

UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

Creative Energies and Contemporary Modes: The Changing Hymnody
of the United Church of Canada

by

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
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The title of this thesis, *Creative Energies and Contemporary Modes: the Changing Hymnody of the United Church of Canada*, has its origin in the "Preface" to *The Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada* (1971).

Despite the difficulties involved, the church must be hospitable to all creative energies if it is to live as Christ's body in these times, and seek to adapt contemporary modes of poetic and musical expression for use in public worship.

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ABSTRACT

While traditional hymns are still in use in the United Church of Canada, many of them reflect the musical styles and theological concepts of past generations. Hymns in a more popular, contemporary musical idiom, expressing current beliefs and societal values are now gaining favour. Based on the assumption that music, and in particular the singing of hymns by a church community, can aid in the definition of a collective identity, and at the same time can provide a vehicle for the expression of individual needs, aspirations, and emotions, this thesis examines the various hymnals that have been used by the United Church of Canada as an articulation of theological, social, and individual concerns of particular times, places and communities. Through an ethnography of a particular church congregation, this study examines how their choice of hymns and performance practices are fundamental to the production and expression of the distinct church culture of this community in the 1990s.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	i
Abstract	ii
Introduction	v
Chapter I: Negotiation	1
The United Church of Canada	4
Hymn Books at Church Union	13
The Inauguration of First United Church, Ottawa	18
Conclusion	28
Chapter II: Participation	31
Hymn Books of the United Church of Canada	34
Conclusion	68
Chapter III: Reorientation	71
A Case Study: First United Church, Ottawa	78
"Tell me about hymns"	88
Conclusion	124
Conclusion	130
Illustrations:	
1.1 Inaugural Services, First United Church	21
2.1 Jesus loves me	58
Table 3.1 Personal data: Informants	86
Appendices	136
1.1 Old Hundredth	137
1.2 Nicaea	138
1.3 The Heart's Refuge	139
2.1 King's Weston	140
2.2 Welcome Voice	141
2.3 Simeon	142
2.4 St. Anne: "The Son of God goes forth to War"	143
2.5 St. Anne: "O God, our Help in Ages Past"	144
2.6 Pentecost	145
2.7a Jesus Loves Me	146
2.7b Jesus Loves Me	147
2.8 Lasst uns Erfreuen	148
2.9 Concrete	149
2.10 Lord of the dance	150
2.11 Kingsfold	151
2.12a "For the healing of the nations"	152
2.12b "For the healing of the nations"	153

2.13a	"O, for a thousand tongues to sing"	154
2.13b	"O, for a thousand tongues to sing"	155
2.14	Walls that divide	156
2.15	Let there be peace on earth	157
2.16	Tell me the stories of Jesus	158
3.1	Language guidelines: Hymn and Worship Resource Project	159
3.2	Gathering Chant	160
3.3	Guidelines for interviews with members and clergy of First United Church	161
3.4	Spirit of gentleness	163
3.5	What does the Lord require?	164
Bibliography		165

INTRODUCTION

"How shall we sing the Lord's song?" is a question that Christians and Jews have asked themselves at every stage of their joint and respective histories. Ways of singing the praises of God have changed mightily over the past four-thousand years, and at this moment the foundations of hymnody are being shaken once again, as they are confronted by the language and musical styles of the closing years of this millennium. This thesis is about the dilemma faced by one congregation in the United Church of Canada, as its members attempt to identify a hymnody which expresses their current theological and social concepts in words and music which most of them find to be acceptable.

In this thesis, I examine the new hymnody of the United Church of Canada as a part of, and as a reflection of, changing societal and religious values within that institution. More specifically, this study examines how hymns are selected by the congregation in the church where I am employed¹---a congregation whose membership profile has undergone a profound change over the past eleven years. Hymn singing has always been important in this community. Since a new hymn book is being prepared by the United Church of Canada for publication in 1996, the function and nature of hymns have been a subject of debate among members of First United during the time that this thesis was being written.

¹First United Church, Ottawa, Canada.

While traditional hymns² are still in common use, the words of many of them are found to be inappropriate in the light of modern beliefs and societal values. Some people feel that music in more popular styles such as contemporary "folk"³ would make the hymns more accessible to those church members who find that the rigid tunes from the past are no longer culturally relevant. Many people would welcome the use of instruments other than the organ, to accompany hymns in the contemporary style.

I became interested in the new types of hymnody when, after being employed for more than thirty years as organist and choir director in churches which favoured a conservative approach to

²For the purposes of this study, a traditional hymn will be defined as one which has been a significant part of the repertoire over a long period of time. Examples from English hymnody include Thomas Ken's "Awake, my Soul" (1695), sung to the tune "Morning Hymn" by Francois Hippolyte Barthelemon (1741-1808); Isaac Watt's "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross" (1707), sung to the tune "Rockingham" by Edward Miller (1731-1807); and Augustus Toplady's "Rock of Ages" (1775), sung to the tune "Redhead" #76, by Richard Redhead (1820-1901). German hymns adapted for use in the traditional repertoire of English-speaking churches would include, for example, Martin Luther's "A Safe Stronghold" of 1529, sung to Luther's own tune, "Ein Feste Burg". Such traditional hymns are usually set in four-part harmony, and are accompanied on the organ.

³The words of many hymns are set to traditional folk tunes, and are now part of the repertoire. Examples include "I feel the winds of God today" by Jessie Adams (1863-1954), sung to the tune "Kingsfold". This adaptation of the English folk song, "Bushes and Briars" is harmonized by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958). Such hymns are usually set in four-part harmony, and are normally accompanied on the organ.

In contrast, other hymns which have been composed in the popular "folk" style are a contemporary addition, most of them having been written in the last twenty years. They are usually set as melody and accompaniment, the accompaniment being arranged for "keyboards" and/or "guitar". Prominent composers of this type of hymn include Ron Klusmeier and Jim and Jean Strathdee.

music, I went to work in a United Church which made full use of hymns which had their roots in the popular music of today. While I applauded the theology and the language of these hymns, I was uncomfortable with the music. This led me to examine what has guided my own preferences, and, more importantly, how this congregation has come to make these musical choices.

Theoretical framework

This thesis is concerned with the selection of hymns from both the traditional and contemporary repertoires, as made by the congregation of First United Church. The goal is to examine how the theological and social issues which members find to be of the greatest importance are articulated through the choice of hymns. By so doing, my hope is to sketch a profile of the current congregation, its beliefs, its aspirations, and its ongoing struggle to be relevant in the changing society of which it is a part.

Hymnody is a rich and important area of the liturgy. The singing of hymns, which has historically been part of Judeo-Christian worship, is a social and communal act, drawing together disparate groups of people. In this act beliefs are articulated and questions of common concern are addressed. Devotion, praise, joy, and sorrow are given communal expression. While the words of the hymns are of the greatest importance, it is the reinforcement of their message through the medium of music that makes their contribution unique. Through this mutual mode of articulation, the message of the poetry becomes familiar and memorable because

of its combination with remembered melodies which, in turn, give character and deeper meanings to the words (Ellinwood 1970, Temperley 1979, Hobbs 1987, Waterman 1990). At the same time, the music is given further definition by the form, meaning, and aural qualities of the poetry.

Musicology fulfills a unique and specific role in expanding our understanding of different cultures and societies (Geertz 1968, Chernoff 1979, Seeger 1987, Waterman 1990, Clifford 1992, Shepherd 1991). This study aims to pursue this role by examining the Christian church as a distinct culture within our society. Sociologist Line Grenier (1990:45) suggests that music can be not only an expression of a social reality, but that it can contribute to the very production and creation of that reality. In this light, I examine the role that hymn singing plays in the production and expression of the distinct church culture of a particular congregation.

The music of hymns both in the traditional style and in the popular style, will undoubtedly find an important place in the new hymnal. Sociologist Simon Frith (1987:144) says that popular music has a particular power, specific to the medium, in that it can both possess and be possessed by the listener or the participant, and lead to a new kind of self-recognition. This is, in fact, true for all musics, since different genres and styles reach people in different ways, because of their personal experiences. Based on the assumption that music, and in particular the singing of hymns by a community, can aid in the

definition of a collective identity, and at the same time can provide a vehicle for the expression of individual needs, aspirations and emotions, I have examined the new and the old hymnody as an expression of theological, social and individual concerns of particular times, places and communities, and how they inform communal and personal identities within the United Church.

Context

The United Church of Canada, founded in 1925, is the largest protestant denomination in Canada, and is ninety-nine percent English-speaking. Hymns are used to open and close the Sunday services, and are normally sung at weekday gatherings. The shape of the church year is underlined by the selection of hymns, a special repertoire being reserved for important seasons such as Advent, Christmas, Lent and Easter. During the liturgy hymns serve to focus the attention of the congregation on aspects of church worship such as communion, prayer, affirmation of faith, preparation for the sermon, or the offering.

The first hymn book of the United Church was published in 1930, and the second, in 1971, was a joint publication of the United Church of Canada and the Anglican Church of Canada. Both churches are now in the process of compiling new and separate hymn books, since the present book has never been entirely satisfactory to either denomination. A small experimental book, *Songs for a Gospel People*, was published by the United Church in 1987, "out of a growing sense of need for renewal of congregational singing and a vision of new directions which that

renewal might take" (Hobbs 1987:1). This book has been favourably received by both the Anglican and United churches. In this interim collection, the words of the hymns (using inclusive language) address issues of current theological and social concern. They are set to music in varying styles, including many in a more popular idiom, based loosely on folk song, and which, at times, exhibits some "pop" characteristics.*

New times bring with them new concerns, and they demand hymns which will express these concerns in an idiom accessible to the people who will sing them. New preferences in musical styles demand changes in performance practice. Church culture in 1996 must be relevant to a membership which draws upon people of varying social, cultural and economic backgrounds. This thesis examines the issues faced by the church, as they are expressed in hymns chosen by a congregation which is embroiled in the religious and political turmoil of its times.

Methodology

In order to introduce the setting in which hymns in First United Church are selected at this time, my first chapter sketches a history of the United Church of Canada, describes the foundation of First United Church in Ottawa, and analyses the choice of hymns sung at the inaugural services which took place in that church at the time of union in 1925. In chapter two I

*Pop characteristics in this instance include ballad-like melodies, syncopated rhythms, blues chords, frequent use of secondary-seventh and added sixth chords, and arrangements for accompaniment on keyboards or guitar.

examine the background and contents of the three hymn books that have been used in the congregation under study, beginning with the first official hymn book of the United Church of Canada, which was published in 1930. Chapter three focuses on the congregation of First United, and the ways they select their hymns. This chapter is based on interviews with twenty-four members of First United Church in Ottawa. The interviews, which took place during the last months of 1995, ask questions about the language, musical style, and functions of hymns. The goal is to see how their selection of hymns articulates their various stances on social and theological issues.

First United is a downtown, inner-city church, which places emphasis on its role as a member of the community. The minister is a woman of intellectual rigor, well-known and respected for her support of human rights. Under her ministry the congregation has increased dramatically in size. While the membership is, in many ways, a cross-section of urban society, most of these people belong culturally and economically to a wide spectrum of the middle-class. Besides the remaining members of an original congregation (most of whom are now very elderly), there is a large group of young and middle-aged professional people (many of whom are in the social-service fields), and a number of people who joined in a body from another, larger, United church, when they found it impossible to agree with that church's policy of exclusion of homosexuals from ordination. Other members of First United include lesbians and homosexuals, university students,

recovering addicts, abused women, street people, and a number of people with AIDS. Most of these groups are represented in the choir.

Informants were selected to obtain a balance of sexes, age categories, economic circumstances, and involvement in church activities. They were asked questions about the function of hymns, their favorite hymns, the language and music of hymns, preferences in performance practice, and their aspirations about a new hymn book. Each tape recorded interview took about an hour. The interviews, with one exception,² took place during the summer and fall (May to November) of 1995. It was the assessment of the information obtained during these sessions that enabled me to sketch a profile of the congregation.

Scholarly Relevance

This study of the new hymnody in the United Church of Canada is the first such study undertaken which recognizes hymn singing as crucial in the formation and identification of a collective identity of a Canadian church community in the 1990s. The selection, for this case study, of a church which contains a significant cross-section of the community, is particularly relevant, since the concerns of many interest groups are voiced

²One interview took place in July, 1994, with a student minister who was interning at First United for the summer.

in this analysis.⁶

While music has come to be seen as helping to shape cultural values and social organizations and, as such, has been analyzed in many studies ((Geertz 1968, Chernoff 1979, Seeger 1987, Waterman 1990, Shepherd 1991, Clifford 1992), and while many of these studies have identified the dual agency of music both in the formation of a communal identity and as an expression of this identity (Grenier 1990; Frith 1987), this is the first project to study the role of hymns in the formation and expression of a communal identity in a church culture.

Although much has been written about English hymnody, (Stevenson 1966; Ellinwood 1973; Watkins Shaw 1974; Temperly 1979, 1981), studies dealing specifically with hymnody in Canada are less numerous. Volume V of the series published by the Canadian Musical Heritage Society (Beckwith 1986) draws on hymn

⁶A doctoral thesis by Paul Cummergen (University of Ottawa, 1996: forthcoming) entitled "Speaking of experience: A study of preaching and other verbal performance in a United Church of Canada congregation", also uses First United Church, Ottawa, as the basis of a case study. Cummergen analyzes the preaching style of the minister, Sharon Moon, using the concepts of social space, field and symbolic capital as developed by Pierre Bourdieu.

books published in Canada between 1801-1939.⁷ Bruce Harding's thesis (1994): "One Man's Vision: the 1930 Hymn Book of the United Church of Canada", provides invaluable background about early hymnody in the United Church, and the concepts which guided the choices for the first hymnal. This thesis will deal with today's hymnody, as it is being articulated and reformulated at First United Church.

This is a time of profound change in the United Church, as activist groups tackle what have been hidden issues, such as molestation of children and sexual orientation. Women have now asserted their presence and vocalized their own concerns. Churches such as First United constitute a haven from many people who find little relevance in the ministry of the conservative wing of the church. The singing of hymns gives a unique communal voice to these concerns, whether they be theological or social. The issue is really what this voice will say, and how it will say it. The question raised in the twenties, the thirties, the sixties, and the eighties, is once again being asked: "How shall we sing the Lord's song?".

⁷Included in this publication are hymns from the original books of two of the three churches which joined to form the United Church of Canada in 1925: *The Presbyterian Book of Praise* (1918) and *The Methodist Hymn and Tune Book* (1917). The Presbyterian and Methodist books had both been published in Canada. The third partner in this union, the Congregationalist Church, used a hymn book which had been published in England, which was therefore not eligible to be part of this volume. Beckwith also includes selections from the first hymn book of the new church: *The Hymnary of the United Church of Canada* (1930).

CHAPTER 1: NEGOTIATION

The choice of hymns to be sung in a church has always been an emotional issue. Hymn singing styles and traditions differ from denomination to denomination, and even among particular congregations of the same denomination. While the protestant churches all recognize the importance of hymn singing as part of worship, the evangelical fervour of one church can be regarded as unseemly emotional excess by another. Each church guards a favoured repertoire of hymns, among which we find, for example, Christmas carols, patriotic hymns, funeral hymns and baptismal hymns. Hymn singing can, at times, be an evocative, intensely emotional experience, since hymns are intimately associated with particular occasions or events. The choice of hymns is never an issue to be taken lightly, because in singing hymns the members of the congregation are physically taking part in a communal, spiritual act--an act which must be compatible with the background of experiences that they bring with them.

While many historical accounts have been written about the formation, in 1925, of the United Church of Canada (through the union of members of the Canadian Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregationalist churches), little attention has been paid to the important role that hymnody played, and still plays, in the politics of that institution. In order to understand the current controversies over hymns in the United Church of Canada, we need to understand the issues faced by the church in 1925 in the

selection of hymns, and the implications of the decisions made at that time in light of a dilemma that has, to this day, never been satisfactorily resolved.

In the early days of the union, areas of tension quickly became obvious as local congregations joined together to form new communities. Clergy and laity were confronted with the task of modifying entrenched denominational patterns of worship, and power politics was rarely absent when the selection of hymns was on the table for discussion. Agreement among the churches had been reached on articles of faith and doctrine, but there was a last, fierce, emotional attachment to denominational hymns and psalms. Areas of tension included words, musical style, pace, pitch,¹ types of musical accompaniment, placement of hymns in the church service, and the number of hymns to be sung. The issue of representation of each denomination was at the heart of all these debates, and accommodation was necessary to allow the new congregations to function in a manner acceptable to most of their members.

The three founding churches each came to the negotiating table with their own hymn book and their own singing style. Given that for five years there was to be no hymn book published for general use in the national church, the newly-formed congregations of the United Church were faced with the difficult task

¹"pitch" is a term commonly used in English-speaking Protestant churches to refer to the note on which a hymn tune begins. The name is derived from the pitch-pipe, which was used to sound the starting note in the psalms in a church when no other instrument was available.

of finding hymns appropriate to the philosophy of the moment and to the spaces in which they were to be performed. At the same time, the traditional hymnody of each denomination had to be treated with proper respect.

There was common ground among the founding churches in that they all accepted hymn singing as a given part of worship. Each church had a strong singing tradition, and pride of place was unquestionably granted to the singing of hymns as a fundamental part of the liturgy. Indeed, a service without singing would have been unnatural and incomplete for any of the members. Furthermore, there was a substantial repertoire of hymns common to the three denominations--hymns derived from their mutual British protestant heritage. In addition, however, each denomination brought its own repertoire of hymns which were highly favoured by its community members. These hymns, which had particular associations and styles, were judged to be fundamental to the expression of the community's faith. Politics inevitably played a role in the negotiations that took place, week by week, in the selection of hymns that would be acceptable to people of such varying loyalties and interests. No easy ruling could be made by the clergy in this or any other matter since, by the constitution of the new church, the congregation held significant power of decision.

In dealing with controversies both old and new, concerning the hymnody in the United Church of Canada, it is necessary to understand something of the particular circumstances from which this institution emerged. The first part of this chapter,

therefore, describes some of the forces--spiritual, socio-political, and economic--that prompted a union in 1925 among three major Canadian Protestant churches: the Presbyterian Church of Canada, the Methodist Church of Canada, and the Congregationalist Church of Canada. The second section of the chapter discusses this important heritage of hymns at the time of church union, with emphasis being placed on the particular contributions made by each church from their own traditions and by their own hymn writers. In the final section of this chapter, an examination is made of the inaugural services of the first United Church to be founded in Ottawa, in order to investigate the politics and the criteria governing the selection of hymns for that occasion. While the hymns chosen emphasize unity and common faith, it is possible to observe omissions, additions and compromises which show the real nature of the political power exercised by factions of the church community at that time.

THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

Church Union

When the United Church of Canada finally became a reality in June, 1925, the ceremonies marking this historic event were celebrated in that most Canadian of institutions, a hockey arena. The fruit of more than forty years of discussion and negotiation, this occasion marked the union of the Congregational Churches of Canada, the Methodist Church of Canada, approximately two-thirds of the Presbyterian Church of Canada, and the Council of Local

Union Churches. The ceremony, attended by 7,646 women and men (Crysdale 1993: 145), was the culmination of a series of unions which had their roots in practical and economic considerations dictated by the realities of Canadian geography.

With the westward expansion of the frontier, planning for a larger, more comprehensive Canadian church with greater resources had begun in the closing decades of the last century. In the English-speaking western provinces the need for some kind of consolidation became obvious, if mission and outreach efforts of the Protestant churches were to continue. This need became critical when, in the years immediately preceding the first World War, there was a great influx of immigrants, many of whom had no cultural links with Britain. A heightened awareness of the social mission of the church and, in particular, a common allegiance to the evangelical doctrines of the Reformation, led to a recognition of affinities among three churches:

Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist. Historian John Webster Grant (1967: 26) writes:

They met on the platforms of temperance rallies, at meetings of the Evangelical Alliance, at Sunday School conventions, in campaigns for supporting the evangelization of French-Canadians. Their chief badges of mutual recognition were receptiveness to new forms of Church life, old-fashioned evangelical zeal, and a moral earnestness closely akin to the English nonconformist conscience. They were beginning to think of themselves as churchmen rather than sectarians.

The immediate issue was not so much one of doctrine, as the effective deployment of resources, both human and material. As the need for a pragmatic approach to the physical task of manning

and supporting the vast western and northern territories became increasingly apparent, a joint committee was appointed in 1904 to consider the question of union among the three churches. A document entitled the *Basis of Union*,² which was developed in five meetings of the committee between 1904 and 1908, was submitted in 1908. This document differed little in approach from the final *Basis for Union* that was implemented in June of 1925. The Methodists and the Congregationalists readily agreed to principles outlined in the document of 1908, and were prepared to become part of the larger church. The whole of the Presbyterian church was not in agreement, however, and signing was delayed until a full accord could be reached. This was not to happen and, at the time of union in 1925, approximately one third of Presbyterian churches chose to remain apart. One of the most important issues was the preservation of the particular identity of the church: would the Presbyterian church, on union, be a continuation of the historic church, or merely become part of a new sect?³

² Chambers (1993: 1) describes the *Basis of Union* as "the attempt of a yet-to-be-born new church to define itself, describe its understanding and interpretation of the Christian faith, and to outline some of the basic principles of its organization."

³ Grant (1967:128) notes:

...when union came under attack, its defenders took great pains to reassure doubters that nothing of substance in the traditions of the uniting churches would be lost. Among Presbyterians, indeed, no issue generated greater heat in the church union controversy than the claim of each party to represent the continuing identity of the existing Presbyterian Church in Canada...the question involved more than a debating point, for few Presbyterians would have been willing to embark on a venture that required them to disown their history.

Both documents for the *Basis of Union* (1908 and 1925) stated, in fact, that the identities of the founding churches were to be respected and preserved, enabling them to enjoy mutual enrichment, as heirs of the past and as trustees for the future. With the reassurance given by this approach to possible points of doctrinal disagreement, practical arrangements for the pooling of resources could be made with confidence. As Grant says:

Churchmen of the first decade of this century, interested more in the application than in the definition of the gospel, thought of the church more readily as an instrument for the realization of the Kingdom than as in any sense itself a realization of it. The primary question for them was not, "What is the Church?" but, "What is the Church for?" (ibid.: 34).

The Founding Churches

What were the ties among the three founding churches--Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregationalist--that they should be able to consider union? While internal arrangements of church government differed, they were all Protestant, and they all saw evangelism as a major part of witness. Each of these churches had been founded in Britain by commoners, and as such the social impetus was upwards rather than one imposed from above by the gentry. Furthermore, they were all liberal, moralistic, and concerned with the social gospel. Finally, each had important followings both in Canada and the United States, and was able to supply clergy born or trained in Canada or, at least, on this continent.

Methodism

The Methodist component was the largest. This church was formed in the eighteenth century through the preaching missions of John Wesley, an Anglican clergyman, who taught justification by faith and the attainment of Christian perfection (Hinnells 1984: 212). His church relied heavily on lay evangelists and itinerant preachers who acted as leaders for a circuit of a number of groups, or "societies." Several varieties of Methodism developed in North America, and, in 1884, the Canadian branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church and a number of smaller Methodist churches were incorporated as the Methodist Church of Canada. They retained an organizational structure similar to that of the Church of England, relying on a central government, including an informal episcopate. Historian Goldwen French writes:

Nevertheless, the Methodists as a group held to an evangelical and fundamentalist faith. Inspired by Wesley's example and by the philistinism of their environment, they showed little interest in biblical scholarship; they preferred the literal interpretation of the Scriptures. For them sin and judgment were realities that could be overcome only by a vivid and definite conversion experience. Hence they continued to prefer in principle a type of liturgy and preaching that would disturb the conscience of the participants and bring them to the point of decision (1963: 78).

Methodism has always stressed the importance of hymn singing, and John Wesley published the first *Methodist Tune Book*

in 1742.⁴ From early days, singing in the church and at the meeting was accompanied and supported by an orchestra or an organ. The demand for varieties in rhythm led to the development of the "fuguing tune" which was popular in North America in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁵ A vigorous approach to the mission of the church was reflected in the outpouring of gospel hymns which were, and still are, an integral part of Methodist meetings on this continent and in Britain.

Presbyterianism

While the Methodist Church developed from the established Church of England, Presbyterianism, on the other hand, is the English-speaking version of the Reformed churches. Worship is simple, orderly, and dignified. Based on the doctrines and teachings of the sixteenth century theologian John Calvin,

⁴ John Wesley (1703-91) and his brother Charles (1707-88) were both distinguished hymn-poets. Other members of the family were equally famous as composers of church music. Most notable among these was Samuel Sebastian Wesley (1810-76), grandson of Charles.

⁵ "Fuguing" hymn tunes typically included a section which made use of imitation among the four vocal parts. In this genre one or two voices would fall silent for a moment, and then re-enter in imitation of a previous voice, resulting in a simple kind of stretto. Scholes (1970: 631) in his article "Methodism and Music" observes: "The last line of the words was often repeated in such a way as to be taken up by the men and women in succession and then both together. Some tunes have a section for two vocal parts only, with an instrumental bass; others have a chorus after each verse or a Hallelujah refrain extending to twenty, thirty, or even forty measures."

Scholes suggests that the popularity of Handel's choruses might have been reflected in this type of tune. An elaborate example of Handel's "fuguing" strategy can be heard in the "Hallelujah Chorus" which closes the second section of Messiah.

emphasis is laid on the hearing and the preaching of the word of God, and the restoration of the church to its original purity. Essential to this is a unique form of ecclesiastical polity, which was later to be used as a model by the United Church.*

Presbyterianism was brought to Canada by immigrants from the British Isles and the American colonies. Most of these families were Scottish in origin; a serious, industrious, godfearing people, with a wholesome respect for education. Pioneers were often accompanied by a minister, who usually functioned also as schoolmaster. These settlers brought with them their metrical psalter: psalm paraphrases which were sung to tunes originating in both Scotland and Geneva.⁷ These were the only hymns permitted in the Presbyterian church until the closing years of the last century. Sung without instrumental accompaniment, they were led

* Presbyterian church government is based on a series of courts: at the congregational level the Kirk Session consists of the minister and elders; the Presbytery incorporates representatives of Session from several neighbouring churches; the Synod is made up of delegates (lay and clergy) from Sessions in a large area, and, at the highest level, the General Assembly (which is the supreme legislative and administrative court), consists of representative elders and ministers from the Synods.

⁷ Scottish refugees took their incomplete psalter with them to Geneva, where it was published in 1561 for use in the Anglo-Scottish church. The first edition incorporating Genevan tunes was published in Edinburgh in 1564.

by a precentor who had a pitch pipe and who often "lined out"⁹ each phrase. The introduction of the organ and "human hymns"¹⁰ into the Canadian church was a matter of bitter debate in many individual congregations as recently as the turn of this century.

Congregationalism

The Congregationalists, as English dissenters were, like the Presbyterians, part of the Reformed Church. The two churches are doctrinally close, both generally accepting the Westminster confession as the standard of faith.¹⁰ The essential difference between the two denominations is to be found in the concept of church government. While the Presbyterians vested the power in a series of church courts, the Congregationalists gave all power, under the authority of Christ, to the local congregation. "Councils" consisting of laymen and clergy were called together to give advice, if asked, on matters pertaining to the clergy: their ordination, induction or discipline.

The church meeting itself was a gathering of women and men

- ⁹ In "lining out" the precentor traditionally recited each single line or phrase of the psalm, which the people then sang. In North America, the precentor commonly sang each line to the congregation. This fulfilled two functions: it reminded the congregation of the tune, and it supplied the words. Without this leadership, the illiterate would not have been able to join in the singing, even if the church were able to supply a book of words for each member.
- ¹⁰ "Human hymns" (Scholes 1970: 825) were those written by men; the Psalms, being hymns taken from the Bible, were considered to be divine, since they were the word of God.
- ¹⁰ Church historian Earl B. Eddy (1963: 26-7) notes that five Congregationalists helped to "frame" the Westminster (Presbyterian) Confession, which is generally accepted by both the English and American streams of Congregationalism.

who, by public profession of faith, were admitted into covenant membership by the congregation. Local congregations were encouraged to formulate their own "creed," or confession of faith. Like the Presbyterians, their ideal was a return to the purity and simplicity of the early church, and to this end their meeting places were plain and their clergy wore no vestments.

The Congregationalists were a formidable presence in the United States, and by the eighteenth century they had become the state church in Massachusetts and Connecticut. In Canada features of both the British and American Congregational churches were united to form a uniquely Canadian institution. Chief among these was the American concept of an association of ministers and lay representatives, which eventually grew into state councils, and finally into a national council.

The Congregationalists have always placed particular emphasis on music in worship, and organs have been in use in their churches since the late eighteenth century (Scholes 1970: 246). Their earliest hymns were from the Scottish Psalter, and music of a simple character has always been preferred. Chief among the Congregationalist hymn writers was Isaac Watts (1674-1748) whose hymns remain, to this day, among the most popular in the Protestant churches (Cross and Livingstone 1974: 1462).

While the Congregationalists met with great success in Upper and Lower Canada, they had less impact in the west than either the Presbyterians or the Methodists. Eddy (1963: 36) suggests that the independent spirit of the Congregationalists expressed itself in another way, by joining with other churches in small

towns in "union" or "community" churches. These Protestant community churches, the result of informal unions among two or more denominations at a local level, became increasingly common in the prairies, offering, as they did, a practical solution to the problems encountered in a frontier society by small congregations. Church historian Stephen Chambers writes that individual churches were finding their needs to be beyond their separate abilities. He describes the founding of one of the "community" churches this way:

Presbyterian, Methodist, and Baptist missionaries were all working early in the century in the railroad town of Melville, Saskatchewan. When the Methodists proposed building a church in 1908, they were persuaded to consider a union church. The Melville Union church was organized in accordance with the Basis of Union document, which the joint union committee had just prepared for the national union discussions. In February, 1910, in their new church, former members of six denominations sat around the Lord's table for communion. (1993: 146)

By June, 1925, more than a thousand such unions (the majority of them in the west) had become a reality, ready to become part of a national, united church.¹¹

HYMN BOOKS AT CHURCH UNION

While each church came into union with its own repertoire of hymns, there was also a substantial common heritage of hymns by the great English and Scottish composers and poets. At the time

¹¹ Chambers (1993) and Grant (1967) set this number at one thousand. Eddy (1963: 36) says that in 1925, "no less than three thousand such congregations joined in the union."

of Union in 1925, the Presbyterians and Methodists had both recently published Canadian hymn books; the Congregationalists, on the other hand, still used an English book.

The Methodists had published *The Methodist Hymn and Tune Book* in Toronto in 1917, and this had been reprinted in 1918 by the United Church Publishing House with the new title *The United Church of Canada Hymn and Tune Book*. While this had no official status (as a publication of a non-existent church), it was a testament to the faith of all parties that an agreement for union was likely to be reached.¹²

The *Book of Praise* (Presbyterian hymnary), edited by Alexander MacMillan, had been published in 1918.¹³ This collection included, besides the Psalter, hymns from the great

¹² The editors of the *Methodist Hymn and Tune Book* list seventy-four entries under the name of Charles Wesley, a founder of Methodism. Importance is also given to the poetry of Isaac Watts, the Congregationalist (twenty-nine entries). The music in this book is generally the work of Church of England composers such as Joseph Barnby (thirty-three entries), John Bacchus Dykes (nineteen entries), and Sir John Stainer (fourteen entries). Oddly enough, the book contains only three hymns by composer Samuel Sebastian Wesley, one of the most famous sons of the Methodist church. There are a number of metrical psalms from various sources, such as the Scottish Psalter, Tate and Brady, and Ravenscroft.

¹³ *Book of Praise: Authorised by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, With Music*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1918.

composers and traditions of the universal Christian church.¹⁴ In many ways it resembled the new hymn book of the United Church which was to be published in Canada in 1930, with MacMillan as editor.

Since these two books, the Methodist and the Presbyterian hymnals, were published in Canada for use in Canadian churches, one would expect, even at this early date in Canadian musical history, to find a number of Canadian composers represented. Bruce Harding (1994) has identified over thirty Canadian tunes in the *Methodist Hymnal*, but only twelve in the *Book of Praise*.¹⁵

The *Congregational Hymnary* of 1916 was a revision of the 1887 *Hymn Book*, for the use of the Congregational Union of England and Wales. The names of the English poets Isaac Watts and Charles Wesley are, of course, prominent, as are many of the

¹⁴ The editors of this book list one hundred and fifty-four selections from the Scottish Psalter (including ten paraphrases by Isaac Watts, and eighteen from the Genevan Psalter). Authors of other hymns in the book include Methodists Charles Wesley (twenty-six entries), composer S.S. Wesley (twenty-three), and Congregationalist poet, Isaac Watts (sixteen). Hymn writers from the Church of England were well represented by composers from the 18th century such as William Croft (eleven); from the 19th century by Joseph Barnby (thirteen), Henry Smart (thirteen), Sir John Stainer (twelve) and John Bacchus Dykes (thirty-nine). Among earlier English composers were Thomas Tallis (seven), Orlando Gibbons (four) and Henry Purcell (four). Martin Luther (three) was one of the few German hymn writers represented.

¹⁵ Among those in the *Methodist Hymnal*, Harding found thirty-six tunes by Canadian composers. These included twenty-three tunes by Herbert Saunders, (co-editor of music for the Methodist committee), five compositions by W.H. Hewlitt, four by Alfred Whitehead and four by James Edwin Jones.

The present writer has identified fifteen Canadian hymns in the *Book of Praise*: eight tunes by W. H. Havergal, four by J.E. Jones, and one each by Ernest Macmillan, Alfred Whitehead and Healey Willan, respectively.

composers represented in the other two aforementioned books.¹⁶

Performance Practice

While each of the three denominations had, by 1925, accepted the fact that the organ and the four-part choir were integral parts of the church service, concepts of performance practice differed radically in other respects. One point of disagreement was the pace at which the hymns should be sung. The Methodists, accustomed to a certain amount of evangelical fervour, favoured hymns with a strong beat, sung at a lively tempo. The Presbyterians, brought up on the Scottish Psalter, preferred a stately, dignified tempo, as did the Congregationalists.

Although the singing of the Scottish Psalter had been the only music permitted in the Presbyterian church until the end of the last century, this strong singing tradition was fundamental to worship within that denomination. Based on the Psalms of David, these hymns, like the church service itself, were simple, orderly and dignified. They were sung at a solemn pace, usually

¹⁶From the index of the *Congregational Hymnary* we can observe that composers and poets included in this publication are almost without exception English. Chief among the composers listed are Josiah Booth (forty-six entries), John Bacchus Dykes (forty-eight), E.J. Hopkins (thirty-one), Sir John Stainer (twenty-one), Sir Arthur Sullivan (forty) and Samuel Sebastian Wesley (seven). Poets include Horatius Bonar (sixteen entries), W.W. How (seventeen), Charles Wesley (thirty-four) and Isaac Watts (twenty-five).

in the "long note" style¹⁷ (Appendix 1.1). Many of these same psalms were to be found in both the Methodist and Congregationalist hymn books in current use at the time of Union.

Once "human hymns", the organ, and the four-part choir were accepted as a normal part of worship, the Presbyterian repertoire expanded, as can be seen by the variety of hymns represented in *The Book of Praise*, published in 1918. These included hymns of English hymn writers who were important in both the Methodist and Congregationalist traditions. For example, the hymn tune *Nicaea* by John Bacchus Dykes, sung to the words of Reginald Heber¹⁸ appeared in all three books. This hymn (Appendix 1.2), which had pride of place as the first selection in *The Hymnary* of the United Church (1930) has been traditionally sung as the opening hymn at the Sunday morning services of the United Church,

¹⁷ In the "long note" or "gathering note" style, the first note of each line of the hymn is elongated to approximately twice the normal length of the pulse note. This was probably originally a device used by the precentor in the lining out process, enabling the congregation to "couple on" to the initial pitch of the line. While, by the time of church union, the role of the precentor had been taken over by the church choir, the long note style persisted, and is a matter of choice, discussion and disagreement till this day in both the United and Presbyterian churches. Taking note of the traditional style, *The Hymnary*, of the United Church (1930) offered the two versions of some well-known tunes, as illustrated in Appendix 1.1.

¹⁸ Hymn tunes in the books under discussion are all classified according to syllabic metre (the total number of syllables in each line of poetry). *Nicaea*, with the metre 11 12 12 10 (as printed beside the name of the tune in Appendix 1.2, can be sung to any set of hymn words which have the same number of syllables per line. Each hymn book comes with a metrical index, an alphabetical index of tunes, an index of composers, arrangers, and sources of tunes and an index to authors, translators and sources.

and is still so used by many congregations.

Like the Presbyterians, most Congregationalists leaned towards the dignified, traditional, conservative hymn, sung in four-part harmony. While they made full use of the Scottish Psalter, hymns by 19th century English composers such as Joseph Barnby, Henry Smart, Sir John Stainer and John Bacchus Dykes were equally popular. The Methodists, on the other hand, while relying heavily on their common repertoire with the Presbyterian and Congregationalist churches, contributed their own special type of evangelical hymn which was favoured by revival groups and at camp meetings. These were generally livelier in pace, and were frequently in the form of verse with refrain (Appendix 1.3). Harmony was often more adventurous, relying on frequent brief modulations to emphasize the emotional nature of the words (see for example line 4 in Appendix 1.3).

THE INAUGURATION OF FIRST UNITED CHURCH, OTTAWA

First United Church, Ottawa, inaugurated on February 15, 1925, is so named because it was the first of the United churches to be established in that city--that is, four months before the national church of this new denomination came into being. Like many of the informal community churches in the west, pragmatism was the primary reason for this union between First Congregational Church and Westminster Presbyterian Church. The members of Westminster Church in Ottawa were in need of a new building, but impending church union offered another solution to their problems.

With unanimous favourable votes on the part of both congregations, final arrangements for a union between the two were quickly made.¹⁹ Edna Shearman, in her article "A Brief History of the First Congregational Church" describes the events of that winter's day as follows:

Thus it was that on February 15, 1925, Mr. Whidden of the Westminster Church with his congregation marched down the few blocks to their new home while the Congregational members stood in the two side sections and [sic] the new members might be received into the centre portion of the church. It was a deeply moving, unforgettable service and so the two became one body to be known as First United Church of Ottawa.

(Shearman 1987: 14)

Both First Congregational and Westminster Presbyterian churches were part of historical Bytown.²⁰ When the First Congregational church was founded in 1846, they were the fifth different denomination to erect a church building in what was still essentially a lumber town. First Congregational's church membership expanded quickly, and the present building (housing what we now call First United Church) was the fourth home of the original Congregational church. Built in 1911, the sanctuary seats five-hundred people. Music has always been an important part of worship, with emphasis being placed on strong leadership

¹⁹ Chief among these arrangements was to be a joint pastorship for two years.

²⁰ In 1855 Bytown was renamed Ottawa, and in 1858 was made the capital of Upper and Lower Canada. The city became the capital of the Dominion of Canada at Confederation in 1867.

by a choir of mixed voices.²¹ The present organ, a two manual Casavant, was purchased in 1901, and has since undergone several renovations and additions.²²

Westminster Presbyterian Church was originally part of the larger congregation of Erskine Presbyterian Church, which had been founded in 1878. In April of 1911, due to an internal dispute, four-hundred members and adherents withdrew from Erskine, and formed a new congregation, which they called "Westminster Presbyterian." It was this new church which was to become a founding member of First United church fourteen years later.²³ First United Church has remained as it began, a union of two congregations; one Presbyterian, the other Congregationalist. No Methodist congregation has ever become part of this church community.²⁴

²¹The Ottawa Choral Union was formed under the leadership of Alastair Crandall, while he was music director at First United. Founding members included several members of his church choir. The Ottawa Choral union continues to perform regularly in that city.

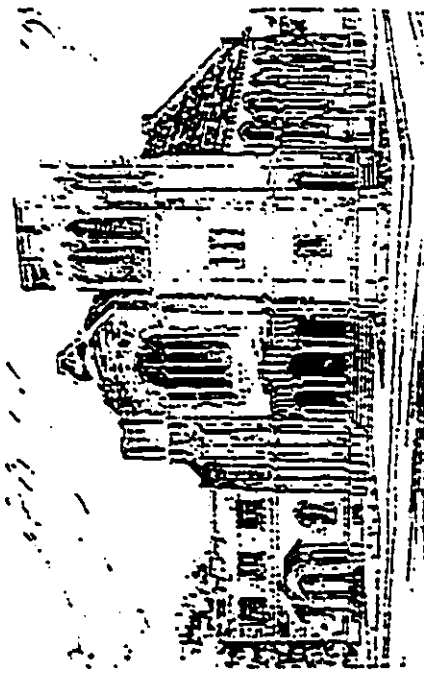
²²The present organ, by Casavant Frères Limitée, is the fourth instrument this church has had, the first one dating from 1866. Casavant is a prestigious Quebec firm of organ builders, founded in 1840.

²³ At the time of general union, members of Erskine voted to remain as part of the Presbyterian church. A significant number left the parent church at this time, and became members of First United Church.

²⁴While at the national level the United Church was formed by the union of the three founding denominations, this could vary at the local level where, depending on local circumstances, union could take place between only two churches. This union of only two of the three founding denominations was common in the United Church. Any combination was and is possible. As always, pragmatism is the watchword.

Inaugural Services

The First United Church of Ottawa



Uniting
Westminster Presbyterian
First Congregational

February 15th, 1925

Rev. A. F. Pollock, B.D. Rev. W. A. Whidden, B.A.
Associate Ministers

Members of Session

of

Rev. W. A. Whidden, B.A. Rev. A. F. Pollock, B.D.
Associate Moderators

JAMES BAXTER	J. M. YOUNG	W. F. FRAZER
A. N. YOUNG	W. H. TATE	T. H. MARTIN
GEORGE GOUCHAY	W. J. TYSDALE	LEONARD THOMAS
NORMAN MACKENZIE	CHARLES MONFORD	R. G. DOUGLAS
W. A. LAMB	D. W. MCCOLL	T. B. WILLIAMS
E. T. LANGDON	A. T. BAILEY	R. CHURCHILL
HENRY KER	J. W. KER	F. W. CIRVAN
H. C. TYERS	A. W. MACDONALD	

BOARD OF STEWARDS

W. T. LAMB	S. DENRAUGH	GUY BAXTER
ALFRED HYDER	G. W. BAILEY	H. G. TYERS
R. CHURCHILL	CARSON BRADLEY	E. T. LANGDON
T. H. MARTIN	ADAM BALLANTYNE	J. L. GILLESPIE
E. EARLE	LEONARD THOMAS	J. A. WALSH
	J. W. CARSON	

TRUSTEES

JAMES BAXTER	J. M. YOUNG	T. A. C. KENNEDY
T. B. WILLIAMS	E. D. EDDY	H. F. HARDY
	W. A. LAMB	

ADJUSTMENT COMMITTEE

R. CHURCHILL	A. E. REVELL	H. KER
T. H. MARTIN	A. W. MACDONALD	W. T. LAMB
LEONARD THOMAS	W. H. TATE	JAS. BAXTER
	J. M. YOUNG	

Illustration 1.1

Inaugural Services



11 A.M.

Organ Prelude.

Call to Worship—Congregation Standing.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in His Holy Place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of His salvation.

Doxology.

Invocation.

Praise.....Ps. Sel. 21.

Scripture Reading—John 17.....Dr. A. H. DENCOON

The Lord's Prayer.

Praise.....Hymn 296

Words of Dedication—Congregation Responding.

For the glory of God, our Father; the exaltation of Jesus Christ our Saviour; and for the ministry of the Holy Spirit, our Guide and Comforter,

WE FORM THIS UNITED CONGREGATION.

For the declaration of the gospel, and the Salvation of men; for the ministry of strength to the weak, and comfort to the sorrowing; and for the establishment of the Faith among the people,

WE FORM THIS UNITED CONGREGATION.

For obedience to the Master's Great Commission and for the establishment of the Kingdom of God at home and abroad,

WE FORM THIS UNITED CONGREGATION.

For the building of Christian Character; the supreme task of Religious Education; and for the training of the Young in the things of God,

WE FORM THIS UNITED CONGREGATION.

For the development of Brotherhood and Christian Concord, the removal of unworthy divisions in the Body of Christ and in answer to our Lord's petition, "That they all may be one",

WE FORM THIS UNITED CONGREGATION.

Inaugural Services—continued



Glory be to God the Father,
Glory be to God the Son,
Glory be to God the Spirit,
Great Jehovah Three in One.
Glory, Glory,
While eternal ages run.

Dedictory Prayer.

Solo—"Open the Gates of the Temple"
Dr. PENNOCK.....Hymn 345

Greetings from the Methodist Church.....Rev. W. G. CLARK
Praise.....Hymn 545

Intimations—Offertory.

Prayer—in dedication of offering.

Anthem—"O Worship the Lord"
.....Hollins
Sermon.....Rev. J. W. G. WARD
Prayer.

Praise.....Hymn 540

Benediction.

Organ Postlude.



3 P.M.

Open Service.....The Church School

Mr. R. G. DOUGLAS.....Mr. J. W. KER

Superintendents

Praise.....Hymn 701

Lord's Prayer in Unison.

Responsive Scripture Reading.....Mark 11: 32-42

Children's Chorus.

Praise.....Hymn 715

Prayer.....Mr. W. F. PRAYER

Solo.....MASTER RONALD BOTTEN

Addresses—Dr. A. H. DENCOON, Rev. H. J. HORSBY, Rev. J. H. OSTERHOOT.

Offertory.

Praise.....Hymn 710

Benediction.

Inaugural Services



7 P.M.

- Organ Prelude.
- Invocation.
- Praise.....Ps. Sol. 100
- Scripture.
- Solo.....MRS. GRANT DEXTER
- Prayer.
- Praise.....Hymn 297
- Ordination and Installation of Elders.

ORDINATION VOWS

Do you believe the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

Do you sincerely receive and adopt the statement of Doctrine as set forth in the Basis of Union, of the United Church of Canada, as being founded upon and agreeable to the Word of God, and do you promise faithfully to adhere thereto?

Do you approve of the Government and discipline of the United Church, and do you engage to maintain and defend the same?

Ordination Prayer with the laying on of hands.

INSTALLATION

Do you accept the office of Elder in this congregation, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof?

Do you promise to study the peace, unity, and purity of the church?

- Prayer.
- Praise.....Hymn 582
- Intimations--Offertory.
- Anticm--"Son of My Soul".....Turner
- Sermon.....REV. A. H. DENOON, D.D.
- Prayer.
- Praise.....Hymn 571
- Benediction.
- Organ Postlude.

Inaugural Services



The Inaugural Services, to which you are cordially invited, will be continued throughout the week.

MONDAY

8 P.M.

Young People's Rally under the auspices of the young people's societies.

Addresses.....MAGISTRATE FLOREWELL, Rev. J. W. WOODSINE
Special Music.

TUESDAY

8 P.M.

Missionary night.

Address--Mr. RAMPH COLLINS, B.A., Student Volunteer for West Central Africa.

WEDNESDAY

8 P.M.

Congregational Social. Musical Programme. All members and friends of the congregation are cordially invited.

THURSDAY

8 P.M.

Citizens Night. Theme: "The Church in the Community". We cordially invite the citizens of Ottawa to this mass meeting.

- Address.....DR. GEORGE HANSON, Montreal
- Greetings.....His Worship, MAYOR BALFORTH,
Rev. H. I. FLOREY,
Rev. J. R. WATTS,
Rev. W. C. SMALLEY,
Rev. E. R. KELLY.

Hymns at Inauguration

In considering hymns in use at that time, it is instructive to look at the services of inauguration of First United Church (Illustration 1.1). Beginning with this occasion, and until the publication of *The Hymnary* of the United Church of Canada in 1930, the *Book of Praise* of the Presbyterian book was used exclusively.²⁵ The inauguration services show a careful compromise made in the selection of hymns, most of which were to be found in the books of both the founding congregations.²⁶

The opening hymn in the Morning Service, the "Doxology", is common to both churches, Congregationalist and Presbyterian, and was doubtless so well-known that there was no need to print it out in the order of service. It is traditionally sung to the tune "Old 100th" from the Genevan Psalter of 1551, and this was undoubtedly the tune used on this occasion. The words are by

²⁵Personal communication, Grace Hyder (Ottawa: March, 1995). She was a member of First Congregational Church at union.

²⁶The Methodist hymnal was not a factor on this occasion, since only two churches were involved in this particular union: Westminster Presbyterian and First Congregationalist.

Thomas Ken.²⁷ The next hymn, one of particular importance to the Presbyterian members of the congregation, was an exception to the effort made to use hymns from the common repertoire of the two founding churches. A metrical version of Psalm XXIV from the Scottish Psalter of 1650 was chosen--a hymn which was not found in the Congregational book. While this solemn hymn of the Covenanters had particular historical significance for the Presbyterians, the words were also appropriate to this occasion. It begins:

Ye gates, lift up your heads on high;
Ye doors that last for aye.
Be lifted up, that so the King
Of Glory enter may.

The tune, found only in the Presbyterian Hymnary, was the famous "St. George's Edinburgh," by Andrew Mitchell Thomson (1778-1831).

The other hymns sung at this first inaugural service were found in the books of both congregations. They all stressed unity and the common faith, using words and music from the 19th

²⁷This hymn was traditionally sung at the dedication of the offering. Its use as the opening hymn on this occasion was particularly appropriate, since the whole service was about praise and dedication.

Praise God from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him, above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Thomas Ken (1637-1711), author of the words was Anglican Bishop of Bath and Wells. The tune, *Old 100th*, is reproduced in Appendix 1.1. No one knows exactly whether the long note or the short note version was used on this occasion, but older members of the present congregation of First United think it likely that it was the long note version.

century. These included:

- "Our blessed bond of union" (#296, Presbyterian Hymnary)
Tune: Lancashire (Smart)
Words: R. Murray (1832-1909)
- "Glory be to God the Father"
Tune: Regent Square (Smart)
Words: Horatio Bonar (1808-1889)
(as printed in the order of service)
- "Faith of our Fathers" (#540, Presbyterian Hymnary)
Tune: St. Catherine (H.F. Hemy, adapted by
J.G. Walton, (1821-1905)
Words: F.W. Farber (1814-1863)
- Anthem: "O Worship the Lord" (Hollins)²⁰

The service at 3 P.M. saw the inauguration of the joint Church School (with corresponding joint Superintendents). Performances by a children's chorus and by Master Ronald Botten were part of the programme. The hymns were all chosen from the large section of "Hymns for the Young" in the Presbyterian book.

- "Break Thou the Bread of Life" (#291)
Tune: Bread of Life (William Fine Sherwin:
1826-1888)²¹
Words: M.A. Lathbury (1841-1918).

²⁰ While only the surname of the composer is given, this anthem could be the work of the Alfred Hollins mentioned by Scholes (1970: 483). Hollins was, at the time when these services took place, the organist of West St. George's Church, Edinburgh.

²¹ Sherwin could have been Canadian, but more likely was American. The music was written for *The Chautauqua Vesper Hour*, copyright J.H. Vincent. The Chautauquas, which originated in the United States, were travelling variety shows, stressing morally uplifting messages. They were also popular in Canada at this time, particularly in the West.

- "Saviour, like a shepherd lead us" (#745)²⁰
Tune: Pleasant Pastures (composer unknown)
Words: Dorothy Ann Thrupp *Hymns for the Young* (1836)
- "Follow Me, the Master Said" (#766)
Author and composer unknown

The evening service of that same day included the ordination and installation of elders.²¹ The hymns, from the common repertoire (with one exception), were all from the 17th or 18th centuries:

- "Unto the hills around do I lift up my longing eyes" (#109)
Tune: Sandon (C.H. Purday: 1799-1885)
Words: John, Duke of Argyll (1845-1919).
- "Glorious things of Thee are spoken" (#297)
Tune: Haydn's Hymn (Haydn)
Words: J. Newton (1726-1807)
- "Blest be the tie that binds" (#571)
Tune: adapted from Hans Georg Nägeli (1768-1836)
Words: J. Fawcett (1740-1817)

Of the hymns chosen from the common repertoire, preference was given to products of the Victorian era, one of the periods of great flowering of hymn writing. The absence of any selection from the works of Isaac Watts (1614-1748), the eminent Congregationalist hymn writer should be noted. Since there were thirty selections by Watts to be found in the *Presbyterian Hymnary*, and since ten of these were paraphrases which were

²⁰Unlike the first hymn, the other two hymns at this service, were not in the *Congregational Hymn Book*.

²¹In the *Presbyterian* manner, this service began with a psalm: "Unto the hills around do I lift up my longing eyes". This was the famous and well-loved metrical version of Psalm CXXI, by John, Duke of Argyll. This hymn was found in the *Presbyterian* book only; the other selections were to be found in both hymnaries.

included in the Scottish Psalter, this looks like a deliberate omission. Notable also was the absence of any hymn by the Wesleys: John, Charles or Samuel Sebastian. Although the Methodist church was not a participant in the formation of First United Church, the inclusion of a hymn by one of these important Methodist hymn writers would have been a graceful compliment to the third founding member of the national United Church of Canada.

CONCLUSION

From the examination of the inaugural services at First United Church in 1925, two major political issues become apparent: the choice of a hymn book and the selection of hymns.

One would have conjectured that the union between the two churches in question, Congregationalist and Presbyterian, would have been relatively smooth, since they were close in theological belief, in style of worship, and in church government. Furthermore, the two congregations had agreed to a joint pastorship for the period of one year following the union, during which time particular emphasis was to be paid to unity and common faith. An examination of some of the events of the inaugural services shows, however, that manouevering for positions of power was present from the onset.

It would have seemed likely that the members of the (former) Congregational church would initially be in the ascendant position since they were already installed in the building to be shared. One can observe, however, that from the very beginning the (former) Presbyterian church played a powerful

role.

The first issue before the joint membership was the selection of the hymn book to be used.³² The Presbyterian Book of Praise was chosen, and continued to be in use until a new book for the national church was published in 1930. While the Presbyterian hymnal was a recent Canadian publication,³³ the compelling factor in the choice of a hymnary could have been the determination of the Presbyterians to have access to the entire Scottish metrical Psalter.³⁴ The availability of the complete psalter was an issue of both historical and emotional importance for the Presbyterians. Singing these hymns of the Covenanters was, to them, a communal act of reaffirmation of the faith of the fathers of the church. They recalled not only the times of exile and persecution, but they looked forward to a new covenant in a unified, protestant, Canadian church. Furthermore, the preservation of the entire psalter was also a matter of the preservation of the particular identity of Presbyterianism--a verbal testament to the faith and culture of the historical church. It was this problem of preserving the identity of the

³²The hymnals of the two churches were similar in size. The Presbyterian book contained 745 selections; the Congregational Hymnary was slightly larger, with 771 hymns.

³³ The Presbyterian book was a recent publication (1918) of the Canadian church. It contained the entire Scottish metrical Psalter, as it was then commonly used. The Congregationalists, however, continued to use an English publication: a 1916 revision of the 1887 Hymnary.

³⁴ While the metrical psalms were fully acceptable to Congregationalists, their Hymnary contained only a portion of the psalter.

original Presbyterian church which had delayed the formation of the United Church for seventeen years.

A second issue before the new congregation was the choice of hymns for the first joint services. Political maneuvering was not absent from these negotiations, and once again the Presbyterian members of the committee succeeded in securing a position of prominence for hymns of their choice and tradition.³³ While respect for the hymnody of the Congregationalist church was preserved in the selections drawn from the common repertoire, there is, as noted earlier, the curious absence of any hymn by well-known Congregationalist writers such as Isaac Watts. Perhaps it was just an oversight; perhaps the Congregationalists were making an extra effort to be welcoming (or accommodating) to the new group which had been received into their midst; or (less charitably) perhaps, one could suggest that it was a deliberate omission.

Although the themes of the day were unity and common faith, and while these were generally reflected in the majority of the hymns chosen, the undercurrents of power politics were never far from the surface. An examination of the hymns chosen for the inaugural services at First United Church serves to illustrate the types of problems, accommodations and compromises that faced congregations as they worked together to put into practice the ideals that had inspired the concept of a United Church of Canada.

³³Of the hymns selected for these occasions, four were to be found only in the Presbyterian Book of Praise. Included among these were the opening hymns of the two major services.

CHAPTER 2: PARTICIPATION

In response to a question about the importance of hymns, Sharon Moon, the present minister at First United Church, made the following comments:¹

Important? They are absolutely essential. The theology that we sing is the theology that's planted deep in the soul, and in the unconscious. The words that we sing, the images that we use, the ways that we think about God in the hymns, are the images that go deep into the soul, and they're far more important than anything I ever say, because they hit a different place in a person's being. Faith and spirituality are very much part of the inner core. I can be preaching the most liberal, open-minded theology, and if the hymns that we sing are planting an image of a patriarchal, triumphal God, or that we're all sinners, there's a split between the head and the soul. The head will take in very intelligent, open-minded ideas, but the heart and soul will take in the other. So hymns are the language of the soul. They speak to the soul far more importantly than any words do... And they cannot be divorced from the music. Sound resonates in different parts of the body, just like the rhythm.

Hymn books are products of a particular time in history, and preferences as to substance and style can vary with each historical period, with each generation, or according to social custom. The cherished childhood hymn book of an older person may evoke images of social behaviour or cultural values which are intolerable to someone who is younger. Although hymn singing involves individual physical participation in a communal act, the verbal and musical memories of this act are retained in the unconscious--what Moon describes as the inner core--long after

¹ In conversation with the author at First United Church, Ottawa, November 9, 1995.

that event has taken place. These memories are often linked to previous personal experiences, so that a hymn which brings back images of happy family occasions to one person may, to another, rekindle memories of an abusive childhood. Because personal experience is unique, there are few shared memories among the members of a church congregation. If hymns speak both to the conscious and the unconscious, they must be chosen with infinite care if they are to project a message that is acceptable to the current theological beliefs and ethical standards of that congregation.

Sociologist Line Grenier suggests that sociology could make a significant contribution to musical studies by putting forward a definition of music as a fully-fledged and specific social phenomenon. "As a form of knowledge", she says, "music can be conceived as both an expression and a mode of expression that not only reproduces a social reality but also and most importantly, contributes to its very production and creation" (Grenier 1990: 45). Grenier's proposition is valid not only for the individual producer or receiver of music, but it aptly describes the social phenomenon which takes place when a group of people make music together, as, for example, in singing hymns.

When hymns are sung in a church service, two processes take place. Through participation in a physical act (singing) a social reality is created within the community, as individual participant members become part of a larger group. Consequent to this, theological, moral and social issues are addressed by the community thus created, through their interaction with the words and

the music. It should therefore be possible by examining the types of hymns in favour at a particular period or turning point in the history of the United Church, to observe changing societal and religious values within that institution as they can be observed within the boundaries of a given time frame.

The choice of a particular hymn is guided by the nature and content of the hymn itself in terms of both the music and the words. Choosing a hymn means making a statement about an issue. The performance of this hymn, by involving physical participation in a group activity, literally gives voice to the issues addressed in the hymn. The hymn itself must be of a musical quality acceptable to the people singing it. Hymn singing is not simply an opportunity for an untrained singer to take part in big and important-sounding music making. If the words and the music of a hymn work well together, if the pitch is reasonable and the music well-known or easy to learn, then singing together can be a powerful expression of something important to the community. A significant bonding can take place among the participant individuals, which may result in the emergence of a new group persona.

This chapter will examine past and present hymn books of the United Church of Canada, noting how the hymns have been informed by theological and social issues of the day, and how the language and musical styles have changed during the first sixty years of the church. The contents of these hymn books should give some indication of religious, societal, and musical values of the United Church at three different periods in its history.

HYMN BOOKS OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

At present the United Church of Canada has a history dating back only seventy years. During that time three hymn books have been in use: two of them were official publications of the church; the third one was privately produced. The two official hymn books (1930 and 1971) were essentially compromises, since they were compiled to meet the needs of uniting churches of distinct traditions at a particular moment in history.² The unofficial (and non-denominational) publication, *Songs for a Gospel People* (1987),³ contains many hymns in a contemporary "folk" idiom, and was compiled to meet the demand for literature suitable for a renewal of congregational singing, in language acceptable to modern Christian thought.⁴

The three books are reflections of their times. The *Hymnary of the United Church of Canada*⁵ was a highly successful (or at least long-lived) attempt to offer hymns of substance to all interested parties: the membership of national United Church; the historical denominational ties of individual founding congregations; the big city church with a professional choir; the smaller

²The *Hymnary of the United Church of Canada*. Toronto: United Church Publishing House, 1930; and *The Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada*. Toronto: The Southam Publishing Company, 1971.

³ Hobbs, R. Gerald et al. *Songs for a Gospel People*. Winfield, BC: Wood Lake Books, 1987.

⁴ Although this book has no official status, it is used extensively in both the Anglican and United churches.

⁵ Hereafter referred to as "The Hymnary" or as the "Blue Book".

neighbourhood church; and the rural mission. It was a book compiled when Canada was still stunned by the carnage of the First World War, and was to do duty during the depression and the Second World War.

This venerable publication was replaced by *The Hymn Book of the Anglican and the United Churches of Canada*⁶, a book published in 1971 when union between the United Church and the Anglican Church seemed likely.⁷ This book was also a compromise, catering to two dissimilar groups, only one of which, the Anglicans, had a strong tradition of sung liturgy. The Red Book was a product of the 1960s and it unmistakably reflects the ideas of the time by voicing current concerns with social issues and changing theological concepts, couched in words that were politically correct for the era. The musical style of many of the hymns was also a reflection of the times: the innovative use of polyrhythms and syncopation, augmented chords, remote modulations and unresolved chord progressions all challenged the traditional hymn style of the common practice period.

The unusual popularity of *Songs for a Gospel People*,⁸ published in 1987, could be attributed to two causes: its use of inclusive language, and the emphasis on "folk" idiom in the music of many of the selections. In the sixteen years since the

⁶ Hereafter referred to as "The Hymn Book" or as the "Red Book".

⁷ This union did not take place, but the two churches have continued to use this joint publication until the present time. They are now each in the process of compiling a new, denominational book.

⁸ Hereafter referred to as SGP or the "Green Book".

publication of the Red Book, issues only hinted at in 1971 had become paramount within the church. While theological concepts had remained unchanged, the image of God was in a process of evolution. The traditional roles of women and children in a patriarchal society were no longer acceptable. Using inclusive language, *Songs for a Gospel People* deals with many of these issues in its scant 134 selections. The accompaniment for most of these hymns is set for piano or guitar in an attempt to offer "songs" in a more familiar musical language.

The *Hymnary of the United Church of Canada* (the "Blue Book": 1930)

S.P. Rose, in an article written in 1930 on the work of The Committee on Church Worship and Ritual (the committee charged with compiling *The Hymnary*), comments on the importance of hymns:⁹

The psalms and hymns which the people sing are probably more influential in shaping doctrinal opinions and moulding character than what is heard from the pulpit...If their sentiment is lofty and their doctrine sound, their value is unspeakable; on the other hand, unworthy hymns have a bad effect upon the taste and Christian experience.

It is part of the mission of a good hymn-book to elevate popular taste; but this requires time and must be tactfully done....Nothing should be included which does not elevate and purify the heart of the worshipper.

(Rose 1930: 310)

Rose, like Sharon Moon sixty-five years later, argues that the theology which we sing is more influential than any words which might come from the pulpit. Moon, in 1995, sees hymns as

⁹ S.P. Rose was a member of *The Hymnary* committee, and the former chairman of the *Methodist Hymn and Tune Book* committee.

theology already planted deep in the soul and in the unconscious; a theology which, by the images that it evokes, can be more powerful than the preached word. Rose, on the other hand, sees the mission of hymns to be one of moulding character through (as he says) "the elevation of popular taste." This philosophy of the power and the mission of hymnody can be observed both in the process of compiling *The Hymnary* and in the final publication of 1930.

*

Two ideals were clearly before the members of the committee charged with the compilation of the *The Hymnary*: the book must be worthy of the church (and as such, be a credit to it in the world), and it must be so comprehensive as to be able to minister to an infinite variety of desires, needs and situations.

The aims of the committee are stated in the preface to *The Hymnary*:

The larger aim has been...to offer a collection of spiritual songs widely representative of the Hymnody of the Church Universal. We have no surer link with our fathers of generations past, and with our fellow-Christians of today, than is provided by the psalms and hymns and spiritual songs which are our common heritage. Canticles of the ancient Church, translations and transfusions of early and medieval Greek and Latin hymns, songs of the time of the Reformation and period following, and a rich appropriation from the treasures of modern hymnody, at once bring those who use them into communion of worship with the Church of the past, and with all who today call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus, their Lord and ours....A second purpose... has been to provide a hymnody true to the genius, history and traditions of the Communion which now compose The United Church of Canada. Here will be found the stateliness and tenderness of the Scottish Psalter, the glowing passion and evangelical fervour of the Wesleys, and the lyrical qualities by which Congregational Hymnody has ever been

distinguished.

(1930: no pagination)

The result was a book shaped primarily by the Reverend Alexander MacMillan, D.D., Secretary of the Committee on Church Worship and Ritual.¹⁰ MacMillan had worked as secretary on the two previous Presbyterian hymn books (1897 and 1918) and had co-edited two other Canadian hymnaries. Harding observes:

...The Hymnary is a book that mirrors MacMillan himself, an immigrant Presbyterian with strong Anglo-Catholic sentiments and a distaste for hymnody of the lower classes.

...MacMillan had none of the spirit of compromise of the great reformers of the church such as Martin Luther. In MacMillan's opinion, popular music had no place in worship, and it is completely inappropriate for addressing the "Most High".

(1994: 64-66)

While the hymn books of the three uniting churches received the primary attention of the committee, the contents of several historical and contemporary English and American collections were also examined, as well as hundreds of manuscripts offered by interested people. The resulting book of 1930 presented a wide selection of hymns conforming, on the whole, to the representative variety described in the introduction. Disappointingly enough, there were only five original Canadian hymns to be found among them.

¹⁰ The committee itself was an elite group, formed from members of the three founding denominations. Of the twenty-seven people on the committee, twenty-four held doctoral degrees, twenty-one of these being Doctor of Divinity. From the list of members in the preface to the hymn book, the committee appears to have been entirely male.

The influence of the Oxford movement (showing MacMillan's vigilant hand) can be seen in the inclusion of translations of Latin hymns and canticles of pre-reformation England. Selections from the prose psalter set to Anglican chant, and musical settings for canticles and other parts of the Divine Service, were among the liturgical resources. The majority of the hymns were set in four-part harmony, and were sung this way by church choirs and members of the congregation who were able to do so. Several well-known hymn tunes had an additional Faux Bourdon version. The influence of the English Folk Song movement, prevalent at that time, can be seen in hymns such as Vaughan Williams' King's Weston, sung to "At the name of Jesus" (Appendix 2:1). A section of forty-one items entitled "For Little Children", offered further suggestions for suitable children's hymns at the end of the section.

Protests from many quarters, notably former Methodists, resulted in the inclusion of a section in *The Hymnal* entitled "The Gospel Call." Given MacMillan's distaste for this popular type of hymn (described below), its omission from the draft hymnal of 1928 was not surprising.¹¹ Thirty-three Gospel hymns were, however, included in the final version of *The Hymnal*.

This popular genre was intended to appeal to the working classes. The music was generally easy to learn, with repeated phrases, uncomplicated devotional language and lively tempos.

¹¹ The Hymn Book Committee's reply to those protesting the omission of Gospel hymns from the draft hymnal of 1928, was that this particular section was still under preparation when the draft book was sent out.

These hymns, which had been popular at Methodist revival meetings in the previous century, were often written in the form of verse and refrain. In this century they continued to be an essential element in evangelical gatherings. A typical example is *Welcome Voice* by Lewis Hartsough (Appendix 2:2) with its refrain:

I am coming Lord!
Coming now to Thee!
Wash me, cleanse me, in the blood
That flowed on Calvary.

In spite of this broad base of different types of hymns from different periods in the church's history, the majority of the selections chosen for *The Hymnary* were products of nineteenth century England. Not only had this era seen a magnificent flowering of hymn writing, but the hymns produced spoke to Victorian theology and societal values. It was undoubtedly to this type of hymn that Rose referred when he spoke of "lofty sentiment" and "sound doctrine" as the elements in a hymn which would elevate and purify the heart of the worshipper.¹²

It is not surprising that *The Hymnary* bears a close resemblance to the *Book of Praise* of the Presbyterian Church in Canada (1918) since the Presbyterians dominated the United Church Hymnal committee. This resulted in the exclusion of eminent Methodists who had worked on *The Methodist Hymn and Tune Book* of 1917.

¹² A preference for Victorian hymns was also notable in the inaugural services at First United Church in Ottawa, in February of 1925, as previously noted.

Probably the most controversial matter before the editorial committee for the new book was question of the Presbyterian metrical Psalter. Arguments continued during four years over the number of psalms to be retained and their placement in the book. Should they remain as a group? If they were to be a group, should they be placed at the beginning of the book or at the end of the book? Or, would it be more suitable to place them singly, among hymns with similar messages? Final disposition of the Presbyterian metrical psalter included sixty-one selections, placed at the end of the hymn section of the book, before the prose psalms set to Anglican chant.

Further evidence of the strong Presbyterian influence in *The Hymnary* can be seen in the choice of "Holy, Holy, Holy" (sung to Nicaea) as the opening hymn in the book (Appendix 1:2). This hymn also occupied first place in the *Presbyterian Book of Praise*.¹³ On the other hand, Methodist collections (from as far back as 1780) had traditionally begun with Wesley's famous hymn "O for a thousand tongues to sing". Harding (1994: 62) says: "Given the controversy over the Psalms and the lack of Methodist hymnody, the committee could have granted a concession to former Methodists by continuing this tradition." The Presbyterians, however, appeared to have the upper hand.

¹³ "Holy, Holy, Holy" was soon adopted by the United Church as an introit, and has been so used until very recently, by which time the imagery of the words had become offensive to many congregations. Among these is First United Church in Ottawa, the community used as a case study in the following chapter.

To gain further understanding of the political situation in the United Church during the period when *The Hymnary* was being assembled, it is instructive to look at issues of importance which were before individual congregations of the church at that time. Many of these issues can be identified from articles in the *New Outlook*--the church publication which was the predecessor of *The United Church Observer*. In the "letters to the editor" lively discussions were in progress over the question of the ordination of women to full ministry in the church. While no one seemed to find any objection to this possibility, many correspondents felt that it was early in the history of the church to make such a change in policy.¹⁴

Other issues of concern were the ethical aspects of the temperance movement and the correct policy of the church in this matter. Considerable discussion also centred around the questions of divorce and remarriage. Continuing attention was given to work in the mission field, including the personal danger experienced by some of the missionaries sent out by the United Church. The threat of the communist regime in Russia towards religion was a further topic of debate.

The foremost issue, however, was war. The country was still sick from the horrors of the First World War. In 1930 the watchword (to be echoed by Neville Chamberlain eight years later)

¹⁴ Lydia Gruchy, ordained at St. Andrew's Church in Moose Jaw on November 4, 1936, was the first woman accepted into the full ministry of the United Church. Ordination of women had been finally approved earlier in that year by the General Council, with a decisive vote of seventy-nine to twenty-six. (White, 1990: 7-8)

was "Peace in our Time." *The Hymnary* was to do duty throughout the Second World War, and the hymns in the section entitled "National and International Life" were sung and argued over countless times during those long six years.¹⁵ It is instructive to look at some of the hymns in this section.

The opening hymn in the section of hymns designated as appropriate for "National and International Life" is "God save the King", which is called National Anthem (#508). The following hymn (# 509) offers an additional verse to the previous selection: six lines by Robert Murray (1832-1909) which refer specifically to Canada:

Our loved Dominion bless
With peace and happiness
From shore to shore;
And let our Empire be
United, loyal, free,
True to herself and Thee
For evermore.

O Canada (#511), is also considered to be a hymn. It is set to the well-known tune by Calixa Lavallée, with harmony edited by W.S. Dingman. The English words, by Albert Durrant Watson (1859-

¹⁵ "Onward Christian Soldiers", with words by Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), sung to the famous tune *St. Gertrude* by Arthur Seymour Sullivan (1842-1900), is an example of a hymn over which there was much controversy at that time; a controversy which continues until this day in many communities. The debate centres around whether soldiers can also be Christian, and whether they are led to war with the blessing and protection of the church. The words of the chorus speak for themselves:

Onward! Christian soldiers,
Marching as to war.
With the cross of Jesus
Going on before.

1926) are not familiar to Canadians today:¹⁶

Lord of the lands, beneath Thy bending skies,
On field and flood, where'er our banner flies,
Thy people lift their hearts to Thee,
Their grateful voices raise:
May our Dominion ever be a temple to thy praise.

Thy will alone let all enthrone;
Lord of the lands, make Canada thine own:
Lord of the lands, make Canada thine own.

The hopes of 1930 are voiced in hymn #514, in the words of John Addington Symonds (1840-1893). These are sung to Simeon by Samuel Stanley (1767-1822), a rousing tune in duple time (Appendix 2.3). The idealism of the time is poignantly expressed in verse 3:

Nation with nation, land with land,
Unarmed shall live as comrades free;
In every heart and brain shall throb
The pulse of one fraternity.

With the outbreak of World War II, a different set of hymns gained favour, many of which were in the section of *The Hymnary* entitled "Courage, Conflict, and Victory." Heber's hymn "The Son of God goes forth to war," sung to St. Anne (Appendix 2.4) shows a different approach to militarism, in a hymn more in keeping with the sentiments of "Onward Christian soldiers" than with hymns of tolerance such as the one by Symonds mentioned above.

¹⁶ O Canada, with the familiar English words written by Robert Stanley Weir in 1908, was approved by parliament as the national anthem of Canada in 1967, and officially adopted in 1980. Before that time, *God save the King [Queen]* and *O Canada* were sung as national anthems by custom only. During World War II they had equal prominence in English speaking Canada. (Personal recollection of the author). French words for neither anthem were offered in *The Hymnary* of 1930.

Heber's hymn begins:

The Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar:
Who follows in his train?

The words of Psalm XC (Appendix 2.5) were also sung to St. Anne. This hymn, well-known to soldiers in the Boer War and in World War I, had been passed on to their sons and daughters (and grandchildren), who were now involved in yet another terrible conflict. It begins with the solemn words:

O God, our help in ages past
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.

Children were not immune to the patriotic fervour of the day. Kipling's hymn, "Land of our birth" (Appendix 2.6) was the school song in at least one well-known United Church school.¹⁷ Verses 3 and 4 with their emphasis on submissive behaviour, obedience and sacrifice would be now viewed with suspicion in most United churches. Indeed, words like these are an anathema in a society such as the present one, where respect for the person of the child is seen as the right of that child, and where child abuse--whether physical, sexual or psychological--is being revealed both within the family and within the church itself.

¹⁷ Personal recollection of the author, at that time a student at Riverbend School for Girls in Winnipeg.

Teach us to bear the yoke in youth,
With steadfastness and careful truth;
That, in our time, Thy grace may give
The truth whereby the nations live.

Teach us to rule ourselves alway,
Controlled and cleanly night and day;
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.

Typical of the hymns found in the section entitled "For Little Children" is "Jesus Loves Me" (Appendix 2.7a). This hymn speaks to the Victorian sentiments which were still prevalent in many churches in Canada in 1930. The words address "little ones", playing upon their weakness, their sinful nature and the necessity of redemption. The music, set as verse and refrain, is simple and repetitive.

Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to him belong,
They are weak but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus love me!
The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me, He who died
Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
Let his little child come in.

Rose (1930:310) argues that the mission of a good hymn book is to mould character, elevate popular taste....and to purify the heart of the worshipper. While concepts of upright character and purity of heart can change over the years, a hymn like this

could, as Sharon Moon suggests,¹⁸ evoke images planted deep in the soul which could negate contemporary liberal teachings. This particular hymn (and others of the same genre) were the subject of much discussion when the new hymn book was being planned in the 1960s.

The Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada (the "Red Book":1971)

The new joint hymn book for the Anglican and United churches....will contain 500 of what the editors guarantee are among the finest hymns in the English language, culled from some 10,000 written as long ago as the fourth century or as recently as last year. About 275 are from the present United Church Hymnary-- but another 400 will be missing.

In the new book, Victorian piety, crinoline, sentiment, sweetness, the glories of war, flying angels, death beds, vales of tears and leaning on the breast of Jesus are out, out, out. Realism, social purpose, community and sound theology are in.

"The New Hymnary"¹⁹
United Church Observer, March 15, 1970.

What precipitated the change in the 60's? Well, for one thing, there was the development of the anti-war movement, anti-Vietnam. It was a whole popular movement: the Age of Aquarius. People really believed in the 60's, (and I was one of them), that a whole new day was dawning. It was such a hopeful era.

Sharon Moon²⁰

The Red Book (because that is what it has always been called

¹⁸ In conversation with the author, November 9, 1995, at First United Church, Ottawa.

¹⁹ Interim report by the committee in charge of compiling the new Hymn Book, *United Church Observer*, Vol.32(2): 12-15, 1970.

²⁰ In conversation with the author at First United Church, Ottawa, November 9, 1995.

in both the Anglican and United churches) was faced with the task of trying to be all things to all people: it was for the members of two churches of strikingly different traditions; for conservative congregations wedded to the historical hymns of their particular denomination; for ambitious contemporary composers and writers with a new concept of what a hymn should be; for young people clamouring for the inclusion of rock groups as part of worship; for congregations of increasingly diverse cultural backgrounds, and for the social activists. Since the new book was to be limited to 500 hymns, this task was indeed a daunting one.

As part of the negotiations towards union between the Anglican and the United churches of Canada,²¹ a joint committee was formed in 1965 to prepare a common hymn book for the two participating churches.²² The committee included fifteen members from each denomination, the chairman being Anglican Bishop F.H. Wilkinson, the vice-chairman the Reverend R.H.N. Davidson of the United Church. The Reverend Stanley Osborne, a distinguished

²¹ As previously noted, this union never took place. The Red Book is, however, still in use both communions (1995). A new United Church Hymnary is to be published in the spring of 1996, and a new Anglican Hymn Book is expected to be completed in 1997.

²² Of the fifteen United Church committee members, five were lay persons, and three of these were women. Five of the sixteen Anglican members were also lay delegates. Of these two were women. Each denomination had a further committee of consultants: twelve from the United Church, and sixteen from the Anglican church with three additional ex officio Anglican members. In addition there was a printing and publishing committee consisting of three members from each denomination.

United Church musician, was appointed full-time secretary. The book was authorized by both churches in February 1971, and was available in the fall of that year.

The aims of the new book, as stated in the preface, are similar in many ways to those of the compilers of *The Hymnary*, forty years before: it must be comprehensive, true to the character of both churches, able to meet the needs of people of different religious traditions, and useful in churches both large and small, rural and urban, old and new. Other factors were also important:

In addition to the foregoing, there are certain standards which must apply to any hymnal if it is to serve the church well. It must be Christian, an expression of faith in God as revealed in Christ, rather than an effusion of general religious sentiment....It must be a vital vehicle of worship, not an anthology of Christian classics, but a well-balanced selection of hymns.

...Despite the difficulties involved, the church must be hospitable to all creative energies if it is to live as Christ's body in these times, and seek to adapt contemporary modes of poetic and musical expression for use in public worship.

(Preface to *The Hymn Book*, 1971: no pagination).

*

The tone of the new book was set with its first hymn: "All Creatures of our God and King" (Appendix 2.8). Several innovations can be observed in its presentation. Sung to a German chorale tune *Lasst Uns Erfreuen* (1623), the harmonies are by the Canadian composer Derek Holman. The venerable words of St. Francis of Assisi (1184-1226) are offered both English and French,²³ and the refrain ends with a set of rousing Alleluias,

²³ There had been no hymns in French in *The Hymnal* of 1930.

an expression of praise common to both languages. Contemporary sensibilities are addressed in words affirming the brotherhood of man, and in expressing a reverence for the earth. Echoing, (and perhaps saluting) "Holy, holy, holy,"²⁴ (the opening hymn in *The Hymnary*), "All Creatures" ends with a doxology: "Praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, three in one." In the contemporary style, the quarter note replaces the traditional half note as the basic rhythmic unit. As is the case throughout the book, this hymn is offered in a lower key than in former publications of either church, to accommodate congregational singing rather than choir voices.

The two churches shared a basic repertoire of three-hundred and fifty hymns, and of these two-hundred and fifteen were to find their way into the Red Book. Sixty additional hymns came from the repertoire of the United Church, among them the sixteen selections which survived cuts from the Presbyterian Psalter. These venerable psalm paraphrases had now become ordinary hymns, and were dispersed throughout the book in sections appropriate to their messages. Power politics had changed considerably in forty years: not only had "Holy, Holy, Holy" been displaced, but the Psalter had almost disappeared.

²⁴This hymn is now found in a section of hymns of praise suitable for the opening of the morning service (#50). Both words and harmonization are identical with those in *The Hymnal*, although the key is a tone lower. A delightful descant by Godfrey Hewitt, organist and choirmaster at the Anglican Cathedral in Ottawa at the time of publication, has been added.

The ninety additional hymns from the Anglican repertoire were new to the United Church. Since a sung liturgy is part of the Anglican tradition, a liturgical appendix of twenty-seven items was added. This included versicles and responses, canticles, the Litany and three complete communion services, two of them by Canadian composers.²⁵ Further additions included ancient Office Hymns of the Catholic Church.

The remaining hymns in the Red Book were new to both denominations. Most of them were modern compositions, with words addressing issues of the day in contemporary theological language. In contrast to *The Hymnary*, twenty-eight individual Canadian composers were represented with a total of 168 original compositions or arrangements.²⁶ The committee secretary, Stanley Osborne, himself contributed four original hymns, forty-two arrangements or harmonizations, and two descants. Among his arrangements were several Negro spirituals, a new departure in the hymnody of both churches.

F.R.C. Clarke, composer of twenty-three original hymns or arrangements, is probably the most controversial composer among the Canadians represented. While his arrangements of well-known hymn tunes are usually set in traditional four-part harmony, many people have felt that his original compositions are too avant-

²⁵Healey Willan and Godfrey Rideout. The third service, by John Merbecke (?-c.1585) had an organ accompaniment, also by Healey Willan.

²⁶ The number of Canadian composers may actually be greater, since it has not been possible to identify some names listed in the index.

garde for most congregations. Although professional musicians often admire the musical quality of his work, the abrupt modulations, harsh discords and strings of open fifths that characterize many of his compositions do not always build confidence in a congregation unskilled in singing atonal music. The reaction can, in fact, often be hostile rather than worshipful.

Among Canadian poets, mention must be made of the five contributions by the Reverend Walter Farquharson, a future Moderator of the United Church.²⁷ His hymns, written originally for his own congregation, speak to the farming community, and of man's responsibility to the soil.

Hear us, our Father, as we pray
for those who till the soil;
grant us a sense of growing worth,
give purpose to our toil.

Our work, our knowledge, and our plans,
we offer for your use;
teach us to live in such a way
this land knows no abuse.

(#380, Red Book)

Another poet of note is the Dutch writer, F.H. Kaan (twenty-five hymns). While Farquharson and Kaan both wrote in pre-inclusive language, as was the style of the day, their theology is still in agreement with modern thinking. They have since both moved into using inclusive language, and remain foremost in

²⁷ During the time that the Red Book was being compiled, Farquharson was a minister and teacher in Saskatchewan, and the Saskatchewan consultant on the Hymn Book Committee.

their field in the United Church.

There is no doubt that the Red Book is a "difficult" book, and as such has continued to be the subject of criticism to this day. As will be shown below, much of the new music is not readily accessible, and the texts often speak of subjects that traditionally have not been mentioned in the church. But there is an aesthetic, an ambition, in some of the music and in some of the modernist poetry, that is unlikely to be tried again in a hymn book intended for general congregational use. This book reflects the daring of the 60s and the implicit faith and hope that things could change.

An example of this extreme modernism can be seen in Clarke's "God of Concrete" (Appendix 2.9), where the clashing harmonies and jagged tune underline the images of the words-- inanimate, cold, unforgiving, angular objects such as steel, concrete and pylons.²⁰ These words speak of power and speed, but it is the power of machines, the speed of freeways, rockets and cables. When the poet reaches the "world of truth" in verse three, and the "world of love" in verse four, the harsh atonal music is, in my opinion, at odds with the softer images suggested by the words. While it might be argued that the music reminds us of the underlying "concrete" world, it could also be seen as inappropriate for the closing verses of this hymn.

²⁰This hymn has always been held up as a model of the aesthetic of the Red Book, but the author, who has been a church organist for many years, has never yet met anyone who has actually sung it.

David Hall²⁹ observes:

Hymns like "God of Concrete" were too politically correct even for their own time [1960s]. Concrete and God don't go together. God is a spirit, concrete is a hard, inanimate object. As a scientist, I'm turned off right away, at the first line.

"Lord of the Dance" (Appendix 2.10) with words and music by Sidney Carter was the subject of much criticism by correspondents in the *United Church Observer* in 1970, in the period immediately preceding the publication of the Red Book.³⁰ Conservative church members found the concept of dance in connection with the crucifixion to be particularly shocking. Objections centred particularly on verse 4, which reads:

I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black--
its hard to dance with the devil on your back;
they buried my body, and they thought I'd gone--
but I am the dance, and I stil' go on.

Another controversial hymn was "the one on sex" (Appendix 2.11). Set to a well-known English/Irish folk tune called *Kingsfold*, the words are by Derwyn Dixon Jones (1925-). The first verse reads:

²⁹ In conversation with the author, September 12, 1995, at First United Church, Ottawa. A member of the church choir, David Hall is a trained singer who teaches high-school science.

³⁰ While most letters were critical, some correspondents offered an alternative meaning for the word "dance". One suggestion was that it was a physical manifestation of a spiritual experience. The Reverend Allan McIntosh, of New Glasgow, N.S., for example, wrote in August 1970 (*U.C. Observer* Vol.33(2): 2-3, 1970): "Sidney Carter has written many electrifying hymns. *Lord of the Dance* is a powerful expression of the Resurrection, and a bold attempt to express theological truth in simple, vivid imagery."

Now thank we God for bodies strong,
vitality and zest,
for strength to meet the day's demands,
the urge to give our best,
for all the body's appetites
which can fulfilment find,
and for the sacrament of sex
that recreates our kind.

In this case outrage was twofold: the very mention of the word "sex" in a church setting, where Victorian hymns (which ignored the physical body) had until that time been the norm, was shocking, unseemly, and perceived to be particularly unsuitable for young ears. Further outrage was voiced at the suggestion that sex might be a sacrament. In the United Church of Canada, only two sacraments, baptism and communion, were and are recognized.

Objections to the book focused not only on what had been included, but on what had been excluded, and what had been revised. There was general approval of the "old hymns" that were left alone, but neither denomination was happy about the favorite hymns that had inevitably been left out. While there had been a vigorous pruning of Victoriana, some old, beloved hymns remained, such as "Rock of Ages", "My faith looks up to Thee", and "All Gloxy, Laud and Honour." New harmonies such as those presented for the latter two hymns were considered to be an added difficulty by many choirs, since it meant unlearning an old, familiar setting in order to learn a new one. The omission of more contemporary hymns such as "How Great Thou Art" was a matter of dismay to some people, and merited an explanation in an

editorial in the *United Church Observer* (Clarke 1970:8).²¹

The attitude towards war had changed after World War II, and most of the former patriotic and militaristic hymns no longer met with approval. "O, Canada" however, remained in the hymn book, this time printed in both official languages, with the words which are now familiar. The two versions of "God Save the Queen"²² were now combined into one hymn, the first verse of which was printed in French and English. Kipling's vigorously imperialistic hymn, "Land of our Birth", (Appendix 2.6) was divested of its first and last verses,²³ so that it now began "Father in Heaven who lovest all." The Victorian morality, most evident in the uncut version, was still there for all who wished to enjoy it. It was paired, however, with a new and unfamiliar tune.²⁴

"These things shall be, a loftier race" (Appendix 2.3) had not been retained. "Onward Christian Soldiers" had at first been

²¹"How Great Thou Art," published in 1953, was extremely popular in 1970. The words are by Stuart K.Hine (b. 1899) who also wrote the music, which was an adaptation of a Swedish melody. The owners of the copyright refused permission to include this hymn in the Red Book, and, as Clarke points out, they were suing people who mimeographed it (op. cit.).

²²Formerly printed as two hymns in the Blue book: #508 comprised verses one and two (author unknown: 18th century); #509 offered one additional verse referring specifically to Canada, written by Robert Murray (1832-1909.) No author is given for the French translation.

²³ One other minor change was made. In verse 5 "Man's strength to succour man's distress" became "Man's strength to comfort man's distress."

²⁴ Pentecost was replaced by Lledrod, a Welsh hymn melody.

withdrawn, and then reinstated after vigorous protests.²⁵

Patriotic hymns had, however, generally given way to hymns about peace and love, such as Kaan's "For the Healing of the Nations" (Appendix 2.12a) normally sung to Westminster Abbey.

Children's hymns no longer had their own section, but were dispersed throughout the Red Book, signifying that children are part of the whole congregation. In hymns such as "Jesus Loves Me" (Appendix 2.7a & b), the words had been liberally edited, and the harmony simplified. An article in *The Observer* in March, 1970 ("The New Hymnary" 32(2):13) compares the words of the two versions, showing how theology had changed in forty years (Illustration 2.1, page 58). Gone are the references to sin, death and dying. Verse three of the original version (quoted below) has disappeared entirely:

Jesus loves me, loves me still,
Though I'm very weak and ill;
Comes to watch me from on high
Comes to watch me where I lie.

The emphasis in 1971 is on understandable images including loving families and Jesus as friend.

²⁵Edwin Sayle, in conversation with the author on September 7, 1995, commented on "Onward Christian Soldiers" from the point of view of a professional singer. "That hymn," he said, "has such a wonderful bass part. It's almost as good as the Hallelujah Chorus." (He referred here to G.F. Handel's *Messiah*.) Edwin Sayle has been bass soloist and member of the choir of First United Church since 1950.

THEOLOGY OF "JESUS LOVES ME"

The Bible says it, but that is not how children know about love. They learn it from their parents and friends!

Jesus loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to him belong,
They are weak but he is strong.

more realistic -

Jesus loves me, this I know,
And the Bible tells me so,
Little ones to him belong,
In his love we will be strong.

What for? Heaven's gate to open wide, He will wash away my sin, Let his little child come in.

Jesus loves me, he who died for me, As he loved so long ago, Taking children on his knee, Saying, "Let them come to me."

Jesus loves me, he will stay
Close beside me all the way;
If I love him, when I die,
He will take me home on high.

Children know what Jesus is, just a matter of how far they will let him walk with them.

Jesus loves me still today,
Walking with me on my way,
Wanting as a friend to give,
Light and love to all who live.

Understands the image, they have seen father's knee, they have seen pictures of Jesus with children

Morbid emphasis on death and dying!

Illustration 2.1

It is not surprising that taste in hymns had changed between 1930 and 1970. The second World War and the Vietnamese war had sickened people of international conflict, and hymns of peace, understanding, and respect for the earth spoke to the current ethic. The Red Book, as the authors said, aimed at "realism, purpose, community and sound theology," (United Church Observer 32(2): 12, 1970). Smaller, less prosperous churches, or more conservative congregations retained The Hymnary for a time (indeed, it is still in use in some churches), but most United Churches bought the Red Book soon after its publication.

During the 1960s and the 1970s Canada was still culturally Christian and, although the church was in the process of losing its power, it was still a key force in Canadian society. In that

period of peace and relative prosperity after the depression and World War II, the family often attended church together. The parents, brought up on the old blue book, retained an inner-core experience of Victorian theology and morality, although they were often singing and hearing something quite different. The children were exposed to the exuberant modern theological concepts of the Red Book, sophisticated poetry, avant-garde music and guitar and rock groups in church, but they also heard some of the theology of their parents and grandparents when "the good old hymns" were sung from time to time.

Songs for a Gospel People

Songs for a Gospel People was conceived two years ago out of a growing...need for renewal of congregational singing and a vision of new directions which that renewal might take....The worship renewal we are experiencing in many of our congregations does not always extend to music. We do not all perceive the answer to this need in the same way. But there is a growing sense among us that we need new resources if our singing is to fill its proper place in worship.

Gerald Hobbs (1987)³⁵

SGP? I love it. I think it was a much needed resource to complement the Red book. But we desperately need a new hymn book, because we need more than those two can give us. The Green Book has a good selection, but it's not enough. It's only an interim solution.

Sharon Moon³⁶

The Green Book? I'll be glad to get rid of it. It's an attempt to be modern and pleasing, but it ends up

³⁵ Hereafter referred to as "SGP", or the "Green Book".

³⁶ In conversation with the author, November 9, 1995.

catering to the lowest common denominator.

David Hall²⁷

Songs for a Gospel People, published in 1987, is subtitled by its editors as "a supplement to the Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada." Although it is not an official hymn book of either church, it is widely used by both denominations.²⁸ Published in response to a growing demand for hymns in keeping with current theological and social concepts which are supported by music in a contemporary style, its success has been phenomenal. A recent article in the *United Church Observer* recalls:

Songs for a Gospel People was an explosion. Not only did the project prove that inclusive language provides no barrier to good, singable hymns, but also that people want them--and in large numbers. The initial breakeven point of 10,000 copies--over five times the print run of any previous Wood Lake publication--was eventually dwarfed by orders for 165,000.

(Howard 1993: 22-23).

What had precipitated this explosion? It was obvious that there had been profound changes within the United Church since the publication of the Red Book sixteen years previously. The sense of power, which had been part of the euphoria of the 1960s, had been replaced by feelings of disillusionment and cynicism,

²⁷ In conversation with the author, September 12, 1995. David Hall is tenor soloist in the choir at First United Church. He actively works with young people, both as a high school teacher and as a musician.

²⁸ The editorial committee, some of whom were clergy, (although they were not so identified) included seven women and eight men. The publishing company, Wood Lake Books of Winfield, B.C., was at that time a small private enterprise.

according to Sharon Moon.³⁹ The popularization of Jungian analytic psychology, and of theories of process theology by people such as Tillich and Teilhard de Chardin,⁴⁰ were all part of a changing image of God, Moon says. God was no longer seen as a paternalistic, judgemental figure "up there" but rather as a nurturing, supportive presence within us and around us. At the same time the women's movement had had a profound effect on how we understand and organize power: Bible study had revealed a feminine face of God.

A new awareness of ecology had changed our sense of connection with the earth from one of stewardship to one of living in harmony with creation. Scientific advances, including the exploration of space, had forever altered our vision of the universe. Finally, there was a whole new awareness of the third world, an awareness which had precipitated a change from the traditional imperialistic role of the church's missionary societies to one of

³⁹ In conversation with the author, November 9, 1995.

⁴⁰ Jung placed the source of religion below the level of the conscious self. Bullock (1988: 450) says that Jung's theory of the unconscious sees human behaviour as being determined not only by the conflicts already present in individual and in racial history, but also by a person's aims and aspirations. In his practice of analytic psychology Jung lays emphasis on dreams as an indicator of a person's striving towards individuation, as a search for creative development, wholeness and completion.

Bullock (ibid.: 683-4) defines process theology as "A modern form of Christian theism, which takes account of modern science, especially the knowledge of evolution, and which teaches that God's way of working in the world is a slow process, patiently overcoming the elements of chance and evil present in the universe, and including in itself all the good that is brought about. The emphasis is on God's involvement rather than his self-sufficiency, his love rather than his omnipotence."

partnership.

In 1987, the year that *Songs For a Gospel People* was launched, church attendance was down. With the changing roles of men and women, the shape of family life was also changing. People no longer came to church for cultural reasons; they came out of a sense of need if they came at all. One particular issue was tearing some congregations apart: while the church had affirmed the human rights of homosexuals as far back as 1977, ten years later the divisive issue of the ordination of gays and lesbians was before individual church communities.

Many of these issues were alluded to in the forward to *Songs of a Gospel People*:

Today's hymnody bears the mark of today's church. It is ecumenical, drawing from all members of the family of God throughout the world. It is pluralist, recognizing that in the church we are a mixed community, and that our words and musical styles need to reflect that diversity. It is biblical and rooted in the Church's story, because being faithful in the great issues of justice and peace in our world means drawing nourishment from our past. It is inclusive, imaging and nurturing the wholeness of the body of Christ.

(Hobbs, op. cit.)

SGP is a small book (134 selections) to have made such an impact. The music and the words are probably equally responsible for its immediate popularity. Many of the hymns are written in a contemporary musical idiom (described below), a style which is more familiar to younger people than that of the traditional hymns of the church. Numerous selections in SGP are in the

contemporary "folk" genre,⁴¹ and are called "songs", not hymns, by young (and not so young) members of the congregation of First United. Sometimes the words are set to traditional folk-song tunes, but more often the music is composed in that style, usually as verse and refrain. With their basic harmonic progressions, minimal accompaniments and repeated musical phrases, they call to mind the gospel songs after which the book is named. Accompaniments are often pianistic in style, and most selections are also provided with guitar chords. These hymns are generally well-suited to the electronic organ with its many sonic options and expressive possibilities. They lose much of their character, however, when played on a pipe organ, due to its distinctive quality of sound, and to the mechanical limitations, both expressive and physical, inherent in a wind instrument.

In another genre favoured by the compilers of SGP, use is made of American tunes from historical collections such as the *Repository of Sacred Music* (1813). Set to four-part harmony, they recall the style of early Protestant hymn singing on this

⁴¹Many of the hymns in SGP are set to traditional folk tunes. Traditional folk tunes are of unknown authorship, passed on from generation to generation, often sung without accompaniment, and with local variants. Examples of this type of music can be found, for example, in #63 SGP: "Let us talents and tongues employ" which is set to a Jamaican folk song, adapted by Doreen Potter, with words by Fred Kaan; or #89: "As long as the hart" which is set to an English folk melody arranged by Darrell Nixon, with words by Danna Harkin.

In contrast, other hymns which have been composed in the popular "folk style" are a contemporary addition to hymnody, most of them having been written in the last fifteen years. They are usually set as melody and accompaniment, the accompaniment being arranged for "keyboards" or "guitar." They often make use of blues chords and syncopated rhythms.

continent. Many of them can be sung antiphonally. SGP also includes a small selection of service music, some of which is drawn from the repertoire of the Protestant ecumenical community of Taizé in France. This music, making full use of chant, ostinato and rounds, favours short melodic phrases with singable musical units that can be readily memorized by members of the congregation.

The main attraction of *Songs for a Gospel People*, however, is probably its language. Using contemporary English and inclusive language, the words show respect and compassion for all of humankind. Reflecting current beliefs, a whole range of images of God are presented. No longer is "he" seen as a judgemental patriarchal ruler, but as a spirit, or a presence, working in different ways in our lives and in the world around us. Changes have been made to the words of some old favorite hymns, making them acceptable to contemporary Christian thought.

D'thea Webster,⁴² an intern minister and former conductor of the children's choir at First United, comments:

In contrast to the Red Book, the hymns in the Green Book are aimed at a different sense of community. It's a different, younger community, more familiar with popular music. The music is more introverted, and the hymns are not so much hymns of praise as hymns of personal experience.

Because many of the hymns in the Red Book are rooted in pietism, they don't talk about individual human beings at all. They talk about God "up there", a disembodied God. They have become the expression of the experiences of many people--of the larger group.

⁴² In conversation with the author, September 11, 1995.

While the United Church of Canada is ninety-nine percent English speaking, the Green Book is first of all a Canadian publication, and as such offers twenty texts in French and one in Cree. Thirteen of the hymns are original Canadian compositions, nine of them being by Ron Klusmeier,⁴³ and five by Darryl Nixon, music editor of SGP. The American composer Jim Strathdee is responsible for eight original compositions, all written in the contemporary (composed) "folk" style. There are five texts by Walter Farquharson, and eight by Fred Kaan, both of whom were first included in the Red Book.

Besides music in the contemporary folk style, some selections in the traditional musical style of the church are included. Affirming ties with the historical church, the first hymn in SGP is the famous one by Wesley: "O, for a thousand tongues to sing."⁴⁴ The words closely follow Wesley's original text, with some minor adjustments (Appendix 2.13 a&b). The

⁴³ Ron Klusmeier and his wife Kris were commissioned by the United Church in 1972 to "encourage the use of modern music in churches" (Anon., 1972). They visited churches across Canada to perform, hold workshops and consult with groups about new ways to use music in church services. Originally rock musicians, they have both worked in the United Church since 1970. Ron Klusmeier says: "Music and the arts have been patronized by the church since the 12th century, but any significant music of this century has been developed outside the church. Somewhere along the line, the church forced music out by its hostility to new forms of expression. It's our idealistic hope to get some of it back into the church" (ibid.).

Klusmeier has, since 1970, worked closely with poet Walter Farquharson. Five songs which emerged from this collaboration are included in the Green Book.

⁴⁴As previously noted, this had been the opening hymn in Methodist hymn books since the eighteenth century, but was replaced by others in the two official publications of the United Church, 1930 and 1971.

music suggested for these words in SGP recalls the Protestant singing tradition on this continent, having been adapted by American Lowell Mason in 1839. SGP also notes that this hymn "may be sung to "Richmond" (HB 147)." "Richmond" is the traditional tune for these words; HB refers to the Red Book.

It is of interest to note changes made by writers such as Fred Kaan since 1971, as, for example, in the second of his two versions of "For the healing of the nations" (Appendix 2.12 a&b). The minor substitutions in verses one, three and four make the hymn acceptable to most feminists. The most obvious change is in verse three, where "dogmas keeping man from man" has been replaced by "dogmas that obscure your plan". Some supporters of inclusive language substitute another word for "father" in verse two, for example by changing "Lead us Father in to freedom" to "Lead us onward into freedom".

Walter Farquharson has also made the change to inclusive language. While his hymn "For the beauty of the prairies", as found in the Red Book, mentions "man" in verses one and three, in a later text such as "Walls that divide" (Appendix 2.14) no trace of exclusive terms for God or humankind are to be found.

"Walls that divide", a typical example of Farquharson's collaboration with Ron Klusmeier, is in the contemporary "folk" style. Set up as verse and refrain, it is sung in unison with accompaniment by piano or guitar. A rhythmic ostinato pattern is announced in the first phrase, and continues with little variation until the end of the piece, and short melodic units,

inclusion of "Tell me the stories of Jesus" (Appendix 2.16) is somewhat unexpected. This Victorian hymn was found in the section of the old Blue Book entitled "for little children", and was sung by the grandparents of today's children. It skipped the next generation, since it was not included in the Red Book. However, the first three verses of this old favorite reappear in SGP with the original tune and words. The language is somewhat old-fashioned: "and I shall fancy his blessing" is not part of the vocabulary of a Canadian child in 1995. However, although the melody has been reharmonized, and the pitch is a semitone lower, this is essentially the same hymn that was sung in Canada early in this century.

Like its two predecessors, *Songs for a Gospel People* has its critics. Traditional church choirs miss the four-part harmony they love to sing. Organists have had to become pianists or guitarists for many of the hymns. Many musicians feel that the music is "inferior" to the words. The jazzy rhythms and harmonies bother some people; others miss the "good old tunes." Some people find hymns in this new style to be too long (or too short), too hard to learn (or too simplistic). However, the words that they sing are usually highly commended for their theological and social content, and for the sensitive use made of inclusive language.

CONCLUSION

The three hymn books discussed in this chapter have all been used by congregations of the United Church of Canada at different periods during the last sixty-five years. The contents speak of the

situation of the church itself, and by looking at the type of hymns favoured by their respective editorial committees and by individual congregations, it is possible to observe political maneuvering as well as changes in theological and social concepts.

The hymn selected to open each book acts as an indicator of what is to follow. In considering which hymn was chosen to occupy this important position, it should be remembered that two of the three books under discussion were essentially compromises. In *The Hymnary* of 1930, the Presbyterians appear to be in a position of relative power. Not only does the hymn traditionally sung at the opening of their Sunday morning service occupy the place of honour in the new book--the whole book bears a strong resemblance to the Presbyterian Book of Praise of 1918. By 1971, in an attempt to have something to please everyone, the first selection in the Red Book was a true compromise. The words of the chosen hymn were written in the thirteenth century, but in this publication they are set to a seventeenth-century German hymn tune, possibly suggesting ties with the universal historical Christian church. At the same time, this hymn acknowledges its Canadian setting: it is harmonized by a Canadian musician, and the words are in both official languages. The Green Book of 1987 tries something completely different. The first hymn is the one which historically opened the old Methodist hymn books: "O for a thousand tongues to sing." With minor editorial changes, the words are those written in 1739 by Charles Wesley, poet and father of Methodism. In keeping with the aims of SGP, Wesley's words are set to a tune which comes from the American gospel

tradition. Written by Carl Glaeser in 1828, the music was adapted by Lowell Mason in 1839.⁴³ In choosing this hymn, a bow is made both to the English Methodists and to the gospel tradition in North America, although no specific reference is made to Canada.

Changes in language indicate changing theological concepts, often linked to political events or movements, and to scientific advances. While the words of "The Son of God goes forth to war" were appropriate in 1930 and 1939-45, subsequent peace movements have changed the way we talk about war, and this is reflected in the hymn books of 1971 and 1987. The feminist movement has been largely responsible for the change to inclusive language, and while this is glimpsed in 1971, it is not fully implemented until 1987. Respect for the person of the child is indicated in the care with which hymns are selected in each book, and in the editorial changes made in 1971 and 1987 so that old hymns might be acceptable to new generations.

While the tone of each book suggests a vision of the church in its particular historical period, the selection by individual congregations of which hymns they will sing is the final, deciding factor in assessing the characteristics of a particular church community.

⁴³ As previously noted, immediately after the title, "O, for a thousand tongues to sing", there is an editorial note referring to the tune to which these words are customarily sung: "may be sung to Richmond (HB [Red Book] 147)".

CHAPTER 3: REORIENTATION

People move in and out of church culture. In the United Church of Canada the congregation's main experience with this particular culture is through their attendance at the Sunday morning service, which lasts (ideally) no more than an hour. Participation in other informal group meetings during the week is entirely voluntary. If church members are exposed to church culture for such a limited time, what, if anything, will remain with them during the rest of the week, as they go about their daily lives?

In the United Church of Canada, the congregation's principal active participation in the Sunday church service is through the singing of hymns. Hymns open and close worship, and provide continuity among other elements of the liturgy.¹ In a survey of selected members of First United Church in Ottawa, the majority of the informants emphasized the importance of hymns both as an integral part of Sunday worship and as a continuing influence during the week.²

¹Other elements of the liturgy would include the sermon, prayers, and reading of the scriptures. Continuity can also be provided through other music performed by the choir, soloists or instrumentalists, or by liturgical dance or drama. The role of the congregation in these cases is, however, that of listener or observer.

²A case study of hymn preferences in this church is to be found later in this chapter. Of the twenty-four informants who were part of this project, six rated hymns as the most important part of the church service, thirteen rated them as equal to other elements, (including the sermon, prayers and scriptures), two rated the sermon as the most important, and three felt that hymns were of lesser importance than the other parts of the service.

Everyone in any congregation is self-styled expert on hymns. Feedback to the clergy and music director often takes the form of complaints: why don't we sing more modern/traditional/gospel hymns?; the hymns are too fast/too slow/too loud; the pitch is too high; I only like happy hymns; we sing that hymn too often; we have too many new hymns; I don't like the language; we need to sing hymns we know so that we can concentrate on the message of the words--the list is endless, and it seems that regardless of the care that is taken in the selection of hymns, it is impossible to please everyone.

The church is, in fact, a site of cultural encounter, and this can be clearly observed in the hymns favoured by a congregation. As will be shown in this study, hymn preferences are not necessarily dictated by age, sex, education or personal economic circumstances. Indeed, the confrontation between supporters of traditional hymnody and those of contemporary hymnody is not just a symbol of a cultural encounter--it is central to the whole concept of worship. Since lay participation in the planning and conducting of church services is encouraged in First United Church, the selection of hymns is a key indicator of the nature of that congregation. Not only must personal preferences be taken into account, but with the globalization of the culture industry, new kinds of hymns must be acknowledged by a congregation which is aware of other cultures, and which sees its mission as extending beyond national borders.

Straw observes:

The sense of purpose articulated within a music community normally depends on the affective link between two terms: contemporary musical practices, on the one hand, [and] the music heritage which is seen to render this contemporary activity appropriate to a given context, on the other. Within a musical scene, that same sense of purpose is articulated within those forms of communication through which the building of musical alliances and the drawing of musical boundaries take place. The manner in which musical practices within a scene tie themselves to processes of historical change occurring within a larger international culture will also be a significant basis of the way in which such forms are positioned within that scene at the local level. (1991: 373)

Frith's comments on the tension between musical tradition and contemporary creativity are also relevant to the problems faced in the selection of hymns at the level of a local congregation:

The bourgeois music world constantly faces a tension between its firm sense of musical tradition (which has to be preserved, documented, refined and elaborated) and an equally firm belief in the value of creativity and the importance of the new and the original. (1990: 97)

*

Music, and this includes hymns sung in a church, is a human activity involving social relationships, identities and collective practices (Cohen 1993: 127). It is something created, used, and interpreted by individuals, who may, by this participation in a group act, assume a group identity. In writing about the social functions of music, Frith (1987) mentions the intense emotional experiences which are part of an involvement in popular music. When applied to the performance of hymns within a church service, his theories offer new insights into this contrasting situation. The expression of intense emotion is

acceptable when hymns are being sung in a church setting. When people sing hymns together, not only are they participating in a creative act (singing), but they are drawn into an emotional alliance with the other people taking part in that same activity. This, says Frith, can aid in the creation of identity--a sort of self-definition, which includes a particular place in society. At the same time, Frith says, music (and by implication, hymn-singing) can organize our sense of time "to make us feel we are living within a moment, with no memory or anxiety about what has come before [and] what will come after" (1987: 139). Finally, Frith argues, [popular] "music is something possessed....In possessing music we make it part of our own identity and build it into our sense of ourselves" (1987: 143).

If hymn singing is an intense (but acceptable) expression of emotion, a participatory act which aids in the creation of an individual and collective identity, and if, in possessing a hymn, that music becomes part of the inner self, then a cultural encounter involving the choice of hymns can become a highly-charged emotional and/or political confrontation.

Music has an additional unique quality--its direct physical effect on the body. When asked whether it would not be preferable to read the words of a hymn aloud rather than struggle with unsingable music, Sharon Moon replied that music, because of its unique qualities, is an inseparable element in any hymn, because

it resonates in various parts of the body.³

McClary also speaks about embodiment and music.

By far the most difficult aspect of music to explain is its uncanny ability to make us experience our bodies in accordance with its gestures and rhythms. Yet this aspect is also what makes music so compelling. (1991: 23)

McClary cites Raymond Williams⁴ on the same subject:

We are only beginning to investigate this on any scientific basis, but it seems clear from what we already know that rhythm is a way of transmitting a description of experience, in such a way that the experience is re-created in the person receiving it, not merely as an "abstraction" or an emotion but as a physical effect on the organism--on the blood, on the breathing, on the physical patterns of the brain...it is more than a metaphor; it is a physical experience as real as any other. (1991: 38)

This physical resonance with the music of hymns can be the source of yet another cultural confrontation. Many people in First United Church feel comfortable with hymns which invite physical participation, whether it be by gestures (for example by raising the arms or clasping hands), by playing percussion instruments, clapping, or swaying in time to the music. Other people (not always the older members) experience difficulty in using their body as an expressive medium, at least in the setting of a church service. Using (or not using) the body as an element of participation could be an indication that other cultural or

³In conversation with the author, Ottawa, November 9, 1995.

⁴Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Cox & Wyman, 1961), 66-69.

psychological factors (or inhibitions²) are also present, although they may not be readily apparent (Shepherd (1990: 6)).

Finally, hymn singing at a Sunday morning church service can never be divorced from the space in which it takes place. This space, set aside for the specific act of worship, is owned and cared for by the participants. The architecture and furnishings announce its special purpose. People are welcomed at the door, and are given an "order of service" (programme) before they take their accustomed seats. Although these regular seats are not assigned, members of a congregation usually lay claim to a particular place when they first attend the church. This ritual (and no doubt symbolic) act of occupying a specific space within a larger one continues to be important in this orderly world. That particular space, occupied on that particular occasion, acts as a mediator between the ritual, ceremony and music on the one hand, and the individual member of the congregation on the other. As Berland observes:

We are not simply listeners to sound or watchers of images, but occupants of spaces for listening, who by being there help to produce definite meanings and effects.
(1992: 39)

In this sacred space the orderly ritual of the Sunday

²For example, the element of Victorian rejection of the human body in the context of worship, (as opposed to a glorification of Christ's body on the cross) can be noted in many hymns from that era. While most of these hymns are no longer in use in First United Church, bodily participation in hymns could be a step which some people are reluctant to take, perhaps because of deep-seated, unconscious inhibitions which are not always easy to recognize.

service has many layers. Beneath the surface lie strata not only of social relationships and group identity, but of the personal experiences and concerns which each participant brings to this brief encounter with church culture. Within the space of one hour people expect to be taught, to be nurtured, and to be sent away with a sense of empowerment. The final act, in which the whole congregation participates, is the singing of a commissioning hymn.⁶ As McClary (1989: 77-78) observes:

...music can provide sustenance to those who somehow continue living in the face of institutional contempt and neglect...the joyful engagement of one's body in dance can be the oppositional movement in lives almost overwhelmed by poverty and racism...the survival of a people and its values can occur through the medium of music...

Like all hymns, the commissioning hymn can speak equally to the conscious and the unconscious mind (Moon).⁷ It must therefore project a meaningful message, through both sound and word, if it is to provide sustenance to the church members as they move from this brief encounter with church culture back into the social realities of the outside world.

In the next section we will see how a congregation is articulated through participation in the church service and

⁶A commissioning hymn is often sung as the last element in the church service. In this hymn, clergy and members of the congregation send each other out into the world with a closing thought to guide them during the coming week. This may be a sung benediction, or a closing charge such as "What does the Lord Require?", discussed below.

⁷Sharon Moon, in conversation with the author: First United Church, Ottawa. November 9, 1995.

specifically through the singing of hymns. The focus will be on the various debates centred around contemporary and traditional hymnody. The goal will be to see how the varied and, at times, contrasting choice of hymns has been based on various criteria, involving (depending on the cases) the following issues: the mediation of space, the physical effect of music on the body, the public expression of emotion, and the emergence of a group identity through the communal act of singing hymns together. Through the ethnography of the preferred hymnody of a particular congregation in the United Church of Canada, I will examine how the changing theological and social values of this community are effected through the selection of the words and musical styles of certain hymns.

A CASE STUDY: FIRST UNITED CHURCH, OTTAWA

The remainder of this chapter consists of a case study of preferences in hymnody as expressed by members of the congregation and clergy in First United Church, Ottawa. This study was conducted through personal interviews with twenty-four members of the community. The purpose of the project was to identify theological and social issues which are of the greatest importance to this group as they are articulated in the words and the styles of the hymns which they now favour. Through this examination, a profile of the congregation became apparent.

First United Church in Ottawa was selected for this case study for several reasons. The first reason is that I work in this church as the director of music and, as such, I am well-

acquainted with the clergy, choir, church officials, and many members of the congregation. Since a new United Church Hymn Book is presently under preparation, the time for such a study (which I began in 1994) seemed appropriate.

A second, equally important reason for selecting First United Church is the open-minded attitude of the minister, Sharon Moon, and the resulting interesting mix of people to be found in the congregation. Finally, this church has always had a strong musical tradition, which supports a varied repertoire of music, both old and new. Given this background, I felt confident that any interviews would be both thoughtful and rewarding.

When Moon came to First United Church eleven years ago, her mandate was to change the church or close it. Church members were aging, and attendance was poor. There was one child in the Sunday School. She says that she found a welcoming congregation which was open to change, and willing to take a chance. The membership has since quadrupled during her ministry. I asked her what kinds of people are now members of the congregation.■

I think we're a congregation that is very inclusive, and by that I mean we welcome anyone who comes. We try to create the kind of atmosphere where people are accepted, and that means that gays and lesbians feel comfortable coming here. (That wasn't overnight. People were a long time coming to that.) And we have people who can come to this community who have AIDS, and know that they're not going to be looked down upon. Also we have increasingly been getting people who are off the streets--some of them have been prostitutes. A lot of the people have been through addiction programmes, and

■In conversation with the author: First United Church, Ottawa. November 9, 1995.

are struggling with addiction. So, that's one part of the spectrum.

We also have a lot of women who have been affected by the feminist movement, and are concerned about the ways in which Christianity has been part of the whole patriarchal system... women who want a spiritual life, but find that the other traditional denominations aren't places where they feel they can belong, because the language is male.... I'm a feminist myself, and part of the whole essence of worship here is that an inclusive imagery of God is used, and an inclusive theology is used.

One of the other areas we serve is through people who work in the justice area. We have several social workers, several counsellors of abused women...people who are in international development work...and someone who works with the status of women.

First United is no suburban church. Located in the inner-city, an increasing number of members of the congregation are unemployed, due to the present economic recession. On the other hand, the membership also includes many middle-class social activists who were attracted to the church because of its aggressive outreach programme into the surrounding community.

I have worked as an organist and choir director for forty years, the last six of which have been spent at First United. Twenty-three years were spent abroad where, within the framework of the Church of England, I worked mainly with people in the diplomatic community.⁹ I am a classically-trained organist in the English Cathedral tradition, and, with two brief exceptions, have worked in Anglican churches¹⁰ all my professional life.

⁹An exception was Cuba, where I was organist in the Spanish speaking Episcopal Cathedral for three years.

¹⁰The Church of England, the Anglican Church of Canada, the Episcopal Church of the United States and the Iglesia Episcopal de Cuba are all members of the Anglican communion. I have worked in all these branches of the church.

First United has been my only venture into the United Church. Although I initially agreed to act only as interim organist, I found that I had to make several immediate and significant personal adjustments. I was used to working in a church where the main power rested in the clergy rather than in the congregation, I had never heard of inclusive language, and I was largely unaware of the feminist movement and the homosexual community. While I was familiar with the Red Book, the music in the Green Book was an unpleasant shock, and I missed the sung Anglican liturgy. Nevertheless, I am still there, and I continue to enjoy the stimulation offered by working in a church so open to new ideas--one in which I can play Bach and Messiaen, and where I can conduct Palestrina, atonal choral compositions, and gospel songs with equal approval.

In order to prepare myself for this case study, I attended three conferences. The first, held in Montreal on April 30, 1994, was one of a series of workshops under the direction of John Ambrose and Fred Graham, consultants for the new Hymn and Worship Book of the United Church (which was then in preparation). At the workshop new orders of service were suggested, and new hymns were sung. Among these were selections from Africa, Japan and New Zealand. One of the most interesting handouts was a sheet of language guidelines (Appendix 3.1). Language of the type suggested by this committee has been in use at First United for

several years¹¹ and, as will be shown, is considered to be of theological and social importance by members of that community.

I later attended the Eighth Biennial Ontario Women's Conference of the United Church of Canada, which was held from June 10-12, 1994, in Waterloo, Ontario. There was a large delegation of woman-activists from First United, including the minister, and I was part of this group, as a participant-observer. The theme of the conference was "When women relate: an exploration of our friendships and relationships with other women." Each session opened and closed with the singing of feminist Christian songs, and I was particularly interested in the selection of music in the "Music Book" issued to delegates. Thirty-three of the thirty-nine hymns were written by women, sixteen of those being by the well-known American social activist Carolyn McDade. While many of the songs are not appropriate for use in the normal Sunday morning church service,¹² I have introduced several others from this collection over the last eighteen months. Particular favorites are a round by Elaine Kirkland and Phil Porter: "The Gathering Chant" (Appendix 3.2), and my own three-part arrangement of "Sending you light" (which has been used as a commissioning hymn for extended

¹¹Sharon Moon was one of the people who helped write the guidelines on inclusive language for the United Church in 1982 (before she was ordained).

¹²The words of some of the selections are more suitable for a purely feminist occasion. Other songs too long or the melody is too intricate for the congregation to learn (even with a congregational practice before the beginning of the church service). Expense precludes furnishing a copy of the music for each person.

periods).

A further conference on "Worship music and Popular Culture" was held at Knox College in Toronto on October 28-29, 1994. Led by the American Presbyterian theologian and musician, Thomas Troeger, emphasis was on practical ways to introduce popular culture into the musical programme of the mainline churches.¹² This conference was indeed useful to someone whose musical training was limited, as mine was, to art music.

Methodology

Selection of informants

My original aim was to interview twenty-four people representing different groups at First United. My criteria for the selection of informants included a wide range of cultural, economic, educational and social backgrounds. People with influential voices within the church were also a target, since they could help me to identify and understand aspects of church culture about which I had little knowledge or experience. Finally, I was looking for equal numbers of adult men and women, from different age categories within the congregation. Children were not part of this project.

In the process of identifying the various groups, I was

¹²The United, Presbyterian, Anglican, and Lutheran churches are considered Mainline Protestant churches in Canada. The Conservative Protestant churches (evangelical groups) include the Baptist, Pentecostal, Salvation Army, Mennonite, Alliance, Nazarene and Reformed churches. (Bibby 1995:18)

surprised to realize that the range of economic backgrounds among the informants was not as wide as had at first appeared. I found that the congregation encompasses primarily, if not exclusively, people from a broad spectrum within the middle class. Neither were the differences in education as great as I had imagined: all informants were high-school graduates, and the majority had at least one university degree. The variety within the congregation was rather in cultural, social and, to a lesser extent in political terms.

Among the informants I was able to recruit the present minister, two student ministers (one of whom was working at First United as a summer intern), and a retired United Church clergyman who is a member of the congregation. Other informants were from the congregation, the choir, and lay officials of church organizations, such as the chairman of the board of stewards, the chair of the worship committee, and the retired church treasurer. While I was able to obtain an equal distribution of sexes (twelve each of men and women) and a balance of age groups, I had more difficulty making contact with some economic groups.¹⁴

My role in this project was that of participant-observer. I knew all the informants well, and for this reason the interviews were relaxed, informal, and were, I believe, a pleasant experience for both participants. Without exception, informants welcomed the opportunity to have a thoughtful discussion about

¹⁴I had, for example, to discard the idea of interviewing street people, since hymns appeared to be of no interest to the ones to whom I spoke.

the whole tangled question of hymnody.

All the interviews took place in Ottawa during the summer and fall of 1995.¹⁵ I prepared a list of questions to be used as guidelines (Appendix 3.3), and managed to cover the same material with most informants--but backgrounds differ, and so did the things people wanted to talk about. Interviews were tape recorded, and usually took about an hour.

Table 1 (page 86) offers some information about the informants. The distribution by age closely follows the pattern of the congregation, and indeed that of most United Church congregations at present (Bibby 1995). As in most other churches, there are few people in their twenties. The majority of the informants were in the age group ranging from thirty-five to fifty-five. Twenty-one of the informants were brought up in the United church or in the Presbyterian church,¹⁶ although ten of these had left the church for extended periods, either for another denomination or because they attended no church at all. This again follows the present trend in the United Church, where many people leave the church in young adulthood, and return when they have children, or are approaching middle age (Bibby 1995).

It was surprising to note how many of the informants (nineteen) were either currently singing in a choir, or had done

¹⁵The only exception was an interview with the student minister from the previous summer, which took place in July of 1994.

¹⁶Of the remaining three, two were originally Anglican and one from the Salvation Army.

PERSONAL DATA: INFORMANTS

<u>Gender</u>		<u>Distribution by age</u>	
Female	12	20-29 years	3
Male	12	30-45	7
		46-60	8
		over 60	6

Clergy and Laity

Ordained clergy	2
Laity:	
Student minister	2
Candidate for ministry	1
Lay preacher	1
Other congregational members	<u>18</u>
Total laity	22

Education

Completed high school	2
High school and technical college	2
Teacher's college	3
University degree not completed	1
Students (current:undergraduate)	1
Students (current:graduate)	3
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	17
Postgraduate degree	13
No answer	1

Musical training

Piano:	
"lessons as a kid"	9
"still play"	4
Guitar:	
"still play"	3
Other instruments:	
"used to play"	7
"still play"	2

Employment

Outside the home	13
Retired	6
Students	4
Homemaker	1

Voice lessons:	
in the past	3
currently studying	1
no musical training:	4

Choir experience

Current member, First United choir	10
Retired member, First United choir	1
Former choir member (other churches)	14
Current member, other choir	8

Table 1

so at one time. This was purely accidental since, as informants, they had not been chosen on this basis. This is probably an indicator of the strong interest in music among the whole congregation, and no doubt was at the root of the informed opinion which surfaced during the survey. It was also interesting to note the involvement of these people in other activities of the church. Twenty people were members or chairpersons of other groups or committees in the church.

Guidelines for the interviews

The guidelines for interviews fall into three groups. Questions 1-8 are concerned with the informant her/him self. Most of the relevant material has already been tabulated in Table 1, page 86.

Questions 9-20 deal with the hymnody which is presently available. The questions are about the function of hymns, favorite hymns, the use of inclusive language, styles of singing, and the use of instruments other than the organ as accompaniment. For my own information I added queries about the acceptability of a sung liturgy, since examples will be included in the new book. Questions 21-26 ask about the new hymn book. Is one needed? What should it include?

While it is not possible within the scope of this paper to comment on all the points that emerged during these interviews, the main issues will be discussed. These revolve around the act of singing together, the functions of hymns, the type of music and the language of hymns, and the appropriateness of present and future repertoires to the current ethic of the congregation.

"Tell me about hymns"

Their importance and functions

Most people began by saying how important hymns are as part of worship. The two physical actions involved (standing up and singing) were usually identified. All the informants said they like to sing and, of these, nineteen said that they enjoy singing together as a communal act. Most people said that they place great importance on hymns because singing gives the congregation an opportunity to participate actively in the service. As previously noted, six informants rated hymn singing as the most important part of the church service; thirteen rated them as equal with other parts of the liturgy (prayers, scriptures, sermon); two felt that the sermon was the most important, and three others felt that hymns were of little relative importance.

John,¹⁷ a choir member, spoke about the functions of hymns. He emphasized the participatory element in hymn singing, pointing out that it enables the congregation to engage in a dialogue with other elements of the service. He also acknowledged the emotional impact that a good hymn can produce.

If the words and the music of a hymn go well together, it's a very powerful and moving thing. Even in a new hymn it's possible to have an intense emotional experience if the relationship is right....Singing is more expressive

¹⁷Informants who are referred to by first name only, have been given fictitious names. Four major informants--Sharon Moon, D'thea Webster, David Hall and Edwin Sayle, are referred to by their proper, full name. These four were introduced in the previous chapter.

than reading parts of the liturgy (for example, the prayers)....There is a participatory element to hymn singing. It permits a kind of dialogue with other elements of the service and it gives you a chance to reflect and to emphasize certain points. Hymns provide balance....they provide music--they involve other parts of the mind and the spirit than those that would be engaged by the words alone.

Favorite types of hymns among the informants were described as "joyful," "peaceful," "evoking a sense of wonder," "passionate," and "empowering." Fourteen said that the music in a hymn makes the first and most important impact, three felt that the words came first, and seven said that the words and music are equally important.

Edwin Sayle says that for him the greatest impact comes from the music of hymns. A trained singer, he finds particular pleasure in singing hymns in harmony. "Hymn singing," he says, "is a great refreshener."

For Michele, a talented musician, the primary impact comes from the words, rather than the music:

When I go to church on Sunday morning, I need to leave there empowered to do my work. The wording in the hymns can either uplift me, or make no impact. I prefer the ones which uplift...which are supportive. It's not necessarily the closing hymn that stays in my mind. A hymn in the middle of the service can be equally important, equally touching.

Other informants found that the words and the music are necessary to each other. Deanna says:

The music in the church--the hymns--are very important. I go out singing the words, and I think about them. And hymns --songs--that I learn in the church are often ones that I find myself singing and humming when I'm either in a really good space, or in a bad space. It's words with a melody. It's an aural memory; my sense of a connectedness between my faith and what I'm involved in. It's often the basis of my theology, and how I live my theology. I theologize from the music.

Tim's attitude was less than enthusiastic. "I guess hymns are important," he said. "I'd miss it if we didn't have any. But we shouldn't sing too many of them."

Many people said they enjoyed hymn singing because it was a group effort. Seven informants said they felt that they became part of a larger group persona; nine others said that they felt they were singing as individuals, but that they became an integral part of the larger group as well. Other informants, who said that they were just "singing along" by themselves did not seem to experience this group effect.

Perhaps these various ways of experiencing music are the precise reasons for its power. As Frith (1987: 143) says, music is something possessed, and in possessing that music we make it part of our own identity. Therefore, if we apply this observation to hymn singing, we can say that each individual takes something new into his/her person. While for some people the process can stop at this point, it could be argued that the interaction with others who are experiencing that same process at that same time, has the potential (for some) to create a larger, communal identity.

Favorite hymns

Informants were asked to name some of their favorite hymns, and to explain the criteria by which they make their selections. Some informants expressed their preferences in terms of style. Some people preferred hymns in the contemporary folk-ballad style; others held fast to hymns of the more conservative,

traditional type.

Those who preferred hymns in the folk-ballad style said that this style is more familiar, since it is derived from folk or popular music. The tunes are "easy to pick up" and easy to remember, and are often set up in the familiar style of verse and refrain. There was general agreement that such hymns are more accessible to younger people, or to people with little or no experience of traditional church music. Some commented favourably on the informality (and familiarity) of the piano or guitar as the accompanying instrument. Since the hymns in this genre which are sung at First United are almost invariably chosen either from the Green Book or from the works of feminist writers, the words were always commended for their inclusive language and imagery.

Many informants named "Spirit of Gentleness," #108 in the Green Book (Appendix 3.4) as a favorite hymn. Written in 1978 by James Manley, this hymn is in the contemporary folk-ballad style. Set as verse and refrain, it has a flowing accompaniment that can be played on the piano or guitar, but which loses its character on the pipe organ. The words speak to the theology and ethic of many members of the congregation. The melody, which is simple to learn, has a gentle rhythm in triple time, which complements the meaning of the words.

Other informants preferred the traditional style of hymn. Some of the older people have a strong attachment to hymns from the Red or Blue book, which they sang in their younger days. They like to sing familiar hymns, and they feel at ease with this

well-loved repertoire. Such hymns are usually set in four-part harmony, and are accompanied on the organ. Many people know the harmony of these hymns, and enjoy the opportunity to sing in parts. Some informants mentioned the pleasure of being able to sing such traditional hymns together as a family group--a group encompassing different generations.

Several informants mentioned "Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee" (#19 in the Red Book) as a favorite hymn in the traditional style. This hymn is an arrangement by Edward Hodges (1796-1867) of the "Ode to Joy," found in the last movement of Ludwig van Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. Set in four-part harmony, this strong tune, in 4/4 time, is well-known and easy to remember. It invites full support on the organ. The words, by Henry van Dyke (1852-1933), are fully acceptable to current theological thinking, and are expressed in inclusive language.

Partiality to hymns in a particular style was not, however, purely generational. Some of the younger people liked older (sometimes Victorian) hymns, while some of the oldest people in the congregation felt that if a popular style of hymn is needed to attract young people, then the congregation has no choice but to favour this repertoire.

Since for some people singing hymns is also a social act, some hymns are favoured because of the social relations they make possible. Tom, a lifelong church member, and the oldest person I interviewed, spoke about the pleasure of being able to sing (in harmony) each Sunday, beside his daughter and grand-

daughter. He sings "bass or baritone", while his daughter sings alto. Tom gave me a list of his favorite hymns: one hundred from the Red Book, and twenty-six from the Green Book. I was interested to observe that, with fifteen exceptions, the hymns which he picked from the Red Book were all to be found in the Blue Book, the book of his childhood and young manhood. However Tom, like many members of the older generation at First United, is a realist when it comes to church membership. Referring to the Green Book and other hymns in a popular or folk genre, he said: "If this is what we have to sing to get the young people in, I'm quite happy with it." He continued:

Well, I have a lot of favorites from the Red Book, like "Guide me, O thou great Jehovah."¹⁰ It's a great tune! And I love the Christmas hymns. But I like the ones in the Green book too....I went to a conference with Jim Strathdee.¹¹ He was excellent. I do like his music. Why? For the life of it. It's joyful. I like joyful hymns. I don't like anything slow. I like the folk-song type, like "Spirit of Gentleness". Old and young can relate to it....The writers in the Green book are mostly new, but I do like to have some hymns from the Red book, too. I know them better. They have a different feeling.

Other informants chose favorite hymns not because of style or for the social interactions they create, but because hymns, for

¹⁰This Welsh hymn (#269 Red book), is set to the tune "Cwm Rhondda," by John Hughes (1873-1932). The words are by William Williams (1717-1791), translated by Peter Williams (1722-1796).

¹¹Jim Strathdee and his wife, Jean, are well-known American hymn writers who are the authors of eight selections in the Green book. They generally write in the folk-ballad style. The most popular hymn among all the congregation, "What does the Lord Require of You?" (Appendix 3.5) is also by the Strathdees. This hymn, discussed below, is often used as a commissioning hymn.

them, evoke memories. Twelve informants said that the hymns that have stayed with them in their adult life are often those which bring with them memories of childhood, or of family gatherings. While these associations are important, they acknowledged that such hymns often present problems, since the the language and images are, in many cases, no longer acceptable.²⁰ Deanna said that while the music calls her because of the memories, she finds some hymns impossible to sing with their present words. She would welcome new words set to these old tunes:

I struggle a lot with the old hymns. I grew up with them, singing them around the piano. And yet when I think about what I'm singing--the theology of it--I'm horrified. I find the tension at times very distressing....I'd still sing "Holy, holy, holy".²¹ It takes me back in memory, though I wouldn't want to admit to it. The memory of singing those old hymns is still strong, and the music calls me because of these memories. But, I often look for opportunities to change the words.

Other informants miss hearing these old hymns, since they create a connection with times past. As Evelyn said:

Hymns stir up a lot of memories for me. I was raised in the United Church. Particular hymns jog my memory: they jog memories about society and the big, extended family. It helps me feel connected. But I hear very few of the hymns that I grew up with. I was away from the church

²⁰In First United Church the following notice is printed in the church bulletin each Sunday:

In our worship we always try to use inclusive language. Sometimes, especially in hymns, this is not possible. Please make whatever changes you feel are necessary.

²¹ "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty" (#1 Blue book; #50 Red book), is reproduced in Appendix 1.2. Some feminists would object to the words of this hymn because God is pictured as King and judgemental father.

for twenty years, and it's not the same church. I don't even know the Red book--I grew up with the Blue book, and I still have my old copy.

Some hymns appear to meet with almost unanimous approval. In such cases, style does not seem to be an issue. Among all the hymns mentioned by informants, the most popular is "What does the Lord require of you?"²²(Appendix 3.5), which is sung very often as a commissioning hymn. Twenty-one of the informants were strongly in favour of this hymn filling this function, one objected to it, and two were neutral in their judgement.

"What does the Lord require?" is a congregational anthem which builds musically as each of three voices (bass, alto/tenor, soprano) enters, each voice singing a different melodic line. All voices then combine their themes, singing the last verse together three or four times. The choir sings a descant for some of these repetitions. This hymn uses the simplest of musical materials (a descending scale passage which becomes an ostinato bass) to build a powerful communal voice as the parts combine. The music is important-sounding, in the style of a traditional church hymn. There is no problem with the language since the words, which are biblical, speak of justice and kindness, and make no references to an exclusively male God.

What is the appeal of this hymn? To many informants, the primary impact seemed to come from the music. Most people spoke about the powerful way the piece builds as each voice enters.

²²Music by Jim Strathdee, with text from Micah 6:8. The words are usually printed in the bulletin, since this piece is not found in any of the hymn books presently available.

They also commented about the way the words and music work together in projecting a message which, to many informants, sums up the mission of this particular church.

Alan: "What does the Lord Require?" fits all the things that are very important to me. First of all, it's very singable. It's nice the way the parts fit together. The congregation can, and does, sing it. It's clearly reaching them. It's also a very profound passage from the Old Testament...absolutely sound theology which speaks through the ages of time. It spoke very clearly to Micah, but it speaks equally clearly to us. I go out with this in my head. I think it has become a sort of ritual in the congregation, and because of that it has developed a new meaning. It's part of "us" in that community.

Fergus: It's eloquent in its simplicity, and pointed in its message. We're doing it creatively as a community. We make fun out of this music, which has a very precise focus and content. It invites us to loosen our rigidities.

Mark (who in other circumstances is a committed feminist!): I love it! It's powerful to go out with it as a benediction. We build as a community while we're singing. I like the thundering, male, opening part. The basses and tenors. Then the women answering. Together it builds very nicely.

D'thea Webster: It's a wonderful piece. I love the counterpoint, the blending of the voices, and the circular nature of it. It just builds and builds, and so does the message along with the music. A real communal identity.

This hymn seemed to be appealing for several reasons--some musical, some theological, and some sociological. Most informants began with comments on the music, saying it was "singable" because there is a comfortable, (and simple) part for every voice range; that the parts fit together nicely; and that the power of the piece builds as each voice enters.²³ Theologically the words are said to be appealing since they project a profound

²³An added attraction could be the resemblance of the bass part to the popular canon by Pachelbel.

Biblical message, expressing the mission of the church. Some informants had a sociological interpretation--they spoke about the communal identity which takes shape when the congregation sings this piece. As Alan said, "this piece has become a sort of ritual with the congregation, and because of that it has developed a new meaning: it has become part of us."

In singing this hymn, most of the members of the congregation who were interviewed felt that each person is individually involved in the selection and singing of a part, while at the same time he/she is contributing to the whole by singing that part. This could be said to be a classic illustration of Frith's theories concerning possession: that music can be possessed by a person, and at the same time that music can possess that person. Furthermore, (following Frith's argument), at this moment, while the church service comes to an end, time itself is arrested, as the congregation is poised between church culture and the culture of the outside world. This moment, full of emotion, could be said to encompass and define the group persona of this community.

Performance practice

Questions were asked about performance practice regarding hymns, musical instruments and the use of liturgical dance.

All the informants were in agreement about one thing: they like to sing hymns in harmony, or to hear hymns sung in harmony by others. Everyone was also in favour of descants (usually sung to selected verses by the choir sopranos).

This emphasis on harmony and descants could have something to do with the expectations that people have of "church" music. Most hymns in the Red book are written in four-part harmony, as are numerous hymns in the Green Book. While the Green Book has many selections in the folk-ballad style, as previously discussed, it also draws on the repertoire of hymns from the early days of the protestant church on this continent. Hymns in this tradition (such as those found in the Green Book), are often written in four-part harmony. Four part harmony is, however, equally familiar to people whose main experience is with popular music, since many groups of folk singers use this style of singing.

The positive response from informants about singing hymns in harmony could thus be attributed to the fact that this practice is familiar to everyone. It could also mean that traditional ways of singing hymns are deep-rooted, since nineteen of the informants in this survey are presently members, or have previously been members of a church choir. The majority are therefore familiar with hymns sung in harmony, and probably enjoy the opportunity of being able to sing this way.

Other questions about performance practice concerned the use of musical instruments in the church service. Twenty-two of the informants were in favour of the organ as the principal instrument to accompany hymns, while two preferred the piano. Fifteen informants liked to hear some of the hymns accompanied on the piano (specifically modern or folk hymns from the Green book), and twelve liked to hear guitars or guitars with piano from time to time. Most people looked with favour on the

occasional use of other instruments, either as part of the hymn accompaniment, or as a purely instrumental addition to the music of the service.

I would suspect that these preferences are informed by both the wide range of generations among the informants, and the different cultural and social values which result from this. All but one of the informants²⁴ was brought up in one of the mainline churches: United, Presbyterian, Lutheran or Anglican. These churches have all traditionally used the organ as the main instrument in accompanying hymns. While many informants had left the church for some years, when they returned, it was to a United Church with a strong musical tradition, and a church which possessed a pipe organ. It was therefore natural, in my opinion, that most of these people would be used to the organ as the principal instrument to accompany hymns, since this was what was embedded in their memories of what church music should be. This is, however, a preference which could be overlaid by other experiences and cultural values. The younger generations are familiar with the more informal music played on the piano and/or guitar, and many prefer a less rigid church service which makes use of these instruments. This could be read as a partial rejection of the values of older generations, who enjoyed a formal, predictable church service, where hymns (if church finances permitted) were routinely accompanied by the organ.

On the other hand, some of the older members of the congregation, or some younger members who have ties to

²⁴One informant was formerly a member of the Salvation Army.

traditional hymnody, have expressed their preference for the piano as the accompanying instrument for many hymns from the Green Book. This applied particularly those hymns which are in the folk genre, or which use jazz harmonies. This preference could be tied to the nature of the pipe organ, which lacks the quick response of the piano and guitar. It is possible that, in the view of these people, such hymns played on the organ may not do credit to the instrument nor to the composition itself.

From my interviews, it appeared that the congregation in general welcomes the occasional use of other instruments during the church service such as the horn, trumpet, saxophone, flute, recorder, harp, cello, and viola. Sometimes small ensembles such as a brass quartet or a wind quintet play before or after the service. This variety is much appreciated, not only because it adds diversity to the church service, but because it is another way in which members can participate.²⁵

For somewhat similar reasons, the occasional performance of Caribbean and African hymns seems also to be deeply appreciated. Often on these occasions, some members of the choir play percussion instruments, while the congregation and other choir members clap in time to the music, sway, or wave their arms. Occasionally liturgical dancers also take part.

²⁵I would suspect that while this might appear, on the surface, to be a rejection of the value systems of the older generations, it might also have something to do with the realistic attitude on the part of many of the senior members of the congregation, who know that church culture must either be open to change or die.

Using a traditional Zulu hymn²⁶ as an example, informants were asked how they felt about the use of such music in the church service. This particular hymn was chosen because of what appears to be its overwhelming popularity among members of the congregation. I was curious to know the reasons for this unusual success. Twenty-two informants were very much in favour of this style of music, and enjoyed both the liturgical dancers and their own (optional) physical participation. Age did not seem to be a factor in what appeared to be almost universal enjoyment of this type of music, and the dancing that accompanied it. "Joy", "light", and "movement" were the attributes most often mentioned.

Tim (a member of the 20-29 age group): The Zulu hymn was a great success: it was danceable. Hymns like that add light and animation to the service. I don't always find dance appropriate--I feel as if I'm being pulled by strings. But the Zulu hymn was fine. I didn't feel manipulated.

Dieter (a retired clergyman): I loved the Zulu hymn...I don't know why....To start with, it's a happy hymn. And I love liturgical dance. I didn't dance, but the two [liturgical] dancers were fine. Dancing isn't unseemly, as long as it isn't done for show.

Deanna: I loved it. There was passion in the congregation. It got the people singing. I don't know whether it was the

²⁶"We are singing, for the Lord is our light", a Zulu traditional song, arranged by Hal H. Hopson for choir and congregation. The words are based on Psalm 27:1-4.

This hymn has been used several times at First United. The choir sings the verse, and is joined by the congregation for the refrain. The choir plays percussion instruments (tambourines, hand drums, maracas, guiros, cekeres etc.), while the piano supplies additional accompaniment. Usually liturgical dancers take part, dancing up the aisles to the chancel. Often they are followed by members of the congregation who also wish to join in the dancing. Other members of the congregation clap their hands or move their arms in time to the music.

rhythm, or the bounce, or the choir singing, but the sound of music filled the church. It wasn't just something at the front. People were looking at each other, and having fun. It was a joyful experience.

D'thea Webster: The Zulu hymn? It was wonderful. It's interesting, because it's a song of praise, but it's the movement that creates such an amazing identity. It lifts you up. The way the music is joined with the words is very energizing. And the percussion is great. I love liturgical dance if it's well-done. When it doesn't feel like a performance it can be very powerful and prayerful.

Other informants had some reservations, perhaps because of deep-seated inhibitions about the propriety of dance itself in a Christian church service. While it is possible to praise God in many ways, some people find it difficult to worship through bodily movement, preferring instead a more traditional, intellectual type of worship.

Luke: I'm not really loose enough to enjoy the dancing, but I like the music. It doesn't shock me, but it doesn't move me or engage me as much as other intellectual approaches do. I appreciated the energy in it, and the joy that was expressed, but I do have trouble with dance liturgy of any sort. It tends to make me shrink within myself. Dancers are a problem: tambourines aren't.

This seemingly ready acceptance of dance by most informants was, on the surface, somewhat surprising, since dance has not traditionally been part of United Church liturgy or worship. It really comprised two elements--the liturgical dancers who led the processional, and the spontaneous dance indulged in by members of the congregation. The dancers who led the processional had performed in worship services on other occasions, and this had met with approval, since it was viewed as an extension of liturgy. The spontaneous dance on the part of members of the

congregation was something that first happened with this specific hymn, has continued to happen when this hymn has been sung on other occasions, and has not occurred when other African hymns have been sung.

There could be several possible reasons for this new type of participation in the worship service. Other African hymns have been sung (in their original language) by the choir alone, and on these occasions the role of the congregation has been that of listener. Any physical participation on their part has been limited to optional clapping in time to the music. The Zulu Hymn, on the other hand, is in English, and the congregation is expected to participate in the singing.

Another process may also have been at work. "Music", as McClary observes (1991: 23), "has an uncanny ability to make us experience our bodies in accordance with its gestures and rhythms." The first time the Zulu Hymn was sung, the minister herself began dancing, as she stood facing the congregation from behind the communion table. While this was a spontaneous reaction on her part, it could also have been interpreted as by some as permission to participate in a new type of behaviour. The fact that the congregation immediately responded could be seen as an indicator of the openness to new ideas and new forms of liturgy within that community.

The language of hymns

As was expected, the language of the hymns was one of the

main issues addressed in this survey.²⁷ During the last fifteen years, a close examination has been made of hymns from the traditional repertoire. The result has been that the number of hymns found to be acceptable to current religious thought and social practice has diminished appreciably. The increasingly influential role of women in the church has been a main factor in this attention to language. Among the informants I found many committed feminists--male, female and lesbian. They believed inclusive language to be essential not only in reference to humankind, but in the projection of an inclusive imagery of God, and as a reflection of inclusive theology.

Eighteen informants said that inclusive language was very important to the church community, three said that it was of marginal importance, and three felt that it was not necessary.

Some people, like D'thea Webster, had no doubt. "Inclusive language", she said, "is incredibly important. I automatically change the words, or else I just don't sing."

Others, while having no doubt about the need for inclusive language, cautioned that the crusade could be carried too far.

Michele: Inclusive language is important, but there can come a point where we can become inundated with political correctness. However, if inclusive language is easily done, and as long as it doesn't change the overall meaning, I am a firm believer in it. The world is changing. The only reason that this kind of injustice has gone on for so long is that it's taken so long to change the basis of society, which has

²⁷As previously mentioned, the following notice appears at the head of the bulletin each Sunday:

In our worship we always try to use inclusive language. Sometimes, especially in hymns, this is not possible. Please make whatever changes you feel are necessary.

been patriarchal. In the church we have an obligation to get rid of language that firmly places the focus on men, and completely eliminates women.

Anne: Yes, it's very important. But I don't have to go the absolute extreme in a piece. I don't mind "Father". I don't have to change every single thing. It was new to me when I came here. I'd never even heard of it in any other congregation where I'd worshipped. I'd never even thought about it. Now I wouldn't be comfortable in a congregation that didn't try to use it. But it shouldn't be too cumbersome.

Jenny: I think inclusive language is a good thing, to some extent, just like feminism. But sometimes it's carried to such a degree that it doesn't help the cause. It more or less makes me feel just like men felt about women...the concept that women had their place in the home, but they didn't have too many brains. I think that if you're too fussy about changing "he" every time you see it, you're just as bad as men were about women. It can be carried too far. There's a happy medium.

Alan pointed out that we must consider when a hymn was written, before making a final judgement about the language. He was equally aware, however, of the special needs of many women at First United:

Inclusive language is very important. But you can't make a hard and fast rule. It's hard to draw a specific line. You have to look at the historical context in which the hymn was written. If a hymn was written in 1995 and didn't use inclusive language, I'd have a hard time with it. It would be inconsistent with my theology. But Bach wasn't in the least concerned about inclusive language, and he didn't write in English either. We have to accept the old hymns as the works of art that they are, and I don't think we have to feel obliged to change them. If, on the other hand, it's a very simple change: "king" for some other simple word, then that's fine--but if it means gutting the poetry of the hymn, then, no.

Right now we've got a very sensitive congregation when it comes to inclusive language, and I think it would be unwise to fail to respect that. On a Sunday, women make up a big part of the congregation. I can identify with a great many of them who would be extremely sensitive about male God images, and for whom it would be offensive. A patriarchal God. A God of wrath. We may not be able to get away with language that might be absolutely appropriate in other congregations.

Other women felt that the victory was not always worth the struggle.

Evelyn (a choir member): It's not too important to me. I had no trouble with my own father. "Man" can be a general, inclusive noun. We have such a struggle in the choir sometimes, and everyone's equally discontent in the end. The struggle is much more gruesome than just singing the damn thing!

Emily had the last word. "Well, I really don't get too fussed about it!", she said.

Since my main encounters with inclusive language occur during choir practice, the private opinions of many choir members were a surprise to me. Many people in the choir, both women and men, are committed feminists, and there is no one who is not aware of the need for inclusive language. However, on two occasions I have had to discard an anthem written several centuries ago, because by the time the language had been adjusted to everyone's satisfaction, the point of the words had been lost.²⁰ It therefore came as a considerable surprise to hear the moderate opinions privately expressed by some choir members who had taken an active part in the rewriting of the proposed anthems.

This tidal wave of political correctness seemed to engulf

²⁰One anthem that had to be discarded was David Willcocks' arrangement (1963) of the Christmas hymn "Of the Father's Heart Begotten". The words, *Corde Natus ex Parentis*, are by the poet Prudentius (b.348), translated by R.F. Davis.

Sharon Moon has observed to the writer on several occasions, that the theology of the most ancient hymns of the church is generally more acceptable to present-day thinking than was that of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

most choir members on the occasions in question. This could be attributed to social or peer pressure by some of the more vocal persons. On the other hand, it could have been a matter of pride. Since First United is known for its position on issues concerning women, church members might feel that it is incumbent upon them, when they are acting as members of that community, to behave in an impeccably liberal and politically correct manner.

Children's hymns

Children's hymnody has always been a vexing question for the United Church. In the Blue Book there was a separate section of hymns for children; the Red Book and the Green Book both contain hymns which are suitable for children, but they are scattered throughout the book among general hymns for adults.²⁹ The same question is asked by each generation: "Should children have their own hymns, or should they sing what the adults sing?"

At First United the children of the congregation rarely sing in Sunday School.³⁰ There are several reasons for this. First of

²⁹ For example, "Away in a manger", the quintessential children's hymn, is in a section entitled "For little Children" in the Blue Book, but is included with general Christmas hymns in the Red Book. This hymn was composed by William James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921). The author of the words is unknown.

³⁰ Sunday school is the church school for children of the congregation. The children normally attend the first part of the full Sunday service with their parents. At that time, as part of the whole congregation, they sing the introit, the opening hymn and the "children's hymn", before they go to their classes. One Sunday a month they begin with their classes in the church school, and then join the adults for the last part of the full church service. In this case they may sing one hymn (not designated as a "children's" hymn) and a closing hymn or a commissioning hymn.

all, there is no competent person free, at present, to lead the singing. Secondly, even if there were, there is no general assembly when all the children are together, when this singing could occur. Thirdly, a lesson must be covered each Sunday, and this takes up most of the available time. The children's main experience in singing hymns takes place, therefore, during the short time they spend with the adult congregation on Sunday mornings.

With an enrolment of approximately sixty children in the Sunday School, the range in age extends from babies to teenagers, and therefore the question of finding even one suitable hymn for them each Sunday is not easy. At least half the children cannot read well enough to follow the words in a hymn book or on a song sheet. On the other hand, some of the young teenagers act as full adult church members--distributing communion, reading scriptures, leading prayers, and welcoming newcomers. This range of age, education, and culture among the children is as striking as it is in the adult congregation. Needs and expectations among these children are therefore quite different.

As previously noted, no children were questioned as part of this study. Seventeen informants (all adults) felt that a separate repertoire of children's hymns was desirable, four said that children should sing the same hymns as the adult congregation, and three were unsure of the best way to handle a difficult matter.

Some informants looked back fondly to the hymns they

themselves had learned as children, and lamented the fact that today's children were lacking that heritage. On closer examination, however, it appeared that to some the connection made with memories of a happy childhood was more appealing than the substance of the hymns themselves.

Ruth: I miss the hymns I sang as a child. My parents and my grandmother sang me to sleep with hymns. And I remember the songs at church camp. We used to stand around the flagpole and sing, and around campfires at night. And I used to go to church to sing, not to listen to the sermon. The minister had such a beautiful voice!

Some informants felt that there was a definite place for a separate, expanded repertoire of children's hymns. They stressed that these should be written in inclusive language, and should be in accordance with current theological beliefs.

Deanna: Children should have their own hymns. They need songs that they can remember, songs to form part of their subconscious. But we need to tap into a larger pot of children's hymns. The theology of some of the traditional hymns is horrifying....music forms a core of so much of what young people do now. We have to show them that it is a core of their faith as well. We have to use modern music and modern sound.

Luke: We should be making more use of children's hymns. I find it kind of sad that when the children's time [during the church service] is over with, that a hymn that has at least a basic appeal to the children hasn't been used.

Other people felt that children would benefit from exposure to more adult hymns.

John: There is a place for singing hymns that are essentially children's hymns, but we don't need a separate repertoire.

A really good children's hymn like "Jesus loves me,"³¹ for example, works equally well for adults. Children should learn more adult hymns, like "Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee,"³² for instance. A bad children's hymn would be one that didn't make sense to them.

Michele: There shouldn't be a separate repertoire of hymns for children. They should just be part of the hymn book. Good children's hymns are good for adults, too, and children should be considered as a major part of the congregation. We have a fine repertoire already, like "Jesus loves me".³³ If the children are singing a hymn, it should be one they know.

It is interesting to note that two informants who felt that children should be singing adult hymns, both cited "Jesus loves me" as a hymn suitable for all ages. This hymn (which immediately came to mind in both cases), was originally written for children, and is one which they, themselves, had undoubtedly learned in own childhood.³⁴

While there was no consensus on the issue of children's hymns as can be seen from the quotations above, many informants had strong views on this subject, to the point where they felt that a separate repertoire of hymns for children was desirable. In contrast, other informants argued that children's participation in the adult church service (including singing hymns from the adult repertoire) is, in fact, a recognition of

³¹Reproduced in Appendix 2.7a & b.

³²See page 92.

³³See footnote 31.

³⁴As noted above in Chapter 2, this hymn was originally written for children, and is included in the section entitled "For little children" in the Blue Book. The Red Book had no separate section of hymns for children; therefore this hymn (with edited words), was included in the hymns for general use.

their rightful place as important, participant members of the church.

Liturgical music

Since the new hymn book will, according to its managing editor,³⁵ include a generous selection of liturgical music, questions were asked about preferences in this field.

A new interest in liturgical music has become apparent in First United over the last five years, and most of my informants generally favoured the introduction of more liturgical music into the church service. This increasing interest in new types of liturgy can be seen in the acceptance of liturgical dance, drama and, most of all, in the willingness to participate in a sung liturgy.

Part of this impetus came from material published in the Green Book.³⁶ While much of the music in that book was not newly-composed, much of it was quite new to the congregation. Other elements of sung liturgy had been familiar in the past (such as a sung Lord's Prayer) but had fallen out of use because of

³⁵John Ambrose: remarks made at the "Voices United" Hymn Book Conference, Montreal: May, 1994.

³⁶The Green Book includes a generous amount of liturgical music, including pieces from the Russian Orthodox liturgy, and excerpts from the repertoire of the Protestant ecumenical community of Taizé. Other pieces for a sung communion service are by modern American composers such as James Kriewald.

objections on the part of some members of the community.³⁷

This new interest in liturgical music could indicate that the nature of the congregation itself is changing. There has been a growing demand for more music of a reflective nature during the past three or four years. Liturgical music could be seen as an aid to this more internalized type of worship. Could it be that this type of music is perceived of as speaking more to personal need rather than to the congregation's recognized mission of outreach to the surrounding community?

From my interviews, I learned that liturgical music seems to be more appealing to those interested in a contemporary approach to worship, rather than to the more conservative members of the congregation who prefer a plainer type of worship, in the tradition of old-style protestantism. Could this new interest in sung liturgy be therefore a matter of new aesthetics?

Comments on the Blue, Red and Green hymn books

In discussing the need for a new hymn book, informants were asked to comment on the three books that have, to this time, been available to the congregation at First United. Since each of these books (the Blue, Red and the Green) has been a reflection of its own generation, many comments centered around their relevance to present-day theological beliefs and culture. While most of the informants were familiar with the Red and Green hymn

³⁷These objections were based on the fact that the congregation did not, at that time, participate in singing the Lord's prayer. It was, many people said, merely a "performance" by the choir.

books, many people were too young to remember the Blue Book.

The Blue Book

Of the fifteen people who commented on the Blue Book, four felt a certain nostalgia for times past, two said that the theology and language of most of the hymns made them unacceptable to the present generation, and one was undecided. The remaining eight had had no experience with this book.

As already noted, it was not easy to obtain informed opinions on the Blue Book, since most church members were too young to remember much about it. Some people spoke with great affection about the Christmas music found in this book.²⁰ Most comments about the Blue Book were, however, concerned with the language of the hymns--a language which reflected the theology of Victorian times. The quote below is included because it eloquently summarizes the main views on this topic.

Evelyn said that she found much of the theology of hymns in the Blue book to be offensive. The Victorian images of the Christian as a suffering, wretched sinner are, she said, bleak reminders of the rigid, narrow morality of times past.

Very few of the hymns that I was brought up with (in the Blue Book) are still in use, because the church has changed. We no longer have a minister pounding the pulpit, talking about sin. The words of the hymns in the Blue Book are morbid, depressing expressions of Victorian concepts of morality: the idea that what is good for the church is good for society, and is probably good for the individual....And

²⁰Most of these Christmas hymns are also to be found in the Red Book.

that individual is a poor, unworthy sinner, whose lot is suffering, and who must be washed in the blood of Jesus Christ to be saved. These hymns are bleak little things, the product of a meagre type of mind.

The Red Book

Eight informants appreciated the wide variety of hymns in the Red Book. Eight others were more cautious, either because of the challenging musical nature of some of the hymns, or because they found some of the language to be offensive. One person said that the Red Book had never been a success, and should have been replaced years ago.

Most informants commented favourably on the inclusion, in this book, of hymns from different periods in the church's history. Many people felt that the new hymns in the Red Book, which spoke to the theology and aesthetic of the sixties, were no longer relevant. Most comments, however, were concerned with the non-inclusive language of the majority of the hymns.

Alan liked the variety of music in the Red Book, and felt that its potential had not always been realized. He noted a lack of music suitable for children.

The Red hymn book is a good book by and large. It's unfortunate that it came out five years too soon for inclusive language. But there's a good balance of music in it, although perhaps not enough music for children. Some of the hymns (like "From the slave pens of the delta"²²) won't pass the test of time. But we should learn some of the more

²²"From the slave pens of the delta" (#170 Red Book) is sung to "Omni Die", an ancient German Proper melody. The words are by T. Herbert O'Driscoll (b.1928).

challenging hymns in that book.... I was seventeen when the Red Book came out, so I don't miss all the old chestnuts from the Blue Book, but the older people in the congregation miss more of the old favorites.

John admired the music in the Red Book, but felt that the theology in some of the modernist hymns is not compatible with present-day thinking.

I'm one of the very few people who will miss the Red Book. I grew up with it, and I'm going to miss some of the traditional hymns that were in it, but I'm also going to miss some of the hymns that were then contemporary. It was an ambitious, difficult book...an interesting experiment. I admit that there's a problem with the words, and that inclusive language is vital. Some of the modernist lyrics got out of control, like "God of Concrete".⁴⁰...But modernism isn't the main problem with the Red Book. The problem is the theology found in what would otherwise be fairly promising hymns. That theology focuses primarily on personal salvation, and that's a theme which isn't very useful in contemporary society. There's not much connection with the earth or even with society in general...there's nothing about community building.

Edwin Sayle voiced the feelings of many people of the older generation. He sees the Red Book as a guardian of the rich literature of church hymnody--hymns he sang as a boy choirister in his native Jamaica. He is afraid that most of these fine, traditional hymns, which he finds to be so strong musically, will fall out of use.

It seems as if the Red Book just came out. I don't think we got to know it well enough. There are a lot of good hymns in that book, but we're not singing them, of course. The Red Book is closer to the things I like. I know we have to change, but some of those hymns are so beautiful, and so well put together, that you wonder why you can't continue to sing them. You just get to know a hymn, and expect it, and then it's gone.

⁴⁰Reproduced in Appendix 2.9.

It was most interesting to observe the possessive attitude of many people towards the hymns of the traditional repertoire which are to be found in this book. While most informants are reluctant to sing them in their present form because some of the words are unacceptable, they want these hymns to remain in the repertoire, either with edited words, or with new words written to the traditional tunes.

The Green Book

Among the informants who commented on the Green Book, seven people liked both the theology and the musical style, six gave qualified approval, and one disliked the book, finding much of the musical material to be inappropriate.

Most comments on this book focused on musical style and language. Many people felt comfortable with the folk-song type of hymn found in the Green Book, while others said that this type of music lacks the richness of traditional hymnody. The use of inclusive language was generally commended.

Mark (a choir member) said that the hymns in the Green Book, because of their easily-accessible musical style and their contemporary language, help to build a sense of community in the church. He likes the simplicity of the folk-style hymns, and he also likes the tunes and words of some of the older, gospel-type hymns, which are to be found in this book:

Most of my favorite hymns come from the Green Book, like "Spirit of Gentleness." The congregation gets into it, so I have a sense of community spirit. It upsets me that the choir thinks that a lot of these hymns are second-rate. Some

of the lyrics may sound like they're for kids, but I like them. I like the tunes, and I like the concepts of the words. The folk-song style is easily accessible.... I like the older ones in the Green Book, too. My all-time favorite hymn is "What is the place?".⁴¹ I like the music and the words. They reflect my own thinking: the church is only a building, but the community is the real centre.

Alan, on the other hand, finds much of the music in the Green book to be simplistic, and more suitable for children.

The Green Book? To be candid, I can do without most of it. A lot of it is pretty shallow musically--like "Spirit of Gentleness." Don't let me ever hear it again! It was never good, and it's got a lot worse in the course of time. The only thing I will say in defence of that book is that my kids like it, and that does matter. We do need music that is simple and easy to pick up, that kids like.

John feels that while the Green Book was a necessary supplement to the Red Book, it should not replace it.

I think the Green Book is a useful worship supplement. If I have a concern about hymn selection at First (because the Red Book has never struck roots here) it's been that the Green Book has had a chance to monopolize the hymnody, and I think that the Green Book by itself is a shallow hymnody. My problems with it often arise on musical grounds.

Evelyn finds some of the hymn texts in the Green Book to be too complex. She has other objections on musical grounds. She commented:

I have to be able to relate to a hymn. Some of them, (particularly in the Green Book), are very dreary...the ones by Farquharson and Klusmeier, for example. They try to cram very complex words and ideas into a text, and the result is that there's nothing flowing about it. Those texts are too complex for hymns--I'd rather read them in a book of

⁴¹"What is the place?" (#70 Green Book) is sung to Valerius' "Nederlandtsche gedenckclanck," of 1626, harmonized by Adrian Engels (b.1906). The words, originally in Dutch by Huub Oosterhuis (b.1933) are translated by David Smith (b.1933).

ideas....Most of them you can't sing in harmony, and the music is boring....Some hymns like "Spirit of Gentleness" have been over-exploited, and they're like a threadbare carpet.

Most informants were generally in favour of the Green Book. Nevertheless, it was generally viewed as a temporary supplement to the Red Book, and not adequate to replace it. Emphasis was placed on the need for a variety of hymns. The music for many of the hymns in the Green Book, however, provoked mixed responses: some informants were comfortable with it, others felt that it was not always of the same high standard as the words. Could this be seen as an indication that music, consciously and unconsciously continues to exert its own particular power? Is the music of these hymns a help to some people, since it reinforces and enhances the message of the words--but a hindrance to others, in that they can be distracted from the carefully crafted verbal text by what they might consider to be inferior, or indeed, distasteful music?

Sharon Moon's comments on this issue summarize the serious problems faced at present in finding hymns suitable for use in a church such as First United. She talked about the three hymn books, and about the difficulties faced each week in the selection of hymns, since the language of each hymn must be weighed against its theology and music. She feels that a new hymn book is badly needed.

I was raised with the Blue Book, but I'm glad we don't use it any more. While it was a fine book in its day, it was a compromise. It was a part of the theology of its time, as the Red Book was, and as the new hymn book will be, too. A

hymn book isn't God's gift forever....hymns change, just like the creed changes....If I choose something from the Red Book, what I'm weighing off is the theology of the hymn, versus the language, versus the music. Sometimes there's a bit of exclusivity in the language, but the theology is so good that I use it. I have to weigh the good against the bad. I long for a book where we don't have to do this constant compromising. I love the Green Book, and I think it was a much-needed resource to complement the Red Book, but we desperately need a new book, because we need more than that. It has a good selection, but it's only an interim solution.

Is a new hymn book warranted?

Most informants felt that a new hymn book is warranted at this time, because changes in theology and societal values since 1971 have been profound. The demand for hymns in inclusive language was cited as a major indicator of these changes. A new book, it was said, should include hymns from different historical periods as well as music in the contemporary style.

First United is a congregation with limited financial resources, an aging building, and a declared mission of outreach into the surrounding community. It is also a congregation with a strong musical tradition. Nevertheless, the purchase of a new hymn book is not a step to be taken lightly. Nineteen informants were strongly in favour of buying the new hymn book as soon as it is available, because none of the books in use at the present time is fully satisfactory. Two people were undecided about this purchase, feeling that a judicious use of the Red and Green books would be sufficient for the time being. They cited the risks of making a significant financial investment in a book which is, as yet, untried. Three informants were against buying the new book, since the First United already has two hymn books in use. On the

other hand, several people said that the use of three books in the church service (Red, Green, and Voices of First United⁴²) is confusing and distracting.

None of the informants who were in favour of purchasing the new Hymn book seemed to be concerned about how it would be financed. The expectation was that this would be accomplished through personal donations, or, if necessary, through special fund raising events. All informants emphasized that the purchase of a new hymn book should not jeopardize other programmes in the church.

When asked what a new hymn book should retain, and what new material should be added, the informants were unanimous in saying that "variety" should be the watchword. All felt that the plainsong hymns of the ancient church such as "O come, O come, Emmanuel,"⁴³ and "Come, Holy Ghost"⁴⁴ should be retained in their present form, with no editing. As previously mentioned, Sharon Moon says that the theology of some of the most ancient hymns of the church is more acceptable to present-day thinking than was that of the eighteenth or nineteenth centuries.

⁴²"Voices of First United", discussed below, is a supplementary booklet of hymns in use at the present time in that church.

⁴³"O come, O come, Emmanuel" (#390 Red book) is sung to "Veni Emmanuel", a plainsong melody, arranged by Healey Willan (1880-1968). The words are from the Latin, 12th century, translated by John Mason Neale (1818-1866).

⁴⁴"Come, Holy Ghost" (#245 Red book) is sung to "Veni Creator", a plainsong melody, Mechlin, arranged by Healey Willan (1880-1968). The words are from the Latin, 9th century, translated by John Cosin (1594-1692).

There was general agreement among informants that other favorite hymns from the traditional hymnody could benefit from some editing of the words or, alternatively, some of the best tunes could be retained, set to new words which reflect current thinking. All informants felt that there is a place for hymns in the "folk" style of the Green Book, and that this type of hymn should be an important part in any new hymn book.

David Hall spoke for most informants who felt that a new hymn book is necessary at this time.

The time has come for a new hymn book, because the theology has changed to suit the times, or maybe it's a change in the way we present it, or a change in emphasis....We should keep the plainsong hymns. We need a good variety of hymns to suit all people on all occasions. Gospel, Victorian hymns, Lutheran hymns, Spirituals--all the hymns from our history are important. Because of their language and music they have lasted a long time, and will last many more years....In a new book, I think the key in terms of music is definitely to keep current in how you present it. The hymn book has to reflect all different types of music so that everybody can find something that can speak to them.

Michele offered a cautionary note:

A new hymn book is important because we need to unify our music. A hymnal should be a basic expression of our ideals....I can't wait until the new Hymn Book comes out. We can't be effective in this society if we remain static--we have to move with the times. But we mustn't take too much stock in a hymnal; it's a tool, and we have to remember that that's what it is. It's a reflection of our faith, and we have to keep that in focus.

Alan felt that a new hymn book should take into account the theological and cultural demands of the present. At the same time, he said that hymns are important in preserving ties with the historical church.

We should retain the historical hymns of the church. The function of the new hymn book should be to provide music that is worshipful to the people of the United Church in this day and age. We need historical hymns, because that's part of the church today. And we need hymns that speak to the kids of today--there needs to be a blend of the new and the old....The fundamental theology hasn't changed, but our interpretation of it has changed, and how it's understood has changed....A new hymn book is certainly warranted because of inclusive language. That was the biggest deficiency in the Red Book.

Tim exhibited his usual caution.

I like hymns that I'm used to. I like the flexibility of being able to move between the Red and Green books. I like the mix. I hope the new book isn't going to be too politically correct for its own good...taking a good hymn and changing it, so that we wish we had the Red Book again, to sing it the way it was. But I suppose time always heals. It's just that I don't know what to expect.

It was interesting to note that only one informant felt that the main role of a new hymn book was to present new hymns. The interest in, and respect for, the historical hymns of the church was striking. While most people felt that one of the main reasons for producing a new hymn book at this time was the need for inclusive language, this did not extend, in general, to the more ancient hymns of the church, for the reasons stated above.

"Voices of First United"

First United Church has recently produced a supplementary hymn booklet, "Voices of First United".⁴³ Not only does it

⁴³"Voices of First United" has been in use since October, 1995. Compiled by Sharon Moon and Patricia Williamson, it was produced by Addie Crawford. Such booklets are made possible by the purchase of a "Church Copyright License", like the one offered by Wood Lake Books, which was used by First United.

include favorite hymns like the "Zulu Hymn",⁴⁶ but it contains several works by feminist writers which have not otherwise been available. Members of the congregation find this collection to be a valuable supplement to the Red and Green books, while they await the publication of the new Hymn Book.

Several of the hymns in "Voices of First United" make use of well-known tunes from the traditional church repertoire. In these cases the words are either entirely new, or the traditional words have been edited to agree with present beliefs and social practices. Needless to say, inclusive language is used throughout. Among hymns mentioned in this thesis which are included in the booklet are the "Gathering Chant," "Sending you light," and the "Zulu Hymn."

Twenty of the thirty-two selections in "Voices of First United" are by women. Among these are two compositions by Patricia Mayberry, a member of the congregation; six by the American feminist and human rights activist, Carolyn McDade; and five by the New Zealand hymn writer, Shirley Erena Murray. Some members of this group of woman composers and poets have gained increased recognition in Canada since the publication of the Green Book in 1987.⁴⁷ It will be interesting to see how many of

⁴⁶The words to such hymns were formerly printed out in the bulletin each time they were used. This involved considerable secretarial time and extra expense.

⁴⁷Although the Green Book is meticulous in its use of inclusive language, only twenty-one of the 132 hymns in this publication were actually written by women.

these hymn writers, as well as members of an even younger generation of women, are represented in the new hymn book.⁴⁰

Conclusion

As could be expected, there was never complete agreement among the informants on any of the issues presented in this study. Neither were the opinions expressed necessarily influenced by age, education or economic circumstances.

Among those interviewed were people who had been members of the congregation of First United Church for fifty years, and others who had joined the church during the ministry of Sharon Moon⁴¹ because they had been attracted by this church's involvement in social issues and by its policy of outreach into the surrounding neighbourhood. Other informants searching for peace and spiritual guidance, in a nurturing and caring community, had come more recently to First United. Each of these groups brought with them a distinct set of expectations and cultural baggage.

One informant, who had recently been Clerk of the

⁴⁰According to the *United Church Observer* (Anon 1996), the new hymn book, called "Voices United" will be available in mid-April, 1996. It will be a large book, containing seven-hundred hymns, fifteen percent of which are written by Canadians. There will be a generous selection of liturgical music, including canticles, metrical and free-verse psalms, and service music, including settings of Holy Communion, the Lord's Prayer, doxologies, and other responses.

⁴¹Sharon Moon has been minister at First United Church since 1985.

Session,²⁰ commented on some of the changes he has seen during the time he has been part of this community:

Luke: I was initially attracted by the sense of community in this church. At that time (eight years ago) there was a very small group of people intensely interested in running a church in the downtown, with a focus on social and local issues. There is no longer a sense of a core group: now there are many core groups.
....This is not a neighbourhood church, and it's no longer as solidly rooted in the concerns of the neighbourhood as it used to be. From my perspective, I've felt that there are a lot of people who come into the church who are concerned with spirituality and liturgy from a much more personal perspective. They are there to renew themselves, but there isn't much interest in the other aspect of it--interest in the wider social concerns....

Luke identified a fundamental change which is taking place in the nature of the congregation of First United. Members of the original core group of social activists are still there, and in fact, because of the success of their involvement in the affairs local community, they may be partly responsible for several of the new interest groups which are now part of the congregation. Many people from the surrounding community have become members of First United because there they are accepted without prejudice or discrimination. In addition, people who feel that they are unwelcome in other city churches because of sexual orientation, illness or addiction have been attracted to First United, because there they can both renew themselves spiritually, and can become active members of a church community.

How is it possible to extract some sense of communal

²⁰The Clerk of the Session is the senior lay-person in a United Church congregation.

identity by looking at the hymns this changing and disparate congregation chooses to sing? While there was some agreement among informants on the larger issues (the importance of hymns in the church service, the involvement of the congregation through the singing of hymns, the need to have a variety of hymns available, and the need for a change in language to reflect current beliefs and social usage), the diverse nature of the congregation became more apparent when personal preferences in hymns were expressed. While "What does the Lord Require?" was the most popular hymn among informants, a split in preferred style became apparent between what might be referred to as the "Spirit of Gentleness" and the "Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee" factions. "Spirit of gentleness" is an introspective hymn of personal experience; "Joyful, joyful, we adore Thee," on the other hand, is a hymn of praise which speaks of the wonders of nature and the need for love among humankind. This division of preference could be attributed to the expectations that individual members of the congregation have of the church service: whether the focus should be on personal needs, or on the role of the church and its members in the larger community.

The general interest in liturgical music could be a further indicator of the changing nature of the congregation. While it may speak particularly to people who are, as Luke says, concerned with spirituality and liturgy from a personal perspective, it has been seen as acceptable to those people who see the church primarily as a community, given that this music requires congregational participation.

First United has always taken pride in the belief that it is a congregation open to new ideas. While this has certainly been the case in larger questions, such as the courageous stands taken by the community on human rights issues, it is interesting to observe that in private, many individual members appeared to be more conservative than one would have expected. This became most apparent in the relatively moderate personal views expressed on the issue of inclusive language. While within a group such as the church choir, fierce adherence to the principles of inclusion could be noted, many people privately said that, sometimes, political correctness could be carried too far.

The cautious approach of many of the informants to contemporary musical idioms and practices as found in the Green Book was also surprising, since full (and at times exclusive) use has been made of hymns in this book since it became available. Their somewhat reluctant acceptance of these new hymns was generally for musical reasons, since most people seemed to have no quarrel with their language.

Musical expectations on the part of many informants presupposed that hymns would be sung to well-known tunes, that they would be sung in harmony, and that they would be selected from a certain type of repertoire. Aesthetic values had to be adjusted when a different kind of music was offered, and many informants did not find this new style always to be conducive to worship. At the same time, since new, and in some cases, younger people were being attracted to the church, the pragmatism which has always been the watchword of the United Church seemed to have

taken charge. As Sharon Moon²¹ pointed out, "people come in from the street who don't know a psalm from a revelation, but they recognize guitars and pianos." Aesthetic values were being adjusted to accommodate a changing community.

It is interesting to note that while some people had trouble accepting newly-composed hymns in the contemporary "folk" style, there was no reluctance to participate in the singing of a traditional folk hymn. Indeed, many people not only sang, but participated through bodily movement as well. Furthermore they were willing to accept a different soundscape, which included percussion instruments and clapping. Was this because participation in something genuinely foreign was acceptable? or was it because the Zulu hymn offered no real threat to their own culture? Could it be seen as a symbolic opening of the doors of the community--an indication that its members feel strong enough in their own church culture to recognize, and perhaps to hold out their hands, to another, quite different cultural group?

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Finding a central pathway acceptable to most people, but yet in no way compromising the positions and needs of the congregation, is the task that has confronted First United Church since its foundation. An examination of the hymns preferred by the present community can be seen as an indicator of the changes that have taken place in that church since the Inaugural Services

²¹Personal conversation with the author: January 1996.

of Union, which took place so long ago. Seventy years have not changed the fact that the different cultural needs within a church community must be met, if that community is to serve the purposes for which it was created--to provide a spiritual home for all who enter its doors.

CONCLUSION

How shall we sing the Lord's song?
Psalm 137:1

The Lord's song has been sung in many ways in the United Church of Canada. This thesis has examined the various factors which have had a significant influence on the ways by which members of First United Church select their hymns. The study of an individual church congregation offered a privileged site from which to observe how, in times of change, its members articulate and negotiate their concerns. While the examination of the preferred hymnody at First United Church helped to sketch a profile of the current congregation, it also served to identify some of the issues being faced at the present time by the church at the national level. Consequently, through a consideration of the hymnody favoured by one congregation at different times in its history, it has been possible to observe changes in theology and social practices, as well as some of the changes in the policies of the national church itself, which took place during those years.

In the seventy-one years since the foundation of the United Church of Canada, the country has faced a depression, World War II, the prosperity of the post-war era, and the economic crises of the 90s. Biblical scholarship and scientific discoveries have changed the way we see creation and the way we see the earth around us. At the same time, the increasingly powerful voice of women within society has profoundly affected both the religious and social practices within the church itself.

These changes are articulated in the changing hymnody of the church. Most striking among these is the recognition in the texts of an evolving image of God--from a judgemental patriarchal figure, to an inclusive, supportive and nurturing presence. Recognition of the primary role of women in society has resulted in a process of change from androcentric language to inclusive language. Hymns of national and international life have also undergone significant revision. Sickened by the carnage of this century, most church members have rejected killing as a way of solving international problems and, as a result, hymns of war have been replaced by hymns of peace and love.

In the light of these findings, it is clear that the United Church cannot be thought of as a static institution with unshakable dogmas. Indeed, the United Church has proven to be an evolving, dynamic entity, which reflects, and sometimes anticipates, the social practices of its time. In reviewing its history we observed that moments of crisis and internal conflict were resolved through negotiation. As noted throughout this study, this process of negotiation was never easy, and did not necessarily always lead to consensus. In practice, for example, issues which may be resolved at the national level (such as the ordination of homosexuals) may not always result in immediate action at the local level, since each congregation has some degree of autonomy. The negotiation process, as has been shown, has nevertheless always been one of active engagement, and one that is basic to the construction and revision of the religious and social value systems of the church.

As has been shown in this study, churches, like society, are a contested terrain, and, like society, they are not immune from political manoeuvring. By examining the history of the United Church we saw that while some denominations were able to achieve union, others were not. Some church communities were able to resolve internal conflicts, others broke apart. Groups unhappy with policies of their parent congregation moved to become members of another, more congenial community. Congregations formed and re-formed, expanded, or sometimes disappeared.

In this thesis I have argued that hymns are currency in the political manoeuvring which takes place on this contested terrain. Each hymn book is the product of its particular generation, and as such speaks to the issues of its time. This is nowhere more obvious than in the changing concepts of the mission of hymnody itself, and in the changing musical language in which it is expressed. The editors of the Blue book, members of a patriarchal society, saw their mission as one of direction: "the moulding of character, the elevation of popular taste, and the purification of the heart of the worshipper" (Rose 1930: 310). The editors of the Red book, self-proclaimed members of the global village, aimed at "a comprehensive selection of hymns from the best of inherited hymnody [and] at the same time...a book of contemporary hymns expressive of the church's mission in, and to, the world of our times" ("Preface": no pagination). The Green book sought a simple renewal of congregational singing, offering hymns both in a popular musical idiom and in a revival of the style of early protestant singing on this continent. The words,

in contemporary inclusive language, aimed at projecting the image of a nurturing, compassionate God, and the wholeness of creation.²

In 1996 the concerns of our time have also been articulated, contested, and negotiated in the selection of hymns for a new hymnary. Through the interviews conducted as part of this thesis, it became evident that the main issue at the root of the present debate has been church culture itself. While most informants said that the church should preserve its heritage of traditional hymns, they also recognized the need to make church culture more accessible to a new generation familiar with a more contemporary type of music and language.

There was complete consensus among informants on only two points. It was generally agreed that hymns are vital to the church service, since singing offers the principal opportunity for the congregation to participate actively in worship. It was also agreed that hymns in a variety of styles must be available to all, since needs differ from congregation to congregation. This varied repertoire, it was said, should include hymns in both the traditional style of church music, and those in the

²It was necessary to impose some limits on the material covered in this thesis, and it was therefore decided to examine only the three hymn books (Blue, Red and Green) that had been in common use at First United. Other books have been used in other churches: collections such as *Songs of the Gospel* (1948) which is popular in Saskatchewan, or compositions such as those by the Common Cup Company of Winnipeg. Discussion of the collection of hymns for children, *All God's Children Sing* (Beckstead 1992) which has been used at times by a children's choir at First United was also outside the scope of this thesis.

contemporary "folk" style. While many informants still have a strong attachment to the historical hymns of the church, most of them stressed the need for a change in language to suit modern theology and social practices.

Consensus appeared, at first, to emerge on other issues, such as the need for inclusive language. However even this question remains open to interpretation and negotiation, since some informants are purists who insist that any type of exclusive language is unacceptable, while others feel that the language of historical hymns should be retained in its original form. Many informants felt that political correctness could be carried too far.

What was perhaps the most striking result of this study was the emergence of the concept of a congregational group identity as a social reality. Through the singing of hymns, the majority of the informants said that they considered themselves to be not only participant members of the group but, at the same time, to be part of a new, separate, larger entity through the agency of that individual participation. The recognition and proclamation of this group persona was articulated most clearly in the discussions on the singing of the commissioning hymn, at the close of the worship service. As Grenier pointed out, music is a fully-fledged and specific social phenomenon. In this study, this was nowhere more apparent than in the discussion about singing hymns together, and the experience that this singing together provides. As Grenier says, a "social reality is not only reproduced", but the act of making music together "contributes to its very

production and creation" (1990: 45).

This thesis has shown how the study of musical practice can explain aspects of social reality which no other praxis can decipher (Shepherd, 1988: 112-13). It may be that music, precisely because of its distinctive characteristics of rhythm, motion and emotion, all embodied in a dynamic practice, speaks to different levels of the conscious and the unconscious. As Sharon Moon said:

The words that we sing, the images that we use, the ways that we think about God in the hymns, are the images that go deep into the soul, and they're far more important than anything I ever say, because they hit a different place in a person's being...and they cannot be divorced from the music, [because] sound and rhythm resonate in different parts of the body.²

At a personal level, this study has been a reflective exercise on my own practice as a musician. While music in the popular style of many contemporary hymns is still not appealing to me as a church organist, I have gained a new respect for music in this genre, because I can observe this social phenomenon occurring as music is being made all around me. I have also become increasingly aware of the fact that different levels of the conscious and the unconscious are brought into play through performance of this music. Music which invites full participation remains an integral part of worship, and the church musician must, I believe, be prepared to make personal compromises to achieve this end. Together, perhaps we will learn how to "sing the Lord's song."

²Personal conversation with the author, November 4, 1995.

APPENDICES

Please note:

The names of the tunes are italicized; the incipit of the text is placed in double quotes. When the tunes and the incipit are both referred to by the opening words of the text, the words are italicized.

1:1 Old Hundredth. Long-note version. Genevan Psalter, 1551.

Slow and with dignity.

Amen.

Old Hundredth. Later version (date unknown).

Slow and with dignity.

A-men.

1.2 Nicaea: "Holy, holy, holy." Music by John Bacchus Dykes (1823-1876). Words by Reginald Heber (1763-1826).

NICAEA. 11 12 12 10. JOHN BACCHUS DYKES, 1823-1876.
Moderately slow.

- H**OLY, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
Early in the morning our song shall rise to Thee;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!
- 2 Holy, holy, holy! all the saints adore Thee,
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea,
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.
- 3 Holy, holy, holy! though the darkness hide Thee,
Though the eye of sinful man Thy glory may not see,
Only Thou art holy; there is none beside Thee,
Perfect in power, in love, and purity.
- 4 Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!
All Thy works shall praise Thy Name in
earth and sky and sea;
Holy, holy, holy, merciful and mighty,
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!

A-men.

REGINALD HEBER, 1763-1826.

1.3 The Heart's Refuge: "Safe in the arms of Jesus." Music by William Howard Doane (1832-1915). Words by Frances Jane Crosby (1823-1915).

THE HEART'S REFUGE. 7676 a. and refrain.

Moderato.

1 Safe in the arms of Je - sus, Safe on His gen - tle breast,
 2 Safe in the arms of Je - sus, Safe from cor - rod - ing care,
 3 Je - sus, my heart's dear re - fuge, Je - sus has died for me:

There, by His love o'er - shad - ed, Sweet - ly my soul shall rest,
 Safe from the world's temp - ta - tions, Sin can - not harm me there,
 Firm on the Rock of A - gas Ev - er my trust shall be.

Hark! 'tis the voice of an - gel, Born in a song to me,
 Free from the blight of sor - row, Free from my doubt and
 Here let me wait with pa - tience, Wait till the night is o'er,

Ov - er the fields of glo - ry, Ov - er the jas - per sea!
 On - ly a few more tri - als, On - ly a few more tears,
 Wait till I see the morn - ing, Break on the gold - en shore.

REFRAIN.

Safe in the arms of Je - sus, Safe on His gen - tle breast.

There, by His love o'er - shad - ed, Sweet - ly my soul shall rest. A - men.

2.1 King's Weston: "At the name of Jesus." Words and music by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958).

KING'S WESTON. 6565 D.
Unison. With voices.



At the Name of Je - sus Ev-'ry knee shall bow.

Con. And.

Ev-'ry tongue con - fess . . . Him King of Glo - ry now:

'Tis the Fa - ther's plea - sure We should call him Lord.

Who from the be - gin - ning Was the might - y Word.

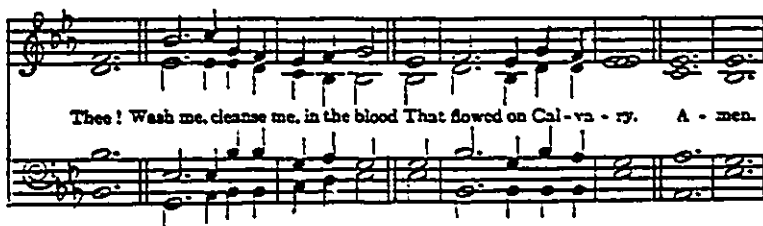
Amen.

2.2 Welcome Voice: "I hear Thy welcome voice." Words and music by Lewis Hartsough (1828-1872).

WELCOME VOICE. S.M. and refrain.
Moderate.



REFRAIN.



I HEAR Thy welcome voice
That calls me, Lord, to Thee,
For cleansing in Thy precious blood
That flowed on Calvary.

*I am coming, Lord!
Coming now to Thee!
Wash me, cleanse me, in the blood
That flowed on Calvary.*

2 Though coming weak and vile,
Thou dost my strength assure;
Thou dost my vileness fully cleanse
Till spotless all and pure.

3 'Tis Jesus calls me on
To perfect faith and love,
To perfect hope, and peace, and trust,
For earth and heaven above.

4 'Tis Jesus who confirms
The blessed work within.
By adding grace to welcomed grace,
Where reigned the power of sin.

5 And He the witness gives
To loyal hearts and free,
That every promise is fulfilled,
If faith but brings the plea.

6 All hail, atoning blood!
All hail, redeeming grace!
All hail, the gift of Christ our Lord,
Our Strength and Righteousness!

- 2.3 Simeon: "These things shall be: a loftier race." Music by Samuel Stanley (1767-1822). Words by John Addington Symonds (1840-1893).

SIMEON. L.M. *Moderato.*

Amen.

Or ORGAN, No. 20

- THESE things shall be: a loftier race,
 Than e'er the world in history shall rise,
 With flame of freedom in their eyes,
 And light of knowledge in their faces.
- 2 They shall be gentle, brave, and strong,
 To spill no drop of blood, but dare
 All that may plant man's lordship firm
 On earth, and fire, and sea, and air.
- 3 Nation with nation, land with land,
 Inarmed shall live as comrades free;
 In every heart and brain shall throb
 The pulse of one fraternity.
- 4 Man shall love man, with heart as pure
 And fervent as the young-eyed throng
 Who chant their heavenly psalms before
 God's face with undiscordant song.
- 5 New arts shall bloom of loftier mould,
 And mightier music thrill the skies,
 And every life shall be a song,
 When all the earth is paradise.
- 6 There shall be no more sin, nor shame,
 Though pain and passion may not die;
 For man shall be at one with God
 In bonds of firm necessity.

- 2.4 St. Anne: "The Son of God goes forth to war." Music ascribed to William Croft (1678-1727). Words by Reginald Heber (1783-1826).

ST. ANNE. C.M.
Slow and dignified.

A-men.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1 THE Son of God goes forth to war,
A kingly crown to gain;
His blood-red banner streams afar:
Who follows in His train?</p> <p>2 Who best can drink His cup of
woe,
Triumphant over pain,
Who patient bears his cross below,
He follows in His train.</p> <p>5 A glorious band, the chosen few
On whom the Spirit came,
Twelve valiant saints, their hope they
knew.
And mock'd the cross and flame:</p> <p>6 They met the tyrant's brandished steel,
The lion's gory mane,
They bowed their necks the death to
feel:
Who follows in their train?</p> | <p>3 The martyr first, whose eagle eye
Could pierce beyond the grave,
Who saw his Master in the sky,
And called on Him to save.</p> <p>4 Like Him, with pardon on his tongue,
In midst of mortal pain,
He prayed for them that did the
wrong:
Who follows in his train?</p> <p>7 A noble army, men and boys,
The matron and the maid,
Around the Saviour's throne rejoice,
In robes of light arrayed:</p> <p>8 They climbed the steep ascent of
heaven,
Through pen, toil, and pain:
O God, to us may grace be given
To follow in their train.</p> |
|---|--|

- 2.5 St. Anne: "O God, our help in ages past." Music ascribed to William Croft (1678-1727). Words by Isaac Watts (1674-1748).

ST. ANNE. C.M.
Slow and dignified.

A-men.

From PSALM XC.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>O GOD, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home:</p> <p>2 Under the shadow of Thy throne
Thy saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is Thine arm alone,
And our defence is sure.</p> <p>3 Before the hills in order stood,
Or earth received her frame,
From everlasting Thou art God,
To endless years the same.</p> | <p>4 A thousand ages in Thy sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.</p> <p>5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.</p> <p>6 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Be Thou our guard while troubles last,
And our eternal home.</p> |
|--|--|

2.6 Pentecost: "Land of our birth, we pledge to thee." Music by William Boyd (1847-1828). Words by Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936).



- LAND of our Birth, we pledge to thee
Our love and toil in the years to be;
When we are grown and take our place,
As men and women with our race.*
- 2 Father in heaven, who lovest all,
O help Thy children when they call;
That they may build from age to age,
An undefiled heritage.
- 3 Teach us to bear 'the yoke in youth,
With steadfastness and careful truth;
That, in our time, Thy grace may give
The truth whereby the nations live.
- 4 Teach us to rule ourselves alway,
Controlled and cleanly night and day;
That we may bring, if need arise,
No maimed or worthless sacrifice.
- 5 Teach us to look, in all our ends,
On Thee for Judge, and not our
friends;
- That we, with Thee, may walk un-
cowed
By fear or favour of the crowd.
- 6 Teach us the strength that cannot
seek,
By deed or thought, to hurt the
weak;
That, under Thee, we may possess
Man's strength to succour man's
distress.
- 7 Teach us delight in simple things,
And mirth that has no bitter springs;
Forgiveness free of evil done,
And love to all men 'neath the sun!
- 8 *Land of our Birth, our faith, our pride,
For whose dear sake our fathers died;
O Motherland, we pledge to thee,
Head, heart, and hand through the
years to be!*

2.7a Jesus Loves Me: "Jesus loves me, this I know." Music by William Batchelder Bradbury (1816-1868). Words by Anna Bartlett Warner (1820-1915).

JESUS LOVES ME. 7777. and refrain.

Moderato.

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The music is written in a simple, homophonic style with quarter and eighth notes.

REFRAIN.

The second system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The music continues from the first system. Below the staves, the lyrics "Yes, Je - sus loves me! Yes, Je - sus" are written.

The third system of musical notation consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef and the lower staff is in bass clef. The music concludes the piece. Below the staves, the lyrics "loves me! Yes, Je - sus loves me! The Bi - ble tells me so. A - men." are written.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>JESUS loves me, this I know,
For the Bible tells me so;
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak but He is strong.
<i>Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.</i></p> <p>2 Jesus loves me, He who died
Heaven's gate to open wide;
He will wash away my sin,
Let His little child come in.</p> | <p>3 Jesus loves me, loves me still,
Though I'm very weak and ill;
From His shining throne on high
Comes to watch me where I lie.</p> <p>4 Jesus loves me, He will stay
Close beside me all the way:
If I love Him, when I die
He will take me home on high.
<i>Yes, Jesus loves me!
The Bible tells me so.</i></p> |
|---|---|

2.7b Jesus Loves Me: "Jesus loves me, this I know." Melody by William Batchelder Bradbury (1816-1868). Harmonization by Stanley L. Osborne (b.1907). Words by Anna Bartlett Warner (1820-1915), revised by David Rutherford McGuire (b.1929).

JESUS LOVES ME 7777 and refrain

♩ = Unison

Je - sus loves me, this I know, and the Bi - ble tells me so.

lit - tle ones to him be - long, in his love we shall be strong.

♩ = Refrain

Yes, Je - sus loves me, yes, Je - sus loves me.

yes, Je - sus loves me, the Bi - ble tells me so.

- 2 Jesus loves me, this I know,
as he loved so long ago,
taking children on his knee,
saying, "Let them come to me".
- 3 Jesus loves me still today,
walking with me on my way,
wanting as a friend to give
light and love to all who live.

2.9 Concrete: "God of concrete, God of steel." Music by Frederick R. Clarke (b.1931). Words by Richard Granville Jones (b.1926).

CONCRETE 777777

Unison

1 God of con - crete, God of steel,
 God of pis - ton and of wheel,
 God of py - lon. God of steam,
 God of gir - der and of beam,
 God of a - tom, God of mine:
 all the world of power is thine. A - men.

2 Lord of cable, Lord of rail,
 Lord of freeway and of mail,
 Lord of rocket, Lord of flight,
 Lord of soaring satellite,
 Lord of lightning's flashing line:
 all the world of speed is thine.

3 Lord of science, Lord of art,
 Lord of map and graph and chart,
 Lord of physics and research,
 Word of bible, Faith of church,
 Lord of sequence and design:
 all the world of truth is thine.

4 God whose glory fills the earth,
 gave the universe its birth,
 loosed the Christ with Easter's might,
 saves the world from evil's blight,
 claims us all by grace divine:
 all the world of love is thine.

2.10 Lord of the Dance: "I danced in the morning when the world was begun." Words and music by Sidney Carter (b.1915).

Lord of the Dance Irregular

Union
I danced in the morn-ing when the world was be-gun,

and I danced in the moon and the stars and the sun,

and I came down from hea-ven and I danced on the earth.

at Beth-le-hem I had my birth.

Refrain
Dance then wher-ev-er you may be,

I am the Lord of the Dance, said he,

I'll lead you all wher-ev-er you may be,

I will lead you all in the dance, said he.

2 I danced for the scribe and the pharisee,
but they would not dance and they wouldn't follow me;
I danced for the fishermen, for James and John;
they came with me and the dance went on.
Dance then wherever you may be ...

3 I danced on the Sabbath and I cured the lame;
the holy people said it was a shame;
they whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
and they left me there on a cross to die.
Dance then wherever you may be ...

4 I danced on a Friday when the sky turned black -
it's hard to dance with the devil on your back;
they buried my body and they thought I'd gone -
but I am the dance and I will go on.
Dance then wherever you may be ...

5 They cut me down and I leap up high;
I am the life that'll never, never die;
I'll live in you if you'll live in me -
I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.
Dance then wherever you may be ...

The small notes are for v. 5

The stanzas may be sung by a soloist
and the refrain by the people.

2.11 Kingsfold: "Now thank we God for bodies strong." Traditional melody of England and Ireland. Harmonization by Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958). Words by Drewyn Dixon Jones (b.1925).

KINGSFOLD 8686D

1 Now thank we God for bo-dies strong, vi - ta - li - ty and zest,

for strength to meet the day's de-mands, the urge to give our best,

for all our bo - dy's ap - pe - tites which can ful - fil - ment find,

and for the sac - ra - ment of sex that re - cre - ates our kind.

2 We thank him too that he has given
the gift of human minds,
and for the thrill of piecing out
the pattern that one finds -
to see in science and in art,
in love of every kind,
that we, in searching out life's ways
do but discern his mind.

3 And most of all we thank him for
the highest gift of all:
that body, mind and all our powers
respond to Spirit's call.
Though kin to bears and born of flesh,
in mortal bodies dressed,
yet God has linked our souls to his:
they nowhere else can rest.

2.12a "For the healing of the nations." Words by Frederick Herman Kaan (b.1929). *The Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada*, 1971.

For the healing of the nations,
Lord, we pray with one accord;
for a just and equal sharing
of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love in action
help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us, Father, into freedom,
from despair your world release;
that redeemed from war and hatred,
men may come and go in peace.
Show us how through care and goodness
fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,
let it from the earth be banned:
pride of status, race or schooling,
dogmas keeping man from man.
In our common quest for justice
may we hallow life's brief span.

You, creator-God, have written
your great name on all mankind:
for our growing in your likeness
bring the life of Christ to mind,
that, by our response and service,
earth its destiny may find.

2.12b "For the healing of the nations" Words by Frederick Herman
Kaan (b.1929). Songs for a Gospel People, 1987.

For the healing of the nations
God we pray with one accord:
For a just and equal sharing
Of the things that earth affords.
To a life of love and action
Help us rise and pledge our word.

Lead us, Father, into freedom
From despair your world release:
That, redeemed from war and hatred,
All may come and go in peace.
Show us how thro' care and goodness
Fear will die and hope increase.

All that kills abundant living,
Let it from the earth be banned;
Pride of status, race or schooling,
Dogmas that obscure your plan.
In our common quest for justice
May we hallow life's brief span.

You, Creator God have written
Your great name on humankind;
For our growing in your likeness,
Bring the life of Christ to mind:
That, by our response and service,
Earth its destiny may find.

2.13a "O for a thousand tongues to sing." Words by Charles Wesley, 1739. *The Hymn Book of the Anglican Church of Canada and the United Church of Canada*, 1971.

O for a thousand tongues to sing
my dear Redeemer's praise,
the glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace.

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.

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

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

My gracious master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honours of thy name.

2.13b O for a thousand tongues to sing. Music by Carl Glaeser, 1828, adapted by Lowell Mason (1792-1872). Alternative tune: Richmond, adapted from Thomas Haveis (1734-1820) and Samuel Webbe (c.1770-1843). Words by Charles Wesley 1739, revised. Songs for a Gospel People, 1987.

O for a thousand tongues to sing

* may be sung to Richmond (HB 147)

G D G Em D G D7 G D

1. O for a thou-sand tongues to sing my great Re-deem-er's praise.
2. Je-sus! the name that charms our fears, that bids our sor- rows cease:
3. He speaks, and list'-ning to his voice, new life the dead re-ceive.
4. Hear him, ye deaf; ye voice-less ones, your loos-ened tongues em-ploy:

G C G D7 G

the glo-ries of my God and King, the vic-to-ries of grace.
'tis mu-sic in the sin-ner's ears, 'tis life and health and peace.
the mourn-ful bro-ken hearts re-joice, the hum-ble poor be-lieve.
ye blind, be-hold your Sav-iour come, and leap, ye lame, for joy!

5. My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread thro' all the earth abroad
the honours of your name.

2.14 Walls that divide. Music by Ron Klusmeier, 1974. Words by Walter Farquharson, 1974.

Walls that divide

1. Tho' an-cient walls may still stand proud and ra-cial
 2. When vest-ed pow'r stands firm en-trenched and breaks an-
 3. The truth we seek in var-led sceme, the life that
 4. The church di-vit-ed seeks that grace, that new-ness

strife be fact, (8)
 oth-er's back, when waste and want live side of
 we pur-sue, u-nites us in a com-mon
 we pro-claim; a u-ni-ty of serv-ing

hate, pro-cim God's ssv-ing act!
 side, it's gos-pel that we lack! (14) Walls that di-
 quest for self and world made new!
 love that lives praise to God's name!

vide are bro-ken down; (21) Christ is our u-ni-ty!
 Chains that en-slave are thrown a-side; (29) Christ is our li-ber-ty! (32)

5. This broken world seeks lasting health and vital unity—
 God's people in the Christ made new cast off all slavery!

2.15 Let there be peace on earth. Words and music by Sy Miller and Jill Jackson, 1955.

Let there be peace on earth

C Am Dm7 G7 C F C Dm G7
 1. Let there be peace on earth and let it be- gin with me;
 2. Let peace be- gin with me, let this be the mo- ment now,
 C Am D7 Em G7
 let there be peace on earth, the peace that was meant to be.
 with ev- 'ry step I take let this be my sol- emn (now)
 G7 Am Em G7 C
 With God, our cre- a- tor, chil- dren all are we:
 Am7 D7 G7
 let us walk with each oth- er in per- fect har- mo- ny. (for 2)
 G7 G7 C Cm7
 vow: to take each mo- ment and live each mo- ment in

F#m Am Dm Em6 C E7 F C C7
 peace e- ter- ni- ly. Let there be peace on earth and
 let it be- gin with me. let it be- gin with me.
 First ending: C G7 C G7 F#m Dm7 G7 Dm7 C
 Second ending: F#m Dm7 G7 Dm7 C

2.16 Tell me the stories of Jesus. Music by Frederic A. Challinor (c.1904). Words by William H. Parker, 1885.

Tell me the stories of Jesus

Capo 1 A Bm7 E A

1. Tell me the sto-ries of Je- sus I love to hear. things I
 2. First let me hear how the chil- dren stood round his knee. and I
 3. In- to the cit- y I'd fol- low the chil- dren's band, wav- ing

F#7 E B7 E E7 A

would ask him to tell me if he were here: scenes by the way-
 shall fan- cy his bless- ing rest- ing on me: words full of kind-
 a branch of the palm tree high in my hand: one of his her-

A7 F#7 Bm E7 F#m Fdim A E7 A

side. tales of the sea. sto- ries of Je- sus. tell them to me.
 ness. deeds full of grace. all in the love- light of Je- sus' face.
 aids. yes. I would sing loud- est ho- san- nas! Je- sus is king.

3.1 Language guidelines: Hymn and Worship Resource Project, 1994.

LANGUAGE GUIDELINES

Hymn And Worship Resource Project

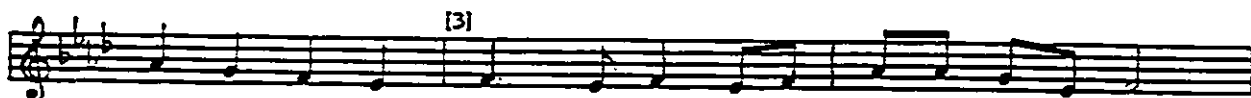
1. With reference to persons, language will be gender-inclusive, avoiding use of any expression that defines people in terms of one gender.
2. Language for people will show sensitivity to non-gender issues, where prejudices and patronizing or derogatory attitudes maybe communicated, however unintentionally. Careful attention will be given to problems created by the evolution of language and shifts in the meaning of terms.
3. In God-language, the objective will be to use non-gendered images in the naming of God, and to balance the use of male-gender images with female-gender images.
4. The use of gender-defined pronouns for God will be avoided. Exceptions would be considered in those instances where a metaphor or simile is being employed which would make the use of such gendered pronouns appropriate.
5. The use of language that characterizes God's relationship with us as coercive, oppressive, or demeaning of the dignity and worth of human beings and of creation, will be avoided.
6. The use of gendered pronouns for inanimate objects, social collectivities like cities and nations, and institutions like the church, will be avoided.
7. Militaristic and triumphalist language about the church is to be avoided.
8. References to the people of Israel, whether in biblical times or modern times, will avoid any suggestion of God's rejection of Israel or Jewish guilt for the death of Jesus of Nazareth.
9. In telling the biblical story with names of Middle Eastern nations (Israel, Syria, Egypt and others), sensitivity to the inferences which might be construed in reference to the contemporary political realities will be exercised.
10. In all editing, retention of literary, historical and theological integrity is a primary concern.

Summary: It is the commitment of the Hymn and Worship Resource Committee that the collection as a whole respect the preceding guidelines. On occasion, an exception for a particular text - for reasons of poetic integrity or widespread public attachment to the older form - may seem warranted. If so, the case for the inclusion of the unedited text will need to be made convincingly to the whole committee, which may grant such exceptions.

3.2 The Gathering Chant. Words and music by Phil Porter and Elaine Kirkland, 1992.



Gath - ered here in the mys - t'ry of this hour. gath - ered here in



one strong bo - dy. Gath - ered here in the strug - gle and the pow'r.



Spir - it draw near.

3.3 Guidelines for interviews with members and clergy of First United Church, 1995.

1. Name of informant.
Age of informant by category: 20-30; 31-45; 46-60; over 60.
2. Education and/or profession.
3. How long have you been coming to this church?
4. Have you come to this church from a church of another denomination? From another United church with different stands on some issues which you find to be of importance?
5. Do you hold any position in this church, or have you held any such position in any other churches to which you have belonged? Are you presently a member of any committee?
6. Are you a member of the choir?
7. Do you have any musical training? Play an instrument?
8. Do you belong to any musical groups outside the church?

HYMNS:

9. Are hymns important to you? Why?
10. How important are they in relation to the other parts of the Sunday service?
11. Do you enjoy singing hymns?
12. What kind of hymns do you enjoy singing? Name some of your favorite hymns.
13. What are your expectations from singing a hymn? Are the words or the music more important to you?
14. What do you think about the issue of inclusive language?
15. Do you like singing hymns in harmony; with descants? Rounds? (eg. *What does the Lord Require of You?*; *Go now in Peace*)
16. Do you like singing hymns with piano or guitar accompaniment, or do you prefer the organ?
17. How do you feel about the use of percussion instruments and liturgical dance when we sing hymns such as the "Zulu Hymn"?
18. Should there be a separate repertoire of children's hymns?

19. How do you feel about using music from Taizé? Using other instruments such as horn, flute, saxophone etc?
20. What do you think of the present Red Book? the old Blue Book? the Green Book?
21. What do you think a new hymn book should retain? add?
22. Do you feel that traditional hymns of the church should be retained? Why?
23. How would you feel about a sung communion service, such as the ones in the Red Book? A sung communion service such as the modern one (by Canadian Nancy Telfer) sung by women of the choir?
24. The Red Hymn Book has had a life of about 20 years. Do you think that new hymn book is warranted? Why?
25. What order of priority do you feel that a new hymn book should have in relation to other financial needs and commitments of this church (eg. outreach, missions, painting the building, organ repair, full-time caretaker.)

3.4 Spirit of Gentleness. Words and music by James K. Manley, 1978.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness

Spirit, Spirit of gen-tle-ness, blow thro' the wil-der-ness
 Spir- it, Spir- it, Spir- it of rest- less-ness,
 call- ing and see, Spir- it, Spir- it of rest- less-ness,
 stir me from plac-id-ness, Wind, Wind on the sea,
 1. You moved on the wa- ters, you called in the deep,
 2. You swept thro' the dex- tert, you sang with the an- nunt,
 3. You sang in a sta- ble, you cried from a hill,
 then you ceased up the moun- tains from the val- leys of sleep;
 and you goad- ed your peo- ple with a law and a land;
 then you whis- pered in st- fence when the whole world was still;

and o- ver the no- ons you called to each:
 and when they were blind, ed with their i- ths and
 and down in the ci- ty you called once a-
 things: . . . winks from your slum- bers
 lies, then you spoke thro' your proph- ets
 gab, when you blew thro' your pen- ple
 and rise on your wings,
 to o- pen their eyes,
 on the rush of the wind.

4. You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
 from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams;
 our women see visions, our men clear their eyes,
 with bold new decisions your people arise.

3.5 What does the Lord Require? Music by Jim Strathdee. Words, Biblical (Micah 6:8).

What does the Lord require?

Bass

What does the Lord re - quire of you?

Alto / Tenor

What does the Lord re - quire of you?

Jus - tice, kind - ness, walk

What does the Lord re - quire of you? What does the

hum - bly with — your God.

Soprano

Lord re - quire of you?

Alto / Tenor

To seek jus - tice, and love

Bass

Jus - tice, kind -

What does the Lord re - quire of

kind - ness, end walk hum - bly

ness, walk hum - bly

you? What does the Lord re -

f. Repeat ad. lib. Last time.

with your God. God.

with — your God. God.

quire of you? you?

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