

You really should read the preface of a hymnal

by

Rev. Joshua Bell

A Project Submitted to the Dr. Lisa Barnett

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Doctor of Ministry

Phillips Theological Seminary

Tulsa, Oklahoma

September 2022

It is well documented that Christianity in the nineteenth century in the United States was rapidly evolving. Thomas and Alexander Campbell¹ a part of this Restoration movement in the United States, and by the publications they wrote and the way they fully participated in a new movement in this country. The accomplishments Campbell had achieved by the time he was Forty-one were astounding. Between his prolific writing and speaking engagements, he founded a town, became the first postmaster general, started his printing press, created a college, and created an economy of sheep herding that supported the entire town of what is now known as Bethany, West Virginia. The Campbells being vital in changing Christianity, Barton W. Stone, and Walter Scott² also made invaluable contributions in both scholarly and theological pursuits. The question for this paper is, “how did they shape the movement known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) understanding of hymnody, and did we learn anything from their offerings?” These trailblazing men shaped American hymnody and theology, paving the way for so many “non-denominational” movements seen in the Twenty-first century.

The movement of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) had hymnals from the beginning to be used in worship. These hymnals created something new that broke away from the sectarian movements these founders came from. A focus only on the ways scriptures inspired the poet. In the movement’s early days, these hymnals shaped each of the founders’ individual yet corresponding theologies. Unlike today's hymnal creation horror stories, these founders were met with deep theological discussion and eventual cooperation. No matter the reasons Campbell’s hymnal Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs outlasted Stone’s and Scott’s trials at

¹. For the rest of the paper, Campbell will refer to Alexander and Thomas will be listed by his name.

². For the rest of the paper, I will be referring to Walter Scott as Scott and Barton W. Stone as Stone.

making a hymnal. Campbell's hymnal is filled with historical theological hymns written in the style of the apostle Paul's Philippian hymn found in chapter two, the goal being a way of bringing disciples of Jesus together to worship in a non-sectarian way and ultimately creating three different sects of believers known as the Churches of Christ acappella, the Christian Churches/Churches of Christ (also known as the Independents) and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). While he was still alive, there were efforts to try and create a hymnal that all of them participated in the creation of; however, it never actually made it to production. The movement evolved after Campbell's death in 1866 when the introduction of a hymnal with musical notation was written in 1871 entitled *Christian Hymnal*.³ This becomes the first official hymnal for the Christian Church. It was created in the sense of compromise to bring the streams of the Stone/Campbell movement together and split them further apart. This is the first of many attempts to bring non-sectarians together until 1941, when the *Christian Worship: A Hymnal* is produced by the two remaining streams and the Northern Baptists and yet again failed to bring them into a mutual usage of a hymnal that encompasses the vast differences theologically.⁴

There is a constant systemic issue in the formation of the once a movement now a denomination, and it is a simple fact that these battles existed between White, land-owning men. The hope is that there is growth in the mistakes of the past. The world of Christendom is leading to different theological understandings merging into a cohesive, active organism known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in ecumenical attentiveness in the twenty-first century. Hymns reflect how religious movements believe theologically and worship and how they

³. George Brandon, "The Hymn," *Journal of the Hymn Society of America* 15, no. 1 (1964): 22.

⁴. Brandon, 21.

practice these beliefs, which are never indeed solidified appropriately in a non-sectarian way in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), leading to the destructive force known as the Chalice Hymnal.

“Hymnody Shapes Theology”⁵

It is important to note that for historical hymnody discussions, there are a few critical factors in understanding the role of the hymnals in the movements they represent. First, the preface is vitally essential early in the study of sacred music anthropologically. It gives the reader and the participant an understanding of where the author’s theology comes from and the role this hymnal plays in the movement it is used in. It is vital to know what the purpose of this hymnal is. Second, the table of contents will tell the reader how the hymnal functions within the congregation. Lastly, the index lets the musician know what hymn tunes will be used in conjunction with the words on the page. Throughout the creation of the movement, which will eventually be known as the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), nothing stands out more robust as an identifier than the music of our movement.

In 1828 Campbell published his first edition hymnal entitled *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*.⁶ Campbell was not a musician per se but an accomplished writer, and his hymns are in the same line as Philippians chapter two. His hymns’ structure is based on his view of theology and study rather than the ease of the congregation. His twenty-three-page preface speaks volumes about this hymnal and what it is not. Campbell wrote, “No exercise of social

⁵. Taken from a conversation with Dr. Rick Lowery former president of the Disciples Historical Society, Bethany, West Virginia July 2022.

⁶. Alexander Campbell, Editor. Bethany {West} Virginia, 1828.

worship is more delightful, solemn, or sublime than singing addresses him in sacred song, care should be taken that the substance and form, or the matter and manner of our song, be such as will be acceptable to him.” There seemed to have been a movement with the Seceder Presbyterians that was happening in the United States at the time that only allowed the singing of Psalms in worship. The Seceders had a long history of factions. In 1747 the Seceder movement exploded over the “Scottish Bergesses’ Oath, which coincidentally was trying to make it the official “true religion” of the realm.”⁷ This notion of making a “national church” went against the Burghers movement in Scotland and Ireland which believed “the true religion might be construed more generically.”⁸ Thomas Campbell deplored the division these movements had created and even “labored to heal the breach of 1747.”⁹ Thomas always strived for some sense of unity in the ways the church should serve. He came to the United States in 1807 as a Seceder Presbyterian minister in Western Pennsylvania and ultimately was placed under discipline charges. He resigned his post, having never seen any fruit of what could be considered early ecumenical work to fruition.¹⁰

The founders of the Stone-Campbell-Scott movement, being against the idea of being sectarian in beliefs and practices, challenged this ideology to their very core writings. Early on, Thomas Campbell coined the phrase, “Where the scriptures speak, we speak; where the

7. Douglas A Foster, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ/Churches of Christ* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2012), 679.

8. Foster, 679.

9. Foster, 680.

10. Foster, 680.

scriptures are silent, we are silent.”¹¹ The prominent argument was the idea of continuing a religious practice that humans determined outside of the Bible. This will cause issues in the liturgy that will be discussed later in this paper, but in hymns, the only understanding we have is the biblical psalms. However, Campbell finds scriptural references inferring that the communities are to bring praise. He addresses this by asking, “Are we allowed to select our own words when we pray to God?”¹² This is in direct conflict with the “European” churches. They had books of worship or missals that had the prayers already written down and determined for the masses. His answer was, “Yes, says the advocate of the exclusive use of the one hundred and fifty psalms of David; always provided, that the words selected be according to the truth taught us in the bible.”¹³ The author would love to go with all the finite details of Campbell’s understanding of the ways how the scriptures speak; however his real goal is to break away from the sectarian world in which he holds no punches as he states,

And those Presbyterians who contend for the exclusive use of David’s Psalms will understand this criticism; when I ask them what is the difference between answering questions and answering “the questions,” in their phraseology? Does not the latter phrase refer to the catechism? . . . And here we observe that psalm and hymn singing, like every other part of Christian worship, has been corrupted by sectarianism. This demon, whose name is Legion, has possessed all our spirits and given the wrong direction to almost all our religious actions.¹⁴

¹¹. Todd M. Brenneman, “‘Where the Scriptures Speak, We Speak’: The Pennsylvania Frontier and the Origins of the Disciples of Christ,” *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 85, no. 2 (2018): 145–66, <https://doi.org/10.5325/pennhistory.85.2.0145>.

¹². Campbell, *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs* Adapted to the Christian Religion, 6.

¹³. Campbell, 6.

¹⁴. Campbell, 10.

All the founders struggle to find that fine line between understanding the ritual and traditions of the historical church and the understanding of “restoring” the church to the first century. The issue congregations were facing was how to sing these new “hymns” written and published by Bethany Press en masse. This is evident when Campbell wrote about those that are studying sacred music.

There is a school called a “singing school,” or a school devoted to “sacred music,” composed of all the young gentlemen and ladies of a vicinity; many of whom neither fear God nor regard man. Their school is filled with all the mirth folly and vanity, that in their hearts. . . .In the midst of jests and laughs, amid every species of frivolity, the death of Christ, the day of judgment, or the glories of redemption are sung. I tremble when I write—I think of him who said “Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain!”¹⁵

It is evident that in this movement's early stages, the need to break away from sects was vital to their reformation. The focus on the biblical tenets of singing praise to God was prominent in all of Campbell’s writings. It also was not a massive issue with changing the words to hymns to fit the theological needs of the time, which is evident on page 22 of the preface when Campbell wrote.

We have used our pen pretty liberally in erasing some words, altering others, and in new-modifying whole stanzas to save some valuable songs, excellent in the general scope, from being proscribed by the law of the New Covenant from admission into christian worship. Sometimes poetic beauties have been sacrificed for a purer speech, rather than we should sing fine poetry at the expense of the purity and simplicity of the christian style.¹⁶

¹⁵. Campbell, 12.

¹⁶. Campbell, 22.

This practice of re-writing hymns to fit the needs of the composer was not a new thing. There is evidence that musicians “borrowed” one another throughout the centuries. Handel borrowed from Mozart in writing the Messiah. Handel even is the one who filled in the full orchestration of Mozart’s Requiem. Mozart used melodic phrases from Bach and so on so on. The idea of changing the lyrics was also not unheard of, especially in the nineteenth century when Methodists would change ancient hymnody to fit their newly founded movement called Methodism. In the hymn entitled *Break Forth, O beauteous Heavenly light* one can see clearly that the hymn was originally written in 1641 by German composer Johann Rist. It was then translated by Methodist minister of music John Troutbeck away from German/Lutheran theology in 1885.¹⁷ The notion of changing the words to hymns to fit a more “purer speech”¹⁸ was just standard practice. The issue Campbell had was that the speech should come from within and not be taught institutionally. It was all about the words.

As the movement continued, Campbell continued to print his hymnal, his laser-guided focus could be summed up brilliantly by Heaton when he wrote

Mr. Campbell defines the three types of hymns:

1. Psalms are historic compositions or poetic narratives.
2. Hymns are songs of praise, in which some persons' excellencies, glories, and gracious acts are extolled.
3. Spiritual songs are either songs, the matter of which was immediately suggested by the Holy Spirit, or sentimental songs composed on the divine communications to men.¹⁹

¹⁷. *The United Methodist Hymnal: Book of United Methodist Worship* (Nashville, Tenn: United Methodist Pub. House, 1989), 223.

¹⁸. Campbell, *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs Adapted to the Christian Religion*, 22.

¹⁹. Charles H. Heaton, “Our First Hymnal,” *The Christian Evangelist* 93, no. 26 (June 29, 1955): 632.

One could almost feel the desire to create an environment free from structure liturgically. This movement broke from everything these men knew and challenged the organized religion that was growing rampant around them. These men were students of Locke and philosophers of the like that had been woven into the religion of Europe as firmly as the Nile runs through Egypt. It is just like he wrote in the *Christian System*.

While philosophy, mysticism, and politics drove the parties to every question into antipodal extremes; while justification by metaphysical faith alone; while the forms and ceremonies of all sects begat the "Spirit alone" in the mind of George Fox, while the Calvinian five points generated the Arminian five points; and while the Westminster Creed, though unsubscribed by its makers, begot a hundred others--not until within the present generation did any sect or party in Christendom unite and build upon the Bible alone. Since that time, the first effort known to us to abandon the whole controversy about creeds and reformations and to restore primitive Christianity, or to build alone upon the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself the chief corner, has been made.²⁰

If this movement succeeded, it had to go to its essential core principles, in Campbell's words, "primitive" Christianity. This meant the focus of worship needed to include new terms of what worship was.

Barton Stone and the Christian Hymn Book

Barton W. Stone followed his colleague and published his hymnal in 1829 entitled *Christian Hymnbook*.²¹ It is tough to find a historically complete copy of this hymnal. The Disciples Historical Society has a copy, and it is interesting to note that there is no preface on the front of Stone's hymnal. "Often prefaces furnish us with our only clue as to the compiler's ideas

²⁰. Campbell, *The Christian System* p. 13-14.

²¹. Brandon, "The Hymn." P.22

of sacred music and hymnody, and a preface in this hymnbook would have been invaluable.”²² This is a word-only hymnal again, also small like Campbell’s. It was 370 pages and contained 340 hymns.²³ The Miami Christian Conference commissioned it according to the cover. Barton included an index. However, he listed the hymns by subject and included scriptural references to the nature of the psalms. As mentioned before, it was not unheard of to not say where he might have received inspiration, so there are no authors listed or sources anywhere in the hymnal.²⁴ It is also important to note that the authors wrote, “we have not secured a copy-right for this book at the end of the book. But we intend to continue to publish until our brethren advise us to stop! Editor”²⁵ This was wildly unsuccessful; however, Stone partnered up with another collaborator, John T. Johnson, in 1832.²⁶ Barton created another hymnal with the same name, and it seems to vanish from existence. This version is scarce, and the Disciples Historical Society did not have a copy to view. It is known to have existed and was not entirely accepted or accessible.

Stone was an avid writer, and his contributions might not have been in the music side of the formation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). His writings about theology, his viewpoints of God, and the presence of the divine truly shaped the functions of the church today. Stone’s hymnal did not have a preface. The process of Stone’s hymnal seems to have been

²². Charles H. Heaton, “*The Disciples of Christ and Sacred Music*” (New York, NY, Union Theological Seminary, 1956), 39, Baylor University.

²³. Barton W. Stone and Thomas Adams, *Christian Hymn-Book, First Edition* (Georgetown, Kentucky: N.L. Finnell, 1829).

²⁴. Heaton, “*The Disciples of Christ and Sacred Music*,” 39.

²⁵. Heaton, 40.

²⁶. Brandon, “*The Hymn*,” 22.

strictly utilitarian and left very little room for interpretation or centralized focus on the usage of the hymnal. Whereas Scott has a preface and gives instructions on how to use his hymnal Stone does not.

Walter Scott “the Musician”

Walter Scott grew up with a father that was a music teacher. “He had naturally a good voice and a fine ear for music, both of which had been cultivated at home under his father’s instruction.”²⁷ He also was highly educated at the University of Edinburgh. In his studies, he discovered he was different from his colleagues. In his studies, he had realized “what the gospel had done for him, in freeing his mind from narrow sectarian prejudices, admiring its beautiful simplicity, and rejoicing...he found himself possessed by an irresistible desire to bring others to that Savior whose truth had made him free.”²⁸ He was an accomplished flutist and began his ministry in the United States as an “Evangelist.” He is the individual who coined the “Five-Finger exercise” he would say, "Now beginning with your thumb repeat after me, 'Faith, repentance, baptism, remission of sins, gift of the Holy Spirit.'"²⁹ It is hard not to focus on the power of this man’s intelligence and his writing contributions to the early parts of the movement. Scott and Campbell had significant disagreements regarding “whether youth should sing praise to God.”³⁰ Because Walter was classically trained there was a desire for everyone to be able to

²⁷. William Baxter, *Life of Walter Scott, First* (Cincinnati: Bosworth, Chase and Hall, 1874), 31.

²⁸. Baxter, 39.

²⁹. Foster, *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement*, 675.

³⁰. Heaton, “*The Disciples of Christ and Sacred Music*,” 29.

sing the same melody and to find ways of improving singing in churches with the implementation of “singing schools.”³¹ He wrote in the *Christian Evangelist*:

It is a fact that we can no more obey the command to sing unless we are at first taught to sing than we can abide by the command to read unless we are first taught to read. Let us then try to fix the heart of God’s young people by encouraging them to study sacred music; and of course, to love the exercise of singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, as they are commanded by the Holy Spirit. The cultivation of sacred music I judge to be the most important means appointed by God, confirming the professors of religion in their most holy faith.³²

Writing a hymnal was very important to Scott; however, his suggestion to Campbell was to use a hymnal with tunes to which the congregations could connect. His specific recommendation was to use a book called the *Sacred Harp*, published in 1834.³³ In the sense of unity, Campbell, Stone, Scott, and a gentleman only known as John T. Johnson (the one who published Stone’s second hymnal) decide to create a “new” hymnal that would encompass a sense of unity. In the hustle and bustle of the creation of the hymnal, it was printed in 1834 entitled *Disciples Hymn Book*, with all their names in the title.³⁴ This is interesting because according to his letter to Campbell in the *Millennial Harbinger* in November 1834, Scott wrote:

It is known to many of the disciples, that brethren Stone and Johnson have published a hymnbook there were of course two hymn books in the field at the same time; and the result was that some preferred one, and some the other. Hence, the two hymn books were not infrequently found in the same assembly to the no small inconvenience of the disciples. As the best remedy for the evil, it was deemed most advisable by brother Campbell to make of the twain one new hymn

³¹. Heaton, 29.

³². Walter Scott, “Singing Schools,” *Evangelist* 3 (August 1833): 191–92.

³³. Brandon, “The Hymn.” P.21

³⁴. Brandon.

book; and for this reason, he addressed an epistle to the brethren Stone and Johnson, setting forth the inconvenience of having two hymnbooks, and requesting them to concur with him in the production of a new one, which should meet the exigencies of all the churches.³⁵

The evidence is clear that Scott and Campbell met without Stone and John T. Johnson created and printed a new hymnal to be used, and their names were included as a show of united forces. The issue at this time is what they called themselves. Stone's group typically preferred to be called "Christians." The mere idea that the new hymnal to unite forces was given the name used by the Campbellites (Disciples) caused significant problems. This did not bode well for Stone. One of Stone's congregants, Thomas Carr states:

Brother Stone, there is one thing which we wish to enquire of you, and wish an answer through the Messenger—it is in relation to a little hymn book that has made its appearance among us, entitled "The Disciples Hymn Book," bearing the name of "B.W. Stone, A. Campbell, Walter Scott, and J.T. Johnson." What we object to, is the title of the book. By this something A. Campbell wishes to affix the name Disciple to the great body of christians(sic) in the west assisted by you. We believe that the name of christian(sic) is the only appropriate name for the members of Christ's Church.³⁶

This letter was written a year after *Disciples Hymn Book* had been published. Stone responds to his congregant by discussing the original plans and how the hymnal had come to pass. It appears early amid being non-sectarian was always a desire to be sectarian, but humans will be humans and ultimately destroy relationships. In the sense of melancholy, Stone wrote in his response back to Mr. Carr these words:

You entreat me to make peace. This I have labored to do; and will still labor, while there remains any hope. But it is hard to convince men of error, who

³⁵. Alexander Campbell, "Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs," *Millennial Harbinger* V (1834): 239.

³⁶. Thomas Carr, "Letter to Brother Stone," *The Christian Messenger* IX, no. 10 (July 21, 1835): 227–28.

are determined to abide in it...It had been agreed among us all to print a Hymn book in conjunction, in order to consolidate the union happily begun among us. It was proposed that we should meet together at some central point to prepare the book. While brother Johnson and myself were waiting in readiness to attend when informed *where*, and *when*, brother Scott having gone to Virginia, met with brother Campbell there; and they agreed to make the selection of Hymns themselves alone, and print them, and send us the proof sheets to Kentucky for our correction...As soon as we saw the title and the prefaces, we determined to have nothing to do with it and immediately wrote to brother Campbell our determination.³⁷

Ultimately Campbell changed the name of the hymnal to his name and still had their name in the preface of the 1834 version of his hymnal. Regardless of what can be proven, it is evident that Stone and Johnson's opinions never mattered, and all Campbell had to do was outlast him financially. Stone comments later in the same article that he "was met with considerable losses and was unable to bear his part of the expense."³⁸ Stone's theological contributions

Scott published his own hymnal with Silas W. Leonard in 1839, adding the name of hymn tunes to be sung with the words on the page to have everyone singing together.³⁹ Walter states his desire to bring the church together with familiar songs and like Campbell, includes a preface albeit only seven pages long. It is still the guide to how the hymnal would work for the local church. Scott emphatically wrote:

We have labored with the assembly for part of two years that those who have lately professed the original gospel by our labors shall excel in ordnance of praise, and we have to render all thanks to our Lord Messiah for what has already been

³⁷. Barton W. Stone, "Answer to Brother Carr's Letter," *The Christian Messenger* ix, no. 10 (1835): 226–28.

³⁸. Stone.

³⁹. Brandon, "The Hymn." 22.

attained in this matter. . . ”sing and make melody in their hearts to the Lord.” For as the command to read cannot be obeyed unless we are first taught to read, even the command to sing cannot be obeyed unless we are first taught to sing. That the brethren man not be compelled to rely for music on the scant resources of their own memory merely, the Music of *Mason’s Sacred Harp* has been set to the Hymnbook; so that to obtain tunes it is only necessary for the brethren to possess themselves of that incomparable work.⁴⁰

Scott is trying to bring back singing schools or at least make churches some singing schools to learn the songs together. In his hymnal, in addition to listing the scripture and the words to the hymn, he puts up in the upper right-hand corner of the song where one might find the hymn tune in *Mason’s Sacred Harp*. This was the first time the Disciples had a hymn-tune book to use in worship, and it was also only printed once.⁴¹ Walter was successful in the notion of helping congregations find typical tonality; it just ultimately never was published again.

This type of behavior continues to happen in the creation of hymnals. The goal always starts with the idea or notion of unity and ultimately fails in the subsequent effort. In 1871 After Campbell’s death, Bethany Press published *Christian Hymnal* as a compilation of the *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. Interestingly to note is that the panel of choosing the hymns were the same ones that Campbell had entrusted the final printing of his *Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs* with a brief preface that wrote like a passing on of the proverbial torch to these elders of the church has gone from the twenty- three-page intro to an introduction he wrote:

At the annual meeting of the American Christian Missionary Society in 1864, an overture was made by Mr. Campbell, of the copy-right of the Christian Hymn Book to be held by certain brethren, in trust, on two conditions 1. A committee to

⁴⁰. Walter Scott and Silas Leonard, eds., *Christian Psalms and Hymns*, First (Jefferson, Iowa: A.S. Tilden, 1839), 6.

⁴¹. Brandon, “The Hymn,” 22.

revise, meet annually to meet the general wishes of the brotherhood of Disciples.
2. That the profits went to the A.C.M.S.⁴²

It could be viewed that even as Campbell was declining in health, he still wanted the final say in his hymnal, even after his death. The 1871 hymnal was not created to replace the 1865 version but offered as an alternative for those who absolutely must have tunes in their hymnals.⁴³ Heaton wrote, “the publishers inserted a few pages of advertisements in the back.”⁴⁴ The overall understanding is that advertisements help publish and bind these hymnals. The hymn tunes chosen for this hymnal are very straightforward are of elementary construction.⁴⁵ Heaton continued to write, “The second feature worthy of note is a rhythmic dullness, especially in harmonizing voices under the melody line.”⁴⁶ One of the main issues with the publication of hymnals is the structure of the hymns as far as range and rhythmic availability. Music needs to be pitched in an accessible range and careful of unfamiliar rhythms. This 1871 hymnal was the first attempt to be the hymn and tune book for the Disciples and became the catalyst for multiple opportunities in uniting congregational singing.⁴⁷ It would not be the last. One example of this would be *Christian Worship: A Hymnal* published in 1941.

⁴². Alexander Campbell, *The Christian Hymn Book a Compilation of Psalms , Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. (Cincinnati, Ohio: Central Book Concern, 1865), 1.

⁴³. Heaton, “The Disciples of Christ and Sacred Music,” 61.

⁴⁴. Heaton, 61.

⁴⁵. Heaton, 63.

⁴⁶. Heaton, 64.

⁴⁷. Brandon, “The Hymn.”

This quintessential hymnal was established to bridge the gaps between the Northern Baptist Convention and the Disciples of Christ. Like its ancestors, the *Christian Worship: A Hymnal* has a preface. The world was a different place at the time of its printing. The American (Northern) Baptists and the Disciples of Christ decided to work together.

The committee met under the influence of the epochal changes in thought and life caused by world-engulfing war and social revolution. Necessity was laid upon to conserve the timeless values and anticipate the requirements of the Christian faith in a new world emerging out of humanity's agony.⁴⁸

This noble endeavor was created to bring a sense of the divine through music in a time filled with war and hate. This hymnal was reprinted several times over several decades. One edition was printed in 1953 with a liturgical resource companion, the *Christian Worship: A Service Book*, edited by G. Edwin Osborn.⁴⁹ It was designed to use the hymns and certain liturgical practices that Disciples of Christ had started using, such as offering meditations, communion meditations, and litanies—using the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. This book was ahead of its game and challenged congregations that still had ties to Campbellism. One could assume that a hymnal was significant in some major breaks of the Disciples of Christ. In 1871 music notation was added, and not too shortly, the Churches of Christ acappella were formed. 1953 a hymnal with a worship resource like a “book of worship” was instituted as “the” book for the Disciples of Christ, and in the 1950s, the Independents was founded. A movement that was very adamantly opposed to things like creeds and liturgies designed by a sect could be

⁴⁸. William P. Shelton and Luther W Smith, *Christian Worship: A Hymnal*, First (St. Louis, Missouri: Christian Board of Publication The Bethany Press, 1941).

⁴⁹. G. Edwin Osborn, *Christian Worship: A Service Book*, 1st ed., vol. 1 (St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, n.d.).

viewed as the “Brotherhood” turning sectarian.⁵⁰ This is important to recognize as one investigates the most recent attempts to create a hymnal “designed for unity.”⁵¹

The Chalice Hymnal fiasco

In 1987 The Association of Disciples Musicians made a proposal to the General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).⁵² Throughout the denomination, there was a desire to create a hymnal that all churches could use. The Council on Christian Unity met and found common ground for Protestant reformation movements. The World Council of Churches was meeting, and the church at large seemed to desire an ecumenical world. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ

This resolution begins by critiquing an earlier attempt in 1970, a hymnal that took eight years to complete, entitled *Hymnbook for Christian Worship*. This hymnal was designed by the American Baptist Convention and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). An attempt to recreate the energy that shaped two movements for three decades. The critique was listed as follows.

The current *Hymnbook for Christian Worship* was published in 1970 and is outdated in terms of Contemporary hymns, modern spiritual songs, traditional and contemporary gospel songs, and hymns; inclusive language, current church

⁵⁰. This phrase does not reflect who the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is today and it had fractured us even more historically but it was the commonly used term for the movement for a long time.

⁵¹. For most the twentieth century this was the nomenclatural term for the Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ, reflective of the leadership of the movement.

⁵². “No. 8737 Resolution Concerning the Need for a New Disciples Hymnal,” 1987-Louisville Resolutions, accessed September 9, 2022, <https://disciples.org/our-identity/our-structure/the-general-assembly-and-general-board/past-general-assemblies/1987-louisville/>.

teaching and emphases, ethnic and cultural diversities, and broad theological expressions, reflecting the diversity of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).⁵³

What makes a hymnal outdated? Is it only the words? The *Hymnbook for Christian Worship's* preface expresses a desire to be new and innovative. It uses new ways of selecting hymns like choir directors and church musicians and asking congregations what hymns they sang and worked for.⁵⁴ Maybe it was the careful planning and determination of the committee to find biblically appropriate liturgical resources of the time.⁵⁵ Outdated is not a word used to discuss sacred adequately or, in their vernacular, “ancient” music. The systemic issue with this proposal made in 1987 is the lack of the Black church voice represented by the National Convocation. In future opportunities, this will not be overlooked. There is a lot to be learned from the creation of this hymnal. The goal has been the same, to use newer hymns and make them more accessible to bring unity. What if we go too far with those goals?

It is possible to view the creation of the *Chalice Hymnal* as a lesson on how to overthink the basic understandings and undergirding of a movement, especially since it was now a sectarian discussion. The preface of the *Chalice Hymnal* is different from the previous denominational hymnals. It discusses how often the committee met and how many committees were created to make this hymnal. There were two subcommittees created: Language, Theology, and Worship, which Dr. Colbert Cartwright headed, and the other was Texts, Tunes, and Service

⁵³. “No. 8737 Resolution Concerning the Need for a New Disciples Hymnal.”

⁵⁴. Charles H. Heaton, ed., *Hymnbook for Christian Worship*, First Edition (St. Louis, Missouri: Bethany Press, 1970).

⁵⁵. Heaton.

Music by Susan Adams.⁵⁶ The focal points presented in the resolution are addressed in the preface, especially inclusive language, ethnic traditions, and liturgical practices, with a focus on the liturgical calendar.⁵⁷ Not unlike the *Christian Worship: A Hymnal* has a companion book, *Christian Worship: A Service Book*, the *Chalice Hymnal* had the *Chalice Worship*. This came from the Hymnal Development Committee's initial task of figuring out the direction of the creation of this document that would serve the denomination and somehow be in partnership with the United Church of Christ.

Interestingly to note the U.C.C. had already begun the creation of their hymnal before the shared committees could get together. On November 26, 1990, Daniel Merrick (D.O.C.) representative and Thomas Crawford (U.C.C.) representative sent a letter stating that after "discussing the work of each other's work, it became apparent that it was not feasible to produce a joint hymnal."⁵⁸ It was not as bleak as they could not work together for theological reasons. It was just timing. It took almost three years to create the Basic Operational Guidelines for this group. The funding for this group would come from the Christian Board of Publication. Hymnal development fell under the umbrella of the newly created entity known as the Division of Homeland Ministries, and with the funding and oversight squared away, the work began.

The first thing the committee did was describe the hymnal committee would be with ten goals such as

⁵⁶. *Chalice Hymnal* (St. Louis, Missouri: CBP Press, 1995), 5.

⁵⁷. *Chalice Hymnal*.

⁵⁸. Hymnal Development Committee, "Hymnal Development Committee Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Basic Operational Guidelines" (1989), Disciples Historical Society.

1. Explicitly designed for use by Disciples, sensitive to their heritage and experiences
2. Conscious of Disciples tradition with a focus on the Lord's Supper
3. Sensitive to our heritage from early times to the present.
4. Sensitive to the inclusion of hymns widely used among Disciples congregations.⁵⁹

Inserting the creeds into the *Chalice Hymnal* in all ways betrays the heritage of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) however one could see the necessity of creating a hymnal that would be ecumenical in nature. The stronger argument would be that since the *Chalice Hymnal's* inception it has only been used at one joint Assembly/Synod. Disciple churches in rural areas especially around Bethany, West Virginia, really struggled with the hymnal making the case to have creeds in the hymnal for the whole denomination. The preamble of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) inserted into the hymnal and being used in ordinations of clergy has also created a fraction within the denomination. These issues were met within heated conversations at Regional Assemblies after 1996. The prices of the *Chalice Hymnal* were held in disregard. The unheard complaint of rural churches voicing their displeasure was met with an obtuse and defamatory tone of voice. In one correspondence stored at the Disciples historical society about the printing of the *Chalice Hymnal*, it was stated "If they (dissenters) do not like they do not have to purchase it."⁶⁰ This brazen response has continued to fracture and push rural churches away. There was little sensitivity to the rural church.

⁵⁹. Hymnal Development Committee.

⁶⁰. This is in the Chalice Hymnal box at the Disciples Historical Society amongst the correspondence amongst the committee's discussions about inserting the creeds as being for the "good" of the local church because it was in their heritage. . .

There are good things about the *Chalice Hymnal* as the committee used Disciples musicians and new music written by those musicians. This had not been done before and lived within the parameters that had been set forth at the General Assembly of 1987. The preface is written thanking so many people that contributed to the hymnal and as a matter of clarification, the correspondence between these individuals for almost ten years was intense, and it is shocking that all of them were thanked. The main issue with the *Chalice Hymnal* was simply the lack of information or the ability to create “singing schools” to show its effectiveness in congregational life. This was a time before the internet was not accessible and/or available to congregations around the country. The hardest critique to be made was that there were very few rural congregations contacted as to the importance of the hymn’s choices. These rural congregations are the backbone of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Churches like these in some places in the United States still have little availability of internet access. They do not have organs, bands, fancy sound systems, or even people that have had musical training. If the denomination was truly creating a hymnal for the church, it would have asked the people what they needed and wanted rather than telling them as it was perceived.

The movement of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) has had many manifestations of the material needed for worship. Campbell created hymnals to bring a unifying presence of the communities of faith for those who might not be able to read music. Stone brought theology through his hymns that challenged the status quo. Scott challenged the movement to find ways of teaching music and theology that shaped who they were and continue to be, and all of them did it to help bring a sense of unity to this wild movement of Christians. The systemic issue of who is writing the hymns that represented the church started with white, heterosexual men who owned

slaves.⁶¹ As the church continued to evolve and use hymnody before their theology, there is evidence that the movement made efforts of inclusiveness. The hymnals speak volumes of where the church has been and where they had hoped to go. The issue with the last two hymnals created for the “church” is simply this, we can’t start off and be for over a hundred years non-sectarianism and force sectarianism upon the churches and expect it to go well. The lesson the church will hopefully learn from the *Chalice Hymnal* moving forward is to not stop trying. The *Chalice Hymnal* was an awesome start for the living organism that is the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It is the author’s hope moving forward to be an active voice of that change and hopefully a non-anxious presence that builds bridges rather than obstacles.

⁶¹ There is recently found bills of sale of Campbell buying slaves to emancipate them in the Disciples Historical Society. There is also proof that he may not have spoken out enough about it Campbell did write abolitionism.

Works Cited

- Baxter, William. *Life of Walter Scott*. First. Cincinnati: Bosworth, Chase and Hall, 1874.
- Brandon, George. "The Hymn." *Journal of the Hymn Society of America* 15, no. 1 (1964): 21–22.
- Brenneman, Todd M. "'Where the Scriptures Speak, We Speak': The Pennsylvania Frontier and the Origins of the Disciples of Christ." *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 85, no. 2 (2018): 145–66. <https://doi.org/10.5325/pennhistory.85.2.0145>.
- Campbell, Alexander. "Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs." *Millenial Harbinger* V (1834): 239–40.
- . *Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs Adapted to the Christian Religion*. Bethany, Brooke County, Virginia: Bethany Press, 1828.
- . *The Christian Hymn Book a Compilation of Pslams , Hymns, and Spiritual Songs*. Cincinnati, Ohio: Central Book Concern, 1865.
- . *The Christian System*. Cincinnati, Bosworth, Chase & Hall, 1871. <http://archive.org/details/christiansystem00camp>.
- Carr, Thomas. "Letter to Brother Stone." *The Christian Messenger* IX, no. 10 (July 21, 1835): 227–28.
- Chalice Hymnal*. St. Louis, Missouri: CBP Press, 1995.
- Foster, Douglas A. *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Christian Churches/Churches of Christ/Churches of Christ*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 2012.
- G. Edwin Osburn. *Christian Worship: A Service Book*. 1st ed. Vol. 1. St. Louis: Christian Board of Publication, n.d.
- Heaton, Charles H., ed. *Hymnbook for Christian Worship*. First Edidtion. St. Louis, Missouri: Bethany Press, 1970.
- . "Our First Hymnal." *The Christian Evangelist* 93, no. 26 (June 29, 1955): 632.
- . "The Disciples of Christ and Sacred Music." Union Theological Seminary, 1956. Baylor University.

Hymnal Development Committee. "Hymnal Development Committee Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) Basic Operational Guidelines," 1989. Disciples Historical Society. "No. 8737 Resolution Concerning the Need for a New Disciples Hymnal." 1987-Louisville Resolutions. Accessed September 9, 2022. <https://disciples.org/our-identity/our-structure/the-general-assembly-and-general-board/past-general-assemblies/1987-louisville/>.

Scott, Walter. "Singing Schools." *Evangelist* 3 (August 1833): 191–92.

Scott, Walter, and Silas Leonard, eds. *Christian Psalms and Hymns*. First. Jefferson, Iowa: A.S. Tilden, 1839.

Shelton, William P., and Luther W Smith. *Christian Worship: A Hymnal*. First. St. Louis, Missouri: Christian Board of Publication The Bethany Press, 1941.

Stone, Barton W. "Answer to Brother Carr's Letter." *The Christian Messenger* ix, no. 10 (1835): 226–28.

Stone, Barton W., and Thomas Adams. *Christian Hymn-Book*. First Editon. Georgetown, Kentucky: N.L. Finnell, 1829.

The United Methodist Hymnal: Book of United Methodist Worship. Nashville, Tenn: United Methodist Pub. House, 1989.