

# 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



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

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