangelism, which is heavily associated with ‘announcing and proclaiming the gospel’, William Abraham suggests instead that churches should be focusing on the type of evangelism implied in the book of Matthew and the early church, arguing that the sharing of faith cannot be done just through proclamation.⁶⁴ Whilst there is space for proclamation, he suggests that it cannot be the only understanding of the word, or the only way Christians view evangelism, as, if churches just focus on proclamation, it suggests that they are instead more focused on growing their Sunday congregations rather than growing the discipleship of the Kingdom of God.⁶⁵ Instead, he offers an alternative definition, suggesting that ‘we can best improve our thinking on evangelism by conceiving it as that set of intentional activities which is governed by the goal of initiating people into the Kingdom of God for the first time’.⁶⁶ In proposing a definition of evangelism that is focused on the creation of disciples, Abraham is suggesting that evangelism is much more nuanced and requires the combining of different church ministries, as ‘it will be impossible to claim that one act alone is enough to constitute evangelism’.⁶⁷ However, it could be suggested that many churches are not prepared for a multidisciplinary approach to evangelism that ‘involve[s] such acts such as proclamation, basic instruction, prayer and ensuring that those who respond are brought to baptism or confirmation,’ and instead, have the structures of evangelism based around proclamation.⁶⁸ When looking at the origin of the Methodist Church, this combinational approach of evangelism can be seen, with Wesley ‘seeing that those who responded

⁶³ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*.

⁶⁴ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 53, 92.

⁶⁵ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 105.

⁶⁶ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 95.

⁶⁷ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 105.

⁶⁸ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 104.

were converted, established in the faith, incorporated into class meeting, and related to the local parish churches'.⁶⁹ This indicates that for the early Methodist Church, it was about bringing people to faith rather than bringing people into a church building.⁷⁰ In his assessment of the twentieth century church Abraham argues that this practice of evangelism has been lost:

At very best, most modern evangelism hands over two things: deeply reduced fragments of the Christian message and the personalistic debris of the Christian moral tradition. It does not supply an adequate summary of the Christian intellectual tradition, it does not introduce the new convert to those gifts of the Spirit without which it is impossible to be an adequately equipped agent of the kingdom in the world, and it does not hand over those fundamental spiritual disciplines without which the believer will ultimately suffocate and die.⁷¹

Abraham suggests that instead churches are focused on the need to keep the church alive and there is evidence to support this. Statistically the number of those who define themselves as Christian in the West is declining and, as a result, some academics feel that 'some mainline churches in America and Europe are in a fit of panic about their future'.⁷² The danger in this is that churches are focusing on 'revers[ing] their numerical decline' rather than focusing on the Kingdom of God.⁷³ It could be interpreted that this is happening within the Methodist Church of Great Britain which committed to a five-year evangelism strategy in 2020.⁷⁴ It could be seen that Methodism has fallen into the trend that John Wesley was concerned about with 'societies losing their passion for evangelism' and 'bureaucrats who are more concerned about numbers and financial figures than they are about reaching out with the good news of the kingdom'.⁷⁵ The danger of an evangelistic approach that is focused on numbers and finance is that the goal of evangelism is misguided and, instead of being about growing disciples as implied by the Bible, it is about growing a church. Michael Gehring writes that 'when the primary emphasis becomes maintaining the institution, what is often lost is an intentional strategy for individual conversion and disciple formation' as 'getting people into church does not necessarily correlate with forming deeply committed disciples'.⁷⁶ Abraham suggests that this has already started, commenting that 'one of the truly astonishing

⁶⁹ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 54.

⁷⁰ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 54.

⁷¹ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 141.

⁷² Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 178.

⁷³ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 178.

⁷⁴ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 178; Levermore and Hall, 'God for All'.

⁷⁵ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 165

⁷⁶ Michael J. Gehring, 'Church Growth and Evangelism', in *The Logic of Evangelism Revisited*, ed. Michael Gehring, Andrew Kinsey, Vaughn Baker, Lawrence William, Abraham William (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2019), 34, 40

features of modern church life is the fact that so many church members need to be evangelised' suggesting that 'we might say that people in modern Western Christianity have been half-evangelised' as a result of the lack of initiation principles within modern churches.⁷⁷

But, if evangelism is not about getting people into church, but about creating disciples, it is important to consider what that means for evangelism as a practice. It is clear that there is an element of proclamation and, whilst that might include teaching people about God and Jesus, academics such as Elizabeth Moreau suggest that there should be a practice of sharing personal stories of witness and testimony. This comes out of the early church where 'the evangelistic spread of Christian faith through the earliest converts... was the outcome of their experience', and this could be applied to the twenty-first century.⁷⁸ This form of proclamation is also supported by research from a project called 'Talking Jesus' which showed that individual Christians are best placed for evangelism due to personal relationships and the conversations that naturally occur.⁷⁹ Theologian John Drane proposes that evangelism could be considered a process which includes multiple events, 'all of [which] present significant opportunities for the sensitive evangelist to nurture the spiritual growth and challenge to new levels of commitment'.⁸⁰ Therefore, the church should consider the journey to commitment in faith and what needs to be included in that. It is suggested by Karin L. Wende and Orlando Costas that included within this needs to be the personal experience and witness of God which is reiterated by Abraham who writes that 'the goal of evangelism becomes not just the formal acceptance of a message or a doctrine but the creation of a new creature'.⁸¹ However, it is further implied by Costas but also Hunsberger that there should be a community around this individual with Costas further writing that:

As a witness to the truth of the gospel, the Christian cannot be content simply with pointing to the historical facts about the life, ministry, and work of Christ. He must interpret the meaning of Christ of the here and now. He must relate Christ's saving work to all of life. Neither must the task of evangelism be understood as a mere sharing of one's personal

⁷⁷ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 113-114

⁷⁸ Moreau, 'The Logic of the Creed in Evangelism', 77

⁷⁹ Talking Jesus, *Talking Jesus Report 2022: What people in the UK think of Jesus, Christians and evangelism* (Talking Jesus, 2022) 15, accessed Jul 20, 2023. <https://talkingjesus.org/research>

⁸⁰ John Drane, *Evangelism for a New Age: Creating Churches for the Next Century* (London: Marshall Pickering, 1994), 114.

⁸¹ Karin L. Wende, 'Conversion, Baptism and Morality,' in *The Logic of Evangelism Revisited*, ed. Michael Gehring, Andrew Kinsey, Vaughn Baker, Lawrence William, Abraham William (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers), 56. ; Orlando E. Costas, 'Evangelism and the Gospel of Salvation,' in *The Study of Evangelism*, ed. Paul Chilcote and Lacey Warner (Michigan: William B. Eedmans Publishers, 2008); Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 126.

experience with Christ. Of course, it includes this, but it also involves interpreting the comprehensiveness of God's salvation to all the peoples of the earth⁸²

This is reiterated further by Mike Booker and Mark Ireland who suggest that 'evangelism is about creating a community, and if people are to grow as disciples of Jesus Christ they need to do that in the context of a community' due to the relationship between belonging and believing.⁸³ The role of this community is expanded by Hunsberger who suggests that when it comes to evangelism the role of Christians 'are those who have been offered God's gift and God's welcome, daily receive, and enter the reign of God ... mean[ing] that evangelism is construed in terms of companionship. [They] walk alongside others to whom the same gift is extended and to whom God offers the same welcome'.⁸⁴ This companionship is considered a crucial part of evangelism by Anne Richards who believes that 'evangelism starts in the deepest heart of a pastoral relationship' with her suggesting that it is this pastoral care that is the 'beginning of the gospel before... proclaiming anything' as it allows for a safe space for the exploration of big questions.⁸⁵ If evangelism is considered a journey, it should be seen that evangelism strategies by the twenty-first century churches should echo this practice and look at ways to journey with people into faith. What the work of William Abraham, and like-minded academics, highlights in relation to the modern church is that when curating evangelism strategies, the focus should not just be on sharing the Word of God, or persuading people to come and sit in a church, but instead there needs to be a focus on how to encourage people to become disciples.

However, it is being suggested by theologians such as Richards, Ireland and Steven Croft that before individuals' journey towards Christian discipleship, the first step is for Christian spirituality to become the answer to a society with increasing spiritual yearning.⁸⁶ Currently, practices like astrology, counselling and tarot cards are answering the spiritual longing of society.⁸⁷ A research project carried out in 2003 by the Coventry Diocese discovered that 'every respondent, no matter

⁸² Wende, 'Conversion, Baptism and Morality,' 56; Costas, 'Evangelism and the Gospel of Salvation', 19e.

⁸³ Mike Booker and Mark Ireland, *Evangelism - which way now?*, (London: Church House Publishing, 2005), 7.; Steven Croft, 'Transforming Evangelism,' in *Evangelism in a Spiritual age: communicating faith in a changing culture*, ed. Steven Croft (London: Church House Publishing) 142.

⁸⁴ Hunsberger, 'Is there Biblical Warrant for Evangelism', 4j

⁸⁵ Anne Richards, 'Reflections,' in *Evangelism in a Spiritual age: communicating faith in a changing culture*, ed. Steven Croft (London: Church House Publishing) 67.

⁸⁶ Richards, 'Reflections'.; Mark Ireland, 'The Local Church Perspective,' in *Evangelism in a Spiritual age: communicating faith in a changing culture*, ed. Steven Croft (London: Church House Publishing); Croft, 'Transforming Evangelism'.

⁸⁷ Rob Frost, 'Beyond the Fringe,' in *Evangelism in a Spiritual age: communicating faith in a changing culture*, ed. Steven Croft (London: Church House Publishing) 99.

what their spiritual or social belief had questions they wanted answering' around destiny, purpose, the universe, God, the spiritual realm and suffering.⁸⁸ Following this research, theologians such as Richards, Ireland and Croft began wrestling with what it means to evangelise in a society that was battling with these questions and whether the established church can fulfil this yearning.⁸⁹ Whilst there is not the capacity to fully explore what these theologians suggest or envisage evangelism to be in this context, it is important to consider some of the key themes. One of these themes is the importance of 'listen[ing] with integrity', with Croft suggesting that the Church needs to be involved in a dialogue that provides the space to explore questions without judgement.⁹⁰ This is reiterated by Randy Newman who suggests that evangelism 'involves more listening than speaking [and] inviting'.⁹¹ Offering the space to explore questions is supported by Ireland who says that 'if today's searchers are attracted by spirituality and experience but are put off by words like truth and doctrine, a more fruitful approach may be to offer short taster courses' to give people a topic that connects with them before talking about Christian apologetics.⁹² Richards strongly believes that evangelism 'is much more about witnessing to why the Christian faith and Christian journey provides a good context for asking these questions and exploring what they mean' but reiterates that there needs to be an open dialogue to explore the questions that people may have.⁹³ She concludes this as meaning that 'evangelism therefore requires a special kind of discernment, in which the sharing of faith and the response to that sharing unfold by a particular negotiation or agreement between those who witness and those who receive the witness'.⁹⁴ What these theologians are suggesting implies that evangelism needs to include safe spaces to explore questions before the sharing of testimony and the proclamation of the Good News.

Therefore, the definition of evangelism that will be referred to throughout this thesis is that evangelism should be a multi-disciplined approach which includes not only proclamation and sharing of faith, but providing a safe space to explore questions before walking with people through Christianity and accompanying them on a journey to becoming a disciple and, subsequently, the role that hymnody has in this.

⁸⁸ Nick Spencer 'Beyond the Fringe,' in *Evangelism in a Spiritual age: communicating faith in a changing culture*, ed. Steven Croft (London: Church House Publishing), 18.

⁸⁹ Richards, 'Reflections'.; Spencer 'Beyond the Fringe,' 18.; Croft, 'Transforming Evangelism'.

⁹⁰ Croft, 'Transforming religion,' 133.

⁹¹ Randy, Newman, *Questioning Evangelism: Engaging People's hearts the way Jesus did*, (Michigan: Kregel Publications, 2004) 26.

⁹² Ireland, 'The Local Church Perspective,' 85

⁹³ Richards, 'Reflections,' 58, 61.

⁹⁴ Richards, 'Reflections,' 68.

Christianity within the twenty-first century

The religious context of our society today has changed drastically from the society that Methodism started in. Whilst England has a national religion and denomination, this is not widely practiced among individuals. The 2021 census saw the percentage of people who would call themselves Christian drop to under 50% for the first time, with only 46.2% of the 94% of those who answered the optional question on religion saying that they were Christian.⁹⁵ The census also showed that “No religion” was the second most common response, increasing by 12.0 percentage points to 37.2% (22.2 million) from 25.2% (14.1 million) in 2011 indicating further that the twenty-first century society is becoming more secular.⁹⁶

In response to the decrease of those who define themselves as Christian, some churches have been doing their own research into Christianity within England. An example of this is the research publication ‘Talking Jesus’ which was organised by a collaboration of different Christian groups and organisations.⁹⁷ The goal of this research was to help churches with their evangelism.⁹⁸ The research was conducted through a ‘10-minute online survey among a total of about 4,000 UK adults’, which is a significant sample size. However, the researchers highlight that the data about to be referenced ‘has a margin error of 1.54%’ which should be taken into account.⁹⁹ The Talking Jesus research concluded that 48% of the population identify as Christian, however, the study further identifies that only 6% of these are practicing Christians.¹⁰⁰ Whilst part of the role of this study was to find out different demographics around those who identify as Christian, it also hoped to provide an insight into the impact of different evangelising techniques. The data showed that the role of the individual Christian is vital in the evangelism of the church. 15% of respondents to the question ‘Where would people go to find out more about the Christian faith’ replied saying that they would turn to a friend or family member who was a practicing Christian.¹⁰¹ A later question, which asked about how people view churches, showed that there is generally a positive opinion about Christians as individuals but negative opinions when asked about the institution of the church.¹⁰² The key

⁹⁵ ‘Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021’, *Office for National Statistics*, Nov 29, 2022, accessed 21 Jul, 2023

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/religion/bulletins/religionenglandandwales/census2021>

⁹⁶ ‘Religion, England and Wales: Census 2021’

⁹⁷ Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 2.

⁹⁸ Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 2.

⁹⁹ Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 3.

¹⁰⁰ Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 7.

¹⁰¹ Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 13.

¹⁰² Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 17-18.

message that came out of this study showed that non-Christians are more likely to know and turn to family or friends thus highlighting that ‘we cannot rely on church leaders to do the work of evangelism; it needs to be the whole church, the whole body of Christ, as we are spread throughout the nation and have close relationships with those who are not yet Christian’.¹⁰³

Whilst evangelism has been defined as the journey to becoming a Christian, not just proclamation, it is evident through this study that conversations are an important for people who are exploring Christianity. However, the study also asked those who are Christian how they came to faith and the answers show that people came to faith through a variety of ways including, conversations with Christians they did or did not know, spiritual experiences, life events, church gatherings, or growing up in a Christian family. This highlights that it is not just proclamation, and there is not just one way to evangelise within the twenty-first century. The twenty-first century Methodist Church and Evangelism

Similarly to many different denominations, the Methodist Church is heavily investing in evangelism with the denomination half-way through a 5-year evangelism strategy called ‘God for All’ which was agreed by the Methodist Conference of 2020.¹⁰⁴ The work of this strategy has a budget of over twenty-two million pounds, but the church is anticipating more money being spent following a strategy development review being presented to the Methodist Conference of 2024.¹⁰⁵ The continuing work, and monetary commitment, highlights the importance that the Methodist Church is placing on evangelism. The ‘God for All’ strategy, and recent work released and shared by the Evangelism and Growth team, is starting to show how people consider themselves to travel with God on a spiritual journey.

The ‘God for All’ strategy consists of eight key areas of work with each section broken down to show how the work will be achieved. The areas of work appear to fit into three key themes: creating church where church currently is not found, improving the discipleship of those within existing churches, and helping those within churches be evangelistic (#everyoneanevangelist). Large proportions of the budget are being spent on ‘New Places for New People’ (NPNP) and ‘Church on the Margins’ (CoM) which both look at reaching out into the community and creating either a new, or different type of, church or creating a church for those who are experiencing marginalisation. Whilst they are trying to reach out into new communities, they are also trying to use existing communities, and the people within them, to create a culture of better discipleship and teaching so

¹⁰³ Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 15.

¹⁰⁴ Levermore and Hall, ‘God for All’, 25

¹⁰⁵ Levermore and Hall, ‘God for All’, 25

that individuals feel better equipped to have conversations about faith. A significant area of work of this work has been a project called 'Hope and Anchor' which comes in the form of a podcast and a touring pop-up venue which travels to different festivals throughout the spring and summer.¹⁰⁶ Its emphasis is on creating an 'inclusive space for conversations that change things' and is about sharing stories and reaching out into different spaces.¹⁰⁷ It accentuates the inclusiveness of the Methodist Church, encouraging people to ask questions, and offers a space to enquire, which might lead to people thinking or joining a faith community. However, whilst the creation of these new spaces or the equipped Methodist people could help people journey to faith, the strategy does not indicate any support or training on how to accompany people to faith but focuses on promoting training on how to be an evangelist. It is undeniable that there is such potential within the creation of these new communities to bring people to faith but, other than creating these new communities, the strategy does not indicate how you might accompany people on the journey to discipleship. Although the strategy document has this slight gap, the work of the Evangelism and Growth team in 2023 has indicated how a branch of existing work is being expanded and developed to have this purpose.

In 2000, the Methodist Conference agreed to a statement called 'Our Calling' which stated that 'The calling of the Methodist Church is to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and to live out its discipleship in worship and mission', and highlighted four areas: Worship, Learning and Caring, Service, and Evangelism; which have become known as the Methodist Way of Life (MWOL).¹⁰⁸ Since the launch of the 'God for All' Strategy, the Evangelism and Growth Team have been developing the MWOL and this primarily started as a piece of work which focused on the discipleship of those already within the church, with an emphasis on building their personal discipleship. In reading the 'God for All' Strategy, the work which MWOL fell into was titled 'Centred in God' and was a 'strategic area of God for All' focusing on 'deepening the discipleship of Methodist people' and therefore laying the foundation for the rest of the strategy.¹⁰⁹ The MWOL was developed into a metaphor of a train network which included twelve different stations, each symbolising a different area of commitment, with the map showing a journey 'where disciples grow in maturity and step out in mission and action'.¹¹⁰ Whilst there is importance in journeying with people who are new to faith, the people journeying with those who are exploring faith have to have a strong relationship with God and the

¹⁰⁶ 'Hope and Anchor – about us', *Hope and Anchor*, n.d. accessed Jul 21, 2023

<https://www.hopeandanchor.io/about-us>

¹⁰⁷ 'Hope and Anchor – about us'

¹⁰⁸ Methodist Church, 'Our Calling – Conference Agenda 2000' (conference paper, Methodist Conference 2000) 3.

¹⁰⁹ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 6.

¹¹⁰ 'Being a disciple on the pathway', *The Methodist Church*, n.d., accessed Jul 21, 2023. [Being a disciple on the pathway \(methodist.org.uk\)](https://www.methodist.org.uk/being-a-disciple-on-the-pathway)

MWOL encourages existing church members to reflect on their relationship with God which will subsequently help evangelism. Abraham suggested, at the time of writing, that most of the modern Western church were 'half-evangelised', so deepening the discipleship of the church is a crucial step in enabling and equipping congregants to have faith conversations with others. The importance of being able to have these conversations was highlighted in the 'Talking Jesus' research which found that conversations with Christians were a 'key influence in their coming to faith,' indicating that it is important for all Christians to have knowledge and confidence in their faith.¹¹¹ However, 2023 the MWOL be developed further, with two videos being released: one with more of an emphasis on those already journeying as a disciple ('The Journey of a lifetime: a Methodist Way of Life') and one on how those in the church can help others start that journey ('How to help people journey: A Methodist Way of Life'), suggesting that MWOL is the resource for that evangelism journey as indicated by Abraham.¹¹²

When reflecting on how musical practice and congregational singing might slot into the evangelism work that is happening within the Methodist Church, one section of the 'God for All' strategy seems to align with this piece of research. The section was titled 'Making Beautiful Worship'.¹¹³ This programme of work (which can be found within the area of work called 'Centred in God') comes in two parts: one focusing on the worship of a gathered community and the other focused on creating space for worship in everyday life, but the goal of both is to improve the worship experienced by people in Methodist churches.¹¹⁴ Due to an interest in congregational worship, 'Making Beautiful Worship: Beautiful Worship within the Gathered Community' has become the core programme of interest for this study. Unfortunately, this area of work has not been developed or explored much by the Evangelism and Growth team at the time of writing.¹¹⁵ Although this section of the strategy is quite limited, an interview with Andy Fishbourne from the Evangelism and Growth team helped to give a bit of background to this strategy, and explained how the team are looking to expand this piece of work. The description within the strategy indicates that this programme of work is focusing on 'helping worship within the gathered community connect people to God and transform them for mission with the world. Worshippers will be inspired through worship to serve God in daily life', indicating three areas which the Methodist Church hope worship will enable and encourage.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Talking Jesus, Talking Jesus Report 2022, 27.

¹¹² Evangelism and Growth Team, 'A Methodist Way of Life Videos', The Methodist Church, n.d. ca. June 2023, accessed Jul 21, 2023. [A Methodist Way of Life Videos](#)

¹¹³ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

¹¹⁴ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8-9.

¹¹⁵ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8. ; This chapter was written in the summer of 2023.

¹¹⁶ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

To have a section within an evangelism strategy which is hoping to improve worship within the Methodist Church could be seen as quite damning towards the worship that is already happening within churches. The group working on this section of strategy had a 'general negative sense about the state of worship' with words like 'dire' and 'paralysing' being used as descriptives, with Andy Fishbourne sharing, 'so that connection with God, I think, is largely missing in perhaps a majority of churches on a Sunday. It has become a bit more of a performance and not a good performance.... We have lost that sense of an expectation that God is going to be with... us'.¹¹⁷ The Evangelism and Growth team want this section of work to tackle the formal idea of worship that has been rooted in the church, and instead want to encourage churches to reflect and create more of a dialogue in worship and about worship.¹¹⁸ Whilst this thesis has a focus on music, when referring to 'Worship' the strategy is referring to an 'act of worship.... Starting from a call to worship, ending with a kind of benediction', with Andy Fishbourne commenting that they had not really attended or thought about music as a specific characteristic of that worship and how that might impact how people connect to God.¹¹⁹ However, despite saying this, a member of the group responsible for developing this piece of work contributed to the curation of *Singing the Faith*, and continues to work on the website *Singing the Faith plus*.¹²⁰ Whilst the Evangelism and Growth team might not be specifically focusing on this, they do have someone engaging with the work who is involved in the present and continuing music life of the Methodist Church. It is also inevitable that, if worship is referring to the act of worship, music will have a role in these conversations. The improvement of worship within the church will inevitably improve discipleship, but it should also impact those who are coming into the church as, by proxy, it should create a space where people can have transformative encounters with God which will help with their initiation into Christianity. Whilst this piece of work within the 'God for All' strategy sits within the section focused on improving the discipleship of the existing church, it should undeniably have a bigger and broader impact.

On first look at the 'God for All' strategy, I naively thought that it was quite simplistic and narrow minded in how it viewed evangelism. It read as a strategy focused on proclamation and improving membership numbers, as well as the discipleship of its current members. However, when observing the ongoing work of the Evangelism and Growth team, one can see that the work is multi-faceted. It is hoping to increase the confidence of those in the church to speak about their faith through work on discipleship and different training opportunities, whilst also giving space for people

¹¹⁷ See Appendix 1.

¹¹⁸ See Appendix 1

¹¹⁹ See Appendix 1

¹²⁰ See Appendix 1; Methodist Church, Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*.

to have interesting conversations about faith and spirituality. It is encouraging people to reach out into spaces where church does not exist, at the same time as creating church for marginalised communities (Church on the Margins). Alongside this, it is hoping to encourage people in existing church communities to help people journey through the Methodist Way of Life and reflect on worship within churches. Through the continuing work of the Evangelism and Growth Team, the Methodist Church has demonstrated a multi-disciplined approach to evangelism which is trying to reach new people, whilst trying to improve the church that already exists.

Conclusion

When combining the biblical background of evangelism, with the theological interpretations of evangelism, there is an easy conclusion that evangelism is more than just proclamation, and instead should involve a multitude of different practices to help individuals understand and commit to being a Christian. An analysis of the Methodist Church 'God for All' strategy and continuing work shows a church which is exploring a multifaceted approach to evangelism which is trying to reach new people, improve the discipleship of the existing church, and is starting to journey with those who are new to faith through the Methodist Way of Life. Abraham acknowledges that there is a journey involved in becoming a Christian and, whilst there is an element of proclamation in this, people need to experience God for themselves alongside learning the basics of Christianity, such as prayer, before being initiated and committing themselves to God.

When considering the relationship between congregational singing and evangelism, there are potentially three different ways that these two factors could interact. It could be that hymns have a role in the proclamation element of evangelism, with congregational singing creating space for transformation, or the lyrics of hymns could have role in the journey to faith by introducing people to the theology of the Methodist Church. Aside from both of these potential relationships, congregational singing could also have a role in strengthening those already with faith to go out and be 'evangelistic', and therefore play a role in the ongoing discipleship of those already in the church. The section of the 'God for All' strategy titled 'Making Beautiful Worship: Beautiful Worship within the Gathered Community of Faith' has highlighted three hopes for worship, and it is this section of the strategy which is the stimulus for this research into the musical practice of hymnody. Therefore, this will be the area of evangelism that will be focused on throughout this thesis and explored through a study into the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District.

Connection and Transformation: The combined power of music and words

Why is singing so important within so many Christian denominations? A brief step outside of Methodism shows that singing has consistently played a role within worship. Before congregational singing was allowed within the Anglican church, congregations engaged with music through choral evensong and now, some churches, have developed high production worship bands that lead their congregational singing. Whilst the practice of congregational singing has stayed within most Christian worship, the style of the worship has become a 'central defining element of a congregation's ministry' and has caused many churches and denominations 'confusion and anxiety' over the perceived need to have a certain type of worship style to help a congregation to grow.¹²¹

The academic field of Christian congregational music has well-documented and researched what is known as 'The Worship Wars', however, this chapter is not aiming to indicate whether one form of congregational singing is more effective as an evangelistic tool.¹²² It is instead looking at what research says about congregational singing and the role congregational singing might have on how individuals view their faith life. This could be explored through the analysis of scientific research into the relationship between music and the brain, however it will instead focus on the critical review of academics and non-academics within the field of Christian congregational music. This chapter explores this interaction by developing the themes of congregational singing as a means of connection, a way of transformation and a commitment to serve God as highlighted within the section of the 'God for All' Strategy titled 'Making Beautiful Worship: Beautiful Worship within the Gathered Community of Faith'.¹²³

Connection to God – the power of words

The individual relationships that Christians believe they have with God are crucial in the development of their faith and the work of the church, and congregational singing has consistently been recognised as an important vessel for these relationships to develop. It is undeniable that music can have an impact in the perceived connection that an individual has with God, and this will be

¹²¹ Constance M. Cherry, 'Merging Tradition and Innovation in the Life of the Church,' in *The Conviction of Things not Seen: Worship and Ministry in the 21st Century*, ed. Todd E. Johnson (Michigan: Brazos Press, 2002), 24.

¹²² The 'Worship Wars' is referencing a continuing debate over musical styles of worship e.g. contemporary vs traditional

¹²³ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

explored later in this chapter; however, there should also be consideration for the lyrics that are sung. Whilst musical style has developed over the years, and the language used within congregational song has become more modernised, theologians have commented that hymns remain a personal testimony that is then sung and becomes part of the singing individual. This section will explore how people of faith use lyrics to support and represent their beliefs.¹²⁴

Academics have contrasting opinions related to the need for the language of sung worship to be accessible, and the history that some language and metaphors have in the church. Janet Wotton writes that ‘hymns have to be accessible to a congregation at first singing, without losing integrity or poetic quality’, indicating that understandable language is key to enabling congregations to engage and understand the words that they are singing.¹²⁵ However, the academic David Brown suggests that there is a ‘need to engage with a poet’s metaphors on their terms rather than ours. Only that way can poetry provide the possibility of access to new understandings and experiences’. He expands further to say that ‘while the vital need for some basic immediate comprehension might seem to pull in that direction, on the other side needs to be set the inherited rich tradition of metaphors within any particular religious community on which the writer can easily draw without obfuscating meaning’.¹²⁶ Whilst there is reason for both of these viewpoints, when considering congregational worship and the language that has historically been and is still used, one needs to consider the changing use of hymnody and hymnbooks. Historically hymns ‘were not written to be sung; they were poems intended to be read and thought about’ and therefore the metaphors used in more traditional hymnody were given space to be understood.¹²⁷ This practice has been lost over the years, and often hymns are announced with minimal explanation before being sung which could be limiting the understanding and engagement of the congregation. Worship leader Bob Kauflin recognises this challenge but suggests that worship should not always be easy and straightforward, saying that God ‘wants to stretch our minds to the limits as we consider the greatness of his being and the wonder of his works. That means some of our songs may require more than one hearing to fully comprehend and may not fit on one page’.¹²⁸ Nick Page further expands this idea, writing that

¹²⁴ Kent Walters, ‘Michael Hawn: Seven Streams of Congregational Song,’ *Institute for Worship Studies* [June, 2014?], accessed March 8, 2024 <https://iws.edu/2014/07/michael-hawn-seven-streams-of-congregational-song/>

¹²⁵ Janet Wotton, ‘The future of the hymn,’ in *Composing Music for Worship*, ed. Stephen Darlington and Alan Kreider (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003), 130.

¹²⁶ David Brown, *God and Mystery in Words: Experience through Metaphor and Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 66, 82.

¹²⁷ Nick Page, *And now let’s move into a time of nonsense: why worship songs are failing the church* (Authentic, 2004), 36.

¹²⁸ Bob Kauflin, *Worship Matters: Leading others to encounter the greatness of God* (Dreamscape Media, 2018), 166.

'hymns were always intended to be multi-purpose.... They were meant to inspire, encourage, challenge and teach Christians.'¹²⁹ As will be explored later in this chapter, it could be said that when some people join in congregational song, they are expecting the presence of God and to feel transformed in God's presence. If this is the case, the using of complex language may be seen as a barrier in allowing people of faith to express their faith; however, as implied by Kauflin, Page and Brown, hymnody was not necessarily written to be easily understood, but instead one role of sung worship is to provide challenge in an individual's faith. Something can also be said for the use of challenging language which requires comprehension as it means that each time an individual sings they might take something different away from the lyrics. John Bell comments on this, saying, 'Like good poetry, it can be explored time and time again, and delivers something of freshness with each performance, and accrues all the while layers of association and fondness'.¹³⁰

Nevertheless, as with all elements of worship, there is a personal element in how an individual engages with the lyrics that they are singing; whilst one hymn might challenge one individual, another's interpretation of the lyrics may open doors in their faith which were previously closed. Bell summarises that 'it is within the purposes of hymnody and church music to speak for God to the people, and for the people to God' indicating that the lyrics written and sung within congregational worship is a way that Christians believe they can communicate with, learn and grow in understanding about God.¹³¹ Page develops this, emphasising that lyrics can sometimes be written in just the 'right' way for an individual to be able to fully comprehend and feel connected with God. He writes: 'Make the words right and they will write themselves on people's hearts. Make the words right and they will form part of people's lives. Make the words right and they will open people's eyes to the reality of God. Make the words right and, as they sing, God will come home to people's hearts.'¹³² This idea is expanded further by Brown who comments that 'Metaphor and analogy are there to illumine our understanding of God. It is not that they constitute or create a way of experiencing God,' before expanding further, saying, 'words, even the words of institution, can do little of themselves to evoke a sense of presence. What matters is how they resonate, their ability to build image upon image in a way that brings to life that sense of presence'.¹³³ Page and Brown highlight that it is important for words to resonate with the individuals who are singing them, implying that it is this engagement that is crucial in allowing lyrics to be opened to individuals, and

¹²⁹ Page, *And now let's move into a time of nonsense*, 18.

¹³⁰ John Bell, 'The lost tradition of Lament,' in *Composing Music for Worship*, ed. Stephen Darlington and Alan Kreider (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003), 116.

¹³¹ Bell, 'The lost tradition of lament,' 111.

¹³² Page, *And now let's move into a time of nonsense*, 112.

¹³³ Brown, *God and Mystery in Words*, 6, 57.

provide a way for people of faith to feel connected with God. It could also be argued that for lyrics to resonate with the individual, the individual may need a depth of understanding which is potentially not on offer in today's churches.

The hymn 'Love Divine' was written by Charles Wesley, and first published in 1747 in the hymnbook *Hymns for those who seek and those that have Redemption in the Blood of Jesus Christ* and has since been a hymn regularly found within Methodist hymnbooks.¹³⁴ The *Singing the Faith plus* website comments on the combination of the words written by Charles Wesley and tune Blaenwern as having the power to 'bind a singing community together like no other hymn', however, the lyrics that are being sung are rich in poetry and biblical references.¹³⁵ For example, the last verse contains references to six different Bible passages, and also builds a beautiful illustration:

Finish then, thy new creation,
 Pure and spotless let us be;
 Let us see thy great salvation,
 Perfectly restored in thee:
 Changed from glory into glory,
 Till in heaven we take our place,
 Till we cast out crowns before thee,
 Lost in wonder, love and praise!¹³⁶

Within Methodism, hymnody is understood as having a place in telling and teaching the theology of the church, alongside creating opportunity for individuals to engage with the Bible (sometimes unknown to them) and to allow them to feel that they can experience and engage with God. Love Divine contains several links to Methodist theology, with emphasis in previous verses of the Methodist theology of 'all can be saved,' whilst the third verse carries theological links to the Wesleyan theology of Christian perfection which can be seen in the lyrics 'pure and spotless' and 'changed from glory into glory'.¹³⁷ Whilst there could be further discussion into this theology, and the role of hymnody in teaching Methodist theology, it is not the area of this thesis. Instead, this case study was to show an example of how lyrics can serve multiple functions. Whilst some academics

¹³⁴ Norma Goldhawk and Kenneth Trickett, ed., *Companion to Hymns and Psalms* (Peterborough: Methodist Publishing House, 1988), 180.

¹³⁵ 'StF 503: Love Divine,' *Singing the Faith Plus*, n.d., accessed March 13, 2024, <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/hymns/love-divine-all-loves-excelling-stf-503/>

¹³⁶ Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, 503.

¹³⁷ Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, 503.

feel that hymns should be understandable for congregations in the first sing, the rich theology that can be found in hymnody might mean that hymns are not automatically understandable.

The lyrics, in traditional hymnody especially but also some more recently published pieces, can sometimes be complicated, but instead of language being something that needs to be a compromise, maybe churches need to build into their services explanations about the hymns that they are using. It could be that with explanation, hymns might resonate with the congregation and subsequently enable congregants to feel able to connect with God.

Transformation – the power of music

The emotional reaction that the human body has to music is a phenomenon well researched by scientists, and it is this emotional response that has the potential to emphasise and highlight to an individual a moment of transformation when understood in the Christian context.¹³⁸ Although the lyrics of a hymn or song may have an impact in a person's response, this section will focus solely on the role of music in the 'Worship experience' and expand on this further by analysing the risk of music being written to create a certain response.

Whilst the Church is often seen and understood as the different institutions of the established church, individual faith is beyond this. In the forward of the book *Composing Music for Worship* the editors highlight this, saying 'religious faith is experience before it is theory, or even theology, and at the heart of this experience is the encounter between the self and the other; both the transcendent other, God and our fellow believers'.¹³⁹ Music is a tool that is understood by Christians to be used by the Holy Spirit to enable individuals to experience the transcendent, and in modern terms, this experience is named 'The Worship Experience'. The 'Worship Experience' is a term coined to describe and explain experiences that have occurred during congregational sung worship when the Holy Spirit is considered to have come upon a person and transformed them.¹⁴⁰ This moment is often a pivotal experience for the individual and, as indicated by Abraham, an experience with the transcendent is crucial in a person's growing relationship with God.¹⁴¹ The Holy Spirit is understood by Christians as part of the Trinity, meaning that it is separate but inherently linked to both God the Father, and Jesus the Son. The Holy Spirit works in and through the earthly

¹³⁸Gertrud J. Tonsing, "'That song moves me to tears' – emotion, memory and identity in encountering Christian songs' *Hervormde Teologiese Studies*, 76, no. 3 (2020): 2-3.

¹³⁹ Stephen Darlington and Alan Kreider, ed. *Composing Music for Worship*, (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003), xi.

¹⁴⁰ Monique M. Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation: how contemporary worship music forms evangelical community*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 44.

¹⁴¹ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*.

church, and is believed to show and manifest itself through a variety of different forms which are described by 1 Corinthians 12: 4-11:

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.¹⁴²

For some, the moment that the Holy Spirit anoints itself upon them can be an overwhelming emotional and physical experience, and it is not uncommon for this to happen within a time of sung worship. However, the reason why music is such a helpful tool in this encounter is something that is unknown. Different academics propose different theories and understandings as to why music has the role that it does, with James MacMillan proposing that ‘Music also demands our time. It unfolds its narratives in time with an authority which will not be hurried’ whilst offering a further explanation that individuals need to be ‘openly receptive to the transforming power of music’ as this is analogous to ‘the patient receptivity to the divine that is necessary for religious contemplation’.¹⁴³ This latter idea has been picked up on by various worship leaders within churches as commented on by Monique Ingalls and Mark Jennings, however there is potential damage in this idea which will be explored later.¹⁴⁴ Whereas, Brian Castle recognises that music ‘can transport us beyond ourselves, thereby lifting up the whole worship’.¹⁴⁵ However, whilst all these academics offer their interpretation, it is June Boyce-Tillman who proposes an expanded explanation as to how music and spirituality are combined. Boyce-Tillman outlines, in her article ‘Re-enchanting the world: music and spirituality’, multiple ways in which music can trigger spiritual experiences, firstly, by proposing

¹⁴² 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 (*New Revised Standard Version*)

¹⁴³ James MacMillan, ‘God, Theology and Music,’ in *Composing Music for Worship*, ed. Stephen Darlington and Alan Kreider (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003), 48.

¹⁴⁴ Mark Jennings, ‘Imagining Jesus doing a Whole Lotta Shakin’: Pentecostal worship, popular music and the politics of experience,’ *Culture and Religion, An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 15, no.2 (2014): 221-222; Monique Ingalls, ‘Singing Heaven Down to Earth: Spiritual Journeys, Eschatological Sounds and Community Formation in Evangelical Conference Worship,’ *Ethnomusicology* 55, no.2 (2001) 265, accessed March 13, 2024 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5406/ethnomusicology.55.2.0255>

¹⁴⁵ Brian Castle, *Sing a New Song to the Lord: The Power and Potential of Hymns*, (Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, 1994),106.

triggers of encounter through different categories titled 'Metaphysical,' 'Intrapersonal,' 'Interpersonal,' 'Intergaian,' 'Extrapersonal/Ethical,' 'Narrative,' and 'Tradition'.¹⁴⁶ Having defined these categories, Boyce-Tillman goes on to suggest that music can enable a spiritual experience through a number of different ways: 'Expression' which is the connection of emotions and feelings in the music, 'Values' which is engaging with other cultures of spaces associated with the music, and 'Construction' which is the journeying through the structure and arrangement of the music.¹⁴⁷ This theory proposes a different way of thinking about spiritual encounters in music as it suggests that for different individuals the encounter can happen due to a different relationship with the music, which could further explain why different genres of music within the Christian landscape are helpful for different people. For example, it might be the way that a piece of music is structured and shared, or it might be the lyrics. However, whilst this theory can be applied to religious settings, for Boyce-Tillman, there is an understanding that 'music that opens up these new non-verbal realms can be drawn from all styles – religious, secular, post-secular, sentimental and kitsch' which suggests that, whilst this gives further explanation as to how music can allow a person to spiritually connect to God, there is still an element of unknown as to why music is such a helpful vessel in allowing an individual to feel anointed and transformed by the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁸ However, the power of music is something that can be experienced by people who are not of faith, due to the well-researched emotional power that music can have, and when exploring the potential of music in enabling transcendent experiences, this should be remembered.

Whilst music has been recognised as a tool that helps congregations to feel close and connected to God and is a way that spiritual transformation can occur, the reasons for this are one of uncertainty. Although academics can research and observe, there will always be an element of unknown as to why music is so helpful in allowing people to engage, connect and experience God and the Holy Spirit. It might, however, be this uncertainty that allows people to be able to make this connection. Howard Goodall suggests this in his chapter in *Composing Music for Worship*, where he proposes that: 'Music, an abstract and elusive art that disarms one's emotional defences and saturates us in feeling and confusion, is almost the only thing we have left that can convey a majestic and disturbing mystery.'¹⁴⁹ Maybe it is this majesty and mystery which allows music to be the perfect tool for God to communicate with humans as it is something that humans will never be able to understand. Despite scientific and academic contribution to this field, when it comes to God, a

¹⁴⁶ June Boyce-Tillman, 'Re-enchanting the world: Music and Spirituality,' *Journal for the study of spirituality*, 10, no.1 (2020): 35-36.

¹⁴⁷ Boyce-Tillman, 'Re-enchanting the world,' 35-36.

¹⁴⁸ Boyce-Tillman, 'Re-enchanting the world,' 32.

¹⁴⁹ Goodall, 'Music and Mystery,' 33.

mysterious and unknown being, it could be suggested that there is always going to be an element of unknown. This does not, however, stop the curiosity within humans to search for an explanation, or for humans to try and create these transcendent experiences.¹⁵⁰

Joshua Busman highlights this through his case study on the worship song ‘With Everything’ where he argues that ‘moments of the highest spiritual intensity and musical significance in congregational music are often the result of specific sonic gestures rather than clear textual references’, insinuating that worship songs are being designed to create these moments of high ecstasy and elation which could be understood by Christians as the Holy Spirit.¹⁵¹ Busman recognises a trend where a musical climax is achieved through ‘increasing volume, rising vocal register, and rhythm diminution,’ with observation showing how ‘these parameters actually instruct fan-worshippers when and how to invest themselves in the spiritual content of the song’.¹⁵² Through using the anthropological approach of ‘sensational forms’ developed by Birgit Meyer and Jojada Verrips, Busman recognises that there are ‘specific levels of musical density, volume, and textual complexity [which] give[s] worshippers a sense of which songs – and which parts of which songs – are most conducive to spiritual experience,’ and the ‘spiritually meaningful moments are those that combine the highest levels of musical intensity with the lowest levels of textual complexity’.¹⁵³

Busman’s theory can be applied to other worship songs, with the increase or decrease of texture being a key musical feature in the construction of many worship songs. In the 2019 live recording of ‘Way Maker’, musical analysis shows that texture and instrumentation is central to the overall structure of the piece.¹⁵⁴ From the second verse, through to the end of the second chorus, the texture continues to build through the rhythm of the guitars, increased dynamics, use of drums, and the repetition of phrases at the end of the chorus, giving a sense of direction and drive to the congregation. However, at the end of the second chorus, the band builds to a chord which is left to be resonant before the piano, acoustic guitar and hi-hat accompany the congregation through another rendition of the chorus. The worship singer also drops out here, leaving the congregation to sing by themselves, meaning that they hear the multitude of voices around them, and take in the atmosphere. This reduction of texture and instrumentation also leaves space for the second climax

¹⁵⁰ Gordan Alban Adnams, ‘The experience of Congregational Singing: An Ethno-phenomenological Approach,’ (PhD Thesis, University of Edmonton, 2008), 239-240

¹⁵¹ Joshua Busman, ‘Worshipping “With Everything”, Musical Analysis and Congregational Worship,’ in *Studying Congregational Worship: Key Issues, Methods and Theoretical Perspectives*, ed. Andrew Mall, Jeffers Engelhardy and Monique M. Ingalls (Abingdon: Routledge, 2022), 26.

¹⁵² Busman, ‘Worshipping “With Everything”’, 26.

¹⁵³ Busman, ‘Worshipping “With Everything”’, 28.

¹⁵⁴ Leeland, ‘Way Maker’, Track 3 on *Better Word*. published September 13, 2019, Spotify Recording, 8:25. <https://open.spotify.com/track/40ozK0lCJOEQzVGWscNUhk?si=1b2aec631d274baf>

which happens during the repetition of the four-phrase bridge passage. By the end of the bridge, the whole band is playing again at full volume, with guitars on every quaver and prominent use of cymbal, which leads the congregation into the final chorus. The end of this recording is notable. The texture dies down for the last repetition of the chorus leaving the congregation singing, accompanied by piano and synth before the worship leader prays rhythmically and the piece ends with call and response between the worship leader and congregation. The sudden drop of texture after a significant build up can be compared to the case study done on 'With Everything' by Busman as, whilst the intensity was not released through sonic gestures such as 'oh's', it was released by the sudden change of texture and dynamic after the second chorus into the bridge. Although an interpretation of how congregants found singing this piece in an audio recording cannot be done, one could extrapolate Busman's observations that the lowest levels of textual density could be the highest moments of spiritual intensity for people of Christian faith.

Busman's study seems to indicate that musical direction during a piece indicates where spiritual intensity should be felt, however Monique Ingalls observation of a performance of Tim Hughes' 'Heart of Worship' suggests that there does not need to be a musical climax to direct a congregation to find space with God.¹⁵⁵ Ingalls's case study noted a performance of 'Heart of Worship' that followed a musical set of high energy full band songs, which was a significant contrast to the start of 'Heart of Worship' which saw Hughes playing acoustic guitar and singing.¹⁵⁶ The use of the solo instrument and voice is significant when reading the lyrics which encourage the congregation to focus not on the music or the experience but instead on their relationship with God.¹⁵⁷ The use of solo guitar and voice 'suggest[s] a greater musical immediacy through a relative lack of technological mediation,' and is further understood by Ingalls 'as a verbal, musical and lyrical reframing of the concert space to focus on God'.¹⁵⁸ The instrumental and textural choices within this song could be seen to suggest that the audience should enter a time of prayer and focus on God, perhaps using the lyrics to enter into a deeper space with God.

Whilst the studies of Busman and Ingalls use forms of worship not commonly found within the Methodist Church of Great Britain, textural and instrumental decisions can be made during a hymn which can add impact and indicate the direction and importance of certain lyrics. For example, High Street Methodist Church in Witney (Oxfordshire) sometimes uses the combination of piano and organ to emphasise lyrics within hymns, thus using texture and instrumentation to indicate a climax

¹⁵⁵ Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation*, 40.

¹⁵⁶ Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation*, 51.

¹⁵⁷ See Appendix 2.

¹⁵⁸ Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation*, 53.

of the hymn. As experienced as a congregation member multiple times, the textural choices in the hymn 'In Christ Alone' highlight a way that instrumentation and texture can be used within traditional church spaces. The hymn begins with the piano as the sole instrument, however, on the lyrics 'Then bursting forth in glorious day' the Organ comes in on all its stops.¹⁵⁹ The use of the organ at this point directs people to the lyrics (a form of word-painting) whilst creating a sense of climax and direction which subsequently could impact the emotional response experienced by the congregation.

There is, however, a danger that the emotional response experienced leads to individuals craving a certain bodily or spiritual response to the worship that they are experiencing. Worship leader Kauflin talks of the privileged position of worship leaders due to the responsibility they have in the faith journey of their congregation. As commented on above, music can be designed to create certain experiences and, potentially, highlight certain emotions. Kauflin makes it clear to readers that 'being emotionally affected and actually worshipping God are n[o]t the same thing,' later saying that 'as valuable as emotional engagement is, it [i]s possible for feelings and experiences – rather than God himself – to become our goal'.¹⁶⁰ For Kauflin, the difference between an emotional response and a spiritual response is that 'music produced feelings will fade, but God's living and active Word will continue in [individual's] hearts, renewing [their] minds and strengthening [their] faith'.¹⁶¹ It is in this spiritual response that congregational singing can arguably enable true transformation of an individual, or a true 'worship experience'. This is echoed by Ingalls in her book *Singing the Congregation* where she writes, 'Worship is transformative when it effects personal change and elicits practical response'.¹⁶² Both Kauflin and Ingalls indicate that, whilst emotions can be enhanced through music, if the worshipping Christian believes that God is present there might be a longer lasting impact and a continuing call to serve God, and that this is the perceived potential that congregational singing has in transforming an individual.¹⁶³

Regardless of whether music is sometimes designed to try and create certain responses, it is recognised by academics such as Ingalls and Tillman that music has the potential to be used by people of Christian faith to explore, expand and experience their faith. Sometimes this can be a result of the music, sometimes the result of the words, and sometimes a combination of both, but in any case, congregational singing can have a powerful impact on a person's life.

¹⁵⁹ Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, 351.

¹⁶⁰ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 97; 167.

¹⁶¹ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 99.

¹⁶² Ingalls, *Singing the Congregation*, 63.

¹⁶³ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 99.

Serving God – the combination of music and words

The 'God for All' Evangelism strategy indicates that 'worshippers will be inspired through worship to serve God in daily life', however it gives little context as to what that looks like.¹⁶⁴ As discussed previously, it is understood by Christians that music can be transforming and this section of the chapter will be exploring how music may be used by people called Christians to encourage them in their faith.

Whilst music can be used to build to certain climaxes and direct an individual to feel and experience the Holy Spirit, academics have also indicated that music can aid the understanding and connection that individuals have with the lyrics that they are singing. This has been explored by Gordon Adnams who performed a hermeneutic phenomenological study on Eldridge Baptist Church in Canada.¹⁶⁵ Through his observations and interviews of members of this church, he proposes that there are eight different 'modes of congregational singing' which provide a comprehensive understanding of the ways that congregational singing can both aid and hinder an individual's worship. Adnam observes that the relationship that an individual has with the tunes and words of music is crucial in how they engage with a hymn, as 'words sung sometimes seem to take flight, as if being carried on the melody. They are now sculpted and directed by the music, released from their everyday semantics... and in so doing are able to articulate some sense of meaning that is other than the word'.¹⁶⁶ When an individual is able to truly engage with the lyrics and the music, Adnams suggests that 'the singer becomes an incarnation of the essence of the song', and therefore:

Sing[s] the language of [their] inwardness... What was inside is now outside, for all to hear, including [themselves]. [Their] deepest emotions seem to be caught in the net of [their] singing and propelled to the surface where they are tossed in the waves of the song. It is a kind of confession, a public declaration of who [they] are as bare, sung lives.¹⁶⁷

This sense of vulnerability and commitment to the song is suggested to be what leaves space for communication with God, with multiple participants expressing feelings of awe and peace, and an overwhelming experience of emotion highlighted with a sense of epiphany and otherness.¹⁶⁸ For those who are Christian, this otherness is understood as the divine and, the overwhelming emotions that are felt when they embrace the language and the music so completely, is the space that is

¹⁶⁴ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

¹⁶⁵ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 18, 20.

¹⁶⁶ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 117.

¹⁶⁷ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 121.

¹⁶⁸ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 121, 122/23, 124-5, 126.

created for communication with God.¹⁶⁹ However, Adnams research expands this mode of singing even further, suggesting that individuals can reach a state of 'Really worshipping' which is when

Singers seem to experience something thoughtful and rich that is centred on and given form, primarily by the sung word. This is a mutual investment as words are allowed to trigger a response from the singer, who then pours something of self-back into the words as they are sung: sung words give impetus to feelings; feelings are given to sung words.¹⁷⁰

Adnams further expands this by saying that 'to feel words, sung or spoken, they have to be drawn near, brought within reach, grasped, and admitted inside our various boundaries' sharing that, if words are kept at a distance, they are 'not easily gathered into deep significance'.¹⁷¹ This whole body investment that can be triggered by sung lyrics is a theory also recognised by researcher Rosalind Brown who comments that 'when we sing we invest ourselves. The words become not just words, but an expression of our heart. It is not just our lips but our lives that are engaged if we let the words touch our hearts'.¹⁷² It seems to be the relationship that the individual has with the words that helps aid someone to reach the mode of 'really worshipping.' This is highlighted further when Adnams introduces modes of congregational singing where engagement between the individual and the lyrics they are singing are restricted and therefore the interaction is limited or non-existent. These modes have been titled 'Just Singing,' 'Unminded Singing,' and 'meaningless words'.¹⁷³ Whilst Adnams recognises the importance in an individual's relationship and engagement in words and music, the transformation that words can have when applied to music is an occurrence noted by different academics within the field of congregational Christian music. Recognising music initiates an emotional response in humans, Jeremy Begbie and Steven Guthrie comment that 'music combines the emotional power of sound with the spiritual power of God's Word in such a way as to affect the soul. For music to convey this power, both the singer and the listener must be in tune with God.'¹⁷⁴ This suggests that music enables us to engage on an emotional level with the words that are being sung, and if these words are words of God there is the potential for a person to experience a spiritual, full body engagement and transformation. Whilst the relationship between music and words can lead to a fuller spiritual engagement, John Ferguson suggests that the expressive language of music has 'the potential to strengthen and deepen the impact of words,' further expanding to say

¹⁶⁹ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 127.

¹⁷⁰ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 143.

¹⁷¹ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 143.

¹⁷² Rosalind Brown, 'How Hymns Shape Our Lives,' *Grove Spirituality Series* (2001), 23.

¹⁷³ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing'.

¹⁷⁴ Jeremy S. Begbie and Steven Guthrie, ed., *Resonant Witness: Conversations between music and theology* (Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2011), 71.

that 'the great good news of the Gospel is too much for mere words; it needs music with its wide range of moods and styles to tell the story of God creating and redeeming God'.¹⁷⁵ The combination of these different theories, suggests that ultimately, sung worship enables a richer and fuller Christian life, both in terms of spiritual engagement but also in terms of the understanding of the Gospel.

When considering the three themes that this chapter has taken from the 'God for All' Evangelism and Growth strategy, one should consider how they link together. To consider themselves to be transformed by God, individuals should be able to feel like they can connect to God and, similarly, both connection to God, and transformation should be central to the motivation behind why an individual serves God. However, there needs to be a wariness about the claiming of music as the ultimate tool to allow all these different experiences to happen. John D Witvliet comments that music cannot be seen as a tool that 'generates an experience of God' as 'music is not God, nor is music an automatic tool for generating God's presence'.¹⁷⁶ He continues to write that 'the primary elements of worship are those that express and enact our relationship with God,' and follows on from this saying that 'God speaks to [Christians] through scripture, God nourishes [Christians] at the table; we thank God, [they] confess [their] sins to God, and declare [their] faith to each other before God's face'.¹⁷⁷ Kauflin says something similar saying that 'no worship leaders, pastor, band or song will ever bring [Christians] close to God. [Christians] can[not] shout, dance, or prophesy into God's presence. Worship itself cannot lead [Christians] into God's presence. Only Jesus himself can bring [Christians] into God's presence,' which has a similar sentiment.¹⁷⁸ For both Kauflin and Witvliet, there is a difference between God bringing people into their presence, and individuals expecting worship to always bring them into the presence of God. This expectation of being in the presence of God in sung worship was found by Adnams to be a generational thing, with him concluding that:

The older generation tends to see worship stemming from an interior, personal commitment to God as different from, but exclusive of, an experience of God... There are no expectations of any sort of ecstasy, [so] these worshippers are free to be surprised by any heightened awareness of their relationship with God they might experience in song, or in any non-musical act of worship.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁵ John Ferguson, 'Is there a future for the church musician?', in *Composing Music for Worship*, ed. Stephen Darlington and Alan Kreider (Norwich: Canterbury Press, 2003), 142.

¹⁷⁶ John D Witvliet, 'Beyond Style: Rethinking the Role of Music in Worship,' in *The Conviction of Things not Seen: Worship and Ministry in the 21st Century*, ed. Todd E. Johnson (Michigan: Brazos Press, 2002), 61.

¹⁷⁷ Witvliet, 'Beyond Style,' 62.

¹⁷⁸ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 73-4.

¹⁷⁹ Adnams, 'The experience of Congregational Singing,' 240.

Whilst the generational divide discovered by Adnams is an interesting find, given the context of the study there should be careful consideration about the generalisation of this conclusion to all denominations. However, it raises an interesting point in how different people view worship, and how they view and expect to experience God. For some Christians, worship should be about a life commitment and offering to God, and this sentiment is supported by Page. Page suggests that ‘true worship is not about singing songs, or holding up your hands, or bouncing up and down or chanting Gregorian Plainsong. It’s about how you live your life,’ with him continuing to say that ‘Worship, putting it simply, means showing Jesus what we think of him. And we do that not only by singing songs about him, but by changing our lives’.¹⁸⁰ For congregational singing to help people of Christian faith to feel that they can truly serve God, congregational singing has got to be part of a bigger picture of their worship life and commitment to God, which will ultimately help them to serve God. However, there is a risk that some churches are so focused on the production of the worship, and creating worship experiences, that this fuller picture of worship is forgotten.

For Kauflin, it is important for worship leaders to ensure that the worship they lead is ‘biblical worship,’ which is defined by Kauflin as worship that is ‘God-focused (God is clearly seen), God centred (God is clearly the priority), and God-exalting (God is clearly honoured)’.¹⁸¹ This idea is expanded further with Kauflin going on to explain that worship should be a continuation of the daily worship that Christians should be sharing with God, thus allowing the time of joint worship to be an opportunity to share together ‘why God is so great, what He has accomplished, and all that He has promised’.¹⁸² This is echoed by the singer-songwriter Graham Kendrick who comments that ‘musical expressions of worship are not a substitute for a lifestyle of worship’ which emphasises that whilst music has a role in an individual's worship life, it should not be the sole experience or understanding of worship. Academic Constance Cherry expands this idea further, echoing some of the thoughts from Witviliet, thus emphasising that when gathered in worship there are ‘primary elements of worship’ such as scripture, the communion table, the congregation thanking God, confessing to God and the declaration of faith, and that whilst these are all elements which do not need music, ‘Music always serves to accomplish one of these actions’.¹⁸³ Cherry goes on further to explain that ‘Music is an instrument by which the Holy Spirit draws us to God, a tool by which we enact our relationship with God. It is not a magical medium for conjuring God’s presence.’¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁰ Page, *And now let's move into a time of nonsense*, 23, 24.

¹⁸¹ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 177, 75

¹⁸² Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 125-126, 129

¹⁸³ Cherry, ‘Merging Tradition and Innovation in the Life of the Church’, 61.

¹⁸⁴ Cherry, ‘Merging Tradition and Innovation in the Life of the Church’, 61.

When considering the combination of all this research, it is clear that whilst music is seen by people of Christian faith as an opportunity for transformation, developing a greater understanding of God and, potentially, experiencing the divine, it should not be the sole understanding or expectation of an individual. Whilst this experience may lead to an individual's journey to serving God, Christianity is a life choice, and subsequently all elements of life, and of a worship service can contribute to a person's commitment to serving God.

Conclusion

The relationship between evangelism, faith, music and words is a complicated and messy area of work, and this chapter covers only a brief part of the available research. What is clear in the research commented on is that sung congregational worship plays a central role for many Christians in their faith and, whilst researchers often try and find a hard truth, for Christians, there is an external and divine aspect. It is this divine aspect which this thesis is interested in, and the subsequent role that it may have on the development of an individual's faith. As the structure of the chapter suggests, music can have a role in each element of the 'Making Beautiful Worship: Beautiful Worship within the Gathered Community of Faith' section of the 'God for All' strategy which may enable and encourage an individual to be evangelistic.¹⁸⁵ It is evident that words and music can individually enable congregants to feel close to God through resonance with the metaphors and poetry, and the use of instrumentation to create atmospheres which might enable people to feel close to God.¹⁸⁶ However, whilst music can enable these transformational encounters for Christians, academics also recognise that some Christians have a level of expectation when they congregationally sing, and this expectation is sometimes emphasised by the people who are leading worship. It does suggest that, whilst there is testimony of transformational encounters through congregational song, this does not happen on every occasion of sung worship and sung worship is also not the only form of worship that God uses to connect to individuals. Regardless of these recognitions, the academic insight into these three areas is helpful to consider when approaching the primary research of this thesis as it does indicate that music has an important role in the development of an individual's faith.

¹⁸⁵ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

¹⁸⁶ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

Sing and Make Music to the Lord: Methodology

Introduction

The Methodist Church has a rich history with hymnody and, whilst the church still holds onto the history of hymnody within its denomination, there is very little knowledge, and no practical research, about the musical practice happening in Methodist Churches and the implication of this musical practice on the congregation's faith. As highlighted in previous chapters, music can have a profound effect on individuals and help Christians feel connected to and experiencing God. However, can it be said that music is providing this opportunity within the Methodist Church and is music a factor that Methodists consider to be something that can provide transformation for themselves and non-Christians?

Due to the lack of research within the twenty-first century Methodist Church, it was clear that primary research needed to be a priority of this thesis; to collect and explore the musical practice in a group of Methodist Churches, and the impact that this practice has on the congregation. To direct the formation, creation, and analysis of this research, the three areas highlighted within the 'Creating Beautiful Worship' section of the 'God for All' strategy were at the forefront of the study development, with these areas being: 'connect people to God,' 'transform them for mission within the world,' and 'inspire [them] through worship to serve God in daily life'.¹⁸⁷ These areas were used to formulate the following three research questions which will be explored further:

1. Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing congregants to connect to each other and to God?
2. Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing individuals to be encouraged in their service to God?
3. Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing individuals to be transformed for mission and share the word of God?

These research questions will be explored through the analysis of data from a study done in the YNE District. The YNE District is a group of 12 circuits and contains 188 different worshipping communities, with an overall Methodist membership of 6,662 according to the 2022 Statistics for

¹⁸⁷ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

Mission.¹⁸⁸ The geographical context of the YNE District is largely rural, with areas of the Yorkshire Dales, Yorkshire Moors, and the Yorkshire Wolds contained within its boundary, however, despite this, the cities of York, Hull and Ripon as well as several market towns and a significant part of the East Coast also sit within the boundary.¹⁸⁹

This research was completed when ethical clearance was obtained, and University of York ethics procedures were followed.

The Questions

To understand the role of musical practice and congregational singing within the Methodist Church, it was clear that there needed to be the development of a survey which collected data from two separate groups: the church and the congregation. To understand how the congregational singing experienced by individuals in a church might impact the understanding of their faith, information about the church, and how congregational singing was accompanied, also needed to be collected. Furthermore, it was clear that the data collected needed to be broader than the musical practice of churches and also collect information which captured how Christians felt their faith was impacted by sung worship. As a result, two questionnaires were developed to collect these two different sets of data; one to be completed by a church leader which collected information about church size, context, and forms of congregational accompaniment within the church, and the other to be completed by members of congregations which collected data around the individual's personal response to sung congregational worship. From this point onwards, the questionnaire which collected information about the church will be referred to as *Part One*, and the questionnaire which members of congregations were encouraged to participate in will be referred to as *Part Two*.

Part One – The Church

The primary purpose of this questionnaire was to collect background information and context on the churches that will also have congregational participation and collect data about the musical practice within these churches.

As seen in *Appendix 3*, questions one-to-nine provide some of the background context, with questions enquiring about the geographical context that the church serves, and whether the church

¹⁸⁸ 'Our District.' *Yorkshire North and East Methodist District*, [n.d.], accessed March 22, 2024 <https://www.yorkshirenethodist.org/district/>; Methodist Church of Great Britain, *Statistics for Mission: Yorkshire North and East Methodist District, Circuit membership summary* (Methodist Church of Great Britain, 2023), accessed March 22, 2024. <https://d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net/media/documents/church-membership-yorkshire-north-and-east.pdf>; this information was correct at the time of writing

¹⁸⁹ See Appendix 5.

belongs to a Local Ecumenical Partnership (LEP), as well as questions around size and number of services. Whilst these questions were designed to help provide a bigger picture, some of the questions may be used more specifically in relation to congregational responses. It was important to collect information about whether the church is a LEP as it may mean that the musical practice is slightly different due to the influence of another denomination. For example, if a church is an Anglican/Methodist LEP, there could be influence from the Anglican choral tradition. The geographical contextual information was also significant as there is no research on whether churches in different geographical areas use music differently within their churches. Whilst this is not the purpose of this study, it was felt that this information may be helpful when considering congregants responses. There are also two questions regarding size, one referring to membership and the other to average congregation size. This numerical data was important to collect as in some cases membership can be vastly different to the average congregation size; being a member of a Methodist Church does not mean that you regularly attend, and you do not have to be a member of the Methodist Church to attend worship or engage with the church. It is hoped that this data will be used in relation to participant responses, to see if the size of the singing congregation impacts participants responses to Question 8 of *Part Two*.¹⁹⁰

Questions 10-14 are related to the musical practice seen within the churches, with two multiple choice questions: one asking, 'How is congregational singing most commonly accompanied?' and another asking church leaders whether their 'congregation respond[s] better to a particular form of accompaniment'.¹⁹¹ Whilst it might seem that these questions are asking very similar things, I think that there is a difference between how churches commonly experience sung worship, and potentially the way that people best respond to sung worship. For example, if a church rarely has a live musician, it means that they might have no choice but to use recorded music although they might respond better, sing louder and feel more united on the rare occasions that they have a live musician. Questions 13 and 14 were focused more specifically on the musicians in these Methodist Churches as, whilst some churches are gifted with talented musicians, others may not be. In relation to this, the final questions explore the priority of evangelism within the church and whether they consider music having a role in this. It is not anticipated that many churches have an evangelism policy, and there is an argument about the importance and significance of an evangelism policy, as evangelism, as outlined by William Abraham, is more about journeying with individuals. However, as evident within both previous chapters, music can have a role in enabling transformative

¹⁹⁰ See Appendix 4.

¹⁹¹ See Appendix 3.

encounters for Christians and these questions were included to gauge how the churches view evangelism, although these questions only touch the very surface and further study could be done.

Overall, these questions were designed to build a picture of context and understanding that the responses from congregation participants will sit alongside. This will provide a richer understanding of the context of the congregation responses, potentially enabling greater analysis.

Part Two – The Congregation

As mentioned previously, the main goal of this section of the research project was to collect information about how the congregational singing experienced by the individual in Methodist Churches impacts their faith. Following several questions which related to the demographics of the participant and the relationship that they have with the church; a Likert question was used to collect data around the relationship that these participants had with congregational singing.

Table 1: Question Eight from the Congregational Questionnaire

	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	The congregational singing at worship connects me to the community that are gathered					
2	The congregational singing at worship helps me connect to God					
3	The congregational singing at worship helps me refocus on God during the week.					
4	The congregational singing at worship encourages me in my faith during the week.					
5	The congregational singing at worship encourages me to share my faith during the week.					
6	The congregational singing at worship is the reason I might invite people to church.					

The statements in the left-hand column were created to target the three different sections of the 'God for All Strategy – Making Beautiful Worship' as commented on previously in this thesis. Statements one and two focus on 'Connection'; questions three and four focus on the individual being 'inspire[d] through worship to serve God in daily life' and questions five and six have a focus on

'being transformed for mission'.¹⁹² Whilst the structure of this question provides a quick and easy way for individuals to share their thoughts, it does limit the testimony and depth of response one might get if using a different research method. However, the goal of this question was to gain a broad understanding of how participants reflect on the role of congregational singing within their faith life. The design of this question was such that comparisons of age and gender, and church contexts and membership size may be done in the analysis of these results. The following question enabled participants to share any changes they would make to congregational singing and why. It was asked to try and encourage participants to reflect on their worship and what they would like to be different.

The final section of this questionnaire encouraged participants to think beyond the Methodist Church, to different denominations, and seeks to find out whether people in Methodist Churches are experiencing sung worship beyond their church. Whilst it may be common practice for some, it suggests that their church may not be fulfilling their spiritual needs when it comes to congregational singing.

Evaluation of Research Methods

The choice of research methods was limited when considering the type of information that needed to be collected. Data could either have been collected through interviews or through a survey and, whilst the survey approach was chosen, there are limitations to this approach. The main reason for the use of a questionnaire was due to the potential quantity of participants. In order to have a more general understanding of the impact of musical practice within Methodist Churches, a large number of participants was necessary as it would allow for more general conclusions to be drawn and for a wider variety of voices to take part. It also meant that the participation was voluntary and could be more representative of the Methodist Church compared to using interviews. Through using two questionnaires, different data will be collected which will enable a more comprehensive analysis of the role of musical practice on the congregation which may not have been collected through an interview. One limitation of the design of these questionnaires is the lack of qualitative responses, meaning that the data being gathered will be primarily quantitative. Whilst this will enable statistical conclusions to be drawn, some of the stories and testimonies which could exist will not be collected, and it is data like this that interviews would have collected.

¹⁹² Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

The Method

To ensure that these questionnaires collected the right data, and were easy to understand and complete, three churches within the West Oxfordshire Methodist Circuit in the Northampton Methodist District were invited to take part in a pilot study in July 2023. The churches invited to take part were selected due to prior knowledge of their size and context, as it was crucial that this study could work in different settings. The West Oxfordshire Circuit covers several rural communities and market towns, and three churches, of varying membership sizes, were invited to take part in a pilot study. In total, there were 28 participants in the pilot study spread over two churches and, whilst the size of the dataset limited analysis, the process enabled the questionnaires to be developed to include the addition of two questions to *Part One*, small editorial changes to question design to some questions in *Part Two*, and other grammatical changes. Following the Pilot Study, the research project, titled 'Sing and Make Music to the Lord – does it really matter?' was introduced to the YNE District at their Synod in September 2023, following approval from the District Trustees, and was then live for the duration of November 2023.

As mentioned previously, there are 188 different worshipping communities within the YNE District spread over 12 different circuits. However, only a quarter of these worshipping communities formed the random sample of the YNE District that were invited to take part in the study. The criteria for participation were that Methodist (including churches in local ecumenical partnerships) worshipping communities had to meet regularly and share in times of sung worship within these gatherings. With these criteria as the background requirement for participation in this study, some clarifications needed to be made within certain contexts. For example, one circuit within the YNE District was excluded from participation due to the way that it gathers. The Kairos Circuit does not gather in a physical capacity regularly or share in sung worship when gathered and therefore did not meet the requirements. One of the participating circuits (The Bridge Circuit) has a different structure to a traditional Methodist Circuit and holds four different geographical mission areas within the District with a central operations manager.¹⁹³ For this research project, each mission area will be considered separately so that it is more representative of the geographical area that each mission area covers. There are also several instances around the District where churches have joined together to be one church on multiple sites, such as the Wolds Edge Methodist Church in the Bridge

¹⁹³ 'Circuits and Churches,' *Yorkshire North and East Methodist District*, [n.d.], accessed March 22, 2024. <https://www.yorkshirenethodist.org/district/circuits/>

Circuit with one church on seven sites. In these instances, each geographical location that meets together was considered its own separate entity.

To select the random sample, each worshipping community was identified with a number and grouped according to their circuit or mission area. Once listed, the number of worshipping communities within each circuit/mission area was identified, and this number was used to identify how many worshipping communities in that circuit constituted a quarter. Then a random number generator was used to select the appropriate number of worshipping communities within each circuit/mission area. Whilst a random quarter of worshipping communities could have been selected, instead of a quarter of worshipping communities within each circuit, there could have been an uneven distribution of geographical contexts which could have led to skewed results. Using this method of random selection meant that, if all worshipping communities within the District Directory participated, there would be a quarter of each circuit represented within the results. It is important to note that the selection of worshipping communities led to these communities being invited to take part, and then it was the choice of the church leaders and the congregations to participate.

To encourage participation from churches, an advertising pack was created and shared with the ministers of each church. This pack contained posters, slides for church PowerPoints, social media posts, links to the online questionnaires (made through Qualtrics) for *Part One* and *Part Two* and PDF copies of *Part 2* to enable those with limited digital capability to also be included within the study. Whilst paper copies were necessary due to the demographic commonly found in the Methodist Church, it was not anticipated that over half of the participants would partake through physical copies. As a result, in January 2024, data was inputted and uploaded in bulk through the Qualtrics app to enable those responses to be analysed along with the rest of the data collected. Once inputted, the data was then analysed through SPSS, a statistical analysis platform.

Conclusion

This methodology sets out an explanation of the research project that took place during November of 2023 within the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District. Going into this research as an individual who has grown up in the Methodist church, preaches in a number of different churches, and has experienced the Holy Spirit during times of sung worship, I personally find the Methodist Church a frustrating place when it comes to congregational singing. From personal experience, often the singing in churches is not passionate, and the accompaniment is often quite limited and restrictive due to churches losing members and, sometimes with that, musical expertise. There is also a desire to modernise the music, but this often happens through the use of videos which is not always helpful and sometimes, at least for me, acts as a reminder of the shrinking nature of the

church. As a result of all of this, and the research previously done, the hypothesis of this study is that the congregational singing within the Methodist Church is not enabling individuals to 'connect people to God,' 'transform them for mission with the world' and 'inspir[e] [individuals] through worship to serve God in daily life'.¹⁹⁴

It should be noted that a contributing factor to the choice of the location of the pilot study, and the main study was due to prior relationships with both geographical areas. Between the ages of 5 and 20, I attended High Street Methodist Church in Witney with my family, and I also worked for the West Oxfordshire Circuit for a year. Similarly, I am an employee and a trustee of the YNE District and I am a member of a church within the York Methodist Circuit (although this church was not a participating church in the study). It should also be noted that I have received funding support from the Methodist Church of Great Britain and the Yorkshire North and East Methodist District in the completion of this research. Whilst all the factors mentioned above need to be disclosed, they are also factors that helped the success of this study in relation to participation, due to the relationships that were had with the different churches and church leaders.

¹⁹⁴ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All,' 8.

Sing and Make Music to the Lord: Demographics

Prior to the analysis of questions that relate to the three research questions, this following chapter will analyse and discuss the demographical information that was collected in participant responses, from both *Part One* and *Part Two* of the research project, by first analysing the general participation, before looking into the responses related to demographical data.

Study Participation

Overall, the participation of churches, circuits, and congregants was very positive, with 36.1% (15 churches) of churches invited participating in *Part One* of the study, and 70.21% (33 churches) of churches participating in *Part Two*. An overview of the circuit and church participation can be seen in *Table 2* below, with the base number of the fractions being the number of churches within that circuit invited to take part.

Table 2 - Proportion of circuits and churches that participated.

	<i>Church participation</i>	<i>Congregation participation</i>
Bridge Circuit	1/5	3/5
Tadcaster	1/2	2/2
Thirsk and Northallerton	0/2	2/2
Ripon and Lower Dales	3/4	4/4
Nidd Valley	1/3	1/3
North Yorkshire Coast	1/5	2/5
South Holderness	0/3	2/3
York	5/6	5/6
Ryedale	1/4	3/4
Driffield Hornsea	0/4	2/4
Goole and Selby	3/6	2/6
Hull (Centre and West)	0/4	1/4
Total	16	33
	36.1%	70.21%

As seen in *Table 2*, the level of participation within circuits varied, with participation in *Part One* being lower than anticipated. In preparing for this study, it was thought that one limitation would be that the encouragement of congregational participation would be burdensome for church leaders, and potentially result in a greater number of church responses compared to congregations.

However, as evident above, the outcome was the opposite as only 36% of church leaders felt able to fill in this section of the study. The 15 churches which participated in *Part One* and *Part Two* of the questionnaire will be used for more in-depth analysis in relation to and comparison of congregation responses, although this analysis may be limited due to the small sample size. This limitation does not, however, discount the overall participation of 209 congregation responses which will give a helpful oversight into the role of congregational singing in the Methodist Church. The number of participants in *Part Two* of the research project suggests that the packs of information, and the advertising done at a District level, was sufficient to enable congregation participation, despite church leaders not having the capacity to complete *Part One*. The level of participation within churches varied across the District, with congregation participation ranging between one and twenty-five, and an average of seven congregation members participating in each church. In total, there were 209 participants to *Part Two* of the research project, which is about 3% of the total District membership, and 11% of the total membership of the churches invited to take part in the study, according to 2022 statistics for mission.¹⁹⁵

It should be noted here that participation in the circuit *Hull (Centre and West)* was limited with only one church sending in congregational studies. Unfortunately, this church submitted congregational questionnaires too late for them to be included in the analysis, so whilst they are noted in this table, their responses are not included in any other analysis.

Demographic Analysis

Within both questionnaires, a significant amount of demographic data was collected which will provide a helpful background prior to other data analysis. The last available demographic data was collected in 2011 and related to the demographics of congregations. Whilst the Methodist Church requires all of its churches to collect data for 'Statistics for Mission' each year, this data does not include the age or gender identification of congregants, and only collects data regarding those who are Methodist members. There is also no available data around the context in which churches serve, and so the collection of this data was important. The below analysis is divided into Church and Congregation.

¹⁹⁵ Methodist Church of Great Britain, *Statistics for Mission: Yorkshire North and East Methodist District, Circuit membership summary* (Methodist Church of Great Britain, 2023), accessed March 22, 2024. <https://d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net/media/documents/church-membership-yorkshire-north-and-east.pdf>

The Church

Geographical Context

The YNE District covers a wide range of different geographical contexts, with the cities of Ripon, York and Hull being within its boundaries, as well as the rural areas of the Yorkshire Dales, Yorkshire Moors, and Yorkshire Wolds, and a stretch of the East Coast. Consequently, gathering the geographical data was important to see if responses varied due to the area that the church served. Of the participating churches in *Part One*, 54% served in a Rural Context and, no churches served within a City Centre. A summary of the geographical contexts can be seen below in *Table 3*:

Table 3- A Table showing the geographical context of participating churches.

City Centre	Suburban	Market Town	Rural	Coastal
	Harrogate Road	All Hallowgate	Walkington	Queen Street
	Haxby and Wigginton	Park Grove	Boston Spa	
	Lidgett		Carlthorpe	
	Southlands		Grewlthorpe	
			Sheriff Hutton	
			Acaster Malbis	
			Allerston	
			Thorpe Willoughby	
			Bayton	
Total:				
0	4 (23.52%)	2 (11.76%)	9 (52.94%)	1 (5.88%)

Whilst the YNE District covers a large rural area, given previous knowledge of the geography of the District, it was not anticipated that such a large proportion of churches served in a rural context. The lack of participation in this section of the study, especially from the churches in the Hull (Centre and West) circuit, may have resulted in some geographical areas being under-represented, and it should be considered that due to the random selection of churches, it cannot be guaranteed that the churches invited to take part were truly representative of the diverse geographical context within the District. When considering the context of churches within the District, it is also important to consider the context of the wider Methodist Church. In a report from 2018, it was noted that 'Methodists meet in City Churches (5% of weekly attendance); Inner City churches (7%); Estate Churches (5%); Suburban churches (34%); Churches in small towns (28%) and Village/Rural Churches (21%)'.¹⁹⁶ Whilst the same categories were not used in this study due to this document being found following the launch of the study, it can be noted that rural churches do make up a significant

¹⁹⁶ Methodist Church of Great Britain, *Methodism in Numbers – Statistics at a Glance* (Methodist Church of Great Britain, July 2018)

percentage of churches within the wider Methodist Church, however there is a significant absence of small towns and suburban churches in the data collected for this study.

The geographical context might also be an indicator as to membership and congregation size. It could be assumed that village churches have a smaller membership compared to city churches, due to the pool of potential membership being smaller, however there is no previous research to support this assumption, and the sample size for this study is too small to come to a conclusion about this.



Figure 2 – A graph showing results to the question ‘What is the membership of the church?’

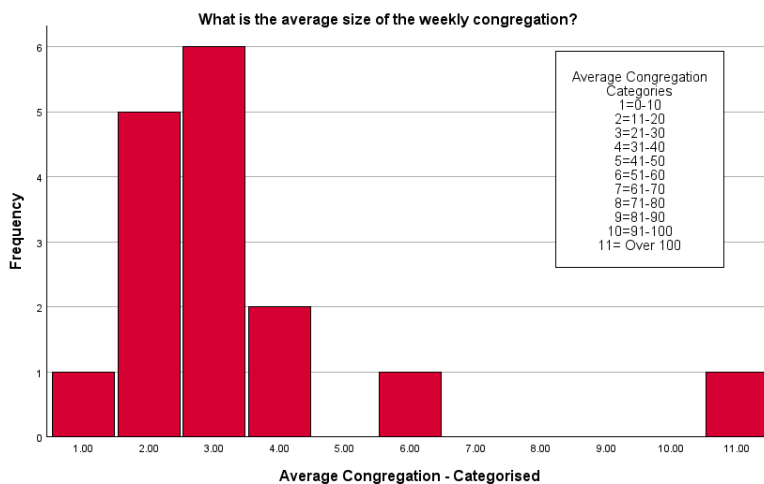


Figure 3 – A graph showing results to the question ‘What is the average size of the weekly congregation?’

Membership and Congregational size

Church leaders were invited to share two different sets of data about the people in their churches: membership and average congregation size. The Methodist Church invites people in its congregations to become a ‘member’ of the Methodist Church, which is seen as a sign of commitment to the church and allows individuals to access pastoral support and take up roles, such as church steward.¹⁹⁷

Membership is also the information that is used by churches to indicate their size which plays a factor in several different church policies. However, the membership of churches does not necessarily relate to the congregation size that churches are seeing each week, and this can be seen in the responses to

¹⁹⁷ ‘Membership,’ *Methodist Church of Great Britain*, [n.d.], accessed March 27, 2024. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/about/membership/>

these questions in *part one* of the study.

Figure 2 and *Figure 3* show the membership and average congregation size, with each category representing an increase of 10, for example 1 being 0-10 people, and 11 being 100+ people. As evident, the average membership of participating churches is larger and more varied compared to the average congregation size of churches. The majority of the participating churches had a membership below 60, with two outlying churches that had memberships of 96 and 240. The mean membership of participating churches was 47, however the mode and median sat at 32 and 33 respectively thus indicating a skew. This was to be expected due to one church having a membership of 240. In comparison, the average congregation size is much smaller with 11 of the participating churches having between 11 and 30 congregants at each service, and six churches seeing between 21-30 congregants. The *Figure 3* has a positive skew which is evident in the mode and median which 30 and 25 respectively, with the mean at 31. Again, there is a significant outlier in this dataset, with one church seeing a regular attendance of 120.

The contrast in this data between membership and average congregation size is a fascinating piece of information, as it indicates that whilst churches may have people who are part of their church communities, it does not mean that they are attending, or that they are members. This is a growing concern for the Methodist Church; however, again it is not something that can be examined more within this thesis.

Whilst the data of membership and congregation size gives an indication of the number of potential participants, it is also a static number and gives no indication of the variance that may happen week by week or over several years. Evangelism is not necessarily about numbers but, when considering the role of music in evangelism, it will be interesting to see if congregation participants in churches that are growing answer differently to those who have seen a decline in membership. To

answer this, church leaders were asked 'Have you seen a growth or decline of average congregation size over the last five years?'. As seen in *Figure 4*, 68.75% of responding churches indicated that their church had declined over the last five years, with only 31.25% seeing signs of growth.

The majority of churches seeing a

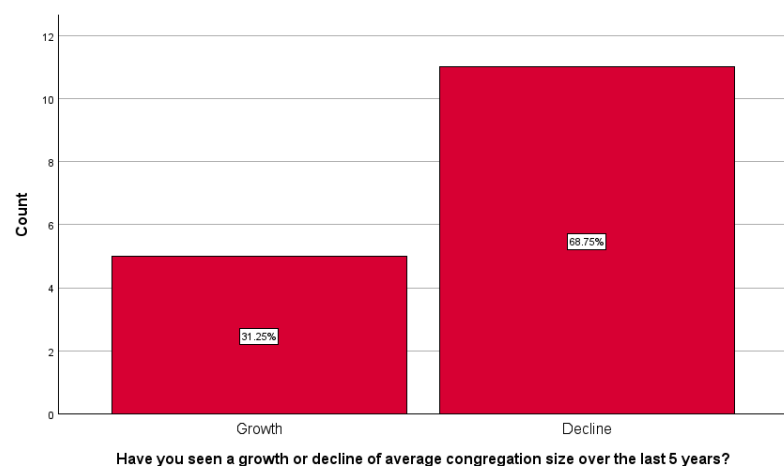


Figure 4 – A graph showing results to 'Have you seen a growth or decline of average congregation size over the last 5 years?'

decline of congregation size over the last five years is a potential cause of concern, although the Methodist Church has seen a continual decline in membership numbers and so this is not a surprise.¹⁹⁸ It should be noted that this sample size is very small and, whilst echoing the trend that is being seen across the Methodist Church, it is not necessarily representative of all churches within the YNE District.

The Congregation

Data collected in *Part One* gave an indication of the size of churches, however *Part Two* collected data about the individuals that attend worship within these churches. At the start of the second part of this study, congregants were invited to share their age and gender and frequency of attendance, alongside other demographical information.

Age and Gender

Of the 209 congregant participants that took part in the study, 79% of congregants were aged between 60 and 90 years old, resulting in a negative skew with a leptokurtic distribution in the age of participants. The

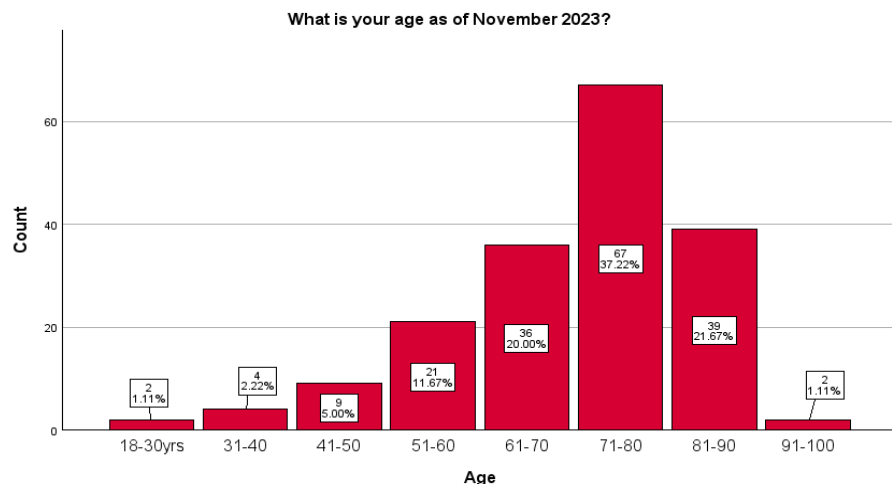


Figure 5 – A graph showing results to ‘What is your age as of November 2023?’

uneven distribution means that the voices and views of the older generations will be more present in responses, however, it should be recognised that, according to statistics from the Methodist Church of Great Britain, the demographics seen in the responses to this questionnaire fits with the demographics of the Methodist Church. A report released by the Methodist Church in 2018 commented that ‘the majority of current members are retirement age’, and statistics from the demographic report from 2011 summarised that 51% of members of the Methodist Church of Great

¹⁹⁸ Methodist Church of Great Britain, *Methodist in Numbers* (Methodist Church of Great Britain, 2021), accessed March 27, 2024.

https://d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net/media/documents/methodism_in_numbers_2021.pdf

Britain are between the ages of 66 and 80 years old.¹⁹⁹ The 2011 demographics report is the last time comprehensive demographic data was collected by the Methodist Church of Great Britain, and it contains data from 94% of churches open at the time of collection. Included within this report was a demographic breakdown of Districts. Since 2011, the boundaries of the Yorkshire North and East District have changed, however, much of the Yorkshire North and East District belonged to the then York and Hull District, and the demographic breakdown can be seen in the appendix alongside the percentiles from the data collected in this study.²⁰⁰

Whilst there has been 12 years since the collection of the demographic data by the Methodist Church of Great Britain, it is interesting to note that the demographics of participants in

To what gender identity do you most identify with?

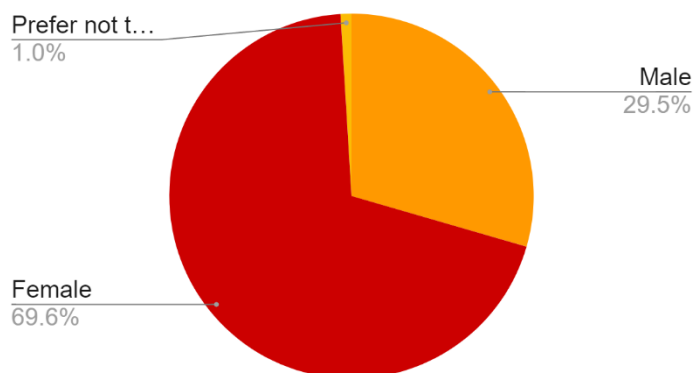


Figure 6 – A graph showing results to ‘To what gender identity do you most identify with?’

this study are not too dissimilar to the data collected 12 years ago. It suggests that the Methodist Church continues to be a place for the older generation, with the majority of churches filled with people of retirement age, which is the same as commented on in 2018.²⁰¹

A similar comparison can be made regarding gender identity, as this was information also collected in 2011, with *Figure 6* showing the proportions

of the 2023 data.²⁰² Whilst data analysis would be aided by a more even proportion of people who identify as male and female, when comparing the data set from 2023 to 2011, we can see that it still sits within the averages that were concluded in 2011.²⁰³ Therefore, this suggests that the data collected by this study is representative of the gender spread within the YNE District as a whole.

However, there are some limitations when it comes to the data that was collected in 2011. Firstly, it is unknown how many churches within the York and Hull District participated in the data collected by the Methodist Church, alongside the fact that there are some circuits that are not

¹⁹⁹ Methodist Church, *Methodist in Numbers – Statistics at a Glance*; Methodist Church of Great Britain, *Methodist Statistics: Demographic Report* (Methodist Church of Great Britain, 2011), accessed March 27, 2024. <https://d1yuutt686hfi0.cloudfront.net/media/documents/stats-demographics-2011.pdf>

²⁰⁰ See Appendix 9

²⁰¹ Methodist Church, *Methodist in Numbers – Statistics at a Glance*

²⁰² See Appendix 10

²⁰³ See Appendix 10

represented in the York and Hull District data due to a changing of District boundaries in 2017. The data was also collected by Church Stewards, meaning that demographic data such as age was approximated by those needing to provide the information.²⁰⁴ The demographic report also suggests that the gender data collected excluded categories such as non-binary which means that some people may have been incorrectly reported. It has also been 12 years since this data was collected, and, consequently, comparisons between the two sets of data are limited. Parallels are also limited by the size of the data set from 2023, as this data only represents 209 congregants out of the District membership of 6622 (around 3%).²⁰⁵ Despite this, it is helpful to compare the results from this study to previous data collections, as it helps to build a wider picture of the church.

Christian Background of participants - Attendance

The majority of participants attended their selected church on a frequent basis, with 105 participants attending church at least four times a month. The data again has a negative distribution, as seen in *Figure 7*, however, it is unsurprising that those who attended frequently took part in this study, as they would have had more opportunity to see the information about the study.



Figure 7 – A graph showing participants frequency of attendance

There may also be a relationship between those who attend more frequently and their sense of wanting to help the church which may also be a reason for the distribution.

²⁰⁴ This information was collected in an informal conversation with a District Chair who was in circuit during 2011. It provided background information that was otherwise not available on the Methodist Church Website.

²⁰⁵ Methodist Church, *Statistics for Mission*

Data was also collected in regard to the length of time they had attended the selected church. *Figure 8* shows this information in categories, with each number on the x-axis representing five years. There is a positive distribution in the number of years that participants attended their



selected church, with the median being 20 years, and the mean being 25 years. In contrast, the mode is 40 years, and the data had a range of under a year to 89 years, suggesting that some individuals had stayed as members of the church that they grew up in.

Figure 8 – A graph showing how long participants attended their selected church.

The collection of this data provides useful

background information when understanding the participants who took part in *Part Two*. It was interesting to see that 41 participants had only attended the current church for up to five years, leading to questions as to how congregational singing fits into the picture of a shrinking church. However, given the majority of participants were between the ages of 60-90, there is reason to believe that participants have moved churches due to retirement moves, and this echoes the median and mean of years of attendance being 20 and 25 years.

Whilst having an understanding about how many years individuals have attended their current church provides an interesting background which may feed into how participants find the music in their churches, there is also a need for data on whether participants grew up with a faith. To collect this data, the following questions were asked: 'Were you brought up in a household that followed a faith?' and 'If you selected yes, please share the faith and denomination below'. Of those who answered these questions, 83.2% of respondents grew up in a household that followed faith, and, of those responses, 71% grew up going to a Methodist Church. The remaining 29% of participants who did not grow up in the Methodist Church but did grow up in a household that followed faith, all attended a church of Christian and Protestant origin. Music within these different Protestant denominations may be used in different ways, and whilst this thesis does not have the opportunity to review the use of music within the different denominations selected by participants, it is interesting to note that all participants come from a Protestant background.

Conclusion

The demographic analysis within this chapter provides the context of the participating churches and congregants before analysis into the research questions outlined within the Methodology. It recognises that there are potential gaps in gender and age, and which may lead to limitations in the data collected and provides contexts into the areas which the churches serve, in terms of their congregation size and geographical context.

Sing and Make Music to the Lord: Data Analysis and Discussion

As highlighted in the Methodology, this research project is focusing on three research questions which are based on the three core elements of the section of the 'God for All' strategy titled 'Making Beautiful Worship'.²⁰⁶ The research questions are:

4. Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing congregants to connect to each other and to God?
5. Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing individuals to be encouraged in their service to God?
6. Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing individuals to be transformed for mission and share the word of God?

The majority of the analysis will focus on Question Eight of the congregational questionnaire which was a Likert question that asked congregants to respond to a number of statements which related to the research questions above. The data collected from this question will be analysed against variables such as the demographics of participants, the length of time participants have spent at the church and the context of the churches. This analysis will then be brought together in the context of the research questions.

Question Eight: What are the trends?

Within the congregational questionnaire a Likert question was used to collect information from congregants on several statements and it is this question which will continually be referred to throughout this analysis.²⁰⁷ Before delving into deeper analysis, which will look at how different variables may impact congregational response, it is interesting to observe the trend in responses. As can be seen in *Figure 9*, the frequency of 'Strongly Agree' decreases as the statements move towards a more evangelistic context with 105 participants strongly agreeing that congregational singing helps them to connect to God, compared to the 22 participants who would invite people to church due to the congregational singing. It is also evident that, as the statements progressed, there was an increase in people who responded 'neither agree nor disagree', with only 12 participants choosing

²⁰⁶ God for All Strategy

²⁰⁷ See Appendix 4

this option when asked about how congregational singing connects them to the gathered community, compared to 79 participants when asked about whether congregational singing encourages them to share their faith.

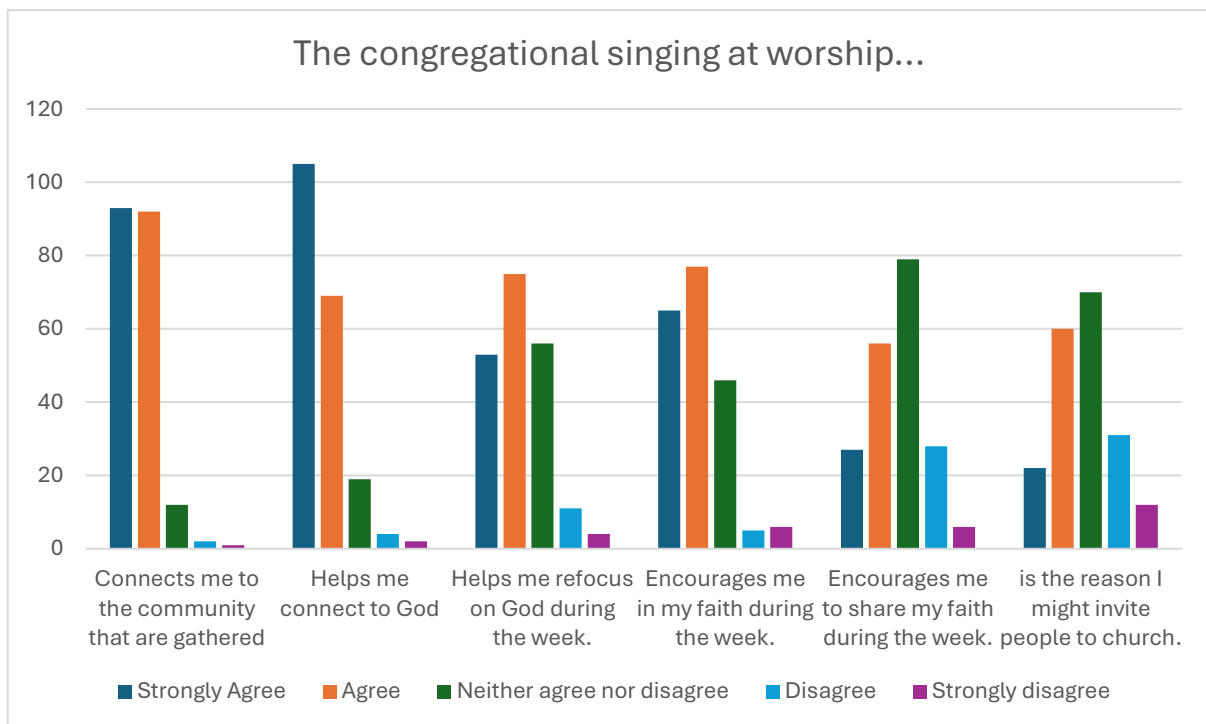


Figure 9 – A graph showing the overall results to Question Eight

Whilst throughout the statements there are still significantly more responses that speak positively of congregational singing rather than negatively, this piques an interest as negative or indifferent responses are increasing when the statements are more directly about being evangelistic. There needs to be consideration that congregational singing is not the only element of worship and, those who would not invite people to church due to congregational singing, may invite people to their church for other elements of church and worship. It could also be suggested that it is the words sung that might encourage a person of faith, both privately and evangelistically, rather than the act of singing them. But with congregational singing being considered such an important part of Methodist worship, one would expect it to play a more important role in inspiring and encouraging its congregants to invite people to church. For example, if congregational singing is helping an individual to feel close and connected with God is that not something that they might want to share with friend who may not know of church and God?

Question Eight – an in-depth analysis.

Whilst an overview of responses indicates certain trends, an in-depth analysis is necessary to understand more about why people are responding as they are. For example, how does age or

gender impact these results, or the size of congregation and the musical accompaniment used. This next section will look at participants responses to Question Eight in relation to different variables which will enable a deeper analysis.

Age

As outlined in the demographic analysis, the age of participants in this study is not evenly distributed with over 70% of participants above the age of 60-years-old. Whilst this means that the age of participants is not evenly distributed, it is a reasonable representation of the demographic of the Methodist Church. It should also be remembered that those who are under-18 could not participate in this study. All this needs to be taken into consideration during further analysis as it could skew potential data.

To see if there was any correlation between age and how participants responded, a scatter graph (*Figure 10*) was used to plot the age and the sum of participants' responses to Question Eight. Each response to Question Eight was coded, with strongly agree being coded as one and strongly disagree being coded as five. The participants responses were then totalled together meaning that the higher the participants total score, the more they disagreed with the statements. This does not consider how participants responded to each individual statement or that participants may not have answered certain statements, however it shows that, overall, there is no relationship between age and how participants responded to the statement.

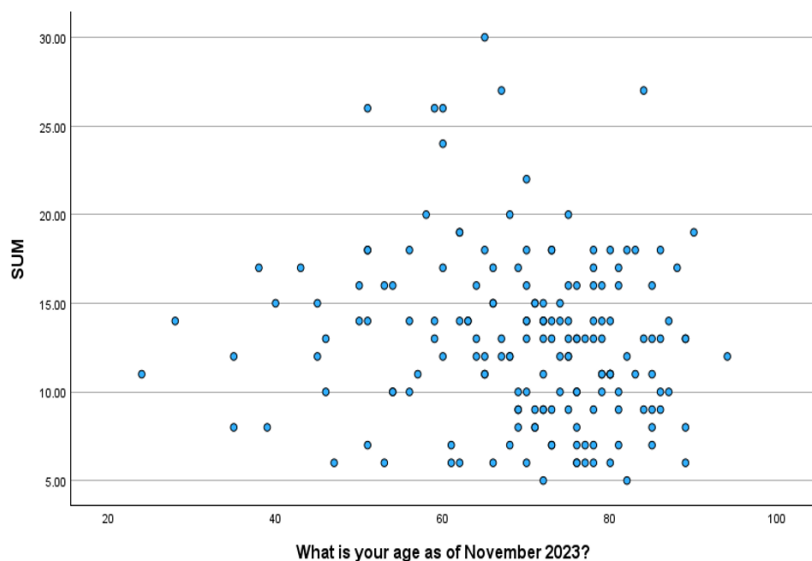


Figure 10 – A scattergram showing the correlation between age and participants responses to Question Eight

Table 4 delves into how different age groups responded to each statement

suggesting that, whilst there may be no general correlation, age is a factor that plays a role in how individuals view congregational singing. The table below looks at two different groups of statistics which are highlighted with different colours: the pale peach is the data for those ≤ 60 -years-old and the grey are those participants >60 -years-old. The decision to split participants in this way was due to the uneven distribution of ages meaning that some age categories under 60-years-old-years-old had two or three participants. Viewing the data like this raises some interesting points.

Table 4- What is your age as of November 2023?²⁰⁸

The congregational singing at worship...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Disagree or Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total participating participants
... connects me to the community that are gathered	43.2%	45.9%	10.8%	--	--	37 (≤60)
	47.4%	46%	5.1%	0.7%	0.7%	137 (>60)
... helps me connect to God	35.1%	37.8%	18.9%	8.1%	--	37
	57.4%	33.1%	7.4%	0.7%	1.5%	136
... helps me refocus on God during the week.	24.3%	29.7%	29.7%	10.8%	5.4%	37
	26.3%	38%	29.9%	4.4%	1.5%	137
... encourages me in my faith during the week.	21.6%	40.5%	24.3%	5.4%	8.1%	37
	33.6%	36.8%	24.3%	2.2%	2.2%	136
... encourages me to share my faith during the week.	8.1%	29.7%	40.5%	10.8%	10.8%	37
	16.4%	26.1%	39.6%	16.4%	1.5%	134
... is the reason I might invite people to church.	13.5%	18.9%	29.7%	21.6%	16.2%	37
	12.1%	32.6%	34.8%	15.9%	4.5%	132

It is interesting to note that, in general, those who are >60-years-old respond more positively to congregational singing than those ≤60-years-old. For example, when responding to the statement 'The congregational singing at worship helps me to connect to God', 90.4% of participants who are >60-years-old responded with 'Strongly Agree' or 'Agree' compared to 72.9% of those ≤60-years-old. Whilst there is still a majority of participants ≤60-years-old who have a positive response about congregational singing, it does suggest that the congregational singing within Methodist Churches is not serving younger generations in the same way that it serves older generations. As the statements become more evangelistic, it is again clear that there is a difference in how the different age categories view the state of congregational singing within their churches. A higher percentage of those ≤60-years-old responded to 'neither agree or disagree' or negatively when asked if congregational singing 'is the reason I might invite people to church' compared to those >60-years-old. Regardless of the different generational responses, it is clear that congregational singing is not as likely to be a reason why someone is invited to church, and instead is seen as a tool that enables and encourages their relationship with God.

²⁰⁸ See Appendix 4

Whilst there might not be a clear correlation between age and responses to these statements, the table above suggests that age has a role in how people responded to the statements and indicates that, if there was an even distribution of ages, there may be a clearer correlation. Despite this, the data in the table implies that, for a higher percentage of participants who are ≤60-years-old, the congregational singing in churches is less likely to be a reason for the deepening of a relationship with God, and also less likely to be a reason why they would be evangelistic and invite people to church.

Gender

Again, when considering gender as a contributing factor, it is important to note before further analysis the uneven distribution of gender as outlined in the demographical analysis. As with age, the variables have been categorised in *Table 5* with different colours where participants who identify as female are categorised with the light peach, and those who identify as male in grey.

Table 5- To what Gender identity do you most identify with?²⁰⁹

The congregational singing at worship...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Disagree or Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total participating participants
... connects me to the community that are gathered	48.2%	42.4%	7.9%	1.4%	--	139 (Female)
	42.4%	54.2%	1.7%	--	1.7%	59 (Male)
... helps me connect to God	54.3%	31.9%	10.9%	2.2%	0.7%	138
	49.2%	39.3%	6.6%	1.7%	1.7%	59
... helps me refocus on God during the week.	29.7%	37%	26.1%	5.8%	1.4%	138
	20.3%	39%	32.2%	5.1%	3.4%	59
... encourages me in my faith during the week.	35.5%	39.1%	19.6%	2.9%	2.9%	138
	27.1%	39%	28.8%	1.7%	3.4%	59
... encourages me to share my faith during the week.	14.8%	29.6%	38.5%	14.1%	3%	135
	11.9%	27.1%	44.1%	13.6%	3.4%	59
... is the reason I might invite people to church.	11.9%	33.6%	34.3%	14.2%	6%	134
	8.5%	25.4%	40.7%	18.6%	6.8%	59

²⁰⁹ See Appendix 4

Unlike the analysis on age, there are some consistent patterns in how participants responded depending on their gender identity. For example, women consistently had a higher percentage in 'Strongly Agree' and men consistently had a higher percentage in the category 'Strongly Disagree'. The data also indicates that, for the first three statements, men were more likely to respond 'agree' however, as the statements became more evangelistic, women were more likely to respond 'agree'. As mentioned, when looking at the general overview, it is undeniable that there are more positive responses than negative, however it is the statements that see the increase in negative views, however small, that are the more interesting. It is apparent that those who identify as men have a considerably less positive perspective on congregational singing and are less likely to invite people church because of the congregational singing.

The patterns of responses are quite suggestive of the ways men and women might find congregational singing and could imply that the church may be serving the preference of one gender more than another. With the responses of men being generally less positive, it could suggest that congregational singing serves the individual faith of women more than that of men. However, it is important to consider the sample sizes of each gender, as there is not an even-distribution of men and women. This means that each response from those who identified themselves as male will be more significant in these percentages compared to those who identified as women. It is also interesting to note that, whilst men have higher percentage responses to 'Strongly disagree', it is often by only a small margin and, when you consider the sample sizes, it could suggest that when it comes to the category of 'strongly disagree' that gender does not play a significant role. Despite this, the data does suggest that there is a gender imbalance in how men and women experience and view the congregational singing in churches as they currently are.

Relationship to Church

Within *Part Two* of this research project, there were multiple questions which can be used to explore the relationship that participants have with their current church, to the denomination, and to Christianity in general such as whether participants grew up with faith, the frequency of attendance and the length of time at their current church.

The majority of participants grew up in a Christian household with only 33 participants, who answered this question, growing up without faith compared to the 162 participants who grew up in a household with Christian faith. *Table 6* compares these two groups of participants in their responses to the statement '...helps me connect to God'.

Table 6 - Were you brought up in a household that followed a faith?²¹⁰

The congregational singing at worship...	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Neither Disagree or Agree	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Total participating participants
... helps me connect to God	93.5%	3.1%	3.15%	33 (Did not grow up in a household of faith)
	85.8%	11.1%	3.1%	162 (Grew up in a household of faith)

When split into categories of positive responses, indifferent responses, and negative responses, it is interesting to observe how similarly each group of participants responds to the statements. It suggests that music is an effective way for everyone to feel connected God regardless of whether they grew up in a household of faith or not. The slight increase of positive responses for those who did not grow up in a household of faith suggests that congregational singing could be a helpful way to engage and experience this connection with God as an evangelistic tool. It could indicate that congregational singing may have a role in the discipleship of new Christians, although more research needs to be done into this. Music could, therefore, be considered an accessible entry point to Christianity, especially when considering the role hymnody has in regard to teaching the theology of the Methodist Church, alongside the fact that congregational singing enables individuals to feel close to God. However, there are limitations to this data as it is not known how long these individuals have been Christian as, whilst they might not have grown up in faith, they could have been Christian for decades so, therefore, it is hard to determine the role music had and continues to have. However, this data does emphasise the potential that music may have in enabling new Christians to feel connected to God and is something that should be considered by the Methodist Church.

Whilst the questionnaire did not ask how long participants had been Christian, it did ask how long they had attended their selected church. This set of data was split according to the median, with one set of data being for participants who had been at their church for twenty years or under, and the other being for those who had been at their church for over twenty years. Ultimately, both groups responded very similarly to the statements which implies that the length of time at a church is not a factor that has any impact in the way that participants view the congregational singing in their church. Whilst the responses are similar, the data does suggest that those who have been in the church for >20 years are more likely to share a stronger opinion about how they find congregational singing. Across all statements participants who have been at the church for ≤20 years have a higher

²¹⁰ See Appendix 4

level of responses in the category ‘neither disagree or agree’. The reason for this is not clear, however, it could be that those who have been at a church for >20 years felt safer sharing strong opinions.

Table 7– The role of attendance on the question ‘How often do you attend worship at your selected Methodist Church?’²¹¹

The congregational singing at worship...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Disagree or Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total participating participants
... connects me to the community that are gathered	44.4%	38.9%	16.7%	--	--	18 (irregular attendance)
	50.5%	43.8%	2.9%	1.9%	1.0	105 (regular attendance)
... helps me connect to God	27.8%	50%	11.1%	5.6%	5.6%	18
	66.3%	25.0%	4.8%	2.9%	1.0%	104
... helps me refocus on God during the week.	17.6%	47.1%	17.6%	11.8%	5.9%	17
	35.2%	33.3%	24.8%	3.8%	2.9%	105
... encourages me in my faith during the week.	27.8%	38.9%	22.2%	--	11.1%	17
	40.4%	38.5%	15.4%	1.9%	3.8%	104
... encourages me to share my faith during the week.	11.8%	17.6%	41.2%	23.5%	5.9%	18
	17.3%	32.7%	34.6%	10.6%	4.8%	104
... is the reason I might invite people to church.	11.1%	16.7%	38.9%	22.2%	11.1%	18
	9.8%	40.2%	34.3%	9.8%	5.9%	102

Analysis also indicates that the frequency of attendance has a role in how participants responded to the six statements in Question Eight. *Table 7* shows the contrast of responses when considering the variable of attendance, with *Table 7* showing the responses of those who indicated that they attended irregularly compared to those who attend every week. It should be noted that the lack of attendance could be due to a number of different factors, such as long-term illness or family situations, and does not indicate any lack of commitment to their personal faith. It is also important to consider the different sample sizes when analysing this data.

It is evident when looking at *Table 7* that those who attend church frequently experience congregational singing differently. For example, 50% of participants who say that they frequently

²¹¹ See Appendix 4

attend church agree that they would invite people to church because of the congregational singing, compared to 27.8% of those who attend infrequently. The data suggests that the more regularly people attend their church, the more likely it is that congregants will invite people to church due to the singing. This is interesting to observe, as it suggests that they either view congregational singing as an important factor in the potential evangelising of people, or that they view the music in their churches as an accessible way for people to learn about God. What is also implied is a relationship between attendance and how congregants feel encouraged in their faith. It could be that those who attend church frequently experience a deeper relationship with God and, therefore, engage more deeply with congregational singing than those who are unable to attend frequently. This idea is strengthened by the difference in how participants responded to the statement ‘...helps me connect to God’, as the data indicates that those who attend church frequently are more likely to find congregational singing an accessible way to feel connected with God, compared to those who are unable to attend church on a regular basis.

If congregational singing is only encouraging the faith of those that attend church frequently, it could be said that this is not a sustainable form of church as the impact of congregational singing should not be dependent on how often they attend. This can be extrapolated to suggest that the congregational singing happening in Methodist Churches is designed for those who experience an existing relationship with God, rather than those that are new to faith. The data indicates that there is an imbalance in how music enables congregants to experience a relationship with God, with those who attend infrequently having a different response to those who attend frequently. However, further research is needed to explore this further due to the uneven distribution of participants.

Overall, the data implies that the relationship that an individual has with their church has an impact in how individuals engage with congregational singing, although the level of significance is dependent on a number of factors. The data from participants suggests that growing up with or without faith has little difference in how people respond and that those who had attended their selected church for over 20 years were more likely to share stronger opinions in responses. However, what the data does indicate is that the frequency of attendance is a factor in how people engage in congregational singing, with responses indicating that it is those who have an existing faith or motivation to attend church that benefit from congregational singing the most, therefore rendering congregational singing an ineffective evangelistic tool.

Size of Church

Analysis suggests that the size of the average congregation is a variable that has a role in how participants responded to the statements in Question Eight of *Part Two*. The participants were

divided into two groups, split according to the median congregation size which was 25. The participants of churches with congregations of >25 responded more positively to the statements 'helps me refocus on God during the week' and '...encourages me in my faith during the week' suggesting that singing in larger groups of people results in a sustained effect of congregational singing, allowing them to refocus and encourage them in their faith. In comparison, congregations ≤25 indicated that they were more likely to invite people to their churches, although the congregational singing they experience is less likely to encourage or refocus them during the week. It also appears that churches with congregations ≤ 25 feel more connected to the gathered community, and to God, when they congregationally sing compared to those in larger congregations. The ability to connect to the congregation may be easier within smaller congregations as there is a higher likelihood that congregants know everyone they are singing with. However, it is interesting to observe the difference when it comes to connection with God and contrasts with expectations had when going into this research. As with most of these percentages, however, the differences are slim and therefore this research can only note trends within the context of participating churches.

Whilst this study categorises large churches as those with congregations of over 25 congregants, this is not necessarily the case around the Connexion. As highlighted earlier in the analysis, the YNE District is a largely rural District compared to others in the Connexion and this will have a role on the size of the congregations. Despite this, the above analysis indicates that congregation size may have an impact on how congregations respond although more research needs to be done on a broader range of churches to be able to come to a certain conclusion.

Role of accompaniment

Alongside the size of the church, it is also important to consider whether the size of congregation has an impact on the musical resources of the church, which may impact how congregants responded. The data collected indicates that larger congregations had a wider variety of accompaniment options, allowing them more variety and options within worship. In comparison, smaller churches did not have this same level of variety, although they do consistently use live music. It should be noted that the churches that use videos and *Singing the Faith* midi files use this in conjunction with other forms of accompaniment, although additional comments suggests that these forms of accompaniment are used when their musician is not around. This contrasts with prior expectations, as this suggests that there are active musicians in all participating churches, although this is not necessarily an accurate picture of the Connexion. The use of live musicians indicates that churches view live music as a preferable option but, when live music is not available, there is then a priority in finding alternative

ways to sing congregationally. This emphasises the importance of congregational singing within Methodist Churches.

Compared to other forms of congregational singing, participants within churches that regularly use an organ for their accompaniment responded more positively to the statement ‘...helps me connect to God’, with 60.7% of participants choosing ‘strongly agree’.²¹² Whilst other forms of accompaniment echo the overall positive opinion, it is interesting that the organ has a significantly higher percentage. It suggests that the organ is a more effective tool in enabling a perceived encounter with God compared to other forms of accompaniment. This is echoed in responses to the first four statements however, when the statements become more evangelistic, the organ is no longer the preferred form of accompaniment.²¹³ In contrast, it is interesting to note that churches which occasionally use videos had the most negative reaction to the statements ‘...is the reason I might invite people to church,’ and ‘...encourages me to share my faith during the week’.²¹⁴ This indicates that, whilst using videos in worship might enable a wider variety of song choice within worship and enables congregations to sing when they may not have a musician, it does not aid congregants in being evangelistic compared to other forms of accompaniment. Throughout all of this analysis, it should be noted that there is an uneven distribution of participants within each accompaniment category which subsequently impacts the potential of comparison between the different forms of accompaniment.²¹⁵ However, it does highlight trends that could be explored further in more research.

Table 8 - Role of Piano/Organ accompaniment in participants responses

... encourages me in my faith during the week.	Organ	Piano	Piano/Organ	Use of Videos	Singing the Midi Files
Strongly Agree	35.7%	20%	3.7%	23.1%	35.3%
Agree	44%	40%	25.9%	43.6%	41.2%
Neither Agree/Disagree	17.9%	40%	55.6%	33.3%	17.6%
Disagree	1.2%	--	14.8%	--	5.9%
Strongly Disagree	1.2%	--	--	--	--

²¹² See Appendix 6

²¹³ See Appendix 6

²¹⁴ See Appendix 6

²¹⁵ See Appendix 6

As evident in *Table 8*, there is a discrepancy in how the participants from churches that interchangeably use piano and organ responded to the statement ‘...encourages me in my faith’ compared to the responses of other participants. Whilst there is no indication of why this might be, and therefore it could be an anomaly, it does indicate that accompaniment makes a difference in how participants respond and raises a question as to the quality of music that they are receiving in their churches. If forms of accompaniment impact how congregational singing is received and experienced, it suggests that there could be some opportunities for training in musicianship which could enable a baseline of musical ability and standard of accompaniment in Methodist Churches.

To ensure a certain musical ability, some churches employ their musicians although results from this study suggest that this does not make a difference. Only one participating church employed their musicians, but the responses from this church imply that paying a musician does not make a difference in how congregants experience congregational singing. If the quality of music does not change how participants in a church respond, it could instead indicate that the tradition and style of music within Methodist Churches is the reason for the increase of negative responses as the statements become more evangelistic. A limitation that runs throughout this study is whether congregants are inspired to be evangelistic regardless of congregational singing. It could be that individuals feel ill-equipped to have conversations that might lead to them sharing their faith, or that a different part of worship is what inspires and encourages them in their faith and subsequent evangelism. It is also unfair to say that the musicians who volunteer are any less skilled than those who are employed. However, from experience as a local preacher, the quality of musicianship varies greatly between churches and this variety will impact how congregants engage with congregational singing.

Despite these uncertainties, the data suggests that accompaniment does have a role in how participants experience congregational singing, but they are not significant and further research would need to be done to understand the role of accompaniment further.

Context of Church

As hinted previously, it is suggested that the geographical context of churches may be a variable that impacts participant response. Before discussing the data, it should be noted that there is an uneven distribution of participant churches within each context, and this uneven distribution continues in the number of participants within each context. Despite this, there are some interesting trends that indicate that geographical context may play a role in how participants responded. The data suggests that the congregational singing in rural contexts does not encourage people in their faith during the week. Participants in rural contexts responded more negatively to the statements ‘...encourages me

in my faith during the week' and '...helps me refocus on God during the week' compared to those in other geographical settings.²¹⁶ An explanation for this could be the size of the average congregation as, within this study, rural churches saw a mean congregation size of 20 compared to the mean congregation size of 45 for the participating market town churches. The participants who attend Market Town churches saw the highest percentages in the category 'strongly agree' in all statements but it is the response to '...is the reason why I might invite people to church' which suggests that, whilst slightly larger congregations may find congregational singing a better way to engage with God, others and their faith, it is not viewed as accessible for those without faith.²¹⁷

However, whilst the above shows some examples which indicate that geographical context may have a role in how participants respond, it is questionable as to the extent that this can be explained due to context. As explored previously, it could be less about the context and more about the congregation size that impacts how participants responded to certain statements, and it could also be argued that the age spread within different congregations also plays a role. For example, within a rural context, the average age of participants is 72, with a range between 35 and 94, whereas within a suburban context the average age of participants was 64, with a range between 24 and 86. This suggests that it is not the geographical context itself which leads to certain responses but how the geographical context links with other demographical data such as congregation size and age.

Do congregations want things to change?

Whilst understanding the state of congregational singing in 2024 was important, it is also important to understand how participants wanted congregational singing to change. When considering this, it is interesting to look at responses to the question 'Is there anything you would change about congregational singing in your church?'. Out of the 200 responses, 65% answered no, indicating that the majority of congregants are satisfied with the congregational singing that they are experiencing in their churches. The 35% who answered yes were given the option to share what they would change, and the content analysis of these responses' highlights some of the frustrations and ways congregants wish congregational singing would develop. It was not a surprise to see comments about the style or type of worship, with some participants wishing for use of more modern hymns or worship songs, and others wanting more traditional hymns. However, what was apparent was a

²¹⁶ See Appendix 7

²¹⁷ See Appendix 7

longing for modern and traditional music to be used together rather than churches choosing one worship style. This can be seen in a handful of participant responses below:

'Sometimes we do not get the right balance between traditional hymns and modern worship songs. I like both but sometimes the modern songs seem to dominate.' **Participant 74**

'More variation not just traditional hymns.' **Participant 1**

'Encourage using a broader range of songs and music.' **Participant 84**

'Introduce a band occasionally and bring in a range of organists regularly.' **Participant 106**

'More modern worship songs, less use of the organ and old seventeenth eighteenth nineteenth century hymns.' **Participant 142**

However, it was also recognised that one of the challenges within the Methodist Church is resourcing the musicians needed to play a range of musical styles, with some participants acknowledging the lack of musicians that may be able and willing to play more modern tunes, or a frustration that the worship bands that do exist are not being utilised in the best way possible.²¹⁸ There was also a yearning by some to bring back the four-part sung harmony which used to be prevalent within Methodist churches. However in order for this to be preserved, tune hymnbooks need to be reintroduced to churches and given to congregations rather than always using screens.²¹⁹ The appreciation of the existing worship style within churches, with a longing for some variety and change, is reiterated when participants were asked what forms of worship they had experienced elsewhere, and whether they wanted them to be included within their regular worship. Of those that answered, 25.4% answered with 'Occasionally' showing that they do value the worship that is happening within their churches, but that a variety of worship styles could be beneficial. However, 29.2% of participants wanted worship styles that they had experienced elsewhere to also be shared within their Methodist Church.

It is interesting that, whilst 35% of participants said that they wanted to change congregational singing in their church, 69% of participants would appreciate worship styles from other denominations being frequently or occasionally included within their worship. This indicates that there are some participants who do not want what they currently experience to change, whilst also wanting to see more variation and styles that are more commonly found in different denominations. It may be the wording of these questions that led to the difference of responses, with the word 'change' potentially being interpreted as something that could be permanent, whereas

²¹⁸ Participant 185; Participant 192; Participant 3; Participant 15; Participant 46.

²¹⁹ Participant 132; Participant 135.

the incorporation of other worship styles into worship was interpreted as something that happens less frequently and does not result in the whole service being changed. For example, the incorporation of Taizé style congregational singing could be used as a response to prayers, thus not changing the style of the overall worship. Whilst this is an assumption, it is an interesting observation and factor to reflect on.

When considering why congregants might want to change the style of congregational singing that they partake in, it is interesting to consider how congregational singing is currently experienced. Question Ten of *Part One* of the questionnaire collected information about the types of accompaniments the participating churches use each week for their congregational singing, and this information can be used to see if there are any trends in how congregants respond.²²⁰ It is important to note that there were 136 congregation participants who participated in churches that also took part in *Part One* of the study, and it is this group of participants who are being used in this analysis.

Tables 9 and 10 below explore how congregants responded depending on the type of accompaniment frequently used in their worshipping communities. Alongside these data points, it is also interesting to mention some of the comments left regarding the changes they wanted to see in their worshipping communities in relation to the form of accompaniment. For example, participants within worshipping communities that use the organ wanted to see the incorporation of modern hymns or a variety of instrumentation and, a participant whose church primarily uses *Singing the Faith* midi files commented a that they wish ‘it to be played by someone’.²²¹

Table 9 – A table exploring how accompaniment impacted responses to ‘If there anything you would change about congregational singing in your church?’²²²

	Organ	Piano	Piano/Organ	Use of Videos	Singing the Faith Midi Files	Total
Yes	23 (27.4%)	1 (10%)	18 (66.7%)	18 (46.2%)	5 (29.4%)	65 (36.7%)
No	61 (72.6%)	9 (90%)	9 (33.3%)	21 (53.8%)	12 (70.6%)	112 (63.3%)
Total	84	10	27	39	17	177

Table 10 - A table exploring how accompaniment impacted responses to ‘Would you like other congregational singing practices to be included in your regular worship?’²²³

²²⁰ See Appendix 3.

²²¹ Participant 173.

²²² See Appendix 4.

²²³ See Appendix 4.

	Organ	Piano	Piano/Organ	Use of Videos	Singing the Faith Midi Files	Total
Yes	19 (22.1%)	3 (25%)	10 (37%)	12 (30.8%)	6 (35.3%)	50 (27.6%)
Occasionally	30 (34.9%)	2 (16.7%)	8 (29.6%)	15 (38.5)	6 (35.3%)	61 (33.7%)
No	27 (31.4%)	3 (25%)	2 (7.4%)	10 (25.6%)	3 (17.6%)	45 (24.9%)
Did not answer	10 (11.6%)	4 (33.3%)	7 (26%)	2 (5.1%)	2 (11.8%)	25 (13.8%)
Total	86	12	27	39	17	181

Whilst for some of these categories, the number of participants is too small to draw any strong conclusions, it is interesting to note the trends that can be spotted. For example, participants who belong to churches that occasionally use videos seem more likely to want congregational singing to change. This could be interpreted to imply that it is not the most desirable way to share in congregational singing despite the variety it might give. Contrastingly, congregations that use piano accompaniment appear to not want their congregational singing to change, suggesting that the piano could be considered a more optimal form of accompaniment. The size of the category needs to be considered here, as the responses of 10 participants is too small of a sample to draw a reliable conclusion. What is interesting, and to some degree unexpected, is that the data suggests that congregations that use piano and organ accompaniment interchangeably are more likely to want to see change in their congregational singing, with 66.7% of participants choosing 'strongly agree'. Unfortunately, the data does not give a reasoning for this which stands out as a contrast to the written responses in the other categories. There are factors which could be responsible for this, such as the quality of the musician or the music chosen for congregational singing, however there can be no certainty for this response.

There is an interesting occurrence in participants wanting congregational singing traditions of other denominations to be included within their regular worship but not wanting congregational singing traditions to change. The comments as to why this might be, as explored above, still stand, but when considering the responses of 'yes' and 'occasionally' there is a consistency of participants wanting alternative forms of congregational singing practices included within their worship. Whilst the term 'occasionally' implies that participants do not want a permanent change, it does suggest that there is a longing for variety in worship and the ways that congregations experience congregational singing. The variety of music within churches is often the responsibility of the preachers, and the indication that a variation of worship styles would be appreciated suggests that preachers could be experimentative in how congregational singing is incorporated in worship. There will, however, be the challenge, which is highlighted in some comments, about the capacity and talent of musicians in churches, and this is sometimes a limitation.

What alternative worship?

When considering variation in musical styles within worship, it is important to consider what musical styles this might be referring to. Participants were asked what other denominational music practices they had experienced, and 80.9% of participants had experienced different forms of Christian worship, with certain forms of congregational singing being more popular than others. Anglican evensong was the musical practice most commonly experienced (43.5% of participants), although this is not surprising due to the Church of England being the established religion of England. Taizé and Iona were also forms of worship that were familiar with participants, which is interesting due to the origination of these musical practices being within religious communities. Iona is an international, ecumenical 'dispersed community of people working for peace and justice' that describes their worship as an 'imaginative engagement with scripture, Christian traditions, lived experience and other sources of inspiration' that 'embodies [their commitment] to justice, peace and the integrity of creation'.²²⁴ As part of this community, they have a group that publishes liturgies, which include hymns and songs for congregational singing, that 'exist to encourage, enable and equip the shaping and creation of new forms of worship that are relevant, contextual and participatory'.²²⁵ Taizé shares a similarity with Iona as it is another ecumenical religious community of 'around eighty brothers from different church backgrounds', that welcomes 'tens of thousands of young adults' for weeks of prayer and biblical reflection.²²⁶ However, what has grown out of Taizé is a practice of meditative singing of 'short songs, repeated again and again' so 'as the words are sung over many times, this reality [of the lyrics which contain a 'basic reality of faith'] gradually penetrates the whole being... thus becom[ing] a way of listening to God'.²²⁷ It is interesting that it is the music and worship of these two religious communities which are experienced by participants outside of the Methodist Church. However, whilst they are experienced by participants, the data suggests that participants do not want these styles to be reflected within regular worship as seen in *Table 11*.

Table 11 - Forms of Congregational Singing

²²⁴ 'Prayer and Worship', *Iona Community*, n.d., accessed May 23, 2024, <https://iona.org.uk/our-resources/prayer-and-worship/>; 'Welcome to the Iona Community', *Iona Community*, n.d., accessed May 23, 2024, <https://iona.org.uk/>

²²⁵ 'Wild Goose Resource Group', *Iona Community*, n.d., accessed May 23, 2024, <https://iona.org.uk/wild-goose-resource-group-about/>

²²⁶ 'The Community Today', *Taizé*, n.d., accessed May 23, 2024, https://www.taize.fr/en_article6525.html

²²⁷ 'Meditative Singing', *Taizé*, n.d., accessed May 23, 2024, https://www.taize.fr/en_article338.html

	Anglican Evensong	Taizé	Iona Worship	Catholic Mass	Worship at Conferences	Worship bands at Sunday Worship
Forms of congregational singing experienced	43.5%	38.8%	32%	17.2%	9%	4.7%
Forms of congregational singing reflected in regular worship	7.2%	7.7%	11%	--	3.3%	1.9%

The variable of age does need to be considered when looking at the forms of congregational singing experienced and wanted within Methodist Churches, as, with the majority of participants being over 60 years old, there is the potential of bias. *Table 12*, which looks at how age impacts the forms of congregational singing experienced by participants, does indicate that this varies depending on age. Those who are over 60 years old seem to be more likely to have experienced Anglican Evensong, whereas those who were under 60-years-old were more likely to have attended worship at various conferences. The category of 'Worship at Conference' is a vague definition and was potentially unhelpful for participants. There is not one form of worship that typically happens at conferences; however, conferences typically allow for worship with large gatherings of people. This should have been clarified to participants.

*Table 12 – Considering the role of age in the question Have you attended and experienced different forms of Christian worship?*²²⁸

	Anglican Evensong	Taize	Iona Worship	Catholic Mass	Worship at Conferences	Worship bands at Sunday Worship	<i>Total participants who took part in this question</i>
≤60-years-old	33.3%	52.7%	36.1%	11.1%	19.4%	2.7%	36
>60-years-old	48.6%	32.9%	30%	18.6%	5%	3.5%	140

However, when asked if participants wanted to see these forms of worship within their regular worship, the comparison of age groups is more significant. The data in *Table 13* suggests that those who are >60-years-old are less likely to want the worship in their church to change compared to those who are ≤60-years-old. Given the >60-years-old are the dominant generation within the Methodist Church, it raises interesting questions about who the Methodist Church is serving. Does the Methodist Church want to serve those who are currently members of their churches, or appeal

²²⁸ See Appendix 4.

to the generations who are not currently experiencing church. If it wants to do the latter, perhaps congregational singing in Methodist Churches needs to broaden and explore a variety of different musical practices.

Table 13 - The role of age in response to the question 'If not, would you like them to be?'

	≤ 60-years-old	>60-years-old
Yes	30%	33.6%
Occasionally	30%	19.3%
No	20%	32.1%
No answer	20%	15%
	40	140

Considering the research questions

Whilst the different variables have been explored, these have not been within the context of the research questions, so this section will explore this analysis within the context of the research questions. It should be noted that these conclusions are based on slight trends as the data suggests that congregational singing is effective, and instead these conclusions highlight areas that could be researched further.

Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing congregants to connect to each other and to God?

It is clear in the overview of the responses to Question Eight that the current musical practice is enabling congregants to feel connected to each other and to God. There are, however, some factors which impacted how participants responded. There was a difference in how congregational singing enabled congregants to connect to God when the data was split according to age. The data suggests that congregational singing may be a barrier for those ≤60-years-old when it comes to feeling connected to God. This continues to be a pattern throughout the statements and suggests that it is a continual trend and needs further exploration. The data indicates that congregational singing may need to change in order to enable younger congregations to feel connected to God and means that churches may need to reflect on whether they serve the congregations that they have, or the congregations that they do not have yet.

What also stood out in the analysis was the impact that attendance has on the role of congregational singing, especially in relation to how music enables participants to feel connected to God. With differences in the category 'strongly agree' between those who attend regularly and those who do not, it again raises the question as for whom congregational singing in Methodist Churches is

designed. If the current musical practice only serves people who attend regularly, could it be that the church cannot serve those who walk through their doors for the first time? It could be suggested that the church is relying on people attending church week after week to feel that connectedness to God. Whilst the data suggests that this is a potential problem in the Methodist Church, it is unknown how people may respond to questions like this from other denominations, and also whether participants would respond differently to other parts of gathered worship. It does, however, raise questions that should be considered by churches around what space is being left for God, and how those who do not regularly attend, or are new to faith, may be able to encounter God within a service.

One of the limitations of this research was the lack of testimonial data collected. The study was designed with questions that collected data quantitatively due to experience of analysing large amounts of qualitative data. Whilst the data collection of this project has enabled an in-depth analysis, the lack of qualitative data means that there are no personal stories of experiences from any participant. When considering connection to God, stories of testimony could have added a depth to the research project, which is otherwise lacking, and if repeated is something that I would consider reviewing.

Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing individuals to be encouraged in their service to God?

It was the two statements that related to this research question that saw little variation in responses. It suggests that there is a general positive view that congregational singing does have long-lasting effects on participants and enables them to engage with their faith during the week. Interestingly, age continues to be a factor of difference in how participants responded, with current musical practices not necessarily supporting the ongoing faith of those ≤60-years-old in the same way as those who are in older generations. It was also interesting to observe that it was participants who had belonged to their selected church for over 20 years who found congregational singing a more effective tool at helping them refocus on God during the week. Whilst the length of time at the selected church does not relate to how long people have been Christian, it does suggest that people become accustomed to the form of congregational singing that they are experiencing and find encouragement in it after a period of time and not instantaneously. Whilst those who have attended the selected church for over 20 years are the most positive in responding to the statement '...helps me refocus on God during the week', they are also the group that have the most negative responses. Gender was also a factor that showed some difference in how people responded, with men being more likely to respond to 'agree' and 'neither agree or disagree' when considering the two statements related to this research question. It raises a question as to whether the church is

nurturing the faith of people who identify as women more than those who identify as men. For future research, it would be important to explore how congregational singing serves and encourages the faith of those who identify with other gender identities. With no participants belonging to this sub-section of society within this project this could not be explored, however, churches should be places that can encourage the faith of all congregants and therefore this might need to be explored further.

What is clear throughout this analysis is that the role of congregational singing in encouraging individuals to serve God is harder to categorise into boxes and is not impacted as much by differing variables. This may be because these research questions reflect more on personal faith and relationships with God. Nevertheless, the fact that 'strongly agree' was not used as frequently, compared to the responses to other statements, indicates that congregational singing is not necessarily supporting individuals in their faith as well as it could be. If this research question was to be explored further, it might be interesting to explore the role of how lyrics encourage individuals in their service to God as this is an important element within Methodist hymnody.

Can the current musical practice within Methodist Churches be understood as allowing individuals to be transformed for mission and share the word of God?

It has been clear throughout the analysis that as the statements became more evangelistic, responses to 'neither agree or disagree' and the negative categories increased, which raises concerns about congregational singing within the Methodist Church. It suggests that, for some people, congregational singing does not transform them for mission, and that the musical practice of Methodist Churches is a barrier in encouraging people to invite others to church. As a Church that considers congregational singing a crucial part of gathered worship, it is important to realise that congregational singing may be a limiting factor in how people might approach evangelism. The data does suggest that age and gender play a role in this, with those who are ≤60-years-old responding more negatively to the statement '...is the reason I might invite people to church,' and a higher percentage of those who identified as men responding negatively to the same statement. The data also suggested that those who do not attend worship regularly are less likely to be evangelistic due to the congregational singing, both in terms of sharing their faith and inviting people to church. However, what is unknown in this data is how evangelistic people are when not reflecting specifically on the role of congregational singing. There needs to be some awareness that the other elements of gathered worship, such as the sermon and prayers, may encourage people to share their faith in a way that the congregational singing may not. Overall, it appears that congregational singing within Methodist Churches is not the most effective at encouraging people to share their faith or encourage

people to invite others to Church, and therefore suggests that there needs to be some further reflection as to how this might be improved.

It is suggested by participant responses that congregants would appreciate more variety in the worship that they experience, and it would be interesting to find pockets of churches who are diverse in their worship styles and repeat the study to see if variety is important. This would have to be on a Connexional scale as it would also enable other diversities such as age, gender, and race to be considered as well. Compared to other Methodist Districts, the YNE District is limited in its diversity and therefore should not be seen as representative of the modern Methodist Church. This is evident with the number of churches based in rural contexts, as it is clear that age and the size of church can be impacted by the geographical context that the church serves in.

What's next...

This research suggests a multitude of reflections that should be considered by the Methodist Church, and these will be brought together in the final conclusion.

A message to the Methodist Church: drawing it all together.

Considering the Hypothesis

As highlighted in the methodology of this project, the three research questions were in response to the following hypothesis: The congregational singing within the Methodist Church is not enabling individuals to 'connect people to God,' 'transform them for mission with the world' and 'inspir[e] [individuals] through worship to serve God in daily life,' and the answer to this hypothesis will now be considered.²²⁹

The analysis of each research question highlighted several areas where there were discrepancies in responses between different variables such as age, gender and type of accompaniment, but despite this, participant response overwhelming disproves the hypothesis. The evidence of this is clear when considering *Figure 9* which indicates that, for the majority of participants, congregational singing is enabling them to feel connected with God, 'be transformed for mission' and 'inspire...[them] to serve God in daily life'.²³⁰ However, the demographic of participants and the geographical context provides limitations when considering the application of this study to the wider Methodist Church. Young people were not represented in this study at all due to the ethical implications of having under-18s participate, but this means that their voice is not considered. The limitations regarding age are expanded further when considering that the majority of participants were over the age of 60, and the geographical context has an impact on this. Had this research project been carried out in an area such as London, the age demographic may have been very different and this needs to be considered when applying these conclusions to the wider Connexion. The lack of church participation in *Part One* of the study also limited analysis into the role of accompaniment and, therefore, this study cannot claim to have a cohesive understanding of how accompaniment impacts participants responses. Whilst the data disproved the hypothesis, the limitations of this research, alongside the trend of increasing negative responses to the statements referring to individual's faith life and evangelism, are worth considering and suggests areas where

²²⁹ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

²³⁰ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

further research is needed, and issues that the Methodist Church of Great Britain may need to consider as they commit further years and money into their evangelism strategy.²³¹

The development of the 'God for All' strategy

The 2024 Methodist Conference received a paper, which reflected and developed the work of the Evangelism and Growth team, and asked for the Methodist Conference to commit to a further seven years of funding totalling over £40 million.²³² This development has led to the streamlining of the strategy into four key areas: New Places for New People/Church on the Margins, Evangelism, Missional Growth and Leadership, and Discipleship.²³³ When considering this research project, the area of the strategy that is most relevant is the stream called 'Discipleship', which looks at developing the discipleship of current congregants as well as the discipleship of new members.²³⁴ The embedding of the 'Methodist Way of Life' continues to be a core element of this work which is expanded further through this section of the renewed strategy.²³⁵ There is additional emphasis in the developed strategy on the 'renewal of worship' which looks at:

Supporting local churches, ordained and lay preachers, worship leaders and the whole gathered community of Christ in our common hunger for a renewal of worship and preaching life that facilitates deep encounters with God; is transcendent and hospitable; is rooted in tradition and accessible and compelling for new generations; seeks the transformation of the human person, the Church, the world and entire cosmos; and supports the extension of the liturgy into personal and community life.²³⁶

Whilst this is built from the statement that has been central to this research there has been further thought and development in this area.²³⁷ There is still mention of encounter and transformation, with the idea of serving God in daily life being integrated with the phrase 'supports the extension of the liturgy into personal and community life'.²³⁸ This indicates that the role of worship in developing an all-consuming faith is a core part of the ongoing evangelism strategy of the

²³¹ Trey Hall and Jude Levermore, 'God for All: The Connexional Strategy for Evangelism and Growth – Strategic Update and Renewal (2025-2032),' (conference paper, Methodist Conference 2024, June 27th – July 3rd 2024 MC/20), 127-183.

²³² At the time of writing (30/05/2024), the Methodist Conference of 2024 has yet to meet and is due to meet for business from the 01/07/2024-03/07/2024; Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 176.

²³³ Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 156.

²³⁴ Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 171-175.

²³⁵ Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 171-175.

²³⁶ Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 172.

²³⁷ Levermore and Hall, 'God for All', 8.

²³⁸ Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 172.

Methodist Church. The above statement is expanded further by recognising that whilst ‘worship renewal is a gift of the Holy Spirit and something that cannot be engineered, but only prayed for,’ there is need for reflection on the patterns of worship that happen within Methodist Churches. The word ‘hunger’ is used on multiple occasions when discussing the renewal of worship and aligns with some of the participants responses which indicated a longing for change.²³⁹

Abraham describes evangelism as a journey, and the 2024 development of ‘God for All’ seems to echo this understanding.²⁴⁰ The strategy reveals that a course is being developed which will ‘introduce newcomers to the Christian faith.... With a focus on practice, experience and reflection,’ and, therefore, offer an opportunity for people to journey and learn about Christianity and faith. This may allow for the journey as expressed by Abraham.²⁴¹ If this is effective, it could provide a helpful resource which churches can offer their communities and engage with those who are spiritually curious.

Overall, the developed strategy is a further emphasis of the Methodist Church’s commitment to improving the discipleship of its members, encouraging its members to be evangelistic and making spaces for those who are unchurched.

Looking further

As outlined in the introduction, this project was undertaken due to a personal commitment to the Methodist Church and a belief that the research being undertaken might provide helpful information for the Methodist Church. This next section draws the outcomes of this research into points of reflection for the Methodist Church, highlighting practical ways this research could be used.

Who is the Methodist Church serving?

The demographical imbalance of participants was evident in this research, especially when considering age and gender. Whilst this is a limitation of the research project, analysis of these variables highlighted potential variances in how different generations and genders consider congregational singing in their churches and the role that it has in their faith life.

The question that I believe the Methodist Church needs to consider is ‘who is the church serving?’ as participant responses indicate that the church is primarily serving women who are over sixty. This statement is broad, and the data does not completely support this, but it is something that

²³⁹ Hall and Levermore, ‘God for All – Strategic Update and renewal’, 172, 175.

²⁴⁰ Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism*, 105; Hall and Levermore, ‘God for All – Strategic Update and renewal’, 174.

²⁴¹ Hall and Levermore, ‘God for All – Strategic Update and renewal’, 174.

the Methodist Church needs to consider. As the Church continues to dedicate large amounts of money to evangelism, there needs to be consideration, by churches, as to whether they serve the congregations that they currently have, or the congregations that they want to have. Whilst Church should not just be about marketing to a younger generation, the data suggests that traditional hymn-singing is not encouraging the faith of younger generations in the same way that it does for those who are older. Therefore, some churches within the Methodist Church may need to try different forms of congregational singing in order to provide a space which may appeal to those who are younger in the church. This research was on a small group of churches within one area of the country, and there may be churches around the Connexion that offer this space and appeal. But this may need to become more widespread. There is an urgency in this, as the updated 'God for All' strategy specifically emphasises work on the discipleship and fellowship of young adults, and if this is the case, the Church needs to be willing to develop and change into a church that can spiritually feed that generation.²⁴² The gender imbalance is also something to consider, as the data indicated that men respond differently to congregational singing than women. However more research needs to be done when considering the role of age and gender in order to bring effective change.

When considering the question 'Who is the Methodist Church Serving?' is it also important to consider those who are unchurched and how they may find the worship that they encounter within Methodist Churches. The data indicated that those who attend church infrequently are much more negative about congregational singing. This suggests that those who walk into churches may not find that the congregational singing aids them in their faith development and, therefore, is something that may need consideration. Music interacts with people in different ways, so it is important to have variety within the Methodist Church. For some people who walk into Methodist Churches, the congregational singing may enable them to find God, however, for others, it may be alien. In order to engage with the unchurched, and all ages and genders, variety may be the way forward.

The diversity of worship

The snapshot of congregational singing in this study cannot be seen as a complete picture of either the YNE District, or the Methodist Church of Great Britain; however, the congregational responses appear to suggest a longing for more diversity in worship. Diversity of worship comes in many forms, and it was apparent that congregations desire different forms of diversity, with some congregations longing for more modern worship and others for more traditional hymnody. There was also a longing

²⁴² Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 174.

for other worship styles to be incorporated into services such as reflective Taizé and more modern worship songs. Whilst the hymnbook *Singing the Faith* boasts a variety of different musical styles, it could be that musicians and those who lead worship are unsure of how to incorporate these styles of worship into services.²⁴³ This may need further reflection and work by the Church to build up the confidence of those involved in worship to explore different structures and styles within services.

It is encouraging, however, that there is acknowledgment of this longing for diversity in the renewed 'God for All' strategy, with recognition that, 'many churches and leaders hunger for an exploration of diverse elements that might aid (or distract) us in our desire for a richer, fuller participation in the worship of God'.²⁴⁴ Whilst this statement will refer to all elements within a worship service, the use of music will, without doubt, be included within this conversation.

Musician development

What was not possible to gather in this research project was the role musicians have in enabling congregations to encounter God; however, it is inevitable that how sung worship is led in churches will have impacted how participants responded to the questions. Whilst the Methodist Church has trained 'worship leaders,' the training is limited when it comes to leading sung worship.²⁴⁵ There are modules with a focus on 'Encounter', with one more specifically called 'Focus on Worship'; but the learning outcomes and the session titles indicate that the course is more specifically about curating services, rather than leading people in sung worship.²⁴⁶ Kauflin highlights the important role of those who lead congregational singing and, whilst his book is more directed to those who lead worship bands, there are points which can be reflected on within the setting of the Methodist Church.²⁴⁷

Kauflin emphasises that all worship should be centred around God and that 'whatever the situation, our goal is to impress on them what God has done in Jesus Christ, what he has promised to do, and what a difference this makes in their lives'.²⁴⁸ Whilst worshipful moments cannot be created, Kauflin indicates that there can be sensitivity 'to the musical moods of songs and lead people naturally from one to the other,' with further emphasis that music should serve the lyrics and musical decisions should be based around this fact.²⁴⁹ Skill is also a factor that needs to be considered as

²⁴³ Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*.

²⁴⁴ Hall and Levermore, 'God for All – Strategic Update and renewal', 175.

²⁴⁵ 'Worship Leaders', The Methodist Church, n.d., accessed Jun 12, 2024. <https://www.methodist.org.uk/for-churches/ministries/local-preachers-and-worship-leaders/worship-leaders/>

²⁴⁶ 'Focus on Worship: Learn NEW (2023)', *The Methodist Church - Online Learning*, n.d., ca. 2023, accessed June 5, 2024. <https://elearning.methodist.org.uk/mod/lesson/view.php?id=3170>

²⁴⁷ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*.

²⁴⁸ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 125.

²⁴⁹ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 116, 102.

'rightly understood and pursued, skill can make the difference between ineffectiveness and fruitfulness in our leading. It can contribute to, or hinder people from engaging with God'.²⁵⁰ This selection of comments suggests that leading sung worship requires a different set of skills and musical knowledge which may not be natural within all musicians. If there is to be more diversity of worship within the Methodist Church, there needs to be some consideration as to how we equip the musicians in our churches to be able to consider the role that they have within worship, and effectively lead congregational singing. The Methodist Church will not necessarily be able to equip every musician, but this does not mean that there is not a need for this piece of work to enable encounter and church growth around the Connexion.

Final Comments

The role of congregational singing is an important part of Methodist Worship, both in the history and tradition of the church itself, but also in how it continues to enable congregations to worship God and share their faith. The historical musical practice and the academic field of Christian congregational music provided context for the study, indicating the role that music historically has had, and how music continues to spiritually feed congregations. This was emphasised in the participant responses to this research project which showed that congregational worship was effective in encouraging participants in their faith, although trends showed that congregational singing was not as effective when it came to encouraging congregants to be evangelistic. Whilst the data concluded that congregational singing is an effective form of worship, a number of factors were raised as areas that could be considered by the Methodist Church, especially as they continue to commit to evangelism with the launch of the renewed strategy in 2024. The three points above are considered the main reflections and will be shared, as appropriate, with the Methodist Church of Great Britain.

²⁵⁰ Kauflin, *Worship Matters*, 34.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Interview with Andy Fishbourne

A Transcript of an interview with Andy Fishbourne that happened on Zoom – June 2nd, 2023.

Naomi Prince: It's not going to be much use. Right? There we go. Yeah, so I thought I would just start with a little bit of background about how I got here.

Andy Fishbourne: Yep

Naomi Prince: I might have said a little bit over emails. But basically, I did for my undergraduate dissertation, I looked at the role of hymns within the 21st century church, which included a big questionnaire it got 414 responses from social media. And within that, there was a question about evangelism, but I had too many words and too much stuff to actually like, touch it at all. So, I kind of just left it. And then I kind of realised that I wanted to embrace the Methodist nerd in me a little bit more, and spend some more time researching it, because there isn't that much research into Methodism in its current state, especially links between music and Methodism and stuff like that. So, I'm exploring that a little bit further. And I was reading the 'God for All' strategy, because if I'm looking at evangelism within the church, obviously, I need to read that strategy. And it was the, the 'Making Beautiful Worship' section really caught my attention. Because it was it was taking me a while to figure out exactly where I was heading, but the making beautiful worship for a gathered community of faith, like specifically that little paragraph, with the focus 'focuses on helping worship within the gathered community connect people to God and transform them for mission within the world. Worshipers will be inspired through worship to serve God in daily life'. And that really caught my attention, partly because I could see how I would take that into a study. So, this is going to go into a study within the Yorkshire North and East district from hopefully about a quarter of churches. And it will be there'll be a questionnaire for the context of the church. So, it will be like what size is your membership? Do you have paid musicians? What kind of thing do you sing along to? And then one for the congregation to kind of see what the correlation between the church and the congregation is. And then is there correlations between were they using Singing the Faith MIDI files, and how the music, how the hymns help them towards the week, but before I do all of that, it would be quite helpful to learn a little bit more about the section of the strategy, because from what I can gather from emails, and from the website is not part of the strategy, which has really kind of been delved into yet.

Andy Fishbourne: No, no, that's a good observation.

Naomi Prince: So yeah, if could you just like, obviously, there were kind of two sections to the making beautiful worship. So, if you would like to, like, if you could expand on, I suppose both of them would probably be quite helpful. And then, but yeah,

Andy Fishbourne: yeah, no, of course. I mean, in a, in a way, I'm the wrong person to ask in that. I had nothing to do with writing that first strategy, so I, this was before my time in post, but there's no one else who's better placed to talk about it either. So, the people who wrote that have now gone. I wrote, so I'm kind of interpreting it as well. And you're quite right in saying that, so far, in, in the sort of what are we sort of three years into this strategy, we haven't given it much love at all, which is, which is completely true. And but we are just about, we've got a group. And a side thing, if you'd like to be part of shaping this, as we go forward, we there's, there's a, there's an offer to be involved in a team to sort of shape this as it as it moves on, if that, if that fits you, they're interested in time. But now we now have a group, which is, so me from Evangelism and Growth, and some people from ministries, and hopefully, we're going to bring in some people and CYF as well, to, to kind of move this on a step to actually get something, something from it. So, I think that I think that the bits from the paragraph as it's done that, for me are important, are the idea of connecting people to God and transforming them. We have a kind of mantra; I suppose that that that guides our work in this areas that transformation happens by encounter. So, we're so I think for me that that's the important bit, whatever. That's what makes it beautiful, in a way. It's people having an encounter with God and being changed and being and change in a good way, change to be more like, made him made more in Jesus' image, that's the that's the dream. That's what makes it beautiful. That we have had lots of, well, lots but we haven't talked about it much. But within the as this group has been formed to take this on, there's a, there's a dislike of the word beautiful in the title. I'm not quite sure where that came from. So, the word beautiful was contentious. Partly because it's ambiguous, I think. What we don't want to say, I think, is that worship should be classically beautiful as in it should be a perfectly played ancient organ by a very high-quality organist. Amateurs stay away. This is for the professionals, that's, that's really all, or a perfect robed choir or a kind of Hillsong band we were not, it's not about beautiful in terms of quality, necessarily. But you know. Got I'm saying by quality?

Naomi Prince: Yeah

Andy Fishbourne: It's not that it's not that type of quality that we're about. And of course, that's great if you have if you have a great organist or a great band, then amazing! But it's more about the transforming effect. That's what really makes it beautiful. The God being in it. And as we know, God isn't necessarily wowed by impressive worship. God is impressed by heartfelt connection and an eye for justice, and including, you know, including the weaker members of our family with honour and respect and stuff like that.

Naomi Prince: One thing that really came up in, in my undergrad survey was this idea that, like, hymns are all out of date and everything like that. But I think this I mean, I'm not necessarily focusing on the this because I realised that I had to be very careful that I wasn't, I didn't want this dissertation to become a worship song versus hymns kind of debate, because that's not necessarily helpful. It's more about the musical practice. And it might hopefully, it would be great for the work that you're doing that my if what comes out is it doesn't matter if it's a recording or whatever, that that would be ideal for the kind of work that you're doing.

Andy Fishbourne: Hmmm

Naomi Prince: But yeah, it's this actually is I suppose what you're trying to do is say that worship doesn't have to be beautiful, because all that is just beautiful, because God's there, rather than beautiful because of how it's portrayed and come across.

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah, so it's not, not beautiful in a polished, impressive professional sense. Yeah, it's beautiful, because it's kind of heartfelt and genuine, rather than...Cause and I think the two are almost different axis on a graph, you can have worship, that's incredibly professional, but it's completely soulless in a way.

Naomi Prince: Yeah.

Andy Fishbourne: And that will be unbeautiful. And you can have worship that's, you know, a mess musically, but nevertheless, it's really transformative in the spirit moves through it. And that that is then beautiful. And I guess the dream is to have both high quality, high professionalism. And also, I don't think they're mutually exclusive. But professionalism is the least important of those axes.

Naomi Prince: Yeah. So, it was when you're thinking about worship is that is... I'm assuming that... is that just looking at the music side of things. Or is it just all worship?

Andy Fishbourne: No, and again, that's another ambiguous word, in the title. I've got a bit of a sort of evangelical charismatic church background where worship did mean the times of singing, so you would have within a church service, you'd have a time of worship, which would mean a worship leader with a guitar and a band and, and stuff, and then you finish your time of worship, and then you might have prayer or a sermon or something. But we don't mean that. I think on one level, it means an act of worship. So, a worship service. So, starting from a call to worship ending with a kind of benediction, blessing that everything that happens in that space together is worship. Not necessarily in a church, of course, but you know, that gathering. I think that's probably what we mean. But there's also the sense that worship happens in our lives all the time. We never stop worshipping. So, but that's more the other, the other paragraph, the everyday paragraph. So, if you're I guess your focus is more about the gathered worship, so yeah, so it's everything that happens within a service and actually probably extend it on because it, I think the conversations that happen before you start the call of worship and the conversation that happen after the benediction are still worshipped for and they're still part of it. So yeah, that that kind of gathered.

Naomi Prince: Yeah

Andy Fishbourne: Not just so yeah. So, including prayer and conversation and preaching and, all that stuff. That's still that's a worship.

Naomi Prince: So, what do you kind of hope that this bit of the strategy will achieve?

Andy Fishbourne: The, let me just check my, my notes to get this right, we were just in the process of kind of clarifying this for ourselves, actually. So, I'm sorry that we're not, we're not sort of sharper with this. We're just in the process of early stages of writing the next 'God for All' strategy. And this will be a lot sharper in that because we're actually going to think about it a bit more beforehand, and make sure it's got some legs. So, I've actually got meeting tomorrow with Paul Wood from Ministries to kind of chew this over. But let me see my, let me just find my notes. So, I don't miss anything.

So, this, this little group that I've mentioned, which is kind of partly evangelism and growth, and partly the people from the ministries team who are interested, and also Lawrence Wearing, you know, Lawrence wearing who, he's the guy behind Singing the Faith, so he's so he does all the singing the faith website. So, there was a, we had this open-ended sort of discussion of this sort of state of worship and what we think needs to need to move. There was a general negative sense about the state of worship in the Methodist Church at the moment. Words like 'dire', 'paralysing', 'where to start'. So, there is a kind of negative sense about worship in the church, generally.

There's a general sense that people have lost a sense of enchantment. So that connection with God, I think is largely missing in perhaps a majority of churches on a Sunday. It's become a bit more of a performance and not a good performance. So yeah, there was a general sort of negativity about the state of worship that if you go into if you picked a random Methodist Church and walked into on a Sunday, your experience isn't necessarily going to be amazing.

Naomi Prince: No, I'd agree with that.

Andy Fishbourne: And there's a patchiness within it as well. If you go one week, and it was good, you could go the next weekend, it can be terrible, because the local preaching rota system kind of means it's very, you know, it's not consistent week on week, but that's a separate, separate thing. But I think the core thing is that idea that it's, it's not a place where you meet God in the way that it should be. That we've lost that sense of an expectation that God is going to be with... we're, we're Christians gathering God is going to be there with us. But it's more like going through the motions almost or following habits and just going through what everybody's done for six years. So we're just carry on the same. So the the sort of things that we thought would be good to kind of shift things up a bit would be to tackle the expectation that it has to be formal. So, tackle some of the the idea that it's someone at the front, like reading out a prayer that they didn't really know what words mean, they didn't write it so that that kind of formality church.

Almost like a sort of formal churchiness. We don't need to have that, and I don't think anyone particularly likes that and it's not I think that's perhaps a barrier that's one area is like, is that sort of aspect. Another one is to bring in more conversation, so to have more of a - less that it's just one person at the front who speaks and everyone else listens and sings when they tell them to - it's there's more of a dialogue and a conversation within it. So people get a chance to sort of talk about their own sort of stories and how they've encountered God in the week and bringing that into worship. And then some way of helping churches, evaluate and review what they're doing. So, some way of helping them assess is what we're doing. You know, what we want it to be. So, you're not just carrying on in a in a furrow. So, they're the kind of three areas I think that are on the on the table to be to be worked on, so that people can have transformative encounters with God. So, it's, it's shaking up that stuffy formality, bringing people's conversations into it and giving some way of helping churches analyse what they're doing and reflect on it.

Naomi Prince: And do you think, I guess, because its conversations are still quite early, will... Do you think music will have like a specific part of that? Or do you think it will just be kind of woven in throughout what comes in the next 'God for All'?

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah, it's a good question, we haven't really attended to that very much. I think. I think there's a, I mean, you mentioned earlier, the kind of that organ hymns versus guitar-based music, there's that kind of fight going on all the time. And so as soon as you start talking about worship, it's in it, some worship, it's on music the music style. It's something that immediately gets people fired up, because they loved one and hate the other. You know, I've been in many, many, many, many, many sort of fights about sort of musical styles. So yeah, I don't know, I think. I think too, I think not being bound by formality. for its own sake, I think that'll be as far as perhaps we would go. So, it doesn't have to be Victorian organ music. It may be Victorian organ music, because that might be what works best for your setting. And for the people you want to reach. That may be best, but it doesn't have to be. I think giving permission to use any style of music, I think would be part of it.

Naomi Prince: I think I'm really recognising as well. Part of the reason why I wanted to do like collect my data about a specific, specific church. So rather than I could have just sent a bog-standard survey to the whole of the district, and just collected information about how they interacted with the music in their church, but that wouldn't have really helped me because I wouldn't have known what they were attending to like what kind of music they were going to. And I guess part of what I'm interested to see is whether it because I don't think it will matter at all. I'm kind of expecting my data to be quite boring, and the fact that it will just kind of show that doesn't really matter. But I also think that's equally as important because it will kind of help this battle or dynamic, because if you've got good music that's engaging you, why does it need to be different? I mean, not that you shouldn't try new things, but at the same time, just because you feel like you need to have modern song, so therefore you're using recorded videos, which might not be the best way to experience that kind of music anyway.

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah, yeah.

Naomi Prince: I think that actually, it's just kind of letting music be music but yeah

Andy Fishbourne: I think this is, I guess this is me speaking personally now rather than for this worship, group worship sort of development sort of team. But I think there's possibly an argument to make to be made that if we want to attract new people into the church, which we do we want to

create new disciples. We need to remove as many barriers as possible of our churchiness. And if our if we're singing a type of music that your everyday person in the street has no connection to at all, but it's good for us, but it's not good for them, I think there is perhaps an argument there to say we need to submit to be more viral in the words of John Wesley and we need to give up some of what we like so that we can be more accessible to others. Like I, I really hate it, for instance, when it's something like a baptism service or a funeral service where you get people coming in who you wouldn't normally get in a church. And the music is really insider-y and they just don't know what it is. So, I think on that those are occasions I think there's a real I think there's a part an evangelistic sense that we're going to pick some songs that everyone stands a chance of knowing. So, what that is, is, that's another question, but and not necessarily just kind of, you know, church assembly bangers, which is one way to go. But yeah, I think

Naomi Prince: I think the interesting thing is that I've gone to churches where there's been this sense that they need to modify that modern, like, modify their music, make it more modern, more upbeat, because that'll bring people in, but they don't have the people to do that. So, then they're resorting to using online videos, like iSingworship or YouTube. And then part of me wonders if there's, is this actually doing what you expect it to do? Because you're not getting any of the kind of experience that you would get with having live musicians because you're listening to a recorded track. So again, it's that kind of it's, which is another thing why I don't know if there'll be links to with the musical practice is if you're just using recorded videos every week, is that actually helping? Or is that blocking things because you're not getting that same atmosphere as you might get if you went to like Hillsong? Or something like that, where you get the kind of everything with all the music?

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah. And obviously, it's, there's no kind of flexibility in the timing as well. So, you can easily lose, lose pace with the recording that you're singing along to.

Naomi Prince: Yeah. Yeah. There's there can be many challenges with using recorded music.

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah.

Naomi Prince: Because obviously, sometimes it's hard to figure out what's about to happen next. And there's no one at the front to kind of give you any indication.

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah. One of the one of the things we're... we've kind of got earmarked to work on is a sort of discussion course called 'Sunshine and Showers'. Now, this is, this is something that we've almost got ready to release for prayer. So, in a similar way, prayer is an equally messy, sort of

topic we can talk about for ages. So, we're just about to release this course, to give people, six things to talk about prayer. And we're particularly focusing on paradoxical issues. So for instance, with prayer, one of them is, is we know prayer should be life giving, and energising and vital but on the other hand, prayer is really boring. And our mind one, our minds wander and it's a slog. So and those two are kind of contradictory. They're a paradox. So, we've got six different paradoxes about prayer that we want to kind of surface and the idea being that the truth is probably somewhere hovering in between the two. If if you just think prayer is life giving, you probably get disappointed. If you just think prayer is boring, that's a shame because it is more than that. So that the truth kind of hovers somewhere in the gap between the two sort of living with contrary convictions. That sort of idea. So, we're thinking of doing another one for worship. So, another six-week course looking at worship, so what ideas do we have actually? So, the, the modern music, older music or? Or do we have like churchy music? Do we have our own hymns that we've written for church? Or do we try and copy what culture is doing musically? I think that that would be an interesting sort of paradox. To discuss. Yeah, so things like do we do we have a sense that God is transcendent or imminent? So, do we? Do we, like worship God at a distance in our worship settings? Or do we have a sense that God is there in the person sat right next to me actually. That that tension between worship being something that happens on a Sunday and stops when you leave, as opposed to whole life? A fixed liturgy versus a fluid liturgy. Participation versus quality. So do you, like, let anybody lead the music, even if they're not very good, and they want to that's a particular sort of pinch point for me. I really wrestle with that one. That whole kind of active/passive thing is the people come to worship expecting to take part or not, and yeah, so that those sorts of things we're thinking might be good, good things to do a second version of this of this course on just to give people a way to kind of think about it and not just fall into cultural patterns, but to Okay.

Naomi Prince: Yeah, there's conversations arounds like they'd be really interesting. It's funny you go with the like the whether you should just have whoever to do like stuff like music because... One of the one of the original ideas I wanted to ask was like, Is your musician any good? But I was like, I can't ask that. Because that'll be so... I needed to find a way of asking, like, is your musician good without asking, Is your musician good?

Andy Fishbourne: Hmmm

Naomi Prince: Which I think I might have got in, in a way. But we'll see. I'm piloting the study in a few weeks at my circuit at home. So, we'll see if the answers that they give, give me the answers that I kind of want. But I think that's because, because also the thing is, you could have paid

musicians, but the paid systems also couldn't be, might not be great. So actually... its then it's the paid versus voluntary. I'm also just generally interested as to how many Methodist churches pay their musicians because I've heard of a sprinkling throughout our district, but I didn't realise it was a thing from before coming here. It's very common within the Anglican Church.

Andy Fishbourne: Yes, I've never come across many that before I started in this role, I was a regular a circuit minister, and the main church within the town where I live had an organist, who was a professional musician. And he didn't charge the church. But he did use a church building for giving music lessons. So, there was a kind of quid pro quo arrangement. So, you kind of did get paid. But you would never pay... It only seems to be the organists who get paid and not any other sort of musician.

Naomi Prince: Yeah, that's true as well.

Andy Fishbourne: I did a bit of a bit of time with Swanbank. At one point, they had a paid like worship leader in a sort of Hillsong sense. And they were the only one in the country at that point, you had a paid worship leader who would be full time sorting out a band, getting practices together and all that sort of stuff. But I think they've moved on now.

Naomi Prince: So obviously, this, the work on this bit of the strategy hasn't got properly going yet. Has part of that been because of COVID or, or just generally busyness within the team.

Andy Fishbourne: I think it I think it was possibly a lower priority than other bits. I think that being honest, that that's where it sort of came down to. The Methodist Way of Life is kind of like the underpinning thing for all of this. And worship is obviously a part of a Methodist Way of Life. But I think we needed to get a Methodist Way of Life going and embedded first, before we did this, I think, I think that's purely it's just priorities in terms of the big picture.

Yeah, and perhaps also a bit of a lack of a clear understanding of what it meant for worship to be beautiful, and what we needed to do to, to make it more beautiful. So, we're kind of getting there now. But there has been a real, it's been a real thing... can't think of the word..., a real sort of passion, interest bugbear of mine for a long, long time, that sort of state of worship. I'm mean, I'm a minister and a worship leader in the kind of charismatic church sense. So, it's always been a passion of mine and pains me when it's done badly. So yeah, it's really important. And it's, I think, as well, evangelistically we're very much trying to encourage churches and people in churches to see their whole life as an area of evangelism - it's conversations with people in all your walks of life. But

nevertheless, the Sunday service is our kind of shop window in some way. We, you do get people who would come into church on a Sunday because they felt a need, or they felt God calling them to. People do crop up and announced or you people do we should be able to invite friends to a Sunday service. So, it is our kind of shop window in many ways. So, the fact that it's on average, terrible, I think is a barrier to our, to our evangelistic mission. So yeah, I think it's really important.

Naomi Prince: Because when I when I started my masters, I realised that one of the first things I needed to do was define what I meant by evangelism, because obviously there are so many different understandings and definitions and I think the one that I kind of settled it on was largely influenced by like William Abraham and the idea that - I think that's his name - but the idea that it's not just a one stop bit, it's like a whole journey to being a full disciple. But part of that is having experience with God and a space for that experience to happen can be worship, but if the worship we're doing isn't enabling people to connect to God, then how is that experience and the moment of transformation going to be able to happen if the worship that we're doing is not enabling that at all?

Andy Fishbourne: So yeah, I think is really important.

Naomi Prince: Because when I, when I started my masters, I realised that one of the first things I needed to do was define what I meant by evangelism. Because obviously, there are so many different understandings and definitions. And I think the one that I kind of settled on was largely influenced by like William Abraham and the idea that - I think that's his name - but the idea that it's not just a one stop. It's like a whole journey to being a full disciple. But part of that is having experience with God and a space for that experience to happen can be worship, but if the worship we're doing isn't enabling people to connect to God, then how is that experience and the moment of transformation going to be able to happen if the worship that we're doing is not enabling that at all?

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah. Totally. I don't mean to limit God. God can work through anything.

Naomi Prince: Yeah,

Andy Fishbourne: But if we can, if we can. And I also don't mean, the kind of manipulative sort of Hillsong sense that you can play the right songs, and then drop her, you know, dropped to a sort of minor key and slow it down a bit and that's when the spirit moves, because it's just emotional manipulation, which any music can do. I don't mean that either. But it's Yeah, I think worship has the potential to be really a really transformative venue. But also, we can mess it up. We can, we can make it sterile.

Naomi Prince: It's ridiculous. When I some of the stuff that I've been researching is like, songs. They literally just designed songs to reach this climactic point. And everyone's like, 'woo it's the Holy Spirit' when Yeah, okay, it might be but also, they've, they've literally done X, Y, and Zed, which helps you experience this because that's what music does. But at the same time, you can have some incredible experiences through music. And whilst I definitely whilst personally for me, I definitely have to now sometimes outsource different types of worship, because I don't get that in the churches near me, I still get a lot out of singing traditional Methodist hymns.

Andy Fishbourne: Hmm.

Naomi Prince: So, like, it's not a one size? Like it's not a one thing, it's actually yeah, I get something from that. But also, there is something so incredibly powerful about singing a good old John, and Charles Wesley, hymn and stuff like that.

Andy Fishbourne: Absolutely.

Naomi Prince: And then just I think, for me a general question to just finish off. So, was, was there a discussion about hymnody at any point? Not necessarily just within this section of the strategy, but when looking at the strategy as a bigger picture? Was music or within churches ever something that really came up? Or is it just something that's kind of been accepted that happens within churches? If that makes sense?

Andy Fishbourne: No, I didn't think it was actually. I don't think it was. No, I mean, it got in in this in that making beautiful worship paragraph sort of behind the surface. But no, it's not. It's not the case that the strategy said to be evangelistic, we need to have modern worship songs, more than hymns. Or, you know, or vice versa. Or, you know. No, it wasn't written in, which is, it's an interesting omission, actually, isn't it? Because it's... singing is a big part of who we are as Methodists and was foundational when the the early sort of days of it. Now, I don't know whether it's just been assumed that, of course, the hymnody important.

Naomi Prince: Or actually, if we're looking at our society today, singing has done even less than less. So actually, it might be quite alien for people. And therefore, doesn't necessarily fit into evangelism strategy because if we're trying to get to people outside of the church, maybe singing isn't a way to get them.

Andy Fishbourne: Yeah, maybe there's a there's a kind of tension with the new places for new people wing of the strategy where we're very much starting new communities for people who are not currently served by the church. But there's a sense that they've they're still going to be a full, full fat worshipping community, ultimately. So does singing play a part in those and which songs are going to do and how does that how does that fit? So yeah, no, it is not ever in the strategy at all. But I guess it's kind of assumed in this beautiful worship. I think as well we mean, as the denomination we've got, sort of... mean, we've got singing the faith as our approved hymnbook and the other ones. And that was a huge amount of work to get that produced and agreed on decisions of what went in and what we didn't. That was a massive, massive thing. And that's gone through conference so that's kind of sealed in stone now. So we didn't want to - I say we, I wasn't around at the time - but 'God for All' wasn't therefore going to try and upset that piece of work by saying, 'We need a new songbook', that would have been like, forget it. We're not gonna do it again. So perhaps it was a sort of this is a hot potato, we're just gonna, we're not gonna touch, I don't know,

Naomi Prince: It's an interesting thing that I need to navigate, because obviously, we've got the Kairos circuit within York. And if I'm doing this, and I'm sending this out to a quarter of churches in the circuit within the district, I need to kind of figure out how I fit Kairos into that, because it's a circuit in it's a worshipping part of our community as a district. But within the, the walls of it, they don't meet within the walls of a church. And I don't actually know how they engage with music at all. And I'm having to be aware of whether church is also a helpful term rather than or whether I need to choose gathered community, because we also have one circuit, which is now all one church. But there are seven different sites. So again, how it's, it's going to be I need to figure out the navigation of that, especially with Kairos as to how I can engage them and involve them in this study. While they don't. I suppose they're not traditionally they don't function in I suppose a traditionally Methodist inherited Methodist sense. They're a new place for new people kind of thing.

Andy Fishbourne: And there'll be there'll be up for a conversation

Naomi Prince: Yeah, definitely. The I think that kind of covers everything I wanted to chat about, is there anything you want to ask me?

Andy Fishbourne: No, but just to repeat that offer of if ever, you would like to bring some of your interest and expertise into this kind of working party to shape this, then let me know, we're not going to ask you for a decision now to if you'd like, if that's something that you might like, if this is a passion of yours, and you'd like to, you'd like to help them. We'd love to have sort of people who are

passionate about this. And we've got a not coming from a sort of predetermined polarised position. Like I only like hymns. You know, someone who's got a sort of a balanced approach is really valuable. So

Naomi Prince: yeah, I have a think, but it sounds really interesting. So yeah. Yeah. Fabulous. Thank you so much. I'll do a transcript of this at some point in the next few weeks, and I'll send it over just for you to let me know if it's all okay. And then. Yeah, and then if you want, then I'll probably then if you want it, I can send you the finished thing, although it will be quite lengthy. So, I can send it to you. You don't have to read it. But I know

Andy Fishbourne: I'd love to see it that'll be really been interesting.

Naomi Prince: But yeah, fabulous. Thank you so much for volunteering your time, and I will see you soon. Yeah,

Andy Fishbourne: yeah, don't hesitate to shout if there is anything I can help with.

Naomi Prince: Thank you.

Appendix 2: StF 437 When the Music Fades

Matt Redman (b. 1974) Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, (London: Hymns Ancient and Modern, 2011), 437.

When the music fades,
All is stripped away,
And I simply come.
Longing just to bring,
Something that's of worth,
That will bless Your heart.

I'll bring You more than a song,
For a song in itself
Is not what You have required.
You search much deeper within,
Through the way things appear
You're looking into my heart.

I'm coming back to the heart of worship,
And it's all about You,
It's all about You, Jesus.
I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made it
When it's all about You,
It's all about You, Jesus

King of endless worth,
No one could express,
How much You deserve.
Though I'm weak and poor,
All I have is Yours,
Every single breath.

I'll bring You more than a song
For a song in itself

Is not what You have required.
You search much deeper within
Through the way things appear
You're looking into my heart.

Appendix 3 – Church Questionnaire

1. This study is open to a specific group of churches/Methodist Communities within the District.
Please select the church from the list below.
2. Are you a minister, steward or local (lay) pastor within the selected church?
Yes No
3. Please select from the boxes below the context that the church serves in
City Centre Suburban Market Town Rural Village
Coastal Rural Town Other
4. Is this church an LEP?
Yes No
5. If you answered yes, which denomination does the church also belong to?
CofE URC Other
6. What is the membership of the church?
7. What is the average size of the weekly congregation?
8. Have you seen a growth or decline of average congregation size over the last five years?
Growth Decline
9. How many services does your church have a week?
10. How is congregational singing most commonly accompanied? Please select all that apply.
 - a. Piano
 - b. Organ
 - c. Piano/Organ are used interchangeably
 - d. Use of lyric videos (such as YouTube and iSingWorship)
 - e. Singing the Faith Midi Files
 - f. Music Group (e.g. multiple musicians or singers at the front of church)
 - g. Other
11. If congregational singing is accompanied in a variety of ways, does the congregation respond better to one form of accompaniment.
Yes Maybe No Not Applicable
12. If you answered yes to question 11, please select the form of congregational accompaniment which the congregation responds better to.
 - a. Piano
 - b. Organ
 - c. Use of lyric videos (such as YouTube and iSingWorship)
 - d. Singing the Faith Midi Files

e. Music Group (e.g. multiple musicians or singers at the front of church)

f. Other

13. If you have musician(s), are they members of your congregation or do they join services to provide music?

- Our musician(s) are members of our congregation
- They come externally to services to provide us with music
- Not applicable – we don't have a musician(s)
- Other

14. If you have musicians – are they paid?

Yes No

15. Does the church have an evangelism strategy?

Yes No

16. If so, is music incorporated into the strategy and how?

Appendix 4: Congregation Questionnaire

Section 1: Demographics

1. What is your age as of November 2023?
2. To what gender identity do you most identify with?
 - Female
 - Male
 - Gender non-conforming
 - Not listed
 - Prefer not to say

Section 2: Church

3. This study is open to a specific group of churches/worshipping communities. Please write the name of your church and circuit below
4. How often do you attend worship at your selected Methodist Church? *Please make on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being rarely attend and 5 being I attend at least 4 times a month
5. How many years have you attended the selected church?
6. Were you brought up in a household that followed a faith?
 - Yes
 - No
7. If you selected yes, please share the faith and denomination below e.g. Christian/Church of England

Faith _____

Denomination _____

Section 3: Congregational Singing

The next set of questions is in relation to the music you regularly hear when attending your selected church.

Please indicate how you agree with each of the statements by choosing strongly agree/agree/neither disagree or agree/Disagree/Strongly Disagree

Please put a cross in the box

8.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The congregational singing at worship connects me to the community that are gathered					
The congregational singing at worship helps me connect to God					
The congregational singing at worship helps me refocus on God during the week.					
The congregational singing at worship encourages me in my faith during the week.					
The congregational singing at worship encourages me to share my faith during the week.					
The congregational singing at worship is the reason I might invite people to church.					

9. Is there anything you would like to change about congregational singing in your selected church?

- Yes
- No

10. If answering yes – what would you change about the music in your church?

Section 4: Other types of worship

11. Within different denominations and practices of Christianity, congregational singing is done in different ways. Have you attended and experienced different forms of Christian worship? e.g. Taize, New Wine, Hillsong Worship, Iona Worship, Anglican Evensong, Flourish (District Event)

- Yes
- No

12. If so, what forms?

Anglican Evensong		Catholic Mass	
-------------------	--	---------------	--

Taize		Worship at conferences	
Iona Worship		Worship bands at Sunday worship	
Other			

13. Which of these forms of would you say are reflected regularly in your worship?

Anglican Evensong		Catholic Mass	
Taize		Worship at conferences	
Iona Worship		Worship bands at Sunday worship	
Other			

14. If not, would you like them to be?

- Yes
- No
- Occasionally

Appendix 5: Yorkshire North and East District Map



Yorkshire North and East Methodist District. 'Our District.' *Yorkshire North and East Methodist District*. [n.d.]. Accessed March 22, 2024. <https://www.yorkshirenemethodist.org/district/>

Appendix 6: A table exploring the relationship between responses to Question Eight and forms of accompaniment.

... connects me to the community that are gathered					
	Organ	Piano	Piano/Organ	Use of Videos	Singing the Faith Midi Files
Strongly Agree	52.2%	50%	33.3%	41%	41.2%
Agree	41.9%	40%	48.1%	41%	47.1%
Neither Agree/Disagree	4.8%	10%	14.8%	15.4%	11.8%
Disagree	--	--	3.7%	2.6%	--
Strongly Disagree	--	--	--	--	--
... helps me connect to God					
Strongly Agree	60.7%	30%	44.4%	46.2%	52.9%
Agree	31.0%	60%	33.3%	35.9%	35.3%
Neither Agree/Disagree	7.1%	10%	22.2%	17.9%	11.8%
Disagree	1.2%	--	--	--	--
Strongly Disagree	--	--	--	--	--
... helps me refocus on God during the week.					
Strongly Agree	32.5%	20%	14.8%	25.6%	29.4%
Agree	43.4%	40%	25.9%	28.2%	35.3%
Neither Agree/Disagree	20.5%	30%	55.6%	38.5%	23.5%
Disagree	3.6%	10%	3.7%	7.7%	11.8%
Strongly Disagree	--	--	--	--	--
... encourages me in my faith during the week.					
Strongly Agree	35.7%	20%	3.7%	23.1%	35.3%
Agree	44%	40%	25.9%	43.6%	41.2%

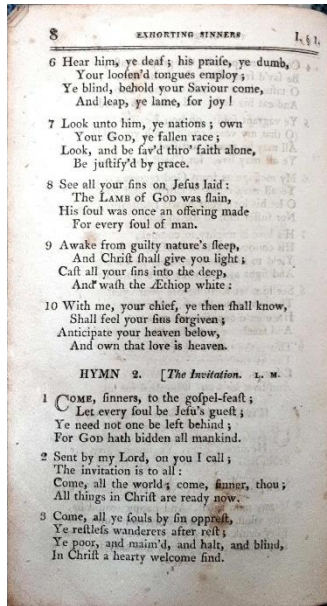
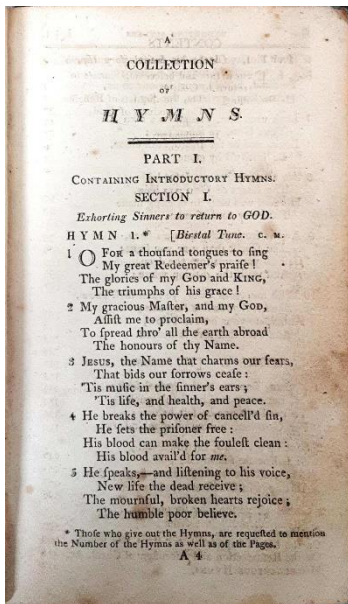
Neither Agree/Disagree	17.9%	40%	55.6%	33.3%	17.6%
Disagree	1.2%	--	14.8%	--	5.9%
Strongly Disagree	1.2%	--	--	--	--
... encourages me to share my faith during the week.					
Strongly Agree	14.6%	25%	3.7%	10.5%	12.5%
Agree	30.5%	37.5%	25.9%	26.3%	25%
Neither Agree/Disagree	41.5%	25%	55.6%	47.4%	37.5%
Disagree	12.2%	21.5%	14.8%	15.8%	25%
Strongly Disagree	1.2%	--	--	--	--
... is the reason I might invite people to church.					
Strongly Agree	11.1%	12.5%	7.4%	10.3%	11.8%
Agree	35.8%	25%	40.7%	33.3%	23.5%
Neither Agree/Disagree	32.1%	37.5%	25.9%	28.2%	23.5%
Disagree	19.8%	25%	18.5%	23.1%	35.3%
Strongly Disagree	1.2%	--	7.4%	5.1%	5.9%
Total possible participants	81-84	8-10	27	38-39	16-17

Appendix 7: A table exploring the relationship between responses to Question Eight and the geographical contexts of churches.

... connects me to the community that are gathered				
	Suburban	Market Town	Rural Village	Coastal
Strongly Agree	46.9%	51.9%	50%	46.2%
Agree	50%	44.4%	40%	38.5%
Neither Agree/Disagree	3.1%	3.7%	8.3%	15.4%
Disagree	--	--	1.7%	--
Strongly Disagree	--	--	--	--
... helps me connect to God				
Strongly Agree	53.1%	66.7%	46.7%	53.8%
Agree	37.5%	25.9%	36.7%	38.5%
Neither Agree/Disagree	9.4%	7.4%	15%	7.7%
Disagree	--	--	1.7%	--
Strongly Disagree	--	--	--	--
... helps me refocus on God during the week.				
Strongly Agree	21.9%	40.7%	18.6%	38.5%
Agree	37.5%	44.4%	42.4%	30.8%
Neither Agree/Disagree	40.6%	14.8%	30.5%	23.1%
Disagree	--	--	8.5%	7.7%
Strongly Disagree	--	--	--	--
... encourages me in my faith during the week.				
Strongly Agree	25%	48.1%	25%	30.8%
Agree	50%	40.7%	40%	46.2%
Neither Agree/Disagree	25%	11.1%	30%	23.1%
Disagree	--	--	3.3%	--
Strongly Disagree	--	--	1.7%	--
... encourages me to share my faith during the week.				

Strongly Agree	12.5%	18.5%	8.8%	16.7%
Agree	31.3%	29.6%	26.3%	41.7%
Neither Agree/Disagree	46.9%	37%	45.6%	83.3%
Disagree	9.4%	14.8%	17.5%	--
Strongly Disagree	--	--	1.8%	--
... is the reason I might invite people to church.				
Strongly Agree	10%	11.5%	10.3%	15.4%
Agree	36.7%	34.6%	36.2%	23.1%
Neither Agree/Disagree	30%	34.6%	29.3%	30.8%
Disagree	16.7%	19.2%	19%	30.8%
Strongly Disagree	6.7%	--	5.2%	--
Total possible participants	30-33	26-28	58-62	13

Appendix 8: A selection of scans from Methodist Hymnbooks across the century.



John Wesley, *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People called Methodists*, 18th Edition (London: Conference Office, 1805), 1.

A COLLECTION OF HYMNS WITH TUNES.

Hymn 1. Winchester Old. C.M. ALBON'S PSALTER, 1699.

1 O for a thousand tongues to sing
My great Re-deem-er's praise,
The glo-ries of my God and King,
The tri-umphs of his grace!

2 My gracious Master and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread thro' all the earth abroad
The honours of thy name.

3 Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
That bids our sorrows cease;
'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

4 He breaks the power of cancell'd sin,
He sets the prisoner free:
His blood can make the foulest clean,
His blood avails for me.

5 He speaks, and, listening to his voice,
New life the dead receive,
The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
The humble poor believe.

Hymn 2. Hilohaber. L.M. G. BURDER, 1774.

1 Come, sinners, to the gospel feast,
Let ev'ry soul be Je-su's guest;
Ye need not one be left be-hind,
For God hath bid-den all man-kind.

2 Sent by my Lord, on you I call,
The invitation is to all:
Come, all the world; come, sinner, thou!
All things in Christ are ready now.

3 Come, all ye souls by sin oppress'd,
Ye restless wanderers after rest,
Ye poor, and maim'd, and halt, and blind,
In Christ a hearty welcome find.

HYMN 1.—Continued.

6 Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,
Your loosn'd tongues employ:
Ye blind, behold your Saviour come,
And leap, ye lame, for joy.

7 Look unto him, ye nations, own
Your God, ye fallen race,
Look, and be sav'd through faith alone,
Be justifi'd by grace.

8 See all your sins on Jesus laid:
The Lamb of God was slain,
His soul was once an offering made
For every soul of man.

9 Awake from guilty nature's sleep,
And Christ shall give you light,
Cast all your sins into the deep,
And wash the Ethiop white.

10 With me, your chief, ye then shall know,
Shall feel your sins forgiven;
Anticipate your heaven below,
And own that love is heaven.

HYMN 2.—Continued.

4 Come, and partake the gospel feast:
Be sav'd from sin; in Jesus rest;
O taste the goodness of your God,
And eat his flesh, and drink his blood!

5 Ye vagrant souls, on you I call;
(O that my voice could reach you all!)
Ye all may now be justified,
Ye all may live, for Christ hath died.

6 My message as from God receive,
Ye all may come to Christ, and live;
O let his love your hearts constrain,
Nor suffer him to die in vain!

7 His love is mighty to compel:
His conquering love consent to feel,
Yield to his love's resistless power,
And fight against your God no more.

8 See him set forth before your eyes,
That precious, bleeding sacrifice!
His offered benefits embrace,
And freely now be sav'd by grace.

9 This is the time; no more delay!
This is the acceptable day,
Come in, this moment, at his call,
And live for him who died for all.

Wesley, John. *A Collection of Hymns for the Use of People called Methodists with a New Supplement*. London: Henderson, Rait and Fenton [reprint of c. 1874 (originally published in 1877)], 1.

HYMNS WITH TUNES

Adoration and Worship

1
 RICHMOND (First Tune). C.M. T. HAWES, 1734-1820.

1 O FOR a thousand tongues to sing
 My great Redeemer's praise,
 The glories of my God and King,
 The triumphs of His grace!

2 My gracious Master and my God,
 Assist me to proclaim,
 To spread through all the earth abroad
 The honours of Thy name.

3 Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
 That bids our sorrows cease;
 'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
 'Tis life, and health, and peace.

4 He speaks, and, listening to His voice,
 New life the dead receive,
 The mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
 The humble poor believe.

5 He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
 He sets the prisoner free;
 His blood can make the foulest clean,
 His blood availed for me.

6 See all your sins on Jesus laid:
 The Lamb of God was slain.
 His soul was once an offering made
 For every soul of man.
Charles Wesley, 1707-88.

1

Methodist Conference Office, The Methodist Hymn-book with tunes, (London: Novello and Company Limited Printers, 1954 [originally published in 1933]),1.

744(i)
 LYDIA C.M. (Ext.) Thomas Phillips (1735-1807)

1 O FOR a thousand tongues to sing
 My great Redeemer's praise,
 The glories of my God and King,
 The triumphs of his grace!

2 My gracious Master and my God,
 Assist me to proclaim,
 To spread through all the earth abroad
 The honours of thy name.

3 Jesus—the name that charms our fears,
 That bids our sorrows cease;
 'Tis music in the sinner's ears,
 'Tis life, and health, and peace.

4 He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
 He sets the prisoner free;
 His blood can make the foulest clean,
 His blood availed for me.

5 He speaks, and, listening to his voice,
 New life the dead receive;
 The mournful, broken hearts rejoice;
 The humble poor believe.

6 Hear him, ye deaf; his praise, ye dumb,
 Your loosened tongues employ;
 Ye blind, behold your Saviour come,
 And leap, ye lame, for joy!

7 See all your sins on Jesus laid:
 The Lamb of God was slain;
 His soul was once an offering made
 For every soul of man.

8 In Christ, our Head, you then shall know,
 Shall feel, your sins forgiven,
 Anticipate your heaven below,
 And own that love is heaven.
Charles Wesley (1707-88)

Methodist Publishing House, *Hymns and Psalms* (London: Methodist Publishing House, 1983), 744.

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LYDIA CM, extended

JESUS CHRIST THE SAVIOUR: LORD OF ALL

- 1 O for a thousand tongues to sing
my great Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace!
- 2 My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of your name.
- 3 Jesus — the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner's ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace.
- 4 He breaks the power of cancelled sin,
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean,
his blood availed for me.
- 5 He speaks; and, listening to his voice,
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice;
the humble poor believe.
- 6 See all your sins on Jesus laid:
the Lamb of God was slain;
his soul was once an offering made
that all may heaven gain.
- 7 In Christ, our Head, you then shall know,
shall feel, your sins forgiven,
anticipate your heaven below,
and own that love is heaven.

Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Methodist Church, *Singing the Faith*, (London: Hymns Ancient and Modern, 2011), 364.

Appendix 9 – A table breaking down data around age

Age Bracket	National (2011) ²⁵¹	York and Hull (2011) ²⁵²	Yorkshire North and East (2023)
20-40 years	7%	5%	3.9%
41-65 years	24%	22%	27.2%
66-80 years	51%	55%	50%
Over 80	18%	17%	18.9%

Appendix 10 – A table breaking down data around Gender

	National (2011) ²⁵³	York and Hull (2011) ²⁵⁴	Yorkshire North and East (2023)
Male	31%	29%-30.9%	29.5%
Female	69%	69.1%-71%	69.6%
Prefer not to say	n/a	n/a	1%

Appendix 11 – Data from Church Questionnaires, pages 127-128Appendix 12 – Data from Congregation Questionnaires, pages 129-151

²⁵¹ Methodist Church, *Methodist Statistics: Demographic Report*

²⁵² Methodist Church, *Methodist Statistics: Demographic Report*

²⁵³ Methodist Church, *Methodist Statistics: Demographic Report*

²⁵⁴ Methodist Church, *Methodist Statistics: Demographic Report*

Appendix 11: Data from Church Questionnaires

	1	2	3	3.1	4	5	5.1	6	7	8	9	10	10.1	11	12	13	13.1	14	15	16
	Boston Spa	Yes	Rural Village		No			55	35	Decline	1	Piano/Organ are used interchangeably, Use of lyric videos (such as YouTube and iSingWorship), Other	mp3 using laptop slides	No		Not applicable - we don't have a musician/s		No	Yes	Monthly Concerts plus 'famous name' events.
	Harrogate Road	Yes	Suburban		No			59	30+		1	Organ, Piano/Organ are used interchangeably		No		Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	no, but it is going to have!
	Walkington	Yes	Rural Village		No			35	22	Growth	1	Organ							No	
	Sheriff Hutton	Yes	Rural Village		No			15	18	Decline	1	Other	Midi files playing through organ or piano	No		Not applicable - we don't have a musician/s			No	
	Southlands	Yes	Suburban		No			34	30	Decline	1	Piano/Organ are used interchangeably		No		Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		Yes	No	
	Brayton	Yes	Rural Village		No			27	21	Decline	1	Organ				Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
	Park Grove	Yes	Market Town		No			32	30	Growth	1	Organ				Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	Yes	We use a variety of music. When we have evangelistic community events we use music that appeals to more people.
	Acaster Malbis	Yes	Rural Village		No			9	10	Decline	1	Organ				They come externally to services to provide us with music		No	No	
	Queen Street	Yes	Coastal		No			53	40	Growth	1	Organ, Use of lyric videos (such as YouTube and iSingWorship), Singing the Faith midi files		No		Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
	All Hallowgate	Yes	Market Town		No			92	60	Decline	2	Organ		Yes	Organ	Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
	Grewlthorpe	Yes	Rural Village		Yes	Other	Methodist	42	20	Decline	1	Organ		Yes	Organ	Not applicable - we don't have a musician/s		No	No	

Appendix 11: Data from Church Questionnaires

	1	2	3	3.1	4	5	5.1	6	7	8	9	10	10.1	11	12	13	13.1	14	15	16
12	Haxby and Wigginton	Yes	Suburban		No			240	120	Decline	2	Organ,Piano/Organ are used interchangeably,Use of lyric videos (such as YouTube and iSingWorship),Music group (e.g. multiple musicians or singers are the front of church)		No		Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
13	Thorpe Willoughby	No	Rural Village		Yes	CofE		30	25	Decline	2	Organ				Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
14	Lidgett	Yes	Suburban		No			45	25	Decline	1	Organ				Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
15	Lidgett	Yes	Suburban		No			45	25	Decline	1	Organ				Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
16	Eggborough	Yes	Rural Village		No			8	13	Growth	One each fortnight	Piano				Other	Member of another church	No	Yes	No
17	Park Grove	Yes	Market Town		No			32	25	Growth	1	Organ				Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	Yes	We try to ensure a variety of hymns both modern and traditional.
18	Carthorpe	Yes	Rural Village		No			21	20	Growth	1	Piano		Yes	Piano	Our musician(s) are members of our congregation		No	No	
19	Allerston	Yes	Rural Village		Yes	CofE		8	12	Decline	Alternate weeks between the Anglican and Methodist church	Organ,Singing the Faith midi files,Other	No Organist, No Problem	Yes	Organ	Not applicable - we don't have a musician/s		No	Yes	Not specifically, we had a village community choir and music is an integral part of our worship
20	Allerston	Yes	Rural Village		Yes	CofE		8	12	Decline	Alternate weeks with the Parish Church	Organ,Other	CD singing the Faith and no Organist, no problem	Yes	Organ	Not applicable - we don't have a musician/s			Yes	Only in as much as it is part of our worship

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
1 66	Male	Darley		2 1	No			Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
2 73	Female	Park Grove		1year 6 5 months	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Yes
3	Female	Darley		5 14	Yes	Christian	Baptist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
4 44	Male	Carthorpe												
5 53	Female	Lidgett		3 31	No			Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Yes
6 70	Male	Wetherby		4 40	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
7 45	Female	Haxby and Wigginton		3 45	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly disagree	Yes
8 76	Female	Walkington		5 45	Yes	christian	methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Agree	No
9 72	Male	Brayton		4 30	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
10 55	Female	Carthorpe												
11 47	Female	Southlands		4 1	Yes	Christian	General Conference of the New Church	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
12 54	Female	Park Grove		4 2 years	Yes	Christian	Christian	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
13	Male	Park Grove		4 21 years	Yes	christian	Church of England	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
14 71	Female	Park Grove		5 6	Yes	Christian	Methodist/Church of England	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
More variation not just traditional 1 hymns	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Worship conferences,12,13				Occasionally		
2 Introduce more modern hymns	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11,13		Cliff College,Other	Easter People	Occasionally		The congregation at Park Grove tend to be very traditional with their hymn singing. But in fairness when a preacher chooses something new they will give it their best and are willing to try it. Sometimes it is the organist that struggles to lead when they don't know the hymns or songs.
3 To have someone to play the piano	Yes	Taize,Catholic Mass,14				Occasionally,Comments	We are an older congregation	I would like to introduce new songs or hymns but have to use dad's and it can be difficult
4								
A wider variety of music, with more modern worship songs, and more use of recorded songs and visual images (eg YouTube clips), in addition to the organ, which is used 95% of the 5 time.	Yes	12				Yes,Comments	I'd prefer to experience a range of different styles, both for myself and to widen others' experiences.	I tend to feel more connected to God and more likely to share my faith through the music/songs/hymns I listen to on my own, as opposed to congregational singing during weekly worship. This is partly because of the style of music, but I also like the space for reflection, which I find challenging when surrounded by lots of other people. Although I would like to see more modern worship music in Sunday services, I'm also not particularly keen on the style of singing 2/3 worship songs back to back. I prefer the singing interspersed with other worship elements.
6 Greater variety	Yes	Iona Worship,12				Yes		
I have answered this with an ideal (for me) of modern worship songs. We currently don't have that and used to. I used to invite others but the music is not something I would invite anyone to anymore. The first part of the survey cirri would be much lower but I'm probably responding with a few years back in mind.	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,Worship conferences,11				Yes		A tricky one to complete. If it was 4/5 years ago, we had a huge variety of worship and it was fantastic. Currently it's very limited and uninspiring (for me personally).
8	No					Yes		
9 Using a Cd soundtrack for newer hymns and songs	No			Iona Worship,Cliff College		Yes		Methodists love a good hymn. The Wesley's wrote a great hymn
10								
11	Yes	Taize,Catholic Mass		Taize				As a family, we attended a different church in the circuit before Covid. This church didn't get back to meeting weekly, and I missed it, particularly congregational singing. Going to Southlands has really helped me to connect with my faith from a worship point of view, and this has mainly been as a result of the singing and wonderful music that happens there. I feel truly blessed.
12	Yes	Worship conferences,11		Other	Not sure	Yes,Occasionally		
13	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize				Occasionally		
14	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass				Occasionally		

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9	
15	Female	Walkington	4	40	Yes	Christian	C of E/Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Yes	
16	63	Male	Walkington	2	6	No		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No	
17	63	Female	Walkington	5	Over 31	No		Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No	
18	81 years	Female	Park Grove	5	20	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No	
19		Female	Park Grove	5	30	Yes	Christian	Congranal	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
20		Female	Park Grove	2	7years	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
21	65	Female	Walkington	4	Three	No		Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No	
22		Female	Park Grove	5	12	Yes	Christian	Baptist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
23	51	Female	Walkington	1	20	Yes	Christianity	Methodism	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
24	50	Female	Southlands	5	21	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	No
25	67	Female	Reivaulx	5	67	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
26	39	Female	Reivaulx	5	39	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
27	35	Male	Reivaulx	5	11	Yes	Christian	Pentecostal	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
28		Female	Reivaulx	4	35	Yes		Methodist/Pentecostal	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
29	79	Female	Park Grove	4	47 years	Yes	christian	congregational non-conformist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
Would like more lively and modern hymns, but appreciate we do not have the musicians to achieve that and others prefer the more traditional hymns	Yes	Anglican Evensong,11,13				Occasionally		
15								
16	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Catholic Mass				Occasionally		I am an Anglican Reader who sometimes leads at our local Methodist Church. The hymns there are more 'user friendly' than the ones that we have at our churches. The words are more contemporary and I think speak more to how we live our lives. Happy to discuss further if of any help
17	No	14				Occasionally		
18	No	14				Occasionally		
19	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship		Iona Worship		Occasionally		If you can not sing along, then read the words.
20	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship				Occasionally		Music helps me focus and still my mind during Worship. Live singing as a Congregation is a form of Fellowship for me and helps me feel part of a body on Earth Worshiping our God.
21	Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		Singing hymns is uplifting to the spirit and it is good to share the experience with others
22	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,11		Other	Songs of Fellowship	Yes		
23	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship				No,Comments	I'd be happy for them to be included, so long as the congregation weren't attempting to sing. Much better to simply listen and enjoy quietly, rather than the embarrassment of trying to join in.	I think my negative attitude to congregational singing probably stems from being part of a very small congregation. I'd be delighted to join in hymn singing in a cathedral or minster when a magnificent organ is playing, a trained choir is leading the singing and there is a large congregation present to swell the sound. I feel really very uncomfortable when I can hear my own voice and those of people around me in a very small congregation.
24	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,11		Taize,Iona Worship		Comments	We do Iona and Tazie quarterly	
25	Yes	11,13		Other	modern worship			
26	Yes	11		Worship at Conferences,Worship Bands at Sunday Worship		No		Please spell the church name correctly. It should be Rievaulx
27	Yes	Worship conferences,Worship bands at Sunday Worship		Worship at Conferences,Worship Bands at Sunday Worship		No		Please spell Rievaulx correctly.
28	Yes	Worship conferences,11,13		Worship at Conferences,Cliff College,Other				Worship music is an important part in church together we are praising Jesus , hymns , choruses, or new modern songs as long as they are scripture based .
29	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship				Yes		we were led by an electric organ which gave an extra dimension to our worship at the close of worship on Sunday last and I hope it will continue.Normally we are accompanied by our organ or piano.

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
30	78	Male	Boston Spa	4	7 years	Yes	Christian	Church of Scotland/URC	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Yes
31		Female	Boston Spa	4	7	Yes	Church of Scotland	Presbyterian	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Yes
32		Female	Wetherby	5	3.5	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
33	69	Female	Hutton Cranswick	5	3	No			Agree		Agree		Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
34	59	Male	Queen Street	5	55	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	No
35	51	Female	Queen Street	2	16 years	No			Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	No
36		Female	Queen Street	2	69	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
37	40	Male	Queen Street	3	14	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Yes
38	24	Prefer not to say	Southlands	4	2	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Agree	No
39	75 yrs	Female	Walkington	5	5 years	No			Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
40	51	Male	Southlands	5	21	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
41	54	Female	Queen Street	5	54	Yes	christian	methodist	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
42	46	Female	Southlands	4	15	Yes	Christine	Church of England	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
43		Male	Queen Street	5	One	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No
44	70	Female	Queen Street	5	13	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
45	78	Male	Southlands	4	3	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
	Wider use of modern hymns e.g. John Bell/Graham Kendrick/Stuart Townend	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship				Yes		Congregational singing can be very personal but hugely important to church life. It is at the heart of most Christian Worship. This is also why BBC Songs of Praise is a popular programme.
30									
31	Use of different instruments or breaking hymns up interspersing with prayer or spoken verses. Also ensuring the tune is heard beforehand if new.An explanation from the minister can sometimes be useful too	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship		Iona Worship,Flourish (District Event)		Occasionally,Comments	I'm not familiar with many of the above	
32	Be less formal	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,Worship conferences,12,13		Iona Worship,Other	Traditional	Occasionally,Comments	Also need to be aware of the needs of the congregation eg mixed styles	Wetherby has mixed styles on the Plan - Traditional, All Age, Contemporary - to reflect different needs
33		Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,Worship conferences,12		Worship at Conferences,Flourish (District Event)				
34		Yes	Iona Worship,12		Worship at Conferences,Flourish (District Event)				
35		Yes	Taize				Occasionally		
36		No	14				No		
37	The style of the worship	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,Worship conferences,13				Yes		
38		No			Taize		Occasionally		
39		Yes	Anglican Evensong,11				No		The worship and singing at the MAYC London Weekend in the Royal Albert Hall in the 1960's remains with me to this day.
40		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass		Taize,Iona Worship		Occasionally		
41		No							
42		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Worship conferences		Taize,Iona Worship		Occasionally		
43		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,12,13				Occasionally		
44		Yes	12				Occasionally		
45		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass		Taize,Iona Worship		Yes		1. We have three musicians, with different experiences and styles, who contribute greatly to our singing. 2. A singing group meets regularly before services to come to terms with new/unfamiliar hymns. 3. A few of us use music editions of the hymn book and sing in parts. 4. Hymn books are routinely NOT distributed, but with the words projected on a screen. This lifts people's heads and assists the singing.

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
46	28	Female	Haxby and Wigginton	2	28	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Yes
47	70	Female	Reivalux	5	30 plus	Yes	Christian		Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
48		Male	Queen Street	5	55	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	No
49	81	Male	Park Grove	4	14	Yes	Christian	Methodist							
50	38	Male	Queen Street	3	9	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
51	85	Male	Haxby and Wigginton	Over 45	5 years	Yes	Christian	Old Baptist Union	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Yes
52	56	Male	All Hallowgate	4	3	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
53	79	Female	Walkington	5	8	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
54		Female	All Hallowgate	5	10	Yes		Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
55		Female	Walkington	5	45	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
56	87	Male	All Hallowgate	5	27	Yes	Christian	Baptist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
57		Female	All Hallowgate	5	7	Yes	Christian	Congregational	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
58	62 years	Female	All Hallowgate	4	2years	Yes	Christian	URC	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
59	71	Female	Grewlthorpe		16 years	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
60	70	Male	Walkington	4	1	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	No
61	76	Male	All Hallowgate	4	25	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Yes
62	56	Female	Haxby and Wigginton	3	26	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Yes
63	46	Female	Queen Street	3	17	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
	A wider variety of hymns and worship songs, whilst we do often have a mix, this is not always consistent with local preachers. I like that we have a small worship band as well as an organist, and I think we should use this resource better if we can	Yes	11,12,13		Flourish (District Event)		Yes,Occasionally		
	47 A little more freedom	Yes	Worship conferences,Worship bands at Sunday Worship,13		Worship at Conferences,Worship Bands at Sunday Worship				No
	48	Yes	12		Other	Hymns	Occasionally		I like a mix of traditional hymns and worship songs
	49								
	50 Increased passion for singing	Yes	11,12,13				Occasionally		
	51 I'd like a more varied selection of both ancient and modern hmns - No not "Ancient & Modern" hymn book!	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,13				Yes,Occasionally		
	52	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship		Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship				
	53	Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		I enjoy the organ accompaniment, as I think it encourages us in our singing.
	54	Yes	Taize,11		Taize				
	55	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship		Other		Occasionally		
	56	No					Occasionally		
	57 Practice the newer hymns so more confident singing	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,12		Iona Worship,Other	Charles Wesley / singing the faith	Occasionally		
	58 I would like to sing more modern hymns/choruses in at least one service a month.	Yes	Worship bands at Sunday Worship				Occasionally,Comments	New wine particularly. I have no knowledge of Flourish	All Hallowgate has a variety of music- organ, piano, music group- and we are privileged to have them. I feel that the congregational worship is about 20 years behind the worship I experienced at my previous C of E Church. It is difficult to adjust. I do not connect to God in the same way through many of the old hymns.
	59 ours is an Ecumenical church so only 1 service per month is strictly Methodist. Our church name is spelt wrong the village is Grewelthorpe	Yes	11		Other	Anglican but not evensong	Occasionally		Only the fact that our church is St James & The Methodist church and only 1 service each month is strictly Methodist so most of the hymns are Anglican based. I love singing and the music is very important to me , particularly the organ. Our church name is spelt Grewelthorpe not as shown on the first page. Thank you
	60	No					No		I am quite happy with the traditional hymn singing of our church
	61 More modern hymns, written over past 30 years, as well as traditional ones	Yes	Worship conferences,Worship bands at Sunday Worship		Worship Bands at Sunday Worship,Flourish (District Event),Cliff College		Occasionally,Comments	A mixture of styles to suit everyone is always best. No-one is excluded by doing this	No, I don't think so.
	62 Try more new songs	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass		Taize,Iona Worship		Yes		
	63	Yes	Taize,Worship conferences,12,13		Worship at Conferences		Yes		

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
64	74	Female	Walkington		4 6 years	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Yes
65		Female	All Hallowgate		4 52	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
66	68	Female	Allerston		3 42	Yes	Christian	Church of the Nazarene	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	No
67	73	Female	Allerston		2 13	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	No
68		Female	Walkington		4 40 years	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
69	77	Male	Wetherby		5 42	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
70	62	Female	All Hallowgate		3 44	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Yes
71	65	Female	Walkington		4 34	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
72		Female	All Hallowgate		3 9	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
73	64	Male	Walkington		5 35	Yes	Christian	Anglican /CofE	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
74	59	Male	Queen Street		3 11	No			Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Yes
75		Female	Walkington		2 2	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
76	54	Female	Haxby and Wigginton		5 54	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
77	51	Female	Haxby and Wigginton		4 10	No			Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Yes
78	75	Female	Wetherby												
79	79	Male	Haxby and Wigginton		5 14	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
80	72	Male	Wetherby		5 13	Yes	Christian	Congregational/URC	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
81	35	Female	Walkington		3 35	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No
82		Female													

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
	64 Add more modern worship songs	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Worship conferences,Worship bands at Sunday Worship				Occasionally		No
	65 Include more contemporary worship songs	Yes	Taize				Occasionally		
	66	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,12		Anglican Evenson,Iona Worship,Flourish (District Event)		Occasionally,Comments	I feel that it is good to experience other forms of singing expression in worship.	The music in a service for me is uplifting, energising and very meaningful. We have some amazing hymn and song writers that express thoughts and emotions about faith in a way that I feel engaged and encouraged by. I take away music in my heart from worship that gives me feelings of great joy and elation ready to begin a new week. It is a joy to sing with large congregations, such as at 'Flourish' and feel part of a greater number of people of faith but is equally satisfying to be part of a small, local congregation.
	67	Yes	Anglican Evensong		Anglican Evenson		Yes		No thank yo
	68	Yes	11		Other	Methodist	No		Methodist Hymns are the best and more tuneful and jolly.
	69	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,12		Iona Worship,Flourish (District Event)				We have a variety of worship styles and music. We have a small music group which is well received by the congregation.
	70 More modern worship songs	Yes	Worship conferences,11		Other	Traditional hymn book			
	71	Yes	Iona Worship				Occasionally		
	72	Yes	Anglican Evensong				Occasionally		
	73	Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
	74 Sometimes we do not get the right balance between traditional hymns and modern worship songs. I like both but sometimes the modern songs seem to dominate.	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11,12				Yes		I don't sing well, but I do enjoy and find beneficial, congregational singing. I find many of the older traditional hymns to be easier to sing than quite a few of the modern worship songs. I don't think this is entirely because they are more familiar. It seems to be to do with the regular metre.
	75 More modern hymns	Yes	11						
	76	Yes	Taize,11,12				Occasionally		
	77 The answer to most of the questions above are 'sometimes', depending on the songs. Some of the traditional hymns I tend to tune out of, which is a shame because some have great words. When the music is good it does connect me to God and shape my faith..	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Worship conferences,12,13		Flourish (District Event)		Occasionally		I fully recognise that we need to reflect different worship preferences, so everyone can have an opportunity to make the most of using music to connect with God. It does tend to be 'traditional heavy' at the moment. I am happy if I think that other people are connecting with God through the more traditional stuff, I use that time to think my own thoughts (or think about what I am making for lunch...)
	78								
	79	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,12,13				Occasionally		
	80	No					Occasionally		
	81	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship		Taize		Occasionally		Gospel music is brilliant.
	82								

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
83	76	Female	Wetherby	4	40	No			Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
84	70	Male	Haxby and Wigginton	5	32	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
85	80	Female	Lidgett	5	15+	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
86	72	Female	Boston Spa	5	9	No			Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Yes
87	45	Female	Lidgett												
88	70	Female	Haxby and Wigginton	5	33	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
89															
90	73	Female	Haxby and Wigginton	3	28 years	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
91		Female	Allerston	1	12	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
92	62	Female	All Hallowgate	5	42	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No
93	43	Female	Southlands	4	20 years	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
94	74	Female	All Hallowgate	5	Four	Yes	Christianity	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
95															
96	89	Male	Hedon	5	89	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
97	75	Female	Scagglethorpe	3	30+	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
98	70	Female	Sheriff Hutton	3	4	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
99	69	Female	Sheriff Hutton	3	4	Yes	Christian	Congregational then Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
100	94	Male	Sheriff Hutton	5	56	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No
101		Male	Boston Spa		Over 40	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
102	75	Female	Boston Spa	3	40+	Yes	Christian	Church of Scotland	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
103	83	Female	Boston Spa	5	30+	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
83		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11,12,13		Iona Worship,Other	Traditional Methodist Hymn books	Occasionally,Comments	When I am looking for a different style I go where I know I will find it. I don't expect my local church to provide it as it wouldn't be suitable for the majority of the congregation.	There is a huge variety of opportunity to join in with congregational singing and I am happy to go where it is available. At different times there are different needs. Most of the time the singing at Wetherby is attractive because of those I am joining in with rather than the style of music itself.
84	Encourage using a broader range of songs and music.	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,11,12		Iona Worship,Flourish (District Event),Other	Eclectic			We have had a strong musical lead from a band etc. in the past but currently we have few people with the musical skills.
85	More enthusiasm	Yes	12,13		Other	Traditional	Occasionally		We are blessed with a pipe organ to accompany singing. However for many hymns/songs this is not the best form of music.
86	Organists becoming an issue, so need an alternative – more music within a Powerpoint presentation or some musical accompaniment like Hymnal Plus or similar	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship				Occasionally		
87									
88	It would be good to have more variety of musicians, but realise that it is dependant upon available resources.	Yes	Taize,12		Taize		Yes		I think a variety of music within worship is vital, providing a worship environment for all needs.
89									
90		No					Occasionally		
91		Yes	Worship conferences,13		Cliff College		Occasionally		
92		Yes	Taize,12				No		
93	Introduce more modern worship songs	Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,11		Taize,Iona Worship		Occasionally		
94		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,12		Other	Methodist	Occasionally		Having different preachers each week brings a variety of worship within Methodist tradition.
95									
96			11				No		
97			11				Yes		
98	More modern worship songs	Yes	11		Other		Yes		
99	Would like to have some more contemporary music. None used at the moment	Yes	11				Yes		
100	I would like it is to be played by someone. Nevertheless we manage extremely by someone operating disks to play organ or keyboard	Yes	11				Yes,Comments	Not regularly	
101		Yes	Taize,11				No		
102	It would help if we had more people singing upbeat-songs would be good. I really like TVs songs of praise so much more upbeat	No	14				Comments	Not sure	
103	I love a good variety of hymn singing and recorded music	No	11				No		

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
104	86	Male	Boston Spa		5 59	Yes			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Yes
105	85	Female	Boston Spa		5 59	Yes	Christian	CoFE and then Methodist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
106	82	Male	Boston Spa		4 20+	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
107	81	Male	Boston Spa		5 9	Yes	Christian	Presbyterian	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
108		Female	Boston Spa		5 31	No			Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
109	80	Female	Kingston Wesley		5 47	No			Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
110	65	Male	Kingston Wesley		5 62	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	No
111	57	Male	Lidgett		5 27	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No
112	78	Female	Lidgett		5 60	Yes	Christian	Church of England.	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree		No
113	73	Female	Lidgett		5 40	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
114	72	Male	Lidgett		5 7	No	Christian	Church of England.	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
115	72	Female	Lidgett		5 2	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree		No
116	74	Male	Lidgett		5 2	Yes	Christian	Methodis	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
117	75	Female	Lidgett		5 40	No			Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
118		Female	Lidgett		4 50+	No			Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No
119	86	Female	Boston Spa		5 40+	Yes	Christian	Non conformist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Yes
120	81	Male	Scagglethorpe		2 Over 40	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
121	72	Female	Scagglethorpe		3 67	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
122	70	Female	Park Grove		53		Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
104	Far too many "difficult to sing" tunes are inflected on a aged congregation. 1 per serviced (neither the first or the last) is acceptable. Meaning is lost if one is concentrating on the time alone	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Catholic Mass,11				No		
105	As I play the organ I do not like recorded hymns. The speed is not always correct I do not like american pronunciation	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,Worship conferences,Worship bands at Sunday Worship,11,12,13				No		
106	Introduce a band occasionally bring in a range of organists regularly	No	11,14		Other		Yes		
107		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11				No		
108	More video music recorded music to sing to	No	14				No		
109		Yes	Catholic Mass				No		
110		Yes	11		Other	Worship bands	No		
111		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,11		Anglican Evenson		Yes		
112		Yes	Anglican Evensong				Yes		
113	Modern hymns	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Catholic Mass,11				Yes		
114		Yes	Anglican Evensong				Yes		
115		Yes	Anglican Evensong		Anglican Evenson		No		
116	Traditional hymns	Yes	Anglican Evensong		Anglican Evenson		No		
117		Yes	Anglican Evensong,11				Occasionally		
118		No	14				No		
119	Recorded crooning by poor singers. Why do they have to vandalise good tuned by completely changing the tempo? It's not a clever thing to do. The original tunes were composed by musicians to praise God, not for some musically bereft kruner to pull apart.	Yes	Taize		Other		No		
120	My ability to sing as i did at the age of 21	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship,11				Occasionally		
121		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
122		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,11,12				Occasionally,Comments	On individual occasions to suit the theme and purpose of the service.	Some of this was difficult to assess it would probably depend on how the hymns themselves fitted in with the overall theme and context of the service. As I continue it to sing hymns with another group of people during the week as part of my employment, there is probably an overlapping effect and it is harder to judge the venues an isolation. My faith itself is probably more a reason why I share rather than. Aspects of worship that encouraged me to do these in my experience. If a style of congregational singing suits the occasion and/all the preacher/worship leader explains why they have chosen a particular hem. People are more open than you might expect to accept in a style that's so different from the preferred norm.

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
123	76	Female	Park Grove		5 76	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
124	64	Female	Hedon		3 20+	Yes	Christian	Evangelical and methodist.	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
125	84	Female	Ayton		2 52	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
126	73	Male	Ayton		5 6	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
127	73	Female	Ayton		3 3	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
128	75	Female	Ayton		7	No			Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
129	85	Male	Lidgett		5 63	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
130	66	Female	Hedon		5 3	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
131	68	Female	Hedon		5 20 +		Christian	Presbyterian and methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
132	90	Female	Hedon		60+	Yes	Christian	Anglican/ Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
133	85	Male	Hedon		14	Yes	Christian	Baptist/methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
134	77	Female	Hedon		5 14	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
135	81	Male	Hedon		3 60	No			Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
136	71	Female	Hedon		5 6		Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
137	78	Female	Hedon		5 53	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
138	75	Male	Hedon		5 13	No			Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
139	50	Male	Scagglethorpe		4 29	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
140	80	Male	Harrogate Road		5 8	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
141	59	Male	Hedon		5 2	No			Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
142	60	Female	Hedon		5 2	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
143	61	Female	Park Grove		2 Under 1	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
144	73	Female	Park Grove		5 2	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Yes
145	67	Female	Park Grove		3 2	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No
146	65	Female	Carlthorpe		4 60	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
147	62	Female	Park Grove		42	Yes	church of England	methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
148	71	Female	Ayton		5 46	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
149	56	Male	Brompton		5 22	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
150	77	Male	Brompton		5 50+	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
151	76	Female	Romanby		3 9	Yes	Christian	Church of England	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
152	82	Female	Romanby		4 5	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
123		Yes	Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11				No		
124		No	14				Yes		
125	Need some good singers to help encourage the others. Hymns need to be in middle range of notes. I detest happy clappy and find arm waving acutely embarrassing	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize		Anglican Evenson		Yes,Comments	Tessie is lovely and lends itself to singing in simple parts	
126	The use of more well known Hymns	Yes	11				No		
127	More modern songs/choruses perhaps in time!	Yes	Iona Worship,11				Yes		
128		Yes	Anglican Evensong,11				Yes,Comments	Worship bands	
129	Ideally, more use being made of books other than seeing the face EG songs of fellowship or power	No	14				No		
130		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11				Yes		
131		Yes	11		Other	Worship app	Yes		
132	Return to more harmony and more preparation	Yes	Iona Worship,11				Yes		
133		No	14				No		
134		No	14				No		
135	More 4 part harmony desired less singalong to screened solarists.	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11				Occasionally		
136		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship,11		Anglican Evenson,Iona Worship		No		
137		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
138		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize		Other		Yes		
139		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize						
140	Try different modern hymns	Yes	Taize,Catholic Mass,11		Other	Worship bands at Sunday service.			
141	Less use of the organ and hymns from the 18th/nineteenth, an early 20th century. More modern worship songs	Yes	11				No		
142	More modern worship songs, less use of the organ and old seventeenth eighteenth nineteenth century hymns	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11				Yes		
143		No	Taize,Catholic Mass,11,14		Other	Worship bands at sunday worship	No		
144	Introduce different styles of music. We are very traditional.	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11				Yes		
145		No	14				No		
146	A more upbeat tune to make you smile	No	14				Yes		
147		Yes	Taize,Catholic Mass,11				No		
148		No	14				No		
149		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
150		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
151		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
152		No	14				No		

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
153	88	Female	Romanby	2	10	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
154	89	Male	Brompton	2	8	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No
155	81	Female	Romanby	3	30+	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No
156	83	Female	Boston Spa	5	50	Yes	Christian	Church of england	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No
157	79	Male	Park Grove		70	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
158	76	Male	Hedon	4	8	Yes	Christian	Church of england	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	No
159	79	Female	Eggborough	3	12	Yes	Christian	Church of england	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No
160	74	Female	Eggborough	5	20	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No
161		Female	Eggborough	3	10		Christian	Church of england	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
162	69	Female	Eggborough		1 year	Yes			Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree			No
163	85	Female	Eggborough	3	4	Yes	Christian		Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree			No
164	80	Female	Eggborough	5	15	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
165	87	Male	Sheriff Hutton	5	30	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
166	60	Female	Romanby	4	20	Yes	Christian	United reformed congregational	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Yes
167	86	Prefer not to say	Harrogate Road	5	37	Yes	Christian	Church of england	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
168	84	Female	Harrogate Road	5	25	No			Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
169	78	Female	Harrogate Road	5	26	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
170	60	Female	Holme-on-S-M	5	23	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
171	61	Female	Nafferton	5	1.5	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	No
172	89	Female	Nafferton	5	69	Yes	Christian	Methodist							
173	80	Female	Nafferton	3	8		Christian	Protestant	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
174		Female	Nafferton	5	60+	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	No
175	76	Female	Nafferton	5	6	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
176	66	Female	Nafferton	5	6	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
177	66	Female	Nafferton	4	0.5	Yes	Christian	Congregational and United reformed Church	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
178	65	Male	Nafferton	Less than 1	4 year	Yes	Christian	Congregational/urc	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
179	72	Female	Nafferton	5	40	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
180	68	Female	Easingwold	2	4	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
153		No	14				No		
154		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
155		Yes	Anglican Evensong		Other				
156		Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,11		Other	Worship band at Sunday worship.	Yes		
157		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
158		Yes	Anglican Evensong,11		Anglican Evenson				
159		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Catholic Mass				No		
160		No	14				Yes		
161		No	14				No		
162		No	14				No		
163		No	14						
164		Yes	11						
165		No					Occasionally,Comments	Prefer traditional particularly the tunes agree with some but not all updating of the worlds	
166	More update hymns and songs	Yes	Catholic Mass,11				Occasionally		
167	No change	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11				Yes		
168		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize		Other		No		
169	Regarding the singing better fellowship would be achieved by the congregations. Sitting further forward and nearer each other	Yes	Taize,11				Yes		
170	More contemporary songs/ hymns, faster music.	Yes	Anglican Evensong,11				Yes		
171		Yes	Anglican Evensong		Anglican Evenson		Yes		
172		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship						
173	It would be good to have different styles of music sometimes Egypt has and said the opening question is. Yes, it does matter enormously. Some people say they get more from the hymns than the sermons	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11				Yes		
174		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11		Other	Worship at conferences	No		
175		Yes	Anglican Evensong		Anglican Evenson				
176		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship,11		Anglican Evenson				
177		Yes	11						
178		Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11		Other				
179		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11		Anglican Evenson,Taize,Iona Worship,Other	Worship bands at Sunday worship	Yes		
180		Yes	Taize,Iona Worship,11		Iona Worship		Yes		

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
181	75	Female	Easingwold		5 10	Yes	Christian	High Anglican church	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
182		Female	Easingwold		5 40+	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
183	78	Male	Easingwold		5 20	Yes	Christian	Church of England.	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
184	68	Male	Easingwold		5 3	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
185	71	Female	Easingwold		5 19	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Yes
186	89	Female	Easingwold		5 24	Yes	Presbyterian	Church of scotland	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
187	72	Male	Easingwold		5 30	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
188	76	Female	Easingwold		4 13	Yes	Christian	Church of england/methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Yes
189	69	Female	Easingwold		5 4	No			Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
190	76	Male	Queen Street		5 28	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
191	67	Female	Easingwold		5 4	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Strongly disagree	Yes
192	80	Female	Brayton		5 43	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Yes
193	89	Male	Brayton		5 30	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Disagree	Yes
194	53	Female	Brayton		4 4	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	No
195	64	Female	Brayton		5 40	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
181	Have a bigger mix of styles regularly from all traditional to new, regardless of the tune, the words must be relevant. Let's get the beat instruments singing and praising god some gospel would be good	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11				Yes		
182	Because we are a small church may have mainly elderly people. Some who wished me forward into accepting understanding reasons of coming to enjoy modern music and Ways of making it as well as many people who stay entrenched in the past and Wesley. Him's only church leaders are not just music. Providers must firmly explain how music needs to move with the times or we will continue to decline as a congregation with young members	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11		Taize,Iona Worship		Yes		
183	Yeah, congregation to be more open to change and a variety of worship leaders to be bolder in encouraging us to come out of comfort zones and discover greater joy	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship,11				Yes		
184	Less YouTube videos of performances.	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Catholic Mass,11				Yes		
185	More instruments flutes/guitars, more choirs	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Catholic Mass,11				Yes		
186	Ladies singing group	Yes	Iona Worship,11				No		
187		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11		Other		No		
188	Not to use singing the faith disc with piano	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Catholic Mass,11				Yes		
189		Yes	Anglican Evensong,11				Yes		
190		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship,11		Other		No		
191	Everything	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Iona Worship,11				Comments	Just a better quality of music any of the above if they are done well and not a recording or recording. All youtube videos of someone else we have karaoke hymns it is dire	
192	It would be good if we had an organist who could play modern hymns And someone to lead the singing. But for a small church it is not always possible.	Yes	11,12				Yes		
193	More instruments than simply the organ pay more attention to the words of the christian songs the millie singing with gusto at the age of thirteen I came to faith through the of singing the hymns and the preaching of the word	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,11				Yes		
194		No					No		
195		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Catholic Mass				Yes		

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	1	2	3	4	5	6	6a	7	8.1	8.2	8.3	8.4	8.5	8.6	9
196	78	Male	Brayton	1	4	Yes	Christian	Church of england	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
197	79	Female	Brayton	5	51	Yes	Christian	Baptist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Yes
198	69	Female	Darley	5	45	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Yes
199	78	Male	Easingwold	4	50	Yes	Christian	Presbyterian	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No
200	80	Female	Walkington	5	2	Yes	Christian	Church of england	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	No
201	86	Female	Walkington	5	9	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	No
202	45	Female	Walkington	2	2	No			Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
203	85	Female	Walkington	4	54	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
204	84	Female	Walkington	5	8	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
205	72	Female	Walkington	5	60	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	No
206	60	Male	Walkington	4	17	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	No
207	51	Female	Walkington	4	47	Yes	Christian	Methodist	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No
208	58	Female	Walkington	1	2	Yes	Christian	Methodist, church of England	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	No
209	82	Female	Queen Street	5	12	No			Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree		Strongly Agree	No

Appendix 12 - Data from Congregation Questionnaires

	10	11	12	12.1	13	13.1	14	14.1	15
196		No			Other		No		
197	The organist with poor eyesight is not enhanced worship. So I try to concentrate on the words of the hymns	Yes	11,12				Yes,Comments	Conference taize worship bands iona	
198	We used cds as our members. He used to play organ violin are both unable to play. Cd is not a great choice.	No			Iona Worship		Yes		
199		Yes	Taize,Iona Worship				Yes		
200		No							
201		Yes	Anglican Evensong		Anglican Evenson				
202		No	14				No		
203		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
204		Yes	Anglican Evensong,11				No		
205		No	14				No		
206		Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship,Catholic Mass,11		Taize,Iona Worship		Yes,Comments	Evensong, mass, orthodox	
207		Yes	Anglican Evensong				No		
208	More instruments	Yes	Anglican Evensong,Taize,Iona Worship		Anglican Evenson,Taize,Iona Worship				
209		No	14				No		