

That's The Way I Understand It - Series

A Case For Art Music To Be The Core Of The Church Music Program

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A Case For Art Music To Be The Core Of The Church Music Program

- This document could have been titled, “Why The Church In The United States Has Trouble Attracting Musicians Trained In Art Music”. The Church is now in a phase of “Contemporary Services” and “Blended Services” which has “pop” type of music as the basic music of the Worship Service. This type of “pop” music Services is now so widespread that when clergy and laity look for Church Music “experts” they are most likely to hear one of these “pop” Church musicians thus they are getting to hear only from that school of thought. Even the simplest of musical ditties can be presented as wonderful Church Music and not many in the Church or even the “experts” know any difference due to bad information that has infiltrated the Church and due to a lack of information articulated from other schools of thought that are not of the lighter “pop” thinking. The document you are reading is to better help you understand the treasurers of art music that God has given the neglecting Church. Those of “pop” music interests are invited to take a look also. And, those whose training is in art music but may not accept the title of this document are invited to also take a look at this document’s thoughts and the document’s examination of Church experiences from the writer’s observing music in many Churches and his several years of studying Church music job advertising listings.
- The position of this document is that good, appropriate art music should be the core of the Church Music Program, especially the Worship Service, but appropriate lighter forms of music have their place in the Church Music Program. Simply stated and without clarification, two reasons for art music to be the core of the Church Music Program are, first: the fact that art music is the highest form of music expression that God has given us and that is the pattern of the Bible to use the highest form of art works in the Tabernacle/Temple and to use the very best for God and Christ. Christ Himself in the Bible became very upset when He cleansed the Temple and noticed what He said about this cleansing and to what attitude of reverence His zeal applied to in this situation, ‘It is written, ‘My House shall be called the House of prayer;’ and ‘The zeal of Your House has eaten Me up.’” And second: appropriate, well done, well-written art music has an aesthetic power which has the potential to lift the receptive human soul of both musician

and non-musician to great aesthetic heights. This aesthetic power cannot be achieved in lighter forms of music.

- Let's mention at the very beginning that there are no Biblical requirements in the New Testament for gatherings of Christians to use art music. Many of the early Christians in the New Testament met in homes. ["Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the Church that is in their house." First Corinthians 16:19. "Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the Church which is in his house." Colossians 4:15. "And Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the Church in your house:" Philemon 1:2.] A Church Worship Service as we know it today was not a part of the first Christians in the New Testament. So, why the case for having art music to be the core of the Church Music Program? The rest of this document presents a case to encourage the concept of having art music to be the core of the Church Music Program.
- As the Church began to see the opportunities and a beneficial need to develop the idea of using Church buildings and having Worship Services, the logical pattern was to pattern the Sanctuary and Worship Services after the pattern of the Old Testament Temple. The Temple and its practices were patterned after the Tabernacle which was patterned after heavenly things. "For if He were on earth, He should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the Tabernacle: for, 'See,' said He, 'that you make all things according to the pattern showed to you in the mount.'" Hebrews 8:4-5. What better pattern can we have than the Temple? The Old Testament Temple embodied the proper awe, reverence, and praise for God and His Glory. Thus, the Old Testament Temple can show us much to help us have the best in Worship Services. This idea of the Temple pattern will be the basis of much of our thinking.

It is true that the idea of a Temple is different in the New Testament. However, the pattern of the holiness of the Old Testament Temple can not be surpassed as a pattern. When Christ was crucified the heavy curtain into the Temple most Holy Place was ripped from top to bottom showing that we can now boldly and humbly with reverence enter into the presence of God through Christ. The book of Hebrews now has Christ with a new Tabernacle/Temple rather than an earthly building (Hebrews 9:11). And, in Revelation God and Christ are the Temple in the new heaven and new earth in the new Jerusalem rather than a building. But we can still pattern our Church building and Worship Service after the holiness of the Old Testament Temple using heavenly patterns.

- Appropriate, well-written, and well done art music has a power that is not available in the pleasantries of "pop" type of music. Art music has a design that uses form including its harmonic structure, development, internal rhythmic flow, aesthetic musical emotional shape, balance, elements internally talking back and forth, human significance, and extra-musical ties that create a power and awe of

God and Christ and Their Glory that can not be done with the pleasantries of “jiving” and other types of music that can be created and expressed with little or no training because of the musical construction of the music. There is just nothing in the internal music construction of lighter types of music that can create the aesthetic atmosphere of power and awe of God and Christ that can be done in art music! This is not to say that these pleasantries types of music have no place in the Church nor does it say that they cannot convey a spiritual message. But only proper art music can create and reveal the high awe and power of God in a music-based, sometimes life changing aesthetic experience. This idea of using the power of art music to greatly heighten the aesthetic experience of God and Christ in worship will also be the basis of much of our thinking.

- The Bible wants us to give our very best to God. ““And if you offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And if you offer the lame and sick, is it not evil? Offer it now unto your governor; will he be pleased with you, or accept your person?” says the Lord of hosts.” Malachi 1:8. This concept of giving our best to God is a big reason for making art music, which is the highest form of musical thought that God has given to man, to be the core of the Church Music Program.

Also, this verse shows the need to bring excellence with appropriate fire, excitement, beauty, and life to the performance of Church art music. Poorly done art music hurts attitudes about art music and poorly done art music cannot possibly do those things for which God gave us art music. Even technically correct but sterilely done art music can be very dry. The correct notes performed without discovering and reproducing the aesthetic shape of the life, heartbeat, feeling, excitement, and beauty of a piece of art music is like the preacher saying the correct words in a sermon in a monotone.

- Solomon used high art in building the Temple in First Kings 6:14-38 which would give us the pattern to use high art music to be the core of the Church Music Program. “So Solomon overlaid the House within with pure gold:” “And he carved all the walls of the House round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, within and without.”

Revelation chapter 21 in the new Jerusalem also uses very high art in the design.

- Solomon used a person with high art skills and craftsmanship in building the Temple in First Kings 7:13-50 which would give us the pattern and extensive examples to use high art music to be the core of the Church Music Program. “And king Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of Tyre. He was a widow’s son of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass: and he was filled with wisdom, and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass. And he came to king Solomon, and wrought all his work.” Second Chronicles 2 and the next few chapters describe more of the skill, excellence, and cunning of the high art craftsmanship in the Temple.

Furthermore, it could be said the Church needs to seek out those Christians with high art music skills and make it worth their time to compose art music and/or recruit, rehearse properly, and direct Church Music Programs. Christians with art music skills should be willing to continually develop and use their God-given talents responsibly in the Church full time, part time, or on a volunteer basis. Again, notice the excellence.

A good Music Director should know how to raise the musical level of the Congregation in both theoretical knowledge and taste just as the Minister should be able to raise the theological level of a Congregation. A Music Director needs to be a Music Educator. Taste is especially important and can be raised by appropriate and well done climactic music performance of classical type and art music type of music. This requires that the Music Director be skilled in and understand music aesthetics to be able to create the conditions for the beautiful and the moving.

The Music Director should be able to distinguish between a good aesthetic music rendition versus a rendition which has people clapping, making nice comments, etc. without achieving the right aesthetic design. The rendition without much aesthetic moving of the listener can be achieved by such things as a display of virtuosity, performing all of the music very fast, ending the music very loud, etc. However, it should be noted that good aesthetic performance does not guarantee that the listener may choose to be moved musically.

The Church should seek well qualified musicians. If a person weak in qualifications is hired, the Church should request that the person weak in qualifications do studies to be capable of Directing an art music program. However, a good musician normally can't take a few college courses and be a good choral vocal Director in a year's time. It takes training and experience. Directing an art music program would involve: knowledge of music construction and aesthetics; conducting; working with the age group to which assigned; discipline; vocal/instrumental technique and teaching experience; techniques to gain commitment from a group; musical knowledge; musical training in the hired specialty; ensemble directing; adequate rehearsal skills and planning to have a group prepared for all scheduled performances; ability to hear, analyze, and correct wrong notes, intonation problems, relative importance of notes in harmonic progression; recruiting; spiritual leadership (are they even a Christian? and seek to obey the Bible?); knowledge of literature in their specialty; ability to stay in charge of a group and not let peer pressure of a group member run the group; the ability and willingness to communicate in a timely manner with group members, parents, staff, and others for planning, scheduling, deportment, costuming, coordination, and logistics; a high level of professionalism in all details; etc. Little or no qualification vocal people usually have vocal groups that do music that has a "pop" flavor, catchy tunes, and a lot of unison singing. These music leaders may not even be able to read music and use recordings to accompany the music. With good piano accompaniment or a good recording,

properly amplified, people will like this kind of music - - especially if done with enthusiasm and it will be liked even more if done loud. But there may be over-singing and not much choral vocal technique involved. This type of music is great for Sunday School programs, campfires, retreats, summer Bible Schools, etc. and has many good songs written for this type of lighter music but is not a real choral music Choir program. Some trained musicians who do not want to make the effort can be tempted to choose this route also. The Church needs to remember and actively request the use of the fact that God has given us people who have devoted a lifetime to making quality choral Church music literature for various ages and developed techniques to make it come to life. A real Choir “choral music vocal” program is to be desired rather than “group sing-along music” Choir programs using such music as campfire music, or Sunday School music, or summer Bible School music and other lighter types of music. A choral music vocal program is needed to produce an art music program.

- Solomon brought Israel’s art treasures into the Temple in First Kings 7:51 which would give us the pattern to use high art music to be the core of the Church Music Program. “And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated; even the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, did he put among the treasures of the House of the Lord.”
- At the dedication of Solomon’s Temple notice the quality of the performance of the music in that the performers “were as one”. Also note the results that followed this art music. “And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place: (for all the priests that were present were sanctified, and did not then wait by course: also the Levites which were the singers, all of them of Asaph, of Heman, of Jeduthun, with their sons and their brethren, being arrayed in white linen, having cymbals and psalteries and harps, stood at the east end of the alter, and with them an hundred and twenty priests sounding with trumpets:) it came to pass, as the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord; and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying ‘For He is good; for His mercy endures for ever:’ that then the house was filled with a cloud, even the house of the Lord; so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of God.” Second Chronicles 5:11-14.

It also should be noted that those who ministered in the Temple in Exodus 30:17-21 and 2 Chronicles 4:6 were ritually cleansed (sanctified) before ministering. This ritual was for the priests but the principle can be used by anyone as indeed the Levites (Temple workers like musicians) did in the books of I and II Chronicles (I Chronicles 15:14 and other places). Church musicians can be cleansed by praying for forgiveness of sins before going into the Worship Service so that no sin will interfere with hearing God and Christ with a seeking heart and so that no sin will interfere with God and Christ working through them and their human frailties. Amos 5:23-24 talks of righteousness coming before making

effective music for God, “Take away from Me the noise of your songs; for I will not hear the melody of your viols. But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.” These Amos verses also have implications for good discipline in Church music rehearsals and performances. A good conductor knows how one unruly youth can greatly affect what happens in a music group which can affect the whole Church through the weaken performance of that music group. A Church can be tempted not to discipline or remove such an unruly youth from the music group in the name of “ministering” to him in disregard for these Amos verses. This youth can be ministered to somewhere else in the Church and it then will not affect the Music Program or the Church.

- The New Testament uses a variety of music which suggests appropriate variety in music in the various activities of a Church. But this does not change the case for art music to be the core of Church music program, especially the Worship Service, as we have already discussed. “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.” Colossians 3:16. “And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;” Ephesians 5:18-19. Jesus led in the singing of a hymn at the conclusion of the last supper. Notice that this music in these verses is done to the glory of the Lord - - not to the glory of the performer. It is not a concert in the Church Service. The Bible includes appropriate dance and on some occasions lifting hands in the prayerful worship of God. However, this variety in music in the just quoted verse does not include a type of music in which the performer goes through gyrations like a strip dancer in a bar which draws attention to the performer rather than to God and Christ.
- It is easier to appeal to people with lighter types of music like Sunday School songs, summer Bible School songs, campfire songs, etc. These songs can carry a fine Christian message for Sunday Schools, summer Bible School, and campfire settings and work well in these contexts. Any pop/pleasantry type of music that has a constant rhythm background and ends loud has an easy appeal to people. However, the Church Music Program should offer more musical depth than easy appeal pleasant songs for the worship of an infinite God. The preacher offers more depth than the easy appeal of a stand-up comic routine to present Biblical wisdom and understanding about an infinite God and Christ. So, why not do the same with the core of the Church Music Program?

Generally speaking, to get numbers of people by using lighter music to be the core of the Church Music Program we can be tempted and pressured to go after numbers rather than what the Bible calls the “harvest” (Luke 10:2; John 4:35). Jesus in Matthew 4 rejected the temptation to go after things that would attract numbers and make Jesus look like the wrong kind of great and famous. In John 6 Jesus went after the harvest and not numbers as “many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him”.

There are good human reasons to use lighter types of music in some situations. However, we can be tempted to choose these lighter types of music only for their entertainment value. If we seek only to be entertained, we are focused on ourselves - - not on God. Let us help each other get the right priorities. Let's grow into a higher relationship with God and Christ with the involved infinite, eternal rewards. Elisha used music for spiritual purposes and allowed the minstrel musician to do his ministry as a joint, more powerful event in 2 Kings 3:14-15, "But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the Lord came upon him." However, in Ezekiel 33:32-33 it notes the spiritual uselessness of pleasant music attracting people mainly for entertainment purposes, "And, lo, you are unto them as a very lovely song of one that has a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear your words, but they do them not. And when this comes to pass, (lo, it will come,) then shall they know that a prophet has been among them."

- Skill and craftsmanship should be in all types of Church Music in the both the composition and the performance of the music. The Biblical David was a great composer, poet for music settings, instrument inventor, and performer. 1 Samuel 16:16 calls David a "cunning player". Psalm 33:2-3 asks us to make skillful music. All types of music should be composed and performed with skill and craftsmanship. There are many excellent Christian music groups and soloists that perform many types of music for Christian purposes such as appropriate pop music, country music, art music, etc. Some people are skilled in writing Sunday School songs, some are skilled in composing Christian country music, some are skilled in writing Christian songs that sound like good quality folk music, some are skilled in writing Gospel music, some are skilled in composing hymns or art music, etc. 1 Corinthians 14:12 tells us to, "seek that you may excel to the edifying of the Church."

The book of Psalms asks us to sing a new song to the Lord. New compositions should be encouraged. But just because someone writes a song with a Christian message does not necessarily mean that the composition is a good composition for its type of music even if it has been published. Music can get into hymn books because of political/religious fads. Besides the text, also look at the construction of the music and its musical content for its type of music before using the composition. Many good hymns have characteristics of art music and are very useful to the Organist and Choir Director for leading the Worship Service. Also, note that even a good art music composition may be appropriate for one situation but not for another situation.

Furthermore, we should not be tempted to excuse and accept poor effort and poor performance in the Church Music Program saying that the Bible allows it with the word "noise" in the repeated statement in the Psalms that says, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord". Instead, we need to read the whole Bible because Psalm

33:3 says about the “noise” that it should be to, “play ‘skillfully’ with a loud noise”.

Some Churches have a tradition of clapping to show appreciation for the skill of the musician after the musician performs in the Worship Service. It is a strange custom since the Church does not also clap for the skill of the preacher after a sermon. Lighter types of music tend to evoke this clapping more than art music. If the music has a rhythmic accompaniment and ends loud, many think the performance is good and clap just like they do in secular situations for lighter types of music. This clapping can deteriorate. The clapping may become a matter of being polite and there will be clapping even for a very poor performance. The clapping can also become something to give glory to the performer rather than give glory to God. In Acts 12 Herod after a speech took glory like he was a god instead of giving the glory to God and he met with an undesirable fate. The Church musician experiencing clapping can simply not acknowledge it during the Worship Service or it least not take concert-like bows for the glory. The performer is not doing a concert during the Worship Service instead the Music Program leads the Worship Service in Worship to the glory of God and Jesus Christ. A Church not desiring clapping during a Worship Service can put a notice in bulletin requesting no clapping or overt expressions following any music presentations.

- Contemporary or blended Services in the Church that take on a “Coffee House” atmosphere should meet somewhere other than in the Church Sanctuary. By “Coffee House” atmosphere we mean bringing drinks and food into the Church Sanctuary. There are people who have a valid issue with bringing drinks and food into the Church Sanctuary in the sense that Jesus was known in belief and demonstration for the fact of “the zeal for God’s House has eaten Me up”. Certainly we can deny ourselves for one hour in a Church Sanctuary in the holy presence of God and Jesus Christ. Also, if the Church Sanctuary has carpet and possibly even upholstered seats, food and drink spills can cause permanent damage and disfiguration to the Church Sanctuary.
- There can be times that both a good piece of art music or a good piece of a lighter type of music can still be made Biblically inappropriate for Church use because of culture associations with the music such as the piece under consideration for use in a Church as an instrumental piece has known secular words that have a message that is contrary to Biblical teachings.
- The document you are studying distinguishes between “art music” and “lighter types of music”. Other names these two music categories often go by in the Church are “traditional high liturgical Church choral and instrumental music” or “classical type music” as distinguished from “blended” Church music. For this part of the discussion we will include contemporary Church music which does not blended anything with it but for the purposes of this part of the discussion it has the same effect as blended Church music. (The document you are examining is

also an invitation for blended Church musicians to become traditional high liturgical classical type Church musicians.) A blended music program sounds like you are getting the best of both worlds because it draws from both kinds of music but often the lighter music predominates and the traditional music program of high liturgical Church choral music (the art music, the classical type music) suffers. The blended music Service has a built in difficulty coming off as a traditional flavored Service to the art musician: that is, it will always have a “pop” flavor rather than a traditional flavor to the art musician due to the construction of the Service and the music used. Rather than a blended music program, a better way to go is to have a traditional Service of high liturgical Church choral music and a Service of lighter music if the congregation is split in musical tastes. Also, the traditional Service person often does not want to be in a contemporary or blended Service and neither does that person want a part of a contemporary Service brought into the traditional Service. Again, rather than a blended music program, a better way to go is to have a traditional Service of high liturgical Church choral music and a Service of lighter music if the congregation is split in musical tastes. This is where the idea for a Saturday night gathering came from for many with the Saturday night being the lighter music Service. But the problem with this arrangement is that you may need two music staffs which means you have to divide the salary budget making it less likely that you get quality music people. Using the same staff for both types of Services usually has one type of music suffering but more on this later. Of course, the document you are studying selects a traditional high liturgical Church choral music program (art music) to be the core of the Church Music Program especially for Worship Services and lighter types of music to be used elsewhere in the life of the Church and its members. The next few remarks are a restatement of many things in the document you are studying but now stated in terms of either a “blended Church Music Program (including contemporary Church music)” or a “traditional Church Music Program of high liturgical Church choral and instrumental music”.

A lot of the music used in a “blended” Church choral Music Program because of its musical construction does not have much musical content as compared to a “traditional” high liturgical Church choral and instrumental Music Program. A “blended” Music Program has trouble attracting and keeping those with the talent and training to do “traditional” high liturgical choral and instrumental music because some of these people recognize and do not want to use their time with “blended” choral music of little musical content. “Traditional” high liturgical choral Music Directors who can aesthetically take the musical spark that is in “traditional” high liturgical choral and instrumental Church music and set hearts on fire moving souls with a power that is only in “traditional” high liturgical choral and instrumental Church music for those who respond - - most of these Directors do not desire to use their life and time for Church music of little musical content. Many “traditional” high liturgical choral Music Directors greatly resist under pressure to use music of little musical content in the Church’s Worship Services - - to the point of going somewhere else under the guidance of Christ that accepts what they have to offer in a similar manner to Matthew 10:11-14, 23.

“Blended” Church Music Directors, who quite often have not learned to adequately do “traditional” high liturgical choral and instrumental music, frequently and unconsciously looking for musical excitement resort to performing very fast, or ending the music loud, and/or selecting music with a strong beat which can lead to mistaken aesthetic conclusions about the quality of the musical performance.

Again, “blended” music can be entertaining but being entertained puts the focus on ourselves rather than on the worship of God and Jesus Christ which will be the joyous activity in heaven. We are not going to heaven to be entertained. High art was used in the construction of the Old Testament Tabernacle and Temple. And, high art is in the New Testament book of Revelation’s description of heaven. Jesus wanted the House of God to be a reverent House of Prayer.

If desired, “blended” music such as Church contemporary music (both types: the type that repeats a few words over and over with little musical development and the type that resemble melodic pop music), praise music, Taizé, Christian rock, Christian pop (mentioned above in contemporary music), gospel, simple ethnic music, etc. can be used successfully in the Church in Sunday School, Saturday Night type Services, Thursday night Praise Services using good high liturgical hymns and well written lighter music (well written for its type of music) to make a very spiritual event, retreats, around a campfire, at special events like a Sunday afternoon performance even with speaker and prayers, etc. Occasionally these types of music are successfully put into high liturgical music construction of the type that gives it aesthetic power. The writer has heard that Martin Luther took saloon music and constructed it into “traditional” high liturgical music and said that the Devil should not get all of the good tunes. Bach did some harmonizations of Luther tunes. Simple ethnic music like Black Spirituals and many folk tunes have sometimes been successfully made into high liturgical hymns and choral music.

It should be noted that a Church should carefully consider what could happen before it starts being a “blended” Church Music Program or Contemporary Church Music Program. Once anything is started it gains a following which makes it difficult to go back.

Advertise for and hire a proven “traditional” high liturgical choral Music Director to get a strong, effective Music Program from top to bottom.

- Music Directors can be full time which means that the Church will likely have more money to attract a good candidate with appropriate salary, good health insurance, retirement, etc. Candidates such as these often come from a specific higher education training to be a Music Director. Proven music teachers (if they have discipline and can recruit) in education institutions in the community make good Church musicians but the Church’s Music Program may have to be divided into several part-time jobs so that music teachers can do the job as a part-time job.

Part-time employees usually get their health insurance, retirement, etc. through their primary job. Part-time jobs need to pay enough to attract music people to do this extra time away from their families. Professional performers make good directors if they can teach and have other necessary characteristics. Good Church musicians can do a very effective Music Program without having office hours - - they just need to get the job done and do adequate planning with other staff at agreed upon meeting times. Church musicians can function as outside contractors and not be a part of Church staff. They are responsible only for their contracted duties. Attracting a good Organist takes salary and good organ plus a strong, good music, congenial Choir Director/Music Director who lets the Organist be the Organist. The full time Organist may actually be a part-time job for the Organist with pianists being hired to cover all rehearsals except the adult choir rehearsal. The Organist has unnoticed hidden duties such as weddings, funerals, selection Preludes and Postludes, rehearsing soloists, preparing the way hymns will lead the Worship Service, etc. An Organist/Choir Director would mean more money would be available for salary to attract a good candidate and it can be done by having the choir rehearsed so that they need little direction to perform. But the Organist/Choir Director has an inherent handicap because the hands can't do two things at once. In many cases the Organist/Choir Director is usually better at one than the other. It is preferable to have a separate Organist and Choir Director.

- Note that a good organ and organist are a magnificent and necessary part of the art music tradition. However, fewer people are becoming organist and putting in the years of training that it takes because Churches are not paying adequately, not providing an organ capable of playing great organ music, etc. Some major institutions of higher learning are even dropping their organ department.
- To keep things in priorities it needs to be stated that Churches with all types of music are bringing people to Christ and ministering to them. However, that does not change to theme of this document.
- There is a wide range of music use in the present day Church. The bulk of Church music falls in the two categories that this document has been discussing. However, some Church Services use no music. Some Churches only want to use music similar to the ancient chants. Some Churches use singing but with no instrumental accompaniment because no instruments were used in the New Testament Church; there been a large movement of this kind of singing using shape note singing to help the singer get the right notes rather using an instrument. Hand bells are an interesting addition to Church music. As long as the Church has some people advocating hand bells the program lasts. They can be played effectively without a lot of training by the committed novice. But they can end up in the closet when there is no one in the Church advocating for them. Hand bells exist little outside of the Church. Many good high art compositions have been written for hand bells. Hand bells can add an exciting flavor to a festive Service. The Moravians have an interesting chapter in the history of the United States high art Church music. They have always had a trombone choir in

the Church music program. In colonial days Moravians were noted for their great music. Well know colonials have made written comments about their music. They were the first to bring Haydn's "Creation" and some of his symphonies to America. However, today some of their ministers are introducing "Contemporary" Church music.

- Labels for the type of Church Services that a particular Church is providing has no widely standardized meaning. A Church listing a Tradition Service or advertising for a traditional Director may actually be doing a blended Service as defined in this document. Some Churches advertise a Traditional Service when the music is all "pop".
- Congregation response to "blended/contemporary" Services (especially "contemporary" Services) also varies widely. In some cases attendees may enthusiastically participate in the music. In other cases they may object to the loud drummer. Quite often the attendees are more like an audience at a concert with not many singing. One Church had nearly all of the congregation sitting there not singing along and looking bewildered like "what has happened to my Church" with the "pop" music swinging and a world-class organist sitting back in the corner playing a few chords over and over on a grand piano playing along with the "pop" band. Sometimes the words for these Services are shown on a screen giving these Churches in some circles the name "screen Church" reflecting the fact that a screen Church implies "pop" music. When a screen is installed permanently in a traditional Sanctuary, some members look at it as defacing the Sanctuary. They do not get use to it in time but rather just stop talking about it. When visitors come to visit the Church, these people may apologize for the screen being in the Sanctuary. The need for technology should be evaluated carefully before a Church decides that that is the only way that they can proceed.
- In the lifetime of the writer there have been many fads in the Church. At one time it was the big thing to do to have "rock masses" and to put Christian words to current popular music love songs. That fad has passed. Saturday night casual Services at one time were the big thing but their popularity is now fading as these are no longer used in places. Now the current big thing is to have a contemporary Service. This trend could last longer because this is the only kind of Service that some Churches have even had and they will be raising a generation that for them a contemporary Service is Church. Unless this group comes in contact with some good art music Church Services, to hear art music worship they may have to wait until heaven from where the Bible got the pattern for earthly worship.
- Care needs to be taken when selecting hymns for a Church Service. If selected by words alone to fit the particular Service of the day, the music may be poor even from hymn books that are mainly art music type hymns. It should be noted that there are hymn books that are mainly art music type hymns and other hymn books that are mainly lighter music and these lighter music books proportionally usually have more music that is poorly written sometimes even poorly written for lighter

music types of styles. Analyze the music and also its appropriateness for the occasion before using no matter how much the words fit the occasion. People on committees to make books of music for congregational singing sometimes have non-music related agendas and these agendas are rarely seen except when “Onward Christian Soldiers” is deleted from a revised hymn book for political philosophy type reasons. Music from the right hymn book needs to fit the type of Service of the day generally speaking.

- Job advertisements for Church musicians can be very interesting. Hopefully Churches will create a job description that is flexible enough for the quality Church musician to be Spirit led (not the same as a free spirit) just like the minister needs to be Spirit led. The Bible tells us to “quench not the Spirit”. Some job descriptions are so lengthy and detailed that the musician will hardly have time to run a music program if that person jumps through all of the hoops of the job description. Churches can write job descriptions that do not fit anyone living and meanwhile the job description discourages quality, wise applicants from applying. Some job descriptions give duties that are not even music related which will likely reduce the number of quality music applicants seeking that position. An organ position may tack on a bell choir to the organist job description which will likely reduce the number of quality organists applying for the position. Music applicants of quality may have a better feel for what will realistically work as a job description for a Church than does the clergy or laity especially relative to the God given gifts of the applicant. Musician applicants should consider asking if the Church would be willing to make changes in the job description if the applicant sees a need or is unwilling to do some of the things listed in the job description. An application may wish to ask the Church to split the position such as an organist may apply only for the organist part of an organist/bell position and ask the Church to hire someone else for the hand bells part of the position. An applicant should also consider seeing if the salary is negotiable and apply at your price if you want to risk possibly not getting the job because of price. An applicant should definitely be careful about agreeing to do things that are not under his control such as increase the size of the choir. The size of the choir may be due to many factors and the only way to increase the choir size for sure would be for the Church to hire singers. The Director could, however, agree to make good quality out of what he has to work with and to do certain things that sometimes does recruit new choir members. Applicants can apply as an outside contractor for a specific job such as adult choir Director and not be a member of the staff with any extra duties that might be assigned staff members. Many Church musicians can do an excellent job without any “office hours”. They get their job done, coordinate with staff as necessary, return phone calls in a timely manner, etc.; some do this all while doing a full time music position in the public school system. Church musicians who do not do their agreed to job with quality should expect to be dismissed. However, too often the Spirit led musician departs from a position in the Church because someone in the clergy or lay leadership tries to take charge of all or part of the musician’s domain or assign duties that interfere with or take time from the musician’s ability to do

his job or from his private life. Salary is probably the primary reason that art musicians do not work in Churches. Churches should consider that Jesus and the Bible teach that “You shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn.” and, “the labourer is worthy of his hire” and “blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it.”

- For more on art music which may help in its use in the Church, see “Encouraging Hope For The Adult Beginning Harpist” which is also in the “That’s The Way I Understand It – Series” on the website danielhookemusic.com for a further discussion of music, musicianship, performing, etc. See it even if you are not a beginner or even if you are a professional. On that same website also in the “That’s The Way I Understand It – Series” for any level of musician is also another musicianship document titled “How To Sing At Sight For The Singer And Instrumentalist (How To Hear Printed Music In Your Mind)”. Another document on that website in the “That’s The Way I Understand It – Series” concerns music, aesthetics, and musicianship which is about making music that is beautiful, moving, and stirring with fire as appropriate. This document is an organizing of the writer’s learning and observations about music, aesthetics, and musicianship into a layered approach to aesthetics. It is an approach that has been successful with simple music as well as masterworks with all ages and abilities. This layered approach to music aesthetics on the website danielhookemusic.com is also in the “That’s The Way I Understand It – Series” and is titled “A Layered Aesthetic Interpretation Of Music For The Performer, Composer, And Listener”. Those who select hymns for Church can use the Composing section of this document to assist in what to select and what to avoid. All of the just mentioned documents may add to an understanding of music - - especially art music which would help better understand the place of art music in the Church.
- David in the Bible may well have been the greatest musician ever to live. The writer recently did a study of the development and organization of the musicians and choir in the Bible at the time of David and Solomon at the Tabernacle and then (with some changes) at the first Temple (Solomon’s Temple). These two Bible Music Programs of David’s may be fruitful with implications for ideas to the help the modern Church Music Program. The Bible details are somewhat sketchy and not completely definitive. The following is one possible scenario. The Temple musicians were Levites who were adequately paid for themselves and their household for life. In I Chronicles 23:5 the instrumentalist numbered 4,000 at the time of the Temple. In I Chronicles 15:14-22 at the time of the Tabernacle which preceded the Temple David’s musicians were singers who also played instruments (15:16) with some of the same names which were later at the Temple. Thus we assume that these 4,000 Temple instrumentalists were also singers. 288 of those 4,000 were the skilled (cunning) leaders and teachers of the Music Program in I Chronicles 25:7, 8. The 288 may have been in addition to the 4,000 but if that would have been the case, then 23:5 would have likely said 4,288 because the purpose of that verse is to establish total numbers. Thus the 288 worked with 3,712. Note in 15:16 that those at the Tabernacle were to perform

with “joy”. Joy is a choice in the New Testament: “Rejoice evermore.” (I Thessalonians 5:16). At the Temple the musicians were for leading in praising God (I Chronicles 23:5) and not for entertainment. At the Temple the musicians performed reverently. They performed in the presence of the priests. When the priesthood was being established in Exodus 28, the priest was to wear a gold plate engraved with the words “HOLINESS TO THE LORD”. Holiness involves using the Bible. Hebrews 12:14 contains the idea that without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Thus, performing reverently was the attitude. And the ministering in the Temple involved those who “sanctified” (spiritually cleansed) themselves as has been discussed elsewhere in this document that you are reading. At the Tabernacle it seems that they did have a Choir Director named Chenaniah (I Chronicles 15:22, 27). At the time when the Temple was developed under Solomon there were three head staff members with the famous “Asaph” of Psalm 50, and Psalms 73-83 as likely Music Director (see below) and the two others as Associate Music Directors (I Chronicles 25:1, 6); chapters 15 and 16 talk of David’s music at the time of the Tabernacle (as does chapters 23 and 25 talk of music at the time of Solomon when for the Temple was developed) and Asaph was already established as David’s Music Director at the time of the Tabernacle (16:5 Asaph the chief, 7, 37). It is interesting to note in the Bible that the music was planned so that the teacher and student (scholar) made music together in I Chronicles 25:6-8. It would seem logical that the teacher carried the solos, if any, and the harder parts. It is also interesting to note that the music of this period did not survive through the ages even though many of the words did. Is there a message in that fact for modern musicians? The music leaders and the other musicians were divided into 24 “courses” or groups for Temple service duties in chapter 25 as were the priests divided into 24 groups in chapter 24. In chapter 27:1 these divisions into groups were call “courses” which covered approximately a year’s work (the group in chapter 27 was divided into 12 courses with one month’s duty each course). Since the musicians and priest were in 24 courses it seems logical that each group served in the Temple for two weeks and then returned home for their other duties. If teachers (288) and students (3712) were involved it certainly would be logical that teaching and rehearsing were throughout the year - - musicians of the Bible were skilled (noted many places) which does not happen with just two weeks teaching and rehearsal. In Psalm 33:3 music is called noise but it was to be performed skillfully! Much rehearsal was needed because at the dedication of the first Temple (Solomon’s Temple), the performance of the musicians was at a very high level in that they performed “as one” (II Chronicles 5:11-14) and this may have involved all 4,000 musicians plus 120 priests blowing trumpets since that chapter says that all of Israel was gathered and all of the priests, not just the course on duty, thus making it likely that all the musicians were present. If 24 weeks were to be covered by courses, then for each course there were 12 leaders working with 154 or 155. Each leader (possibly like our sectional leader) may well have worked as a sectional leader with 12 or 13 which is the size group that Jesus Christ worked with. The size of the sections and the courses meant that someone could be sick and you would still have an adequate group with all of the parts covered if this was needed. The chapters in I

Chronicles like 16:5-6 at the time of the Tabernacle note that various names were associated with a certain instrument so these sections which were divided by family line may have been limited to primarily one instrument. Can you imagine your extended family being the cymbal section for Church? However the skill of David making all of the instruments (23:5) (inventing their design (Amos 6:5)) meant that he could probably play all of them like a modern day Band Director so it stands to reason that these Temple musicians may have been skilled on all or many of the instruments just as David was. The instruments used by these musicians did not have much dynamic range. With instruments such as these a way to get dynamics (volume changes) is to use a few instruments for softer and add instruments to get louder. Generally speaking, volume goes up with geometrical numbers not arithmetical numbers when you add more instruments. Thus a section of 12 to 14 including the leader would sound about twice as loud as a few people playing and a whole course of 154 or 155 plus 12 leaders would sound about twice as loud as one section playing. When the (properly dressed) musicians performed “as one” at the dedication of the Temple in II Chronicles 5, the Temple was filled with a cloud so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud for the glory of the Lord filled the House Of God. This dedication of the Temple was the highest spiritual Church type Worship Service recorded in the Bible. Study the high artistic background of the Tabernacle in Exodus and the high artistic background of the Temple in I and II Chronicles. It is important to note that this Worship Service did not happen in the presence of catchy tunes with little musical content like campfire music, although spiritual things can happen at campfire religious gatherings, but instead the cloud and the glory of God filled the House Of God in the presence of high art and in the presence of the highest quality of art music that the culture had to offer!

- Let’s review some now.

There are several types of Church Music Programs.

One type of Church Music Program is based on the fact that some Churches do not have a music staff or the likely means to get such a music staff in the near future. Their music is based on little or no formal music training. However, the music they have to offer to God and Christ as well as the music they have to lead the Worship Service is Biblically significant. All people can make significant music regardless of their music ability.

The following is the logic of the fact that your music is significant even if you have had no musical training. Here is a logic about music symbols that even young children can understand. Do you know what an animal is - - long, furry tail type thing. There is one important difference between people like you and me, and animals. We can symbolize our experience and animals can’t. We use two types of symbols. One type of symbols we use has a definite meaning like words and mathematics. When we say “chair” or “table”, we all know what we are talking about. The other type of symbols we use has an indefinite meaning like

music and the arts. When we hear a piece of music, we all put our own meaning into these symbols. Now this means that we can make music just as easy as we can talk - - - unless we are an animal. I have never met a person that was an animal. And to you the reader or hearer of this document, I do not believe that there are any animals examining this document! You may not have the speaking ability to speak on a great theatrical stage in a great drama but you can say nice things to God, Jesus Christ, and other believers. In a like manner, you may not have the musical ability to sing in one of the world's greatest operas or the musical ability to play in one of the world's great symphony orchestras but you can say nice musical things to God, Jesus Christ, and other believers. Do it with confidence!

However, most of us, though, have had a lot of training with the symbols of talking but not much training in music but we can learn more about music to help our musical experience. All of us learn some or all of our music by "rote" which, for example, is by listening to others sing the melody or whatever until we can sing it. This is the way we learn to talk and use language at first. Some of make music "by ear" which, for example, is thinking what the music sounds like and then picking it out on an instrument. Some of us make music by "reading music" which, for example, is decoding music printed notation to know what sounds to make. Reading music notation is not hard to learn - - even elementary school children can learn some of the basics of reading music. To learn more about music: study documents in the "That's The Way I Understand It - Series", get with good teachers or helpful musicians, take music courses, etc. regardless of whether you make music using rote, by ear, or reading music - - all of which are good to know.

There are many types of Church Music Programs that are led by music staff. We have looked at many types of Church Music Programs which will not all be listed here.

A type of Church Music Program which is in popularity right now is a program that makes music with "pop" styles and lighter forms of music using Christian words. These Church Music Programs usually go by the name of "Contemporary", "Blended", etc.

And there is a type of Church Music Program that uses (hopefully appropriate) classical type music and art music as the core of the Church Music Program. These Church Music Programs sometime go by the name of "Traditional" however the term "Traditional" may mean something else than the preceding to some Churches.

And now some comments for those musicians trained in classical type music and art music and for those who like this kind of music to be the Church Music Program. We mentioned at the beginning of this document that the Church in the United States has trouble attracting musicians trained in art music. Many of these

musicians have dropped out of Church Music when the Church started experimenting with “pop” music and lighter forms of music to be the Church Music Program. Art musicians and those who like this kind of music to be the core of the Church Music Program should not abandon hope because of the Church’s current fascination with “pop” music and lighter forms of music. In the book of Acts chapter 6 in the early Church the Grecian Christians were upset with the Hebrew Christians. The Grecians presented their problem to the twelve disciples. The leadership of the disciples solved the problem by selecting people such as Stephen “a man full of faith” to take care of the problem - - people “of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom”. Then the disciples were able to continue to devote themselves “to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word”. The result along with other things in the Church was that “the Word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of priests were obedient to the faith”.

May we suggest that classical type art musicians and those who like classical type art music to be the core of the Church Music Program should prayerfully try this preceding Acts pattern before they leave a local Church and go to another local Church that has a Church Music Program with a core of classical type art music. Just as the Grecians Christians took their concern to the Church leadership in Acts, so those who are interested in making art music the core of the Church Music Program should take their concern to the leadership of the local Church with the goal of getting one Worship Service on Sunday morning to be totally an classical type art music Service. Churches with lighter music for one Worship Service and classical type art music for another Worship Service can exist successfully side by side using the same sanctuary if the lighter music Service at the end of the Service puts away all things that are used in the contemporary or blended lighter music Service and the classical type art music Service does the same at the end of their Service. For the classical type art music Worship Service hang a textile banner over a video screen if one is permanently installed in the sanctuary to restore the formal look to the sanctuary. (This changing between Services involving carrying in and out of equipment and setting it up plus doing logistics should not be done during the Prelude or Postlude which are part of the traditional Service.) Classical type art music should be the core of the classical type art music Service including the hymns, etc. Hymns, etc. with a “pop” or lighter music flavor should not be used for this Service. Use hymns, etc. that have good musical construction and aesthetic design. Anthems, etc. should be of a good formal music construction and not be music designs that would work better at a campfire, retreat, Sunday School, summer Bible School, cocktail lounge, etc. A Church Organist who can perform the world’s great religious masterworks and hymns, etc. in a way that leads the Worship Service should be hired if the Church does not already have one. A study of the reverence and awe associated with worship spaces described in the Bible should be examined for guidance. No food or drink should be allowed in the art music Service as people deny themselves for an hour in the presence of a holy God. People should be encourage to dress up to give their best to God as taught several places in the Bible however the James

chapter 2 passage concerning a poor person's dress most certainly still applies. A person needs to be hired to lead the music for the art music Service who is "of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" "full of faith". Of course, this music Director should have the qualities mentioned earlier in the document that you are reading. The Director should be able to analyze an art music composition to see the aesthetic form and the musical construction so that the music is not performed as a group of correct notes without bringing out the musical discussion and the discussion's aesthetic and formal design so that the art music's power develops and comes through properly. With this classical type art music Service the leadership of the Church can be able to continue to devote themselves "to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word". The leadership of the Church needs be able to devote themselves "to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word" because we live in an age in which what Jesus has to say about Himself being God's Savior of the world and what Jesus has to say about the Bible is under great attack like in the days of the early Church. These attacks can involve coercion, professional and social peer pressure, ostracization, and even death. The world has opinions and even in religious circles there are opinions rendered that do not agree with what Jesus and those He endorses in the Bible have to say about Jesus being God's Savior of the world and what Jesus and those He endorses in the Bible have to say about the Bible New Testament and Old Testament. Jesus has the power to honor the Bible if it is interpreted and used the way He interprets it. Others do not have the power to honor the use of their way of interpreting the Bible. We need the leadership of the Church to be able to devote themselves "to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word". The process we have just discussed will give a good Worship Service for the Church. If God chooses, may the results of this process be like Jerusalem in the early Church in that "the Word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of priests were obedient to the faith".

- In conclusion, - - two points.

There are different musical tastes, if Biblically appropriate, and there are different goals of Christian groups. However, God's gift of classical type art music has the possibility of a human aesthetic height and power not available in other types of music.

We are under no Biblical requirement for art music to be in the Church. But, from the pattern that God has given us in the Bible of high art being connected with holiness and Tabernacle/Temple worship, a strong case can be made for art music to be the core of the Church Music Program. Under the guidance of God and Jesus Christ may we earnestly contend for that case.

That's The Way I Understand It - Series

See the website danielhookemusic.com

Concerning Music Documents in "That's The Way I Understand It - Series": Read all of the music documents to get a picture of what has worked for the writer.

Concerning Religious Documents in "That's The Way I Understand It - Series":

These religious documents are *An Advocate* for interpreting the Bible the way Jesus of Nazareth interprets the Bible. Jesus will honor the Bible if we use it the way He interprets it. ... Jesus our Savior believed the Bible as He interpreted it; so we know that what the Bible says about diligently seeking God and Jesus will be rewarded and honored in some way. Hebrews 11:6; John 14:15, 21; 15:4-6; I Sam. 2:30.

Bible Lessons For Those Who Want To Be Better Informed About This Famous Book

Do you know what the Bible really says and what it offers? Do you know what are some of the main issues in a Bible interpretation position that is *An Advocate* for interpreting the Bible the way Jesus of Nazareth interprets the Bible and what kind of Biblical understanding it offers? Requires a few minutes a day of reading. Uses documents from *That's The Way I Understand It - Series*. [Another approach to the materials in *Studies In Biblical Christianity, A Self-Directed Course Of Study*.]

THE BIBLICAL GOD IS A REWARDER

Are You Informed About Where Biblical Christians Are Coming From As You Make Decisions?

Bible Rewards from God.

A Case For Art Music To Be The Core Of The Church Music Program

Persuasion to help us not to lose the great depth of Worship that is possible with a particular kind of music assuming that it is properly done.

An Easy Bible Reading Plan

Do you know what the Bible really says? With a few minutes a day you can read the entire Bible. The readings are divided into episodes to make your reading more logical and easier.

Encouraging Hope For The Adult Beginning Harpist

Encouragement for adult harpist. Discussion of musicianship for any musician and for many who are not musicians.

The Essence Of Teaching

Provides the professional teacher or the parent as teacher with a momentary reflection on the natural process of teaching hopefully with a more comprehensive, helpful look at teaching.

The Welcoming Committee For The Second Coming

A study in Biblical prophecy and the end times of earth time. **{Help to save you time in figuring out Bible Prophecy.}**

How To Sing At Sight For The Singer And Instrumentalist (How To Hear Printed Music In Your Mind)

Just what the title says. For the professional and the amateur. Get a copy of this document for each member of your performance organization especially if it is a singing group. Drill on it at the beginning of each rehearsal should pay good dividends.

That's The Way I Understand It - Series (continued)

Instant Sunday School – A Ten Year Verse-By-Verse Trip Through The Bible

Requires very little preparation time for a person to lead this group study. All of the work is already done for you. Thus, it is an easy Bible Study to present. This Bible Study goes through the Bible verse-by-verse alternating from time to time between the Testaments. This study can also be done as an individual study. Please see the document for more details and uses. Do you know what the Bible really says to help you discern error and grow? *"Blessed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it." Luke 11:28*

IS THE CROSS OF JESUS CHRIST CENTRAL TO HUMAN HISTORY?

Has anyone ever told you about Biblical Christianity? Do you know some of the issues about the Bible and Bible interpretation including the issue of is God a rewarder? Uses "The seven last words of Jesus Christ". Uses the story of the thief on the cross beside Jesus. The thief on the cross bad-mouthed Jesus severely. Then, in less than a few hours he converted. What happened? Why did the thief convert? Sinners can be forgiven and redeemed by God. **An Advocate for interpreting the Bible the way Jesus of Nazareth interprets the Bible. {Help to save you time in figuring out the Bible.}**

A Layered Aesthetic Interpretation Of Music For The Performer, Composer, And Listener

A new look at music in human existence. For anyone who makes music at any level and for anyone's enjoyment of music. Not as complex as the title might imply. The principles in this document have application to all of the arts.

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The Pattern of Prime Numbers. For the mathematician. Contains information on macro writing thus making it also for the computer person.

Studies In Biblical Christianity

A Self-Directed Course Of Study

Provides a Picture Study, a Linear Study, and Additional Studies that should go far in giving you the opportunity to examine the explanations, clarifications, and reasons in the view of a Bible interpretation position that is **An Advocate for interpreting the Bible the way Jesus of Nazareth interprets the Bible** to see some of the issues in Biblical Christianity for an introduction or review. Uses documents from **That's The Way I Understand It - Series**. [Another approach to the materials in **Bible Lessons For Those Who Want To Be Better Informed About This Famous Book.**]

A Quick Look At Biblical Christianity

Do you know why Jesus of Nazareth is important? Do you know what He claims His purpose is? Do you know how He supports and interprets the Bible? Compare your answers with this document. Many people who know that Jesus is important have never really investigated Biblical Christianity. Many people are restrained by peer pressure (both social and professional), threat of death, etc. from investigating Jesus of Nazareth or from investigating Biblical Christianity. This is a good document to use to begin your investigation of Biblical Christianity. This document could have also been titled "The Intellectual Basis Of Belief And The Belief Basis Of Intellect".