

ABSTRACT

Liturgical Inculturation among Baptists in the United States

Stephen A. Cowden, M.M.

Chairperson: David W. Music, D.M.A.

Liturgical inculturation seeks to cultivate worship that is meaningful in the church's context by joining texts and rites with the cultural pattern surrounding the church. This study begins with a brief investigation of historical influences on Baptist liturgical theology and music. It then introduces the study of liturgical inculturation, describing principles and methods developed by Catholic and Protestant liturgists. These principles and methods serve as a basis for application of liturgical inculturation among Baptists in the United States. Music as a means of inculturation receives particular consideration. Examples of liturgical inculturation among Baptists in the United States are presented, demonstrating the practicality of inculturation for Baptists in the past and present.

Liturgical Inculturation among Baptists in the United States

by

Stephen A. Cowden, B.M.

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Approved by the School of Music

Timothy R. McKinney, Ph.D., Interim Dean

Laurel E. Zeiss, Ph.D., Graduate Program Director

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Approved by the Thesis Committee

David W. Music, D.M.A., Chairperson

C. Randall Bradley, D.M.A.

Brian C. Brewer, Ph.D.

Alfredo C. Colman, Ph.D.

Terry W. York, D.M.A

Accepted by the Graduate School
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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

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DEDICATION

To our children.
May they be closer to God in the valley
than we have been on the mountain

CHAPTER ONE

Historical Influences on Baptist Liturgical Theology in the United States

Introduction: Concerning This Study

A few introductory remarks are necessary before delving into this study. First, a specific note in regard to terminology: Where the phrase “American Baptists” is used, it is meant to refer to Baptists in the United States as a collective whole, not to the specific denominational convention that historically employed the term as its name. The subject of this study includes all those that are part of the Baptist tradition in the United States. It does not intend to focus upon a particular denomination, although it occasionally refers to the dichotomy between Baptists in the northern and southern United States. This dichotomy should not be understood as two opposing groups, and neither should it exclude Baptists that do not clearly fall within these two categories.

Second, this study assumes that congregational worship—Sunday worship in particular—is the primary liturgical expression of Baptists in the United States. Third, due to the Baptist belief in local church autonomy, all discussion of Baptist beliefs and worship practices is descriptive, not prescriptive. Although Baptist leaders and churches are encouraged to consider its contents, no part of this study—descriptions of Baptist liturgical beliefs in the first chapter, principles of liturgical inculcation in the second chapter, chapter three’s guidelines for Baptist adaptation of those principles, or examples provided in the final chapter—is intended to require a particular method or result of

liturgical inculturation. Examples are not precedents to follow; they are provided to illustrate how specific congregations have begun the work of inculturation.

In a publication, now a decade and a half old, of the Baptist World Alliance, the editor cautioned, “Anyone attempting to identify practices which are universal to Baptists is either unusually courageous or simply uninformed!”¹ The author of the present study sincerely hopes that he falls under the former description. However, he graciously welcomes collegial discussion on the topic of liturgical inculturation among Baptists in the United States.

Baptist Beginnings in Britain

As any student of Baptist heritage knows, the tradition’s story begins, not in America, but in England and Holland during the seventeenth century. It has its roots in seventeenth-century reform movements, particularly those that were considered to be radical dissent such as Puritanism, Separatism, and possibly Anabaptism.² When John Smyth and Thomas Helwys led their small nonconformist congregation from Gainsborough to Amsterdam in 1607, they came into contact with a group of Dutch Anabaptists who lived there. During his time in Holland, Smyth wrote “The Character of the Beast or The False Constitution of the Church,” in which he asserted that infants should not be baptized and that those converted to Christianity should be admitted into the church by baptism.³ The doctrine of believer’s baptism may have been influenced by

1. Baptist World Alliance, *We Baptists: One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism: Baptist World Alliance*, ed. by James Leo Garrett (Franklin, TN: Providence House, 1999), 52.

2. Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1987), 49 and following.

3. John Smyth, *The Works of John Smyth, Fellow of Christ’s College, 1594-8*, tercentenary ed. for the Baptist Historical Society, notes and biography by W. T. Whitley (Cambridge: University Press, 1915), 2:563.

Anabaptists, but scholarship has not come to agreement on this point. Some scholars assert that Anabaptists influenced early Baptists by preparing the way for Separatism and by leading some to go beyond Separatism to accept believer's baptism.⁴ Other historians maintain that Baptists simply took Separatist beliefs to their logical conclusion, and that every distinctive Baptist belief is inherent within Separatism.⁵ Whatever the case, in 1609 the Smyth and Helwys congregation changed its belief regarding membership to believer's baptism and re-formed according to this requirement. Thus they were labeled "Baptists."

Early British Baptists consisted of two major groups who shared much in common but differed on their theological views of atonement and church organization. The earliest Baptist congregations were General Baptists who believed in a "general" atonement, the effect of which is that anyone who voluntarily believes in Christ can be saved.⁶ This tradition's ecclesial structure tended to limit congregational autonomy by allowing associations to have significant influence. Particular Baptists, in contrast, held to "particular" atonement; they believed that the effect of Christ's death was definitive for those who would be saved. Particular Baptists became the larger of the two groups, although they formed a generation after General Baptists, with the earliest church dating to the 1630s.⁷ In Particular Baptist church structure, congregations had full authority while associations acted in advisory capacities. General and Particular Baptists each devised confessions of faith, and several of these early confessions, especially the First

4. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 53.

5. Ibid., 49.

6. Ibid., 21.

7. Ibid., 22.

London Confession of the Particular Baptists (1644), influenced the shape and direction of Baptist life for generations to come.

Although the degree of influence that Dutch Anabaptists had on the early British Baptists is disputable, certainly the Baptists shared many theological and liturgical inclinations with Puritans and other English Separatists. Separatists and Puritans developed in the context of Anglicanism, but they drew heavily from the Reformed tradition. Calvin's vague guidelines for worship did not satisfy them, however, so they subscribed to rigorous biblicism for directing their liturgical practice. Liturgical scholar James White writes that they may be distinguished from their Reformed forebears by their preference for making liturgical decisions at the local level rather than in a hierarchical system.⁸ White explains that, for these Baptist predecessors, "relevance really has a priority almost equal to biblical authority, so that relevance and authenticity are united."⁹ Individual congregations ordered their own worship, prayers could be extempore, and sermons were written for specific congregations.

Puritans attempted to reform the Church of England from within by returning to the faith and practice of earliest Christianity; they were concerned with authentic inward commitment and outward manifestation of piety through moral behavior.¹⁰ White's discussion of the Puritan agenda of reform concludes that the primary divisive issue between Puritans and the Church of England was neither polity nor theology, but liturgy. Puritans believed that Anglicans did not go far enough in their liturgical reformation and

8. James F. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989), 119.

9. Ibid., 119.

10. E. Glenn Hinson, "Theology and Experience of Worship: A Baptist View," *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 22, no. 4 (December 1, 1977): 418-419.

lobbied against the use of vestments, objectionable practices in communion, and ceremonialism in general. Horton Davies writes, “First and foremost the Puritans were the champions of the authority of the ‘pure Word of God’ as the criterion not only for church doctrine, but also for church worship and church government.”¹¹ This presented practical problems of biblical interpretation, but congregations trusted that they could reach a consensus on worship that was completely obedient to God’s will.

Puritans insisted on scriptural warrant for liturgical conventions and could find none that supported these lingering customs. Wider availability of scripture also affected their individual piety and they demanded sermons with biblical emphasis. Sermons were long in Puritan worship services, often over an hour, and were considered central to the gathering. The value of relevance was manifest in preaching as well as prayer, and the latter could be either written or extempore. In accordance with their liturgical biblicism, the Puritans opposed the singing of human-composed hymns and allowed only psalms, or their metrical paraphrases, to be sung in corporate worship. Finding no scriptural basis for instrumental or choral music in worship, the Puritans banned it from their gatherings.

In contrast to Puritans, Separatists formed their own independent congregations, some out of principle and others out of pragmatism. They viewed the Puritan agenda of reform from within as maintaining communion with a “promiscuous multitude,” and opposed it as vehemently as they resisted the established church.¹² The Lord’s Supper was a central liturgical concern of Separatists, and they insisted upon the importance of worthy communicants. They abandoned set forms of worship, and their services included

11. Horton Davies, *The Worship of the English Puritans* (London: Dacre Press, 1948), 49.

12. White, *Protestant Worship*, 120.

a lengthy time of prayer, a lengthier sermon, and commentary on the sermon by a member of the laity.¹³

Early Baptists shared many of the liturgical principles and emphases of Puritans and Separatists. Scripture was their supreme liturgical criterion. The Second London Confession (1677) states, “But the acceptable way of Worshipping the true God, is instituted by himself; and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshipped according to the imaginations, and devices of Men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representations, or any other way, not prescribed in the Holy Scriptures.”¹⁴ Appropriate worship practices listed by the Confession are scripture, preaching, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, and teaching and admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.¹⁵

The earliest record of a Baptist worship service is found in a 1609 letter from Hughe and Anne Bromhead, members of Smyth’s Separatist congregation:

The order of the worshippe and goverment of oure church is .1. we begynne wth A prayer, after reade some one or tow chapters of the bible gyve the sence therof, and conferr vpon the same, that done we lay aside oure bookes, and after a solemne prayer made by the .1. speaker, he propoundeth some text owt of the Scripture, and prophecieth owt of the same, by the space of one hower, or thre Quarters of an hower. After him standeth vp A .2. speaker and prophecieth owt of the said text the like tyme and space, some tyme more some tyme lesse. After him the .3. the .4. the .5. &c as the tyme will geve leave, Then the .1. speaker concludeth wth prayer as he began wth prayer, wth an exhortatation to contribution to the poore, wch collection being made is also concluded wth prayer. This Morning exercise begynes at eight of the clocke and continueth vnto

13. Ibid., 121.

14. “Confession of Faith put forth by the Elders and Brethren of many Congregations of Christians (baptized upon Profession of their Faith) in London and the Country,” article XXII:1, in William L. Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 2nd ed., rev. Bill J. Leonard (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 2011), 276-277.

15. Ibid., article XXII:3-5, in Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 2nd ed., rev. Leonard, 277-278.

twelve of the clocke the like course of exercise is observed in the afternowne from .2. of the clock vnto .5. or .6. of the Clocke. last of all the execution of the goverment of the church is handled.¹⁶

The basic pattern outlined by the Bromheades consists of prayer, scripture reading, exposition and prophecy from scripture, exhortation, and collection of money. These elements continued to have prominence in Baptist churches for many decades and, some may argue, even to the present time.

The Helwys church's confession of 1611 adds the ordinance of the Lord's Supper and is more generic with its instruction to "praise God" and "perform all other parts of spiritual communion."¹⁷ In 1695, the Paul's Alley church, a Particular Baptist congregation in London, merged with a General Baptist church in the area. Their forming agreement gives a short description of worship:

That the publick Worship in the Congregation on the Lord's Day be thus pformed, viz. In the morning about half an hour after nine, some Brother be apointed to begin the Exercise in reading a Psalm, & then to spend some time in Prayer; & after yt to read some other Portion of H. Scripture, till the Minister comes into the Pulpit; and after Preaching & Prayer to conclude wth singing a Psalm.¹⁸

This account, written several decades after the establishment of the first Baptist congregations, shows the same basic pattern of scripture, prayer, and exposition, with the addition of a sung Psalm at the end of the service.

Most English Puritans and Separatists opposed hymn singing in the early seventeenth century but sang metrical Psalms in worship. While Particular Baptists

16. Champlin Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research* (Cambridge: University Press, 1912), 2:176-177.

17. "A Declaration of Faith of English People Remaining at Amsterdam in Holland," in Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 2nd ed., rev. Leonard, 112.

18. Baptist Historical Society (Great Britain), "Paul's Alley, Barbican, 1695-1768," *Transactions of the Baptist Historical Society* 4 (1914): 47, accessed October 18, 2014, http://www.biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_tbhs_02.php.

followed suit, General Baptists rejected all forms of congregational singing for over a century after their formation. Parties on both sides of the issue argued from the regulative principle, that worship should be ordered according to principles found in scripture. Isaac Marlow, a leading opponent of singing in worship, held that biblical references to “singing” meant it was a spiritual practice, noting that Ephesians 5:19-20 and Colossians 3:16 instruct believers to make music with gratitude in their hearts to the Lord.¹⁹ In his tract, *The Breach Repaired in God’s Worship*, Benjamin Keach supported hymn singing by asserting that scripture prescribes singing, and it is both a moral and a positive duty. Keach was the first to establish hymn singing as a practice in the regular worship of any English church. He began using hymns with his Particular Baptist congregation in the 1670s and produced his own collections of hymns during the next two decades.²⁰ Although some General Baptist congregations began singing psalms in the early eighteenth century, as a whole General Baptists did not begin to adopt hymn singing in worship until the late eighteenth century.

Early Baptists in the United States

Liturgical and Musical Traditions

The first Baptist church in America was founded in 1639 at Providence, Rhode Island, and twenty-three others were established in New England and the middle colonies during the seventeenth century. These congregations were small, each averaging fewer

19. David W. Music and Paul A. Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*”: *A History of Baptist Hymnody in North America* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008), 11.

20. Ibid., 12-13.

than thirty-five members.²¹ Music in Baptist worship generally reflected the music of other denominations in America at the time, although Baptists were typically slower than many other traditions to incorporate musical innovations in their worship.²² As in England, Particular versus General Baptist orientation was often the source of conflict over congregational singing. This is seen in the history of First Baptist Church, Providence. Although the congregation used psalmody in worship during its early years, the practice was discontinued for over a century, probably due to its adoption of General Baptist tenets in 1652.²³ Other churches underwent similar liturgical controversies during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The Philadelphia Baptist Association used the Second London Confession as the basis for its 1742 Philadelphia Confession and included new articles by Benjamin and Elias Keach about the laying on of hands and singing. Article XXIII, on singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, states that singing the praises of God in public assemblies is an ordinance of Christ.²⁴ Most Baptists in America accepted the practice of singing in worship by 1750, and objections were virtually silenced by 1800.²⁵

Baptists gradually abandoned the use of psalmody during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and congregations looked to the compositions of Baptist

21. Ibid., 72.

22. David W. Music, “Music in the First Baptist Church of Boston, Massachusetts, 1665-1820,” in Harry Eskew, David W. Music, and Paul A. Richardson, *Singing Baptists: Studies in Baptist Hymnody in America* (Nashville, TN: Church Street Press, 1994), 34.

23. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 72.

24. “The Philadelphia Confession, 1742,” in Lumpkin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, 2nd ed., rev. Leonard, 367.

25. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 79.

composers as well as those of other denominations for use in worship. The first American Baptist tunebook was compiled by Samuel Holyoke, a Congregationalist, and published in 1804. Its short title was *The Christian Harmonist*, and its long title specified that it was designed for use in Baptist Churches in the United States. Holyoke chose texts that were commonly used among American Baptists, and a wide variety of composers, both American and English, are represented. Musical developments among Baptists continued to reflect those of other denominations, including the formation of choirs by the end of the eighteenth century and introduction of instruments into worship by the early nineteenth century.

The First Great Awakening and Separate Baptists

The First Great Awakening, a revival movement that swept through the American colonies during the 1730s and 1740s, began among Presbyterians and Congregationalists. Its beginnings are traced to Theodore Frelinghuysen and Gilbert Tennet, and it was bolstered by the influence of Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. The Awakening produced tension in many communities, and churches frequently split into two parties, with one favoring the movement and the other opposing it.

Although Baptists in America initially were ambivalent toward the revival movement, it proved to be a turning point for them. In the late 1720s, prior to the beginning of the Awakening, Baptists had established thirty-two churches in America with 1,699 members. By 1790, Baptists had 978 churches with 67,320 members.²⁶ Congregationalists who favored the Awakening were significant contributors to this

26. Pamela R. Durso, and Keith E. Durso, *The Story of Baptists in the United States* (Brentwood, TN: Baptist History and Heritage Society, 2006), 45.

growth. Some left their churches in an attempt to form more pure congregations, and many of these groups adopted the doctrine of believer's baptism. About half of these Separates became Baptists.²⁷

Embracing the spirit of revival, Separate Baptist churches grew quickly. They rejected confessions of faith and held that the Bible, along with the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit, should serve as the norm for life, faith, and practice. The doctrine of Separate Baptists was controversial to the more traditional Regular Baptists, who charged them with deserting Calvinist orthodoxy. Separate Baptist worship was comparatively more passionate and emotional; boisterous preaching ended with an altar call. They fully accepted the practice of congregational singing and became known for the enthusiasm with which they sang.²⁸ In addition to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, Separate Baptists found scriptural precedent for love feasts, laying on of hands, foot washing, anointing of the sick, the right hand of fellowship, the kiss of charity, and dedication of children.

The Sandy Creek Tradition

Shubal Stearns, a Separate Baptist from the northern colonies, founded a Baptist church in 1755 at Sandy Creek, North Carolina. During the next two decades, Sandy Creek Baptist Church experienced substantial growth, produced many preachers, and became the mother church for over forty Baptist congregations on the frontier. These churches formed the Sandy Creek Baptist Association. Much that is distinctive in

27. Ibid., 47.

28. Music and Richardson, "*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*," 79.

Southern Baptist life, Baptist historian Walter Shurden suggests, can be traced to the customs of this group of Baptists.

In a 1981 lecture, Shurden described a “Southern Baptist synthesis” of traditions that was shaped during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries. The most significant of these traditions were the “Sandy Creek Tradition” and the “Charleston Tradition.” The Sandy Creek Tradition is characterized by biblicism, deep pietism, and emotionally identifiable experiences. The word that underscores the tradition is “ardor,” which “expressed itself in individualism, congregationalism, Biblicism, and egalitarianism. [Sandy Creek Baptists] released a devotion to freedom which is without parallel in Baptist history.”²⁹ These Baptists planned and participated in worship that was revivalistic. Shurden describes their praise as horizontal: “They did not praise God by praising God; they praised God by reaching women and men.”³⁰ Their musical repertory was likely centered around the hymns of Isaac Watts and folk hymn tunes.

The Charleston Tradition

The Charleston Tradition stands in contrast to the Sandy Creek Tradition. Charleston was the hub of Baptist activity in the southern colonies during the eighteenth century, and the First Baptist Church of Charleston was the most influential church in the region for many years. The tradition of this church, as well as the wider Charleston Association, was rooted in the Particular Baptist beliefs and practices. Shurden summarizes the Charleston Tradition as “order.” In regard to liturgy, he writes, the

29. Walter B. Shurden, “The Southern Baptist Synthesis: Is It Cracking?” *Baptist History and Heritage* 16, no. 2 (April 1, 1981): 4.

30. Ibid., 5.

Charleston Tradition “represented a style in public worship that was ordered and stately, though pulsating with evangelical warmth . . . Worship appeared to be neither spontaneously charismatic nor primarily revivalistic. It was directed toward heaven, not earth.”³¹ These churches valued the ordinances more than many of their successors, and they sang standard psalm and hymn texts and tunes.

The Second Great Awakening and Revivalism

American Baptists drew their music from three streams during the early- to mid-nineteenth century: tunes of British or Anglo-Genevan origin, those from the Northern singing school tradition, and those from the folk hymn idiom. The former two streams dominated the worship repertory of churches in the Charleston Tradition, while those in the Sandy Creek Tradition sang primarily Northern singing school tunes and folk hymn tunes.³²

During the first half of the nineteenth century, Protestants in the United States experienced another revival movement known as the Second Great Awakening. It began around 1790, gained momentum around 1800, and reached its peak by the 1840s. Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian congregations, whose preachers spearheaded the movement, enjoyed rapid increases in membership after the 1820s. New denominations were also formed, along with non-denominational churches, and many converts of the Awakening believed that it signaled a new millennial age.

Revivalism during the Second Great Awakening took on two forms: one in rural frontier settings and the other in urban centers. Many frontier settlers lived in

31. Ibid., 4.

32. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story,*” 303-304.

communities without authorized houses of worship or ordained ministers, and camp meetings led by itinerant preachers were an innovative response to the situation. These religious services, often four or five days in length, also served as social venues.³³ Having traveled several miles to the camp meeting, attendees often camped at the meeting site for the duration of the event. Camp meetings were characterized by extreme emotionalism among the preachers and attendees, emphasizing conversion and morality, while downplaying formal theology.³⁴

Common liturgical activities at camp meetings included preaching, praying, singing, and communion. The camp meeting fostered a tradition of hymn singing that was oral, improvisatory, and spontaneous. Attendees learned songs by rote, and texts and tunes were often adapted as required by the setting. The words and music were necessarily simple, and refrains, which are characteristic of camp meeting songs, were often added to existing hymn texts.³⁵ Lyrics were usually personal rather than corporate in nature. While the texts were compiled into collections for camp meeting use, many of their tunes were included in singing school manuals in the South and urban revival collections in the North.³⁶

Urban revivalism, which began around the turn of the nineteenth century and peaked during the 1830s and 1840s, typically took the form of evening services in a local

33. David W. Music and Paul Westermeyer, *Church Music in the United States: 1760-1901* (Saint Louis, MO: MorningStar Music Publishers, 2014), 59.

34. Charles A. Johnson, “Camp Meeting Hymnody,” *American Quarterly* 4, no. 2 (1952): 110-126.

35. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 307.

36. See Richard H. Hulan, “Frontiers of the American Hymn” in David Warren Steel, *The Makers of the Sacred Harp*, Music in American Life (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 57-69.

church that went on for several weeks at a time. These revival services were more restrained than rural camp meetings, but they, too, focused on conversion and rejoicing.³⁷ Revival hymnody was succeeded by gospel hymnody during the late nineteenth century.³⁸ The style of gospel songs was heavily influenced by popular secular music of the time. Gospel hymnody was prominent in Baptist worship during the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth, and Baptist hymnwriters contributed significantly to the genre.

United States Baptists in the Twentieth Century

Prior to the beginning of the twentieth century, Baptists had begun the work of forming denominations. The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), by far the largest Baptist denomination in the United States, was formed in 1845 when Baptists in the South split from the Triennial Baptist Convention. Shurden believes that the Southern Baptist spirit was solidified around institutions and movements in the first half of the twentieth century. These included foreign and home mission boards, colleges and seminaries, the Women's Missionary Union, and the Baptist Sunday School Board. The last of these was most significant to Southern Baptist life. In addition to literature and educational materials, the Sunday School Board published "the first 'Southern Baptist Book of Common Prayer'—the *Broadman*, and later, *Baptist Hymnal*."³⁹ These hymnals exemplify the common repertory of Baptist churches provided by their denominations.

37. Music and Westermeyer, *Church Music in the United States*, 75.

38. Music and Richardson, "I Will Sing the Wondrous Story," 333.

39. Shurden, "The Southern Baptist Synthesis," 9.

Such publications reached their height during the mid-twentieth century, and the latter half of the century showed decreasing confidence in denominational structures.

Denominational Fragmentation and Re-formation

Shurden, speaking in 1981, outlined several stressors that had cracked what he called the “Southern Baptist synthesis.” Geographical expansion of the denomination had placed cultural stress on it: “While still a predominantly regional, white, middle-class denomination, the synthesis is beginning to be challenged by cultural diversity.”⁴⁰ Cultural pluralism continued to challenge the denomination during the end of the century. In addition to cultural stress, Shurden noted an ecumenical threat to denominational loyalty. This threat did not come from the twentieth-century ecumenical movement, which Southern Baptists largely avoided, but from loyalty to other, non-Baptist organizations and movements such as Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority. In addition to these were financial, creedal, and theological stressors.

The last half of the twentieth century saw an intense struggle for control of resources and ideological direction within the SBC. This disagreement, called the conservative resurgence by its initiators and the fundamentalist takeover by its detractors, polarized Southern Baptists according to their conservative or moderate stances and resulted in fragmentation of the SBC. While conservative leaders tightened doctrinal control over institutions and churches, a group of moderates attempted to preserve what it perceived to be historic Baptist principles and traditions within the SBC. When the moderates were edged out of the Convention by conservatives, many of them formed the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship.

40. Ibid., 10.

Baptists in the United States also experienced fragmentation beyond secessions from the SBC. Much of this is attributed to theological disagreements and differences in worship practices. Such schisms yielded new cooperation among Baptist congregations at regional, state, and national levels. For instance, churches of similar ethnic or cultural makeup allied to establish their own ministries and institutions, though most ethnic minority Baptists in the United States partnered with existing denominational bodies by the end of the century. Overall, twentieth-century denominational fragmentation and reformation reinforced the Baptist value of local church autonomy, especially among Baptists in the South. Baptist congregations were reminded of the historic Baptist tenet that placed them as ultimately responsible for their own doctrinal beliefs and patterns of worship.

Influence of Pentecostalism, the Liturgical Movement, and Ecumenism

A reformation, or revolution, of worship practices dominated the Christian landscape in the United States during the last four decades of the twentieth century. Movements such as Pentecostalism, liturgical reform, and ecumenism affected Catholics, mainline Protestants, and evangelicals. Pentecostalism originated in the early twentieth century among radical adherents to the Holiness Movement. It centers on direct personal experience with God through a second baptism, or baptism with the Holy Spirit. Pentecostal worship emphasizes the immediacy of the Spirit within the people, and it is not concerned with biblicism or liturgical structure. Theologian Donald Dayton notes that “much of the variety within Pentecostalism is derived from cultural factors.”⁴¹ Martin

41. Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Francis Asbury Press, 1987), 17.

Marty, in his introduction to Dayton's book, describes how Pentecostalism "seeped northward from its early mid-South and southeastern strongholds," and "now the undeprived upper-middle classes in Catholicism and some of mainstream Protestantism also have substantial Pentecostal movements."⁴² It has the remarkable ability to cut across social distinctions so that adherents are not restricted by gender, ethnicity, or social class.

Pentecostalism was accepted by some Baptist congregations before mid-century, particularly Free Will Baptists in North Carolina. As a whole, however, Pentecostal distinctives were not embraced by the religious mainstream prior to the 1950s. Writing in 1989, White noted increasing interaction among Pentecostal churches and between Pentecostals and other traditions: "This has moved many Pentecostals to closer affinity with evangelicals, especially those who worship in the Frontier tradition . . . The process [of ecumenical relations] has brought some assimilation from other traditions, most notably in the area of music."⁴³ During the last decades of the twentieth century, beliefs and practices of Pentecostalism made their way into mainstream congregations largely through the influence of the charismatic movement.

Many Baptists were attracted to the emotionalism of charismatic worship, and they adopted some practices from the tradition. Such practices, particularly the musical elements, became known as the "praise and worship" movement, and began to affect Baptists after the 1970s and 1980s. This populist approach led to a greater focus on worship by individual believers than on evangelizing the unconverted. Liturgically, the

42. Ibid., 10.

43. White, *Protestant Worship: Traditions in Transition*, 205.

praise and worship movement introduced a period of congregational singing that featured short choruses accompanied by popular music ensembles.⁴⁴ The singing of the assembly received increased attention when the movement merged with elements of Contemporary Christian Music in the 1990s, and music leaders simplified their styles to promote congregational participation. David Music and Paul Richardson compare this return to simplicity and participation to the nineteenth-century development of revival hymnody.⁴⁵

The liturgical movement began early in the twentieth century, reached a critical point during the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), and has since continued to prompt revision and reform of worship among both Catholics and Protestants. Broad results of the Council include liturgical reform and revision, emphasis on lay participation in the Catholic Church, and increased ecumenical dialogue with other Christian traditions. Music and Richardson suggest that, although Vatican II did not influence Baptists directly, some of the Council's ideas impacted traditions that are closer theological and cultural relatives of Baptists, who, in turn, discovered the viability of liturgical patterns and practices for their own worship.⁴⁶

Whether direct or indirect, the influence of the liturgical movement on Baptists may be seen in several areas. While the Catholic Church moved from Latin to vernacular in its liturgy, Baptists shifted from use of the King James Version to updated translations of scripture. The repertory of Baptists expanded during the last decades of the twentieth century to include more diverse musical styles as well as an increasing number of

44. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 465, 478.

45. Ibid., 478.

46. Ibid., 464.

composers and authors outside the Baptist tradition. The last half of the century also brought about increased awareness of the corporate act of worship and a return to emphasis on congregational singing. These developments not only attest to the influence of the liturgical movement, but also to the ecumenism through which the movement spread.

Twentieth-century ecumenism has its roots in the 1910 World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh. Following this landmark gathering, a series of councils and conferences led to the inauguration of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948. The WCC's goal is one faith and one eucharistic fellowship among its member churches, and it effectively supports the mission of the ecumenical church by facilitating dialogue and cooperation among its members, mission bodies, and representatives of other church traditions. In 1940, the WCC invited the Southern Baptist Convention to join the organization prior to its inauguration. The SBC declined for two reasons: the Convention lacked any ecclesiological authority, and it was sensitive to the danger of "totalitarian trends" that threatened the autonomy of its member churches.⁴⁷ Other Baptists in the United States, particularly the American Baptist Churches USA, have participated in ecumenical interaction through the WCC.

Baptists in the South were largely suspicious of ecumenism during the twentieth century.⁴⁸ However, encouragement toward ecumenism in worship has come from individuals such as Glenn Hinson, Timothy George, and Steven Harmon.⁴⁹ These

47. William Wright Barnes, *The Southern Baptist Convention, 1845-1953* (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1954), 286.

48. This suspicion was noted by Hinson in "Theology and Experience of Worship," 417-427.

49. See Hinson, "Theology and Experience of Worship"; Timothy George, "The Sacramentality of the Church: An Evangelical Baptist Perspective," in *Baptist Sacramentalism*, ed. Anthony R. Cross and

theologians encourage their fellow Baptists to look outside their own tradition when developing a vision for worship. Specifically, they advocate for the use of creeds in worship, liturgy as the context for spiritual formation, the recovery of Baptist sacramental theology, and the constructive retrieval of tradition.

The Core of Baptist Liturgical Theology

Baptist Identity and Theology

From the beginning of their faith tradition, Baptists have been suspicious of doctrinal and liturgical conformity. It is difficult to describe the beliefs of a Christian tradition that values congregational autonomy. Nevertheless, attempts have been made from various approaches. Most basically, Baptists understand themselves as sharing the beliefs of the early Christian church as expressed in the New Testament, and they affirm the core teachings of the Protestant reformers. They belong to a Free Church tradition that has included Anabaptists, Puritans and Separatists, and Frontier Christianity.⁵⁰ Beyond this, one may describe several basic distinctive beliefs of American Baptists.⁵¹

Philip E. Thompson (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003): 21-35; Steven R. Harmon, “Praying and Believing: Retrieving the Patristic Interdependence of Worship and Theology,” in *Towards Baptist Catholicity: Essays on Tradition and the Baptist Vision*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought 27 (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2006), 151-177.

50. James White names these three traditions of Free Church worship in *Protestant Worship*, 80, 117, 172.

51. The description of beliefs that follows is formed with reference to several sources: Baptist World Alliance, *We Baptists*, ed. James Leo Garrett; Brian C. Brewer, ed., *Distinctly Baptist: Proclaiming Identity in a New Generation* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2011); Walter B. Shurden, *The Baptist Identity: Four Fragile Freedoms* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 1993); and “Towards a Baptist Identity: A Statement Ratified by The Baptist Heritage Commission in Zagreb, Yugoslavia July, 1989” in Shurden, *The Baptist Identity*, 63-66.

Soul competency and priesthood of all believers. Baptist doctrine is undergirded by the concept of soul competency, the belief that God gives each individual the right and responsibility to make spiritual decisions.⁵² Baptist biblical scholar and theologian David E. Garland writes that this means that “no one, no pope, no college of cardinals, no bishops, no denomination, no association of churches can dictate to anyone what the truth of the gospel is.” However, Garland continues, “soul competency does not mean that sole competency belongs to [the individual]. The truth of the gospel is discerned in community.”⁵³ Due to their belief in soul competency, Baptists hold that faith is personal, and that every soul has direct access to God. They stress the experience of personal salvation through faith in Jesus and believe that the church consists only of believers.

Soul competency is related to Baptist belief in the priesthood of all believers. It should be noted, however, that the latter is a doctrine handed down from the Protestant Reformers; Luther, Calvin, and Zwingli each made distinct statements about every Christian being ordained to the priesthood of Christ.⁵⁴ There are no degrees of status among Christians; worshiping and witnessing should involve all believers. This is not to say that all members have the same function within the church, however. Pastors and deacons are ordained for the particular service of spiritual leadership.

52. Leon McBeth, “God Gives Soul Competency and Priesthood to All Believers,” in Charles W. Deweese, ed., *Defining Baptist Convictions: Guidelines for the Twenty-First Century* (Franklin, TN: Providence House Publishers, 1996), 63.

53. David E. Garland, “Conforming to Christ’s Spirit, Not to the Crowd: A Sermon on the Baptist Distinctive of Soul Competency,” in Brewer, ed., *Distinctly Baptist*, 40.

54. Joel C. Gregory, “Impersonating a Priest: A Sermon on the Baptist Distinctive of the Priesthood of All Believers,” in Brewer, ed., *Distinctly Baptist*, 46.

Ordinances. Faith in Jesus is symbolized in both baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptists believe the New Testament teaches that baptism is only for believers, and it is the means of initiation into the church. Immersion is the appropriate mode of baptism. Baptists hold that the Lord's Supper is an important feature of Christian worship, and it is observed congregationally as an act of remembrance, communion, thanksgiving, and hope.

Authority of scripture. Baptists believe that the Bible is the record of God's revelation to the world and the supreme written authority for faith and practice. The Bible is central in the lives of individuals and the church. However, beliefs differ in regard to interpretation of scripture.

Religious freedom. Related to the belief in soul competency, the passion for religious freedom is vital to Baptist identity. This means freedom from compulsion and coercion by the state government or national church in matters of religious faith and practice. Under the Lordship of Christ, local congregations are free to determine their membership and leadership, order their worship and ministry, and participate in the larger body of Christ.

Baptist Theology and Worship

British Baptist scholar Christopher Ellis asserts that "Baptist worship is not consciously constructed on the basis of a systematic theology of worship. However, in this exploration of the *spirituality* of Baptist worship a number of theological convictions have been gathered – core worship values which influence worship or are expressed in

it.”⁵⁵ Ellis is correct that Baptist worship is not rooted in a systematic theology, but is an embodiment of the community’s spirituality. The theological distinctives listed above influence the norms and values of American Baptist worship in a number of ways.

Authority of freedom under Christ. Mistrust of liturgical conformity, as well as the broader value of religious freedom, is the basis for Baptist freedom from uniform liturgical tradition. Local congregations are responsible for determining the patterns and contents of their own worship. This should not imply a lack of concern for order in worship but allows for freshness and adaptability. Traditional worship practices possess only the authority given to them by the congregation. This becomes restrictive if the congregation and its leadership are unaware of their own heritage and the heritages of other Christian traditions. If the church is acquainted with various liturgical practices, however, it has an expansive repository from which to develop its own conventions. All of this is assumed to take place under the Lordship of Christ, and Baptist worship, like that of many other Christian traditions, is inherently Christocentric.

Authority of scripture. Second to the authority of Christ is the guidance of scripture. The instinctual rule of scripture is prominent in Baptist worship. While the Bible does not provide a universal pattern for worship, it does provide examples of worship practices and, some argue, orders of worship. Public reading of scripture historically has been a major element of worship, biblical phrases are found in the songs Baptists sing, and exposition of scripture in the sermon is considered a fundamental part

55. Christopher J. Ellis, *Gathering: A Theology and Spirituality of Worship in Free Church Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 2004), 97. The core values of Baptist worship he lists are attention to scripture, devotion, community, and concern for the Kingdom.

of Baptist worship. This last practice is the most prominent use of scripture in Baptist worship today, and it attests to the authority of scripture in the lives of individuals.

Authority of relevance. Relevance to the local congregation may be considered a tertiary authority for Baptist worship. Baptists inherited from their Puritan predecessors an emphasis on the local congregation's independence from other influences. Whether rehearsed or extempore, sermons, prayers, and songs are expected to be pertinent to the life of the individual church and its congregants. For example, intercessory prayers historically are a significant part of Baptist worship, and although they are often voiced by an appointed leader, they represent the combined prayers of the entire congregation. Baptists cherish the freedom to tailor liturgical practices to their specific situations.

Individual and communal faith. On the whole, Baptist worship emphasizes the experience of individuals and hints at the bonds of community. Focus on individual faith is a product of the doctrine of soul competency, while the priesthood of all believers gives weight to the participation of the entire assembly in worship. Baptists assume that the liturgical actions performed by their pastors and deacons are done on behalf of congregants, not in place of them.

Personal salvation. Baptists hold a strong value for the personal experience of salvation, and Baptist worship often recalls such experience. The core practice of believer's baptism by immersion is a powerful symbol of personal salvation and of individual union with Christ in death and resurrection. Observance of the Lord's Supper often takes on an individualized meaning as congregants are encouraged to recall their need for salvation and Christ's atoning work through his death. Largely due to the

influence of revivalism, preaching in Baptist worship frequently entreats congregants to remember their salvation and encourages non-believers to consider their need for salvation.

Corporate faith. In addition to symbolizing personal faith, the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper also represent corporate faith. The entire church is reminded of corporate resurrection in Christ in the days to come as it observes the act of baptism. Participation in the Lord’s Supper is a corporate act of communion, thanksgiving, and hope. The focus in Baptist worship is both upward toward God and outward toward fellow congregants.

Dynamic Tensions in Baptist Theology and Worship

Several of the theological values described above present dynamic tensions in Baptist worship that require balance.

Freedom from and freedom for. Freedom from uniform liturgical tradition has been a proud point of Baptist heritage from the denomination’s founding. It has been obvious in the Baptist aversions to iconoclasm, sacerdotalism, and adornment of worship in general.⁵⁶ However, freedom *from* liturgical tradition carries with it freedom *for* liturgical tradition. David Nelson is not the first to note that “everyone who gathers to worship forms a liturgy of some sort, even if they do not do so self-consciously and

56. Ellis writes that the Baptist liturgical concern for simplicity and freedom “is evident in the lack of ceremonial activity and in the valuing of spontaneity . . . The scriptural principle had inevitably led to worship services which were stripped of anything which might be regarded as ‘ritual.’” Ellis, *Gathering*, 68.

reflectively.”⁵⁷ However, he is among the first to present a sound argument from the evangelical perspective that the interrelationship of doctrine and doxology directly affects the authenticity of the church’s worship. If Baptist belief is discussed and ordered, then theology and elements of Baptist worship should also be given serious attention.

White identifies two ways that freedom continues to impact worship in the Free Church in America. First, the order of worship developed by revivalism is still present among evangelicals, including many Baptists. He asserts that the order, which consists of preliminaries, a sermon, and a harvest, aims to change people rather than offer praise and glory to God.⁵⁸ The prayer and praise of the assembly is largely relegated to the preliminaries, and the sermon, placed close to the end of the service, is the chief focus. Second, White suggests that the notion of “freedom from” seems to be applied to planned reading of scripture. While the Roman Catholic Church and many Protestant denominations use a common lectionary to guide scripture readings in worship, many Baptists shy away from this practice. “It is an amazing contrast to go from a Roman Catholic Sunday Mass with three full lessons from Scripture plus a psalm to a so-called ‘evangelical’ service with only a few verses read as a sermon text,” White writes.⁵⁹ He attributes this to the evangelistic thrust of the nineteenth century. Revivalism only required a small selection of Bible verses to introduce a sermon, but a community of faith

57. David P. Nelson, “The Nicene Faith and Evangelical Worship,” in *Evangelicals and Nicene Faith: Reclaiming the Apostolic Witness*, ed. Timothy George, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 149.

58. James F. White, *Christian Worship in North America: A Retrospective, 1955-1995* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1997), 107.

59. Ibid., 108.

needs a strong diet of scripture. Baptist liturgical freedom, in White's opinion, has been taken too far.

Ellis frames the discussion of freedom from tradition in a different way, noting that Baptists tend to be more concerned with the contents of worship than with its structure or sequence. He proposes that the two primary values for Baptists in worship are attention to scripture and the importance of devotion.⁶⁰ Although it is rarely given deep consideration, the order of Baptist worship tends to center itself on scripture and preaching. The importance of devotion plays out in participation in elements prior to the sermon and in personal response following the sermon. Baptists inherited a broad value for simplicity from other Christian traditions, and this value guides both the order and the contents of worship services.

Discussion of worship tradition in a Baptist congregation frequently amounts to an argument about how far back in its history the church should explore, and which tradition should be considered. It is important to remember that Baptist churches in America are relatively young; currently, no Baptist church in the United States is more than 375 years old, and many are much younger. If a congregation looks beyond its own history, it discovers the heritages of American Baptists, English Separatists, other Reformation traditions, the Catholic Church, and the early Christian church. Each of these holds multiple liturgical traditions, and Baptists are free to employ elements of these traditions as they wish.

Planning and spontaneity. The leadership of the Holy Spirit is the issue at stake in the tension between planned worship elements and spontaneity in the worship event.

60. Ellis, *Gathering*, 74.

Historically, the prevailing notion among Baptists has been that worship should be free of set forms imposed from outside the local congregation. Some have taken this principle further to assert that worship should not include any elements—such as printed prayers—that are prepared in advance. However, this idea has been challenged by several practices over the last four centuries. First, music, which was not a worship practice of the earliest Baptists, is nearly always planned. Music and lyrics are composed prior to their use in worship, and extensive improvisation is impractical in congregational singing. Second, while early General Baptists engaged in extemporaneous exposition of scripture during worship, today many, if not most, Baptist preachers prepare their sermons prior to the service. Third, Particular Baptists historically used written prayers in the congregational setting, and some contemporary churches have reclaimed this tradition.

Despite the increase of planned elements, many Baptists still value a significant degree of spontaneity in their worship. This is most commonly found in the greeting, pastoral prayers, and congregational response after the sermon. A balance has been sought as Baptists have begun to acknowledge that the Holy Spirit can work through both planning and spontaneity.

Personal piety and formal religion. Whereas theology and forms of religion can cross cultural borders, piety is more deeply rooted in the geography, heritage, and social conditions of an individual or group. During the historical period of pietism—seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—disenchantment with conventional church life was not due to doctrinal rebellion, but desire for a more intimate sense of community within churches.⁶¹ Baptists received from their progenitors a value for piety in addition to the doctrine and

61. White, *Protestant Worship*, 51.

practice of formal religion. Glenn Hinson notes, “The Puritan forbears of Baptists were really concerned with two things at the same time—authentic inward commitment, as opposed to mere formal confession, and outward manifestation of piety through good behavior and good deeds. The true test of worship would be whether it achieved these aims.”⁶² Pietistic tendencies also played a significant role in American revivals during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: “Revivalism sought to bring individuals to faith . . . The central concern of revivalism was with producing an individual relationship with God.”⁶³ As has been noted, such revivalism played a significant role in forming the liturgical heritage of Baptists in America.

Piety has long been a part of Baptist life, both in corporate worship and in individual living. Throughout his discussion of Baptist spirituality of worship, Ellis emphasizes the conviction that worship and prayer must be sincere; he explains that integrity and sincerity are dimensions of an interpersonal relationship with God and commitment to him in worship.⁶⁴ The spiritual relationship between the individual worshiper and God has a place of primacy in Baptist worship. Outward aids, such as rituals, music, and visuals, are intended to guide the inner thoughts and attitudes of congregants. The task of correlating personal piety with formal religion should be performed by local congregations as they consider their own beliefs and worship practices. It is crucial that Baptist churches work to apply the doctrines held in common by the assembly to practical concerns of daily life.

62. Hinson, “Theology and Experience of Worship,” 419.

63. White, *Christian Worship in North America*, 106. In regard to the First Great Awakening, see David W. Bebbington, *Baptists Through the Centuries: A History of a Global People* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 71-72.

64. Ellis, *Gathering*, 86.

Participation and leadership. Historically, Baptists have encouraged participation of the whole assembly in worship. Baptist founder John Smyth taught that any church member who had received an insight from the Holy Spirit in worship ought to share it with the congregation.⁶⁵ In early Baptist congregations, several congregants often performed exposition in a worship service.⁶⁶ Today the responsibility of exposition typically lies with the pastoral leadership of a congregation. White asserts that, because evangelicals have generally abandoned corporate prayer in favor of pastoral prayer, the sense of the community joining in the prayer of many voices is largely absent; the same has happened to musical portions of evangelical worship as choral music has replaced congregational song.⁶⁷ Ellis, however, notes that “even listening to the sermon is an active process where the worshiper offers to God their openness to the divine Word.”⁶⁸ It is impossible to determine whether congregants are listening actively or passively, but the assumption among Baptists is that the entire congregation participates in corporate worship, even when a single leader is preaching, praying, or singing.

Individuals and community. The dynamic tension between participation and leadership in Baptist worship points to the tension between individuals and community. White believes that one of the great losses resulting from nineteenth-century revivalism is that it “virtually ignored the Church as the community of faith where the Christian life is

65. Thomas R. McKibbens, “Our Baptist Heritage in Worship,” *Review and Expositor* 80, no. 1 (December 1, 1983): 55.

66. See the Bromhead’s record of the worship of Smyth’s congregation in Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research*, 2:176-177.

67. White, *Christian Worship in North America*, 107.

68. Ellis, *Gathering*, 92.

lived in the Body of Christ.”⁶⁹ While the New Testament church considered the assembly to be most important in worship, he argues, it is simply an option for modern evangelicals. White mistakenly identifies a personal encounter with God as the sole liturgical value among evangelicals. Certainly the personal experience of salvation, as well as ongoing piety, is an emphasis of the Baptist tradition, but it is not the only concern in worship. For Baptists, the church is considered to be those who are part of the worshiping assembly, and the local congregation is the normative expression of the church. Worship is a participatory act in which the community expresses its common beliefs, and so Baptists express the theological significance of individual faith. They bear witness to what God has done in the life of the church and in the lives of individuals. When Baptist worship is at its best, it is theocentric, its means of participation are anthropocentric, and each element of Baptist worship is presumed to be both communal and personal. The challenge for churches is to remind their members that worship is not performed *for* the congregation, but *by* the congregation, and to ensure that it is meaningful and formative for both individuals and the worshiping community. The latter is the objective of liturgical inculcation.

69. White, *Christian Worship in North America*, 106.

CHAPTER TWO

Principles of Liturgical Inculcation

As a branch of liturgical study, inculcation touches a wide range of topics. Broadly, it joins the church's liturgy with the culture that surrounds it. Liturgy itself has relationships with church history, theology and personal piety, processes of teaching and training, ordinances and sacraments, music, visual art, architecture, and ritual studies. Culture, an idea that anthropologists and sociologists have long struggled to define, is a complex of interrelated systems. English anthropologist Edward B. Tylor described culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities or habits acquired by man as a member of society."¹ With social, economic, political, religious, and educational influences surrounding it, culture addresses at least as many subjects as liturgical studies.

While the scope of liturgical inculcation is indistinct, the need for it is clear. Anscar Chupungco, a Roman Catholic liturgist whose work on the topic is seminal, writes, "For sacramentals and catechesis to be relevant, they need to be inculturated. For the liturgy to relate to the religious experience of a large segment of the Church, it must interact with popular religiosity."² Inculcation of liturgy, the work of the people in the

1. Edward B. Tylor, *Primitive Culture: Researches into the Development of Mythology, Philosophy, Religion, Language, Art, and Custom*, 6th ed. (New York: G. P. Putnam's sons, 1920), 1.

2. Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculcation: Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 11.

worship of God, is necessary for Christians' communion with God and with one another.³

It is necessary for the spiritual formation of individual believers as well as congregations.

Finally, it is necessary for the ongoing mission of redemption that God is accomplishing through the church.

Liturgical Inculturation in Church History

One can reasonably assert that liturgical inculturation is as old as the Christian church itself. Dutch Reformed missiologist David Bosch notes that “the Christian faith never exists except as ‘translated’ into a culture.”⁴ By the fifth century, the church had developed local liturgical rites, including Syriac, Greek, Roman, Coptic, Armenian, Ethiopian, and Maronite. Additional localized liturgical forms, such as the Mozarabic, Celtic, and Sarum rites, were developed during the following centuries. As an example of early inculturation, the Roman cultural characteristics of solemnity, simplicity, and practicality are evident in the texts and rituals of the Roman rite. In the eighth century, churches under the emperors Pepin the Short and Charlemagne adapted Roman liturgical texts and rites to Franco-Germanic cultural tradition. This Gallican rite was characterized by ornate language and elaborate rituals, and later was combined with the Roman liturgy.

The tradition of liturgical adaptation was halted in the sixteenth century by the Roman Catholic Council of Trent. In reaction to the Protestant challenge, the Council leaders rejected many Reformation principles as well as the national and cultural

3. I have based this simplistic definition on the Greek word *leitourgia*, which literally means “work of the people.” Definitions of “liturgy” vary widely. Anscar J. Chupungco writes that “liturgy can be defined in a variety of ways depending upon the aspect one wishes to stress . . . no single definition is able to capture its nature and purpose.” Chupungco, *What, Then, Is Liturgy?: Musings and Memoir* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2010), 51.

4. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, American Society of Missiology Series 16 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 448.

variations encouraged by the reformers. They insisted on strict liturgical and theological uniformity in an attempt to protect Catholic unity. Aylward Shorter points out the tragedy that this coincided with an age of exploration and discovery of new continents and cultures. “Uniformity implied a Western, homogenous, ethnocentric view of culture, and a bias towards its Latin origins,” he writes. “The practical effect of this standardization was to ally the Church with colonizers and conquistadors, reinforcing their belief in Western cultural superiority.”⁵ The Roman liturgy, with its texts and rituals, was mandated for all Roman Catholics, including those in non-European cultures. However, as Western missionaries continued to spread Christianity to peoples they encountered, they found a need for strategies to aid conversion by bridging cultural gaps. These strategies were variously termed accommodation, adaptation, or indigenization. They did not modify Western theology, but only dealt with surface matters such as non-sacramental rites and liturgical elements.

The nineteenth and twentieth centuries saw the promotion of Western anthropological thought, rise of nationalism in the Third World, and maturation of churches outside of the West. At the same time, Catholic clergy such as Prosper Louis Pascal Guéranger, Lambert Beauduin, Ildefons Herwegen, and Pius Parsch began a movement that was concerned with congregational participation in the liturgy. Their efforts brought liturgical concerns to Rome’s attention, and Pope Pius XII’s 1947 encyclical *Mediator Dei* affirmed a more accurate understanding of the sacred liturgy, acknowledging that it includes both divine and human elements. The liturgical movement brought the topic of liturgy to the forefront of discussion and, at the same time, the

5. Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (London: Chapman, 1988), 154.

plurality of cultures led to a plurality of theologies among churches around the world.

The Catholic Church gradually accepted the necessity of theological inculturation under the leadership of Paul VI and John Paul II. The Second Vatican Council addressed the principles, criteria, and norms of liturgical inculturation (which it called adaptation) in four articles of its *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. The most significant permission for inculturation was granted in article 38:

Provisions shall also be made, when revising the liturgical books, for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in mission lands, provided that the substantial unity of the Roman rite is preserved; and this should be borne in mind when drawing up the rites and devising rubrics.⁶

The Council placed such adaptations under the authority of local bishops, within the limits set by the typical editions of liturgical books.

Protestantism followed a similar path during the twentieth century; mission efforts highlighted the need for a better understanding of faith and culture. In 1978 the Lausanne Committee of World Evangelization sponsored a Consultation on Gospel and Culture in Willowbank, Bermuda. The resulting Willowbank Report outlined a method of inculturation known as “dynamic equivalence,” which became a favored model among both Catholic and Protestant liturgists. Other models of contextualization that have informed theological inculturation to a lesser extent include translation, anthropological, praxis, synthetic, transcendental, and adaptation.⁷

6. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* [Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy], December 4, 1963, article 38, in Thomas C. O’Brien, ed., *Documents on the Liturgy 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial Texts*, International Committee on English in the Liturgy (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982). Articles 37-40 address norms for adapting the liturgy to the culture and traditions of peoples.

7. For detailed discussion of methods and models of theological inculturation, see Gerald A. Arbuckle, *Earthing the Gospel: An Inculcation Handbook for Pastoral Workers* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990); Stephen B. Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, rev. ed., Faith and Cultures Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002); Robert J. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1985); and Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*.

Bosch, who is best known for his work on post-colonial Christian mission, discusses theological inculturation as one element of an emerging ecumenical missionary paradigm. Christians began to integrate the church's nature and its mission during the twentieth century, he writes, and "in the emerging ecclesiology, *the church is seen as essentially missionary . . . the church exists in being sent and in building up itself for the sake of its mission.*"⁸ One of Bosch's primary theological tenets is that the mission of the Christian church has always been incarnational, so inculturation is natural and essential for the church.

Bosch describes several differences between inculturation and its predecessors of adaptation, accommodation, and indigenization.⁹ First, the work of inculturation relies on the Holy Spirit and the local church community, whereas accommodation was supervised by visiting missionaries. Second, rather than developing manifestations of the universal church in specific locations, inculturation emphasizes the context of the local church in which the universal church exists. Third, it follows the model of the incarnation: The church is born anew in each cultural context. Fourth, inculturation embraces all of culture rather than Christianizing isolated elements and customs. This requires a double movement: Christianity is inculcated and, at the same time, culture is Christianized.¹⁰ The gospel offers understanding of the divine mystery to a culture and simultaneously helps the culture develop expressions of Christian life according to its own tradition.

8. Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 372.

9. Bosch discusses these differences in detail in *Transforming Mission*, 453-455.

10. This same idea is expressed in Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Varietates Legitimaee* [Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy: Fourth Instruction for the Right Application of the Conciliar Constitution on the Liturgy], article 4, Adoremus, accessed October 10, 2014, http://www.adoremus.org/doc_inculturation.html.

Although articles 37 through 40 of the *Sacrosanctum Concilium* addressed adapting the liturgy to cultures, it was not until thirty years later that the Catholic Church took up the issue in more detail. Published in 1994 by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Varietates Legitimae* describes the historical background of liturgical inculturation, requirements for inculturation, principles and norms for inculturation of the Roman rite, and areas of adaptation in the Roman rite. Chupungco was a key framer of this document—he had published his *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis* two years earlier—and it echoes the liturgist’s theological, cultural, and liturgical criteria for inculturation.¹¹ Chupungco’s work serves as the foundation for discussion of liturgical inculturation among Catholics.

Catholic Principles of Liturgical Inculturation

In his systematic theology from a liturgical perspective, Geoffrey Wainwright uses the fifth-century axiom *lex orandi, lex credendi* to discuss the relationship between worship and doctrine. Worship influences doctrine and doctrine influences worship, but Catholics and Protestants tend to take opposing approaches to this idea. Wainwright summarizes the two ways of thinking as agreement and difference:

Both Catholicism and Protestantism consider that there is properly a complementary and harmonious relation between worship and doctrine, and that it is the business of worship and doctrine to express the Christian truth. They tend to differ on the question of which of the two, doctrine or worship, should set the pace, and they differ profoundly on the question of whether either or both—the Church’s worship or its doctrine—may fall into error.¹²

11. Mark R. Francis, “The Future of Liturgical Inculturation and the Contribution of Anscar J. Chupungco, OSB,” *Liturgy* 29, no. 3 (April 15, 2014): 8.

12. Geoffrey Wainwright, *Doxology: The Praise of God in Worship, Doctrine, and Life: A Systematic Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 252.

The primary approach taken by Catholic theologians, particularly during the last four centuries, is that doctrine is influenced by liturgy. Protestants will find this explanation helpful in understanding why the Catholic magisterium so closely safeguards its liturgy.

Since the liturgy is a deposit of faith from which doctrine may be drawn, liturgical inculturation opens a path for a plurality of theologies to make their way into the church. Obviously, Christian dogma must withstand theological threats, so Catholic liturgists refer to typical editions of liturgical texts as their norm. The *Sacrosanctum Concilium* assumes the typical editions will be the basis of the work of adaptation: “Within the limits set by the typical editions of the liturgical books, it shall be for the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority mentioned in Art. 22, 2, to specify adaptations.”¹³ Chupungco affirms that “after Vatican II, inculturation, for local Churches belonging to the Roman liturgical tradition or family, should normally start from existing models, and in practice the models are the typical editions of the liturgical books published by the Vatican after the council.”¹⁴ However, he notes, these editions are far from straightforward, and “the principle elements of the typical editions need thorough examination” of their historical background, theology, pastoral and spiritual concerns, and possibilities for inculturation.¹⁵

Terms and Definitions

With the typical editions as the starting point for inculturation, Chupungco endeavors to clarify the meanings of the multitudinous terms associated with

13. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 39.

14. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 32.

15. Ibid., 33.

inculturation. He is careful to mention that each term is nuanced, and there is no hard and fast definition of each one. Their meanings are derived from past and contemporary liturgical literature. He begins with a term from the era of colonial missions, indigenization, which “refers to the process of conferring on Christian liturgy a cultural form that is native to the local community.”¹⁶ Use of this term presents two problems. The first is that “something is indigenous when it originates in or is produced, grows, and lives naturally in its own region or environment. In this sense, nothing can be made native or indigenous in foreign soil.”¹⁷ The liturgy may be grafted onto cultures outside of its origin, but this does not make it indigenous to them. The second problem is determining which elements of a culture are indigenous. Retrieval of archaic cultural elements tends to alienate the contemporary populace, and most societies today represent complex integrations of multiple cultures. If one could create a liturgy indigenous to the United States, for instance, it would exclude all non-native ethnic communities.

Contextualization made its way into the church’s vocabulary during the 1970s through the influence of the World Council of Churches. It represents a pastoral agenda to ensure that the church’s theology, worship, and mission are influenced by the context in which it exists. For example, in the many parts of the world dominated by struggle for political, economic, and cultural freedom, contextualization means actively moving toward liberation. Theological reflection in these locations, often characterized as “liberation theology,” necessarily gains access to worship through contextualization.

16. Ibid., 14.

17. Ibid., 16

Influenced by the liturgical movement, the *Sacrosanctum Concilium* repeatedly uses the term revision when prescribing the work needed in reexamining the typical editions. Chupungco believes that “revision suggests that the liturgical books, in this case the Tridentine books, are looked over again in order to correct, amend, improve, or update them.”¹⁸ The Second Vatican Council did not intend for new typical editions to be produced, but for the editions to be restored to the simplicity and sobriety that characterized the classical form of the Roman Rite.¹⁹ Such revision would make the typical editions more practical for the work of adaptation.

Adaptation is the official expression used in the *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, found most prominently in articles 37 through 40. Chupungco explains that there are two types of adaptation in postconciliar typical editions, represented by use of the terms *aptatio* and *accomodatio*: “One type of adaptation pertains to the conference of bishops, which in this connection normally operates through the liturgical commission. The other type refers to what the minister can or should change in the celebration for pastoral reasons.”²⁰ *Aptatio* requires changes in the ritual of the church, while *accomodatio* is a temporary modification by the local minister. Overall, Chupungco believes, the term adaptation refers to the general agenda of church renewal through revision of the existing rites according to contemporary needs.

The Second Vatican Council used the incarnation as a paradigm for young churches, encouraging them to imitate Christ by becoming the church *in*, not just *of*, a

18. Ibid., 22.

19. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 34.

20. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 23.

particular locality. This inspired some liturgists to adopt the term incarnation as a substitute for adaptation. Chupungco writes that the incarnation is not merely an appropriate synonym for adaptation. It is more accurately the theological basis of liturgical adaptation: “The liturgy is not merely adapted; it is, as it were, hypostatically united with the traditions and culture of the local Church. In short, it is incarnated.”²¹ Out of reverence for the mystery of Christ’s incarnation, many Catholic liturgists object to use of the term as a method rather than a pattern.

In the 1980s, a group of liturgists began to suggest that adaptation be replaced by the newer term inculturation. “[Adaptation] is too closely associated with a dated theology and the missionary experiences of a Eurocentric church,” writes Gerald Arbuckle. “It connotes a one-way manipulation of cultures, not an openness to receive on the part of both parties in the dialogue.”²² Inculturation is different, he explains, because “the primary agent of inculturation is the living faith community, not the evangelizer.”²³ While adaptation still appears in official liturgical books, inculturation is now a familiar word among liturgists.

As a means of defining inculturation, Chupungco contrasts it with a similar word, acculturation. Acculturation occurs when two cultures interact with one another on the basis of mutual respect and tolerance. The two are placed side by side, but neither culture undergoes substantial change. Chupungco offers the example of liturgy during the Baroque period. Due to rigid rubrics, the official texts and rites of the Tridentine Mass

21. Ibid., 18.

22. Gerald A. Arbuckle, “Inculturation Not Adaptation: Time to Change Terminology,” *Worship* 60, no. 6 (November 1, 1986): 518.

23. Ibid.

did not incorporate the drama and exuberance of Baroque culture.²⁴ The liturgy and culture coexisted with minimal influence on one another. In contrast, Chupungco emphasizes that inculturation signifies not only an external adaptation, but also an internal transformation of cultural values through the rooting of Christianity in culture. He adds the dynamic of transculturation to his previous discussion of acculturation, meaning that the interacting agents of liturgy and culture retain their respective essential features throughout their mutual enrichment. Liturgy does not transform into culture, and neither does culture transform into liturgy, but each retains its identity while undergoing internal transformation. Finally, Chupungco gives a full sense of what liturgical inculturation is and what it does:

Liturgical inculturation, viewed from the side of the liturgy, may be defined as the process of inserting the texts and rites of the liturgy into the framework of the local culture. As a result, the texts and rites assimilate the people's thought, language, value, ritual, symbolic, and artistic pattern. Liturgical inculturation . . . means that liturgy and culture share the same pattern of thinking, speaking, and expressing themselves through rites, symbols, and artistic forms. In short, the liturgy is inserted into the culture, history, and tradition of the people among whom the Church dwells. It begins to think, speak, and ritualize according to the local cultural pattern.²⁵

The liturgy begins to appear as a reflection of local culture and, at the same time, challenges the culture to conversion. Just as Christ, in his incarnation, offered redemption to culture even while he was fully a member of it, so inculturation fully integrates liturgy and culture without conceding the essential characteristics of either one.

24. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 28. Music of the Mass, however, did reflect Baroque culture. Innovations included the use of a wider harmonic vocabulary, solo voices, and instrument obbligatos.

25. Ibid., 30.

Process and Methods

Liturgical inculturation seeks to bring together the typical editions of liturgical books and the people's cultural pattern so that, from their union, a new liturgy for the local church may be created. As already noted, the process begins with the typical editions as models. The cultural pattern also plays a prominent role in inculturation; Chupungco calls it the "typical mode of thinking, speaking, and expressing oneself through rites, symbols, and art forms . . . It is a people's prescribed system of reflecting on, verbalizing, and ritualizing the values, traditions, and experiences of life."²⁶ A congregation that is aware of its cultural pattern will react negatively to a liturgy rooted in a foreign cultural pattern, and this liturgy will either be adapted or it will be irrelevant. Chupungco describes three methods of liturgical inculturation that have been used by the church: dynamic equivalence, creative assimilation, and organic progression.²⁷

Dynamic equivalence. The method of dynamic equivalence involves replacing an element of the liturgy with a cultural element of equal meaning or value. The result is a new expression of the liturgy's linguistic, ritual, and symbolic elements according to a particular cultural pattern. The qualifier *dynamic* opposes the idea of *static* equivalence, which is the precise equivalent of a word or phrase without reference to its cultural associations. While static equivalence can safeguard church doctrine, it does not always aid a congregation's understanding of liturgical elements. Imaginative language, idiomatic expressions, and cultural symbolism, which would be ignored by static equivalence, are valid sources for dynamic equivalence. In order to engage in the method

26. Ibid., 35.

27. Ibid., 37-50.

of dynamic equivalence, theological content of a rite—its meaning—must be distinguished from liturgical form—its visible expression. The former must be preserved while the latter is reconstituted. Chupungco notes that, in the Catholic Church, the liturgical form of a divinely instituted rite may not be altered in a way that modifies its original meaning. Baptism, for example, must always involve washing with water and the Trinitarian formula, and the Eucharist must always be performed with food and drink.

Creative assimilation. Creative assimilation is achieved by bringing cultural rites and expressions into liturgical use. These expressions supplement, rather than replace, liturgical elements. During the patristic period this method produced rites such as anointing and giving the cup of milk and honey during initiation. Because creative assimilation does not begin with the typical editions, it is not the preferred method among Catholic liturgists; however, sometimes it is the only realistic method available. This is particularly true with the liturgies of marriages and funerals; many cultures possess their own traditional rites and symbols for marriage and death, and these may be creatively assimilated into the church's prescribed liturgies in ways that supplement their meaning.

Organic progression. The final method of liturgical inculturation described by Chupungco is organic progression. He explains this as supplementing and completing the shape of the liturgy in a way that still complies with its nature and tradition. The *Sacrosanctum Concilium* allows for the development of “new forms” of the liturgy as long as the innovations “grow organically from forms already existing.”²⁸ The Council fathers did not believe it important to enumerate the details of how existing liturgical rites

28. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 23.

should be adapted or performed. Instead, they left this work to bishops and local churches. Through organic progression, the work begun by the Second Vatican Council continues into the present and the future, providing a richer liturgical life according to local pastoral and cultural needs.

Inculturation of Sacramentals and Catechesis

Chupungco's seminal work on liturgical inculturation applies his principles to sacramentals, religiosity, and catechesis. The second of these will be discussed later. The reason to inculcate the other two is simple: "For sacramentals and catechesis to be relevant, they need to be inculcated," he writes.²⁹ Sacramentals nurture the effect of sacraments by completing, supplementing, or extending their effect of sanctification. God's presence and grace is especially important during turning points in the lives of individuals, families, and communities, and by these "sacred signs," "various occasions in life are rendered holy."³⁰ The *Sacrosanctum Concilium* notes that certain features have muddled the nature and purpose of sacramentals, and some changes should be made to adapt them to contemporary needs.³¹ Chupungco suggests, as an example, that cultural color schemes be considered in funeral rites, while keeping intact the paschal character of Christian death. Such inculturation aids in conveying the meaning of the liturgy while fostering active participation of the people.

Liturgical catechesis, Chupungco declares, is the mainstay of liturgical renewal. Changes in the liturgical texts and rites always require explanation, he writes, and the

29. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 11.

30. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 60.

31. Ibid., article 62.

post-conciliar reforms of Vatican II would have been unsuccessful without catechesis.³²

Its purpose is to reveal the meaning of symbolic actions in the liturgy so the faithful may realize that they participate in the salvific work of Christ through participation in sacramental action. Liturgical catechesis also “seeks to lead communities and individual members of the faithful to maturity of faith through full and active participation in the liturgy.”³³ Teaching and practice have a reciprocal relationship; catechesis reveals the meaning of liturgical actions and, conversely, liturgical celebrations are catechesis in action. Chupungco notes that Church Fathers such as Cyril of Jerusalem, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Augustine used the language and cultural traditions of their initiates to teach the doctrine of the sacraments.³⁴ They explained the meaning of words, symbols, and gestures used in Christian rites.

These Patristic theologians and pastors serve as an example for modern liturgists. However, the contemporary church needs to distinguish between the origin of its liturgical rites and their catechetical interpretation by the Church Fathers. The approach outlined by Chupungco is both pastoral and intellectual: “The task of catechists is to inculturate the language, methods, and pedagogical means of catechesis in view of explaining, in the setting of culture and traditions of their people, the theological content and liturgical forms of the rites.”³⁵ Inculturated catechesis leads to celebration of the sacraments with an experiential effect in the daily lives of the faithful.

32. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 134.

33. C. Dooley, “Liturgical Catechesis,” in *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 2nd ed., vol. 8 (Detroit: Gale, 2003), 644, *Gale Virtual Reference Library*, accessed October 8, 2014.

34. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 141-158.

35. Ibid., 161.

Protestant Approaches to Liturgical Inculturation

As noted earlier, Wainwright uses the axiom *lex orandi, lex credendi* to describe the relationship between liturgical practice and accepted belief among Catholics and Protestants. Roman Catholicism, he writes, characteristically considers the descriptive pattern of prayer to be a prescriptive norm for belief, so that right belief may be determined by proper liturgical practice.³⁶ On the other hand, Protestantism emphasizes the supremacy of doctrine over liturgy; belief determines what may or may not be done in worship. Wainwright describes the work of Protestant reformers as a “root-and-branch cleansing of medieval western doctrine and its liturgical expression.”³⁷ They looked to the scriptures and early church practices in an attempt to recover the original rule of belief and worship, and they reshaped the latter at the levels of ceremony, rituals, and texts.

The Protestant approach means that scrutiny focuses less on the practices of worship and more on the theology that motivates them. Nuance is often overlooked except in traditions that have, over time, developed intricate systems of theologically-based symbolic expression in their liturgical practices. The Free Church, which lacks scholarship in the field of liturgical theology, is more concerned with the presence of basic elements of worship than with how their execution represents the church’s belief. Protestant branches with a thoughtful liturgical tradition, however, have begun to consider the relationship between worship and the culture surrounding the local church.

36. Wainwright, *Doxology*, 251.

37. Ibid., 263.

Two outcomes of this are the *Willowbank Report* and the *Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture*.

The Willowbank Report and Dynamic Equivalence

The 1978 Consultation on Gospel and Culture in Willowbank, Bermuda, sponsored by the Lausanne Theology and Education Group, had several broad goals. It worked to develop an understanding of the interrelation of the gospel and culture, engaged in critical reflection on the implications of cross-cultural communication of the gospel, identified tools needed for better communication of the gospel, and shared the fruits of its study with church and mission leaders.³⁸ “If the gospel must be contextualized, so must the church,” the Willowbank Report states, and it recommends the “dynamic equivalence” model as a method of contextualization.³⁹ While Chupungco lists this as one Catholic model of liturgical inculturation, here it will be discussed in the context of its Protestant origin.

Dynamic equivalence is derived from the work of Bible translation, in which it means changing the form of communication in order to preserve its meaning. Similarly, dynamic equivalence in the church “would preserve the essential meanings and functions which the New Testament predicated of the church, but would seek to express these in forms equivalent to the originals but appropriate to the local culture.”⁴⁰ This model rejects imports, imitations, and rigid structures. Its Protestant basis is obvious as it “rightly looks to the New Testament for the principles of church formation, rather than to

38. “The Willowbank Report” in John R. W. Stott and Robert T. Coote, eds, *Down to Earth: Studies in Christianity and Culture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 311.

39. Ibid., 329.

40. Ibid., 330.

either tradition or culture, and it equally rightly looks to the local culture for the appropriate forms in which these principles should be expressed.”⁴¹ The New Testament conveys the nature of the church as a worshiping community, and contemporary local churches develop forms of worship in relationship with their indigenous cultures. These forms, says the Report, include “the presence or absence of different kinds of liturgy, ceremony, music, colour, drama, etc.”⁴² The Willowbank Report does not provide further detail about the process or employment of dynamic equivalence.

Members of the Consultation questioned the limitations of the dynamic equivalence model, and the Report mentions potential shortcomings. The chief question is whether the model “is large enough and dynamic enough to provide all the guidance which is needed.”⁴³ Each model of inculturation presents only a partial picture, it acknowledges, and dynamic equivalence is not an exhaustive method of inculturation. In addition, the analogy of Bible translation to church formation has weaknesses; while translation is accomplished by an individual who aims for objectivity, church inculturation involves an entire community of faith that often includes conflicting voices and differing assessments of its local culture.

Further assessment of the dynamic equivalence model of inculturation has brought additional critique. Catholic theologian Robert Schreiter finds two major faults with models of this type. First is a positivist understanding of culture, in which “cultural analysis is done not on the terms of the culture investigated, but only to find parallels

41. Ibid.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

with patterns in previously contextualized Christianity.”⁴⁴ Surface patterns of culture receive more attention than deeper meanings in dynamic equivalence. Second, this model assumes that the theological meaning of a biblical revelation, or a liturgical practice, may be separated from previous manifestations and immediately translated into a culture. Schreiter notes that even in the Bible meaning and manifestation are given together, and over time they become conjoined. For example, Jesus used bread and wine when instituting the ordinance of communion. It may be that Christ sanctified these dietary staples of his culture, thereby setting an example for his followers to sanctify elements of their respective cultures. On the other hand, perhaps Christ intended bread and wine to be universal representations—or real presence—of his body and blood, unifying all Christians in a transcultural symbolic act.

Even if a liturgical practice can be peeled away from its deeper theological meaning, dynamic equivalence assumes that there is a corresponding cultural element that may serve the church’s liturgy. This presumption is the most damaging to the model. Cultural expressions of all types carry with them levels of meaning that are best understood by those within the culture, and even still, individuals may disagree on the nuanced meanings associated with a symbol or ritual. A truly inculcitated liturgy takes time and effort and is better served by a process along the lines of Chupungco’s organic progression. Nevertheless, dynamic equivalence has proven to be an immediately practical model, and it has been adopted by several Protestant groups.

44. Schreiter, *Constructing Local Theologies*, 8.

Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture

One such group is the Lutheran World Federation (LWF). The LWF Study Team on Worship and Culture produced the *Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture* during its January 1996 consultation in Nairobi, Kenya.⁴⁵ The *Nairobi Statement* outlines four dynamics of the relationship between Christian worship and culture: worship is transcultural, contextual, counter-cultural, and cross-cultural. In regard to the transcultural nature of worship, the *Nairobi Statement* notes that Christ transcends all cultures, and the fundamental shape of the principal act of worship is shared across cultures: “the people gather, the Word of God is proclaimed, the people intercede for the needs of the Church and the world, the eucharistic meal is shared, and the people are sent out into the world for mission.”⁴⁶ In short, it says, there is one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, and one Eucharist. Recovery of these transcultural elements as central in each congregation is the foundation for contextualization.

The incarnation of Jesus is the model and mandate for contextualization of worship, the *Statement* continues. It affirms two methods of contextualization: dynamic equivalence and creative assimilation. The *Nairobi Statement* expands on the Willowbank Report by outlining the procedure for dynamic equivalence:

First, the liturgical *ordo* (basic shape) should be examined with regard to its theology, history, basic elements, and cultural backgrounds. Second, those elements of the *ordo* that can be subjected to dynamic equivalence without prejudice to their meaning should be determined. Third, those components of culture that are able to re-express the Gospel and the liturgical *ordo* in an

45. It is of interest to note that Chupungco was a member of this team, though it approached liturgical inculturation from a Lutheran perspective. Francis, “The Future of Liturgical Inculturation,” 8-9.

46. Lutheran World Federation, “Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture,” article 2.1, quoted in International Review of Mission 85, no. 337 (April 1, 1996): 184-188.

adequate manner should be studied. Fourth, the spiritual and pastoral benefits our people will derive from the changes should be considered.⁴⁷

Creative assimilation, as described by the *Nairobi Statement*, involves adding pertinent components of local culture to the liturgical *ordo*. Whereas dynamic equivalence is a re-expression of liturgical elements, creative assimilation enriches the liturgy. The *Statement* emphasizes that “elements borrowed from local culture should always undergo critique and purification,” but does not explain what this directive means.⁴⁸ One wonders whether a cultural element retains its validity once it is purified.

Christ’s passage from death to eternal life is the model for transformation of culture, and counter-cultural aspects of worship challenge cultural elements that are contrary to the gospel. Examples of cultural elements to be opposed by liturgical patterns include oppression and social injustice, idolization of self at the expense of others, and acquisition of wealth at the expense of the earth and poor people.⁴⁹

Because Christians share one Lord, one faith, one Baptism, and one Eucharist, there is one church unified in Christ and worship is cross-cultural. The ecumenical “sharing of hymns and art and other elements of worship across cultural barriers helps enrich the whole Church and strengthen the sense of the *communio* of the church.”⁵⁰ Cross-cultural sharing is especially important in multicultural congregations, the *Statement* notes, and while sharing is beneficial, churches should take care that they

47. Ibid., article 3.3.

48. Ibid., article 3.6.

49. Ibid., article 4.2.

50. Ibid., article 5.1.

understand and respect the music, art, architecture, gestures, and postures borrowed from other cultures.

Liturgical Inculturation in the United States

The pioneering work of Chupungco was brought to North America by liturgist and teacher Mark Francis, who prescribes a starting point for inculturation in the United States: “By holding the liturgical tradition, our own particular point of view, and the U.S. cultural context in a constant but productive tension, we will at least be able to ask the questions necessary to continue the process of liturgical inculturation in a responsible way.”⁵¹ Francis begins with a caution that one cannot exhaustively describe the cultural context of the United States because it is so complex. Distinct regional cultural differences within the nation are influenced by facts such as geography, socioeconomic status, and race. In addition, because new cultural groups are constantly added to the already multicultural makeup of the United States, and because of changes in daily life due to the advance of technology, United States culture is an ever-changing organism. In the case of this country, he says, it is more correct to speak of cultures in the plural.

With caveats in place, Francis examines two general cultural characteristics shared by the majority of United States residents. First, religion in the United States is pervasive but private. He explains that while references to religion are overt in American culture and the nation has the highest level of church attendance in the Western industrialized world, “Mainstream U.S. culture sees religion as something Americans voluntarily do on a Sunday—a kind of ‘religious hobby’ that has and should have no

51. Mark R. Francis, *Shape a Circle Ever Wider: Liturgical Inculturation in the United States* (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2000), 88.

bearing on how they come to decisions and live their lives in a multireligious and multicultural society.”⁵² The privatism of worship in the United States has moved churches from their historical theological and liturgical traditions to the free marketplace, he asserts. Megachurches, in particular, flourish because they have developed an attractive product: “Offering a range of services from baby-sitting to self-help groups, combined with an informal, entertainment-style Sunday service that has no discernable link with a historical tradition of worship, the megachurch is an example of the inculcation of Christianity into the American white middle-class culture.”⁵³ Secondly, according to Francis, mainstream United States culture has entered the period of postmodernity.⁵⁴ The postmodern mindset moves away from accepted authority and excessive rationalism, and is characterized by skepticism and personal subjectivity.

American cultural characteristics are not necessarily inimical to faith and liturgy, Francis believes. A positive aspect of postmodern subjectivity is that church participation is motivated more by personal value than by family tradition. In addition, laypeople tend to value active participation in worship because of their desire for personal appropriation of faith in their daily lives. This presents a challenge for liturgists to translate theological concepts into action and to make practical connections between liturgy and life. The democratic social structure of the United States means that many parishioners expect to be involved in the work of their local churches regardless of gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status.

52. Ibid., 80.

53. Ibid., 81.

54. Ibid., 82-83.

These tendencies, influenced by mainstream United States culture, have several implications for liturgical practice. First, worship leadership may mirror the democratization of church life; people of both genders fulfill roles as allowed by the church's norms. Second, laypersons perceive themselves as ministers beyond the sacred assembly. Chupungco supports this idea: "Laypersons are enjoined not only to respond to prayers, sing, and interiorize the meaning of the liturgical celebration but also to serve the community as liturgical ministers."⁵⁵ Third, the church is increasingly challenged to rid itself of liturgical language that denigrates the marginalized people in society. With these ends in mind, Francis suggests several steps toward liturgical inculturation in the United States. He challenges congregations to consider not only what is done in worship, or how the liturgy is performed, but also who fulfills the various ministerial roles in the liturgy. Liturgical leadership should involve a wide cross section of parishioners, including both genders and all ethnicities present. He also recommends that churches consider the cultural value of hospitality by ensuring that how the church gathers corresponds with how hospitality is shown in the surrounding culture.

The design of liturgical spaces reflects the cultural and theological values of Christian identity. For a church in the United States, this means that its physical space should facilitate active participation of the assembly in a way that accounts for the physical and cultural location in which it resides. Similarly, liturgical art must serve the liturgy rather than superficial purposes of decoration. Francis suggests that, rather than representing traditions in a different time or place, art and furnishings in worship spaces

55. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 70.

should “locate the celebration in the cultural world of the assembly.”⁵⁶ Locally-crafted materials contribute to the theological immediacy of the sacraments to which they direct attention.

Liturgical language should also be considered in light of both its theological implications and its cultural relevance. During the late twentieth century, the United States experienced a movement to include in society those who previously had been denied full status. The cultural vernacular shifted to recognize women, varied ethnicities, newly acknowledged sexual orientations, and the poor in society. Use of more sensitive language in worship is “not simply a trendy thing to do but a matter of good theology, honesty and justice.”⁵⁷ In addition, Catholic scholars have recently recognized culturally conditioned translations and interpretations of scripture that limit the portrayal of God as masculine. The International Commission on English in the Liturgy has accounted for a more expansive notion of God’s identity in its recent translations of biblical and liturgical texts.⁵⁸

Certain elements of liturgical norms challenge North American cultural tendencies. One example is the use of the physical body in worship. Francis writes, “The Roman rite encourages an embodied approach to worship that corresponds to our Catholic theology of sacrament, which sees creation in general and our bodies in particular as basically good and potentially revelatory of God’s presence.”⁵⁹ United States religious culture, on the contrary, regards the body as irrelevant to spirituality. Thus

56. Francis, *Shape a Circle Ever Wider*, 94.

57. Ibid., 97.

58. Ibid.

59. Ibid., 90.

liturgical gesture, posture, and movement are often perceived as superfluous. Francis cautions that disregard of embodied symbols can allow the assembly to become a passive audience rather than actively participating in the liturgy.

Another liturgical challenge to North American culture is the concept of time. The ecclesial experience of liturgical time rarely corresponds with the civil calendar, and the church must decide which aspects of its liturgical calendar it will maintain and which it will concede. The most obvious example of this is the season of Advent. American culture tends to celebrate Christmas during the weeks prior to Christmas Day, whereas the liturgical stance of Advent is one of restrained expectation. Thus the liturgy is inherently countercultural in this regard and the discrepancy must be reconciled. Francis also recommends that church leaders consider how civil celebrations tend to elicit a religious response in society.⁶⁰ For instance, he says, more American Catholics attend Mass around Thanksgiving Day than at most other times in the year. Such times provide opportunities for the church to engage national and cultural experiences in its planning and teaching.

Special Considerations of Liturgical Inculturation

These particular characteristics of United States culture demand consideration for the work of liturgical inculturation. The broader aspects of popular piety, multiculturalism, and music present additional challenges. Each of these can either aid inculturation or act as an obstacle to it.

60. Ibid., 100.

Popular Piety

A significant aim of the liturgical movement was to return the liturgy to its place of primacy in the church. It succeeded in sharply distinguishing the essential liturgy from non-essential popular piety. The *Sacrosanctum Concilium* includes only a passing mention of the effect of popular piety on expressions of Christian worship:

Popular devotions of the Christian people are to be highly commended, provided they accord with the laws and norms of the Church . . . But these devotions should be so drawn up that they harmonize with the liturgical seasons, accord with the sacred liturgy, are in some fashion derived from it, and lead the people to it, since, in fact, the liturgy by its very nature far surpasses any of them.⁶¹

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, liturgists were inundated with new typical editions and threw their whole effort into the work of translation and adaptation. They, along with local pastors, banned popular devotions during the Mass in an attempt to direct parishioners' attention to the vitality of the liturgy.

The significance of piety reappeared as an afterthought a decade after the Second Vatican Council. It occurred to liturgists that the worship of the church consists, and has consisted from the beginning of Christianity, of both official and popular forms of prayer. The faithful often sense a need for more personal, unstructured prayer beyond what the Mass or even sacramentals can provide, and liturgy without this quality is felt to be an exclusive activity of an elite group in the church. Chupungco advocates for a mutually enriching exchange between the liturgy and popular devotion; devotion should contribute “a more human countenance to the liturgy,” and the liturgy should provide “a more solid

61. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 13.

theological and ecclesial foundation to popular religiosity.”⁶² Inculturation plays an important role in this exchange.

Chupungco highlights four forms of what he terms “popular religiosity”: devotions to Christ, Mary, and the saints; rites related to the liturgical year; traditional practices of the sacraments and other Christian rites; and institutions and religious objects.⁶³ He also describes common features of religiosity. It often reflects basic human problems and sentiments, and it is modest and simple compared to the more complex liturgical expressions. It has a spontaneous, felt, and creative quality. Religiosity is often associated with particular places, cultural expressions, or social conditions. Vivid and picturesque language characterizes its texts, which often focus on moral instruction.

In 2002, the Vatican’s Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments issued the *Directory on Popular Piety and Liturgy*.⁶⁴ It distinguishes among the terms “popular piety,” “pious exercises,” and “popular religiosity.” The last of these refers to the religious dimension of human life among all peoples. Popular piety became the new official expression of what Chupungco had previously termed popular religiosity. Francis notes that, “while the *Directory* is an important guide to the liturgical life of the Church, it offers an approach to both inculturation and popular piety that could be called

62. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 99.

63. Ibid., 102. Chupungco borrows this classification, as well as the ensuing traits, from Domenico Sartore, “Le manifestazioni della religiosità popolare,” *Anamnesis* 7 (Genoa, 1989), 232-233.

64. Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, Vatican, accessed October 11, 2014, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20020513_vers-direttorio_en.html.

‘from the top down.’⁶⁵ It ignores the muddled nature of liturgical history, failing to convey the richness of the interaction between liturgy and popular expressions of faith. In an attempt to correct this, Francis writes that the liturgy communicates on three levels. The official level of meaning is contained in liturgical books and explained by introductions such as the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. The public level of meaning in the liturgy, which may or may not match the official meaning, is commonly understood by the assembly; cultural context complicates this level. Finally, the liturgy also communicates on a personal level according to an individual’s own history and experience with liturgical practices.

While liturgists may not transform the liturgy into popular piety, they should study how the latter can influence the shape of the liturgy. The motives for this are twofold: to make the liturgy more accessible, and to enrich the doctrine of religiosity. The method of dynamic equivalence may be employed if one considers the characteristic features of popular religiosity to be the cultural elements that enter into interaction with the liturgy. This does not mean wholesale adoption of a popular religious practice into the liturgy of the church, placing it side-by-side with religious rites and texts. Rather, inculcation of popular religiosity inspires a popular expression of the liturgical texts, rites, and symbols.

65. Mark R. Francis, *Local Worship, Global Church: Popular Religion and the Liturgy* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), 5. In this insightful historical study, Francis endeavors to “add the perspective of popular piety to our study of worship today since it is one of the primary ways in which the liturgy itself is understood and transformed in the larger process of inculcation.” Ibid., 7.

Multiculturalism

Understanding how popular religious practices affect the expression of faith in various cultures is particularly important to liturgical inculturation in multicultural settings. Prior to the mid-twentieth century, Roman Catholic parishes were established to care for a particular cultural group in their own language and customs.⁶⁶ While Protestant churches were not necessarily established with this goal in mind, they nevertheless reflected the same principle. With cultural diversity in most communities rapidly increasing, however, this strategy of cultural stratification is no longer viable in the new millennium. Neighborhoods are less ethnically homogenous than in the past, and people are more mobile, able to drive longer distances to attend their preferred church. Multiculturalism is an increasingly prominent characteristic of congregations in the United States, and it presents unique challenges for inculturation.

Francis offers a few principles for inculturation in multicultural settings.⁶⁷ Verbal proclamations should be accessible to as many people as possible; this means judicious use of words. Nonverbal elements of liturgical participation do not rely on translation and can be performed by everyone present. These include art and furnishings as well as movement such as procession, standing, sitting, and kneeling. Finally, he notes that silence has the power to communicate in a liturgical assembly, as does its counterpart, music.

An important goal of multicultural worship is the same as that of worship in a homogenous cultural group: full, active, and conscious participation. The purpose of

66. Francis, *Shape a Circle Ever Wider*, 101.

67. Ibid., 103-108.

multicultural liturgy is not to celebrate diversity, but neither should it deny the diversity that exists. Congregants should recognize their common identity as Christians and acknowledge that each cultural group has a valuable theological perspective and liturgical interpretation to share with the other groups in a church.

Music as Means of Liturgical Inculcation

Music has a unique ability to unite an assembly or to divide it. The Second Vatican Council understood the essential role of music in the liturgy and devoted an entire chapter of the *Sacrosanctum Concilium* to the topic. It states that “as sacred song united to the words, [music] forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.”⁶⁸ The goal is for music to carry out liturgical action, not merely to accompany it. The potential for musical inculcation is found in article 119 of the *Sacrosanctum Concilium*:

In certain parts of the world, especially mission lands, there are peoples who have their own musical traditions, and these play a great part in their religious and social life. For this reason due importance is to be attached to their music, and a suitable place is to be given to it, not only in forming their attitude toward religion, but also in adapting worship to their native genius.⁶⁹

The conciliar document goes on to note two ways, in particular, that music might be inculcated. First is the concession that “other instruments [besides the pipe organ] also may be admitted for use in divine worship, with the knowledge and consent of the competent territorial authority.”⁷⁰ The second potential for inculcation is through composition: “Composers, filled with the Christian spirit, should feel that their vocation is to cultivate sacred music and increase its store of treasures,” the document encourages,

68. Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, article 112.

69. Ibid., article 119.

70. Ibid., article 120.

with the reminder that “the texts intended to be sung must always be in conformity with Catholic doctrine; indeed they should be drawn chiefly from holy scripture and from liturgical sources.”⁷¹ It also directs composers to write not only for large choirs, but also for small choirs and the entire assembly.

While the *Sacrosanctum Concilium* gave permission for use of music within strict confines, later instructions allowed more freedom. *Musicam Sacram* includes an ambiguous statement that seems to permit a wide range of musical possibilities: “No kind of sacred music is prohibited from liturgical actions by the Church as long as it corresponds to the spirit of the liturgical celebration itself and the nature of its individual parts, and does not hinder the active participation of the people.”⁷² The *Sacrosanctum Concilium* permits music that aligns with liturgical sources, while *Musicam Sacram* allows any sacred music that does not hinder participation.

While they have done well to maintain the primacy of the liturgical texts, official liturgical documents have failed to acknowledge that music itself carries inherent cultural meanings. Music historian Joseph P. Swain wisely notes, “The simple strategy of musical inculturation fails to recognize how music’s power to carry meaning even apart from its lyrics, its semantic range, could cause serious harm.”⁷³ An example of this is the American song “Dixie.” Although it was not originally a folk song, “Dixie” has become part of the American folk vernacular. The song’s associations differ according to

71. Ibid., article 121.

72. Second Vatican Council, *Musicam Sacram* [Instruction on Music in the Liturgy], article 9, Vatican, accessed October 12, 2014, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_instr_19670305_musicam-sacram_en.html.

73. Joseph P. Swain, “Inculturating Liturgical Music,” *America* 191, no. 6 (September 13, 2004): 16.

geographical location and ethnicity. For certain cultures in the southern United States, especially white southerners, the song is part of a proud cultural heritage. To others it represents the American Confederacy, slavery, and racial segregation. No matter the interpretation, it is obvious that the song, like much music, carries subtle meanings beyond the text itself. Some music is associated with religious systems besides Christianity or with cultural values or structures that are contrary to the Christian message. Inculcating such music risks compromising the gospel message that the liturgy is intended to convey.

Another challenge of musical inculturation is the ambiguity of historic musical traditions in the contemporary setting. Identifying indigenous music is difficult when folk styles no longer resonate with the general population. Swain gives the example of Japanese society: “The ‘indigenous’ music of most Japanese today is entirely Western classical music and the latest popular sounds from America.”⁷⁴ In such a case, using historic musical styles in worship would seem as foreign to participants as importing music from an entirely different culture.

In light of these challenges, liturgists must examine how music functions in a culture and determine which structures may be inculcated for use in worship. Several questions can aid in this task: What forms does popular music utilize? Do some of these forms lend themselves to participation and memory? What instrumentation is used in this culture, and can it be adapted for liturgical use? Are there cultural situations in which members of a society sing or chant together? How can this inform development of liturgical music? Are there particular cultural musical expressions for times of

74. Ibid., 16.

celebration, meditation, sorrow, or thankfulness? These questions demonstrate the potential for ethnomusicology as a dialogue partner with liturgical studies.⁷⁵

When the music of a culture carries inappropriate associations or lacks meaning for its listeners, the musical style must be adapted or abandoned. However, before reviving liturgical music of previous eras, one should consider whether these musical styles carry their own associations and whether they truly aid congregational participation. The music of a contemporary culture may not need to be wholly expunged from the church. It may be that the church in a specific locality needs to generate its own mode of liturgical music so as not to compromise the integrity of the gospel. This is a musical application of Chupungco's concept of organic progression.

Most importantly, the nature and needs of the local community—chief among these is the need for spiritual formation and theological development for daily life—must guide the decisions about which music to use in worship and how to use it.⁷⁶ Thus the minister, whether termed a liturgist, pastor, or worship leader, must understand and relate to the people to whom he or she ministers. A minister must be aware of personal preferences in regard to music and have a realistic view of how personal bias affects liturgical judgments. A local liturgist must know which elements of culture align with Christian beliefs and values and which elements are challenged by Christianity. He or she must know which beliefs, symbols, texts, and rituals are essential to the Christian

75. A helpful start toward such dialogue is Gaetano R. Lotrecchiano, "Ethnomusicology and the Study of Musical Change: An Introduction and Departure for Ethnoliturgiology," *Liturgical Ministry* 6 (June 1, 1997): 108–119.

76. Kathleen Harmon, "Inculturation and the Pastoral Musician," *Liturgical Ministry* 6 (June 1, 1997): 150.

tradition and which are peripheral. Furthermore, a pastoral musician must understand the role of music at each point in the liturgical celebration, know what music functions well in each role, and how musical leadership helps or hinders the participation of the assembly. This is a challenging call for the minister, but it is a crucial one. Even beyond its weighty significance as an aid to participation, liturgical inculturation reaffirms to the local assembly that theirs is an incarnational faith. The church as the manifestation of God's active, redemptive work in the world is exemplified through the inculturation of its liturgy.

CHAPTER THREE

Application of Liturgical Inculturation among Baptists in the United States

Relationship of Baptist Liturgy to Culture

Prior to engaging in liturgical inculturation, it is important to consider the complex relationship of Baptist liturgical theology to culture. H. Richard Niebuhr notes that the discussion of faith and culture—or, more essentially, of Christ and culture—is an old one, tracing its roots to Christ himself. His book, *Christ and Culture*, gives a helpful overview of the issue, presenting three broad viewpoints of Christians: Christ against culture, Christ of culture, and Christ above culture.¹ The people of God vacillate between separating from society for the benefit of Christ and jeopardizing their Christology for the benefit of society, spending most of their time somewhere between these two ideas. Understanding the theology and implications of these approaches is crucial to the functioning of the Church, especially in worship.

In short, Baptist belief and heritage are not inherently opposed to culture or to liturgical inculturation. Neither do Baptist belief and heritage intrinsically support cultural elements or inculturation. Baptist liturgical theology, elements of liturgy, characteristics of culture, and means of inculturation must each receive individual attention.

1. H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1951).

Elements of Baptist Liturgy

Use of Scripture

It has already been noted that scripture is a norm and guide for Baptist worship, but such a crucial value bears repeating. The earliest Baptists rejected the norms of liturgical tradition for the Anglican church in favor of what they considered to be biblical ordinances for worship. These were not limited to baptism and the Lord's Supper; the Bible also ordains prayer, thanksgiving, reading and preaching of scripture, and music, although this last ordinance has been the most disputed. The Bible structures Christian living and belief, and it also serves as a devotional treasury that nourishes and transforms those who read and hear it.² Scriptural commands and precedents act as guides for the practice, shape, and content of worship.

Baptists believe scripture is a primary means for communing with God as individuals and as a congregation. God speaks directly to people through the Bible, with the implied guidance of the Holy Spirit. Historically, scripture permeated Baptist worship services, which often began with a scriptural call to worship. Baptists have held the reading of scripture as an important event in worship. Phrases and images from the Bible are often used in prayers, hymns employ biblical quotations and allusions, and scripture passages serve as a narrative framework for liturgical actions such as baptism and the Lord's Supper.

2. Christopher J. Ellis, *Gathering: A Theology and Spirituality of Worship in Free Church Tradition* (London: SCM Press, 2004), 126.

Preaching

The most obvious use of scripture is in the sermon, where it is exegeted and applied to the specific situation of the congregation. In Baptist liturgical heritage, the sermon developed from the early tradition of extemporaneous exposition of a Bible passage by multiple members of the congregation. Such exposition was rapidly transformed, however, by the cultural influence of the Enlightenment. Horton Davies describes the situation among English dissenters at the start of the eighteenth century:

In brief, continual argument [between Christianity and Deism] led to religious indifference among the superficially religious, and among the deeply religious to overestimating the place of the intellect in religion and underestimating the place of faith and of the emotions . . . The most consciously intellectual and apologetic element in the service of worship, the sermon, took on an exaggerated importance . . . [Congregants] came to a ‘Lord’s Day Lecture.’ They hoped to hear a discourse on revealed religion, planned with clear divisions, buttressed by cogent arguments, and phrased in elegant terms. In consequence, prayers and praises tended to become the mere ‘preliminaries’ to the sermon.³

The balance between intellectual stimulation and devotion leaned toward the former from early on in Baptist history. Devotion, particularly manifested in emotional fervor, regained ground in America during nineteenth-century revivalism. In the twentieth century, writes Christopher Ellis, the sermon was influenced by widening of education, developing secularization, and the decreased formality of radio and television.⁴ Use of visual aids increased toward the end of the twentieth century, and the average length of sermons decreased, although they still represented nearly half of the time available for worship services.

3. Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1996), 2:96.

4. Ellis, *Gathering*, 131.

Some Baptists have expressed concerns about the nature of the sermon in the contemporary context. A few argue that scripture reading has been subsumed into the preaching.⁵ Ellis notes, however, that “the very concern that the omission of scripture readings leads to a deficiency in worship, confirms that the norm *is* the reading of scripture.”⁶ Other Baptists have taken issue with the verbal mode of sermon delivery. Glenn Hinson contends that Calvin effectively elevated preaching of scripture above the Eucharist, which corresponded with a Western cultural shift from visual to verbal, and from symbolic to spoken truth.⁷ Elevating the spoken word downplayed the importance ascribed to signs and sacraments prior to the Reformation.⁸ In today’s era of post-rational thought, with renewed emphasis on visual communication, extreme dependence on verbal symbols has restricted the church’s ability to communicate the gospel and express its praise.

In a discussion on the state of worship in the twenty-first century, Randall Bradley deconstructs the outdated mode of preaching that still lingers in the church.⁹ He believes that preaching cannot survive in its current form for several reasons; chief among these are that preaching is a monologue that lacks opportunity for input and shared ownership, and it is leader-centered rather than people-centered. Prayer, reading, and singing are

5. Thomas R. McKibbens, “Our Baptist Heritage in Worship,” *Review and Expositor* 80, no. 1 (December 1, 1983): 67.

6. Ellis, *Gathering*, 80.

7. E. Glenn Hinson, “Theology and Experience of Worship: A Baptist View,” *Greek Orthodox Theological Review* 22, no. 4 (December 1, 1977): 418.

8 The exception is the Lord’s Supper, which Calvin referred to as the Word reinacted following the Word spoken.

9. C. Randall Bradley, *From Memory to Imagination: Reforming the Church’s Music*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship Liturgical Studies Series (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2012), 31-47.

widely considered to be corporate activities in Baptist worship, Bradley writes, while preaching is the only liturgical practice that remains a solo activity. “If proclamation within worship were a shared experience, no one person would bear the full responsibility for it, collaboration would be modeled, and a truer voice of God (most often expressed communally) might have a better chance of being heard,” he suggests.¹⁰ Others respond, however, that the congregation’s participation in the preaching event occurs through its attentiveness and reception of the word of God in humility and expectation.¹¹ Critical listening and application are active endeavors of both mind and heart, and reason and devotion come together in these acts of participation to reorient the faithful toward God.

Invitation and Response

Many Baptist congregations encourage such reorientation during a time of invitation and response following the sermon. The invitation received a prominent position in Baptist worship during the nineteenth century when, Thomas McKibbens asserts, camp meetings and subsequent revivalism prompted a shift from theocentric to anthropocentric worship among Baptists, at least in the South. Rather than being a service rendered to God, worship in revivalism was characterized by what happened to the people present. During this shift, “the primary and sole purpose of preaching became the conversion of sinners, not the praise of God,” and the sermon gained such significance as the climax of worship that “nothing could follow the act of preaching other than the invitation.”¹² Although the invitation became a regular part of worship services among

10. Ibid., 35.

11. Ellis, *Gathering*, 146-147.

12. McKibbens, “Our Baptist Heritage in Worship,” 64.

some Baptists during the Second Great Awakening, the invitation first appeared in Separate Baptist worship a century earlier:

At the close of the sermon, the minister would come down from the pulpit and while singing a suitable hymn would go around among the brethren shaking hands. The hymn being sung, he would then extend an invitation to such persons as felt themselves poor guilty sinners, and were anxiously inquiring the way of salvation, to come forward and kneel near the stand.¹³

In addition to illustrating the liturgical pattern of the invitation and its theological rationale, this description also demonstrates a clear association of the invitation with hymn singing.

The invitation in Baptist worship is often accompanied by hymns that emphasize the need for conversion or renewal. *The Psalmist*, published by Northern Baptists in 1843, included twenty-two hymns under the head “Invitation to Sinners.”¹⁴ Likewise, the 1850 Southern Baptist publication *The Baptist Psalmody* listed twenty-eight hymns as “Gospel Invitations,” with an additional eight related to the subject.¹⁵ The “gospel song,” introduced during the mid-nineteenth century, “used contemporary and individualistic language to convey simple biblically based messages of God’s love and the human appropriation of such divine love.”¹⁶ Gospel songs quickly made their way into Baptist hymn books in the North and South. Southern Baptists continued to emphasize

13. Robert I. Devin, *A History of Grassy Creek Baptist Church* (Raleigh: Edward Broughton and Company, 1880), 69. Quoted in Leon McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage* (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1987), 23.

14. Baron Stow and S. F. Smith, eds., *The Psalmist: A New Collection of Hymns for the Use of Baptist Churches* (Boston: Gould and Lincoln, 1854), 45.

15. Basil Manly and B. Manly, Jr., *The Baptist Psalmody: A Selection of Hymns for the Worship of God* (Charleston, SC: Southern Baptist Publication Society, 1850), 7.

16. Brian C. Brewer, “Hymns of Invitation in the Baptist Tradition: A Historical and Theological Comparison of American and Southern Baptist Hymns,” *The Hymn - A Journal of Congregational Song* 51, no. 3 (July 2000): 30.

evangelistic and invitation hymns in twentieth-century denominational hymnals.

Northern Baptists, on the other hand, diminished their revivalistic tendencies as they strove for ecumenical cooperation and liturgical order in the twentieth century.¹⁷ Most churches have continued to carry on their respective invitational traditions according to their liturgical heritages and soteriological beliefs.

Prayer

Like other elements of Baptist worship, forms and patterns of prayer are determined by a congregation's own heritage. Rather than using a collection of prayer texts, most Baptists have held to a tradition in which one person spontaneously articulates prayers on behalf of the congregation.¹⁸ As a result, there is little historical evidence of the contents or forms of their prayers. The earliest written account of Baptist worship notes that four prayers were offered: the first began the service, another "solemn" prayer by the preacher followed the reading of scripture, a third came after the exposition, and a final prayer concluded the service after a collection for the poor.¹⁹ Because the service centered around the exposition and application of scripture, it is likely that the first two prayers invoked God's help with preaching and understanding scripture, the third probably focused on applying the principles of scripture to the lives of congregants, and the closing prayer may have included intercessions.²⁰

17. Ibid., 33.

18. Ellis, *Gathering*, 104.

19. Account by Hughe and Anne Bromhead, printed in Champlin Burrage, *The Early English Dissenters in the Light of Recent Research* (Cambridge: University Press, 1912), 2:176-177.

20. Ellis, *Gathering*, 104-105.

Whereas past Baptist worship services often included a small number of lengthy prayers, today it is common for several short prayers to appear throughout the service, each with a unique emphasis. Ellis attributes this change to the ecumenical impact of litanies and collects.²¹ Ecumenism has also affected the form of Baptist prayer by modeling an alternative to spontaneity. Prepared prayer historically has been more common for churches in the Charleston Tradition, while those in the Sandy Creek Tradition tend to favor an extemporaneous approach. Hinson wrote about Southern Baptist worship in 1977, “Seminary-trained pastors are learning to organize prayers around the great elements of thanksgiving, praise, confession, petition, intercession, etc., and to pray in biblically flavored language, but a scant minority make use of the great liturgical prayers of the past. Written prayers, read from a manuscript, are unusual indeed among Southern Baptists.”²² However, the last few decades have seen a shift away from extemporaneous prayer even among some Baptists in the Sandy Creek Tradition.

Extempore prayer often follows a pattern despite its lack of design. A congregation tends to use fairly consistent phrases and patterns in its worship, and leaders, if they are familiar with the tradition of the congregation, employ these in corporate prayers. Furthermore, Ellis comments, free prayer is not completely free. In accordance with the Baptist belief that spontaneity in worship allows for leadership by the Holy Spirit, prayer “should be open to, and therefore dependent upon, the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Though free in form, free prayer ceases to be true prayer when such

21. Ibid., 111. Ellis is primarily writing about prayer in British Baptist worship, but the impact is also noticeable among Baptists in America.

22. Hinson, “Theology and Experience of Worship,” 422. Although he does not state it, Hinson is describing the Sandy Creek tradition among Southern Baptists.

submission to the Spirit is missing.”²³ Guidance by the Spirit is also implied when Baptists use pre-composed prayers, he writes: “Contemporary Baptists would see the one leading prayer as open to the Spirit in the work of preparation, and also ‘free’ to follow the Spirit’s leading by setting aside prepared or written prayers during the service.”²⁴ No matter its form, prayer in Baptist worship is intended to rely on the Holy Spirit, enjoy freedom under the authorities of Christ and scripture, and maintain relevance to the particular situation of the congregation.

Corporate prayer is a shared expression of faith. This belief is affirmed by the Baptist World Alliance: “Although usually offered by the ordained minister or other worship leader, [intercessory prayers] represent the combined prayers of the whole church and should be structured in such a way that the congregation can meaningfully participate.”²⁵ Congregational participation in prayer is generally passive, although there are a few means of active participation—bowing the head and giving a vocal “Amen,” for instance. Nevertheless, it is assumed that congregants participate inwardly when a leader voices a prayer in worship. “We must understand that those leading in prayer are doing so as representatives in the belief that the whole congregation is praying, even though only one voice might be heard,” Ellis writes. He goes on to propose that “the congregation is not seen as a crowd, but as a group of individuals in relationship with one another.”²⁶ Thus, for many Baptists, there is little distinction between public and personal prayer;

23. Ellis, *Gathering*, 116.

24. Ibid., 117.

25. Baptist World Alliance, *We Baptists: One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism: Baptist World Alliance*, ed. James Leo Garrett (Franklin, TN: Providence House, 1999), 59.

26. Ellis, *Gathering*, 122-123.

both use similar, or even identical, language and forms. Finally, it is important to note that prayer extends into other modes of worship, especially music. Much Baptist congregational song consists of prayer language voiced from either an individual or corporate point of view.

Music

Although the earliest Baptists opted to exclude congregational singing from their gatherings, it has been given an increasingly fundamental place in Baptist worship over the last three centuries. By the nineteenth century, nearly all Baptist churches in the United States had incorporated singing into their worship services.²⁷ This music was characterized by simplicity, and churches began to use choirs and musical instruments around this time.

Music provided a degree of cohesion within Baptist denominations during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. For instance, the release of the 1940 *Broadman Hymnal* brought an unprecedented degree of uniformity to Southern Baptists, Leon McBeth claims, shaping their beliefs and worship more than any book except the Bible.²⁸ The further promotion of church music continued this trend:

In a longer report on ‘Church Music and Worship,’ the [SBC] in 1943 sought to define acceptable worship, established its priority in church life, endorsed the graded choir movement, urged specific training in music and worship for pastors as well as musicians in colleges and seminaries, and concluded with its intention ‘to prepare and set going a constructive, educational program of Church Music among Southern Baptists.’²⁹

27. David W. Music, *Music & Worship: The Emerging Experiences of Baptists* (Atlanta, GA: Baptist History and Heritage Society, 2008), 10.

28. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 689-690.

29. Ibid.

Denominational and local Baptist church music programs grew after World War II, but the sale and use of denominational hymnals began to decline in the final decades of the twentieth century. While some churches still use hymnals, few hesitate to look outside of denominational resources for songs to use in worship.

Baptist hymnologist David Music identifies six basic worship expressions among Baptists in the late 1900s and early 2000s.³⁰ The “liturgical” format is characterized by orderly, dignified worship in which the congregation participates through singing and responsive readings. Music usually includes hymns and choral pieces with organ accompaniment. The “traditional evangelical” approach follows the early twentieth century revivalistic pattern. These services are generally informal and center on the sermon and invitation. They include singing of hymns and gospel songs, accompanied by organ and piano, as well as choral or solo presentations. In a “praise and worship” style, a small group of singers with a rock band leads the congregation in singing a selection of choruses, typically beginning energetically and diminishing in intensity as they approach the sermon. The “seeker” model is designed to appeal to unbelievers. Because group singing is uncommon in contemporary American culture, congregational song is downplayed, and music presented to attendees is in popular idioms. A “blended” format combines elements from two or more of these expressions. Finally, an “emerging church” approach emphasizes a mystical, contemplative style of worship and may use any or none of the above expressions.

30. Music, *Music & Worship: The Emerging Experiences of Baptists*, 15-16.

The story of Baptist church music in America is much more extensive than it has been presented here.³¹ However, the purpose of this section is not to reiterate this history, but to illustrate music's liturgical function in Baptist congregations. Bradley points out that Baptists, while they have invested heavily in musical training for their ministers, have failed to address liturgical preparation and worship studies.³² "Both popular and academic studies of hymnody abound," Ellis agrees, but "there is a difference between the written text of a sermon and the event of preaching. A similar distinction can be made between hymn texts and the event of congregational singing."³³ While the study of hymn texts yields information about the authorial intentions of their writers, examining how congregations use hymns contributes to an understanding of their liturgical function.

Music can serve many roles in worship. When properly placed within a liturgical framework, it is able to express praise or thanksgiving, voice proclamation or confession, reaffirm devotion and commitment, or send the faithful out into the world. By the end of the twentieth century, however, many Baptist worship services had come to consist of blocks of congregational songs prior to the sermon. Some leaders recommend interspersing songs throughout the service to allow music to interact with other parts of worship. Bradley suggests, "By integrating sung refrains to punctuate Scripture, fragments of songs to add meaning to prayers, preaching that uses song for illustration and application, and by involving music meaningfully into communion, we could move

31. For the most comprehensive account to date, see David W. Music and Paul A. Richardson, "*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*": *A History of Baptist Hymnody in North America* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008).

32. C. Randall Bradley, "Music as Liturgy," in *Gathering Together: Baptists at Work in Worship*, ed. Rodney Wallace Kennedy and Derek C. Hatch (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 127.

33. Ellis, *Gathering*, 151.

past ‘singing only’ and ‘word only’ models—word, prayer, and Scripture could be integrated into a liturgical tapestry.”³⁴ Such integration has potential to bring vitality to Baptist worship and assist in the formation of the faith community and its individual believers.

Congregational singing reflects the core liturgical theology of Baptists in several ways. First, congregational singing can express and nurture belief. In fact, Music asserts, “Congregational singing serves as a primary shaper and reflector of theological belief. This fact is especially true for Baptists, whose hymns have historically served as a substitute for the creeds used by other denominations.”³⁵ He names several factors that make congregational singing powerfully formative: congregational songs combine the rational and emotional power of poetry and music, they condense profound theological ideas into shorter form, they use memorable forms, they are repeatable, they draw upon past experience, singing involves physical activity, and congregational singing is a visible and aural expression of Christian unity and the priesthood of all believers.³⁶ The scriptural images and devotional themes in songs reinforce individual and communal faith.

Second, congregational singing reflects Baptist liturgical theology because it is active and concerted. Singing together provides opportunity for more obvious active participation than in any other element in worship, and “it is the only activity that engages large numbers of people in simultaneous breathing, exhaling, phonating, and

34. Bradley, “Music as Liturgy,” in *Gathering Together*, 126-127.

35. Music, *Music & Worship: The Emerging Experiences of Baptists*, 17.

36. Ibid., 17-18.

articulating.”³⁷ Despite the fact that the words sung might have multiple meanings, it is undeniable that congregational music unites participants in thought, word, and action in a way that few other liturgical practices do.

Third, congregational singing reflects the individual and communal aspects of Baptist belief by lending itself to participation and highlighting corporate faith. The communal aspect of singing in the liturgy goes beyond the local congregation. The repertory of congregational songs is one of the few liturgical collections that Baptists share with the wider church. Ellis goes so far as to say that “hymnbook collections have provided a catholicity to the worship of a local congregation,” allowing the congregation to join in a communion of praise with Christians of different traditions at different times and in different places.³⁸ In addition, congregational singing brings together individual devotion and communal experience: “Hymnody offers us an intersection between the shared faith of the community and the personal experience of the individual worshipers.”³⁹ Indeed, “Music is a catalyst for connecting our everyday lives with God. The liturgy through which we encounter God gives voice to God’s daily interactions among us,” Bradley writes. “Music is fully capable of holding all the emotion that our lives can muster. The total depth and breadth of the fully-lived life can be held within the confines of song.”⁴⁰ Music serves as a unique bridge between the liturgy of the faith community and the liturgy of daily life. While the former is acted out in the unique context of corporate worship, the latter goes with congregants into the culture in which

37. Bradley, “Music as Liturgy,” in *Gathering Together*, 133.

38. Ellis, *Gathering*, 158.

39. Ibid., 164.

40. Bradley, “Music as Liturgy,” in *Gathering Together*, 130.

they live. For this reason, the music used as congregational song must not be so disconnected from culture outside of the church as to seem inapplicable to the daily lives of congregants.

Without doubt, music is the most easily accessible means of liturgical inculcation among Baptists. McBeth notes the historical correlation between Baptist church music and the surrounding culture: “As Baptist hymnody developed in America, it tended to adapt the musical styles of its host culture. As cultural patterns in North and South diverged, so did Baptist worship in the two areas.”⁴¹ For example, *The Psalmist* in the North adapted the musical heritage represented by Lowell Mason, while Baptists in the South preferred the *Sacred Harp* revivalist tradition, built upon southern folk music and textual tradition. Cultural influence was obvious in new forms of church music such as the youth musical and “rock anthem” during the 1960s and 1970s, and American popular music continues to impact contemporary praise music today. Baptists have always dealt with the issue of culture influencing their music for worship. The topic of musical style has often been the focal point of conflict, and solutions have ranged from entirely resisting popular appeal to uniting secular musical styles with sacred texts. Discernment is required to determine whether a cultural movement should be shunned, ignored, or utilized to enhance the meaningfulness of Baptist worship.

Characteristics of Contemporary American Culture

Many characteristics of contemporary American culture are significant for the life and work of the church. However, four in particular warrant consideration for liturgical inculcation: prominence of technology, decreased significance of geography,

41. McBeth, *The Baptist Heritage*, 688.

multiculturalism, and a shift in spirituality. These characteristics do not necessarily run counter to Baptist belief, and neither do they parallel it. In the discussion of inculturation, each one must be addressed in relationship to the church's liturgical theology.

Prominence of Technology

Advances in electronic technology over the last several decades have made it a prominent cultural force, providing both opportunities and challenges for the church's worship. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) notes that "developments in technology and media influence not only what, but how, people communicate and understand. Numerous modes of communication, such as art, visual design, drama, film, and projected presentation may be able to support the preaching of the word."⁴² Other elements of worship may also benefit from technology and media. However, in its *Principles for Worship*, the ELCA cautions, "The use of audiovisual elements in worship requires careful consideration. Such media are desirable when they enhance rather than replace essential congregational action."⁴³ Use of technology can increase the accessibility of worship through visual aids such as projection screens and aural aids in sound amplification.

In addition to its effect on communication, the prominence of technology has aided the transformation of America into a visual society, and it has resulted in a shift from concrete ideas and places to abstract concepts of space and forum: "What we understand as media networks and media domains are not to be imagined simply as

42. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, "Principles for Worship," (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), article P-17E.

43. Ibid., article S-15A.

counter-forums to regulated public space or prosthetic adjuncts to what occurs in cities; rather, they are part of the material and experiential formation of what now constitutes life in public spaces.”⁴⁴ Public spaces no longer exist only in the physical realm, but also in the digital, as seen in the proliferation of social media. Churches must consider how this new conception of space, as well as visual and aural technology, will affect their worship.

Decreased Significance of Geography

Largely due to technological innovations, the last century saw a decrease in the significance of geography in American culture. The automobile made it convenient for suburbanites to drive considerable distances to attend churches outside of their own neighborhoods. Whereas at the beginning of the twentieth century residents had little choice but to attend the local church, after mid-century they could choose among a number of churches within a few minutes drive. With more choices available, Americans have become more selective of which churches they attend, and congregations no longer necessarily represent the cultures of their local communities. This allows for liturgical specialization; as long as it is not concerned with attracting a diverse body of constituents, a congregation can form its worship practices to match its liturgical theology. Conversely, congregations that are concerned with diverse representation of ages, ethnicities, genders, and socioeconomic classes tend to move away from specialization toward broad cultural appeal.

44. Chris Berry, Janet Harbord, and Rachel Moore, eds., *Public Space, Media Space* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 1.

As has been noted, advances in technology have created a new sense of space in the realm of electronic media. The internet allows people to subscribe to churches and parachurch organizations in the digital realm. They can observe how other congregations worship, listen to music and sermons from various sources, and participate in discussions outside of Sunday gatherings. It is likely that congregants can find better-rehearsed musicians, more polished speakers, and more impressive audio and visual displays through internet searches than in their local Sunday morning worship services. Churches must now consider the value of the corporate worship experience in addition to information they disseminate in their gatherings.

The decreased significance of geography has left many congregations confused or disheartened, but American sociologist Robert Wuthnow offers a word of hope:

The church's capacity to survive in a changing culture is very high indeed. This is because the church not only adapts to changing conditions but also creates its own communities, which give individuals part of their identity. Being geographically local, these communities can be disrupted by spatial, economic, and demographic change. But they can also be rebuilt in new locations. Church leaders, denominational officials, and all who care need to be aware of the constant need to relocate and rebuild.⁴⁵

At times, relocating and rebuilding may be needed in the physical sense; however, this may also mean demolishing structures that a church constructed around past cultural norms in order to rebuild around the framework of its true liturgical beliefs. In order to survive cultural shifts, a church must be more faithful to its calling than to its means of fulfilling that call, and must determine how to adjust to the changes around it.

45. Robert Wuthnow, *Christianity in the Twenty-first Century: Reflections On the Challenges Ahead* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 24.

Multiculturalism

Both the prominence of technology and decreased significance of geography have contributed to an increased sense of multiculturalism in the United States. Discussion of liturgical inculcation among Catholics and Protestants began as an effort to join the liturgy with a particular cultural identity, so it was not concerned with the issue of multiculturalism. As a whole, however, America is an especially multicultural society, and this presents a unique problem: How does one inculcate worship with a culture that is, in fact, multicultural? The problem is further complicated when one considers that culture is organic and constantly shifting, and that there are often multiple levels of culture that exert influence over a particular group of people. Congregants of a church are part of broad American culture, regional culture, local city culture, and even neighborhood culture. The challenge of multiculturalism is not unique to the United States, but it is such a prevalent characteristic of American identity that the church cannot ignore it.⁴⁶ Discussion about multiculturalism in the church often refers to multiethnicity, but it reflects a larger need for diversity. Socioeconomics, gender, and age are also points of segregation in society and in churches.

Churches have several reasons for planning worship that is multicultural. The initial motivation for many congregations is ecclesiological; the society in which the church exists has become multicultural, and many believe the church should reflect this reality. A practical motive is to help as many cultural groups as possible to participate actively in worship. Finally, because worship affects belief, including elements from

46. Indeed, the church has not ignored the topic of multiculturalism in worship. Those interested in an overview of the discussion should look to Terry W. York, “Multicultural Congregations and Worship: A Literature Review,” *Family and Community Ministries* 27 (2014), available from <http://www.familyandcommunityministries.org/journal/article.php?articleid=53>.

various cultures in worship introduces various theologies to the congregation. Churches that attempt to make worship multicultural often include various ethnicities in visible leadership roles, incorporate multiple languages in the liturgy, employ preaching and speaking techniques that are unique to specific cultures, and sing songs from various cultures. These approaches, designed to acknowledge and represent ethnicities present in the congregation, tend to focus on celebrating the diversity of the people in worship.

Congregations may find the term *transculturation* helpful in discussions of multiculturalism. Transculturation was originally proposed by Cuban anthropologist and ethnomusicologist Fernando Ortiz in his 1940 essay *Contrapunteo Cubano del Tabaco y Azúcar* as a means of explaining the cross-cultural mixture of African and European peoples in Cuba.⁴⁷ Ortiz described a reciprocal exchange of cultures in which transcultural descendants hold on to remnants of both parent cultures without assimilating into either one. American language and literature scholar Mary Pratt introduced transculturation into English-speaking circles in her book *Imperial Eyes*.⁴⁸ She joined the idea to the notion of a pragmatic linguistic idiom—a pidgin or creole—that develops in trade environments to overcome language barriers. In her view, the relationship between subjects of different cultures is mutually transformative but hierarchical.⁴⁹ Due to power struggles that accompany cultural interaction, transculturation is by no means a flawless solution to multiculturalism. Nevertheless, a reciprocal cultural exchange that mutually

47. Fernando Ortiz, *Contrapunteo Cubano del Tabaco y del Azúcar* (Madrid: Cátedra, 1940/2002).

48. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (New York: Routledge, 1992).

49. Paul Allatson, *Key Terms in Latino/a Cultural and Literary Studies* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 299-232.

transforms the people involved seems an advisable approach to multiculturalism for congregations in the United States.

Congregants should feel free to be multicultural in worship without having to act multicultural, and should be reminded that, while members may vary in ethnicity and cultural identity, their common identity is in Christ as part of his church. This identity should transcend, but not subsume, other identities. The goal is to focus on common identity—what unifies congregants—rather than on the diversity of those present, without denying or ignoring the diversity that does exist. Moreover, a challenge for the American church in the twenty-first century is to leave behind methods of compromise in worship, such as internal segregation—by age, socioeconomic class, gender, or ethnicity—and coexisting culturalism, and to deepen communion within local congregations.

From “Dwelling” to “Seeking” Spirituality

In his book *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s*, Wuthnow writes of a “profound change in our spiritual practices [that] has indeed taken place during the last half of the twentieth century but not in the usual sense . . . a traditional spirituality of inhabiting sacred places has given way to a new spirituality of seeking.”⁵⁰ While both dwelling and seeking are familiar aspects of life, historical periods tend to orient people more toward one than the other, Wuthnow contends. The recent shift in American spirituality coincides with a similar shift in other aspects of society. For example, Americans have gone from being residents of communities to being commuters between locations, and rather than producing primarily material goods, American

50. Robert Wuthnow, *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 3. The discussion that follows is a selective summary of *After Heaven*, 4-10.

industry now focuses on services and information. This overall movement from production to consumption is obvious in how Americans commit to institutions such as the church. Whereas they used to identify their faith by their membership in a specific congregation, people increasingly search for transient connections with churches.

The shift from dwelling to seeking spirituality is further illustrated by Wuthnow's comparison of the two. A spirituality of dwelling emphasizes habitation with the divine in a sacred space, which is separated from the secular by symbolic boundaries and rules. Seeking, on the other hand, takes place between sacred spaces and is often symbolized as a journey. It emphasizes negotiation among complex moments and meanings of spirituality. Dwelling yields systematic grand conceptions of the universe, while seeking prioritizes pragmatism for everyday life. Because of this focus on practical activity, organizational positions are less important to seekers than to dwellers.

Wuthnow also points out a few ways in which architecture and liturgy reflect the change in spirituality. Whereas dwelling-oriented architecture invites attendees to leave the secular world and enter a sacred space, buildings for seeking-oriented spirituality tend to be designed with the priorities of functionality and connection with the outside world. This notion is corroborated by liturgical scholar Frank Senn, who writes of the last decades of the twentieth century, "A whole generation of suburbanites grew up worshiping in large multipurpose rooms that lacked any numinous aura in the Ottonian sense. The megachurches of the 1980s and since have even replicated on their campuses the ambience of the suburban shopping mall, to the point of adding food courts."⁵¹ The sacred space of dwelling spirituality is set apart by formal clothing, Wuthnow writes, but

51. Frank Senn, "Four Liturgical Movements: Restoration, Renewal, Revival, Retrieval," *Liturgy* 19, no. 4 (September 1, 2004): 74.

seekers blur the boundaries between the sacred and everyday life with more casual attire.

In regard to liturgy and music, he notes that dwelling spirituality is concerned with the faithful as part of a great community of believers moving towards God's sacred space.

Seeking spirituality is more concerned with momentary experiences of the divine.

The shift in spirituality is a generality, and Wuthnow paints this picture with broad strokes. He acknowledges that many Americans will continue in their dwelling-oriented spirituality; their congregations will work to remain safe havens in which those called to live apart from the world may subsist amidst the uncertainties of the society around them. However, "seeker-oriented spirituality will be more compatible than dwelling-oriented spirituality with the changing lives that growing numbers of Americans are leading, offering them freedom to make their own choices about how to understand the sacred and exposing them to a variety of ways to worship."⁵² Churches that align with this perspective primarily function as suppliers of spiritual goods and services. Senn adds that "the new master image of community emphasizes the church as a fellowship group. In fact, churches have been abandoning calling themselves 'churches' and are calling themselves 'communities' instead."⁵³ For those who wish to combine the two spiritual orientations, Wuthnow recommends practice-oriented spirituality; this approach allows personal exploration, but limits and guides it with spiritual disciplines. He recommends that spiritual practices be performed individually and that congregations strengthen spiritual discipline by engaging in these practices during worship gatherings.⁵⁴

52. Wuthnow, *After Heaven*, 15.

53. Senn, "Four Liturgical Movements," 74.

54. Wuthnow, *After Heaven*, 15-17.

Despite his generalities, the spiritual shift that Wuthnow describes is certainly recognizable in American culture. Evidence of this significant change is obvious: the increasing number of titles in the spirituality section of the bookstore, the abundant discussions of the topic on television talk shows, and the plethora of explanations in the blogosphere for why young people are leaving the church are just a few illustrations. A transition from dwelling to seeking spirituality has weighty ramifications for the church's mission and, likewise, its worship.

Principles of Inculturation for Baptists

General Principles

As explained by Catholic liturgist Anscar Chupungco, "Liturgical inculturation, viewed from the side of the liturgy, may be defined as the process of inserting the texts and rites of the liturgy into the framework of the local culture."⁵⁵ One may ask, then, what are the texts and rites of Baptist liturgy? Unlike some other Christian traditions, Baptists have no liturgical documents or books that must be followed in worship services or special ceremonies. Whereas Catholic liturgists begin their work of inculturation with the Missal and Breviary, Baptists must begin elsewhere. It is commonly understood that Baptist worship is based on scripture. While scripture traditionally holds a significant role both as content and as a liturgical guide for worship, Baptists do more in their gatherings than simply read and preach the Bible. Hence scripture, although it is a key value of Baptist liturgical practice, cannot serve as the only starting point for inculturation.

55. Anscar J. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechesis* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 30.

Liturgical pattern is also an insufficient starting point. The Word and Table pattern found in the worship of many Christian traditions does not aptly describe those Baptist churches that only occasionally observe the Lord's Supper. Neither is there a consistent *ordo* among Baptist congregations. What is consistent is the belief that each congregation is free to order its own worship and employ whatever scriptures, songs, prayers, texts, and rituals in worship that it deems sensible. The value of local church autonomy means that Baptist congregations are free to address liturgical inculcation within their own contexts and without externally imposed constraints. This leads to two overarching principles for liturgical inculcation among Baptists.

First, Baptist congregations will inculcate their worship according to Baptist beliefs. The core tenets of Baptist liturgical theology outlined earlier serve as helpful guides here: Baptists practice the authority of freedom under Christ; they observe the authority of scripture for worship; they find authority in relevance to their particular contexts; they express both individual and communal faith; they emphasize personal salvation; and their worship demonstrates corporate faith. If a congregation disagrees with any of these beliefs, it should seek to understand why it disagrees and to define what it believes instead. In addition, a congregation must determine how it will approach each of the dynamic tensions described earlier: balancing freedom from with freedom for particular liturgical materials, balancing planning with spontaneity, popular piety with formal religion, participation with leadership, and individuals with community. A church will likely tend toward one end of each dynamic tension, giving the church its own unique sense of liturgical theology.

This leads to the second principle: Local congregational liturgical theology will inform how worship is inculturated. Each congregation has the privilege and responsibility to consider what it believes about worship in light of its heritage and context, and according to the mission God has given it in its particular time and place. Terry York and David Bolin write, “It is the work of the congregation to find its voice, and, having found it, to continually refine that voice toward clarity and beauty in ministry and worship.”⁵⁶ When it is given the proper attention by a group of Baptists, liturgy becomes the active working out of communion, and it serves as an affirming rehearsal of the community’s identity and mission. The practical question for a church is not *whether* it will inculturate elements of worship, but how it perceives the surrounding culture, and *to what extent* and *how* it will inculturate worship. One congregation does not need to inculturate its worship in the same way as another because the means of inculturation begins with its unique liturgical theology. This theology is shaped by leanings within the above dynamic tensions as well as by particular emphases in the church’s worship. For example, one church’s liturgical beliefs may emphasize peace while another church may emphasize personal conversion. These are observed as themes that pervade the setting, structure, and elements of worship.

Illustrative Considerations for Baptist Inculturation

The beliefs of a local Baptist church should be expressed in worship according to the local cultural pattern. Culture varies from place to place, among groups of people, and across time, so a comprehensive discussion of all cultural elements that might be

56. Terry W. York and C. David Bolin, *The Voice of Our Congregation: Seeking and Celebrating God’s Song for Us* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 8. This text is an excellent guide for congregations that seek to express their authentic identity in corporate worship.

inculturated is impossible. Rather than attempt such a discussion, a few illustrative examples are now presented: The cultural movement toward seeking spirituality, elements of popular religiosity, Baptist equivalents to Sacramentals, and the value of catechesis for liturgical inculturation.

The seeking spirituality that Wuthnow says is growing among Americans implies diminished separation between sacred and secular. A congregation that desires to inculturate this trend should examine several aspects of its worship. First, the geographical location of the worship gathering, and likewise the physical space in which it occurs, should be considered. Is the location or space perceived by locals to be especially sacred and, if so, do they think of it as unapproachable? What does such a space convey to those who gather about the worship that takes place there? Does the space match the design of a secular institution such as a theatre, stadium, shopping mall, or coffee shop, and what does this convey about the congregation's beliefs? Second, the furniture, adornment, and arrangement of the worship space should be examined in a similar manner. Third, a congregation should consider how the clothing of both laity and clergy separate sacred from secular. Fourth, a church needs to discuss how its language, rituals, and symbols imply (or overtly state) the divide between the things of God and things of the world. Finally, the music used in worship should be examined on multiple levels. Musical style, instrumentation, form, textual context, point of view, and other aspects of music and poetry must be discussed.

Congregations would do well to reflect on how popular religiosity has been inculturated into their worship. A historical example of this is carols: "In spite of their less than sanctified bawdy and even pagan origins, carols were gradually associated with

Christianity until five out of every seven of them treated Christian subjects . . . People sang around worship, about the themes of Christian worship, and in their daily lives.”⁵⁷ In a similar way, contemporary Christian artists set sacred texts to secular musical genres. Many “praise and worship” songs have already been accepted into the canon of church worship, and more recent songs are disseminated through radio and internet sources.

A visit to a Christian bookstore will illustrate the adoption of secular musical genres, and it will also reveal many other forms of popular religiosity. One can purchase Christian art, religious clothing, and paraphernalia such as bumper stickers as he or she encounters shelves of inspirational and devotional books.⁵⁸ Body art with Christian themes is especially popular among young and middle-aged believers. American popular religiosity goes beyond physical manifestations to values that may be perceived in social dialogue. For example, many Christians pledge public support to athletes or politicians on account of their professed religious affiliations. Each of these elements of popular religiosity should be examined, not in terms of good or bad, but as to how they influence worship and whether they reflect the congregation’s liturgical theology.

Chupungco advocates for the inculcation of sacramentals, which nurture the effect of sacraments by completing, supplementing, or extending their effects of sanctification.⁵⁹ The Catechism of the Catholic Church names three types of sacramentals: blessings of persons, meals, objects, and places; consecrations and

57. Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1998), 136-137.

58. Wuthnow writes that such manifestations are products of America’s “religion industry,” and suggests that the trend of marketing religion is partly responsible for the transformation that is taking place in spirituality. Wuthnow, *After Heaven*, 11-12.

59. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 55.

dedications; and exorcisms.⁶⁰ Baptists may glean from the notion of sacramentals the lesson that significant occasions in the life of a congregation, or in the lives of its members, should have places in worship. Indeed, many Baptists already include child dedications, ordinations, and harvest thanksgiving in their corporate gatherings. They should consider whether other important life events should receive attention in worship, either in the large Sunday gathering or in a more private setting. These services might seek God's blessing on rites of passage such as graduations, symbolic progressions from adolescence into adulthood, new homes or possessions, the beginning of a school year, or the start of a new vocation. Each of these presents an opportunity for liturgical inculcation. By way of illustration, a traditional symbol used in ordination services is footwashing, taken from the example of Jesus washing his disciples' feet in John, chapter 13. While this is a powerful ritual, congregations may consider adding to it cultural symbols of service.

A final point of inculcation, and an important one for Baptists to learn, comes from the process of catechesis. Chupungco notes that catechesis is the mainstay of liturgical renewal because changes in liturgical texts and rites always require explanation. Baptists tend to shy away from the idea of catechesis, preferring instead to focus on discipleship through Bible study and exposition of scripture. This approach, however, does little to help congregants understand and fully participate in corporate worship. Baptists, who often claim to follow the ecclesial pattern of the early church, should note the precedent for catechesis established in the *Didaché* and in the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus. Each of these texts prepares a believer for baptism by instructing him or her

60. Catholic Church, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed., publication no. 5-109 (Washington, D.C: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), paragraphs 1670-1673.

to live according to the church's moral standards, and the moral instruction takes place in conjunction with liturgical rites. Thus, Chupungco writes, liturgical catechesis is more than intellectual enrichment. It is a lively experiential unfolding of the church's faith that should lead to celebration of sacraments and to their effect in the believer's life.⁶¹

Baptists have begun exploring the basics of liturgical theology—or, at least, their beliefs about worship—in seminaries and schools, but ministers rarely teach it to their congregations. Discussion of the meaning and purpose of liturgical elements would enable increased active participation and deeper spiritual understanding of what goes on in corporate worship. Such discussion should include an overview of the history of Baptist worship, core liturgical beliefs and values, explanation of rituals and symbols, reference to liturgical practices of other Christian traditions, and more specific teaching on liturgical elements such as music. Laypersons are to serve the community as liturgical ministers—a concept known in other traditions as “liturgy after the liturgy”—but they cannot successfully do this if they are uninformed about and unpracticed in their own liturgical rites.

One significant challenge is the lack of appropriate settings for such teaching. Sunday School hours, where they still exist, are occupied by Bible studies or devotional guides. Sermons seek to apply scripture lessons to daily life, committee meetings are occupied by church business, and other gatherings focus on fellowship. A congregation must find or create a forum for teaching and discussion on topics of worship. Children may be instructed in liturgical participation through a church's children's ministry, for

61. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation*, 158.

example, or a small group of adolescents and adults may engage in such activity during worship committee meetings.

No matter what it is termed or how it is accomplished, liturgical catechesis must follow the cultural pattern so that the message of the teaching connects to the daily life of the listener.⁶² Pedagogical methods should align with those that have proven successful in American culture. The theological and spiritual language of the church should be clearly explained in terms that congregants understand in their cultural context. Dynamic equivalents of worship rituals or symbols should be made with culture. Each Baptist congregation is responsible for understanding its own liturgical theology, finding methods of inculturation that are appropriate and meaningful in its cultural context, and developing effective means of teaching about worship. These are starting points for accomplishing the goals of liturgical inculturation.

62. Ibid., 134-135.

CHAPTER FOUR

Examples of Liturgical Inculturation among Baptists in the United States

Historical Examples of Inculturation among Baptists

While the parlance of liturgical inculturation is a relatively recent development, it is erroneous to presume that Baptists have, until now, never attempted to modify their worship practices according to cultural developments. At times Baptist groups have reacted against cultural movements that they perceived as antagonistic to the gospel, but Baptists in America have also responded positively to the culture around them in many ways. This is especially true of the texts and music they have used in worship. The following examples will illustrate diverse attempts to correlate Baptist congregational song with elements of culture.

Distribution of Quality Texts in Practical Volumes

In an effort to provide a functional collection of quality texts to Baptist congregations, the Philadelphia Baptist Association published *A Selection of Psalms and Hymns Done under the Appointment of the Philadelphian Association* in 1790. Two years earlier the influential association had appointed David Jones, Samuel Jones, and Burgiss Allison to prepare a hymnal—the earliest compiled in America by a Baptist group such as this.¹ This appointment was likely prompted by the spread in America of English Baptist John Rippon's *A Selection of Hymns from the Best Authors: Intended to Be an Appendix*

1. David W. Music and Paul A. Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*”: *A History of Baptist Hymnody in North America* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2008), 129.

to Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns, published in 1787. The objectives of the Philadelphia *Selection of Psalms and Hymns*, as outlined in a letter by Samuel Jones, were threefold: to supply a collection that was more affordable than Watts's *Psalms and Hymns*, to publish the best of Watts's work alongside texts by other authors in a single volume, and to provide a book that was easy for worshipers to use.²

The hymnal met most of its goals, although its demand was lessened by the popularity of Rippon's *Selection*. Jones and Allison's is truly a practical collection. The compilers included indices, noting in their preface, "By the Scheme of General Contents, wherein the Hymns on the different occasions are duly arranged, any Hymn wanted may be, in a general way, pretty readily found: Nevertheless, a Table of First Lines follows, as also an Index of more particular contents at the end of the Book."³ For each text, the editors list the topical heading, meter, author or source, and which compiler selected it for inclusion. The practicality of the Philadelphia Association's volume was further heightened by grouping the contents according to suggested liturgical use; categories denote hymns for opening of public worship, before the sermon, after the sermon, baptism, the Lord's Supper, constitution of churches, ordination, association of churches, fasts and thanksgiving, funeral occasions, family worship, and for private use.⁴ Samuel Jones provides a caveat, however, in his preface: "It is not designed that those Hymns appointed to be sung at the opening of public worship, before sermon, and after sermon, should be invariably used on those occasions only, but every one is left to his own

2. Ibid.

3. Samuel Jones and Burgis [sic] Allison, *A Selection of Psalms and Hymns Done under the Appointment of the Philadelphian Association* (Philadelphia: R. Aitkin & Son, 1790), iv.

4. Ibid., "General Contents."

discretion.⁵ The contents of the book reflect a cultural trend among American churches that continued to uphold the example of Watts's hymnody while introducing more diverse texts, especially those of a more personal, devotional nature. Keeping intact the Baptist value that congregations are free to order their own worship, the Philadelphia Association produced an updated collection of hymns designed to aid the work of worship planners.

Nineteenth-Century Church Music Reform

The Philadelphia Collection sought to place high quality psalm and hymn texts in the hands of congregants. Similarly, an example of inculturation that aimed to improve the musical content of congregational singing was the nineteenth-century reform in the cultivated tradition of church music. This movement, largely a reaction against the rugged constructions of Yankee Tunesmiths, did not begin among Baptists but eventually influenced their music. The Yankee Tunesmiths' "additive" manner of composition—in which the bass, treble, and counter lines were each written in counterpoint to the tenor melody—featured angular melodic lines, free use of dissonance, and open fourths and fifths as well as parallel fifths and octaves. Reformers believed that this style of music was sufficient for singing school purposes, but its unrefined harmonic elements were unsuitable for regular use by congregations.

The church music reform movement that peaked in the early to mid-nineteenth century strove to promote participation by simplifying and improving the music used for congregational singing. A group of composers led by Lowell Mason and Thomas Hastings combined the values of reformed psalmody with the European classical music

5. Ibid., iii.

tradition to nurture what they called “scientific” church music. Mason was an important figure on the Boston musical scene; he taught music in public schools, co-founded the Boston Academy of Music, filled the role of music director at several churches, and served as president of the Handel and Haydn Society. He believed that church music should be simple and free of ostentation, and that texts should be handled with as much care as the music. In 1822, Mason edited *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music*, a volume that set the standard in the scientific style of congregational song. The collection featured tunes harmonized for three or four voices and included figured bass for use with organ or piano.

At least a few Baptist churches used collections by Mason and his collaborators. The 1832 *Manual of Christian Psalmody* was an adaption for Baptists of *Church Psalmody*, edited by Mason and David Greene. Mason and Greene intended their volume to raise the quality of texts used in corporate worship, and they collaborated with Baptist pastor Rufus Babcock, Jr., who wrote several hymns with Baptist views for the collection.⁶ Publishers also released a “Baptist edition” of the 1859 *The Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book* by Mason, Edwards A. Park, and Austin Phelps.⁷ Though not a Baptist himself, many of Mason’s hymn tunes have been sung in Baptist worship since his time.⁸ The inclusion of such texts and tunes in the Baptist congregational repertory reflects a particular cultural influence that valued the European cultivated music tradition as a paragon for American congregational song.

6. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 165.

7. Ibid., 253.

8. Tunes by Mason that are common in the Baptist repertory include ANTIOCH, AZMON, DENNIS, HAMBURG, HENDON, OLIVET.

Introduction of Instruments into Worship

The introduction of instruments into Baptist worship is another historical point of liturgical inculcation. The position of early Baptists in America was part of a long Christian heritage that rejected the use of instrumental music in worship. They gave many reasons, ranging from practical to theological, for refusing to allow instruments in their churches. No significant effort was made to introduce instruments until after 1800, and when they finally were brought in they usually were accompanied by controversy. Congregants who opposed the use of instruments often made their views known by exiting the worship space during congregational singing and returning for the sermon.⁹ The bass viol was among the first instruments used to support singing in American Baptist worship. The First Baptist Church of Newport, Rhode Island, began using a bass viol just after the turn of the nineteenth century; the First Baptist Church of Providence followed suit in 1804; it was introduced in the First Baptist Church of Haverhill, Massachusetts, around 1810; and the First Baptist Church of Boston used one by 1818.¹⁰ Baptists in the South and West were slower to introduce instruments to accompany congregational singing due to financial reasons as well as biblical and theological objections.¹¹ Few congregations in the South used a musical instrument before the 1830s.

Acceptance of the bass viol was followed by the addition of other instruments to Baptist worship. Churches began using whatever instruments happened to be available—which often included bass violins, clarinets, flutes, violins and brass instruments—in small

9. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 101-102.

10. Ibid.

11. Hugh T. McElrath, “Turning Points in the Story of Baptist Church Music,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 19, no. 1 (January 1, 1984): 12.

orchestras to accompany singing. Opinions about instrumental music in worship gradually changed, and Baptist churches began to install organs during the early and middle decades of the nineteenth century. The Baptist church at Pawtucket, Rhode Island was the first to use an organ in their worship services. It was installed in the church's meetinghouse around 1819 for use in concerts by the local Mozart Society; however, the congregation began to enjoy its accompaniment for singing. Other Baptist churches soon joined the ranks of organ owners: Clarendon Street Baptist Church of Boston in 1828, the First Baptist Church of Philadelphia in 1829, the First Baptist Church of Providence in 1834, and—in the south—the First Baptist Church of Charleston in 1831.¹² Gradual acceptance of instruments to accompany congregational singing brought Baptists in line with musical norms of other Christian traditions, and paralleled in American culture the increased demand for access to music performance and education.

Camp Meeting and Urban Revival Hymnody

The cultural environments in which nineteenth-century camp meetings and urban revivals took place guided their respective liturgical and musical forms. Pioneer settlements were socially impoverished and morally lax and, beginning in 1800, itinerant preachers attempted to minister to frontier people through large rural camp meetings. The goals of rural camp meetings were to convert sinners and to emphasize Christian morality. They lasted several days, altering the pace of frontier life, and attendees usually camped near the revival site for the duration of the event. Services were almost continuous, with nonstop preaching and singing even into the night; when one speaker

12. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 105-107.

finished another rose to take his place.¹³ In addition to the religious component, camp meetings were also social gatherings for those who rarely had opportunity to enjoy such community.

Due to the interdenominational nature of camp meetings as well as the lack of printed materials, congregants learned songs by rote, and spontaneous and improvisatory elements were common. The unaccompanied songs featured simple language—even country colloquialisms—that emphasized repentance of sinners.¹⁴ The personal lyrics were set to folk-like tunes with gapped scales in major keys or modes. Frontier Baptists, who “preferred the informal spiritual songs which their forebears had brought over in the oral tradition from England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland,” naturally were drawn toward popular folk hymns.¹⁵ Music leaders adapted the texts and tunes of these hymns as needed, often by adding choruses that did not necessarily relate to the original hymn text. While few collections of camp meeting tunes were published, they were often included in later southern shape-note tune books.

Both rural camp meetings and urban revivals focused on personal devotion and emphasized conversion. The settings, however, differed considerably. Urban revivals were held as nightly services in church buildings and went on for weeks at a time. They featured intellectual, direct preaching. Like camp meeting songs, music used for revivals in city churches was characterized by simple text and music, exhortations to repentance,

13. David W. Music and Paul Westermeyer, *Church Music in the United States, 1760-1901* (Saint Louis, MO: MorningStar Music Publishers, 2014), 60.

14. William J. Reynolds and Milburn Price, *A Survey of Christian Hymnody*, 5th ed., rev. by David W. Music and Milburn Price (Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing, 2010), 134.

15. McElrath, “Turning Points in the Story of Baptist Church Music,” 11.

and use of a refrain or chorus.¹⁶ However, in addition to folk hymnody, urban revivalism also included tunes from the cultivated tradition of the Mason-Hastings reform and some early American psalmody. Asahel Nettleton's 1824 textual publication *Village Hymns* and subsequent tunes collection *Zion's Harp* were used in revival services by churches that commonly sang Watts hymns.¹⁷ Joshua Leavitt expanded Nettleton's sophisticated approach by also including folk hymnody, contrafacta of secular songs, and translations of several German and Latin hymns in *The Christian Lyre*, published in 1831.¹⁸ Mason and Hastings compiled their own hymnal designed for revival meetings in 1832, *Spiritual Songs for Social Worship*, through which they intended to reinforce the cultured approach in response to Leavitt's inclusion of lighter songs.¹⁹

Moral reform was a prominent agenda in urban centers of the United States during the 1830s and 1840s. At a time when American cities were expanding at an unprecedented rate, social issues were addressed by organizations such as the New York Female Moral Reform Society, established in 1834 under the leadership of Lydia A. Finney. Lydia was the wife of Charles Finney, whom many consider to be the father of urban revivalism. Thus the social emphasis of moral reform coincided with religious revival in American cities. Urban revival music followed a cultivated tradition that coincided with the intellectual preaching and social awareness it accompanied, whereas camp meeting music was regulated by pragmatism and featured familiar folk hymnody.

16. Music and Richardson, "I Will Sing the Wondrous Story," 309.

17. Ibid., 308.

18. Reynolds and Price, *A Survey of Christian Hymnody*, 139.

19. Ibid., 140.

These contrasting cultural settings are evident in the divergent thrusts of the musical styles they produced.

The Gospel Song

The late nineteenth-century gospel song exemplifies a specific form of musical inculturation. Gospel song texts are personal in nature, emphasizing emotional appeal. Musical characteristics include simple tunes with refrains and uncomplicated harmonic structures with slow harmonic rhythms. Predecessors included folk hymnody, camp meeting songs, and Sunday School songs; the latter style served as a transition between early revival hymnody and the gospel song.²⁰ Inculturation is obvious in the significant influence of popular secular music on the gospel song style. Gospel song writers frequently appropriated textual and musical characteristics of several popular genres: waltzes such as those of Johann Strauss, Jr.; marches in the style of John Philip Sousa; Gilbert and Sullivan operettas; and parlor songs by Stephen Foster. Beyond general styles of music, gospel song texts were occasionally set to popular song melodies.²¹ Writers such as Philip P. Bliss, Fanny Crosby, William B. Bradbury, Robert Lowry, George C. Stebbins, and William H. Doane—the last four of these were Baptists—understood the appeal of popular music and sought to inculcate it with church worship. Gospel songs supplemented Baptist hymnody in the North and largely replaced southern folk hymns during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and, although the musical and

20. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 333.

21. Music and Richardson give specific examples of gospel songs that align with each of these genres, as well as an example of contrafactum in “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 333.

textual styles that shaped the gospel song are no longer in currently popular idioms, the form continues to enjoy prominence among many Baptists in the twenty-first century.

Expansion of Church Music Education and Musical Diversity

The turn of the twentieth century saw a new emphasis on music in higher education. American institutions began forming conservatories after the Civil War: Oberlin in 1865, New England and Cincinnati in 1867, and Peabody the following year. Liberal arts colleges established music studies during the last quarter of the nineteenth century: Harvard in 1875, Yale in 1894, Columbia in 1896, and Juilliard in 1910.²² Music education was bolstered during the 1920s by the addition of instrumental techniques courses for teachers of bands and orchestras.²³ The first half of the twentieth century also saw the establishment of schools by Southern Baptists for training professional music ministers. In 1915, I. E. Reynolds founded the first seminary music school in the Southern Baptist Convention at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas.²⁴ E. O. Sellers began the Department of Music at Baptist Bible Institute in New Orleans 1919, which later became the music school of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.²⁵ In 1944, Frances and Donald Winters established the School of Sacred Music at the Southern Baptist Theology Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky.²⁶ This

22. Wiley L. Housewright, "Music in Higher Education," *Music Educators Journal* 54, no. 2 (October 1967): 39.

23. Ibid., 40.

24. McElrath, "Turning Points in the Story of Baptist Church Music," 14.

25. "NOBTS - Church Music Ministries," New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, accessed February 22, 2015, <http://www.nobts.edu/music>.

26. McElrath, "Turning Points in the Story of Baptist Church Music," 14.

turning point in education of Baptist church musicians at least coincided with establishment of music education programs in other American institutions, even if it was not partially motivated by the latter.

Around the same time, the position of “Minister of Music”—a professional musician who directs the music and music ministries of a congregation—evolved from the position of the revival music director. Ira D. Sankey led singing in revivals by playing a portable organ, and music evangelist Charles M. Alexander later expanded the song leader role to one that also served as a Master of Ceremonies. Baptist churches imitated this revival pattern in their worship services during the early twentieth century, and it soon grew into the Minister of Music position.²⁷ The development of Music Minister training programs in Baptist seminaries accommodated this need, which arose from the culture of American revivalism.

The second half of the twentieth century was rife with musical accommodations by Baptists to American culture. Music and Richardson write that “the sociological, technological, and theological permutations of the culture and church gave rise to two different groups of change agents in worship and congregational song,” the “reformers” and the “revolutionaries.”²⁸ Reformers worked from within the church to adjust music to the values of baby boomers. During the 1960s, this school of musicians produced works such as the youth musical *Good News*, by Bob Oldenburg, Billy Ray Hearn, and Cecil McGee, and the rock anthem “O thou, to whose all-searching sight” by Eugene S. Butler.

27. David W. Music, “The Baptist Influence on Revival Music / The Revival Influence on Baptist Music,” *Baptist History and Heritage* 45, no. 3 (2010): 44-45.

28. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 465. The “reformers” and “revolutionaries” labels come from Michael S. Hamilton, “A Generation Changes North American Hymnody,” *The Hymn* 52, no. 3 (July 2001): 11-21.

The Southern Baptist Sunday School Board published such experiments with the use of popular music through the 1960s and 1970s.

The reformer's efforts had a clear influence on the development of the 1975 edition of the *Baptist Hymnal*. Although it retained approximately sixty percent of the material from the 1956 *Baptist Hymnal*, the 1975 edition introduced many new—and reintroduced some old—musical expressions. It featured a significant number of hymns written by Baptists since the publication of the previous edition as well as early hymns of the New English Renaissance, and it also recovered many standard hymns that had been forgotten by Baptists. The collection addressed contemporary themes such as space exploration and civil rights, and it included at least fifteen songs that made use of popular music idioms.²⁹ The 1975 *Baptist Hymnal* even contained several selections from Roman Catholic sources: "My God, I Love Thee" attributed to Francis Xavier, the sixteenth-century Catholic missionary saint, and translated by Edward Caswall in 1849; John Newton's versification of the *Dies Irae*, "Day of Judgment! Day of Wonders!"; and "Where Charity and Love Prevail" by Omer Westendorf, set to a tune by Paul Benoit. The hymnal also introduced several plainsong melodies, such as DIVINUM MYSTERIUM and VENI EMMANUEL, to the Baptist repertory.³⁰ The 1975 *Baptist Hymnal* was the most eclectic and contemporary collection published by the Southern Baptist Convention up to that time.

29. Ibid., 470-475.

30. David W. Music and Stephen A. Cowden, "Parallel Stream: Vatican II and Baptist Congregational Song" (sectional presentation, annual conference of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, Richmond, VA, July 15, 2013).

The second school of musicians in the twentieth century, the revolutionaries, began with baby boomer forms and values and sought to adapt them to Christian faith. They primarily worked from outside the church and accommodated church music to their own experiences. The proliferation of the “Jesus music” genre in late 1960s and early 1970s promoted popular expressions of young people’s faith. It gained notoriety on secular charts and was a predecessor to the Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) industry. CCM began to flourish as part of the 1980s church growth movement, and Baptists were particularly quick to accept pop and rock genres as part of corporate worship.³¹ The “praise and worship” movement of the 1970s and 1980s, which was influenced in part by the charismatic movement, came alongside CCM and represented a more grassroots slant to the populist approach of revolutionaries. Reformers brought a greater awareness of various hymnological streams to Baptist congregational song, while revolutionaries incorporated secular musical paradigms. Despite their contrasting frames of reference, both the reformers and revolutionaries produced inculturated forms of church music that influence Baptist congregational song even today.

Contemporary Examples of Inculturation among Baptists

It has already been stated that, for Baptists, worship is inculturated according to a local congregation’s liturgical theology. Liturgy is the active working out of communion, and it serves as an affirming rehearsal of the community’s identity and mission. Each congregation’s theology is a unique synthesis of nuanced belief and liturgical emphases that affect the setting, structure, and particular elements of worship. In order to illustrate the outcome of liturgical inculturation, this section will present several examples of

31. Music and Richardson, “*I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*,” 477.

worship in contemporary Baptist churches. The first, Mosaic Church in Los Angeles, California, will address a few specific issues of inculturation. The remaining vignettes will discuss the worship setting, order, elements, participation, and leadership in several Baptist churches in order to illustrate how they inculcuate worship according to their beliefs and emphases. Descriptions of worship at Harris Creek Baptist Church and University Baptist Church, both in Waco, Texas, are based on the author's observation of a single Sunday worship service at each and informal discussions with a few regular attendees. The description of worship at Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, Texas, is based on the author's aggregate attendance of eleven months, with focused study of services during the last four of those.

Harris Creek, University Baptist, and Calvary are by no means representative of all Baptist churches in America. These three were chosen as examples for several key reasons. First, although they are geographically close—each within one and a half miles of the others—their attendees encompass different social demographics, as will be discussed below. Second, each church exemplifies one of the six twenty-first century worship expressions identified by David Music.³² Harris Creek uses the “praise and worship” style, University Baptist follows an “emerging church” format, and Calvary maintains a “blended” approach that combines elements of the “liturgical” and “emerging church” formats. Finally, because of their unique modes of worship expression, and due to distinctions in their liturgical theologies, each congregation has developed its own means of liturgical inculturation.

32. David W. Music, *Music & Worship: The Emerging Experiences of Baptists* (Atlanta, GA: Baptist History and Heritage Society, 2008), 15-16.

Mosaic Church

Mosaic is a multi-site Baptist church based in Los Angeles, California. In an extended case study of the church, sociologist Gerardo Marti describes its ethnic diversity as well as the innovation that results from strategic pursuit of goals.³³ While Mosaic practices liturgical inculturation in a wide variety of ways, it provides particularly helpful examples of handling multiethnicity, employing catechesis, and inculturating the Lord's Supper.

Mosaic is surrounded by a multiplicity of ethnicities and cultures. Marti describes the church as multiethnic, not multicultural. Although ethnicity is respected at Mosaic, ethnic enclaves are avoided, and attendees report that it is a refuge for being ethnic without having to act ethnic.³⁴ In explaining this approach, Marti relies on the work of German sociologist Max Weber, who writes that the root of ethnicity is a “belief in group affinity, regardless of whether it has any objective foundation.”³⁵ Actual kinship is not as important as belief in affinity. Thus, Weber claims, “Any cultural trait, no matter how superficial, can serve as a starting point for the familiar tendency to monopolistic closure.”³⁶ Marti applies this to the situation at Mosaic by noting how other values supersede ethnic affiliation: “Shaping people toward a new identity framed around new interests overrides the divisive aspects of ethnic identity.”³⁷ Leaders at Mosaic emphasize

33. Gerardo Marti, *A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multiethnic Church* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005).

34. Ibid., 156-157.

35. Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 389. Quoted in Marti, *A Mosaic of Believers*, 13.

36. Ibid.

37. Marti, *A Mosaic of Believers*, 17.

an inclusive Christian identity that redefines relationships among people of various ethnicities.

Marti goes on to expound upon five significant elements of this new shared identity that are enacted in corporate gatherings at Mosaic: common confession as followers of Jesus, common rite of baptism by immersion, common commitment to membership, common meal in the Lord's Supper, and common character in attitudes and perspectives.³⁸ Each of these elements, as Marti explains them, exhibits some influence of outside culture. They also require an understanding of the culture within Mosaic, so classes that acculturate people to the congregation's language, values, and priorities precede commitment to membership. Classes include lessons on baptism, prayer, scripture reading, growth in character, and involvement in the church.³⁹ This Baptist method of catechesis helps new congregants more fully engage in worship rituals and begin to make sense of the Christian identity shared among Mosaic members.

The creative ways in which Mosaic observes the Lord's Supper serve as illustrations of liturgical inculcation. In Marti's words, "The Lord's Supper is one of the most prominent occasions for expressing conservative beliefs in a nontraditional way."⁴⁰ During the three years prior to his writing, each Lord's Supper celebration centered on a particular culture from around the globe. Flexible features of Lord's Supper services included various forms of music, visual art, ethnically specific types of bread, and experimentation with seating arrangements. The featured culture was chosen with

38. Ibid., 173-177.

39. Ibid., 175.

40. Ibid., 64.

purpose. For instance, when the church commissioned a missionary to India, the congregation used *nan* in the Supper; when a couple was sent to North Africa, the Lord's Supper included characteristics of African music and woven mats placed on the floor. These details were not explicit importations from other cultures, but metaphoric of those cultures. Marti writes that elements of Lord's Supper services at Mosaic “are woven together into a contemporary, participatory, multisensory experience, and the service still succeeds in feeling sanctified, reverential, and consecrated . . . It is a reorienting experience that aligns people toward their identity as followers of Jesus Christ.”⁴¹ Affirming congregants’ mutual identity in this act allows Mosaic to inculcate the Lord’s Supper more freely, even joining the liturgy to cultures with which attendees may be unfamiliar.

Calvary Baptist Church

Calvary Baptist Church in Waco, Texas, was formed when two preexisting congregations merged in 1928.⁴² The area of Waco in which it is located is characterized by high racial diversity, low median household income, and relatively high unemployment.⁴³ The church focuses its outreach and ministry in the surrounding neighborhoods despite the fact that most congregants live in other parts of the greater Waco area. There is a wide range of ages among attendees, and no age group dominates the others in numbers; the congregation is also evenly balanced between genders.

41. Ibid., 177.

42. “Calvary Baptist Church / About Us / Our History,” accessed February 9, 2015, <http://calvarybaptistwaco.com/#/about-us/our-history>.

43. Data collected from “Waco, TX Neighborhood Map - Income, House Prices, Occupations - List of Neighborhoods,” Urban Mapping, accessed February 9, 2015, <http://www.city-data.com/nbmaps/neigh-Waco-Texas.html>.

Multiple ethnicities are present, although approximately eighty percent of attendees are Caucasian. People of multiple socioeconomic classes attend Calvary, with upper-middle class being the most prominent. While it is one of the most diverse congregations in the city, the congregation does not represent the extent of diversity in its surrounding geographical area.

When attendees enter the doors of Calvary Baptist on a Sunday morning they receive a handshake and a worship handout from congregants serving as ushers. The foyer is furnished with a couch and chairs, a check-in station for children, and a small table with coffee. The hallway between the foyer and the sanctuary is decorated with large colorful photographs of congregants at church gatherings as well as information on upcoming events. Members of the congregation gather for conversation in the hallway and in the back of the sanctuary. The latter is a cathedral-style arrangement—a long space with a high ceiling and pews facing directly forward. The walls are painted in warm colors with windows for natural light. It has a raised platform at the front, and stage lighting and decorations are simple. The space is fairly resonant, but voices and instruments are electronically amplified to a comfortable volume.

Congregants follow a detailed order of worship printed on a handout. The dimensions of the handout itself vary according to contents. The handout lists names of authors, composers, speakers, leaders, and soloists; it also contains written instructions for service elements that require explanation. Texts for readings are included, as is the music for songs not in the pew hymnal. In general, the order of worship elements varies from week to week. The sermon, often listed as a homily, seems to serve a liturgical purpose rather than acting as a climatic point in worship, though it nearly always occurs

toward the end of the service. The responsibility of preaching alternates between Calvary's senior pastor and associate pastor, with other pastoral staff fulfilling the role on occasion. The senior pastor uses a hands-free microphone to enable freedom of movement away from the pulpit; other preachers tend to remain stationary. Preaching frequently includes cultural references: television shows, films, and books are often used as illustrations, and preachers also employ their personal experiences.

The pastor's prayer following the sermon is the only extemporaneous prayer in Calvary's worship. All others are prepared in advance and read from a script. Forms of prayers vary, and language may be either formal or informal. Most prayer leaders are members of the laity rather than the pastoral staff, and they are generationally and ethnically diverse. Despite the variation of prayer leaders, forms, and language, advance preparation provides a significant measure of continuity. This is true not only of prayers, but of every element in Calvary's worship; each song, reading, prayer, and ritual action is well-rehearsed and performed with modest simplicity.

Calvary observes the Lord's Supper every three weeks, usually by intinction. The worship handout provides written instructions and leaders give verbal instructions at the beginning of the ritual. Attendees move toward various locations within the sanctuary where deacons distribute pieces of bread torn from loaves and hold large cups of juice. The deacons speak simple phrases to each communicant: "The body of Christ, broken for you," and "The blood of Christ, shed for you." The congregation expresses relaxed reverence through the use of gentle instrumental music and sparse talking. Singing is rare during the Lord's Supper.

Worship sometimes includes multisensory experiences that encourage congregational participation. These may involve writing thoughts or drawing pictures on paper mounted on the walls of the sanctuary. Occasionally attendees are encouraged to share photos of meaningful church experiences through social media or by posting them on bulletin boards in the sanctuary. The church recently hosted a meal on the Sunday nearest Thanksgiving Day. Attendees brought food, which was placed on tables at the back of the sanctuary so that its smell reminded congregants of what was to come. The service adjourned directly into a corporate meal, which the worship handout labeled as “Worship around the tables.”⁴⁴

In general, regular attendees of Calvary Baptist participate well in worship services. Congregants are directed to stand for singing and sit for all other elements in worship. Singing is typically sturdy, though not exuberant. As might be expected, participation in new songs or those of unexpected musical style is more timid than with familiar hymns. Symbolic participation in prayers is almost unanimously observed through the posture of bowing heads and closing eyes. The congregation exchanges spoken vows with new member candidates, parents during child dedications, and candidates for deacon ordination. Ordination services also include opportunities for congregants to lay hands on candidates and pray for them.

Like other elements of worship, music—congregational songs and choral anthems—serves a liturgical purpose in Calvary’s gatherings. Songs and anthems are interspersed throughout a service. While historical and contemporary Protestant hymnody constitutes the core of the church’s repertory, worship planners intentionally utilize

44. Calvary Baptist Church, worship folder, November 23, 2014.

diverse sources of music for congregational singing. They select songs according to a theme or subject rather than musical style or era. Broadway hits such as “Day By Day” and “Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord”—both from Stephen Schwartz’s *Godspell*—are sung by the congregation, as are soloistic songs such as “My Tribute” by Andraé Crouch.⁴⁵ The congregation regularly sings music that originated outside of Western Caucasian culture, although songs are modified according to the cultural makeup of the church. For example, when leading “When I Think About the Lord,” by gospel songwriter James Huey, the musicians play at a tempo that is faster than typical performance practice for black gospel music.⁴⁶ Global hymns occupy a place in the church’s repertory and are typically sung in both their original languages and English.

Worship planners also apply the principle of adaptation to song lyrics, which undergo minute alterations in order to align with Calvary’s theological tradition. An example of this is the contemporary hymn “In Christ Alone.” In the original published text, the fifth and sixth verses of the second stanza read, “Till on that cross as Jesus died, / The wrath of God was satisfied.”⁴⁷ However, the lyrics printed in Calvary’s worship handout deviate to convey an alternate theology of atonement: “And on that cross, where Jesus died, / He bore my guilt and sinful pride.”⁴⁸ Rhythms and melodies are sometimes adapted according to the ability and customary singing style of the congregation. This

45. Calvary Baptist Church, worship folders. “Day By Day” sung November 9, 2014; “Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord” sung December 14, 2014; “My Tribute” sung November 23, 2014.

46. Personal observation by the present author, November 23, 2014.

47. Keith Getty and Stuart Townend, “In Christ Alone,” Gettymusic - Online Music Resources for the Church, accessed February 9, 2015, <http://www.gettymusic.com/hymns-inchristalone.aspx>.

48. Calvary Baptist Church, worship folder, October 19, 2014.

particularly applies to praise and worship songs, in which melodies are adjusted and syncopated rhythms are simplified to help congregants sing together.

Accompaniment for congregational singing on most Sundays includes piano, organ, acoustic guitar, electric bass, drum set, and a solo instrument that plays melodies and descants. The instrumentation varies according to the musical style of each song. Four singers with microphones provide vocal support from the platform. The music leader, a professor of church music at nearby Baylor University, rarely uses a microphone. Instead, he leads the congregation through gesture and facial expression.

Calvary was the first Baptist church in Texas to ordain a female pastor, and leadership roles at Calvary are egalitarian.⁴⁹ The church currently has both male and female pastors, and deacons include both genders and multiple ethnicities. No worship leadership role is restricted by gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or age. Individual worship leaders decide their own attire, though pastors encourage modesty and tastefulness. Most who appear on the platform prefer business casual clothing; they wear slacks, dresses, or skirts rather than jeans and tee shirts.

Liturgical theology and inculturation at Calvary Baptist. Calvary Baptist's liturgical theology emphasizes hospitality. More specifically, through worship the congregation invites people outside the church to come and take part in it. A literal invitation follows the sermon, when the pastor asks attendees to consider joining the church as members. The aspect of hospitality is obvious when calls to worship enjoin congregants to engage in personal conversation with those around them. Musically, the

49. "Calvary Baptist Church / About Us / Who We Are," accessed February 9, 2015, <http://calvarybaptistwaco.com/#/about-us/who-we-are>.

invitation to come join the people of God is given through songs such as Marty Haugen’s “All Are Welcome,” in which the congregation reminds itself that “all are welcome in this place.” In actuality, Calvary Baptist portrays this emphasis even before the worship service begins. The couch and chairs in its foyer are visual symbols of hospitality. The display of congregational photos in its hallway is akin to family photos hanging in a living room. The simple, unadorned sanctuary invites newcomers to join in worship that is intelligible to those who lack personal experience with church. Finally, the combination of written and aural communication in worship services aims to explain everything so that visitors do not feel ignorant or uncomfortable.

In Robert Wuthnow’s paradigm of “dwelling” versus “seeking” spirituality, Calvary’s worship supports the former type.⁵⁰ The spaciousness and unidirectional seating of Calvary’s sanctuary sets it apart from the architecture and furnishings in the rest of the building. The clothing worn by both clergy and laity is more formal than they would wear outside the church—or at least more formal than can be afforded by many members of lower socioeconomic classes—and sets apart Sunday worship from weekday activities. The idea of dwelling spirituality is found in some of the congregational songs used in Calvary’s worship. Another text by Marty Haugen beseeches God to “Gather us in, the lost and forsaken . . . the blind and the lame . . . the right and the haughty . . . the proud and the strong.”⁵¹ Other songs proclaim that there is plenty of room in this sacred space: “Come to the feast of heaven and earth . . . here at the table of plenty.”⁵² The

50. Robert Wuthnow, *After Heaven: Spirituality in America Since the 1950s* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998).

51. Marty Haugen, “Gather Us In.”

52. Dan Schutte, “Table of Plenty.”

spirituality of dwelling is strongly presented through Calvary's worship setting and participatory elements.

It should be noted, however, that planned elements of worship often point toward seeking spirituality, supplementing the dwelling spirituality just mentioned. Worship leaders at Calvary frequently employ metaphors of journey in language, song, and action. Two instances are Schwartz's "Day By Day" and "Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah" by William Williams. "Heavenly Sunlight" by Henry J. Zelley, begins, "Walking in sunlight, all of my journey, / over the mountains, through the deep vale." A quintessential example of journey language in Calvary's worship is Doris Akers's "Lead Me, Guide Me," the refrain of which reads, "Lead me, guide me, along the way, / for if you lead me, I cannot stray. / Lord, let me walk each day with you; / lead me my whole life through." In addition to spoken and sung words, physical movement during Lord's Supper observances and other participatory rituals also reflects this spirituality of seeking.

The multiplicity of musical styles itself is a means by which Calvary Baptist incultuates its worship. Congregants wish to ensure that people of all backgrounds feel welcome among them, and they demonstrate this desire by singing songs from various eras, in several styles, and even in languages other than English. Calvary's repertory includes global hymnody, African-American spirituals and gospel songs, classical and contemporary Protestant hymnody, revivalistic gospel songs, contemporary praise and worship songs, and even Roman Catholic liturgical renewal hymnody.⁵³ The congregation shows its hospitality by singing cross-culturally and ecumenically.

53. These are six of the seven streams of congregational song identified by C. Michael Hawn, "Streams of Song: An Overview of Congregational Song in the Twenty-First Century," *The Hymn - A Journal of Congregational Song* 61, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 16–26. The seventh, folk song influences, may be present in Calvary's worship, though it was not observed. For more detail on each of these streams, see C.

Other elements of Calvary's worship are also inculcuated. Cultural and personal sermon illustrations help preachers explain religious ideas in everyday terms. For example, in her homily on December 14, 2014, the associate pastor referred to ornaments on the Christmas tree as symbols of experiences or of the people who provided them. She said that these are like signs from God received by people in the birth narrative of the gospels.⁵⁴ The senior pastor's hands-free microphone allows him to abandon the traditional pulpit in favor of a method of public speaking that appears more natural and personal. Finally, the Lord's Supper method of intinction, with elements served by deacons, is relational and interactive. Whereas taking communion by passing plates of bread and juice may be likened to impersonal online shopping, Calvary's method is more akin to going through the line at a grocery store. By inculcating its liturgical theology, Calvary gives both metaphorical and literal invitations to come to the table.

Harris Creek Baptist Church

Harris Creek Baptist Church in Waco, Texas, holds Sunday morning services in two locations. The larger of the two is in a suburban neighborhood outside of the city, and the slightly smaller meets for Sunday worship in a downtown theatre building. This description will focus on the latter location. The church adapts the venue's facilities for Sunday use: rather than ushers, church volunteers gather near the entrances to greet attendees; coffee is available in the concession area of the lobby; the back rows of the auditorium are roped off to compel congregants to occupy the forward seats and allow

Michael Hawn and James Abbington, eds., *New Songs of Celebration Render: Congregational Song in the Twenty-first Century* (Chicago, IL: GIA Publications, 2013).

54. Personal observation by the present author, December 14, 2014.

room for latecomers. Prior to entering the auditorium, attendees are given a five-by-nine inch card with a basic order of service on one side and upcoming events on the other. The card contains a welcome and gives instructions for technological participation through social media, for example: “Share a picture or write about your favorite part of Baptism Sunday on social media using the hashtag #hcbaptism.”⁵⁵ Attendees are encouraged to follow the church on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Sermon podcasts and other media are available through the church’s mobile app on iTunes or Google Play.

In addition to the use of technology for social media, the church sets up high-quality sound amplification and stage lighting each week. Loud music plays in the auditorium prior to the start of the service, and again after its conclusion. Projection screens present a countdown to the beginning of the service and display lyrics and videos during worship. The stimulation of light and sound invigorates congregants as they enter the room to search for a seat. Upon exiting after the worship hour, some notice a loaf of bread and bowl of wine—more likely juice—on a table at the back of the auditorium. These appear untouched, and there is no explanation for their presence.

Attendees of the downtown Harris Creek service are mainly white, middle- or upper-class college students. Approximately two-thirds are female. Congregants outside of this demographic make up a small minority, and multiculturalism is not a prevalent characteristic of these services. Most attendees apparently arrive at the service in pairs or small groups and situate themselves in the auditorium according to groups of acquaintances. However, congregants do not hesitate to sit next to strangers because the back rows are cordoned off until the space is needed. Attire of both leaders and laity is

55. Harris Creek Baptist Church, worship folder, January 18, 2015.

between casual and formal. Many men wear polo style or button-down shirts with jeans or khaki pants, and women tend to prefer casual dresses or blouses and pants.

The basic order of worship services at Harris Creek includes a welcome with announcements, a block of congregational singing, a sermon, and a benediction. The singing lasts about twenty-five minutes, and the sermon averages half an hour in length. Occasionally Harris Creek features a “Baptism Sunday” in which congregational singing alternates with series of video testimonies and baptisms. In these videos, baptism candidates typically describe their experiences of personal conversion and subsequent spiritual formation.

Music at the downtown service is led by a female musician who is a generation ahead of the college attendees. She plays an acoustic guitar and is the only singer with a microphone. The rest of the band includes two electric guitars, electric bass, and drums. Prayers led by the music leader frequently borrow from the lyrics of congregational songs. They focus on the relationship of the congregants to God and can even be sermonic in nature. For example, in one prayer the music leader petitioned, “We pray that, if you say, ‘Go,’ we will go. Help us to answer your call.”⁵⁶ Gestures, facial expressions, and verbal cues play a ritual role in music leadership. The leader indicates to congregants what to sing and when to begin through these means.

The majority of music used for congregational worship at Harris Creek’s downtown location consists of recently published songs that may be heard on popular Christian radio stations. In one particular service—a “Baptism Sunday” that featured about twice the number of songs typically sung in a service—the congregation was

56. Personal observation by the present author, January 18, 2015. This prayer is based on a song used in the service: “If You Say Go” by Diane Thiel.

invited to participate in eight songs. Of these, seven were published between 2007 and 2011. The remaining one was published in 2002. One of the recent songs was an arrangement of a gospel hymn, “Blessed Assurance,” by the music leaders at Elevation Church, a Southern Baptist multi-site church in based in Charlotte, North Carolina.⁵⁷ The musical style of each of the songs in this service could be classified as rock or pop, and two of them exhibited elements of a folk style that has recently gained prominence in the independent music scene in the United States.

No song information—author, composer, or publisher—is displayed for attendees of Harris Creek, although the church’s Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI) license number is listed on the card handout. Nevertheless, many of the church’s attendees appear to be familiar with the majority of songs used in worship. The musical leadership is certainly familiar with professional performances of these songs and works to replicate them on Sunday mornings. Singing styles and musical climaxes in congregational singing match those on professional recordings of the songs. Due to the vocal range of the music leader, songs are performed in a very low tessitura for congregational singing. Participation in music is strong among females, but most male congregants stand silent. Physical movement is minimal among all those present. The speaking style of worship leaders is very informal and fast-paced. They consistently instruct congregants to stand for singing and sit for other elements of worship, and encourage the congregation to applaud as an act of giving God praise between songs.

57. Personal observation by the present author, January 18, 2015. Fanny Jane Crosby and Phoebe Palmer Knapp, “Blessed Assurance,” arranged by Chris Brown and Mack Brock.

Liturgical theology and inculturation at Harris Creek Baptist. The emphasis on personal experience is strong in Harris Creek's downtown services. Speaking from the platform—by the worship leader, pastor, or congregant testimonies—frequently addresses life change, which is termed “transformation” in Harris Creek vernacular. The card distributed to attendees upon entrance clearly states, “The most important thing to us is that you find connection with Jesus Christ.”⁵⁸ Elements of worship services also imply that Christian experience is characterized by intimacy with God. Gospel song texts such as Fanny Crosby’s “Blessed Assurance” affirm the value of personal experience in Harris Creek’s worship. Much of the contemporary music sung in worship implies warm personal devotion to God. For example, “You’re Beautiful” by Phil Wickham begins, “I see your face in every sunrise / The colors of the morning are inside your eyes . . . I look up to the sky and say, ‘You’re beautiful.’” Charlie Hall’s song “Mystery” calls Christ “my sanity” and “my clarity.” The chorus of “Washed by the Water” by the band Needtobreathe proclaims, “Even if the earth crumbles under my feet / Even if the ones I love turn around and crucify me . . . I won’t fall as long as you’re around me.” Finally, a call to action following the sermon suggests that congregants make a decision for salvation, pursue baptism, join a small group, or seek to repair personal relationships.

Emphasis on corporate experience complements personal experience in Harris Creek’s worship, and corporate worship is theatrical. Worship services are obviously affected by the physical setting in which they take place, and Harris Creek leaders take no measures to downplay the fact that their congregation gathers in a theatre. The card handout casually invites attendees to “relax, grab some coffee, and experience worship

58. Harris Creek Baptist Church, worship folder, January 18, 2015.

with us,” initially implying a passive role for congregants.⁵⁹ They are asked later to participate actively by singing together and applauding. The attire of congregants is such as they might wear on a date or to a theatre performance. Through a method that epitomizes liturgical inculturation, aspects of the theatre setting are replaced by ecclesial equivalents: Greeters take the place of ushers, coffee is offered in lieu of concessions, and a visual countdown replaces an overture.

Moreover, worship at Harris Creek is shaped into a sort of script that is acted out by leadership and laity. A clear distinction is made between the two groups through use of stage lights and sound amplification, and through spatial positioning—leaders occupy the platform while congregants are confined to audience seating. Even when congregants give testimonies, they are presented in carefully edited videos. The distinction of clergy from laity is reinforced in the welcome and announcements on the card handout through the language of “we,” representing the leaders, and “you,” representing attendees. Points of participation and nonparticipation are clear to attendees, and are even dictated in detail during congregational singing through gesture and verbal cues. Just as theatre actors stir up applause for the play’s director and producers, worship leaders at Harris Creek encourage applause as praise directed toward God. Congregants are aware of precisely when the service begins, they know when to stand and sit, and they immediately leave when the lights come up at the end of worship. These are some of the ways in which Harris Creek inculcates its liturgical theology with cultural aspects of the theatre.

Additional points of liturgical inculturation may be found beyond the emphases of personal experience and theatrical corporate experience. Musical styles used for

59. Ibid.

congregational singing reflect popular styles heard outside of the church. The leaders' quick and informal manner of speaking aligns with cultural norms among the church's young constituency. Lastly, Harris Creek has adopted a cultural means of conversation in its use of technology to disseminate information about worship and to share experiences of worship.

University Baptist Church

One mile from the theatre that houses Harris Creek Baptist Church's downtown service is University Baptist Church (UBC). UBC is situated in a residential Waco, Texas, neighborhood and has a historical, though informal, relationship with nearby George W. Truett Theological Seminary and Baylor University. It was founded in 1995 by Chris Seay, a graduate of Baylor and a student at Truett, and Christian recording artist David Crowder, who also studied at Baylor. College students comprised a large portion of the congregation during its first decade, and although many of the subsequent ministers at UBC have also held degrees from Truett Seminary and Baylor University, the congregation's makeup has gradually shifted. There is now a wider age range in UBC's congregation. An estimated seventy percent of worship attendees are of college age, but the church has gained a significant number of young adults and middle-aged families. There are few children in worship because the church provides separate children's programming during services. As was observed at Harris Creek Baptist, many of the college members seem to arrive and leave in small groups, indicating that the congregants share relationships outside of church activities. The attire in worship services is casual; most attendees wear their everyday clothes, making it difficult to discern socioeconomic status.

UBC holds a single Sunday morning worship service following a Sunday school hour. The outside of the church building is unostentatious, and it sports a trendy, casual interior. A room devoted to coffee and refreshments adjoins the small foyer, and worship attendees are encouraged to take ceramic mugs of coffee into the service. Staff offices face the main hallway through a wall of windows, and the entrance to the worship space is directly across from them. This hallway contains visual artwork and bulletin boards where congregants share notes on their favorite new music.

The worship space is a dark room, painted black, with a polished concrete floor. Bare light bulbs, chandeliers, and candles light the room before and after worship services. The only decorative material is corrugated metal and a large artistic portrayal of the last supper on the back wall. The preacher uses a simple, moveable wooden pulpit. The space is wide rather than long and narrow, which allows all congregants to feel close to the platform and to one another. The leadership of UBC uses technology to help create a particular ambiance in worship services. Stage lights direct focus away from congregants and toward the platform in the front center of the room. Projection screens on either side of the platform display song lyrics, scriptures for corporate readings, and visuals aids to preaching such as video clips and scripture references. Sound is electronically amplified—music to a much louder volume than speaking—but in a way that does not draw attention to the use of microphones or other sound equipment.

The order of UBC's worship services generally follows a pattern that the church has set over time. It includes typical Baptists elements of singing, scripture reading, prayer, preaching, and church announcements. However, services do not follow the twofold pattern of singing and preaching; songs, readings, and prayers are intermingled.

When a member of the pastoral staff welcomes attendees toward the beginning of each worship service, he or she often mentions the current time in the liturgical year, indicating that UBC follows the liturgical calendar. It should be noted, though, that readings in services do not necessarily match the Revised Common Lectionary. Sermons are relatively short and seem to be presented as a liturgical element rather than a climactic point of worship. The senior pastor prefers frank, intellectual preaching that applies to the daily lives of congregants. He includes an abundance of scripture passages, several references to theologians, and a few allusions to popular culture. The sermon is not followed by a time of invitation. Instead, the pastor offers a brief prayer and then explains that the congregation will take time for the Holy Spirit to minister. This time of silence lasts one or two minutes.

Silence provides a sharp contrast to other elements of worship at UBC. Generally a full rock band—electric guitars, electric bass, drums, keyboard, and one singer—accompanies congregational singing, and the amplification is loud. Some services, however, include contrasting musical presentations in which certain songs are more simply led by the singer with an acoustic guitar. The band has a well-polished electric indie folk sound, and the music leader has a distinct vocal style. He prefers to sing in a tessitura that is too high for most of the congregation, so congregants accommodate by changing vocal registers phrase-by-phrase.

One Sunday morning service began with the band and congregation singing “Amazing Grace.” The text and tune were true to the original hymn, but congregants soon discovered that they were actually singing the contemporary arrangement “Amazing Grace, My Chains Are Gone” by Chris Tomlin. However, the band strayed from

performances on Tomlin's recordings by introducing its own unique timbres and harmonies.⁶⁰ Song selection at UBC does not seem to be limited by musical style or time period. In the same service, the congregation also sang "Just a Closer Walk with Thee," which followed the hymn text and tune but was accompanied by the band's particular musical style, and "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow."⁶¹ The band led "House of God, Forever," a setting of Psalm 23 from a solo album by Jon Foreman of the band Switchfoot. Although this song is not on the CCLI top 100 list, congregants seemed very familiar with it and sang wholeheartedly.⁶² Thus UBC uses hymns and songs from various eras in corporate worship, performing each selection in its own particular manner.

Congregants at UBC, like those at Harris Creek and Calvary, are in the habit of standing for songs, and they typically sit for all other elements in the service. It is difficult to hear congregants singing due to the volume of the band, but participation in congregational singing seems to be strong. There is little movement among congregants during songs, and rhythmic clapping is rare. The congregation occasionally applauds in order to show appreciation, but not simply for agreement or in response to entertainment. One might assume that a young group of attendees would be distracted from the service by their electronic devices, but this is not the case; cell phone use during service is altogether absent, and most attendees appear to be highly engaged in the corporate worship experience. Nearly all of them bow their heads during prayers, and times of silence are astonishingly quiet.

60. Personal observation by the present author, January 25, 2015.

61. Anonymous, "Just a Closer Walk with Thee." Thomas Ken and Louis Bourgeois, "Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow."

62. The song was, however, frequently played on Christian radio stations following its 2008 release.

Worship leaders at UBC seem to consider themselves part of the congregation. Just like congregants, leaders dress in everyday casual attire. When on the platform during congregational reading of scripture, they instinctively turn their backs toward the congregation to read from the projection screens behind them. Humor abounds in their speaking to the congregation, and most of it is of the intelligent, tongue-in-cheek type. Their appearance, actions, and speech all appear relaxed and comfortable.

Liturgical theology and inculturation at University Baptist. UBC's liturgical theology values personal spiritual formation that applies to the everyday lives of congregants. Worship at UBC is consistently personal. Most scripture is read corporately, as is the benediction, putting these words into the mouth of each congregant. Every song featured in the January 25, 2015, service was written in first person point of view, with the exception of "Praise God, From Whom All Blessings Flow." The sermon on this Sunday focused on the perspective of a middle-aged working parent, no doubt relating to a large portion of attendees. Leaders of UBC seek to apply worship elements to everyday life by eliminating, to a large degree, the separation between sacred and secular. The church's website clearly states its belief that this is a false division, particularly with regard to vocation and art.⁶³ The music used for congregational singing is not chosen according to whether marketers intend it to be used in worship, and the vocal and instrumental styles of UBC's musicians are markedly similar to those heard in secular

63. "Our belief [is] that in God's story of creation-redemption-restoration, the division between what is sacred and what is secular is a false division. This [Sacred/Secular] conversation plays out in many ways, but especially in the areas of vocation and art." "New Here," UBC Waco, accessed February 13, 2015, <http://www.ubcwaco.org/new-here/>.

popular music. It is evident in the church's worship practices that the God of Sunday morning is the same as the God of every day.

UBC's inculturated personal formation is accomplished in accordance with its value of communal dialogue. The church believes that the ecclesial community exists far beyond its local congregation. This is illustrated by use of the ecumenical liturgical calendar as well as both historical and contemporary liturgical practices: "Our particular liturgy has been referred to in some circles as 'Ancient-Future,' because in addition to being creative in our use of music and visual arts in our worship, we also hearken back to ancient forms of Christian worship."⁶⁴ There is hardly a hint of formality on Sunday mornings at UBC. The building's exterior does not indicate that it is a sacred space. Inside, staff offices are separated from the hallway and worship space only by transparent panes of glass. The worship space is intentionally comfortable; visual aspects, seating arrangement, and the presence of coffee mugs imply intimacy and dialogue. As demonstrated during welcomes, announcements, and sermons, the congregation values honest, frank conversation, and is not afraid of intellectual talk or discussion of real life. One congregant described UBC as the "Common Grounds of Sunday morning."⁶⁵ If Harris Creek is the ecclesial theatre of worship, then UBC is the coffee shop where Christians go to sit and spend time discussing what they believe and how they live.

Harris Creek, UBC, and Calvary Baptist each exhibit their own liturgical theologies through inculcation of worship elements. In each church, inculcation affects the settings in which worship takes place, the materials used, and the means by

64. Ibid.

65. Common Grounds is a popular coffee shop adjacent to the local university. Molly Johnson, interview by author, Waco, TX, January 25, 2015.

which worship is conducted. Their unique worship expressions illustrate the diversity of Baptists, even in a small geographic area, that allows local congregations to inculcate their worship. While the notion behind liturgical inculcation is not new, increased scholarship in the field can positively influence how Baptists approach interaction between church and culture, and how this affects their worship.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion: The Need and Potential for Liturgical Inculturation

Liturgical inculturation deserves ongoing consideration by Baptists for several reasons. First, it addresses the larger issue of church and culture that is often responsible for ecclesial arguments. Segments of the church employ populist approaches to worship, appropriating current trends in popular culture for church use. Other groups approach worship from a reformist perspective by emphasizing the sacredness of liturgical elements. These two schools of thought often coexist within the church and even within individual congregations. It is important for both groups to understand that they are addressing the same issue: interaction between church and culture. Disagreements over church music, in particular, often polarize the populist and reformist approaches. They also contrast cultivated traditions with vernacular traditions. The former promote music by trained musicians for dignified listeners in the name of artistic value; conversely, vernacular traditions champion the popular appeal of semi-trained musicians for general listeners. Pastoral concern over these church squabbles, which sometimes culminate in worship wars, brings about discussion of the church-culture relationship. Liturgical inculturation is an important part of this conversation.

Second, interaction between culture and Christian worship is inevitable. Those with a reformist approach may take issue with inculturating the liturgy because they believe it sullies what is sanctified. They would do well to consider the innumerable examples of inculturation throughout church history, particularly the example of the early Christian church. Moreover, as an inevitable product of human society, culture is

inescapable. A congregation that refuses, on principle, to engage culture should recognize the cultural elements already present in its worship—music, ritual, architecture, patterns of speech, and so on. Although its worship may not ally with contemporary culture, it likely reflects the culture of a historical period during which the church thrived. At the same time, those who support a populist approach should understand that liturgical inculcation does not necessarily mean allowing the latest styles and trends to steer the church’s worship. Certain elements of culture hinder or contradict a congregation’s liturgical theology—and even the Christian message itself—and cannot be justifiably inculcated.

Finally, liturgical inculcation is necessary for the church. If worship is to be meaningful for congregants, it must relate to their lives. When liturgical materials and practices are too distant from the world in which Christians live, there is little hope that they will be able to understand worship, let alone participate in it. Additionally, worship shares a reciprocal relationship with spiritual formation. As Christians repeatedly engage in the act of directing their minds, hearts, and wills toward God, the Holy Spirit forms them so that such directing pervades the whole of their beings. In turn, the church’s mission of perpetuating God’s redeeming work goes hand-in-hand with worship and spiritual formation. Thus inculcated liturgy not only aids participation in worship; it also deepens the work of spiritual formation and furthers the mission of the church.

Admittedly, the practical work of liturgical inculcation has its own set of challenges. It is difficult work that requires deep investigation and thinking. It requires a congregation willing to learn, experiment, practice, and move forward when inculcation fails. It requires a forum for discussion in the church. Liturgical

inculturation requires knowledgeable leaders who are pastoral, wise, and sensitive to culture.

Many suggestions may be given in regard to this last necessity. Leading a congregation to discover its own culture involves a look at its past; people, records, business meeting minutes, and worship service orders contribute to a fuller understanding of the local church's heritage. A leader should examine liturgical patterns within the local church and in the broader church. He or she should look at the history of the community and the church side-by-side, and discuss the mission of the church in its place. Most importantly, he or she should lead the congregation in discussing how its beliefs are embodied in its worship.

This thesis merely serves as an introduction to liturgical inculturation among Baptists, and there is plenty of opportunity for more scholarship in this area. Baptists need to deepen their understanding of liturgical theology and of how their own beliefs are expressed in and through worship. Although they began as part of a revolutionary movement against ecclesial and liturgical forms imposed from the outside, Baptists have since adopted—and adapted—forms of worship from socio-religious events and movements throughout American history. Baptists must understand the historical forces that have shaped the way they worship, and they must continue transforming their liturgical practices in order that their particular Christian heritage remains incarnated within the present and future culture.

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