

FAITH

SINGING

Faith Singing

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Preface

I have a wonderful heritage of church music given to me from my time as a boy growing up in the Salvation Army. I remember as a pre-schooler sitting next to my father in the Salvation Army band as he played the trombone in Sunday morning worship. Praise to God was *double forte* accompanied by a brass-band. During my early years our house was often filled with Salvation Army brass band and songster (church choir) music.

Church of England hymns added to my adolescent understanding of the church song through week-day school assemblies and compulsory Sunday night chapel services for secondary school boarders in Zimbabwe. Time spent worshipping as an adult in Baptist and Presbyterian churches has further shaped my faith and added to my expression of worship through a widening palette of church hymns and songs.

One Sunday more recently, I was standing in church singing and found myself struggling to bring any sense of worship to God with the words on the screen. I had spent the hour before church walking and praying in preparation for this worship time. The words left me isolated from my desire to focus on God in this communal setting. The song meant nothing to me. I had sung these words before, but they did not express the quality of worship I had experienced the hour previous, and I longed for silence as this would have been better than the amplified singing of the music group and the rather poor sound from the congregation.

It was during this time that I began consciously looking at the words of our worship songs and started asking questions about them. For most of my life it had been the music that had captured me, and I was startled by this new quest. Questions

confronted me: Are the words we sing in worship important? And if they are then how important in shaping our faith?

My concerns about the widening gap between the life that we were singing about in church worship, and the reality of life in the world outside of the church walls, began to haunt me. God sees a broken world and his answer to this brokenness is Christ's death and resurrection, yet my own church community seldom sings about the brokenness God sees. I began to wonder if in the lyrics of these songs we sing, we had somehow domesticated God. I started to ask whether these words were designed more for our own comfort than for the worship of God

Marva Dawn's book *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*¹ gave further shape to my thinking. She believes that 'we dumb down the truth about God in a false effort to feel better about ourselves.'² If Marva Dawn's proposition is true, I wondered, would it be reflected in the lyrics we sing communally in worship? Do we have a rounded theology in our lyrics? Are our congregational lyrics offering us a well-balanced expression of the Christian faith? My recent worship experience, and Marva Dawn's comments raised unsettling questions that have given me the motivation to explore further. I invite you to join me on this journey.

¹ Marva Dawn, *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down* (Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmanns 1995).

² *Ibid.*, 91.

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Introduction

When Christians come together as a gathered community, singing forms a considerable part of regular worship. Congregational lyrics express in words the thoughts and feelings, and the theology and faith, of the worshipper. To understand present developments in congregational singing, we need first to understand its history.

a) History

Christian singing has a long history reaching back into the synagogue worship of Israel's past. From its birth in Judaism, the early church inherited the Jewish musical tradition of the synagogue. Paul Westermeyer notes that Hebrew music was folk-like in character. Its transmission was oral for musical notation was not present until the ninth century A.D.³

At the centre of synagogue singing were the Psalms, the Old Testament songs of Israel, and these came over into the Church. The early Christian writer Tertullian testifies to the importance of the Psalms in Christian worship. Others like Ambrose and Basil were lavish in their praise of the Psalms.

Although Jewish Temple worship included the use of instruments, synagogue singing was generally unaccompanied, and this pattern continued in the early church. In 1 Corinthians 13.1 Paul disparages the noisy gong and the clanging cymbal. In the third and fourth centuries musical instruments were banned from church music because of their association with idolatry and immorality.⁴ Early church singing

³ Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 17.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 68.

inherited from the synagogue, led eventually to what we know as the Gregorian chant and the development of the western hymn.⁵

Hymn singing, however, has not always been a part of congregational life. The Middle Ages had liturgical structures that implied but left out participation by the people.⁶ The sixteenth century Reformation provided a strong impetus in reclaiming the congregational song. Luther worked the hardest to regain the people's voice by working his hymns out of the Psalms. Zwingli, who was the most musical of the Reformers, denied his people their voice, and Calvin restricted it to the singing of the Psalms.

Two centuries later Isaac Watts, the great English poet of the congregational hymn, did for the English-speaking world what Luther had done for the German-speaking world during the Reformation.⁷

Up until the nineteenth century, hymn singing was not an integral part of the official order of service for worship in the Church of England. Indeed, Archbishop Cramner at the time of the Reformation had dispensed with hymn singing altogether.⁸ Only since the second Vatican Council has congregational singing been a major part of Roman Catholic worship.⁹

b) Present Developments

In more recent times there has been a shift, from the hymnbook to the overhead and data projector. Hymnbook songs were printed in verse that conformed to certain conventions of rhyme and metre. Today these have been abandoned. With the demise of the hymnbook there is no longer any editorial committee intervening to

⁵ Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 43.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 220.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 137-150.

⁸ Harry Eskew and Hugh McElrath, *Singing with Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Hymnology* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1980), 135.

⁹ Rosalind Brown, *How Hymns Shape Our Lives* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2001), 3.

review the selection of songs offered to the worshipping congregation. Changes in technology mean that a new song can be heard on CD and the words and chords downloaded from the web. Within a short space of time the congregation can be singing this new expression of the faith, with the result that choice of song is often driven by the music, with scant attention given to the suitability of the words, or even their orthodoxy. A commercial Christian music industry (worth about \$1 billion US)¹⁰ now drives the contemporary Christian music scene.¹¹

Today singing plays a major part in congregational worship and is often accompanied by guitars and drums. Occasionally there will be an organ, woodwind or string instruments. The musicians and lead singers are now electronically amplified, with sound-desks to finely control the acoustic balance. But what balance is found in the words, the theology, the imagery and the practical outworking of faith expressed in our lyrics? Do our congregational lyrics provoke and inspire us to Christian living? Do they offer a well-balanced theology that has the potential to make us mature Christians?

c) The Faith Shaping Function of Lyrics

Singing is an important part of worship and inevitably helps to shape our faith. It forms Christian character and Christian community in a way that other components of worship are unable to do. Sociologist David Martin asserts that the hymn is the most central item in the religion of Britain.¹² He considers that what ordinary church attendees believe and feel, may be more accurately discerned from aspects of worship in which they participate actively, for example congregational singing, than from the writings of professional theologians and the sermons of preachers. Songs and hymns

¹⁰ About \$1.4 billion NZ at \$1US = \$0.70NZ.

¹¹ Mark Powell, "Jesus Climbs the Charts: The Business of Contemporary Christian Music" www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=2627.

¹² Quoted in Chris Marshall, "Re-engaging with the Bible in a Postmodern World" *Stimulus 15* (February 2007): 5-16.

work on an intellectual level in forming theology, and on a more emotional level in shaping how faith is expressed.¹³ One preaches a sermon but all are invited to sing. John Bell asserts that “we cannot all speak together, but we can sing together,”¹⁴ and what we sing shapes the way we understand and think about God.¹⁵ “We are far more likely to find ourselves humming something we sang in church when we go home”, says Rosalind Brown, “than we are to find ourselves meditating on a phrase in the sermon.” This is not to deny the formative power of sermons, but to underscore the often ignored, formative power of hymns and songs. The fact is, as the early Methodists knew so well, many Christians imbibe their theology through what is sung rather than what is taught. Ian Stackhouse suggests that no matter how orthodox our preached theology may be, worship and music are more able to displace it by their potency.¹⁶ This is evidenced in the liturgy where doctrine is often sung. (e.g. the Memorial Acclamation)¹⁷. Chris Marshall suggests that what people sing in church, is today arguably their primary source of theological instruction.¹⁸ Words set to music engage the emotion and lodge in the memory and are more likely to be remembered, simply because they are sung more frequently.¹⁹

Prompted by the trend towards church as entertainment, Marva Dawn expresses her concern about the current trends in worship. She notes the character-forming potential of worship, which although subtle and barely noticed, impacts on the hearts, minds and lives of those attending church. Worship, she observes, both

¹³ Brian Gilling, “The Heart is Greater than the Head,” *Stimulus* 9 (Nov 2001): 9-16.

¹⁴ John Bell, *The Singing Thing* (Glasgow: The Wild Goose Publication, 2000), 17.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 59.

¹⁶ Ian Stackhouse, *The Gospel Driven Church* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004), 48.

¹⁷ Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

¹⁸ Chris Marshall, “Re-engaging with the Bible in a Postmodern World” *Stimulus* 15 (February 2007): 5-16.

¹⁹ Rosalind Brown, *How Hymns Shape Our Lives* (Cambridge: Grove Books Limited, 2001), 3.

reveals and forms our Christian identity as persons and communities.²⁰ John Bell adds to this by saying “what we sing shapes the way we understand and think of God.”²¹ Brueggemann, taking a wider view, argues in *Israel's Praise*, that worship creates categories of thinking that make available “a very different world.”²²

Singing consists of words and music. Music is a cultural construct and does not readily lend itself to theological expression. Without words the music of the congregational song has little or no theological meaning. Rick Warren goes further. He asserts that there is no such thing as “Christian music” only Christian lyrics. He considers music to be a neutral thing that carries no spiritual meaning in itself.²³ This is not to deny the fact that music in a church context does affect the emotions, as Mandi Miller has discovered.²⁴

From the comments of observers like this, we can conclude that the words of congregational songs do shape Christian faith and form Christian character and so we need to give them attention.

d) Recent Trends

A number of writers have commented on recent trends that influence congregational singing.

Loss of Intimacy

In our culture there has been a loss of intimacy. This has come about through the use of the motor vehicle, television, computers, walkmans, ipods and other accoutrements of western life. Modern living keeps us emotionally separated, and the

²⁰ Marva Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down* (Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmans, 1995), 4.

²¹ John Bell, *The Singing Thing* (Glasgow: The Wild Goose Publication, 2000), 59.

²² Walter Brueggemann, *Israel's Praise: Doxology against Idolatry and Ideology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 27.

²³ Michael Reimer. “Rick Warren, Martin Bucer and the Worship Debate in Reformation Perspective” *McMaster Journal of Theology and Ministry* 7 (2006): 46-69.

²⁴ Mandi Miller, “The Emotional Effects of Music on Religious Experience: A Study of Pentecostal-Charismatic Style or Worship and Music.” Unpublished M.A. thesis in Psychology, University of Canterbury, 2000.

church has not been unaffected. Church members do not experience that deep intimacy that could characterise their time together. Lacking sincere intimacy in congregational fellowship, we often put false pressure on worship to produce these feelings of intimacy that we long for.²⁵ This raises interesting questions about the words of intimacy we use to worship God.

Loss of Community

The congregational song is in trouble for quite a different reason according to Brian Wren. He views the increase in social mobility and the quest for privacy as major factors, making us less inclined to join a group and sing along with it.²⁶

Disconnection from Real Life

Nick Page speaks quite bluntly about some of the worship lyrics sung in church. “When I look at the words on my service sheet every Sunday morning they [the words] don’t seem to connect with me. Why,” he asks, “when the tunes are so good, are the lyrics frequently bad. Why are we content to stand there in church and sing stuff that really doesn’t make sense?”²⁷ The identification of worship with singing means the whole process of worship has become isolated from the rest of our lives. You can use language that you would never dream of using in your real life because this isn’t real life; it’s a time of worship. “Worship,” notes Nick Page, “has now become divorced from living.”²⁸

While Nick Page’s observation is generally only too true there are songwriters like John Bell and Graham Maule of the Iona Community whose language is robust and earthy. For example:

²⁵ Marva Dawn, *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down* (Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmans, 1995), 27-8.

²⁶ Brian Wren, *Praying Twice The Music and Words of Congregational Songs* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 54.

²⁷ Nick Page *And Now Let’s Move Into a Time of Nonsense: Why Worship Songs Are Failing the Church* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2004), 2.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 2.

*Feel for the parents who've lost their child.
 Feel for the women who men have defiled.
 Feel for the baby for whom there is no breast.
 And for the weary who find no rest.²⁹*

These are powerful images that involve us in the modern world. This broken part of humanity, like the Psalms of Lament, talks of difficult issues and human emotions.

Lyric Imbalance

Since music is a cultural construct, music in the church will follow the music of the surrounding culture. The words however are a different matter. For Brian Smith they carry the “precious freight of the gospel.” It is the words that make our songs Christian. For this reason he has a number of concerns about the offerings that emanate from Hillsong (Australia), Integrity’s Hosanna Music (U.S.A.), and Parachute (New Zealand). The first is the tendency to make the believer’s inner experience the focus. The songs thus become subjective and sentimental. The second concern is not with what the songs contain, but what they don’t. Because the focus is inner experience there is little interest in anything beyond that – creation, redemption in history and the world around us. The central Christian stories of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost scarcely feature and the world of poverty, injustice and ecological concern does not rate a mention. Even at the level of inner experience these songs are deficient. Omitted are the darker issues of temptation, repentance, discipline, struggle and doubt.³⁰

e) Thesis Proposition

The lyrics we sing in church are character forming as they shape our identity as people and communities. They shape the way we understand and think of God. Although there is comment in the literature about the influence congregational lyrics

²⁹ Song, Christ is the World, John Bell and Graham Maule, 1989 Iona Community, GIA Publications Inc.

³⁰ Brian Smith, “Theology off the Wall: from Printed Page to Projected Word” *Stimulus* 9 (No 4) 2001:2-6.

have, there appears to be little or no in-depth analysis of the words we sing. For this reason the research project aims to test the hypothesis:

That today's congregational lyrics form a well-balanced expression of Christian faith.

The thesis will test this proposition by looking at the lyrics of songs sung in 2006/2007 in eight suburban churches in the Howick-Pakuranga area of Auckland, New Zealand. These eight churches represent a broad spectrum of Christian conviction and include Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, Baptist, Elim and Assembly of God congregations.

g) Thesis Outline

The first chapter describes the sampling method for selecting the lyrics and considers the question of lifting the lyrics from their context of use in liturgy and worship. Chapter 2 explains the various evaluation tools used.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 examine the lyrics in several aspects, namely, theological content, imagery and perspective, and the way the songs express the outworking of the Christian faith.

Chapter six consists of two comparisons. The lyrics in this study are compared first of all with the ancient lyric selection we know as the Psalms, representing the songs of the Hebrew Scriptures, and then with a much more recent selection, the *Scripture in Song* series published in New Zealand, 1971-1987.

In the final chapter the hypothesis is tested in the light of the results.

Chapter 1

Sampling Methods

This chapter describes the methods used to select the lyrics to be studied. Before doing that, however, it is important to discuss the question of context.

1.1 Lyrics in Context

Lyrics are sung to music and sung in a context of worship. One could argue that to understand the lyrics one must also understand the context in which the lyrics are sung. This suggests a lyric is in some way fixed by a particular situation, first the one in which the lyric was written, and then the context in which it is subsequently used. Obviously the context of later use differs from the original and is shaped by the liturgy or order of service relating to a particular occasion. For example the context changes for a song that may be sung in worship on Sunday, but is also sung at a wedding on Saturday, or a funeral during the week. There is a sense in which a meaning of a lyric is not fixed as say the christological hymn is in Philippians 2, where the rest of the letter provides the context for understanding this particular expression of the faith. As lyrics of congregational songs find themselves used in many different church and worship situations, lifting them out of their worship setting for analysis is not going to destroy the meaning of the words. The lyrics will still retain the theology they were originally given.

The words of a number of congregational songs are written by poets and the music composed by musicians. In that case says Lyell Cresswell, one notable New Zealand composer now living in Edinburgh, “the job of the composer is not to impose, but to discover the music in the words,”³¹ Other songs are written by singer/songwriters. They write both the music and the words, and so the connection

³¹ Christopher Moore, “Knowing the Score,” *The Press*, Christchurch 21 February 2007, D, 1.

between the words and the music may be stronger.³² In either case it is the words that make the song Christian and it is to these we turn to discover how they shape our Christian faith and form Christian community.

1.2 Collecting the Lyrics

The collection of lyrics was from two sources.

- a. Local churches
- b. Copyright licensing bodies

a) *Collection from Local Churches*

The first source of lyrics was provided by eight local, English speaking, congregations in the Howick and Pakuranga suburbs of Auckland. I limited myself to these eight representative local congregations to make the task manageable. The churches formed two groupings:

<i>Roman Catholic/Anglican</i>	<i>Evangelical-Charismatic-Pentecostal</i>
Roman Catholic (2)	Presbyterian (1)
Anglican (2)	Baptist (1)
	Elim (1)
	Assembly of God (1)

The choice of lyrics sung in worship is potentially quite large. Three churches brought some order to this task of choosing lyrics by developing play-lists. These play-lists were relatively small (25, 30 and 51 songs respectively), so for these churches the play-list was used as the sample. In the case of the churches that did not have play-lists, the lyrics collected were those sung by the congregation over a three month period.

³² Some writers, like Brian Smith and Nick Page, argue that musicians should leave the writing of the words of congregational songs to poets and theologians.

Obviously, over the three month collection period some songs were given repeated use. In order not to give any undue weighting to a particular song in a church's lyric basket, all the songs were considered, but considered only once.

In the case of Church E, their two services had quite different songs. I choose my sample from the more contemporary, or family orientated service because it was more representative.

Where parts of the liturgy were sung I included those words in my sample.

There was no further sampling of lyrics after the collection period or during the analysis.

b) Collection from Copyright Licensing Bodies

There is a risk that the local churches sampled are not truly representative of the wider New Zealand Church and so any conclusion based on this small sample can only be tentatively extrapolated. I am aware that sampling lyrics locally may produce results that are only relevant locally. I am also aware that collecting lyrics from only part of the church calendar year may skew the results somewhat, as the collection period included Lent and approached Easter (6th-8th April 2007).

Information collected from one source can be used to clarify or correct material gathered from another source. Scott Thumma suggests that a multiple method approach to research can overcome the limits of a single method.³³ This allows for a more nuanced portrayal of the topic under study. So to extend my sampling and include a wider group of churches and a wider part of the calendar year I used a second method of collecting representative lyrics.

³³ Scott Thumma, "Method of Congregational Study" in *Studying Congregations*, ed. Nancy Ammerman, Jackson Carroll, Carol Dudley and William McKinney (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 196-199.

The hymns and songs used by churches are subject to copyright and churches must therefore be licensed to use them. Copyright in New Zealand is held by two main licensing bodies:

- Christian Copyright Licensing Asia Pacific Ltd (CCLI)
- LicenSing

CCLI extends copyright licenses to the Evangelical-Charismatic-Pentecostal churches in this study, and LicenSing gives copyright permission for the two Roman Catholic and two Anglican churches.

Both licensing groups publish a list of the current top hymns and songs registered with them. This suggests that a more representative sample of what is being sung in New Zealand churches might be obtained by examining these lists. Both licensing bodies compile their lists from data submitted by local churches based on songs used in worship. In using these lists however, it is important to note that the two bodies compile their list of top songs in different ways.

CCLI uses a rather complex weighting method where new songs are scored on the basis of the following categories:

- Transparency fixation³⁴
- Print fixation
- Congregational arrangement fixation
- Recording fixation

Each of these categories earns three credits. A fifth category, computer fixation, earns one credit. These credits are totalled, and then weighted according to the size of the congregation (see Table 1.2).

³⁴ The term “fixation” refers to making copies.

Table 1.2 CCLI Credit Weighting

Church Size	Credit Weighting
1-49	1
50-99	2
100-149	3
150-199	4
200-499	5
500-999	6
1000-1,499	7
1500-2,999	8
3000-4,999	9
5000-9,999	12

Using this system CCLI produces a list of the top 25 songs every six months. The CCLI list used in this study was the most recent one available covering the six month period from April to September 2006 (reported in February 2007).

In contrast to CCLI, LicenSing uses a more straightforward method to compile its list of top songs. It simply records the number of times a church reports the use of a song over a calendar year, and lists the top 20. No weighting is applied for the size of the congregation.

Comparison of the lyrics from the two church streams with lyrics from their respective licensing bodies provides some helpful insights. The comparisons will not be perfect but will be useful for the purpose of this study.

1.3 Model Church

As a way of verifying my local sample I used the top song lists from these two licensing bodies and assumed that each of these lists could form a “model” church. “Model” here is not used in the sense of being desirable, but used in terms of being a close approximation of what an average New Zealand church might look like in terms of the congregational lyrics sung. At the time of writing, Christian Copyright Licensing Asia-Pacific holds licences for 1376 New Zealand churches. LicenSing

holds licences for 64 churches. A total of 1440 churches outside of the eight local churches provide a valuable second source of information for this study.

1.4 Quantitative v Qualitative Difficulties

This study leans towards the quantitative as it seeks to test a hypothesis. As part of the study around three hundred lyrics³⁵ were analysed for specific indices. The assumption here is that lyrics contain within an objective reality that can be measured.

However, this research is also dealing at times with poetry, so it has a qualitative edge to it. Poetry is not easily divided into discrete units of measurement, and so one cannot lean too heavily on the quantitative approach.

Further, the assessment of characters in a song can be subjective and for a more rigorous assessment reliability checks would be appropriate. Intra-coder and inter-coder reliability tests would help remove this subjectivity and add further reliability to the findings.

This study recognises that the dividing line between quantitative and qualitative research is not always as clear as some textbooks would lead the reader to believe. It also acknowledges that both processes may lead towards the same outcome but by different paths.

³⁵ The lyric titles are listed in Appendix 2.

Chapter 2

Methods of Analysis

This study of congregational songs examines the lyrics in three different aspects.

These are:

- Theology
- Imagery and Perspective
- The Outworking of the Christian Faith

2.1 Theology

By what measure can we judge the theological content of congregational lyrics? One brief expression of essential Christian theology is the Apostles' Creed. This creed was already known about the year 200 A.D. and pointed back to an earlier period.³⁶ It is not the oldest of Christian formulae, nor is it apostolic in the sense that it was formulated word for word by Jesus' disciples. But it is apostolic in the sense that it sums up the message passed down by the apostles.³⁷ This creed emphasizes the true humanity of Jesus Christ including his material body, a point that the Gnostics, Marcionites and later Manicheans, denied.³⁸ Although the creed emphasizes Christ's humanity, it mentions nothing of his life and ministry, and has nothing to say about his proclamation of the kingdom of God, his teachings, or his miracles as evidence of that kingdom. As Moltmann observes, the two standard confessions, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, have nothing more than a comma between the incarnation and the cross.³⁹

³⁶ Karl Barth, *Credo* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936), 1.

³⁷ Wolfhart Panneberg, *The Apostles' Creed* (London: SCM: 1972), 2.

³⁸ www.reformed.org/documents/apostles_creed.html

³⁹ Jurgen Moltmann, *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions* (London: SCM 1990), 150. Moltmann suggests inserting the following after "born of the virgin Mary" (Apostles' Creed) and "was made man" (Nicene Creed): baptized by John the Baptist; filled with the Holy Spirit;

Despite this the Apostles' Creed is a theological statement that all Christians across the sampling range in this study accept either implicitly in their liturgy, or explicitly in their preaching and teaching. This creed has been formulated in opposition to the Gnostic heresy, and it may be deficient for a more theologically nuanced comparison of congregational lyrics. However, I have chosen it for its acceptability to all faith traditions used in this sample, and also for its simplicity.

So it will make a useful, if not quite complete, theological measure to examine lyrics currently used by the eight congregations and two models in this study.

The twelve clauses of the creed are:

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.
2. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
3. who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,
4. suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;
5. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.
6. He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father,
7. and will come again to judge the living and the dead.
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,
10. the forgiveness of sins,
11. the resurrection of the body,
12. and life everlasting. Amen⁴⁰

In scoring a lyric against the standard of the Apostles' Creed, reference to a particular clause was counted only once. If a particular clause was found two or more

to preach the kingdom of God to the poor; to heal the sick; to receive those who have been cast out; to revive Israel for the salvation of the nations, and; to have mercy on all people.

⁴⁰ Anon, *A New Zealand Prayer Book: The Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia* (San Francisco: Harper Collins 1997), 48.

times in the same lyric it received no extra weighting. This method was chosen to prevent any one lyric having any more weight than any other lyric counted. The resulting scores are expressed as a percentage of the lyrics sampled in each church, so that churches with a different number of lyrics in their play-list can be compared.

2.2 Imagery and Perspective

To consider the imagery of lyrics in local congregational songs I have used three broad categories:

- Biblical
- Historical
- Contemporary

Biblical imagery is any Old or New Testament imagery, either explicit or implicit that connects the singer to the biblical story. Any image or story that brings the singer in contact with the church and the characters of its history beyond the biblical story is noted as *Historical*. The *Contemporary* category refers to imagery that expresses the Christian faith in new and fresh ways, not found in the scripture. This third category is not limited to just recently composed hymns and songs. There are lyrics that have passed into the public domain (i.e. fifty years or older) that delight and surprise and restate the faith in quite different and non-biblical ways. In addition to the above categories a case study was made of images used in the two “model” lyric baskets for sin, salvation and Jesus Christ.

Perspective is another poetic device used in lyrics to present the Christian faith in novel and different ways. I considered four different approaches in which perspective is a factor in lyric writing. These ways or “voices” are:

- the unexpected voice,
- the human voice,

- the divine voice, and
- the repetitive voice.

2.3 The Outworking of the Christian Faith.

This section seeks to identify the lyric content that focuses on the world outside the church. It looks for a response that has a community component to it. It seeks to identify how lyrics might express the Christian faith in action, how the singing might find expression in Christian service to others and to our world. The four categories used to examine lyrics are:

- Justice and Freedom,
- Social Concern,
- Culture, and
- Creation

Firstly, *Justice and Freedom* acknowledges humanity's brokenness and the impact this has on those around us. This analysis looks for evidence of a response to those people groups who have no justice and freedom. This category is concerned with the big-picture and those issues that have become embedded in societal structures. Secondly, *Social Concern* seeks to find in the lyrics reference to the basic needs of individuals such as food and shelter, warmth and hope, family and marriage, work and recreation. Thirdly, *Culture* looks for a Christian communal response to issues wider than the basic needs of people. It looks for evidence of faith engaging culture in its diverse forms. And last, *Creation* includes the church's response in song to environmental problems, global warming, pollution, waste disposal and the care and enjoyment of God's creation.

2.4 Two Comparisons from the Past

By way of further evaluating the nature of contemporary lyrics it seemed useful to make a comparison with lyrics from the past. Two were chosen. First the Psalms and second the *Scripture in Song* series published in New Zealand in the 1970s and 1980s.

The first comparison is made with the Psalms, ancient Israel's songs. To provide a basis for comparing the lyrics in this study with the Psalms I used Brueggemann's typology of function.⁴¹ In this regard Brueggemann makes the provisional presupposition that the modern and ancient use of the psalms share a common intent and function, even though other matters such as setting and institution may be quite different. He proposes a sequence of orientation-disorientation-reorientation as a helpful way to understand the Psalms.⁴² For the purpose of comparison with the lyrics under study 30 typical psalms were selected.⁴³

The second is with *Scripture in Song*. For this purpose Brett Knowles' 2001 study of these lyrics was used. Knowles examined 682 songs and I used three of his categories.⁴⁴ They are:

- *Scripture Use*: Verbatim, Adapted, Tenuous
- *Lyric Focus*: God, Jesus/Christ, Spirit, Believer, Other
- *Lyric Category*: Worship, Praise and Exhortation.

⁴¹ Walter Brueggemann, "Psalms and the Life of Faith: A Suggested Typology of Function" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17 (1980): 3-32.

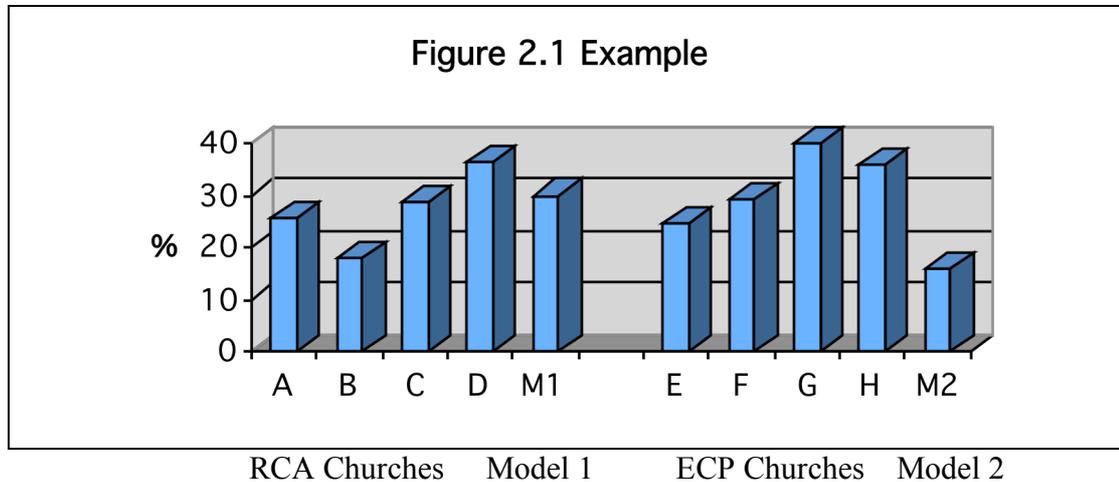
⁴² Psalms of Orientation: 1,8,14,33,37,104,119,131,133,145 Psalms of Disorientation: 13,32,35,49,51,74,79,86,88,137 and Psalms of New Orientation: 29,30,34,40,65,66,96,114,124,138,

⁴³ Walter Brueggemann, "Psalms and the Life of Faith: A Suggested Typology of Function" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17 (1980): 3-32.

⁴⁴ Brett Knowles, "'From the ends of the earth we hear songs': Music as an indicator of New Zealand Pentecostal theology and spirituality" *The Spirit and the Church* 3.2 (November 2001): 227-249.

2.5.1 Presentation of Results

The results of this study are presented throughout, in the diagrammatic format shown below in Figure 2.1.



The Roman Catholic and Anglican (RCA) churches are represented by A, B, C, and D. The Evangelical-Charismatic-Pentecostal (ECP) churches are represented by E, F, G, and H. The Roman Catholic and Anglican model (Licensing) is represented by M1 and the Evangelical-Charismatic-Pentecostal model (Christian Copyright Licensing Asia-Pacific) by M2.

Chapter 3

Theology

In this chapter the focus of our attention is the theological content of the lyrics. While each individual lyric has been examined for its theology it is the basket of lyrics and the overall theology of each worshipping community in its singing, that is of interest. Before I discuss my findings, two theological difficulties in scoring lyrics and how they were resolved are outlined.

3.1 Two Theological Difficulties in Scoring Lyrics

The two theological difficulties were the interchangeability of the names and titles for the Trinitarian God, and lyrics that did not specify who was being addressed.

a) Interchangeability of Names and Titles

Some lyrics studied seemed to show a lack of differentiation between God the Father, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. There appeared to be a blurring of the differences between them. They became three or more terms for the same God.⁴⁵ Brian Smith makes the point that in a good many contemporary songs the traditional titles of God, Lord, Jesus, Father and Spirit, tend to be attached indifferently to “You,” the single divine reality emotionally experienced. The “You” of these songs is one, but has different names and wears different hats.⁴⁶ This is called modalism. The lyrics of Marc Imboden’s song, “You are Holy,” illustrates the point. Below I have indicated the divine Persons I think the pronoun “You” refers to.

<i>You are holy, (You are holy)</i>	God (undifferentiated)
<i>you are mighty (you are mighty)</i>	God
<i>You are worthy, (You are worthy)</i>	Jesus Christ (Rev 4:11)
<i>worthy of praise (worthy of praise)</i>	
<i>I will follow, (I will follow)</i>	Jesus Christ

⁴⁵ Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 301.

⁴⁶ Brian Smith, “Theology off the Wall” *Stimulus* 9 (Nov 2001): 2-6.

<i>I will listen (I will listen)</i>	
<i>I will love you, (I will love you)</i>	Jesus Christ (he is the one being followed)
<i>all of my days (all of my days)</i>	
<i>I will sing to and worship</i>	Jesus Christ?
<i>(You are Lord of Lords, You are King of Kings)</i>	Christ (Rev 17: 14; 19:16)
<i>The King who is worthy</i>	
<i>(You are Mighty God, Lord of everything)</i>	God
<i>I will love and adore Him</i>	
<i>(You're Immanuel, You're the Great I Am)</i>	Jesus (Mt 1:23) then Yahweh (Exod 3:14)
<i>I will bow down before Him</i>	
<i>(You're the Prince of Peace, who is the Lamb)</i>	Jesus Christ (Isa 9.6; Rev 5:12)
<i>I will sing to and worship</i>	
<i>(You're the Living God, You're my Saving Grace)</i>	God then Jesus
<i>The King who is worthy</i>	
<i>(You will reign forever, You are Ancient of Days)</i>	Yahweh (Dan 7:13)
<i>I will love and adore Him</i>	
<i>(You are Alpha, Omega, Beginning, and End)</i>	God (Rev 1:8; 21.6) Jesus Christ (Rev 22:13)
<i>I will bow down before Him</i>	
<i>(You're my Savior, Messiah, Redeemer and Friend)</i>	Jesus Christ
<i>You're my Prince of Peace and I will live my life for You</i> ⁴⁷	Jesus Christ (Isa 9:6)

In these lyrics the writer moves between Yahweh/God and Jesus Christ, with little or no distinction between them. The terms and titles are used synonymously and interchangeably. In the lyrics of songs like this there is definitely some confusion as to who is the object of worship. In scoring these songs I gave one frequency point to God the Father Almighty, and one frequency point to Jesus Christ, God's only Son.

b) No Name Specified

If modalism presents some confusion about who is being addressed in a song, then having no name or no reference to a name is equally confusing. Sometimes it was difficult to determine to whom the lyric and the adoration was being directed. A good example of this type of problem is found in the words of the song "I Could Sing Of Your Love Forever," by Martin Smith.⁴⁸ The bold type below is mine.

⁴⁷ Many songs throughout this study had no punctuation marks. They are presented here as I found them.

⁴⁸ For information concerning the copyright of all songs surveyed see Appendix 2

*Over the mountains and the sea,
Your river runs with love for me,
and I will open up my heart
and let the Healer set me free.
I'm happy to be in the truth,
and I will daily lift my hands:
for I will always sing of when
Your love came down. [Yeah!]*

*I could sing of **Your** love forever,
I could sing of **Your** love forever,
I could sing of **Your** love forever,
I could sing of **Your** love forever. [Repeat]*

*Oh, I feel like dancing
it's foolishness I know;
but, when the world has seen the light,
they will dance with joy,
like we're dancing now.*

If there was no context of worship for a song like this it could quite easily be mistaken for a secular love song, as there is no indication of whose love it is that is forever. We do know, however, that this love will lead to dancing. The fact that this love runs like a river and that it came down suggests it came down, perhaps in the form of rain. There is a “Healer” who has set the songwriter free, but the lyrics do not make it certain the “Healer” is the one whose love could be sung forever. In situations like this I gave no frequency points to Clause 1 or Clause 2 of the Apostles Creed, for I could not tell who the lyric was addressed to.

Lyric Theology

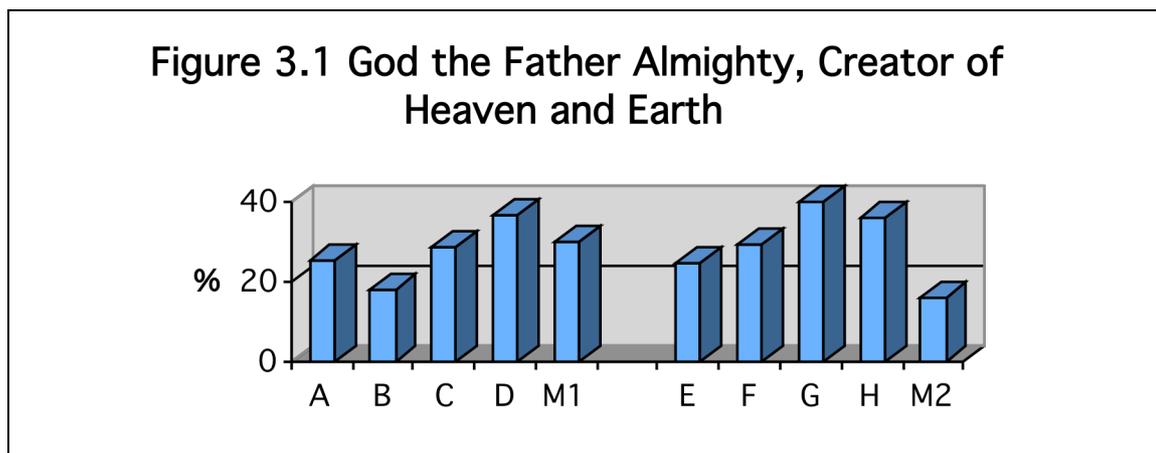
Let us now consider the theology of the lyrics and its balance through the twelve clauses of the Apostles’ Creed.

1. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Clause 1 of the Apostles’ Creed is foundational to the Christian faith in our understanding of God’s Fatherhood and sovereignty. By affirming God as Creator of heaven and earth we affirm the basic goodness of the created order, and acknowledge

humanity as being part of it. By naming God as Father we affirm that God is more than an abstract, impersonal idea or force.⁴⁹ He is a personal God in relationship as a father is to his daughter or son. The use of the term “Father” implies a gender-neutral term, as gender is considered part of the created order.

A graphical representation of the findings in relation to Clause 1 can be seen in Figure 3.1. The supporting numerical data is given in Table 3.1 in Appendix 1.



In examining the lyrics for the first clause of the Apostles’ Creed the RCA churches (A to D) had an average frequency of 27.2% compared to 32.5% for the ECP Churches (E to H). The RCA model (M1) supports the findings of the RCA churches, but the ECP model (M2) does not support the findings of the ECP churches. The range for all churches is 22% (17.9 % to 40%), which is surprisingly wide for such a foundational belief. Further comment on this will be made when Clauses 1 and 2 of the Apostles’ Creed are considered together.

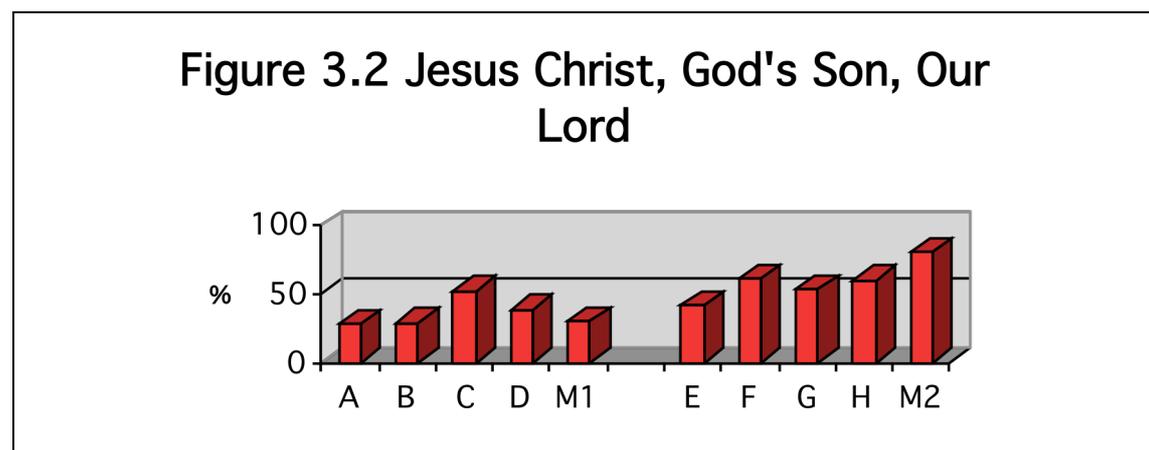
2. I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord,

Although belief in God is affirmed first, the heart of the Apostles’ Creed is the confession concerning Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. Six of the ten clauses in the Apostles’ Creed concern Jesus Christ. The term “Christ” is the Greek form of the

⁴⁹ Alister McGrath, *An Introduction to Christianity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997), 190.

Hebrew title “Messiah” or anointed one.⁵⁰ Calling Jesus, “God’s only Son” indicates how unique and intimate the relationship between God and Jesus was understood to be by early Christians. Adding “our Lord” to this creedal formula recognizes Jesus as divine.⁵¹

The frequencies for Clause 2 of the Apostles’ Creed are found in Figure 3.2 and Table 3.1 in Appendix 1.



From Figure 3.2 we see the ECP churches (E to H) are on average (53.9%) singing more lyrics that include part, or all of Clause 2, (Jesus Christ, God’s only Son) than are the RCA churches (36.7%). The RCA model (M1) supports the local findings as it falls within the range of the RCA church results. The ECP model’s frequency (M2) falls outside the local ECP church results by a substantial margin. This frequency of 80% is the highest for any clause in any of the churches or models analysed.

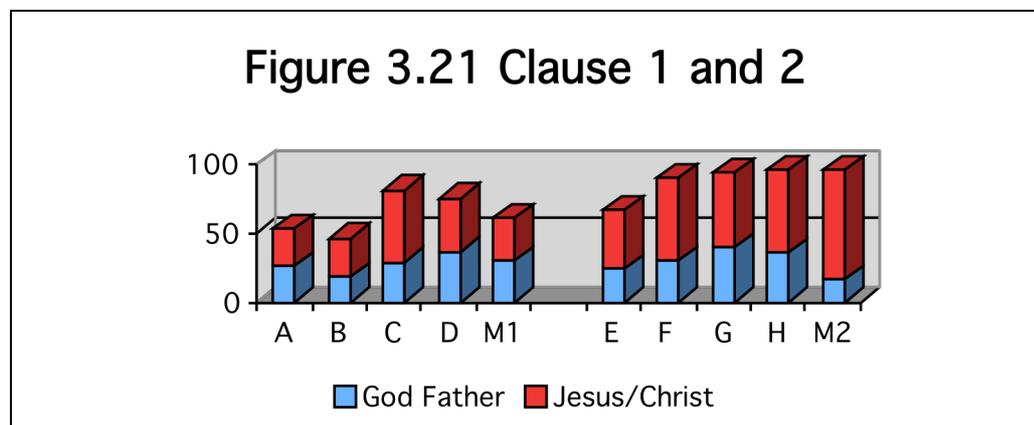
What the data suggests is that the lyrics of the ECP churches are on the whole more christocentric than the lyrics of the RCA churches. The ECP model (M2)

⁵⁰ Alister McGrath, *An Introduction to Christianity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997), 110.

⁵¹ The word Lord is the Greek word *kyrios* and is used to translate the cipher of four letters, the Tetragrammaton YHWH, used to refer to God in the Old Testament.

indicates that the ECP churches outside this study have a very high frequency of lyrics that speak about Jesus Christ.

If one considers Clause 1 and 2 together (Figure 3.21) the ECP churches have a higher average lyric frequency (86.4%) than the RCA churches (63.9%). The two models support their local findings. It is noteworthy that two of the RCA churches (C and D) fall within the range found for the ECP churches, so overlap between the two church streams has occurred in this case. The RCA churches are singing less about the divine than the ECP churches, and a suggested explanation for this will be found in the Conclusion.



An interesting comparison with the Psalms will also be made in Chapter 6 when lyric focus is considered. The findings there will compare the naming of Yahweh/God in the Psalms to mention of God and Jesus/Christ in the lyrics of the local churches.

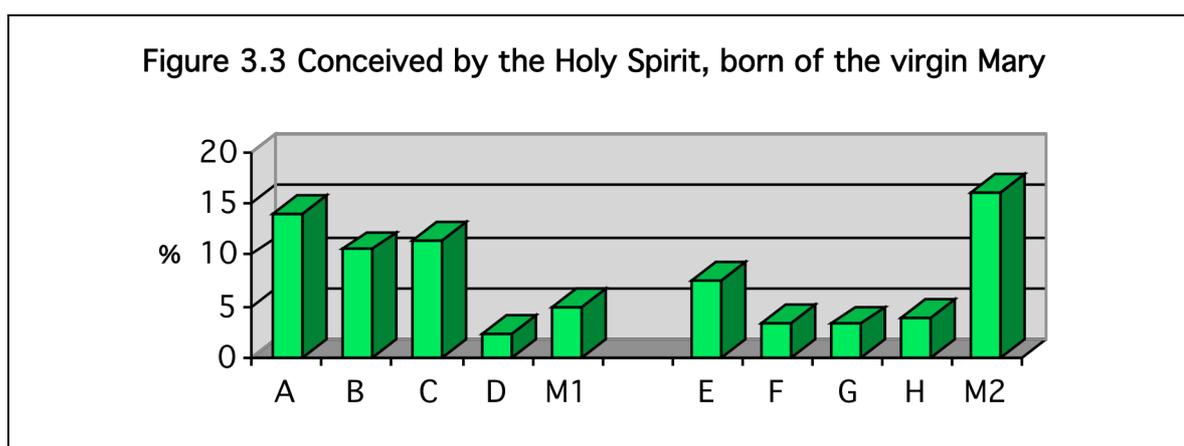
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,

This clause is contentious as outside of Mathew and Luke's gospel account, the virgin birth is not known in the New Testament. Hans Kung concludes from this that the virgin birth of Jesus cannot be regarded as original or central to the Christian

message.⁵² However its inclusion speaks against any idea of adoption of Jesus by God (Adoptionism),⁵³ or his seeming to take human form (Docetism), or that Jesus was the natural child of both Joseph and Mary (Ebionitism).⁵⁴ This is an interesting clause because it will not let Christians separate the man Jesus from the divine Christ, as the Gnostics attempted to do. Jesus was truly human.

The data for Clause 3 can be seen in Figure 3.3. The RCA churches have a relatively low average frequency for Clause 3 in their singing (9.6%). It is however substantially higher than the ECP churches (4.6%). This low level of reference in the ECP churches may be a response to the perceived elevation of the virgin Mary found in some RCA churches. These ECP churches may still carry some of the criticism from the Reformation that devotion to Mary could threaten the central place of Jesus Christ in our singing, prayer and worship.

The RCA model (M1) falls within the RCA range of the data and so the model supports the local RCA findings. However the situation is quite different for the ECP model (M2), which shows a much higher lyric frequency compared to the ECP churches studied.



⁵² Hans Kung, *Credo: The Apostles' Creed Explained for Today* (London: SCM, 1993), 43.

⁵³ Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 209.

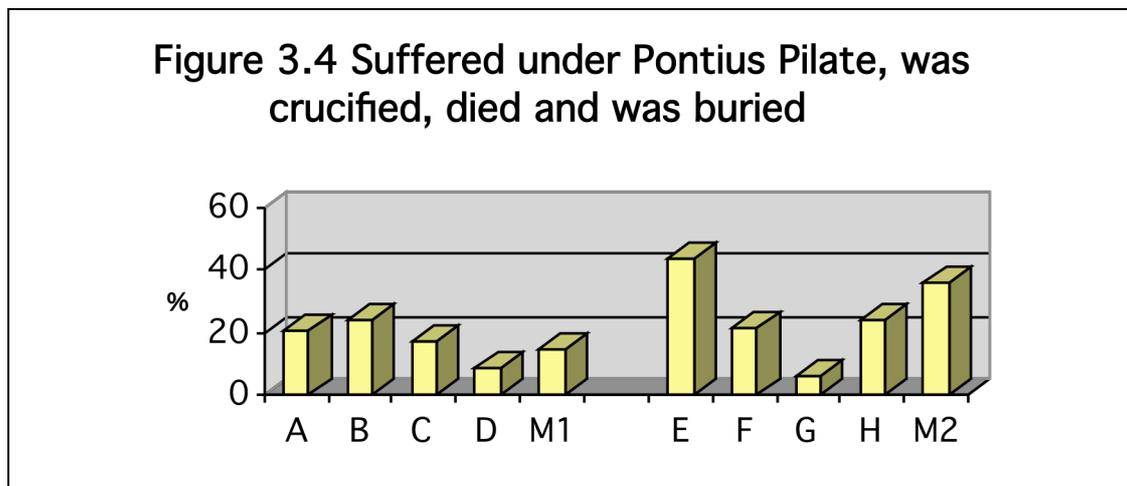
⁵⁴ Peter L. Berger, *Questions of Faith: A Skeptical Affirmation of Christianity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 73.

The difference between the ECP churches and its model may have something to do with the way Clause 3 is understood. Rather than Jesus' humanity being the focus of this clause as it was in the first two centuries, the virgin birth as evidence of Christ's divinity appears to be more the emphasis of the local ECP churches.

4. *Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried;*

Reference to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor underlines the historicity of Jesus. He is not to be understood as the ahistorical *avatar* of some divinity, but a particular Jewish individual who lived and died in Palestine when Pilate ruled that territory. The three-fold emphasis on Jesus' end, "crucified, died and was buried," is clearly intended as an anti-Docetic statement.⁵⁵

The collected lyric data for Clause 4 of the Apostles' Creed is presented in Figure 3.4



The RCA churches sing less frequently about Clause 4 than the ECP churches but incorporate it into their liturgy and celebrate this every week through the Communion and Eucharist. It is incorporated into their weekly story and has a central place in their worship. The ECP churches do not make this the central focus of their worship but

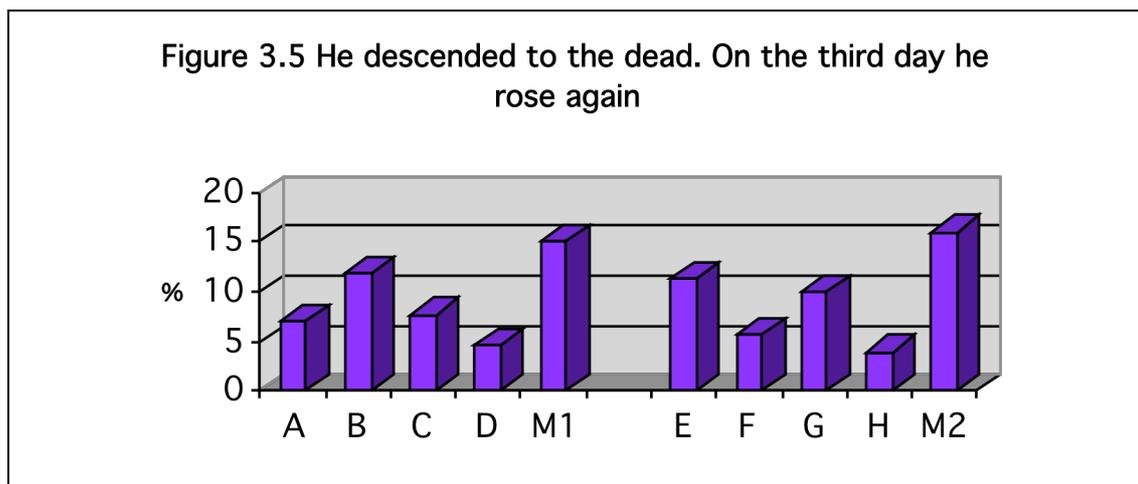
⁵⁵ Peter L. Berger, *Questions of Faith: A Skeptical Affirmation of Christianity* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2004), 85.

rather it is found in their singing. However the local data suggests that there is no agreement among ECP churches about how important this singing is. The ECP model (M2) indicates that many churches in New Zealand consider it important to sing lyrics that include Clause 4.

5. *He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again.*

The phrase “descended to the dead,” or its older translation “descended into hell,” is of special interest because it is not frequently found in any of the lyrics examined. Irenaeus and Tertullian do not have this phrase in their writings. It first appeared in the writings of Rufinus (ca 407) who said that it meant only that Jesus went to the grave, the place of the dead. Augustine did not have this phrase, but it occurred again in the Gallic Creed of 650 A.D. and remained from then on.⁵⁶ However the second part of this Clause 5, Christ’s rising from the dead, is very central in its importance to Christian belief.

Let us consider Figure 3.5 that represents the numerical data for lyrics including Clause 5 of the Apostles’ Creed.



Both the RCA and the ECP church average was 7.8%. There is close agreement locally about Clause 5 in congregational lyrics. The data from the two models did not

⁵⁶ <http://www.christianodyssey.com/history/apostles.htm>

support their local church data. In 2007 Easterday fell on the 8th of April, so resurrection lyrics would not have featured highly in congregational singing in the period before that. One would expect the two models to give a fairer indication of the frequency of reference to this clause of the creed, representing as they do songs for the full calendar year. Having said that, however, it is worth noting that this expectation was not met for churches F, G and H. Their lyrics were taken from playlists for the full year, yet their frequency still fell below that of the ECP model.

6. *He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father,*

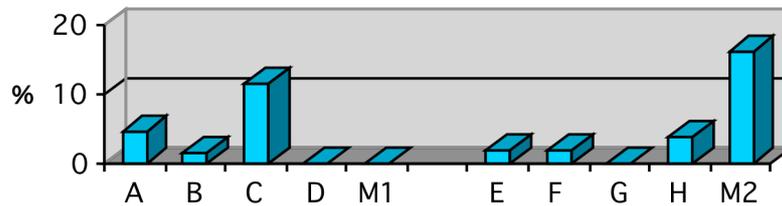
Resurrection from the dead is not a return to this earthly life but a transformation into a new life and a new body. Karl Barth rightly notes that this clause is not something that has been, but something that is and continues.⁵⁷ This sovereignty of Jesus Christ is exercised in the full power of the Creator God. The doctrine of ascension completes the incarnation event, drawing the saving work of Christ into the ultimate mystery of God. Through it the union of God and humanity that took place in the person of Christ, has been brought into the immediate presence of the Father where Christ wears our human life, standing in for us, interceding for us as advocate, high priest and mediator.⁵⁸

If the ECP churches (E to H) have difficulty singing about Jesus' conception and his humanity (see Figure 3.3), they appear to have even more difficulty singing about his ascension to and his position in heaven (Figure 3.6). This apparent difficulty is not shared with the ECP model (M2) where 16% of songs speak about this topic.

⁵⁷ Karl Barth, *Credo* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936), 106.

⁵⁸ Graham Redding, "To Whom do we Direct our Worship and Prayer...and Does it Matter?" *Stimulus* 9 (3) (August 2001): 5-10.

Figure 3.6 He ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father



The relatively high score for the EPC model comes about because some of the language of worship implies ascension.⁵⁹ Two churches in the RCA grouping (B and D) and the RCA model (M1) share the same difficulty experienced by the ECP churches. The RCA model rates no songs or hymns on its list that speak of Jesus' ascension to heaven and his being seated alongside the Father. The early church struggled with Christ's humanity and the Apostles' Creed is good evidence of that. This data suggests that some local churches are now struggling not with Christ's humanity, but his divinity.

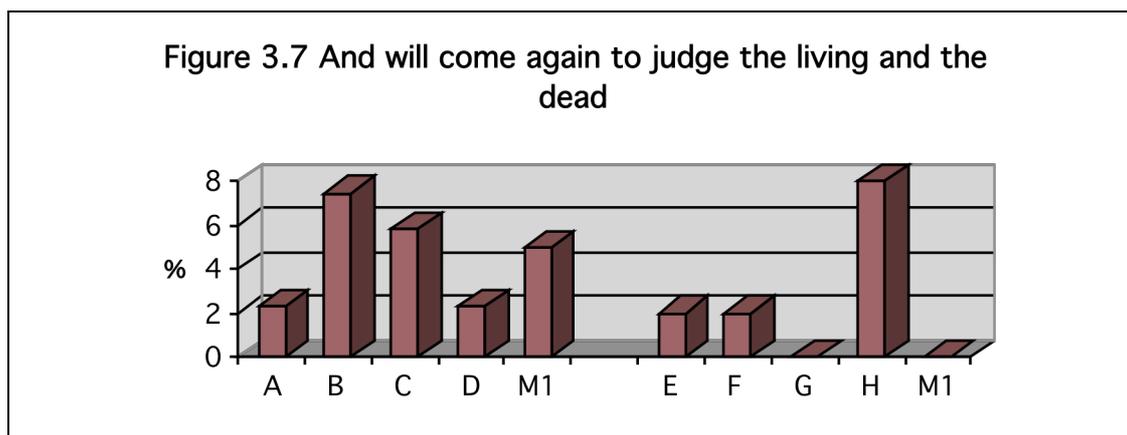
7. *And will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

The Church whose faith is expressed in this creed looks backwards and also forwards. It remembers and it waits.⁶⁰ Joseph Ratzinger (now Pope Benedict XVI) notes that the New Testament clings fast, in spite of its message of grace, to the assertion that in the end humanity will be judged. No one can escape giving account of how they have lived their life.⁶¹

⁵⁹ "to see you high and lifted up" or "you rose again on high"

⁶⁰ Karl Barth, *Credo* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1936), 117.

⁶¹ Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), 247.



The RCA churches (A to D) have not lost the idea of Christ's return and judgment from their singing theology. It is present in the lyrics, although at a low average frequency (4.5%). For Clause 7 of the Apostles' Creed the ECP churches have a very low level of frequency, except for Church H. The ECP model records no lyrics with mention of Clause 7.

Sin and salvation imagery from the two models will be discussed in Chapter 4. Evidence presented there from the lyrics suggest that the RCA churches might view sin in a slightly different way to the ECP churches, which probably makes it easier for them to include Clause 7 of the Apostles Creed in their song.

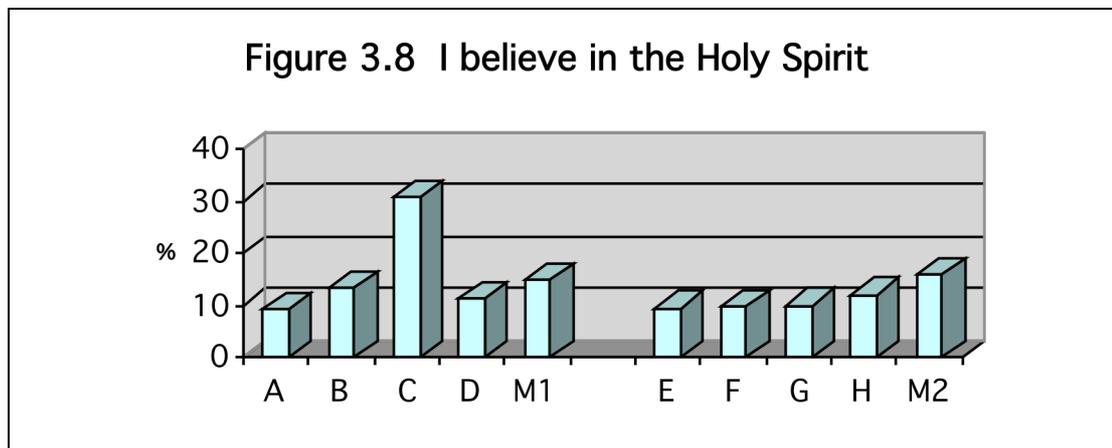
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,

Christians from early times baptised in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matt 28: 19). Athanasius was of the opinion that this had momentous implications for an understanding of the status of the person of the Holy Spirit. He argued that this baptismal formula clearly pointed to the Spirit sharing the same divinity as the Father and the Son.⁶² The importance of the Holy Spirit in local church lyrics is seen in Figure 3.8 below.

One would expect the ECP churches (E to H) to have a strong emphasis on the Holy Spirit in their singing, given their history of bringing the church's attention to

⁶² Alister McGrath, *An Introduction to Christianity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997), 209.

the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. This expectation is not reflected in the lyrics of local ECP congregational singing. However when an ECP comparison is made with RCA churches, excluding Church C, the frequency levels for this clause are very similar.



Unlike the others, Church C had considerably more emphasis on Clause 8. This may be in part a reflection of the larger number of hymns and songs this church sings (52 over three months). It is worth noting that in general the two models (M1 and M2) had higher inclusion rates (15% and 16% respectively) than their local church counterparts.

9. The holy catholic Church, the communion of saints,

Thus, in this ninth clause of the Apostles' Creed the believer acknowledges that the Church, in spite of its faults and deficiencies, is the field of activity of the Holy Spirit. The Church belongs to God and to his activities in the world.⁶³

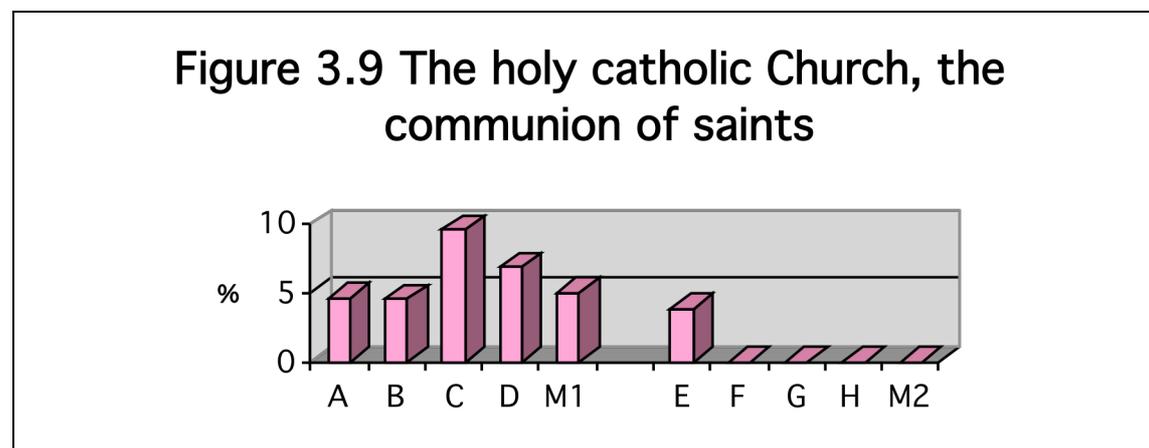
In lyric analysis of Clause 9 I looked for any connection believers were able to make with the body of Christians, called the Church. While I did not narrow my search to "the holy catholic Church," for I considered the wording could present some

⁶³ Wolfhart Panneberg, *The Apostles Creed* (London: SCM, 1972), 145.

difficulties for those outside the Roman Catholic tradition, I did look for a sense of communal identity.

Of all the categories examined in this study this category of Church left me with considerable concern. In the lyrics of the ECP churches, except for Church E, there was little or no sense of communal identity or acknowledgement of the Church as God's sphere of activity. The ECP model supports the local findings. It appears that the EPC churches around New Zealand are struggling with a lyric faith that is expressed communally. A private, individualized and interior sense of God seems to characterize ECP lyrics. I will have more to say about the "Church" when we consider the lyrics outworking of the Christian faith in Chapter 5.

In the RCA church lyrics (A to D) by contrast, there is a sense of group identity and of Church. Their average score was 6.4%, slightly above the frequency seen in the RCA model (5.0%). It appears the RCA churches have an understanding that the Holy Spirit's field of activity is among the people of the Church.



The ECP churches (apart from church E) may have a very individualistic understanding of the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church, a view not held by the Apostles' Creed or the RCA churches in this study.

10. The forgiveness of sins,

Pannenberg understands this clause in the light of the previous clause and the two clauses that follow it in the Apostles' Creed. The communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins and a future hope, he says, belong together. Forgiveness of sins means liberation from everything that divides us from God.⁶⁴

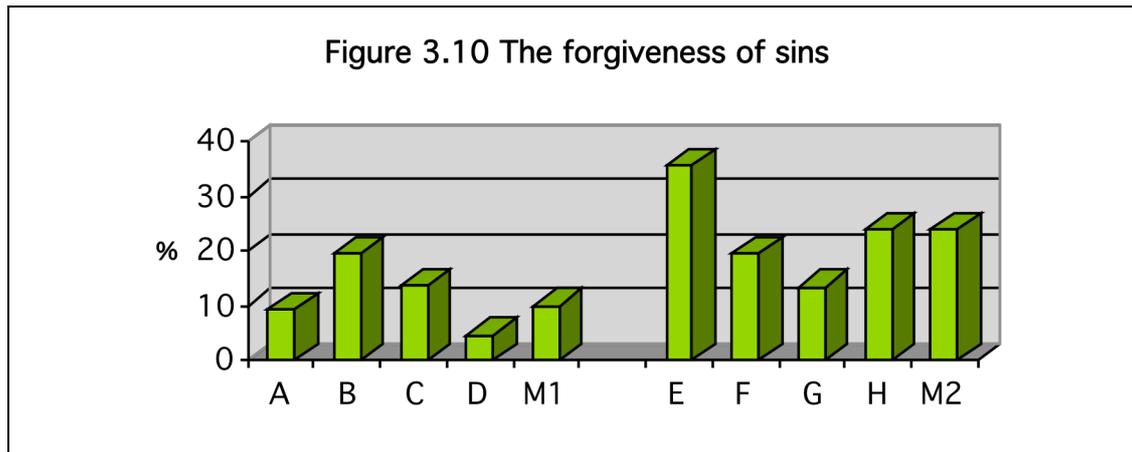
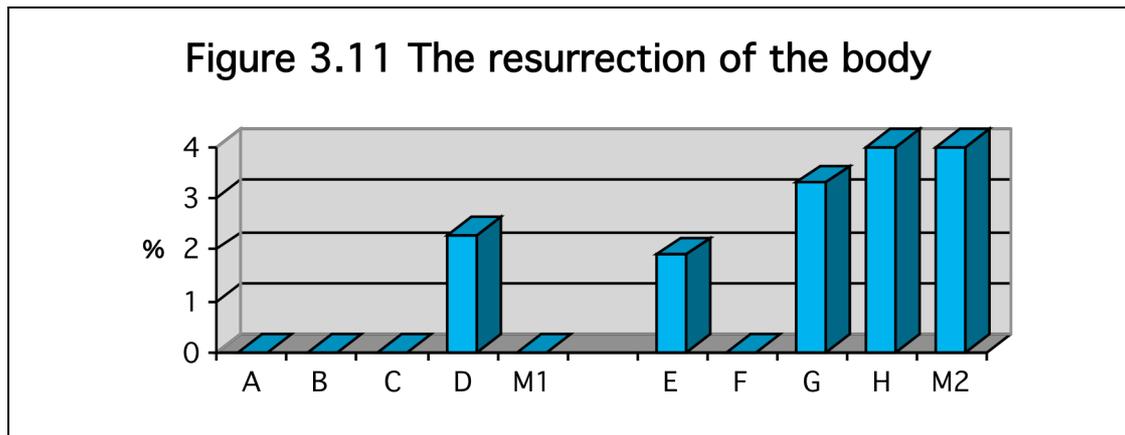


Figure 3.10 shows that the frequency of Clause 10, the forgiveness of sins, occurs in the RCA churches (11.7%) about half as frequently as it does in the lyrics of the ECP churches (23.2%). The data from the models supports the findings of their church streams. The lower lyric frequency in the RCA churches and RCA model may be because confession is part of the spoken liturgy. One church grouping expresses this clause in spoken words and the other in singing.

11. The resurrection of the body,

The resurrection of Jesus on the one hand is bound up with his earthly activity. On the other hand it points forward with hope to the transformation of all things. This clause expresses the Christian hope that believers will, one day share in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. When examining how frequently the lyrics expressed the idea of bodily resurrection a clear difference emerged between the two church streams.

⁶⁴ Wolfhart Pannenberg, *The Apostles' Creed* (London: SCM, 1972), 160.



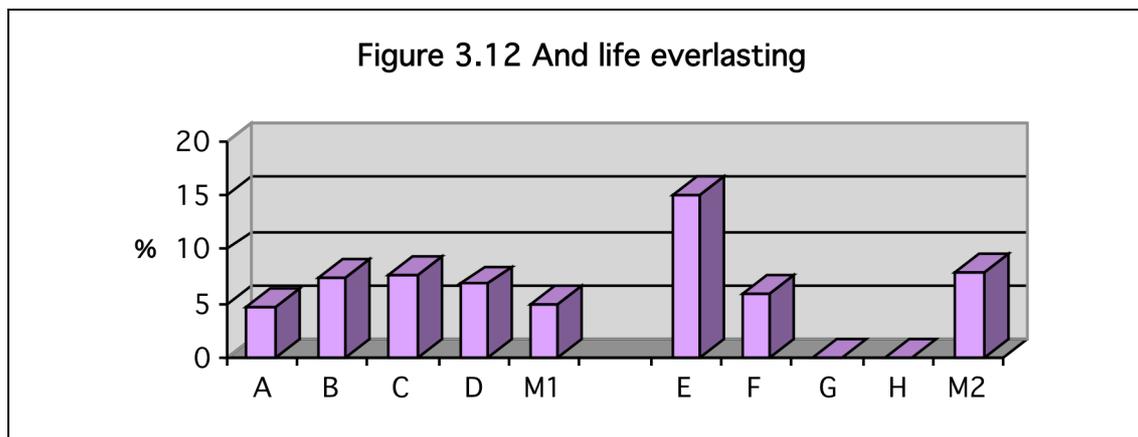
Apart from Church D, the RCA churches did not sing about the worshipper's resurrection. The model (M1) verifies the findings from the local RCA churches. If the RCA theology of the life to come leans towards the immortality of the soul, then bodily resurrection becomes less important and so may explain these results. A more probable explanation lies in a stronger understanding that resurrection starts now rather than at death. This places the emphasis on the "now" rather than on the "not yet." Thus the bodily resurrection of believers becomes implicit rather than explicit and is not seen in congregational lyrics.

On the other hand, although the ECP churches sing about resurrection, it is at a low frequency. Again the model (M2) supports the local findings. The difference seen here raises a question about the different understanding the RCA and the ECP churches may have about the resurrection of the faithful. An alternative explanation may exist in society's focus on this material life seeming to have pervaded the church and its song, more so for the RCA than the ECP churches. Heaven and the "good life" have already arrived on earth.

12. *And life everlasting. Amen*

This is not life that just goes on and on, but is life in all its fullness. It is an extension of life begun on earth but life fully transformed by the presence and love of God.

In the geographic area of this study there is little in the song of the believer that indicates a belief in the resurrection of the body. This however is not the case for a belief in everlasting life which appeared in the lyrics of six of the eight churches sampled. The RCA churches sang at a consistently low level about life everlasting. The model (M1) supports the local observations.



The ECP churches sang about life everlasting at about the same low level as the RCA churches, but their singing was less consistent. Churches G and H registered no songs including Clause 12 in their lyrics. Church E stood out as singing about life everlasting two to three times more than any other church in the study. It is interesting to note that the RCA lyrics had little about the believer's resurrection, but considerably more about eternal life.

3.3 Total Lyric Theology

Did the number of lyrics on the church's lyric play-list influence the total theological frequency found in the lyrics? From this study it appears as though the

size of the play-list did not reduce the theological content if frequency of occurrence of the Apostles' Creed is the measure used. The total theology score is the sum of the frequency percentages found in Table 3.1 of Appendix 1.

Table 3.2 Total Lyric Theology

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2
Number of Lyrics	43	67	52	44	20	53	51	30	25	25
Total Theology	130.3	146.3	196.0	125.2	135.0	198.0	160.3	139.8	180.0	236.0

Although models M1 and M2 and Churches G and H have relatively small play-lists, the range of total theology is quite wide. It varies from a total score of 135 (M1) to 236 (M2), a range difference of 101 points. Churches with larger play-lists (B, C, E, and F) have total scores varying from 146 (B) to 198 (E), a range difference of 52 points. These results suggest larger play-lists do not necessarily mean a wider theology in lyrics sung.

3.4 Lyric Summary

How much theological content is found in the lyrics under study? A summary of the results will help answer this question and this is seen in Table 3.3 on the following page. By way of assessing total theological content I suggest that a frequency of 10% may be taken as a benchmark. While this is somewhat arbitrary, it assumes congregations will sing three to five lyrics each quarter that give expression to a particular clause of the Apostles' Creed. This is no less than a monthly frequency for most churches.

If a congregation receives a greater than ten percent frequency for any one clause of the Apostles' Creed one would expect the Christian faith to be lodged a little firmer in the life of a believer. Correspondingly, if a congregation receives below ten

percent frequency, one would expect a weaker understanding of that aspect of the faith.

Table 3.3 Lyric Summary

Church	RCA Average %	M1 %	ECP Average %	M2 %	RCA/ECP Average %
God Creator	38.1	30.0	32.5	16.0	29.8
Jesus Christ Only Son Our Lord	36.7	30.0	53.9	80.0	45.3
Conceived of the Holy Spirit born of Mary	9.6	5.0	4.6	16.0	7.1
Suffered, Crucified, Dead and Buried	17.8	15.0	23.9	36.0	20.9
Descended to Hell, Rose on Third Day	7.8	15.0	7.8	16.0	7.8
Ascended to Heaven	4.4	0	2.0	20.0	3.2
Return and Judgement	4.5	5.0	3.0	0	3.7
Holy Spirit	16.2	15.0	10.3	16.0	13.3
Church	6.4	5.0	1.0	0	3.7
Forgiveness of Sins	11.7	10.0	23.2	24.0	17.4
Resurrection of the body	0.6	0	2.3	4.0	1.4
To life everlasting	6.7	5.0	5.3	8.0	6.0

The RCA churches from this sample of lyrics (see Table 3.3), have a strong focus on God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. They grasp the association between Jesus' crucifixion and death and the forgiveness of sins, and the role the Holy Spirit plays in the church. However the RCA churches in this study need to give more lyric attention to Jesus Christ's resurrection (note the proviso above concerning the time of the year these lyrics were collected). To gain a better balance

they also need to focus more on His ascension, return and judgment as well as the believer's own resurrection to everlasting life.

The ECP churches, like the RCA churches, are strong on the first two clauses of the Apostles' Creed. Both the crucifixion and death of Jesus and the forgiveness of a believer's sin feature prominently. The Holy Spirit works but apparently not through the Church. The ECP churches in this study could well attend to lyrics concerning Christ's humanity, his resurrection and ascension (and possibly his divinity), the role of the Church in God's salvation plan, and like the RCA churches, the resurrection of believers to life everlasting.

3.5 Conclusion

When considering whether the lyrics are a balanced expression of the Christian faith we found only five of the twelve clauses from the Apostles' Creed rated above the 10% lyric frequency benchmark for both the RCA and ECP church streams. Interestingly, it is the same five clauses for each church stream that is above this mark⁶⁵ (see Table 3.3). The RCA model supports the finding of the RCA churches. The ECP model, representing the wider ECP church scene in New Zealand, has a better balance in its lyric theology for it includes three more clauses of the Apostles' Creed above 10% than do the local ECP churches.

The findings of this study suggest the theology of more than half of the Apostles' Creed is unevenly sung and in some cases not sung at all. This study of lyric theology has detected an unbalanced expression of the Christian faith in the local congregational lyrics studied.

⁶⁵ Clauses 1, God; 2, Jesus Christ; 4, Suffered, dead and buried; 8, Holy Spirit; and 10, Forgiveness of sin.

Chapter 4

Imagery and Perspective

Inevitably congregational lyrics will contain imagery, as it helps form their expression of the Christian faith. Any study of these lyrics must therefore include discussion of the images found in them. Besides considering the images found in the lyrics sung in eight local congregations, we will also, to get a wider view, do a case study of some particular images in the lyrics of the two model churches.

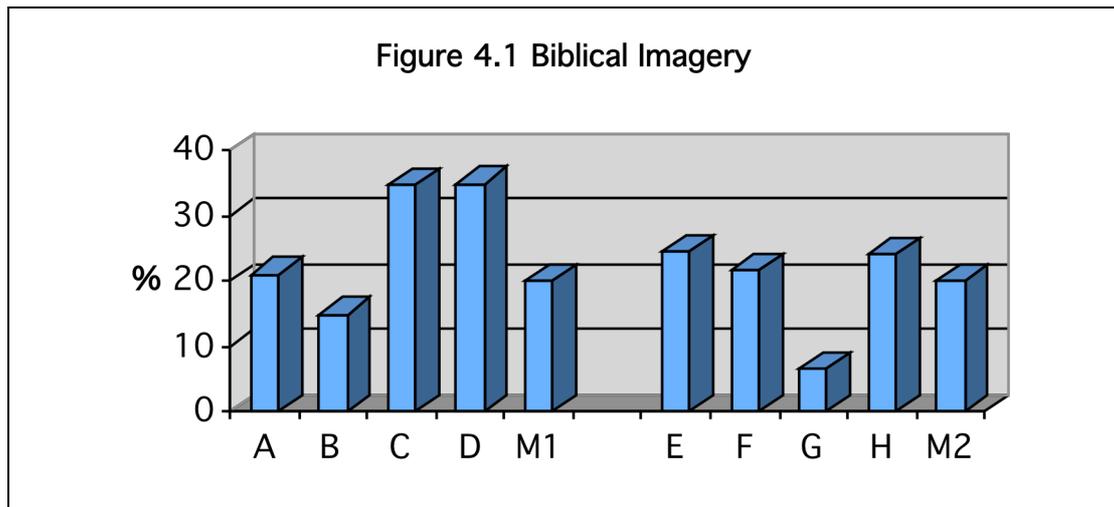
Along with imagery, perspective is another poetic device found in lyrics. By perspective is meant the use of different “voices” to provide a change in the way of looking at things. When well done, a different “voice” can bring a lyric to life. When poorly done, it can detract from the lyric’s message. The latter part of this chapter considers this question.

4.1 Imagery

Using the categories, biblical, historical and contemporary described in Chapter 2, we examined the lyrics under study. The results are as follows.

a) Biblical Imagery

The frequency of biblical imagery in lyrics, across all churches sampled, ranged from 6.6% to 34.6%. Figure 4.1 on the next page and Table 4.1 in Appendix 1 details this information. Churches C and D appear to be relatively rich in biblical imagery and Church G, by comparison quite poor. The average frequency for the ECP churches (E to H) was 19.1% and for the RCA churches (A to D) was 26.3%. Surprisingly the frequency for the two models (M1 and M2) was the same at 20%.



There is obviously agreement between local churches and the two models about the role biblical imagery plays in congregational lyrics. It is a fertile source of inspiration for writers of hymns and songs. Some examples of this rich biblical imagery discovered in the lyrics of this study are noted below.

Rick Founds in “Lord I lift Your Name on High” describes how God came to save us. In so doing he uses the biblical imagery of the cross and the grave as he draws a tight progression from incarnation to ascension.

*Lord I lift Your name on high
 Lord I love to sing Your praises
 I'm so glad You're in my life
 I'm so glad You came to save us*

*You came from heaven to earth
 To show the way
 From the earth to the cross
 My debt to pay
 From the cross to the grave*

From the grave to the sky

Lord I lift Your name on high⁶⁶

⁶⁶ I reiterate that many songs throughout this study had no punctuation marks so I have presented them as I found them.

The chorus of “Galilee Song” by Frank Anderson brings to light the images around a biblical fishing scene on the shores of Lake Galilee, and the challenge Jesus gave to Simon, Andrew, James and John, to follow him.⁶⁷

*So I leave my boats behind!
Leave them on familiar shores!
Set my heart upon the deep!
Follow you again, my Lord!*

Songwriters also draw imagery from the Old Testament. In “As the Deer,” Martin Nystrom has used images of deer longing for flowing streams to describe the worshipper’s thirst for God (Ps 42:1-2), gold and silver to describe the value of this relationship, and the “apple of the eye” (Ps 17: 8) to emphasise its closeness.

*As the deer pants for the water,
so my soul longs after you.
You alone are my heart’s desire
and I long to worship you.*

*Refrain
You alone are my strength my shield,
to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart’s desire
and I long to worship you.*

*I want you more than gold or silver,
only you can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver
and the apple of my eye.*

*You’re my friend
and you are my brother,
even though you are a king.
I love you more than any other,
so much more than anything.*

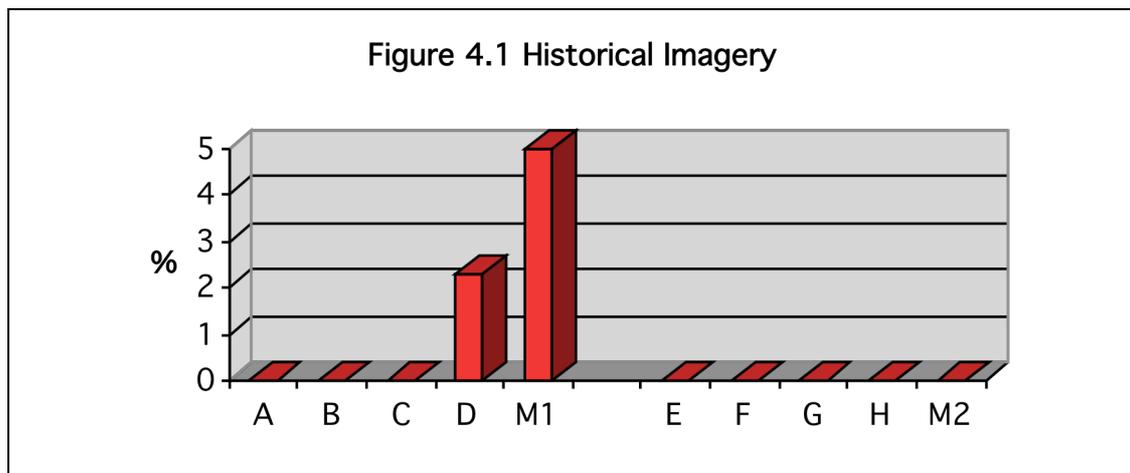
The song “Come to the Water” has a verse that skilfully ties the biblical story of Jesus and the Samaritan women at the well to the questions raised in Isaiah 55.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Mark 1: 16-20.

*Why spend your money on what cannot fill,
the emptiness deep in your heart?
Listen to my words and you will enjoy
Goodness and peace in your heart.*

b) Historical Imagery

Surprisingly, there was little that reminded the congregational singer of the Church's rich history outside of the scriptural record. Only one church in Figure 4 chose to sing about the saints of the Church over the sampling period.



The ECP model (M2) supports the findings from the local ECP churches. The RCA model (M1) does not support the local RCA data. RCA churches outside this study area are singing lyrics that include historical imagery and this indicates that such songs do exist.

It is sad to see such a low frequency of lyrics being sung about our Church's past, for the Church has a rich history over two millennia to draw upon for lyric composition. To forget one's history is to enter a state of amnesia. It is to be cut off from the past and the lessons there; it is to be consigned to living only in the present, a sort of sterile vacuum. Even a cursory reading of Israel's ancient songs, the Psalms, will show that the Hebrew people sang about Yahweh and his actions through exodus and exile. C. S.

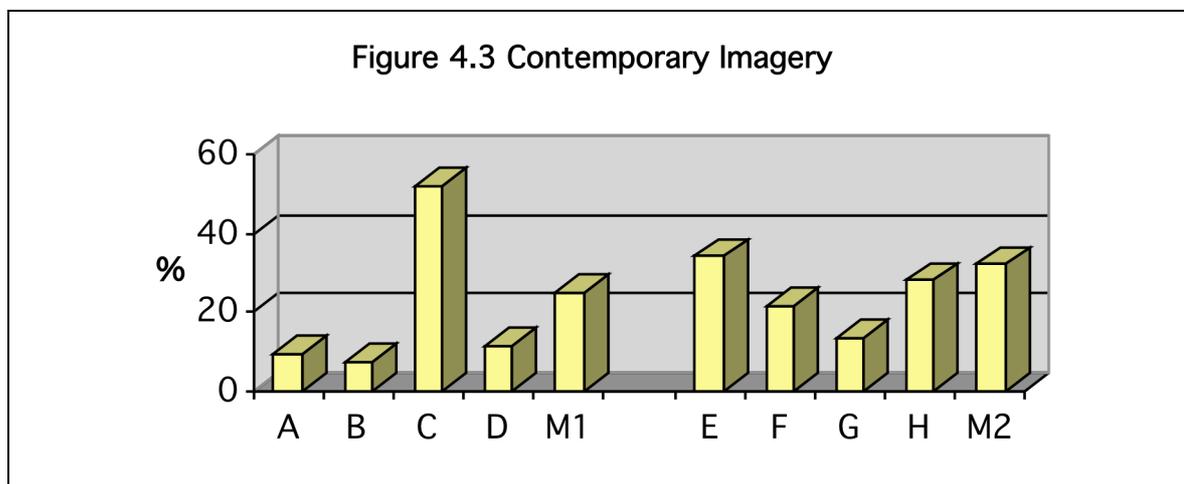
⁶⁸ Is 55: 2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy?

Lewis counsels us to alternate between the contemporary and the ancient in our reading on the ground that the errors and faults of the past are obvious to us, but the truths those from the past see clearly will powerfully illuminate our contemporary blindness and partialities.⁶⁹ His comments apply with equal force to lyric singing.

c) Contemporary Imagery

The variation of frequency found in contemporary imagery is the widest of our three categories (see Figure 4.3). It ranged from 7.5% (B) to 51.9% (C). The ECP churches show a slightly higher frequency for contemporary imagery in their lyrics than the RCA churches.

The two models (M1, 25.0 and M2, 32.0) show a higher frequency than the local churches (RCA 20.0 and ECP, 24.2) for their respective traditions. This suggests that churches outside the sampling area are singing lyrics with a higher frequency of contemporary imagery than the local churches.



It must be noted that even some of the older hymns had strikingly contemporary imagery. They attempted to place faith concepts into non-biblical language in ways that appeared fresh and memorable. One example is from the Christmas carol “We Three

⁶⁹ Cited in Chris Bengé, “Confessions of a Prompt” *Stimulus 9* (November 2001): 17-20.

Kings From Orient Are.” In the fifth verse of this song John Hopkins ties the third gift of myrrh to Christ’s death and burial. It is a marvellous combination of words, poetically crafted and economically used.

*Sorrowing, sighing bleeding, dying
Sealed in a stone-cold tomb*

Further, he does this in a Christmas carol, in the context of a lyric devoted to the incarnation.

Another example of contemporary imagery is found in the hymn, “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross,” by Isaac Watts. In the third verse he uses “sorrow and love” as images of blood flowing from the wounds of the crucified Jesus.

*See, from his head, his hands, his feet,
sorrow and love flow mingled down.*

A more modern example can be found in Graham Kendrick’s song “Servant King.” He focuses on the nailing of Jesus’ hands to the cross. These hands are an image of power (“hands that flung stars into space”), yet they become the symbol of surrender.

*Come see His hands
And His feet
The scars that speak
Of sacrifice
Hands that flung stars
Into space
To cruel nails
Surrendered*

In his song “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us” Stuart Townsend gives voice to the way sin kept Jesus on the cross. Again the image is a powerful one of voluntary sacrifice. This time there are no nails.

*It was my sin that held Him there
Until it was accomplished
His dying breath has brought me life
I know that it is finished*

“How Great is our God” by Chris Tomlin describes God in terms of the tension between light and darkness. The theology of God taking on light as a garment⁷⁰ might seem strange to the ear of those familiar with the Nicene Creed’s “light from light, true God from true God.” However, the image creates a good contrast between light and darkness and the tension that is felt when darkness tries to hide but cannot.

*He wraps himself in Light, and darkness tries to hide
and trembles at His voice
Trembles at His voice*

Lenny Leblanc and Paul Baloche liken Jesus’ death to a single rose flower being walked on by those who have not seen it or choose to ignore it. This brings fresh imagery to the theme of crucifixion.

*Crucified, laid behind a stone
You lived to die rejected and alone
Like a rose trampled on the ground
You took the fall and thought of me
Above all*

Christ taking “the fall” suggests he was the “fall-guy,” the one who took the blame, because someone needed to be punished.

d) Imagery for Sin and Salvation

In Chapter 3 it was noted that the forgiveness of sins has more emphasis in ECP than in RCA lyrics, and this was seen in Figure 3.10. How then are sin and salvation viewed in a wider sample of the two church groupings? To answer this question I considered the lyrics of the two models, M1 (LicenSing) and M2 (CCLI).

Sin in the lyrics of the CCLI model is seen as debt,⁷¹ as being in mirey [sic] clay,⁷² as darkness,⁷³ as a weakness,⁷⁴ as shame, pain and a burden,⁷⁵ and as guilt and fear.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ From the NIV translation of Psalm 104: 2.

⁷¹ Song “Lord I lift your name on high” by Ricky Founds.

⁷² Song “For all You’ve Done” by Hillsong United.

There was no evidence that sin was seen in the CCLI lyrics as rebellion from God, as falling short of the mark, as a form of bankruptcy, as an abandoning of the path, as a casting off of the creature's dependence on its Creator, or as an illness or hereditary disease. There was no sense in which sin was communal. Nor was there an awareness of the consequences of sin being carried by others in the form of injustice and poverty, or hatred and war. Again there was no understanding of the whole of creation labouring under the weight of sin in the form of ecological mismanagement. There were no lyrics that spoke of God's wrath and anger, and no connections were made between sin, judgement and death.

The lyrics of the LicenSing model viewed sin as despair and darkness,⁷⁷ as people's pain⁷⁸ and as a troubled world longing for peace, a hungry world longing for food and a homeless world longing for shelter.⁷⁹ The LicenSing model had little to say about individual sin with no pronouns linking sin to personal responsibility. The emphasis was on communal sin and its wider implications. In contrast the CCLI model lent towards an interpretation of sin that was purely individual in nature. Neither model made the connection between sin, judgement and death.

There has been criticism that some churches are shifting the meaning of sin to negative thinking and attitudes that limit our potential and destroy God's purpose in our lives.⁸⁰ I found no evidence of that in the lyrics of either the CCLI or the LicenSing models. Yet I did find that the idea of sin did not hold the seriousness I had expected, particularly in relation to guilt. In this respect David Wells has noted a shift from guilt to shame,

⁷³ Song "Here I am to Worship" by Tim Hughes.

⁷⁴ Song "The Power of Your Love" by Geoff Bullock.

⁷⁵ Song "My Redeemer Lives" by Reuben Morgan.

⁷⁶ Song "In Christ Alone" by Keith Getty and Stuart Townsend.

⁷⁷ Songs "Prayer of St Francis," "Rain Down" by Jamie Cortez and "Christ be our Light" by Bernadette Farrell.

⁷⁸ Song "Here I am Lord" by Dan Schutte.

⁷⁹ Song "Christ be our Light" by Bernadette Farrell.

⁸⁰ Tony Payne and Gordon Cheng, "The Surprising Face of Hillsong" *the Briefing* 340: 11-18.

expressed as inner emptiness, deprivation, loss and disorientation. In Well's view this shift cripples the ability of sinners to make their way back to God, lacking as they do, a solid foundation for understanding the salvation offered through Christ and the cross.⁸¹

The Christian faith affirms that the death of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection is of central importance to the salvation of the world. Alister McGrath suggests that images of Christ's death and resurrection can be grouped around four themes.

- The cross is a sacrifice in terms of imagery found in the Old Testament and the letter to the Hebrews. This idea continues to be of importance in sacramental theology, especially to the Catholic Church in the Eucharist.
- The cross is victory over sin, death and Satan. This is seen most noticeably in the celebrations at Easter.
- The cross provides the basis by which God is enabled to forgive sin (Jesus being a representative of humanity, the believer participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and Christ being a substitute who goes to the cross in our place).
- The cross is a demonstration of God's love. God is profoundly interested in us despite our indifference. He is willing to suffer the depravity of humanity all the way to the cross because he loves us.⁸²

There is a wealth of imagery in the four themes Alister McGrath describes and I will use these four themes of the cross to examine the lyrics of the two model churches.

The CCLI model lyrics contained ideas of sacrifice in the words 'His blood covered my sin.'⁸³ A similar idea is hinted at and expressed in the words "you took the fall" and

⁸¹ David Wells. *Losing Our Virtue*. (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998), 29.

⁸² Alister McGrath, *An Introduction to Christianity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1997) 135-143.

⁸³ Song "My Redeemer Lives" by Reuben Morgan.

partially by the words “the wrath of God was satisfied.”⁸⁴ Three of the CCLI lyrics express the idea that God came from heaven to suffer human depravity.⁸⁵

There were no examples in the lyrics of the LicenSing model that talk of the salvation achieved by Christ on the cross. However there were examples in the lyrics of this model of gathering together and the sharing of bread and wine. Such songs would add to the drama enacted each week and give voice to the congregation as they express their faith at a deeper level.

The sample size of the two models was small and although representative, was not wide enough to allow a full critique of sin and salvation imagery of the two church streams.

e) Images for Jesus Christ

Many different images, both biblical and contemporary were used to describe Jesus Christ. These include: bread and wine, servant, shepherd, lamb, farmer, priest, son, light and king. A more detailed examination of the lyrics of the two models revealed the two church streams preferred different images, (see Table 4.2 below).

⁸⁴ Song “Above All” by Lenny LeBlanc and Paul Baloche.

⁸⁵ Songs “For all you’ve done” by Hillsong, “Here I am to Worship” by Tim Hughes and “Lord I lift your name on high” by Rick Founds.

Table 4.2 Imagery of Jesus Christ

Image	RCA Model	ECP Model
	%	%
King	0	28
Way	0	4
Truth	0	4
Life	0	4
Light	30	12
Redeemer	0	8
Comforter	0	4
Saviour	0	4
Lion	0	4
Lamb	0	8
Creator	0	4
Holy One	0	4
Master	5	0
Bread	20	0
Wine	15	0
Living Water	5	0
Wisdom	5	0
Son	5	0

The RCA model prefers images of Jesus Christ as light, bread and wine. The ECP model prefers images of king, redeemer, light and lamb. The range of imagery seemed rather narrow for both models given the multiplicity of images available to describe Jesus Christ. However if a more thorough examination were made of the lyrics collected from the local churches a different picture may emerge.

The strong emphasis in the ECP model on the imagery of the king seems rather outdated given that a substantial part of the English-speaking world has had a queen for the last 55 years. But this may be even stranger because the concept of the monarchy is not a universal concept in the English-speaking world of the 20th or 21st century particularly in the U.S.A. where many of the contemporary lyrics are sourced. However this imagery of king may be associated with God's "kingdom" found in the Synoptic gospels.

f) Old and Tired Imagery

There is a good deal of imagery that has become old and tired. It has lost its ability to express the Christian faith in a well-balanced way and has become a cliché. Lamb, crowns, nail-pierced hands, temple and courts fall into this category. “Worthy is the Lamb” by Hillsong United demonstrates the point.

*Thank you for the cross Lord
Thank you for the price You paid
Bearing all my sin and shame
In love You came
And gave amazing grace*

*Thank you for this love Lord
Thank you for the nail pierced hands
Washed me in Your cleansing flow
Now all I know
Your forgiveness and embrace*

*Worthy is the Lamb
Seated on the throne
Crown You now with many crown
You reign victorious
High and lifted up
Jesus Son of God
The Darling of Heaven crucified
Worthy is the Lamb
Worthy is the Lamb*

If we want to praise God’s creation, says Nick Page, it is usually the mountains that do it for us or possibly the trees. Justice always flows, and always like a river. We are rescued from dungeons and chains, and darkness covers the land. God roars like a lion, or is a solid rock.⁸⁶

There is a need to widen the imagery of some lyrics. Perhaps the most successful composer of the consciously modern worship song is John Bell of the Iona Community. His verse demonstrates the power of fresh imagery.

⁸⁶ Nick Page, *And Now Let’s Move into a Time of Nonsense* (Milton Keynes: Authentic Media, 2004), 60.

*If the war goes on and the children die of hunger,
And the old men cry for the young men are no more;
And the women learn how to dance without a partner,
Who will keep the score?*⁸⁷

John Bell's songs have powerful images of the modern world. No temples and courts or crowns and nail pierced-hands, just hungry people in need of God's peace and love.

Imagery can be a powerful tool used to catch the attention of the singer and to make statements about the faith in new and delightful ways. It can bring to life the imagination of the believer and help make connections to faith. A change of perspective can make these connections in another way by bringing to light different voices.

4.2 Perspective

Changing the perspective or camera angle on a particular biblical or theological theme in a lyric can sometimes reveal fresh and different way of understanding aspects of the faith. On occasion we hear the unexpected "voice." It has an ability to surprise and delight by changing the traditional view of things. Another change of perspective is provided by the use of either the human or the divine voice. Repetition can also be used to bring a different point of view.

a) *The Unexpected Voice*

"Mary Did You Know?" by Mark Lowry is a very good example of the unexpected voice. He writes this song about Jesus from Mary's perspective. In doing this he achieves a sense of reversal. At the end of each verse comes a line of surprise. In the first verse Mary finds that "this child you've delivered will soon deliver you." In the second verse she is surprised to discover "when you kissed your little boy you've kissed the face of God." The end of the fourth verse comes as Mary's greatest surprise because of its theological depth. "Did you know, that your baby boy is heaven's perfect lamb?"

⁸⁷ "If the War Goes On" WGRG Iona Community 2001

This sleeping child you're holding is the great I Am." The power of the lyric in Mark Lowry's "Mary did you know?" is reinforced by the poetry, the rhyming and the repeated question, "Mary did you know?"

*Mary, did you know
That your baby boy will one day walk on water?
Did you know
That your baby boy will save our sons and daughters?
Did you know
That your baby boy has come to make you new?
This child you've delivered
Will soon deliver you*

*Mary, did you know
That your baby boy will give sight to a blind man?
Did you know
that your baby boy will calm a storm with his hand?
Did you know
That your baby boy has walked where angels trod?
And when you kissed your little boy
You've kissed the face of God*

*Mary did you know?
The blind will see
The deaf will hear
And the dead will live again
The lamb will leap
The dumb will speak
The praises of the lamb*

*Mary, did you know
That your baby boy is lord of all creation?
Did you know
That your baby boy will one day rule the nations?
Did you know
That your baby boy is heaven's perfect lamb
This sleeping child you're holding
Is the great I am.*

In this song we are confronted with Christ's full divinity found in a human baby as Mark Lowry anticipates the earthly life of Jesus. Change of perspective of this kind is not often found. Another unexpected voice that gives a different perspective on the love of God is found in Colin Gibson's "Nothing is Lost." The lyric affirms that not even the

- *“I long to worship you”*⁸⁸
- *I once was lost but now am found*⁸⁹
- *“Lord, I lift your name on high, Lord I love to sing your praises”*⁹⁰

Lyrics of this kind are based on a shared experience between God and the worshipper. They hold a good balance between God’s acts and the singer’s response to God’s actions.

Other lyrics with a human voice depend not on God’s actions and the worshipper’s response, but on personal feelings and desires. They focus not on what God has said or done, nor what happened as a result, but what I feel or desire and what I want to do. The metaphors in these lyrics often relate to intimacy and love. Some examples found in this study are:

- *“I want to know you, I want to hear your voice, I want to touch you, I want to see your face, I want to know you more”*⁹¹
- *“I could sing of your love forever”*⁹² and
- *“I love you Jesus more and more and more”*⁹³

These lyrics have made the transition from lyrics that are rooted in the biblical story out of which we respond to God, to lyrics that assume but do not articulate that biblical foundation. They focus instead on the worshipper’s personal need and response. Jesus is spoken of as someone to love “most of all because you are you.” This “you” fixes God as intimate and personal.

⁸⁸ “As the Deer” by Martin Nystrom.

⁸⁹ “Amazing Grace” by John Newton.

⁹⁰ “Lord I lift your Name on High” by Rick Founds.

⁹¹ “In the Secret” by Andy Park.

⁹² “I Could Sing of Your Love” by Martin Smith.

⁹³ “Eagle’s Wings” by Reuben Morgan.

c) *The Divine Voice*

The third perspective comes from the divine voice. These are lyrics where the divine voice is heard, usually in the form of “I the Lord.” The songwriter and the singer presume to speak for God, in God’s name and with his voice. We sing God’s part and in doing so eliminate any possibility of dialogue with God in the lyric. Dan Schutte (“Here I am Lord”) uses this divine voice in the line “I the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my people cry.” In another song “Eagle’s Wings” Michael Jonas used the line “I will raise you up on eagle’s wings.” This original line has now been changed to find better balance. In one revision the “I” now reads “He,” in another “God.” Using “I” to refer to God and God’s voice is presumptuous, and we cannot speak God’s part in our congregational lyrics without losing the essence of dialogue between the worshipper and God.

d) *The Repetitive Voice*

The last voice to note is that of repetition. Repetition can be very effective in holding the theme of a lyric together. John Bell and Graham Maule have used the repetitive voice effectively to weave together the song “Take this Moment.” The word “take” is used repetitively and tied to different aspect of life - the present moment, failure, tiredness, fear of the future, and the use of talent and skills.

*Take this moment, sign and space,
take my friends around,
here among us make the place
where your love is found.*

*Take the time to call my name,
take the time to mend
who I am and what I’ve been,
all I’ve failed to tend.*

*Take the tiredness of my days,
take my past regret,
letting your forgiveness touch
all I can’t forget.*

*Take the little child in me
scared of growing old,
help me here to find my worth
made in Christ's own mould.*

*Take my talents, take my skills,
take what's yet to be,
let my life be yours, and yet
let it still be me.*

Repetition is used in antiphonal singing such as some Taize music, and is found in responsive psalms such as Psalm 136. Repetition is used sometimes between cantor and congregation. While it can add to the effectiveness of lyrics, too much repetition can also destroy the balance of expression or blunt the meaning. Repetition of words, badly used, can become rather like a “mantra” and the repetitive voice eventually loses the full depth of meaning. It becomes an unbalanced expression of the Christian faith.

“Forever” by Chris Tomlin is one example of this. It contains the word “forever” thirty-six times, and some congregations would sing it through twice. Reproduced below is the lyric as a congregation would sing it, with the word “forever” highlighted.

*Give thanks to the Lord
Our God and King
His love endures **forever**
For He is good, He is above all things
His love endures **forever**
Sing praise, sing praise
With a mighty hand
and outstretched arm
His love endures **forever**
For the life that's been reborn
His love endures **forever**
Sing praise, sing praise
Sing praise, sing praise
Yeah!
Forever God is faithful
Forever God is strong
Forever God is with us
Forever
Forever*

*From the rising to the setting sun
His love endures **forever***

By the grace of God
We will carry on
*His love endures **forever***
Sing praise, sing praise
Sing praise, sing praise
Yeah
***Forever** God is faithful*
***Forever** God is strong*
***Forever** God is with us*
Forever
Forever
***Forever** God is faithful*
***Forever** God is strong*
***Forever** God is with us*
Forever
Forever
Forever
*His love endures **forever***
*His love endures **forever***
*His love endures **forever***
Forever
Sing praise, sing praise
Sing praise, sing praise
Yeah!
***Forever** you are faithful*
***Forever** you are strong*
***Forever** you are with us*
Forever
And ever
Yeah!
***Forever** you are faithful*
***Forever** you are strong*
***Forever** you are with us*
Forever
Forever

You are God.....
Forever
And ever and ever

Had this lyric had more content it may have used repetition more effectively. Using the word “forever” attached to God’s acts adds emphasis, as in Psalm 136.⁹⁴ Using it unattached blunts the effect of repetition.

⁹⁴ Psalm 136 used the word “forever” 26 times and associates it with 22 acts of God. Chris Tomlin’s song uses the word “forever” 36 times and associates it with only 2 of God’s acts.

Matt Redman's "Blessed be Your Name" is another good example of tedious repetition.

"Blessed/blessing" occurs 23 times and "name" 21 times. Here is the song:

Blessed Be Your Name

*In the land that is plentiful
Where Your streams of abundance flow
Blessed be Your **name***

Blessed Be Your name

*When I'm found in the desert place
Though I walk through the wilderness
Blessed Be Your **name***

*Every **blessing** You pour out
I'll turn back to praise
When the darkness closes in, Lord
Still I will say*

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Blessed be Your name

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Blessed be Your glorious name

Blessed be Your name

*When the sun's shining down on me
When the world's all as it should be'
Blessed be Your **name***

Blessed be Your name

*On the road marked with suffering
Though there's pain in the offering
Blessed be Your **name***

*Every **blessing** You pour out*

I'll turn back to praise

When the darkness closes in, Lord

Still I will say

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Blessed be Your name

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Blessed be Your glorious name

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Blessed be Your name

Blessed be the name of the Lord

Blessed be Your glorious name

*You give and take away
You give and take away
My heart will choose to say
Lord, **blessed** be Your **name***

Again with so much repetition the words “blessed” and “name” undergo a devaluing process.

Repetition can add to lyric expression. It can also risk losing the full depth of meaning from important words used in congregational singing. Poorly used it leads to a form of hypnosis, rather than full engagement with a God who is holy and is forever. This thesis contends that repetition, unless used well, adds to the unbalanced expression of Christian faith.

4.3 Conclusion

The Bible is a rich source of imagery for lyricists and is used widely. Contemporary imagery was found in 20% to 25% of lyrics surveyed, but spread unevenly over the churches in this study. At present the lyrics surveyed do not have images that connect the worshipper to the history of the church. There is also a richness of imagery yet to be explored in such themes as Jesus Christ, sin and salvation.

Changing perspective has the power to bring to voice the unexpected and allows creative and surprising ways to demonstrate aspects of the Christian faith. The human voice in congregational lyrics is important, as it is the worshippers’ response to God’s actions. However the human voice, when expressed as “I” and coupled with love language sung to the undefined “You,” has the potential to become ambiguous. Perspective that focuses solely on the desires and feelings of the believer leads to an unbalanced expression of Christian faith. Care must be taken when using the divine voice in lyrics. It can silence any sense of dialogue between the worshipper and God.

Repetition can be voiced creatively to reinforce a lyric's theme, but it also has the power to blunt its message.

Chapter 5

The Outworking of the Christian Faith

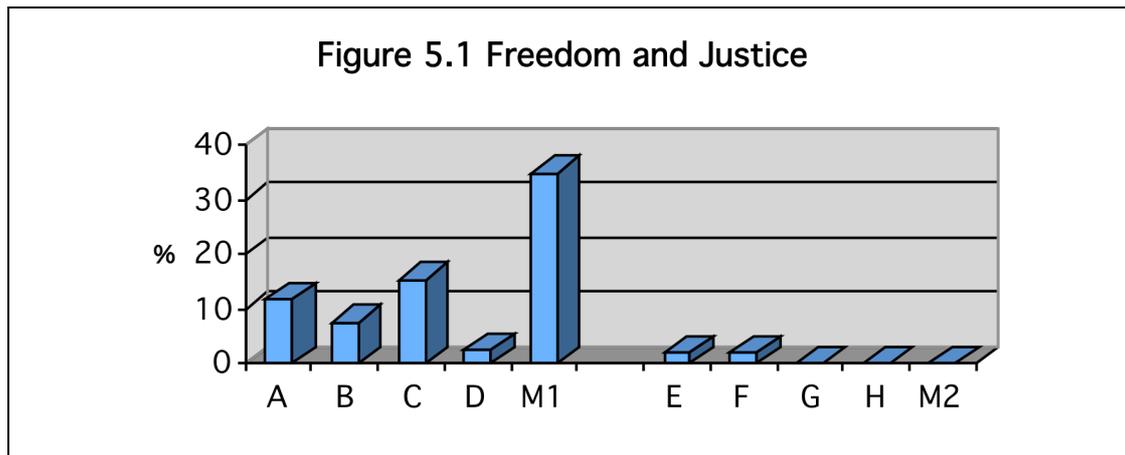
This chapter seeks to identify lyric reference to issues outside the Christian community. It looks for a lyric expression of Christian faith at work in the world. The assumption is that a well-balanced expression of Christian faith will provide evidence of an outward facing community and its mission, and this will be reflected in its basket of lyrics and songs. This lyric basket and its congregational singing will in turn shape the church's communal identity. If the congregational basket of lyrics does not have a response of this kind then this will be seen as an incomplete lyric expression of Christian faith. If lyrics have no response to the faith then one may assume the emphasis is on a singing faith that is more about the shape of its internal identity. To examine this aspect of congregational lyrics four categories were chosen.

- Justice and Freedom
- Social Concern
- Culture and
- Creation

Using these categories (see Chapter 2) the following results were obtained.

5.1 Justice and Freedom

The ECP church stream had little or no lyric expression for the *Justice and Freedom* aspect of the Christian faith. Figure 5.1 and Table 5.1 (Appendix1) demonstrate the findings. The ECP model confirmed the findings of the locally collected data from the ECP churches

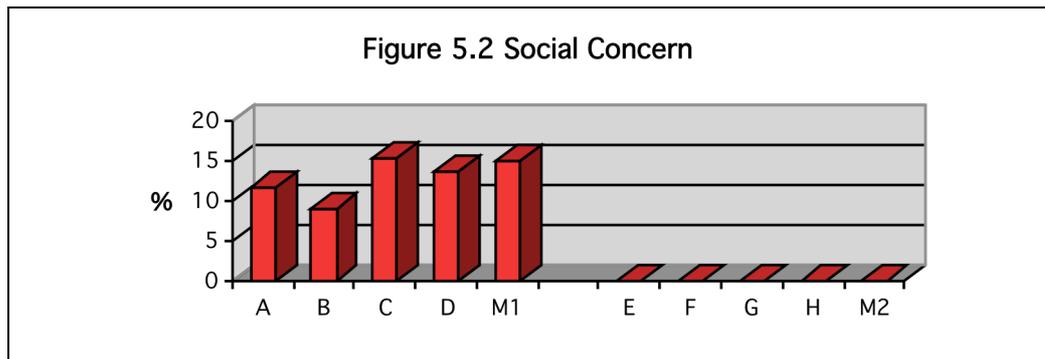


The situation is markedly different for the RCA churches. All RCA churches had a lyric faith response to justice and freedom in their congregational singing. It must be noted on this occasion that Church D had a frequency level similar to the ECP churches, so the difference, it appears, is one of lyric choice. The RCA model shows that churches outside of this study area have a higher level of frequency of justice and freedom themes in their lyrics.

The low frequency level of justice and freedom found in lyrics of all the churches in this study may be a result of their relatively better socio-economic situation. Concern for freedom and justice remains in the RCA churches, but is virtually absent from ECP church lyrics.

5.2 Social Concern

For *Social Concern* the results are even more startling than for the previous category. The ECP churches had no lyric frequency for this (see Figure 5.2). The ECP model also had no songs that sing of this part of life and confirms the results found in local ECP churches.

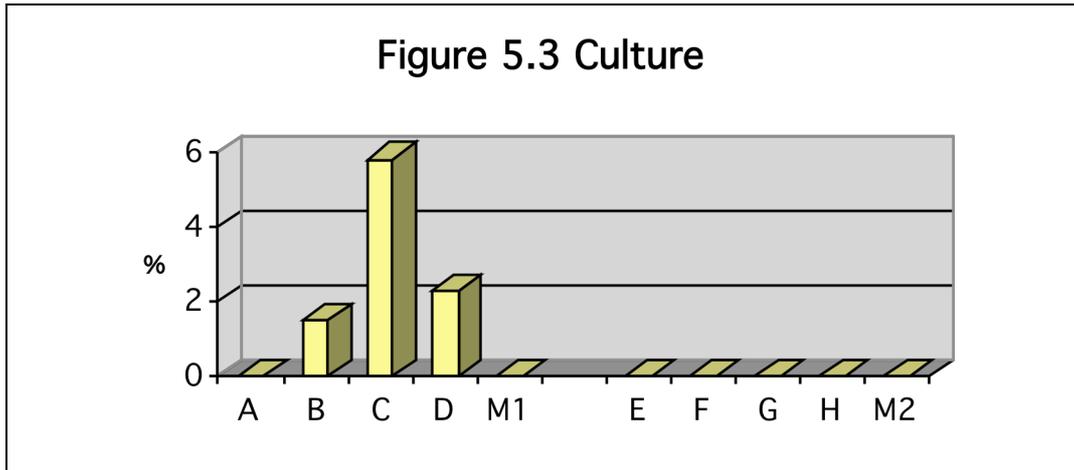


From this, one concludes that along with no songs about the Church, lyrics with any kind of social concern do not form part of the local ECP churches' singing faith. This raises questions about the theological component of local ECP church teaching about our life together in community, inside and outside the walls of the church. Has individualism and materialism so affected the ECP churches that they cannot sing about our Christian concern for those less fortunate? Is there no worth in work, marriage and family life that can rate a mention in ECP congregational lyrics?

The RCA churches had about the same level of frequency (10% - 15%) for social concern, as they had for freedom and justice. The RCA model confirms the findings of the locally collected data.

5.3 Culture

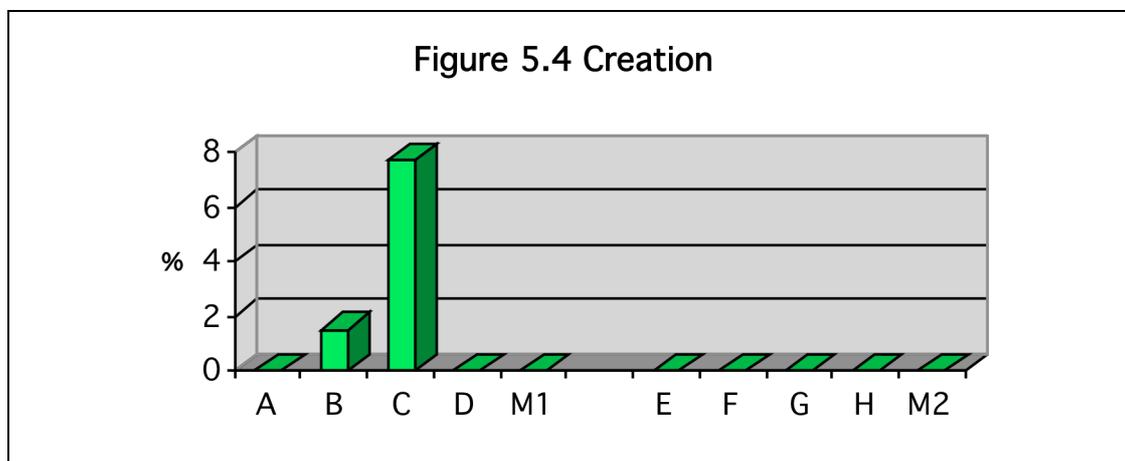
I looked for evidence of faith engaging culture in all its diverse forms and the results are presented in Figure 5.3.



Evidence for this category was found in three RCA churches (B, C and D), but no evidence was found in the ECP churches, or the two models (M1 and M2).

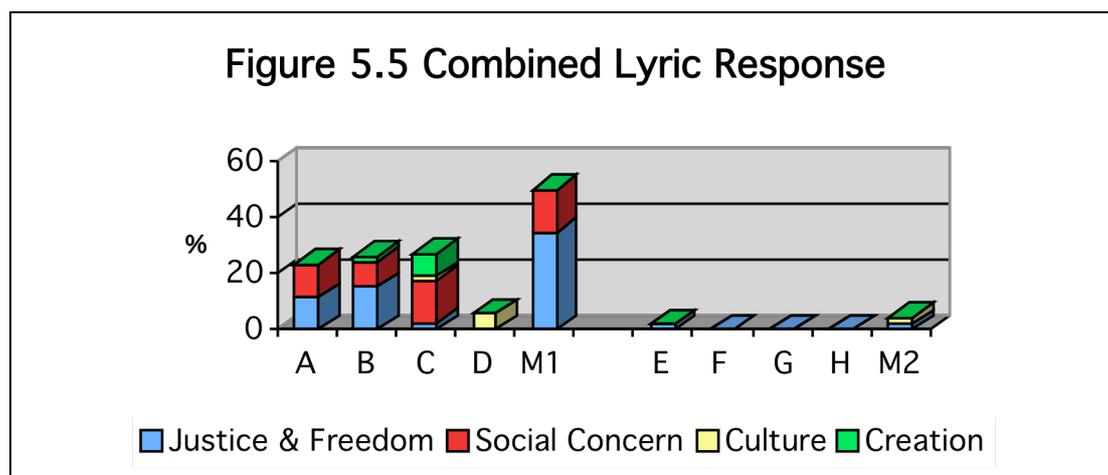
5.4 Creation

A very similar trend was seen for *Creation* and the results are found in Figure 5.4 on the following page. Church C has concern for creation issues expressed in song. Church B has limited concern, and all remaining churches had no lyric expression. The two models (M1 and M2) register no apparent lyric concern as yet, for faith engaging creation issues. Environmental issues have been to the fore in the last few years, and it is disappointing that such global issues have not yet found a faith response in the lyrics of congregational singing in more churches in this area.



No environmental response was detected in the lyrics presented in the two models. The value that God places on his created order is struggling to find a voice in our singing. What seems to be needed is a better theology of creation, and a theology of redemption that includes all parts of the created order.

Graphing all the data for lyric response relating to the outworking of the Christian faith in song (see Figure 5.5) we see a clear trend.



The RCA churches, apart from Church D, give expression in song to issues outside of the Church. The RCA model indicates that RCA churches outside this study area are engaging with issues that affect humanity and God’s creation, more strongly than the local RCA churches.

One very good example of a lyric response to Christian faith is found in a song entitled “Christ be our Light,” by Bernadette Farrell. There is a sense of longing for the brokenness to be healed. To this brokenness, expressed as darkness, for those who are troubled, hungry and homeless, comes the response “*Christ shine on your church gathered today...make us bread...make us your building...let us be servants to one another.*” Here is the song responding to the world it sees, through the eyes of Christian faith.

*Longing for light, we wake in darkness
 Longing for truth, we turn to you.
 Make us your own, your holy people,
 Light for the world to see*

*Christ be our light
 Shine in our hearts.
 Shine through the darkness.
 Christ, be our light!
 Shine on your church gathered today*

*Longing for peace, our world is troubled
 Longing for hope, many despair
 Your word alone has pow'r to save us
 Make us your living voice*

*Longing for food, many are hungry.
 Longing for water, many still thirst
 Make us your bread, broken for others.
 Shared until all are feed.*

*Longing for shelter, people are homeless.
 Longing for warmth, many are cold.
 Make us your building, sheltering others,
 Walls made of living stone.*

*Many the gifts, many the people,
 many the hearts that yearn to belong.
 Let us be servants to one another,
 Making your kingdom come.*

By comparison Graham Kendrick's "Shine Jesus Shine" has a very personal focus. Repeated at the end of each verse is the line *Shine on me, shine on me*. In Bernadette Farrell's song the light is shining on the church. Here the light is shining on the individual believer, and the focus of the song is personal piety.

*Lord, the light of your love is shining,
 In the midst of the darkness, shining;
 Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us,
 Set us free by the truth you now bring us.
 Shine on me, shine on me.*

*Shine, Jesus, shine,
 Fill this land with the Father's glory;
 Blaze, Spirit, blaze,
 Set our hearts on fire,*

*Flow, river, flow,
Flood the nations with grace and mercy;
Send forth your word,
Lord, and let there be light.*

*Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into your radiance;
By the blood I may enter your brightness,
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me.*

As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
So our faces display your likeness,
Ever changing from glory to glory;
Mirrored here may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me.

The words of Graham Kendrick's lyrics appear to be an escape from the harsh realities of this world into a world transformed, where everything becomes perfect.

5.5 Conclusion

Mandi Miller's research on the effect of music on religious experience in Pentecostal churches notes that music's stated function is to prepare the congregation for worship.⁹⁵ If the lyrics are working in tandem with the music then one might assume that the lyrics are preparing the singer for worship also. Part of this preparation should be about the brokenness of the world around us and we might therefore expect to find recognition of this brokenness in the lyrics we are invited to sing. But there is little or no evidence of this in the ECP lyrics examined in this study. Therefore there is nothing stated in these lyrics that ECP Christians can say or do, to allow God to heal the human and environmental wounds.

In regard to the outworking of the faith into the world beyond the Church, the proposition of this thesis holds true for RCA churches' lyric response. There is

⁹⁵ Mandi Miller, "The Emotional Effects of Music on Religious Experience: A Study of Pentecostal-Charismatic Style or Worship and Music" M.A. Thesis in Psychology, University of Canterbury, 2000.

balance in the lyrics of the RCA churches and model. The proposition does not hold true for ECP churches as little or no balance is found either in the churches sampled or the ECP model. Dualism, individualism and materialism are proposed as a possible explanation and this will be discussed in the Conclusion.

Chapter 6

Two Comparisons

By way of shedding further light on the balance of expression of the Christian faith, it seems useful to compare the basket of lyrics under study with two other lyric baskets, first with the Psalms, the songs of ancient Israel, then with the songs of the relatively recent *Scripture in Song*. The two comparisons are tentative, for we are comparing baskets of lyrics separated in time by 25 to 30 years in one case, and 2500 to 3000 years in the other. But however tentative the comparison, it may shed some light on the present situation.

6.1 The Psalms: A Comparison with Ancient Israel's Song

Psalms have been sung in worship, some for almost three millennia. They have been the poetry of the Jewish synagogue's congregational song. "The Psalms," said Ambrose, "are the voice of the Church."⁹⁶ Tertullian testifies to the importance of the Psalms in early Christian worship⁹⁷. Reformation singing, especially in John Calvin's Geneva, was based almost completely around the Psalms, as was congregational singing in England before the time of Isaac Watts. Given their long history in the worship of the people of God the Psalms provide a standard for comparison with present day lyrics.

To compare these ancient psalms with today's songs I will use Walter Brueggemann's typology.⁹⁸ Brueggemann identifies three classes of psalms: psalms

⁹⁶ Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 23.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁹⁸ Walter Brueggemann, "Psalms and the Life of Faith: A Suggested Typology of Function." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17 (1980): 3-32.

of *Orientation*, psalms of *Disorientation* and psalms of *New Orientation*. His typology is outlined below.⁹⁹

In the Psalms of *Orientation* there is no great movement, no tension to resolve. The mindset and world-view is that of those who enjoy a serene location, and for whom life is securely orientated with a sense of orderliness, goodness and reliability. Songs of creation, wisdom, retribution and blessing, all function in this same context of good order and wellbeing.

The Psalms of *Disorientation* are psalms of individual and communal lament. They are speeches of surprised dismay and disappointment for the speaker never expected what has happened. These are the voices of those who find their circumstances dangerous, and not just inconveniently changed, and they do not like it. They remember better times in the old period of orientation, and wish to return to that situation. There is anger and resentment against the one who has caused the disorientation, and a suggestion that the loss of orientation is reversible and the old orientation retrievable. These Psalms move from petition and plea to praise.

The Psalms of *New Orientation* are declarative hymns and thanksgiving songs. They see newness has been given which is not achieved, not automatic or derived from the old, but is a genuine newness wrought by gift. The second situation is a new one, and not a return to the first one. Often the language is not descriptive but evocative and there is a surprising re-orientation.¹⁰⁰

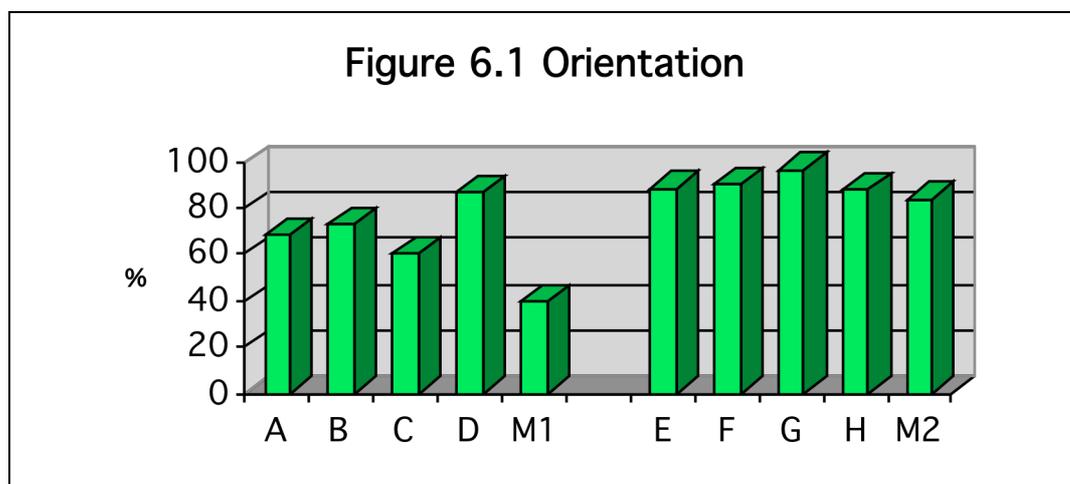
a) Lyrics of Orientation

I classified the lyrics in this study according to Brueggemann's typology and my findings are found in Figure 6.1 and in Table 6.1 (see Appendix 1).

⁹⁹ Walter Brueggemann, "Psalms and the Life of Faith: A Suggested Typology of Function" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 17 (1980): 3-32.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 3-32.

These findings indicate the ECP churches have a high level of *Orientation* type lyrics (average 90.8%). The RCA churches by comparison have a lower level (average 71.9%). The range for the ECP churches is 88% to 96.7% and for the RCA churches 60% to 86.4%. There is no overlap between the scores for the RCA and ECP churches. The ECP model confirms the findings from the ECP churches. The RCA model indicates the local RCA churches sing *Orientation* type lyrics more frequently than other RCA churches within New Zealand.



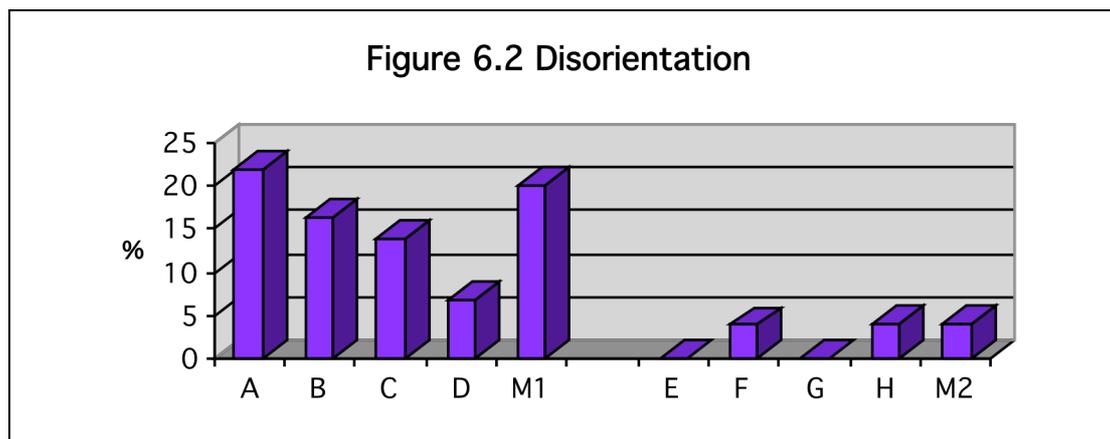
The data suggests that the churches in this study may have a mindset or worldview that sees life as essentially well ordered and good, more so in the ECP churches than the RCA churches. Lyric life for many worshippers in the suburbs of Howick and Pakuranga is about goodness and reliability, and this may be an expression of the higher socio-economic status of the area. Lyrics of *Orientation* fit well in congregations where prosperity doctrine is held. In that case security and material reward are seen as the blessing of God for faithful obedience.

b) Lyrics of Disorientation

Robert Davidson notes that psalms of personal lament occur with greater frequency in the Old Testament than any other type of psalm. These psalms found a lasting place in the hymnbook of ancient Israel. They were continually used and

useful, because, both the community and individuals within the community across the centuries found that serious threats to the integrity of their religious experience had to be face. God often seemed strangely absent. “Why?” and “How long?” were repeatedly discovered to be as authentic cries as “Hallelujah.”¹⁰¹

The frequency with which lyrics of disorientation were found in the sample churches can be seen in Figure 6.2.



These results indicate a significant avoidance by the ECP churches of lyrics that speak of the disorientation in life. Pain, distress and collapse of the old order are not part of the singing theology for two of the four ECP churches (E and G). But they are a significant part of the RCA church lyrics. This observable difference between the two church streams may have something to do with the frequency and centrality of Communion/Eucharist in the RCA churches, and the different emphasis that is placed on this event by the ECP churches. The RCA churches emphasise the sacrifice of God’s Son through death, and this speaks of pain and suffering. In the ECP churches marginalisation of Communion/Eucharist, especially with regards to Christ’s suffering, means they have lost a good part of the context for *Disorientation* and hence are left in a state of *Orientation*. If *Orientation* and *Disorientation* are not held in balance it leaves the ECP worshipper with unanswered questions about pain and

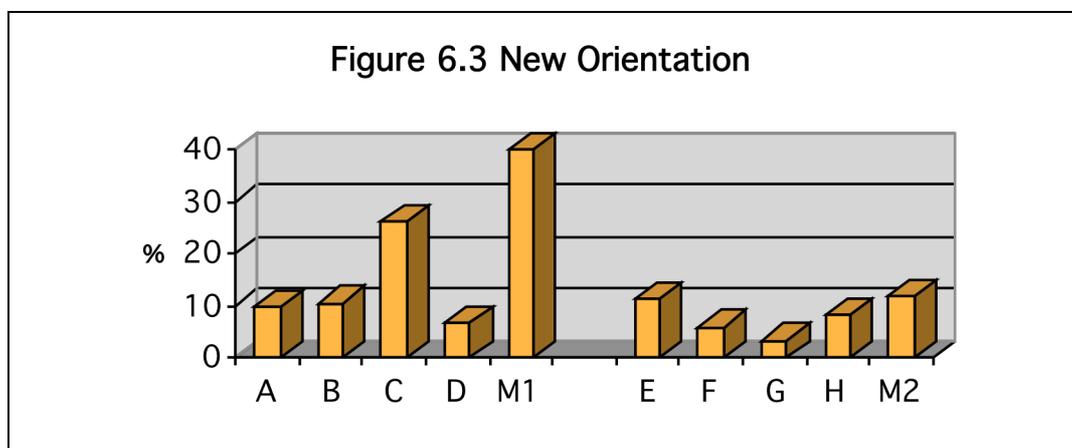
¹⁰¹ Robert Davidson, *The Courage to Doubt* (London: SCM Press, 1983), 12.

suffering. The findings from the two models support the local observations from the two church streams.

Claus Westermann comments that “in Western Christendom the lament has been totally excluded from man’s relationship with God, with the result that it has completely disappeared above all from prayers and worship.”¹⁰² This is certainly true for ECP church lyrics in this study. It is worth asking whether life in the 21st century is so radically different from that of the psalmist that this element of worship must now be excluded. I believe it is not.

c) Lyrics of New Orientation

New Orientation is not a return to the old stable orientation. It is a statement of resolution culminating in praise and thanksgiving. It is a statement about trouble resolved and thus has as its backdrop a situation of need and pain. Transformation is made possible by God who brings new life into being where none seemed possible.¹⁰³



The RCA churches had twice the ECP church frequency for lyrics referring to *New Orientation* (average 13.3% versus 7.2%). The data from the ECP model (M2)

¹⁰² Claus Westermann, “The Role of the Lament in the Theology of the Old Testament’ in *Interpretations* 28 (1974) 30 in Robert Davidson *The Courage to Doubt* (London: SCM, 1983), 15.

¹⁰³ Walter Brueggemann, *The Message of the Psalms: a Theological Commentary*. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1984), 124-5.

supports the local ECP findings. The RCA model demonstrates a level of *New Orientation* well above that of the local RCA churches, and at a level over three times its counterpart ECP model. Church C stands out as one that recognises the transformation God offers. This data indicates that the RCA churches are more serious in singing about God's *New Orientation* than the ECP churches. One wonders if the reason the ECP churches do not sing about God's *New Orientation* is because they do not have songs that acknowledge *Disorientation*.

6.2 Scripture in Song: A Recent Comparison

A second comparison is made with the more recent set of lyrics found in the *Scripture in Song* series. These songs were published in New Zealand, between 1971 and 1987 by David and Dale Garratt. They comprise three volumes: *Songs of Praise* (1971), *Songs of the Kingdom* (1981) and *Songs of the Nation* (1987). Not all churches were using *Scripture in Song* during this period, so the comparison will need to be made with some care. Nevertheless it may well indicate noticeable shifts in the way the Christian faith has been expressed over the last 25 to 30 years.

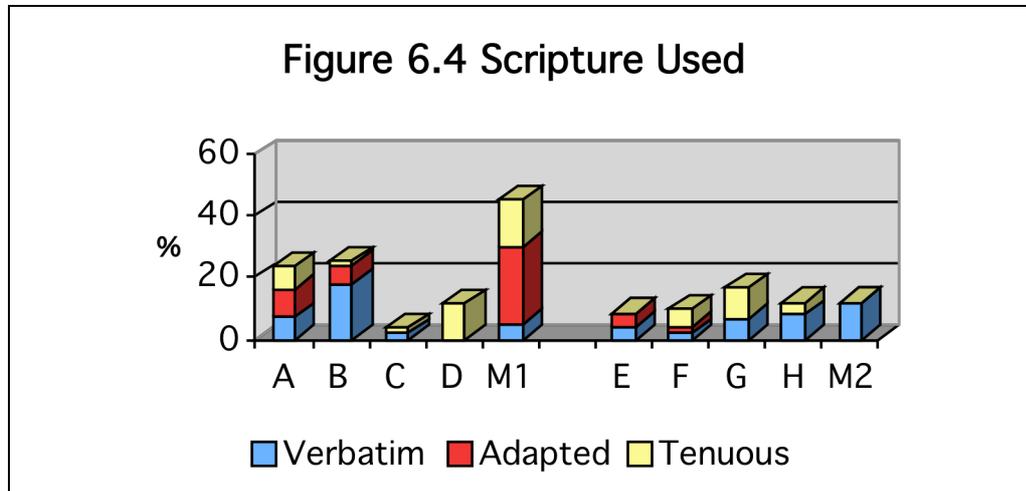
In 2001 Brett Knowles examined 682 lyrics of *Scripture in Song* and we will use three of his headings to examine our lyric sample:

1. *Scripture Usage*: This is scripture in its various forms used in lyrics.
2. *Focus*: This considers who or what is central in the song.
3. *Category*: This classifies lyrics according to what the song is about (e.g. worship or praise)

a) Scripture Usage

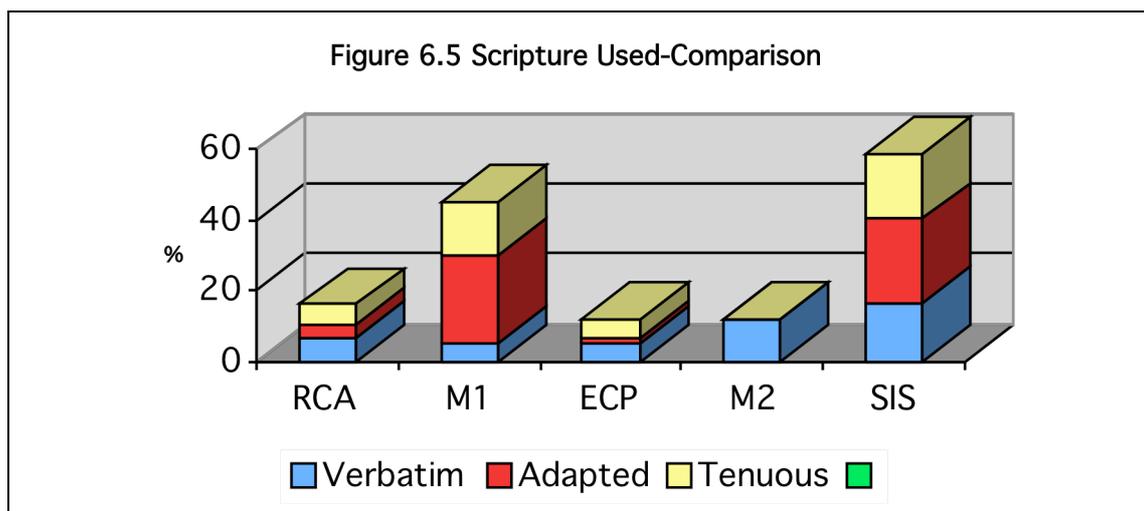
In regard to Scripture usage Knowles posited three sub-categories: verbatim, adapted, and tenuous. These sub-categories were also applied to the lyrics in this study. The results are shown in Figure 6.4 and Table 6.2 in Appendix 1.

From these results we see that the RCA churches include more scripture in their singing (average 16%) than the ECP churches (average 11.8%).



The RCA model (M1) does not support the local findings for the RCA churches. RCA churches outside this study area include considerably more Scripture in their lyrics. The ECP model (M2) supports the ECP data collected locally. Note that there is some overlap in the result between RCA and ECP churches.

How then does the present situation compare with songs published 25 to 30 years ago? If *Scripture in Song* is a reliable measure of lyrics sung in churches in the 1970s and the 1980s, it appears, as Figure 6.5 and Table 6.3 demonstrate, that Scripture use has declined substantially. According to Knowles, 59% of lyrics in the *Scripture in Song* (SIS) series contained scripture in verbatim, adapted or tenuous form. This has dropped to an average of 13.9% in local churches over the sampling period of this study.

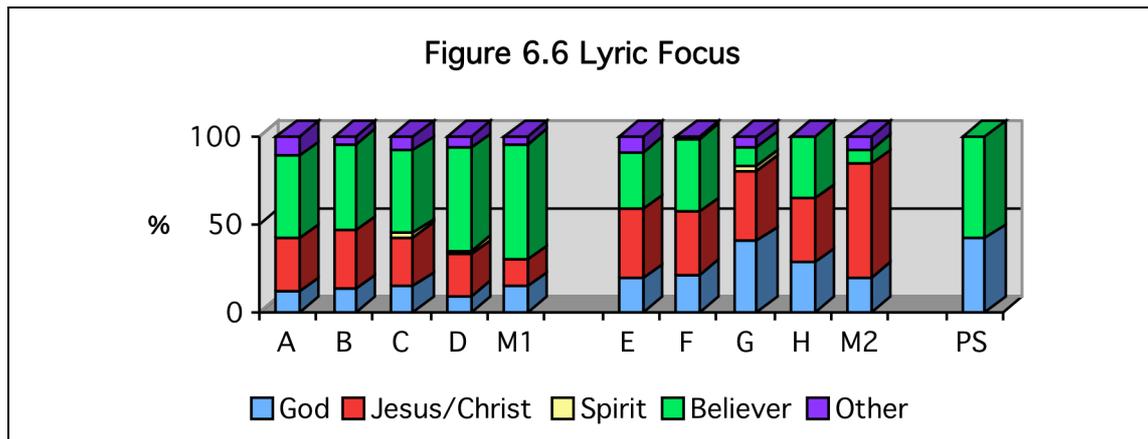


The large drop seen in this comparison may be a result of how the Bible is viewed today. Mark Brown, chief executive of the Bible Society of New Zealand notes that a recent New Zealand survey of church attending participants shows that 57% read the Bible only occasionally, or hardly ever. A similar survey conducted in the United States in 2005 revealed that 66% said they read the Bible less often than once a month or never.¹⁰⁴ The crisis that Mark Brown has detected in Bible reading habits in New Zealand and the U.S.A. may be a crisis over the place of scripture in the lives of believers in some churches, and may explain the trends seen in this study.

b) Lyric Focus

When considering the central focus of each song, Knowles, in his study, used five different categories: God, Jesus/Christ, Spirit, Believer, Other. The results of using these same categories on the lyrics in our sample are seen in Figure 6.6 and Table 6.4 in Appendix 1.

¹⁰⁴ Mark Brown, "Losing Touch: Bible disengagement in New Zealand" *Stimulus 15*: 2-4.



Although the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit focus in the lyrics is very low, even in ECP churches that often have a strong Holy Spirit emphasis. The range is 0% to just 3.3% for all churches in this study. Overall the RCA lyrics are more believer-focused and the ECP lyrics focus more on God and on Jesus/Christ.

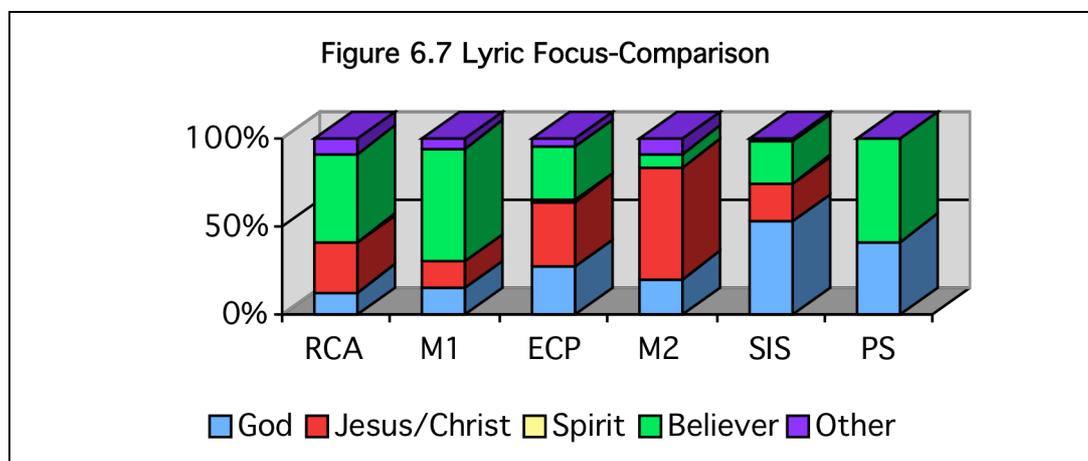
Given that the categories God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit may be subsumed under the concept of the Trinity, what happens when we compare combined references to the Trinitarian God to references to God/Yahweh in the Psalms? To make this comparison 30 psalms were selected¹⁰⁵ and assessed for God/Yahweh or believer focus. The results are shown on the right of Figure 6.6 (labeled PS) and in Table 6.4 in Appendix 1. Surprisingly all churches, except Church D, scored for the Trinity at or above the level found for God/Yahweh in the Psalms Observations in Chapter 3 from Figures 3.21 (Clause 1 and 2 of the Apostles Creed combined) support this lyric *Focus* result.

The opposite trend was evident with believer-focused lyrics. All were at or below the frequency found in the selected psalms (PS), except the RCA model (M1).

¹⁰⁵ Psalms of Orientation used are: 1, 8, 14, 33, 37, 104, 119, 131, 133, and 145. Psalm of Disorientation used are: 13, 32, 35, 49, 51, 74, 79, 86, 88, and 137. Psalms of New Orientation used are: 29, 30, 34, 40, 65, 66, 96, 114, 124 and 138.

There is a possible reason for this high rate of believer focus in the Psalms. One third of the psalms selected were of the *Disorientation* type and this may have skewed the average, because these Psalms are psalms where the cry of the heart is heard. The old order has collapsed and the situation is one of distress where the believer is the focus.

Let us now turn to a comparison with the *Scripture in Song* analysis. According to Brett Knowles, God was very much the focus of lyric singing in the 1970s and 1980s. A comparison with the present situation is seen in Figure 6.7 and Table 6.5 in Appendix 1.



Present average rates for God as the focus in local church lyrics is under 20% (RCA, 12.3%; ECP 27.1%). Twenty five to thirty years ago God-focused lyrics appeared to be more than double that figure (52.8%). Jesus/Christ as the focus has increased over the same period from 21.4% (*Scripture in Song*) to an average of 33.1% (RCA, 28.5%; ECP, 37.7%). Little change has been seen in the frequency of lyrics focused on the Spirit.

In the 1971 to 1987 period 23.6% of lyrics were believer focused (Table 6.5, Appendix 1). Today the two church streams range from 29.8% (ECP average) to 50.2% (RCA average). This change over 25 to 30 years represents a move from theocentric, to christocentric focused lyrics in the ECP churches, and to believer-

focused lyrics in the RCA churches. If a grace/nature dualism is at work it is apparent that the RCA church stream has a strong foothold below the grace/nature line, and the ECP church stream a strong foothold above it. This imbalance of both church streams is of concern for it will not lead to a well-balanced expression of Christian faith. A discussion around lyric *Category* may shed more light on this trend.

c) Lyric Category

Under this heading Knowles divided *Scripture in Song* into three main categories, each with several sub-categories.

Worship

- Worship: Glorifying God for who and what he is.
- Adoration: Becoming absorbed or “lost” in God.
- Surrender: Personal response to God.

Praise

- Praise: Glorifying God for what he has done.
- Thanksgiving: Expressing personal gratitude for God’s acts on one’s behalf.
- Celebration: Public joyous rejoicing in God.
- Prayer: Request and supplication to God, personal and collective.
- Spiritual Warfare: Aggressive militant declaration against satanic/evil realms, statement of defeat of the enemy.¹⁰⁶

Exhortation

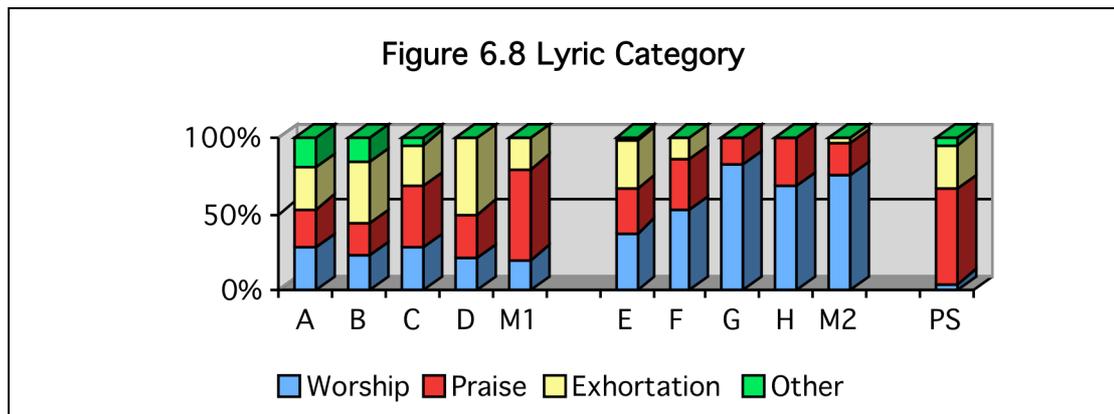
- Declaration: Statement to others about God’s being, character or acts.
- Exhortation: Seeking to motivate others to act or respond to God.
- Testimony: Statement of “this is what God has done for me/us.”

¹⁰⁶ In my sample I found no lyrics that could be classed in this sub-category.

In making these classifications Knowles regarded the *Worship* type songs as saying more about God and the *Exhortation* type as saying more about the believer.

Knowles' three categories classified only songs that in one way or another were orientated towards God. This does not allow for lyrics where the congregation sings to itself (for example at the Communion/Eucharist), or for songs about creation, or the Church, or Mary, or about our pain and brokenness. To cope with songs of this type I have added a fourth category "Other." The results of testing the sample lyrics against the four categories outlined above are seen in Figure 6.8 and Table 6.6 (see Appendix 1).

There is considerable variation between individual churches, between the two models, and between the churches and the Psalms.



Twice as many ECP church lyrics fell into the *Worship* category compared to RCA lyrics. A large number of these lyrics did not state any particular truth about God, rather the nature of God was simply assumed. This leads to a very individualized and internal view of God.

Exhortation type lyrics occurred over three times as frequently in RCA churches as ECP churches. *Praise* lyrics occurred at about the same frequency in both church streams.

There were considerable differences between the two church groupings and the two models that represented them. The model data did not accurately support the collected church data (see Table 6.6). The absence of *Exhortation* in two ECP churches (G and H), and the very low level in the ECP model (M2) supports the supposition that a form of dualism is operating in some churches. *Worship* and *Praise* dominate and *Exhortation* takes a lower place in congregational lyrics. This is considered further in the Conclusion.

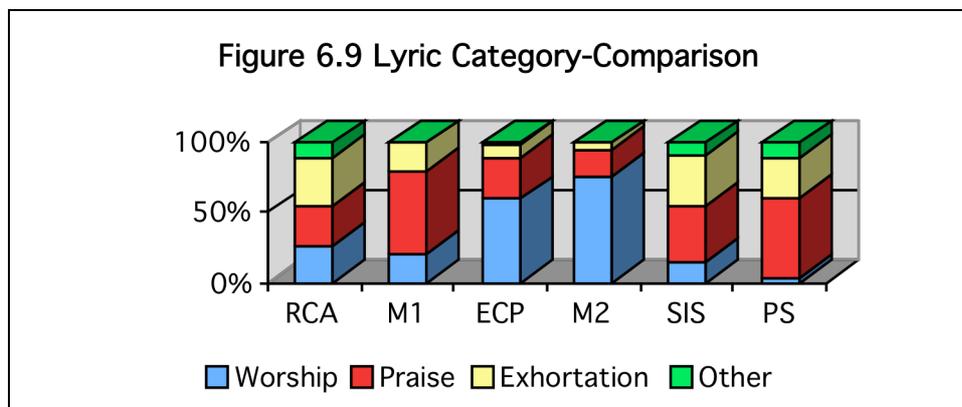
Another interesting and surprising result is seen in the data from the Psalms (PS), as shown in Figure 6.8 and Table 6.6, Appendix 1. The largest category was *Praise* at 56.6% followed by *Exhortation* at 30%. On the basis of Knowles' classification the Psalms have a low level of what he calls *Worship*. Their focus is on what Knowles calls *Praise*. The Hebrews had no speculative theology. Their knowledge of God was based on what God had done.¹⁰⁷ The ECP churches and their model have a comparatively high level of *Worship* compared to the Psalms. If the Psalms are a faithful standard then both the ECP churches and the ECP model may need to seek a better balance by replacing some of their *Worship* songs, with songs of *Praise*.

A comparison of present data with Knowles' lyric *Category* is found in Figure 6.9 and Table 6.7 (see Appendix 1). A close similarity of frequency exists between *Scripture in Song* lyrics and the selected psalms. This is not surprising for the Psalms are used extensively in *Scripture in Song*.

There has been a shift in *Worship* from 15.7% (SIS) to a church average of 42.3% (RCA 25.3%; ECP 59.6%). A frequency decrease in *Praise* and *Exhortation* has occurred since the time of *Scripture in Song*. *Praise* has dropped from 45.0%

¹⁰⁷ e.g. Psalm 105:2 Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. (This Psalm then goes on to tell of all his wonderful works).

(SIS) to a church average of 29.2% (RCA, 28.9%; ECP 29.5%). Exhortation has dropped from 39.3% (SIS) to a church average of 23.3% (RCA 36.1%; ECP 10.5%).



The balance in lyric *Category* for *Worship* and *Exhortation* has changed over the last 25 to 30 years more noticeably for ECP churches than for RCA churches.

6.3 Conclusion

The first comparison is with ancient Israel's song, the Psalms written 2500 to 3000 years ago. This comparison indicates that the ECP churches in particular, focus on lyrics that have a sense of reliability, orderliness and security about them, and ignore the frequent brokenness, distress and collapse of life. The same cannot be said about the RCA churches. The RCA churches speak of this in their lyrics, and they acknowledge this when they sing hymns and songs about *Disorientation* seven times as often as ECP churches. *New Orientation* bought about by God's transformation is found in RCA lyrics almost twice as frequently as in ECP church lyrics.

The second comparison with *Scripture in Song* is a comparison with lyrics published 25 to 30 years ago. This suggests that there have been some significant changes in the last three decades. There is a marked reduction in Scripture used either directly, adapted or tenuously in the lyrics of both church streams. The ECP lyrics are now less theocentric and more christocentric than they were three decades ago. A

noticeable ECP shift towards *Worship* and away from *Exhortation* has occurred. This is a move that neither *Scripture in Song* nor the Psalms support.

The RCA church lyrics hold a better balance between *Worship*, *Praise* and *Exhortation* than do the ECP churches, for they sing lyrics from each category on a more equally frequent basis. The RCA lyrics have moved from being theocentric and are now more believer-focused, a move the data from the Psalms would support.

These two comparisons highlight shifts that have occurred and raise further questions about the balance of expression of the Christian faith in congregational lyrics.

Conclusion

Singing is an important part of worship and inevitably has a faith shaping function. It forms Christian character and Christian community in a way that other components of worship are unable to do. What ordinary church attendees believe and feel may be more accurately discerned from aspects of worship in which they actively participate, such as congregational singing. For many, singing becomes their primary source of theological instruction. Words set to music engage the emotion and lodge in the memory. The words of the lyrics remain, simply because they are sung more frequently.

For this reason congregational lyrics are worthy of study for the importance they hold, and the influence they exert on the life of the believer. This importance and influence raises questions about the robustness and balance of congregational lyrics presently being sung in New Zealand. To provide some answers to these questions eight local churches were sampled for lyrics over 2006/2007: four local churches representing the Roman Catholic and Anglican stream, and four churches from the Evangelical-Charismatic-Pentecostal stream.

Each stream has its own lyric (and music) licensing organisation. These two bodies, servicing New Zealand churches, publish their top lyrics from regular information they receive from licensed churches. These top lyrics were used to form two “model” churches representing a wider church audience and allowing verification of local results.

The lyrics were examined for their theology, their imagery and perspective, and their outworking of the Christian faith. The eight church lyric baskets were also compared to lyrics published 25 to 30 years ago, in the first comparison, and 2500 to

3000 years ago in the second. The proposition lying behind the examination of the lyrics stated:

that today's congregational church lyrics form a well-balanced expression of Christian faith.

The first area to be examined was lyric theology.

a) Lyric Theology

The Apostles' Creed was used as an acceptable measure for theological analysis. In the RCA and ECP lyric baskets sung locally, only five clauses of the Creed rated above the 10% frequency mark. In this regard there was close agreement between the two church streams about the clauses that received singing focus.

It is encouraging that such foundational clauses as God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, Jesus Christ and his humanity expressed in crucifixion and death, the forgiveness of sins and the Holy Spirit, are found in our lyrics above the 10% benchmark.

The RCA model supported the local RCA findings. However the ECP model went further and included another three clauses above 10% frequency, making a total of eight. This suggests that over the whole country ECP congregations have more theological content in their singing.

In both church streams there seems to be a connection between those clauses in the Apostles' Creed that scored below 10%. They relate to Christ resurrection, ascension and return to judge the living and the dead. The results from this study suggest that we struggle to understand Christ's present role as high priest and mediator, and his return as king and judge.

Two further clauses – the resurrection of the body and life everlasting - can be added to the list of those lyrics that had a frequency below 10%. The resurrection of

believers has a very low frequency in RCA lyrics, and one wonders whether resurrection is seen as something for Christ alone, with everlasting life for believers being related to the immortality of the soul. It is also possible that a stronger sense of new life now leaves questions about the afterlife unanswered. Everlasting life has a low lyric frequency in both church streams, possibly because talk of an afterlife may be difficult in a materialistic culture where the “good life” has already arrived.

In regard to the theology of the lyrics in this study, the most startling results are the omissions. In the case of the ECP churches it is very noticeable how little mention there is of the “Church.” This may be due to a sense of individualism that fails to recognise the corporate nature of the Christian community. God works in individuals through the Holy Spirit, and the Church is simply a collection of those individuals. According to this kind of thinking the Church is a human arrangement and has no divine mandate. Churches are seen rather like shops in a mall where one chooses to frequent by choice, rather than by divine calling.¹⁰⁸ The Church is not seen as an essential part of God’s economy, and therefore is not something to be celebrated in song.

It should be noted that the size of the play-list in this study, did not influence the total theology sung. The larger play-lists did not necessarily mean a wider theology in lyric singing.

As was pointed out in Chapter 2 on methods, the Apostles’ Creed limited the scope of the lyrics’ theological analysis and interesting questions about the use of Christ’s life, his teaching and miracles in song, remain unanswered.

¹⁰⁸ This leads to a form of worship that becomes church as entertainment.

b) Imagery and Perspective

As noted in Chapter 4, lyrics have three main sources of imagery: the Bible, the history of the Church and contemporary life.

The Scriptures are a great source of metaphor, and the lyrics reflected this as congregational songwriters drew from this deep well for their imagery. There is, however, much in the way of biblical imagery that has yet to be included in lyrics.

When it comes to the history of the Church, the story is quite different. The Church has a wonderful history, but the lyrics in this study do not reflect this. The believer's song appears to be cut off from the Church's saints and history. We have forgotten that a sense of the future must include an understanding of what God has done in the past. This apparent amnesia appears to have occurred because of a strong preoccupation with the future, shaped only by humanity. This thesis argues that to have a robust future, the church must also recognise and celebrate its past in song, as the Hebrew people did in the Psalms.

Contemporary imagery is used, but the spread across the local churches is uneven. Somewhat surprisingly images in this category were found in some older hymns now in the public domain. A case study approach indicates that there is considerably more scope to include contemporary imagery than has been seen in the lyrics under study.

A change of perspective can bring new life to lyric construction and four "voices" were used to examine how perspective can be changed. The first of these is the unexpected voice in which Mark Lowry's "Mary Did You Know" stands as a notable example.

The second "voice" is the human one. As is often the case in the Psalms, the human voice brings to light lyrics that express the shared experience between the

worshipper and God. However concerns are raised about the high frequency of lyrics where the human voice, expressed as “I,” is coupled with the undefined “You.” This leaves the lyrics weighted towards the emotional and experiential at the expense of songs about God and what he has done. David Wells notes this trend and concludes that there has been a loss of theological content in favour of inner experience. These songs, he says, admit the experiencing-self to the innermost places of God directly, without any waiting. Music becomes the key to unlocking the presence of God, and is often associated with physical action such as the raising of arms with palms upwards, and the swaying of the body. All this opens the door to divine reality,¹⁰⁹ so that God is experienced internally and individually, in a way that is difficult to describe. Clearly, the focus here is on God’s immanence to the exclusion of God’s transcendence.¹¹⁰

A further difficulty with songs of this kind is that the I-You relationship is frequently described in terms of love language. This leaves the lyrics open to interpretive ambiguity and suggests God is the receptive lover. Pete Ward¹¹¹ talks of it as a kind of idolatry, Pilavachi as mild eroticism,¹¹² and Mike Riddell as a group sex substitute.¹¹³ This focus on intimacy and love, while answering questions of anxiety and loneliness, runs the risk of making the lyric an end in itself. Be that as it may, what is certain is that a high dose of such songs represents an unbalanced expression of the Christian faith for they leave God hidden, and the lyrics open to sexual ambiguity.

At this point yet another concern must be noted – the all too frequent use of the first person pronoun “I”. This makes the songs intensely personal, for it speaks of an

¹⁰⁹ David Wells, *Losing Our Virtue* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998), 43.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 45.

¹¹¹ Pete Ward, *Selling Worship: How What We Sing Has Changed the Church*. (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2005), 210.

¹¹² Ian Stackhouse, *The Gospel Driven Church*. (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004), 56.

¹¹³ Mike Riddell, “Alternative Worship.” *Stimulus 9* (August 2001): 18-20.

individual's relationship to God, yet these are lyrics sung congregationally and corporately. Using "I" to refer to the worshipper's desire creates intensity, but at the expense of the church's collective life. Graham Kendrick comments on the doctrinal weakness of such songs. He considers that the disproportionate number of "subjective experience" songs, places the weight towards existential experience and individual fulfillment, at the expense of songs that are actually about God, who He is and what He has done.¹¹⁴ This tends to see the individual as paramount. Ken Booth sees in this a kind of piety that developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with a focus on individual choice and individual salvation. He notes that it has contributed to the misunderstanding that religion is a private matter.¹¹⁵

George Lindbeck's cultural-linguistic approach to faith provides an alternative for those churches that have a strong focus on the experiential, with music as the medium. He asserts that Christianity is not merely cognitive (intellectual assent given to a set of doctrinal propositions), nor is it simply experiential (engagement in uplifting religious experience), but rather it is a cultural-linguistic system, by which we learn the language of faith.¹¹⁶ His approach gives hope to those poets working on congregational lyrics, for they too work with the language of faith. Further hope for congregational poets comes from understanding that the Christian faith is learnt primarily from the main worship event, where the language and the culture are conveyed to those growing in the faith.

A third change in lyric perspective comes from the divine voice, but it must be used with care for it can eliminate the dialogue between the worshipper and God. Yet

¹¹⁴ Graham Kendrick, "God and Groove," *Worship Magazine*, (September/October 2001) cited in Ian Stackhouse, *The Gospel Driven Church* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2004), 55.

¹¹⁵ Ken Booth, "Worship as a Subversive Act: Towards a Theology of Worship" *Stimulus 9* (August 2001): 11-15.

¹¹⁶ George Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1984) cited in Marva Dawn *A Royal Waste of Time* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 336-7.

a fourth perspective comes from the repetitive voice. This can be used to reinforce a lyric message but when used poorly blunts the lyric's meaning.

c) The Outworking of the Christian Faith

The Christian faith is more than a conceptual framework or a philosophical construct. It is primarily a way to live in relationship with God and this has its practical expression in the way we encounter and respond to life around us. Four categories were chosen to measure these responses: freedom and justice, social concern, culture and our relationship to God's creation.

The results were surprising. Large differences were seen between the RCA and ECP streams. There was almost no ECP lyric frequency for any of the above categories. This is not a local aberration, as the EPC model supported the finding from the local ECP churches. If ECP congregational lyrics are their measure, these themes are not matters that have become part of the people's theology.

Why is this when the sister churches in the RCA stream show a significant lyric expression for the outworking of the faith? I suspect that there has been a division of theology between grace and nature, between God and the visible world, between spirit and matter. This dualism assumes that matter takes a lower position in the order of things. Even though this approach does not fall over into Gnostic denigration of matter as inherently evil, the material world is still not quite as clearly the object of God's saving action as it is in Scripture.¹¹⁷ Supporting evidence for this suspicion comes from within this study. As seen in Figure 3.3 there is a lower frequency of Clause 3 of the Apostles' Creed related to the incarnation in ECP churches (i.e. conceived of the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary). As the sample of songs in this study shows there are very few ECP lyrics that focus on the earthly life

¹¹⁷ Ken Booth, "Worship as a Subversive Act: Towards a Theology of Worship" *Stimulus 9 (3)* (August 2001): 11-15.

of Christ. His baptism, temptations, teachings and miracles are not a feature of what is sung. This supports the suggestion that a form of dualism is at work. If this interpretation of results is correct then some serious theological questions need to be asked of those teaching theology to our songwriters, and of those choosing the congregational songs that are being sung in ECP churches.

Another explanation may be found in the combined effect of individualism and materialism that gives no thought to others in need or to the environment. Consumerism is one manifestation of this, and the large shopping complexes in this local area are testimony to this power of both individualism and materialism.

The influence of both individualism and personal piety have also contributed their share to the misunderstanding that religion is a private affair.¹¹⁸

When it comes to responding in lyric form as Christians to life around us, one has to stop and ask whether dualism, materialism, individualism and religion as a private affair have come together to have its influence on local ECP church songs.

On the other hand, in RCA churches there is a reasonable level of lyric frequency that expresses the outworking of the Christian faith. These lyrics see the visible and the created order as an object of God's saving action. A strong understanding of God's presence in this world, is proposed as one contributing factor leading to this result.

d) Two Comparisons

The lyrics in the present study were used to make two comparisons. One comparison was made with Israel's ancient songs, the Psalms, and a second comparison with the more recent *Scripture in Song*.

¹¹⁸ Ken Booth, "Worship as a Subversive Act: Towards a Theology of Worship" *Stimulus 9 (3)* (August 2001): 11-15.

The first of the two comparisons used Brueggemann's typology of the Psalms to examine the lyrics. This method brought to light the high level of *Orientation* in local ECP and RCA church songs, and the low level of *Disorientation* and *New Orientation* in the ECP lyrics. It is interesting to note that good order, stability and reliability feature highly in both local ECP and RCA lyrics reflecting the higher socio-economic status of the study area. The RCA model representing the RCA churches outside the local area stands out from the local results, as it does not share the high level of orientation seen in local RCA and ECP churches.

In ECP churches a spirit/matter dualism works against a strong understanding of God's presence in the material world because the created order appears to be of less importance for God's saving actions. Its brokenness, therefore, is not a consideration and *Disorientation* is not acknowledged. For this reason *New Orientation* is not possible in lyric expression. The difference seen between RCA and ECP churches on this account may relate to a liturgical difference involving the frequency and understanding of Communion/Eucharist. Through their lyrics the RCA churches around the country acknowledge more strongly the disorientation in their lives and the possibility of God's newness at hand.

The second of the two comparisons used Brett Knowles' study of *Scripture in Song*. This comparison suggests a much lower level of Scripture use today in both RCA and ECP lyrics. The ECP model supports the local findings but the RCA model does not. There appears to be an issue of a growing biblical illiteracy. Knowles considered that as New Zealand churches grew throughout the 1970s their dependence on Biblical language might have become diluted by the influx of new members who did not share what he calls "a fundamentalist approach to Scripture."

The result was a broadening of perspective.¹¹⁹ The songs became implicit and derivative rather than explicit and literal. However this continued trend seen towards implicit and derivative lyrics can not be explained by continued church growth, because church attendance has declined markedly since the 1980s. A more likely explanation is the lower level of biblical literacy and theological training among congregational songwriters today. Lutheran theologian, Robert Jenson blames clergymen and women for the growing level of biblical illiteracy in U.S. congregations. He notes that clergy give much less attention to catechetising young believers, teaching them how to access the Scriptures and stocking their minds with biblical stories, language and themes. Chris Marshall, reflecting on this, wonders if this is true of more liturgical traditions, how much more true it must be of evangelical, Pentecostal and other free church traditions which usually lack any formal apparatus for the catechesis or instruction of young believers. He goes on to note that in liturgical worship, the congregation every week hears the public reading of Scripture on the basis of the lectionary. In many evangelical church services, by contrast, the only time the Scripture is publicly read is to furnish the launching pad for some sermonic excursion that focuses on the experiential or therapeutic needs of the listener rather than on the meaning of the text itself.¹²⁰ David Wells goes further. He considers that while the inspiration of Scriptures is cheerfully endorsed, there is not a lot of confidence that the Word of God can accomplish its purposes. To make Scripture effective David Wells sees the RCA churches hitching it to tradition and the ECP churches to business and psychology. He sees this happening because of unbelief.¹²¹ Anecdotal evidence suggests that this lower level of biblical literacy is not so marked

¹¹⁹ Brett Knowles, “‘From the ends of the earth we hear songs’: Music as an indicator of New Zealand Pentecostal theology and spirituality” *The Spirit and the Church* 3.2 (November 2001): 227-249.

¹²⁰ Chris Marshall, Re-engaging with the Bible in a Postmodern World *Stimulus* 15 (February 2007): 5-16.

¹²¹ David Wells, *Losing Our Virtue* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1998), 28.

among RCA songwriters, and the higher level of Scriptural inclusion in the RCA model (M1) supports this observation.

Lyrics 25 to 30 years ago were more theocentric, but today have become more christocentric for ECP churches, and more believer-focused for RCA churches. *Worship* lyrics play an important part in ECP worship locally. However *Praise*, *Exhortation* and *Other* lyrics are not sung as frequently, a trend shared by ECP churches throughout the country. The trend in ECP churches towards singing more *Worship* lyrics is a move that neither *Scripture in Song*, nor the Psalms support, and lends weight to the previous observation that ECP lyrics tend towards the emotional and experiential with God being understood as immanent. This significant move towards *Worship* and away from *Exhortation* in the ECP churches supports the observation that dualism may be an important feature in today's ECP lyrics.

The local RCA churches have found a better lyric balance when expressing the Christian faith for they sing *Worship*, *Praise* and *Exhortation* on a more equally frequent basis.

Final Conclusion

It is not easy to write lyrics for congregational use when starting with a blank piece of paper or an empty computer screen. However because congregational lyrics hold such a powerful place in shaping the faith of believers and forming communal church identity it is important that they have a well-balanced expression of Christian faith. There are thousands of lyrics to choose from for each worship service. The task is to ensure that the basket of lyrics sung provide a balance in theology, imagery and perspective, and response to the Christian faith.

After the information had been tested and compared this thesis found evidence to suggest that today's congregational lyrics did not altogether form a well-balanced expression of the Christian faith.

It should be noted that this conclusion assumes that a play-list approach to lyrics sung would give a fair indication of the content received by church members in their singing. Two factors may distort this assumption. The first relates to songs used more than once over the sampling period, and the lyrics sung more than once in a particular church service.¹²² In this situation the frequency of some content increases.

The second distortion relates to church attendance, where in some churches only about 60% of the congregation is present for worship on any one Sunday. In that case the irregular church member receives, in his or her singing, a somewhat different content profile to that recorded in this study.

Recommendations

I have six recommendations that will help to achieve a better balance of lyric expression of the Christian faith in the songs and hymns sung in worship.

- Churches need to be more discerning in the choosing of songs and hymns so that equal emphasis is placed on the words and the music. The basket of lyrics or the play-list should be considered for balance when new lyrics are added and old lyrics removed. This would prevent a gradual drift from the central truths of the faith.
- Theological colleges can assist by ensuring that all students are exposed to critical analysis of congregational lyrics. This will ensure that in churches where responsibility for lyric selection has been passed to musicians, ministers and pastors will play a larger role.

¹²² It is worth noting that Church C did not sing any one song more than once throughout the sampling period.

- The development of suitable criteria for lyric selection is a task national church organizations need to take up. Here is a way in which they can assist individual churches to make the choices described in the first recommendation.
- An analytical tool needs to be developed to assess the present position of churches and to mark progress made towards a better lyric balance.
- More resources need to be made available to church poets and lyric writers. Their talents need to be recognized and their skills nurtured. They need training in theology as much as do preachers and teachers.
- The licensing organizations are part of the church, and a vital link between worshipping congregations and Christian poets and lyric writers. They could become the vehicle for recommending to churches, new and suitable congregational lyrics for the Christian market.

Areas for Future Study

A number of New Zealand lyric composers were included in this study. It would be interesting to know what is shaping the New Zealand congregational song at present. There is room for study of a lyric expression of faith that is becoming more distinctively “Kiwi,”¹²³ with an identity separate from its colonial past and from other English speaking countries around the world.

Scripture in Song has given way to Hillsong. These songs are composed by a group of musicians at Hillsong, Australia’s largest church based in Sydney. Hillsong lyrics are now being sung by congregations around the world and about 11% of the lyrics in this study sample originated from Hillsong. This group of songs has raised

¹²³ New Zealand

many concerns in this thesis, and they need to be studied for they too are shaping the faith of a new generation of Christian believers.

Children's lyrics are sung outside of the worship service usually in the children's own gathering. Songs have a faith shaping function and as Jocelyn Marshall notes the songs we learn as children remain in our memory for the rest of our lives.¹²⁴ This makes children's songs a fertile area for lyric study.

¹²⁴ Jocelyn Marshall, "A Singing Faith" *Music In the Air 10* (Winter 2000): 13-17.

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Appendix I

Table 3.1 Theology in the Lyrics

Church	A	B	C	D	RCA ave	M1	E	F	G	H	ECP ave	M2
No of lyrics	43	67	52	44	51.5	20.0	53	51	30	25	39.8	25
God Creator	25.6	17.9	28.8	36.4	27.2	30.0	24.5	29.4	40.0	36.0	32.5	16.0
Jesus Christ Only Son Our Lord	27.9	28.3	51.9	38.6	36.7	30.0	41.5	60.8	53.3	60.0	53.9	80.0
Conceived of the Holy Spirit born of Mary	14.0	10.5	11.5	2.3	9.6	5.0	7.5	3.4	3.3	4.0	4.6	16.0
Suffered, Crucified, Dead and Buried	20.9	23.9	17.3	9.1	17.8	15.0	43.4	21.6	6.6	24.0	23.9	36.0
Descended to Hell, Rose on Third Day	7.0	11.9	7.7	4.6	7.8	15.0	11.3	5.8	10.0	4.0	7.8	16.0
Ascended to Heaven	4.7	1.5	11.5	0	4.4	0	1.9	2.0	0	4.0	2.0	16.0
Return and Judgement	2.3	7.5	5.8	2.3	4.5	5.0	1.9	2.0	0	8.0	3.0	0
Holy Spirit	9.3	13.4	30.8	11.4	16.2	15.0	9.4	9.8	10.0	12.0	10.3	16.0
Church	4.6	4.5	9.6	6.8	6.4	5.0	3.8	0	0	0	1.0	0
Forgiveness of Sins	9.3	19.4	13.5	4.6	11.7	10.0	35.8	19.6	13.3	24.0	23.2	24.0
Resurrection of the body	0	0	0	2.3	0.6	0	1.9	0	3.3	4.0	2.3	4.0
To life everlasting	4.7	7.5	7.6	6.8	6.7	5.0	15.1	5.9	0	0	5.3	8.0

Table 3.2 Total Lyric Theology

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2
No of Lyrics	43	67	52	44	20	53	51	30	25	25
Total Score	130.3	146.3	196.0	125.2	135	198.0	160.3	139.8	180.0	236.0

Table 3.3 Lyric Summary

Church	RCA Average	ECP Average	RCA/ECP Average	M1	M2
God Creator	38.1	32.5	29.8	30.0	16.0
Jesus Christ Only Son Our Lord	36.7	53.9	45.3	30.0	80.0
Conceived of the Holy Spirit born of Mary	9.6	4.6	7.1	5.0	16.0
Suffered, Crucified, Dead and Buried	17.8	23.9	20.9	15.0	36.0
Descended to Hell, Rose on Third Day	7.8	7.8	7.8	15.0	16.0
Ascended to Heaven	4.4	2.0	3.2	0	16.0
Return and Judgement	4.5	3.0	3.7	5.0	0
Holy Spirit	16.2	10.3	13.3	15.0	16.0
Church	6.4	1.0	3.7	5.0	0
Forgiveness of Sins	11.7	23.2	17.4	10.0	24.0
Resurrection of the body	0.6	2.3	1.4	0	4.0
To life everlasting	6.7	5.3	6.0	5.0	8.0

Table 4.1 Imagery

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2
No of lyrics	43	67	52	44	20	53	51	30	25	25
Biblical	20.9	14.9	34.6	34.9	20.0	24.5	21.6	6.6	24.0	20.0
Historical	0	0	0	2.3	5.0	0	0	0	0	0
Contemporary	9.3	7.5	51.9	11.4	25.0	34.0	21.6	13.3	28.0	32.0

Table 4.2**Imagery of Jesus Christ**

Image	RCA Model	ECP Model
	%	%
King	0	28
Way	0	4
Truth	0	4
Life	0	4
Light	30	12
Redeemer	0	8
Comforter	0	4
Saviour	0	4
Lion	0	4
Lamb	0	8
Creator	0	4
Holy One	0	4
Master	5	0
Bread	20	0
Wine	15	0
Living Water	5	0
Wisdom	5	0
Son	5	0

Table 5.1 The Outworking of the Christian Faith

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2
Number of Lyrics	43	67	52	44	20	53	51	30	25	25
Justice Freedom	11.6	7.5	15.4	2.3	35.0	1.9	1.9	0	0	0
Social Concern	11.7	9.0	15.4	13.6	15.0	0	0	0	0	0
Culture	0	1.5	5.8	2.3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Creation	0	1.5	7.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	23.3	19.5	44.3	18.2	50	1.9	1.9	0	0	0

Table 6.1 Lyric Mindset

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2
Orientation	68.2	73.1	60.0	86.4	40.0	88.6	90.2	96.7	88.0	84.0
Disorientation	22.0	16.4	14.0	6.8	20.0	0	3.9	0	4.0	4.0
New Orientation	9.8	10.5	26.0	6.8	40.0	11.4	5.9	3.3	8.0	12.0

Table 6.2 Scripture Used

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2	RCA	ECP	RCA/ECP
											Av.	Av.	Average
No of Lyrics	43	67	47	44	20	53	51	30	25	25	50	40	45
Verbatim	7.0	17.9	1.9	0	5.0	4.2	2.0	6.7	8.0	12.0	6.7	5.2	6.0
Adapted	9.3	6.0	0	0	25.0	4.2	2.0	0	0	0	3.8	1.6	2.6
Tenuous	7.0	1.5	1.9	11.4	15.0	0	5.9	10.0	4.0	0	5.5	5.0	5.9
Scripture Used	23.3	25.4	3.8	11.4	45.0	8.4	9.9	16.7	12.0	12.0	16.0	11.8	13.9

Table 6.3 Scripture Used-Comparison

	RCA	M1	ECP	M2	Scripture in Song
	Churches		Churches		
Verbatim	6.7	5.0	5.2	12	16.6
Adapted	3.8	25.0	1.6	0	23.6
Tenuous	5.5	15.0	5.0	0	18.8
Total Scripture Used	16.0	45.0	11.8	12.0	59.0

Table 6.4 Lyric Focus

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2	PS
God	11.6	13.4	14.9	9.3	15.0	18.9	21.6	40.0	28.0	20.0	41.7
Jesus/Christ	30.3	32.8	27.7	23.3	15.0	39.6	35.3	40.0	36.0	64.0	
Spirit	0	0	2.1	2.3	0	0	0	3.3	0	0	
God/Jesus/Spirit	41.9	46.2	44.7	35.9	30.0	58.5	56.9	83.3	64.0	84.0	41.7
Believer	46.5	49.3	46.6	58.1	65.0	32.1	41.1	10.0	36.0	8.0	58.3
Other	11.6	4.5	8.5	7.0	5.0	9.4	2.0	6.7	0	8.0	

Table 6.5 Lyric Focus-Comparison

Focus	RCA	M1	ECP	M2	Scripture in Song	PS
	Churches		Churches			
God	12.3	15.0	27.1	20.0	52.8	41.7
Jesus/Christ	28.5	15.0	37.7	64.0	21.4	
Spirit	1.1	0	0.8	0	1.3	
Believer	50.2	65.0	29.8	8.0	23.6	58.3
Other	7.9	5.0	4.6	8.0	0.9	

Table 6.6 Lyric Category

Church	A	B	C	D	M1	E	F	G	H	M2	PS
No. Of Lyrics	43	62	47	44	20	53	51	30	25	25	30
Worship	18.6	16.1	19.2	12.0	10.0	18.9	21.6	30.0	28.0	44.0	0
Adoration	7.0	1.6	4.3	7.1	5.0	11.3	15.7	43.3	24.0	20.0	0
Surrender	2.3	6.5	4.3	2.3	5.0	3.8	15.7	10.0	16.0	12.0	3.3
<i>Worship</i> Sub Total	27.9	24.2	27.8	21.4	20.0	34.0	53.0	83.3	68.0	76.0	3.3
Praise	9.3	12.9	6.4	4.8	10.0	17.0	17.6	13.3	12.0	8.0	20.0
Thanksgiving	2.3	3.2	6.4	4.8	5.0	5.7	2.0	0	8.0	8.0	3.3
Celebration	0	1.6	2.1	9.5	10.0	1.9	0	0	0	0	3.3
Prayer	14.0	3.2	25.5	9.5	35.0	11.3	13.7	3.4	12.0	4.0	30.0
Warfare	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Praise</i> Sub Total	25.6	20.9	40.4	28.6	60.0	35.9	33.3	16.7	32.0	20.0	56.6
Declaration	2.3	19.4	6.4	14.3	0	22.6	5.8	0	0	0	20.0
Exhortation	25.6	14.5	19.1	35.7	20.0	5.7	0	0	0	0	0
Testimony	0	4.8	2.1	0	0	0	7.9	0	0	4.0	10.0
<i>Exhortation</i> Sub Total	27.9	38.7	27.6	50.0	20.0	28.3	13.7	0	0	4.0	30.0
Other	18.6	16.2	4.2	0	0	1.9	0	0	0	0	10.0

Table 6.7 Lyric Category Comparison

Category	RCA Churches	M1	ECP Churches	M2	Scripture in Song (1971-1987)	Psalms
Worship	25.3	20	59.6	76	15.7	3.3
Praise	28.9	60	29.5	20	45.0	56.7
Exhortation	36.1	20	10.5	4	39.3	30.0
Other	9.8	0	0.4	0	0	10.0

Appendix II

List of Song Titles, Writer, Church Stream, I.D. Number, and Publisher.

A & M Hymns Ancient and Modern Revised
 WOV With One Voice
 SIS Scripture in Song
 BHB Baptist Hymn Book
 CPC Catholic Publication Centre
 WGRG Wild Goose Resource Group
 OCP Oregon Catholic Press
 ICEL International Commission of English in the Liturgy

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
A new commandment	Elizabeth Benson	RCA	281945	Nazarene Publ. House
A new heart for a new world	Trish Watts & Monica O' Brien	RCA	2262879	Willow Connection Pty Ltd
A place at the table	Shirley Murray & Colin Gibson	RCA		Shirley Erina Murray
A trusting psalm	Kevin Bates	RCA	1969221	Willow Publ. Pty Ltd.
Above all	Lenny LeBlanc	ECP	2672885	Integrity's Hosanna Music
Advent Acclamation/Christmas Gospel	David Haas	RCA		OCP
Agnus Dei	Michael Smith	ECP	626713	Sony/ATV Milene Music
All about you	Joel Houston & James Rudder	ECP	4414113	Hillsong Publishing.
All creatures of our God and king	W. H. Draper	ECP	A & M 172	Public Domain
All heavens declare	Noel Richards & Tricia Richards	ECP	120556	Thankyou Music
All in all	Dennis Jernigan	ECP	825356	Shepherd Heart Music

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
All the Earth	Jack Hayford, Andrew Ulugia,	RCA/ECP	3287499	Parachute Music
All the ends of the earth	Barbara Bridges	RCA		OCP
All the heavens	Reuben Morgan	ECP	3490585	Hillsong Publ.
Alleluia	Don Fishel	RCA	32376	Word God Music
Alleluia sing to Jesus	W.C. Dix	RCA	A & M 399	Public Domain
Amazing grace	John Newton	RCA/ECP	WOV 56	Public Domain
Amen	John Schiavone	RCA		
And can it be	Charles Wesley	ECP	WOV 138	Public Domain
As the deer	Martin Nystrom	RCA	1431	Praise Inc
As with gladness	W. C. Dix	RCA	A & M 79	Public Domain
Away in a manger	Anon	RCA	WOV 242	Public Domain
Be glorified	Keith Routlege	ECP	592218	Sovereign Lifestyle Music
Be not afraid	R. J. Dufford	RCA		OCP
Be still and know	Steve Chapman	RCA	2758912	Sparrow Song & Peach Hill Song
Be still for the presence	David Evans	RCA	12084	Thankyou Music
Be thou my vision	Irish 8 th cent. Tr. Mary Byrne	RCA/ECP	WOV 455	Public Domain
Because he lives	W.J. Gaither	ECP	16880	William J. Gaither Inc.
Blessed be the Lord God Almighty	Bob Fitts	ECP	21480	Scripture in Song
Blessed be the Lord of Israel	Dave Moody	RCA	15908	Dave Moody Music
Blessed be Your name	Matt Redmann Beth Redman	ECP	3798438	Thankyou Music

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Blessing and honour	Gary Sadler & Jamie Harvill	ECP	798108	Integrity's Hosanna Music
Bread of life	Jaime Cortez	RCA		OCP
Breathe	Marie Barnett	ECP	1874117	Mercy/Vineyard Publ.
Breathe on me breath of God	Edwin Hatch		BHB 592	Public Domain
Bright the vision	R Mant	RCA	A & M 161	Public Domain
Called as partners	John Huber & Jane Huber	RCA	830042	Jane Parker Huber
Child of blessing	R. Cole-Turner & W.H. Harvergal	RCA	2323622	Ronald S. Cole-Turner
Christ be our light	Bernadette Farrell	RCA		OCP
Christ is made the sure foundation	tr. J.M. Neale	RCA	WOV 433	Public Domain
Christians are all kinds of people	unknown	RCA		unknown
City of God	Dan Schutte	RCA		OCP
Come as you are	Rudy Perez, Judith Volz, Loren Balman	RCA		Rubet Music Publishing
Come back to me	Gregory Norbett	RCA		Benedictine Foundation
Come now is the time to worship	Brian Doerksen,	ECP	2430948	Vineyard Songs
Come praise the Lord	Keith Getty & Kristyn Lennox	ECP	3994696	Thankyou Music
Come to the banquet	Faye White	RCA		Grapevine Music
Come to the water	John Foley	RCA		North American Liturgy Resources
Come together lets celebrate	Michael Mangan	RCA		Litmus Productions

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Create in me a clean heart	Keith Green	ECP		Sparrow Records
Crown him with many crowns	M Bridges	ECP	A & M 224	Public Domain
Dear Lord and Father	J G Whittier	RCA	A & M 184	Public Domain
Dying you destroyed our death	Steve Angrisono	RCA		OCP
Eagles wings	Reuben Morgan	ECP	2478168	Hillsong Publ.
Eat this bread	Michael Joncas	RCA		OCP
Emmanuel	M. W. Smith	ECP	81468	Meadowgreen Music Company
Enemy of Apathy	John Bell & Graham Maule	RCA	1097303	WGRG Iona Community
Enter Rejoice and Come In	Louise Ruspini	RCA		unknownn
Every move I make	David Rus	ECP	1595726	Mercy/Vineyard Publishing
Every nation will adore	John Schiavone	RCA		ICEL
Every thing that has breath	Chris Bowater	ECP	381838	Sovereign Lifestyle Music
Everyday	Joel Houston	ECP	2798154	Hillsong Publishing
For all You've done	Reuben Morgan	ECP	425489	Hillsong Publishing
For who you are	Marty Sampson	ECP	4591799	Hillsong Publishing
Forever	Chris Tomlin	ECP	4254689	sixsteps Music
Forever grateful	Mark Altrogge	ECP	24047	Sovereign Grace Praise
Forty days and forty nights	G. H. Smyttan & F. Potts	RCA	A & M 92	Public Domain
Freely freely	Carol Owen	RCA	13209	Bud John Songs
Friend of God	Israel Houghton & Michael Gungor	ECP	3991651	Praise Music

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Galilee Song	Frank Anderson	RCA		Spectrum Publication Pty Ltd.
Gather us in	John Bell	RCA		WGRG
Gather your People	Bob Hurd	RCA		OCP
Give me oil	A. Sevinson & D. Winkler	RCA	305478	Pilot Point Music
Give thanks	Henry. Smith	RCA	20285	Integrity's Hosanna Music
Glorious things of Thee are spoken	John Newton	RCA	A & M 257	Public Domain
Glory	Reuben Morgan	ECP	3744592	Hillsong Publishing
Glory & Praise to our God	Dan Schutte	RCA		OCP
Go now in peace	Andrew Chinn	RCA	3329553	Andrew Chinn
Go now you are sent forth	L Watt	RCA		unknown
Go tell everyone	Alan Dale & Hubert Richards	RCA	968866	Kevin Mayhew Ltd.
God and God alone	Phil McHugh	ECP	24841	River Oak Music Company
God gives us a future	Elizabeth Smith	RCA	1447489	Josef Weinberger Ltd.
God He reigns	Marty Sampson	ECP	4462402	Hillsong Publishing
God is here	F. Pratt Green, Cyril Taylor & Roland Pritchard	RCA	223549	Stainer & Bell Ltd.
God of day and God of darkness	Marty Haugen			GIA Publication Inc.

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
God of Wonders	Marc Byrd & Steve Hindalong	ECP	3118757	New Song
God to You all Heart	Elizabeth J Smith	RCA		unknown
God's son came to bless us	The Bohemian Brethren	RCA		Public Domain
Grace like rain (Amazing Grace)	adapted by Todd Agnew	ECP		Public Domain
Great is the Lord	Michael Smith & Deborah Smith	RCA	1149	Meadowgreen Music Company
Great is your faithfulness	T. O. Chisholm	ECP	BHB 576	Public Domain
Guide me O thou great Redeemer	W Williams	RCA	A & M 294	Public Domain
Hail to the Lord's anointed	J. Montgomery	RCA	A & M 219	Public Domain
Hail true body born of Mary	tr. Henry Oxenham	RCA		Public Domain
Hallelujah	Marty Sampson	ECP	425774	Hillsong Publishing
Have faith in God	Geoff Bullock	ECP	1305992	Word Music
He I am Lord	Dan Schutte	RCA		OCP
He is exalted	Twila Paris	ECP	17827	Straightway Music
Hear our praises	Reuben Morgan	ECP	2543402	Hillsong Publishing
Heart of worship	Matt Redman	ECP	2296522	Thankyou Music
Help us accept each other	Frederik Kaan	RCA	1192703	Stainer & Bell
Here I am to worship	Tim Hughes	ECP	3266032	Thankyou Music

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Here is love	Matt Redmann, Robert Lowry & Willaim Rees	ECP	3287884	Thankyou Music
High Above	Brian Platt	ECP	3985090	Parachute Music
His love	Raymond Badham	ECP	4433400	Hillsong Publishing
Holy	Bob Dufford	RCA		OCP
Holy is the Lord	Chrsi Tomlin & Louie Giglio	ECP	4158039	worshiptogether.com songs
Holy is the Lord on high	Scott Brenner	RCA	147443	Mercy/Vineyard Publishing
Holy, holy, holy	Cecily Sheehy	ECP		New Zealand Hymn Book Trust
Holy, Holy, Holy God	R Heber	RCA	A & M 160	Public Domain
How can I keep from singing	Chris Tomlin, Ed Cash & Matt Redmann	ECP	4822372	Thankyou Music
How deep the father's love for us	Stuart Townend	ECP	1558110	Thankyou Music
How good Lord to be here	Bruce Harding	RCA		unknown
How Great is Our God	Chris Tomlin, Jesse Reeves, Ed Cash	ECP	4348399	sixstep Music
How great Thou art	Stuart Hine	ECP	14181	Stuart K. Hine Trust
Humbly we adore thee	Melvin Farrell	RCA		Public Domain
I am a child of God	Barbara Bridges	RCA		OCP
I am the bread of life	Suzanne Toolan	RCA		GIA Publications
I am the light of the world	J. Strathdee	RCA		Desert Flower Music
I believe in Jesus	Marc Nelson	ECP	61282	Mercy/Vineyard Publishing

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
I cannot tell	Lara Goudie	ECP	3198492	spiritandsong
I could sing of your love forever	Martin Smith	ECP	1043199	Curious? Music UK
I give you my heart	Reuben Morgan	ECP	1866132	Hillsong Publishing
I love you Lord	Laurie Klien	RCA/ECP	25266	House of Mercy Music
I want to see Jesus lifted high	Doug Harley	ECP	1033408	Thankyou Music
I will bless the Lord	Owen Alstott			OCP
I will sing	Craig Colson & Kristen Colson	RCA		Ed Bolduc
If we trust this Jesus	unknown	RCA		unknown
Immaculate Mary	Robert Hebble	RCA	2390239	The sacred Music Press
In Christ alone	Stuart Townsend Keith Getty	ECP	3350395	Thankyou Music
In Christ there is a table set for all	Robert Stamp			Dawn Treader Music
In the quiet of this day	Shirley Murray & Jillian Bray	RCA	4156550	Shirley Muray & Jillian Bray
In the Secret	Andy Park	ECP	1810119	Mercy/Vineyard Publishing
In your hands	Reuben Morgan	ECP	1935925	Hillsong Publishing
Indescribable	Laura Story	ECP	4403076	sixsteps Music
Jesu, Jesu	Tom Colvin	RCA	186208	Hope Publishing
Jesus good above all others	Anon	RCA		Public Domain
Jesus is my rock	Eddie Duncan	RCA	1365853	Tennessee Music & Printing Company

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Jesus Lamb of God	Bernadette Farrell	RCA		OCP
Jesus lover of my soul	Daniel Grul, John Ezzy & Steve McPherson	ECP	1198817	Hillsong Publishing
Jesus loves me	Anna Warren & William Bradbury	RCA	1187	Public Domain
Jesus shall reign	Isaac Watts	RCA	A & M 220	Public Domain
Jesus stand among us	Graham Kendrick	RCA	40155	Thankyou Music
Joyful, joyful we adore you	Henry van Dyke & Lani Smith	RCA	3788400	Lorenz Publishing Company
Just let me say	Geoff Bullock	RCA	1406413	Word Music
King of majesty	Marty Sampson	ECP	3234479	Hillsong Publishing
Land of primal shinning forests	Bill Wallace	RCA		unknown
Lead me, Lord	John Becker	RCA		OCP
Let creation sing	Reuben Morgan	ECP	4433390	Hillsong Publishing
Let there be love	Dave Billbrough	RCA	36483	Thankyou Music
Let there be peace on earth	Jill Jackson & Sy Miller	RCA	93690	Jan-Lee Music
Let us adore	Reuben Morgan	ECP	4437846	Hillsong Publishing
Lift high the cross	G W Kitchin, et al	RCA	A & M 633	Public Domain
Litany of the Saints	John Becker	RCA		ICEL
Lord as we rise	Fred Kaan & Eric Routley	RCA	216745	Stainer Bell Ltd
Lord by your cross	Fred Carciotti	RCA	3810866	Fred Carciotti

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Lord I lift your name on high	Rick Founds	ECP	117947	Maranatha Praise
Lord Jesus Christ	Patrick Appleford	RCA	40241	Josef Weinberger Ltd.
Lord most high	Dan Harris & Gary Saddler	ECP	2037688	Integrity's Hosanna Music
Lord of all Hopefulness	Jan Struther	RCA	WOV 546	Public Domain
Lord you give the great commission	Cyril Taylor & Jeffery Rowthorn	RCA	230673	Hope Publishing Co.
Lord you have my heart	Martin Smith	ECP	1108735	Thankyou Music
Lord, every nation on earth will adore you	John Schiovone	RCA		ICEL
Lord, make me an instrument of your peace	Francis of Assisi	RCA	3701614	Public Domain
Love divine all loves excelling	Charles Wesley	RCA	A & M 205	Public Domain
Love is his word, love is his way	Unknown	RCA		GIA Publication
Majesty	Martin Smith, Stuart Garrard	ECP	4219071	Curious? Music UK
Make me a channel of your peace	S. Temple; arr B.Polkingham	RCA	3988729	Sovereign Music UK
Mary did you know	Mark Lowry & Buddy Greene	RCA	839225	Word Music
Mass of a joyful heart	Steve Angriasono & Tom Tomaszek	RCA		CPC
Mass of Creation	Marty Haugen	RCA	International Licence No 1267	CPC
Mass of Remembrance	Marty Haugen	RCA		CPC

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Mighty to save	Ben Fielding & Marty Haugen	ECP	4591782	Hillsong Publishing
Mine eyes have seen the glory	Julia Howe	RCA	WOV 205	Public Domain
My hope	Darlene Zchech	ECP	3951062	Hillsong Publishing
My life is in you Lord	Daniel Gardner	ECP	17713	Integrity's Hosanna Music
My Redeemer Lives	Reuben Morgan	ECP	2397964	Hillsong Publishing
My saviour's love	Charles Gabriel	ECP	25297	Public Domain
My shepherd is the Lord	John Bell	RCA	4331722	WGRG Iona Community
No more Lord may we walk apart	Tr. Thomas Lacey	RCA		Public Domain
None but Jesus	Brooke Fraser	ECP	4726186	Sony/ATV Music Publishing Australia
Nothing is lost	Colin Gibson	RCA	1932722	Hope Publishing Co.
Now is the time of healing decreed	tr. Thomas Lacey	RCA		Public Domain
Now thank we all our God	M Rinkhart	RCA	A & M 379	Public Domain
O Breathe on me breath of God	Edwin Hatch	RCA		Public Domain
O come let us adore him	C Oakley, J Wade, M Redman, T, Bryant	RCA	4162678	Thankyou Music
O Come O Come Emmanuel	tr. J M Neale	RCA		Public Domain
O God beyond all praising	Michael Perry	RCA	3615906	Jubilate Hymns Ltd.
O God you search me and know	Bernadette Farrell	RCA		OCP
O Little Town of Bethlehem	Phillip Brooks	RCA	A & M 65	Public Domain
O Love of God	Bob Hurd	RCA		OCP

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
O the love	Estelle White & Kevin Mayhew	RCA		Estelle Song Ltd. ?
O Worship the Lord	J. S. B. Monsell	RCA	A & M 77	Public Domain
Of the Father's love begotten	Prudentius Tr. J M Neale	RCA	A & M 58	Public Domain
On Eagles Wings	Michael Joncas	RCA		New Dawn Music
One bread, one body	John Foley	RCA		John S Foley & OCP
One day	Reuben Morgan	ECP	2725646	Hillsong Publishing
One in Love	Monica Brown	RCA	4236023	Emmaus Productions
One Way	Joel Houston & Jonathan Douglas	ECP	4222082	Hillsong Publishing
Open my Eyes	Jesse Manibusan	RCA		spiritandsong.com
Open the Eyes of my Heart	Paul Baloche	ECP	2298355	Integrity's Hosanna Music
Our God is an awesome God	Rich Mullens	ECP	41099	BMG Songs
Our life has its seasons	Shirley Murray & Colin Gibson	RCA	1514587	Hope Publishing Co.
Out of darkness God has called us	Christopher Walker	RCA		OCP
Over all the earth	Brenton Brown	ECP	2490706	Vineyard Songs
Part of the Family	James Manley	RCA	244102	James K. Manley
Pass it on	Kurt Kaiser	RCA	14284	Bud John Songs Inc.
Potter's hand	Darlene Zschech	ECP	2449771	Hillsong Publishing
Power of your love	Geoff Bullock	ECP	917491	Word Music
Praise him, praise him	Francis van Alstyne	ECP	BHB 215	Public Domain
Praise to you O Christ	Bernadette Farrell	RCA		OCP
Prince of Peace (You are holy)	Marc Imboden & Tammi Rhoton	ECP	2332149	Imboden Music

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Proclaim his marvellous deeds	Psalm 96	RCA		Public Domain
Pure and Holy	Mark Altrogge	RCA	270224	Sovereign Grace Praise
Put peace in to each other	Frederik Kaan	RCA	430916	Stainer & Bell Ltd
Rain Down	Jaime Cortez	RCA		OCP
Refiner's fire	Brain Doerksen	ECP	426298	Vineyard Songs Canada
Reign in me	Brenton Brown	ECP	2490706	Vineyard Songs
Right here, right now	Trevor King	ECP		Non Stop Music Co.
Salvation belongs	Adrian Howard & Pat Turner	ECP	24092	Restoration Music Ltd.
Seek seek the Lord	unknown	RCA		unknown
Seek ye First	Paul Dempsey	RCA	4047401	Burning Heart Music
Sent by our God am I	unknown	RCA		unknown
Shalom	Jerry Herman	RCA		unknown
Shine Jesus shine	Graham Kendrick	ECP	30426	Make Way Music
Shout to the Lord	Darlene Zschech, Stuart Garrard	ECP	1406918	Hillsong Publishing
Shout to the north	Martin Smith	ECP	1562261	Curious? Music UK
Sing a new song	Dan Schutte	RCA		OCP
Sing of the Lords goodness	Ernest Sands	RCA		OCP
Still	Reuben Morgan	ECP	3940963	Hillsong Publishing
Table of plenty	Dan Schutte	RCA		OCP

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
Take my gift	Shirley Murray & Hal Hopsen	RCA	4071790	Hope Publishing Co.
Take this moment	John Bell	RCA	1430623	WGRG Iona Community
Taste and see	Steve Angrisano	RCA		
Teach me your ways	Bryan Peterson	RCA	273245	CNF Music
Tell my people I love them	Leonard Barlotti & Guy Jansen	RCA		Gospel Publishing House
The Beatitudes	Bernice Reagan	RCA		Song Talk Publishing
The church's one foundation	Samuel Stone	RCA	A & M 255	Public Domain
The First Nowell	Anon	RCA	WOV 221	Public Domain
The heart of worship	Matt Redman	ECP	2296522	Thankyou Music
The Lord is kind and merciful	Tom Booth	RCA		OCP
The Lord is my shepherd	Francis Rous	RCA	BHB 73	Public Domain
The love of God comes close	The Iona Community	RCA		
The potter's hand	Darlene Zschech	ECP	2449771	Hillsong Publishing
The power of Your love	Geoff Bullock, Wayne Huirua	RCA/EC P	917491	Word Music
The servant king	Graham Kendrick	ECP	78897	Thankyou Music
The servant song	Richard Gilliard	RCA	72673	Scripture in Song
The Spirit of the Lord	Graham Kendrick	ECP	2560753	Makeway Music
The trees of the field	Steffi Rubin & Stuart Dauermann	RCA	20546	Lillenas Publishing Company
The wonderful cross	Chris Tomlin/Isaac Watts	ECP	3148435	worshiptogether.com

Song Title	Writer	Church Stream	Song ID or CCLI #	Publisher
There is none like you	Lenny LeBlanc	ECP	674545	Integrity's Hosanna Music
These hands	Andrew Chinn	RCA	3329560	Andrew Chinn
These hills	Colin Gibson	RCA	2542104	Hope Publishing Co.
They will know we are Christians by our love	Peter Scholtes	RCA	26997	F.E.L. Publications
This day God gave me	James Quinn, Russel Schulz-Wildmar	RCA	162521	Selah Publishing Company
Thou didst leave thy throne	Emily Elliott	RCA	A & M 363	Public Domain
Thou knowest the secrets of our hearts	Burial service Book of Common Prayer	RCA		Public Domain
Thy word is a lamp unto my feet	John Carter	ECP	1610261	Hope Publishing Company
To God be the glory	Frances van Alstyne	RCA	WOV 85	Public Domain
To live is Christ	Kate Wray	ECP	3009615	Parachute Music
Trinity Song	Williard Jabusch	RCA		OCP
Turn your eyes upon Jesus	Allan Hall, Nicol Smith & Todd Smith	ECP	4338237	Curb Songs
Two Ways	Psalm 1	RCA		Public Domain
Unchanging	Chris Tomlin	ECP	4016669	sixstep Music
We belong to the people of God	unknown	ECP		unknown
We fall down	Chris Tomlin	ECP	2437367	worshiptogether.com songs
We have a gospel to proclaim	Edward Burns	RCA	WOV 189	Public Domain
We shall go out	Bart Shaha & June Boyce-Tillman	RCA		Stainer and Bell Ltd
We three kings of orient are	John Hopkins	RCA		Public Domain
Welcome in this place	Miriam Webster	ECP	4435790	Hillsong Publishing
What child is this?	William Dix	RCA	30983	Public Domain
When human voices	Shirley Murray	RCA	1710642	Shirley Erena Murray
Who is my mother, who is my brother ?	Shirley Murray & Jack Scharder	RCA	1710862	Shirley Erena Murray

Will you come and follow me	John L Bell and Graham Maule	RCA	879539	WGRG Iona Community
When I survey the wondrous cross	Isaac Watts	RCA/EC P	A & M 108	Public Domain
When we eat this bread	Vince Nims	RCA		spiritandsong.com
Where the road runs out	Colin Gibson	RCA		All Saints
Where true love and charity are found	tr. Richard Proulx	RCA		GIA Publication
Wonderful cross	Chris Tomlin, Isaac Watt, Jesse Reeve & Lowell Mason	ECP	3148458	Worshiptogether.com songs
Wonderful Lord	Doug Horley	RCA		
Worthy is the Lamb	Darlene Zschech	ECP	3217555	Hillsong Publishing
With all I am	Reuben Morgan	ECP	4257734	Hillsong Publishing
You are a child of God	unknown	RCA		unknown
You are good	Israel Houghton	ECP	3383788	Integrity's Praise Music
You are my king	Billy Foote	ECP	2456623	worshiptogether.com songs
You are worthy of praise	James Farmer	ECP	1483199	That's beautiful Music
Your love keeps following me	Russel Fragar	ECP	1405926	Hillsong Publishing
Your love O Lord	Brad Avery, David Carr, Mac Powell, Mark Lee, Tai Anderson	ECP	1894255	Vandura 2500 Songs
Your words Lord are Spirit and life	Bob Hurd	RCA		OCP

Two Maori lyrics were not included in the list for there was no English translation of these two songs. They were Tama Ngakau Marie and Mo Maria.

All effort was made to trace author and publisher for songs. In a small number of cases this was unsuccessful and so I have marked them as "unknown"