

Lasting Investments

By Dr. Charlotte Kroeker

CMI is the grateful recipient of an estate gift from someone I last spoke with 20 years ago. Jan and I shared appreciation for a common upbringing with music rooted in congregational singing that at the time was shaping a framework that would become the Church Music Institute. Unknown to his attorney, executor or to me, he has followed CMI's work for two decades until his unexpected death in January, 2022. Now Jan has invested in CMI as we invested in something he cared about. He returned the favor.

So many of our actions are much less purposeful than we believe. Who of us could anticipate the trajectory of our vocational lives? The places we would live? The relationships that would be most important to us? The joys and sorrows that would shape our lives? The dreams that would be dashed only to be replaced with reality better than we ever could have believed?

For those of us who have lived longer, we acknowledge how little control we have over what happens to us. If we think we have control, we fool only ourselves. One aspect over which we do have control is our choices that build character. As Christians, we call this discipleship, the lifelong task of becoming more like Jesus Christ, our example, whose birth we celebrate this season. We have options to invest in timeless truths, beauty and good-

ness the world needs, and about which there can be little disagreement.

A helpful tool is the formative nature of music, and the power it has to influence our character. The Biblical mandate to "Sing to the Lord" repeated consistently through scripture is no accident: neuroscience tells us we remember longer words we sing than words we hear or speak. Music has always been a central part of worship from the earliest times. CMI takes this centrality seriously, helping congregations, clergy and musicians choose music thoughtfully, to think about when it should be used and how it can best be offered.

A relatively unknown 18th c. hymn of Charles Wesley set to an equally

Sacred music can raise worship to a higher level of theological understanding, awe, and transcendence.

unknown but sturdy tune by James Lucas is an example. As we begin 2023 it calls us to consider anew our calling and purpose. Dr. Ann Knipschild, a professor and friend to CMI, has set it for reproduction. Both tune and text are in the public domain, can be used without copyright infringement, and with grati-

tude to these wise benefactors from our past. The hymn is included here as an insert.

We don't always know what is lasting, especially when information bombards us from all directions demanding our attention and consideration. Those of us living within the traditions of the church are most fortunate to have scripture, psalmody, hymnody, and worship practice that have lasted. Time has sorted those truths that have served generations before us, truths that speak to us today, and insights that may give us clues about what will last into the future. I'm betting on it. Just like Jan did.

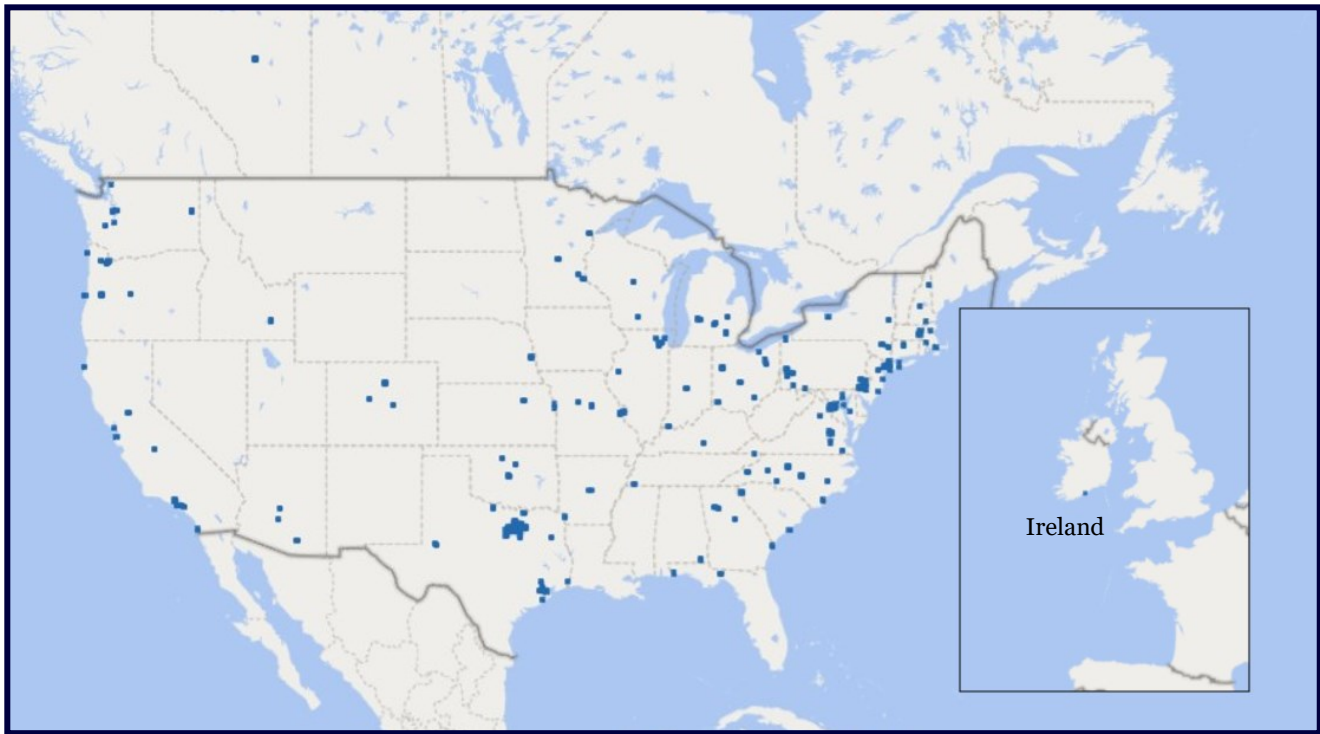
The Church Sings Its Faith By Dr. Robert Mann

Dr. Robert Mann writes the book the church has needed for so long, a concise volume of the development of congregational song from the earliest times to the present. Using common hymns we love to sing, the book traces their origins and helps us understand their meaning for today's worship. Questions for thought and discussion accompany each chapter.

The book is available through
GIAMusic.com
and Amazon.com.



Events in 2022 Draw Participants Across U.S. and Beyond



2022 CMI Events

January 8th– “Best Ideas for Organist” by Dr. Michael Bedford

January 15th- “Best Ideas for Choral Musicians” by Dr. Timothy Sharp

January 29th- “Preparing for Lent” by Dr. Wilma Ann Bailey

February 19th- “The Church, Song, and the Pandemic” by Dr. Rene’ Schmidt

June 13-24- “Music in Christian Worship” Course with scholars from across the country

Aug. 5-6– Summer Intensive led by Dr. Carey Cannon & Dr. Michael Burkhard, Hopson and Thomas Lecturers

September 10th– “Exploring the CMI Library” with the CMI Staff

September 17th– “The Liturgical Year” with Prof. Ellen Johnston

September 24th– Fr. Michael Joncas introduces his Simple Psalter

October 15th– “Planning O Antiphons, Lessons, Carols, Art, Poetry” by Rev. Kathryn Johnson

October 22nd– Fr. Michael Joncas Unpacks his Advent and Christmas Hymns

November 12th- “Treasures from the Organ Library” by Dr. Margaret Evans

CMI Co-Sponsors Herbener Lecture



Rev. Peter Marty

CMI and the Lutheran Center of North Texas sponsored a workshop on worship with Peter Marty followed by evening prayer led by Don Horisberger. In the 10th Annual Herbener Lecture the Rev. Peter Marty convincingly makes the case that worship is, first and foremost, not what we do for God, but rather what God does for us. And as God comes to us in worship with his gifts of grace, we are empowered to become more fully human. Video of the lecture can be accessed via the link below.



Dr. Don Horisberger

<https://www.churchmusicinstitute.org/video-from-the-worship-music-lecture-by-rev-peter-marty/>

Bells Build a Worship Community and a Church

Trinity Heights United Methodist Church in Newton, Kansas began in 1963. Many of the earliest members were young families with children who committed to the new venture out on the edge of town. They wanted to be part of a growing faith community. They made financial and personal sacrifices for this act of faith.

Trinity Heights' founding members placed value on a strong music program. A choir was an important part of worship from the beginning. In 1977, three octaves of bells were purchased with cash donations, pledges, and memorial donations, a pattern that continued to fund the bell choir program for successive decades. A congregation member crafted oak music stands. More bells, table covers, foam pads, tables, and choir chimes were added to the program over the years, with congregation members' designated gifts, until in early 2000 a fifth octave of bells was completed including the large and expensive bass bells, along with 4th and 5th octave bass choir chimes purchased in 2017.

The bell program at Trinity Heights always included both Youth and Adult choirs, with a brief hiatus for Youth in 1987-88 when there were not enough youth to complete a choir. One name dots the history of the bell program consistently from 1977 forward: Karen Monroe.

Karen was born and raised in a small town in western Kansas where she took piano lessons and was always involved in the music of her Methodist church. She trained as a teacher, taught for several years, married a CPA, and when children arrived it became apparent tax season for their family meant she was needed to run the family. It also meant she could pursue her avocation as a musician, particularly to participate in the new bell program at Trinity Heights. She directed the Youth Bell Choir from 1979-87 and the Adult Bell Choir from 1985 to the present. Her other volunteer work at the library and hospital, as well as any travel she wanted to do, revolved around the bell choir schedule. After all, *everyone* has to be there when the bell choir plays. If one person is missing there is not a choir. Karen does not miss this point nor does the choir. They are committed.

Bell choir members not only are committed to the bell choir, but also to the church. Bell choir membership has become, in some instances at least, a metaphor for how one can view church membership, and as an extension, one's commitment to the Christian faith. You show up. You pay attention. You listen. You play your part on time. If you have to be gone you make sure someone else is there to take your place. If it is time to polish the bells, everyone does it. (If you want to play you do the dirty work too.)

The boys and men like to play the big bells. This is not just women's sport. Gender equality. Everyone matters. Youth choir members become adult choir members at Trinity Heights. The current Youth Choir director was a Youth Choir member who became an Adult choir member. Now his son plays too. Mothers and daughters play together – it is an intergenerational choir.

Prior to her recent retirement, Karen has been involved with the bell program for 45 years. She claims she is not a professional musician – just a volunteer. Yet she is the glue that held the program together and nurtured not just musicians but Christians young and old. She built the worshipping community of Trinity Heights, nurturing the musical and worship life of this church for decades. She not only directed bells but also served on the worship committee and cared for other parts of worship. (She sings alto on the hymns in the congregation.) She encouraged “professional” musicians along the way, not the least of whom is her own son, a music educator who creates new generations of musicians in his own way. Her husband sang in the choir at the church and both of them supported the entire music program, including making sure the church had a good organ when a new sanctuary was built. But Karen, with her quiet, passionate commitment to the bell program at Trinity Heights has been a singular, continuing, steady presence of music and worship unlike that of anyone. Thank you, Karen.



We're not admitting that Santa works as CMI membership coordinator during the off-season, but if you call CMI and sense a generous spirit you may have suspicions about Bill Medley.

The CMI Online Libraries: Treasure for Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere

The CMI libraries are a one-of-a-kind treasure trove of the best sacred music for worship available 24/7. Beautiful music that accommodates the needs of both highly resourced congregations and small churches can be found in the CMI libraries. Each entry has a PDF sample and full information for ordering. Best of all, hard copies are available at the CMI office in case the music is out of print or an order is delayed.

How are the CMI libraries built? From music publishers who regularly send new releases, donations from libraries of church musicians, scholars, libraries and churches, and single copies shared from some of the best working libraries of church choral programs in the U.S. For a listing of sources see

<https://www.churchmusicinstitute.org/library-sources>.

It is exciting to note **CMI libraries were used 40% more in 2022 than in 2021!** Experienced users found new ways to find more music and more users discovered how their worship is enriched by CMI resources and their jobs made easier. The CMI library search engines do so much work for users.

The growth of the CMI libraries never stops. In 2022, 1664 new choral titles and 559 new organ works were added. Total choral entries stand at 23,624; organ entries are 17,027.

Let the secret out. If you want music for worship that is transcendent and uses the best of your congregation's resources, you want to use the CMI libraries!

CMI Summer Internships

CMI is looking for summer interns. Interested or know a good candidate? Prospective hires can set up a profile and apply through [joinhandshake.com](https://www.joinhandshake.com). For more information go to:
<https://www.churchmusicinstitute.org/summer-internships/>

Looking Forward to 2023

Yearlong Topical Sessions— Saturday morning sessions will resume in mid-January and continue through April.

January 20— Dr. Kroeker will be speaker at the Association of Church Musicians in Madison, WI.

February 22 to 25— CMI at the American Choral Directors Association National convention in Cincinnati, OH.

June 12 to 23— CMI offers online "Congregational Song" course with Brite Divinity School, Texas Christian University.

June 27 to 30— CMI at the American Guild of Organists Regional Convention in Tulsa, OK.

August 4th and 5th— CMI Summer Intensive with track to follow for young organists.

October 7th and 8th— Bob Chilcott at Highland Park United Methodist Church, Dallas, TX

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/

Let's Connect!

@churchmusicinstitute on Instagram, as well as on Facebook and Twitter, to 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.