

Youth Unlimited Convention
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Song Menu

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Workshop Description

Whether you are eating-in or dining out a menu is desirable. When you're ordering your songs for worship a menu is no less valuable. In this workshop we'll look through various menus for songs, check our song diet, and find out how to order the best for our worship gatherings.

Introduction

A song menu is a gathering of songs from which we choose what we sing. The menus available to us are as diverse as the restaurants in our local communities. Some menus provide us quick, popular, easy songs to learn like fast food restaurants. Other menus display less popular, but stable, healthy songs, like a mom and pop's family restaurant. Still others challenge us to explore diverse or global offerings, like an ethnic restaurant serving Indian or Thai food. The challenge for song leaders is to establish a menu from the variety of menus that is on the one hand accessible and on the other hand healthy.

You Are What You Sing

There is a popular dieting phrase that states, "You are what you eat." You can learn a lot about a person by what they choose to eat – are they self-disciplined, are they risk-takers, are they connoisseurs, are they efficient? In some sense, our food choices are an expression of who we are. At the same time, what we eat dramatically impacts our health and our sense of well being. A well balanced diet builds muscle tone and wards off disease. But an unbalanced diet can lead to any number health problems.

The same is true when it comes to the songs we sing, "We are what we sing." On one hand, songs **express our faith** to God. Songs express our love for God, our desire to serve him, our wonder at his beauty, our sorrow for our sin, etc. Because songs express our faith, we need songs that use simple, accessible language. We need melodies that are easy to sing and appealing to the ear. And we demand lyrics that capture our imagination and our experience. Take for example Psalm 150:

¹ Praise the LORD.

Praise God in his sanctuary;
praise him in his mighty heavens.

² Praise him for his acts of power;
praise him for his surpassing greatness.

³ Praise him with the sounding of the trumpet,
praise him with the harp and lyre,

⁴ praise him with tambourine and dancing,
praise him with the strings and flute,

⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals,
praise him with resounding cymbals.

⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the LORD.

Praise the LORD.

On the other hand, songs impact or **form our faith** in God. Look at Psalm 150 again. Where is God? In his sanctuary, in his mighty heavens. Praise him for what? His acts of power and his surpassing greatness. Praise him with what? The trumpet, harp, lyre, dancing, etc. Who is to praise the LORD? Everything that has breath.

Illustration: Testimony about the song “In Christ Alone”

When we are designing our song menu, we want to be sure to include songs that both express our faith and form our faith in positive ways. Ideally we hope to find songs that do both, like “In Christ Alone.”

Questions for discussion:

- What songs do you know that both express and form well our faith?

- Can you recall a time when a song came to your mind when you needed it most?

- How are songs like sermons? How are they not like sermons?

Holistic Health Food

The Psalms are wonderful examples of songs that cover the breadth of human experience. The Psalms are holistic, understanding that in worship we bring our whole selves: our doubts & our belief, our laments & our joys. Consider Psalm 51 as an expression of confession. Consider Psalm 13 as an expression of lament. Consider Psalm 136 as an expression of gratitude. The entire human experience is captured in the Psalms.

Questions for discussion:

- When you think of your students what kinds of emotions do they bring to worship?

- What aspects of the human experience are often left out of our services?

- What songs/hymns of confession can you think of? What songs of lament?

Two Song Examples:

“God Be Merciful to Me” (<http://igracemusic.com/igracemusic/hymnbook/>)

“O Lord, Hear My Prayer” (Sing! A New Creation #204)

As we strive to include songs in our menu that express a wide range of human experiences, it is important to remember that songs also form and shape our human experience. For example, we may not feel the need to confess at a given moment, but the time will come when we do need to confess. At that time we will be grateful that we know a song to sing!

[My experience of not having any songs of lament to sing at our 9/11 prayer service. This was the motive behind Matt & Beth Redman composing “Blessed Be Your Name”]

A Diverse Palate

Finally, when we're putting together our song menu we ought to consider the wide variety of menus that are available to us. Since the 1960s there has been a flowering of songs for worship. In fact, more songs have been written for worship since 1960 than in the entire history of the church prior to 1960! It is exciting to explore all the different choices, but it also affords us the luxury of being picky about what songs we include on our menu.

[Turn to the page in your handout entitled "The worship of God's people flows on the river of music." I apologize for the change of metaphor. I think that this illustration of a river and tributaries conveys well the variety of songs available today.]

Resource: "The worship of God's people flows on the river of music."

- Liturgical Folk:
 - "Gather Us In" (G.I. A.) – SNC 8
 - "O Lord, Hear Our Prayer" (Taizé) – SNC 203
- "Praise & Worship":
 - "Majesty" (1st Wave)
 - "Lord Most High" (2nd Wave) – SNC 47
 - "God Be Merciful to Me" (3rd Wave)
- World:
 - "Anytime and Anywhere" (Asia) – SNC 188
 - "Come, All You People" (Africa) – SNC 4
 - "O Sing to the Lord" (Latin America) – SNC 224
- Gospels:
 - "I Love the Lord (Spiritual) – SNC 226
 - "Now Behold the Lamb" (Gospel) – SNC 144

By selecting songs from such a wide variety of sources, we learn to expand our tastes. The tastes are not only our musical preferences, but also our appreciation for the breadth of God's kingdom.

It is easy for us in North America to become isolated from the rest of the world. "Serve" projects and mission trips are great experiences that broaden our perspective and increase our heart for the world. The songs we sing on a regular basis can give us this appreciation, too.

Moreover, it is easy for Protestants & Evangelicals to forget the wider body of Christ. We forget the wider body of Christ in other denominations as well as the body of Christ that spans all of time. Singing songs from other worshipping traditions (G.I.A., especially) as well as singing historical hymns of the faith expand our palate and form us into fuller Christians.

Questions for discussion

- What "world" songs do you know? Where have you discovered them?
- What stream for your youth is unexplored? i.e. What new taste can you introduce?
- When would be a good time to introduce a song from another culture or time period?
- What traditional hymns have you sung with your youth group?

Designing Your Menu

Song Menu

Theme	Hymns	Liturgical Folk	“P & W”	World	Gospel	Date
Celebration						
Adoration						
Confession						
Redemption						
Thanksgiving						
Dedication						
Illumination						
Lamentation						
Intercession						

Where to begin?

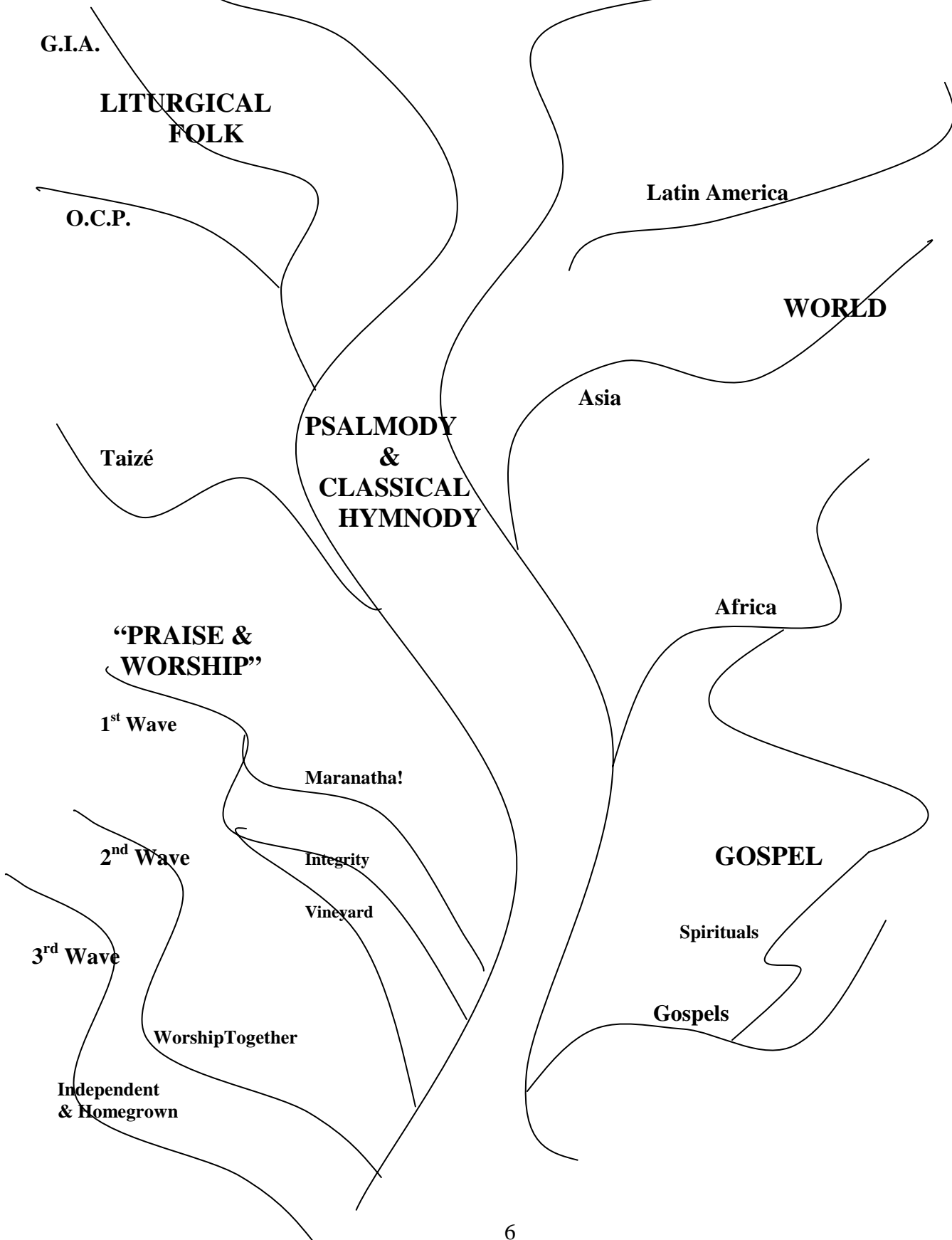
1. Take into consideration your diet. What songs are you already singing?
2. Analyze your songs according to this grid with your leaders.
 - What types of songs are filling your menu?
 - What types of songs are you missing (where does your menu need balance?)
3. When introducing new songs ask, “Does this song fill a space in my menu?”
 - Notice that this is an easier question to answer than, “Do we *like* this song?”
 - Realistically, a group can only sustain about 200 songs a year, i.e. learn it well enough that authentic expression and real formation can take place.
 - If the song does not fill a new space, does it replace an older song?
4. A balanced song-menu takes place over time.
 - Some people may be able accept a brand new menu right away.
 - Oftentimes, however, restaurants change their menu little by little over time.
 - (It would be interesting to look at the menu at Outback Steak House from ten year ago. I imagine there would be a lot of similarities, but a lot differences, too!)
5. A great menu is the song book *Sing! A New Creation* (Faith Alive Christian Resources)
 - This is a supplemental book to the Christian Reformed Church’s *Psalter Hymnal*.
 - It includes the best new songs from the last forty years in each of the categories above.

Balanced Menu of Human Expression

“What human response or need do our songs and hymns provide or fill in our services?” Many songs or hymns can serve a variety of expressions while others are singular in purpose. The responses or needs that songs typically provide or fill within worship are these:

- Celebration: Magnifies the character and acts of God by saying back to God who he is and what he has done. Generally, songs *about* God.
Examples: “Lord Most High”, “Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty”, “Praise to the Lord the Almighty”
- Adoration: Expresses love and desire for God. Intimate language and focus on relationship with God characterize songs of Adoration. Generally, songs *to* God.
Examples: “As the Deer”, “I Love You, Lord”, “My Jesus, I Love Thee”
- Confession: Provides words and musical affect that allow the congregation to express their repentance and seek God’s forgiveness and sanctifying grace.
Examples: “Create in Me a Clean Heart”, “Give Us Clean Hands”, “God Be Merciful to Me”
- Redemption: Songs that confirm God’s love for us. Songs of Redemption bring us words of healing, help us through the work of the Spirit to cleanse our guilty consciences, and remind of us God’s pardoning grace.
Examples: “You Are My King (Amazing Love)”, “Amazing Grace”, “In Christ Alone”
- Thanksgiving: Gives a voice to the congregation to respond to God’s redemption with gratitude. Many songs of Celebration, Adoration, and Redemption will contain a theme of Thanksgiving.
Examples: “Give Thanks”, “There is a Redeemer”
- Dedication: A response to God’s word that voices commitment and/or aspiration. These songs also call upon God to help us walk with him in love and faithfulness.
Examples: “Be Thou My Vision”, “Take My Life”, “I Surrender All”
- Lamentation: Asks the question of God, “Why?” Lamentation expresses to God that the world and our circumstances are not the way they are supposed to be. Often includes songs about justice.
Examples: “Hear Our Prayer”, “I Need Thee Every Hour”, “Good to Me,” “Blessed Be Your Name”
- Intercession: Helps us to voice our petitions to God. Prayer songs also ask God to hear us as we pray.
“Blessed”, “In My Life Lord, Be Glorified,” Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” “Cares Chorus”

**“The worship of God’s people
flows on the river of music”**



LOFT Song Menu 2004-2205

Song Title	Function	Musical Source	Genre	Frequency	Text	Individual/Communal
Better is One Day	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/3,12/5	Biblical	Individual
Blessed Be Your Name	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/10/2004,4/3	Contemporary	Individual
Enough	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/31,11/7,2/6,4/24	Contemporary	Individual
Famous One	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	1/16/2005, 2/27,	Contemporary	Individual
God of Wonders	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	1/23	Contemporary	Individual
Great is Thy Faithfulness	Adoration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	12/12/2004,4/24	Traditional	Individual
Hallelujah (Your Love is Amazing)	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5,10/10,2/6,4/17	Contemporary	Individual
Hallelujah Forever	Adoration	Independent & Homegrown	Song	9/12,10/31, 2/27/2005,	Contemporary	Communal
Here I am to Worship	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/24,12/12, 2/20/2005,	Contemporary	Individual
Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty	Adoration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	11/21/2004,4/3	Traditional	Communal
How Great Thou Art	Adoration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	11/14/2004, 2/27/2005,	Traditional	Individual
I Could Sing of Your Love Forever	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/31	Contemporary	Individual
Let Everything that has Breath	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/31	Contemporary	Individual
Lord I Lift Your Name on High	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/10	Contemporary	Individual
Lord Most High	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/10/2004,4/17	Contemporary	Communal
Lord You Are Good	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	11/7/2004,2/13,4/3	Contemporary	Communal
My Jesus I Love Thee	Adoration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	12/5	Traditional	Individual
Need You Here	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/19/2004, 2/13/2005,4/3	Contemporary	Individual
O Come Let Us Adore Him	Adoration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	12/5	Traditional	Communal
Prince of Peace	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5,11/21	Contemporary	Individual
Santo, Santo, Santo	Adoration	Global	Song	10/24/2004,4/3	Cross-Cultural	Individual
Shout to the Lord	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	1/23	Contemporary	Individual
Water (You Are My God)	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	12/5	Contemporary	Individual
We Delight	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/12,11/7	Contemporary	Communal
You Alone	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	11/21	Contemporary	Individual
You Are Worthy of My Praise	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	5/1	Contemporary	Individual
Your Love Oh Lord	Adoration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	12/5/2004, 2/27/2005	Biblical	Individual
My Friends May You Grow In Grace	Blessing	Independent & Homegrown	Song	Every Week	Contemporary	Communal
The Lord Be With You	Blessing	Independent & Homegrown	Song	Every Week	Contemporary	Communal
All Creatures of Our God and King	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	9/5/2004,1/23/05,4/17	Traditional	Communal
All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	11/21	Traditional	Communal
Bless His Holy Name	Celebration	Gospels & Spirituals	Song	3/6,	Cross-Cultural	Individual
Blessed Assurance	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	2/27/2005,	Traditional	Individual
Christ the Lord is Risen Today	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	3/27	Traditional	Communal
Forever	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/19,11/14	Contemporary	Communal
Glory	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	1/9/2005, 3/6,3/27	Contemporary	Communal
Hallelujah, Salvation and Glory	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5/04,9/26,1/16/05, 3/6,	Biblical	Communal
He is Lord	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Song	3/27	Traditional	Communal
Holy is The Lord	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	1/9/2005,1/16,4/3	Contemporary	Communal
I Will Call Upon the Lord	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/19/2004,3/27	Biblical	Individual
Jehovah Jireh	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	4/24	Biblical	Individual
Joy to the World	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	12/12	Traditional	Communal
Make a Joyful Noise	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/3,11/14	Contemporary	Individual
Oh For a Thousand Tongues	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/24/2004,1/23/05	Traditional	Individual
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty	Celebration	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/31/2004,4/24	Traditional	Individual
Shout to the North	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/26,11/14	Contemporary	Communal
We Fall Down	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/24/2004,1/9/05	Contemporary	Communal
With Every Breath	Celebration	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/19	Contemporary	Communal
A Prayer	Confession	Independent & Homegrown	Song	2/13/2005, 2/20, 2/27, 3/6,	Contemporary	Individual
Give Us Clean Hands	Confession	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/24	Biblical	Communal
God Be Merciful to Me	Confession	Independent & Homegrown	Hymn	11/21	Biblical	Individual
Have Thine Own Way Lord	Confession	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	1/23	Traditional	Individual
Kindness	Confession	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/26,11/7	Contemporary	Communal
Not What My Hands Have Done	Confession	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/31	Traditional	Individual
Ven, Espiritu, Ven	Confession	Global	Song	2/6	Cross-Cultural	Individual
Be Thou My Vision	Dedication	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	9/12/2004,2/6, 3/6,	Traditional	Individual
Everyday	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5,10/10, 2/20/2005,	Contemporary	Individual
Holiness	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/3	Contemporary	Individual
I Give You My Heart	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	11/14,11/21,4/17	Contemporary	Individual
I Will Surrender	Dedication	Classical Hymnody	Song	10/3/2004, 2/20,4/17	Traditional	Individual
In the Secret	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5/2004,4/17	Contemporary	Individual
Jesus Lover of My Soul	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	5/1	Contemporary	Individual
Knowing You	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	2/20/2005,	Contemporary	Individual
Lord Light the Fire Again	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/24	Contemporary	Individual
Lord Reign in Me	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/24/2004,1/16/05	Contemporary	Individual
More Like You	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5/2004,1/23/05,4/24	Contemporary	Individual
Oh Love that Will Not Let Me Go	Dedication	Independent &	Hymn	9/19,12/12,2/13,4/24	Traditional	Individual

		Homegrown				
Step by Step	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/3	Contemporary	Individual
Surrender	Dedication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/10,11/21	Contemporary	Individual
Take My Life	Dedication	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/24,11/21,1/23/05,4/24	Contemporary	Individual
Take O Take Me As I Am	Dedication	Liturgical Folk	Song	2/20,	Cross-Cultural	Individual
Thuma Mina	Dedication	Global	Song	10/3/2004,1/16/05	Cross-Cultural	Individual
Come All You People (Uya imose)	Gathering	Global	Song	9/12/2004,1/16/05	Cross-Cultural	Communal
Come Now is the Time to Worship	Gathering	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/12	Contemporary	Communal
Gather Us In	Gathering	Liturgical Folk	Hymn	10/24/2004,4/24	Contemporary	Communal
Let it Rise	Gathering	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5/2004,1/9/05,3/27	Contemporary	Communal
Sing for Joy	Gathering	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/26	Contemporary	Communal
All Who are Thirsty	Intercession & Supplication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	1/23/2005,4/24	Contemporary	Communal
Blessed	Intercession & Supplication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/5/2004,10/3,1/9/05,4/24	Biblical	Communal
Come Thou Long Expected Jesus	Intercession & Supplication	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	12/12	Traditional	Communal
Come to Us Beloved Stranger	Intercession & Supplication	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	3/27	Traditional	Communal
Hear Our Prayer	Intercession & Supplication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/12,12/5	Contemporary	Communal
Hungry	Intercession & Supplication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/12,11/7	Contemporary	Individual
I Cast All My Cares Upon You	Intercession & Supplication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	6/26	Contemporary	Individual
I Need Thee Every Hour	Intercession & Supplication	Independent & Homegrown	Hymn	9/19	Traditional	Individual
O Come, O Come Emmanuel	Intercession & Supplication	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	12/5,12/12	Traditional	Communal
Show Your Power	Intercession & Supplication	"Praise & Worship"	Song	1/16/2005,2/6	Contemporary	Communal
Spirit of the Living God	Intercession & Supplication	Liturgical Folk	Song	11/7	Contemporary	Individual
"40"	Lamentation	"Praise & Worship"	Song	12/12	Biblical	Individual
Good to Me	Lamentation	"Praise & Worship"	Song	12/12/2004,1/16/05,4/17	Contemporary	Individual
Be Still and Know	Proclamation & Profession	Classical Hymnody	Song	10/31	Biblical	Communal
Come and Find the Quiet Center	Proclamation & Profession	Liturgical Folk	Hymn	9/26	Contemporary	Communal
How Firm a Foundation	Proclamation & Profession	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/3/2004,1/9/05,4/3,4/17	Traditional	Communal
I Believe in Jesus	Proclamation & Profession	"Praise & Worship"	Song	2/6	Contemporary	Individual
Leaning on the Everlasting Arms	Proclamation & Profession	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	9/26	Traditional	Individual
Soon and Very Soon	Proclamation & Profession	Gospels & Spirituals	Song	10/17,12/5	Cross-Cultural	Communal
The Church's One Foundation	Proclamation & Profession	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	11/14	Traditional	Communal
Those Who trust	Proclamation & Profession	"Praise & Worship"	Song	9/19/2004,1/9/05,4/3,4/17	Contemporary	Communal
Wait for the Lord	Proclamation & Profession	Liturgical Folk	Song	12/5	Cross-Cultural	Communal
Amazing Grace	Redemption	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	12/12	Traditional	Individual
Arise, My Soul, Arise	Redemption	Independent & Homegrown	Hymn	3/6/2005,4/3	Traditional	Individual
Before the Throne of God Above	Redemption	"Praise & Worship"	Hymn	2/13/2005, 2/20, 3/6,	Contemporary	Individual
Come Thou Fount	Redemption	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/10,11/7, 2/20/2005,4/17	Traditional	Individual
Grace Flows Down	Redemption	"Praise & Worship"	Song	10/31/2004, 3/6,	Contemporary	Individual
How Deep the Father's Love	Redemption	"Praise & Worship"	Hymn	11/14/2004,2/13, 3/6,	Contemporary	Communal
In Christ Alone	Redemption	"Praise & Worship"	Hymn	9/19,12/12,3/27	Contemporary	Individual
Jesus I Come	Redemption	Independent & Homegrown	Hymn	9/5,9/26,1/9/05,3/27	Traditional	Individual
Nothing But the Blood	Redemption	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	9/12/2004,2/13	Traditional	Individual
Now Behold the Lamb	Redemption	Gospels & Spirituals	Song	10/17,11/7	Cross-Cultural	Individual
The Wonderful Cross	Redemption	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/3	Traditional	Individual
What Wonderful Love	Redemption	Classical Hymnody	Hymn	10/10	Traditional	Individual
When I Think About the Lord	Redemption	Gospels & Spirituals	Song	10/31,11/7,2/13, 2/27,	Cross-Cultural	Individual
You Are My King (Amazing Love)	Redemption	"Praise & Worship"	Song	11/14,11/21,2/13	Contemporary	Individual
Give Thanks	Thanksgiving	"Praise & Worship"	Song	11/14	Contemporary	Communal
Thank You for Saving Me	Thanksgiving	"Praise & Worship"	Song	3/6	Contemporary	Individual