

The worship music planner plays both a pastoral and prophetic role in the life of the church. Let's consider the broad range of congregational songs available to us and how we might present our churches with a repertoire that sustains and encourages healthy faith.

Introduction

- Repertoire is theology.
- A song is not just a song. It allows us to adore, confess, proclaim, remember, meditate, pray, etc.
- *Traditional* and *contemporary* are very narrow slices of a very large pie.
- Songs are liturgical “real estate.”
- Music is a marker of cultural identity.
- Worship music is pastoral work and Christian formation.

A Balanced Diet

Song Sources

New Old
Local Global

Role

Pastoral..... Prophetic
Formation Expression
Complex..... Simple
Known New
Congregational..... Presentational

Form

A cappella Accompanied
Note Rote
Leader People
Wordy..... “Wee”
Planned Spontaneous
A variety of forms: strophic, verse/chorus,
Call/response, cyclical, chant

General Principles

- Know your congregation. Enter their stream.
- Start at the sweet spot (pastoral), but stretch in all directions (prophetic). In every service each worshiper should experience a place of comfort and a place of challenge.
- Don't move too fast.
- Worry more about overall health and less about individual “meals.”
- Take the long view: *What are you going to sing by heart around a campfire? What are you going to sing at a funeral? Five years from now, will your people have a more expansive view of Christ and his kingdom?*
- Be a shepherd of the people's song, a theologian of the heart, an expositor of scripture in music.