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# Research exercise: Perceptions of Meaning in Liturgical Music in Christian Church Communities of Various Denominational Identities

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# Perceptions of Meaning in Liturgical Music in Christian Church Communities of Various Denominational Identities

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## PURPOSE

To gain a deeper understanding of how music is valued and perceived in various church communities, so as to develop my own perceptions and beliefs about music in worship

## Interview Questions

- ❖ What is your church community's denominational identity?
- ❖ What is the basic style of the music at your church?
- ❖ Are there specific types of themes you notice in the music?
- ❖ Is it more complex or simplistic?
- ❖ Where does the content stem from? Is it based in Scripture? Church teachings?
- ❖ Do you use a cantor, choir, or worship band?
- ❖ How do you think your specific type of music ministry benefits the service vs. another kind?
- ❖ What do you perceive to be the purpose of the music during a service?
- ❖ What is the function of music during church services?

## GOALS

- ❖ Explore different styles of worship music & their inherent meanings
- ❖ Investigate perceptions of liturgical music in church communities of various denominational identities
- ❖ Examine why and how music is used in worship

### Epiphany Lutheran Church

Denomination	Lutheran
Style of Music	Traditional & Contemporary (depending on service)
Leaders /Ministers	Choir or Cantors
Content	Follows the revised common lectionary
Purpose	Supplements readings/message for the day), and serves to involve the congregation in an active way



### The Vineyard

Denomination	Non-denominational
Style of Music	Contemporary; Praise Choruses
Leaders /Ministers	Worship Band
Content	Wide range of themes ~ some come from Scripture, some are general messages   Mostly simple, relatable themes
Purpose	Music = Worship   Brings people fully into worship and praise

### St. Luke's Catholic Parish

Denomination	Catholic
Style of Music	Primarily hymns (traditional & modern) & occasional Taizé
Leaders /Ministers	Mass Choir, Cantors, Guitar Group, Funeral Choir
Content	Complex messages & themes, and predominantly based in Scripture
Purpose	"Singing the liturgy"   Helps to reach people where they are   Increases faith



### United Methodist Church

Denomination	Methodist
Style of Music	Traditional hymns, African-American spirituals, original compositions
Leaders /Ministers	Choir
Content	Complex messages & themes, and predominantly based in Scripture
Purpose	Acts as a significant part of the liturgy   Lifts people's hearts

**Interviewees:**  
 EPC: John Benjamin  
 Vineyard: Scott Sliver & Dustin Smith  
 St. Luke's: David Sievers  
 UMC: Robert Jones