

## A Job Well Done Takes Time and Lasts

By Dr. Charlotte Kroeker

What do Johnny Appleseed, Medieval stonemasons, and thoughtful 21<sup>st</sup> century worship and music leaders have in common? The short answer is that they all did/do their work well for the present and it lasts beyond their lifetimes.

First, John Chapman (1774-1845), is affectionately known as Johnny Appleseed. Folklore may present an image of a man with a tin pan hat randomly crossing the country with apple seeds, planting trees wherever he went. That was not the case. Rather, he established nurseries for the apple trees, fencing them for protection from wildlife, and securing a caretaker before moving onto a new location.

Second, medieval stonemasons were highly skilled craftsmen who belonged to guilds. Their work was arduous and poorly compensated for a church they would not complete in their lifetime. What would they often say when asked about their work? “We are building a cathedral.”

Likewise, clergy, musicians, and congregational leaders who care deeply about worship think about

the long term value of their decisions when planning. They know the words we speak and music we sing has formative, eternal value and cannot be considered as temporary or decided lightly. They choose liturgy and music with truths in the spirit of Psalm 78:6-7:

*...that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments. . .*

A recent article calls for such care

### ***How do we create environments within our congregations that will have long term good?***

in decision-making “longtermism.” Though a secular article, the professed definition is remarkably similar to what Christians would consider the Great Commandment: “Morality at its core is about putting ourselves in others’ shoes and

treating their interests as we do our own.” Further, the article calls us to consider what we do now as affecting not only those currently alive, but also future generations, and encourages us to influence the long-term future as a key moral priority of our time. Future people count. We can make their lives better by how we think about the long-term impact of our decisions. The author notes a remarkable overlap between what is good for people in the here and now, and what is good for our posterity<sup>1</sup>.

How can we create environments within our congregations that will have long term good? Rev. Dr. Tim Shapiro who heads the Center for Congregations in Indianapolis talks of the formative power of congregations and suggests telling stories, tending to relationships, observing religious practices and reflecting on practice as important parts of formation. He lifts up worship, prayer, singing, study of scripture and rites of passages or sacraments as particularly formative<sup>2</sup>. If we value formation, how we approach these activities assumes great importance.

## A Job Well Done... continued

As Erik Routley reminds us:

*"You can't make a congregation sing just by putting music in front of them. You can do that with a choral society or a church choir, it's their job to sing what they are given. But put an awkward and unfriendly tune before a congregation and it will simply stay [silent]. It has the right to strike, and it does."*

The Church Music Institute consists of its members, newsletter

subscribers, and others who care about the worship and music of the church. We are the stonemasons and tree planters who seek to "build the cathedrals" and nurture faith of Christians yet to come.

Join us in this task of finding and implementing the best resources, tools and practices for worship and music. Our efforts are worthwhile. We have the examples of others who bequeathed us texts and tunes for hundreds of years that continue to enrich our lives and connect us

to God. May we be the worthy stonemasons of *this* era so those in the future will have more treasures from which to choose, all because we carry on a tradition of long-term faithfulness.

Charlotte Kroeker, August 2022

<sup>1</sup>MacAskill, William. "The Case for Lontermism." *The New York Times*, August 5, 2022. Mr. McAskill is professor of philosophy at Oxford University and author of "What We Owe the Future."

<sup>2</sup>Shapiro, Tim. "The Formative Power of Your Congregation." <https://thecrg.org/blog/the-formative-power-of-your-congregation>.

### "Becoming More Human through Worship"

*The Annual Herbener Lecture by Rev. Peter W. Marty*

Sponsored by the Luther Center of North Texas

Sung Evening Prayer Sponsored by Church Music Institute

October 30, 2022

Wilshire Baptist Church, 4316 Abrams Road, Dallas, TX 75214

#### About the lecture, from Rev. Marty:



Those who make a practice of committing their lives to worship discover, over time, something interesting. When they leave worship they see an "outside world" that is smaller and more paltry than they had thought. Its politics are puny, its consumerism is hollow, its care for the weak is peripheral. The very assumptions of what constitutes the "Real World," assumptions that typically guide our lives as shoppers, scientists, social workers, and sales associates suddenly become undone once we realize how the grandeur and mystery of God make us more whole than the more cramped outside world. We

can *do* all kinds of things on our own, quite independently and self-sufficiently, thank you very much. But what we can never *become* without worship is fully human. Worship is where we figure out who we get to be in the presence of a God who gives and gives, and always out of love.

For more information including schedule, meal reservation and to sing in the choir:

[churchmusicinstitute.org](http://churchmusicinstitute.org)

*Events and Workshops*

or call 214.751.7669

## Music in Christian Worship 2022



Twenty-three faculty and professional attendees gathered on Zoom for the mornings of two weeks in June to delve into the history and practice of worship and music from earliest times to the present. Using Dr. Paul Westermeyer's text *Te Deum* as a foundation, visiting professors from across the U.S. weighed in from their areas of expertise each day to provide in-depth and scholarly understanding. Morning and noon prayer bookended study time, with music originating from the particular time of the period under study, ably presented by two fine musicians on their own church organs. Discussion was rich, with attendees ranging from Brite Divinity School students preparing for ministry to seasoned clergy and musicians who spanned geographic locations across the U.S. and Ireland. Not only were the readings and professors stimulating, but attendees brought their own life experience, perspectives, and problem-solving skills to each other's learning. One attendee reported, "I can tell that I am a different church musician! I am intrigued by new information, challenged by some different opinions, and supported in some lifelong habits and practices."

**Now we anticipate "Congregational Song" in June 2023!**

## CMI Summer Intensive 2022

"Singing in Our Hearts AND with Our Voices – Again and Always!"

Covid didn't stop musicians, clergy, and congregational leaders from accessing the jam packed 24 hours of ideas and inspiration provided by exciting presenters – and each other! Though in-person attendance was limited for safety, that did not stop some of the best ideas for continuing the song of the church to be shared virtually across the U.S. and Canada. Not only were the presenters superb, but attendees themselves, as is usually the case at CMI events, disseminated tried and true ideas among each other. From best ideas for using the choir in the sanctuary space to support congregational singing, to how the organ can tie spoken and sung word together throughout a service, to Psalm singing and pedagogy for effective cantoring, to how best to involve children in worship and much more, attendees gathered tips and resources to begin their new program year. An After Words discussion several days later provided additional time to probe ideas from the event for implementation in congregational life. Thanks to all for a best Summer Intensive ever, and for staying healthy in addition!



Photo: Dr. Kroeker, Dr. Lynn Trapp and Ms. Joanne Werner

## North Texas Giving Day is September 22nd.

### Can we count on you?

The song of the church is returning and CMI resources are in demand. Would you like to help? Mark your calendar and watch for ways you can maximize your gift. Thank you!

### Saturday Morning One Hour Topical Events are Back This Fall!

**September 10**—“Exploring the CMI Libraries, Fall, 2022”: Join CMI Staff for a sprint through the online libraries, particularly to find treasures appropriate for the fall, advent, and Christmas seasons.

**September 17**—“The Liturgical Year”: Ellen Johnston, emerita from Virginia Theological Seminary will present a journey through the seasons of the liturgical year with an eye for potential to enhance the Christian experience through worship and music.

**September 24**—Fr. Michael Joncas will explore his new *Simple Psalter, Year A and Simple Psalter for Solemnities, Feasts, & Other Celebrations*, part of a larger project that sets every Psalm of the three year lectionary.

**October 15**—Rev. Kathryn Johnson will offer “Planning O Antiphons, Lessons, Carols, Art, Poetry” as the first of a larger series, “What language Shall I Offer in a World Yearning for God’s Justice and Mercy?”

**October 22**—Fr. Michael Joncas returns to introduce his collection of Advent and Christmas hymns of the day, *Within Our Hearts Be Born*, fresh texts (and some new tunes too) for these special seasons.

**November 12**—Dr. Margaret Evans presents “Treasures in the CMI Organ Library.” Though she admits they may be her “treasures,” there are thousands more options for you to discover on your own!

### Did you know?

A CMI membership gives you access to our extensive, carefully curated repertoire searchable by scripture, hymn tune, composer, and more! To become a member, sign up at [www.churchmusicinstitute.org/membership/](http://www.churchmusicinstitute.org/membership/)

### Let’s Connect!

@churchmusicinstitute on Instagram, as well as on Facebook and Twitter, top keep up with the latest CMI happenings!

**The Church Music Institute is a proud partner of the American Choral Directors Association and the American Guild of Organists**



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*Dedicated to the advancement of the best liturgical and sacred music for Christian worship, serving clergy, musicians, and congregants.*