

# MUSIC AND SPIRITUALITY

THEOLOGICAL APPROACHES, EMPIRICAL  
METHODS, AND CHRISTIAN WORSHIP

EDITED BY  
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# Introduction

*George Corbett and Sarah Moerman*

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The composer Sir James MacMillan has called music ‘the most spiritual of the arts’, and for many people, both religious and non-religious alike, this rings true.<sup>1</sup> But what do people mean by ‘music’ and ‘spiritual’ in this context, and what is the nature of their perceived relationship? Do certain kinds of music more readily afford spiritual experiences than others? What do psycho-physiological measures—such as heart and breathing activity, electrodermal activity, and saliva samples—reveal about perceived spiritual experiences? What are the practical implications of all this in the musical programming of Christian worship services? How has online Christian worship changed the dynamic between music and spiritual experience? These are just some of the questions that scholars explored at an interdisciplinary workshop on Music and Spiritual Realities co-hosted by the University of St Andrews’ School of Divinity, Music Centre, and School of Psychology and Neuroscience in June 2023.<sup>2</sup> As co-organisers and editors, we issued all contributors with a core challenge, from which these further questions emerged:

- 1 James MacMillan, ‘The Most Spiritual of the Arts: Music, Modernity, and the Search for the Sacred’, in *Annunciations: Sacred Music for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. by George Corbett (Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2019), pp. 9–16, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0172>
- 2 For an introduction to the research project, see the short film by Templeton Religion Trust, ‘Music as a Bridge to Spirituality’, online video recording, *YouTube*, 16 March 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ei0mPuJBnUI&t=8s>; for a short film about the workshop itself, see University of St Andrews, ‘Music and Spiritual Realities: International Workshop’, online video recording, *YouTube*, 16 November 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWfXQGYYPO0&t=10s>. One of the speakers at the workshop (and author of Chapter 10 in this volume) wrote up his own reflections on the workshop: see Bernard Sawicki, ‘Music and Spiritual Realities International Workshop (University of St Andrews, 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> June

how would you, with your own area of expertise, your own research experience, and your own research methodologies, address or seek to demonstrate the commonly-perceived connection between music and spiritual realities? This volume, the fruit of that workshop, brings the interdisciplinary field of Christian theology and music into conversation with new musicology, ethnomusicology, and congregational music studies, as well as with psychology and neuroscience, in order to respond to this challenge.

Since its foundation in 2000, the Institute for Theology, Imagination, and the Arts (ITIA), in the University of St Andrews' School of Divinity, has pioneered research exploring the relationship between Christian theology and music.<sup>3</sup> The interdisciplinary field of Christian theology and music is now well-established with centres, graduate programmes, research networks, and publications, including a forthcoming *Oxford Handbook of Music and Christian Theology* in five volumes.<sup>4</sup> As this field first developed in Schools of Divinity and Faculties of Theology, rather than in Religious Studies programmes, this has affected its methodological approaches and areas of focus; thus, for example, Christian theologians have tended to have a pastoral concern for the music of their own immediate denomination and culture, whereas, in the field of religious studies, there has been more scholarly attention to world Christianities and to world religions.<sup>5</sup> While there have been invaluable contributions

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2023) *The Main Topics and Outlook: the Perspective of New Horizon of the Sacred Music*, *Ecclesia orans*, 41 (2024), 155-77.

- 3 The scholarship of Jeremy Begbie—the Co-Founder, with Trevor Hart, of ITIA—has been especially influential on the field. See, for example, Jeremy Begbie, *Sounding the Depths: Theology through the Arts* (London: SCM Press, 2002); Idem, *Resounding Truth: Christian Wisdom in the World of Music* (London: SPCK, 2007); and Idem, *Music, Modernity, and God: Essays in Listening* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). See also, in particular, David Brown and Gavin Hopps, *The Extravagance of Music* (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2018), and Corbett, ed., *Annunciations*.
- 4 See *Oxford Handbook of Music and Christian Theology*, ed. by Steve Guthrie and Bennett Zon (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming), 5 vols.
- 5 For an introduction to the study of music and world Christianities, see *The Oxford Handbook of Music and World Christianities*, ed. by Jonathan Dueck and Suzel Ana Reily (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). To address the relative dearth of scholarship analysing the relationship between music and world religious traditions, Guy Beck has recently proposed a new interdisciplinary field—'musicology of religion'—to advance scholarship in this area (Guy Beck, *Musicology of Religion: Theories, Methods, and Directions* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2023)).

to the study of the relationship between Christian theology and music historically and in practice, as well as in relation to individual composers, there has heretofore been little engagement with empirical and scientific perspectives.<sup>6</sup>

Just as there has been a growing attention in Christian theology to the arts in general, and to music specifically, as a source of spiritual understanding, insight, and growth, so developments in musicology have made the field more open to an engagement with Christianity and with theological concerns. ‘New’ or ‘critical’ musicology shifts scholarly attention from a traditional focus on representing and reproducing a particular composer’s intention embodied in the score, to a focus on how music is perceived or experienced. While leading proponents have typically excluded any possibility of transcendence or religious meaning in music,<sup>7</sup> more recent scholarship has challenged this ‘illiberal exclusion’, and shown how ‘new musicology’ does indeed open a productive space to explore the spiritual dimension of music.<sup>8</sup> In ethnomusicology, scholars have highlighted that music is ultimately something that is done—enacted and embodied—and that any search for meaning in music must necessarily take this into account. Christopher Small’s widely-adopted neologism ‘musicking’ helpfully points to

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- 6 The scholarship in the field of Christian theology and music is now considerable. In addition to the forthcoming Oxford handbook, see, for just a few examples, *Creative Chords: Studies in Music, Theology and Christian Formation*, ed. by Jeff Astley et al. (Leominster: Gracewing, 2000); the expansive corpus by Jeremy Begbie including *Resonant Witness: Conversations between Music and Theology*, ed. by Jeremy Begbie and Steven Guthrie (Grand Rapids, MI: W. B. Eerdmans, 2011); Maeve Heaney, *Music as Theology: What Music has to say about the Word* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2012); and *Music and Transcendence*, ed. by Férdia J. Stone-Davis (Burlington: Ashgate, 2015). Heidi Epstein’s *Melting the Venusburg: A Feminist Theology of Music* (New York: Continuum, 2005) continues to be the seminal feminist work in the field. The theology of composers, as diverse as Richard Wagner, Olivier Messiaen, and Arnold Schoenberg, has begun to receive significant scholarly attention (for examples, see, respectively, Richard Bell, *The Theology of Wagner’s Ring Cycle: The Genesis and Development of the Tetralogy and the Appropriation of Sources, Artists, Philosophers, and Theologians* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2020); *Messiaen the Theologian*, ed. by Andrew Shenton (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010); and Julie Brown, *Schoenberg and Redemption* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)).
- 7 See, for example, Lawrence Kramer, *Expression and Truth: On the Music of Knowledge* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2012).
- 8 Brown and Hopps, *Extravagance*. See also Gavin Hopps, ‘Music and Theology: Some Reflections on “the Listener’s share”’, in Corbett, ed., *Annunciations*, pp. 337–62.

music as an activity (a verb) rather than a static thing (a noun), whether practising, rehearsing, performing, listening, or otherwise participating in the social, cultural, and communal dimensions of music.<sup>9</sup> These ideas have been at the core of the emerging interdisciplinary field of Christian congregational music studies, which has sought to understand music as lived action in the specific realm of Christian religious practice.<sup>10</sup>

While psychologists and neuroscientists have conducted extensive research on music or musicking, they have tended not to explore music's relationship to spirituality, whether in explicitly Christian contexts or not.<sup>11</sup> The interdiscipline of cognitive musicology, for example, has begun to integrate psychological approaches to both musical production and consumption, exploring the neurological processes impacted by both music-making and music-listening. However, computational cognitive modelling of emotional and mental processes is limited to directly observable and quantifiable effects, and 'in-the-moment' experience, missing the depth of experience that may come in time; it has also not explored music's affordance for deeper understanding of spiritual realities. While psychologists have identified the need for an experiential, phenomenological approach to advance understanding that is more gradual, holistic, and embodied in nature—rather than the mere accumulation of factual or propositional knowledge—this, again, has rarely taken into account the relationship between music and spirituality. As Yeshaya David M. Greenberg remarks in this volume, 'when it comes to the realm of science, the terms "music" and "spirituality" are rarely uttered in the same breath and almost never appear together in any title or abstract in a peer-reviewed empirical study.' Likewise, John Sloboda commented at our workshop, 'the number of psychologists who are studying music and religion, you can count them on one hand', while 'something is happening here that is

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- 9 See, especially, Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998); and Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000).
- 10 See, for example, *Christian Congregational Music: Performance, Identity and Experience*, ed. by Monique Ingalls et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013) and *Studying Congregational Music: Key Issues, Methods, and Theoretical Perspectives*, ed. by Andrew Mall et al. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2021).
- 11 For helpful overviews, see, for example, *The Cognitive Neuroscience of Music*, ed. by Isabelle Peretz and Robert Zatorre (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003) and *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*, ed. by Susan Hallam et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

pushing forward the field in a way that I don't think has been pushed forward in any other arena that I know of'.<sup>12</sup>

Our workshop thus set these three broad fields in dialogue with each other, drawing together and evaluating existing methodologies, as well as suggesting and pioneering new ones. Contributors to Part II and Part III of this volume present new psychological and empirical research on music and spirituality, as well as providing their own constructive reviews of the extant scholarly literature in these areas. In opening up these interdisciplinary conversations, this volume does so predominantly in relation to Christian theological approaches to music (as in Part I), and to worship practices of music in Western Christianity (as in Part III). While there is a considerable diversity of denominational perspectives and contexts presented (including Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican, Methodist, and Pentecostal), the anchoring of the conversation in the Western Christian tradition allowed for some common points of reference and discussion, and provided a necessary focus to the volume. Nonetheless, as indicated by Greenberg's empirical study of the psychological effects of singing wordless sacred melodies called *nigunim* on a large group of Jewish participants (just one of his case studies involving participants from multiple religions and faith traditions in Chapter 7) or by Dilara Turan's empirical research on the musical trance scene of modern-day Turkey (Chapter 8), it would be beneficial, in a future workshop or volume, to anchor the interdisciplinary conversation in another religious tradition, or in relation to musical practices from other parts of the world. Likewise, while most contributors to our volume refer exclusively to a Western classical understanding of music, and are concerned with notated music, many of their conclusions and methodological approaches might be qualified, enriched, and advanced by an engagement with non-Western understandings, as well as with oral singing traditions or improvised traditions.<sup>13</sup>

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12 See University of St Andrews, 'Music and Spiritual Realities: International Workshop'.

13 On spirituality and oral singing, see, for example, Nancy L. Graham, 'Spirituality by Heart', in *Living Song—Singing, Spirituality and Wellbeing*, ed. by June Boyce-Tillman et al. (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2021), pp. 67–82; on spirituality and improvisation, see, for example, Bruce E. Benson, *Liturgy as a Way of Life: Embodying the Arts in Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013).

While necessarily limited in scope, our volume contributes distinctively, indeed, to a much broader discussion of music and spirituality in contemporary scholarship, one which encompasses different religious and faith traditions, as well as secular forms of spirituality.<sup>14</sup> This scholarly and lay discussion has been a pre-eminent concern of June Boyce-Tillman, whose series ‘Music and Spirituality’ (numbering sixteen volumes since 2014) is especially valuable to research in the field, ensuring a range of experiences and voices are heard and represented, and decentring fields which otherwise typically centre particular doctrinal, ethnic, and musicological foci.<sup>15</sup> Two volumes in the series are particularly pertinent to our own. Noting that experiencing music is often considered ‘the last remaining ubiquitous spiritual experience in Western culture’, the second volume of her series—*Experiencing Music—Restoring the Spiritual*—takes a similar starting point.<sup>16</sup> In this monograph, Boyce-Tillman decouples ‘religion’ from ‘spirituality’, describing the ‘development of a spirituality based on process rather than the dogmas and creeds of the defined world religions’; and she explores how music can be a ‘trigger’ for the spiritual, including outside the realm of explicitly religious or sacred music.<sup>17</sup> The ninth volume, *Enlivening Faith*, is more narrowly focused on music and spirituality in different Christian contexts, including prayer, liturgy, and education.<sup>18</sup> The series as a whole is notable for the breadth and range of religious and non-religious beliefs and practices, and of musical genres and styles, covered. Boyce-Tillman’s series also programmatically critiques imbalances in the scholarly literature—as in relation to gender,<sup>19</sup>

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- 14 See, for example, *Sacred Sound: Music in Religious Thought and Practice*, ed. by Joyce Irwin (Chico: Scholars Press, 1983); Guy L. Beck, *Sonic Theology: Hinduism and Sacred Sound* (Charleston, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1993); Jacob Neusner, *Judaism’s Theological Voice: The Melody of the Talmud* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1995); and *Experiencing Music in World Religions*, ed. by Guy L. Beck (Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2006).
- 15 The series ‘Music and Spirituality’ is published by Peter Lang. In addition to being the overall editor of the series, June Boyce-Tillman is author or co-editor of twelve of the sixteen volumes published thus far.
- 16 June Boyce-Tillman, *Experiencing Music—Restoring the Spiritual: Music and Well-Being* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2016), p. 7.
- 17 *Ibid.*, p.4.
- 18 *Enlivening Faith: Music, Spirituality and Christian Theology*, ed. by June Boyce-Tillman et al. (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019).
- 19 Thus the first volume of the series, *In Tune with Heaven or Not: Women in Christian Liturgical Music* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014) takes its title from a Church of England



sexuality,<sup>20</sup> and race<sup>21</sup>—as well as effectively addressing the complex capacities of music and spirituality for healing from abuse and trauma.<sup>22</sup> Our volume—with its thematic focus on Christian music in Western contexts—has somewhat conformed to type in some of these areas, and Boyce-Tillman’s series is, in this respect, a useful point of contextual correlative and potential critique.<sup>23</sup> The question of positionality is, nonetheless, the central concern of Maeve Louise Heaney, in her discussion of our scholarly status as ‘spiritual subjects’ with our own partial lenses (Chapter 11), and this concern recurs in the volume, and is underlined by John Sloboda in his Afterword as well.

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report on Church Music from 1992, and critiques the gendered perception of church leadership, questions the absence of women’s voices from the 1992 report, and highlights women’s contributions in Christian liturgical music from Hildegard to the present.

- 20 See, especially, volume 7 of the series, which brings together queer studies and discussions of music and spirituality: *Queering Freedom: Music, Identity and Spirituality (Anthology with Perspectives from Over Ten Countries)*, ed. by Karin Hendricks et al. (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2018).
- 21 See, for example, Nancy L. Graham, *They Bear Acquaintance: African American Spirituals and the Camp Meetings* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2017); and *Ritualised Belonging: Musicking and Spirituality in the South African Context*, ed. by June Boyce-Tillman et al. (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2021). For an exploration of issues of gender expression, sexuality, and race in the specific context of Black Pentecostal congregations, see also Alisha Lola Jones, *Flaming? The Peculiar Theopolitics of Fire and Desire in Black Male Gospel Performance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020).
- 22 For example, well-being, abuse, and trauma are addressed in volumes 2, 3, 6, 11, 13, 14, and 16 of the series. Boyce-Tillman charts her own autobiographical account of music, abuse, and vocation to the Anglican priesthood in June Boyce-Tillman, *Freedom Song: Faith, Abuse, Music and Spirituality: A Lived Experience of Celebration* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2018).
- 23 Thus, for example, although the editorship is gender balanced, the contributing authors are not. This is partly generational. We did, however, approach other female scholars who were unable to contribute, and, in our open call, we accepted all papers by female contributors, as well as inviting an early-career female postgraduate student to contribute. Although there are a series of initiatives seeking to address historical imbalances, there are wider gender and ethnicity imbalances in theology relative to other disciplines, and this has also been true of theology and music. On theology and gender, see, for example, Mathew Guest, Sony Sharma, and Robert Song, *Gender and Career Progression in Theology and Religious Studies* (Durham: Durham University, 2013), <https://www.durham.ac.uk/media/durham-university/departments-/theology-amp-religion/GenderCareerProgressioninTRS-ProjectReport.pdf>; on theology and race, see, for example, the initiatives within the Society for the Study of Theology at <https://www.theologysociety.org.uk/initiatives/theology-and-race/>.

As organisers and editors, we provided all contributors with a provisional definition of ‘spiritual’ as ‘a perceived area of human experience beyond the material’. Thus, in the context of Christian theology, one might distinguish between spiritual realities (such as God, angels, the human soul), spirituality (which we might think of as a person’s disposition or openness to the spiritual, as someone may identify as ‘spiritual’, or as having a ‘spirituality’), and spiritual experience (a state of a person, as when someone experiences ‘the presence of God’ or being ‘closer to God’, or an altered state of consciousness). However, we left it to each contributor to interrogate this definition in their own way, or to work with another approach to spirituality, and we were intentionally open to a more ‘thin, vague, and useful understanding of spirituality’, as advocated by John Swinton, for example, in the practical context of medical care.<sup>24</sup> The first step, for us, was to name and recognise the lived reality of people’s perceived spiritual experiences through music. Each scholar in this volume addresses this spiritual experience through music in different ways, and with different levels of conceptual precision. The volume’s tripartite division—Theological Approaches, Empirical Methods, and Christian Worship—is likewise intended to be suggestive and indicative, rather than exclusionary. Thus, in terms of content, the first six chapters are more theological, and yet contain insights about methodology and worship practice, while many chapters in the other two sections have strong theological components. This division may also serve readers coming to the volume for the first time: a linear progression is but one way through: thus, for example, those readers concerned more with questions of method (especially empirical methods) might be advised to start with Part II, those with questions about the practice of music in Christian worship with Part III.

In the volume’s first chapter, Jeremy Begbie underlines music’s resistance to those reductionist habits of thought and language which

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24 Medical practitioners are increasingly aware of patients’ need for spiritual care, and of the reality of their spiritual concerns, and yet this spiritual exigency has historically been overlooked, in part due to an uncomfortableness with something so difficult to pin down precisely. See John Swinton, *Spirituality and Mental Health Care: Rediscovering a ‘Forgotten’ Dimension* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2001); see also Ewan Bowlby, ‘From Beaune to “Breaking Bad”: Using the Arts to Meet Cancer Patients’ Need and Desire for Spiritual Care’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of St Andrews, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.17630/sta/243>

would pre-emptively exclude discussion of ‘spiritual realities’, before providing a renewed theological account of both music and language as vital means of ‘sense making’ which can direct our access to spiritual concerns. In Chapter 2, Peter C. Bouteneff similarly focuses on sacred music (with its balance of sacred text and music) as a productive site for considering music’s ‘empathetic spirituality’, which he does with specific reference to the music of Arvo Pärt. Liturgical singing is also the focus of Michael O’Connor’s chapter, which explores the spirituality of music—a spirituality which is *through, with and in*, the material and physical body and not *beyond* it—in light of the work of the Holy Spirit, and with particular attention to the theological-musical writings of Hildegard of Bingen. In Chapter 4, Férdia Stone-Davis argues that to grasp at religious knowledge or music, or religious knowledge through music, in a purely rational or demonstrative way is, ultimately, to avoid it; instead, she proposes an ‘adorative posture’ to both music and spiritual realities, where the affective and intellective powers are together necessary for our experience and understanding. While the first four chapters take predominantly emic perspectives, Bennett Zon tackles head on atheistic scepticism about God and spiritual realities per se, let alone their purported relationship with music. Zon argues, though, that music—considered as an ‘experimental constant’—might help us to understand better the complex historical relationship between religion and science, with specific reference to Augustine’s theo-psychological understanding of music, which leads us from *ordinary* music (which we compose and listen to) to *extraordinary* music (the harmony of the universe). In Chapter 6, C.M. Howell similarly addresses the question of secularity in the contemporary West, in which ‘spirituality’ can be radically reoriented to socio-cultural conditions within a closed ‘immanent frame’, with no reference to the transcendent or supernatural. Methodologically, Howell draws on German aesthetics to propose a holistic approach to the phenomenon of music reception, which allows the immaterial (and unquantifiable) to be appreciated alongside its material (and quantifiable) counterpart, taking as his case study ‘outlaw country’ music, a ‘dissonant’ form of American country music which emerged towards the end of the long 1960s.

A core theme running through this volume is the strange lack of empirical research on spiritual experience through music, despite

it being a widespread sociological phenomenon. In Chapter 7, the psychologist and social neuroscientist Yeshaya David M. Greenberg documents this lacuna before giving case studies of his own pioneering empirical research while, in Chapter 8, Dilara Turin analyses the neurological and cognitive processes involved when rhythmic units, pitch, tempo, and communal chanting induce altered states of consciousness in participants of the musical trance scene. In Chapter 9, Jeffers Engelhardt addresses critically the secular and positivist methodological presuppositions of ethnomusicology, and of the social sciences more broadly, according to which 'other-than-human' agency, or the position of a religious insider, have traditionally been framed out of the discipline; he also gives examples of new ethnomusicological methods which seek to include, or entangle, the emic perspective. While, in Chapter 10, Bernard Łukasz Sawicki argues for a methodological focus on 'atmosphere'—the reciprocal relationship with the environment, including its mood, presence, inhabitation, and landscape—as a necessary bridge to understand the relationship between music and spiritual experience, Maeve Louise Heaney, in Chapter 11, privileges attention on the spiritual subjects themselves, cautioning against the scholarly tendency to assume uncritically an 'objective' perspective. In Chapter 12, Richard E. McGregor describes his methodological attempts—as musicologist and composer—to understand 'what "happens" during the composition of a musical work', a happening commonly referred to in spiritual terms, as an 'inspiration'.

The third part of the volume turns specifically to the context of Christian practice and worship. While a core purpose of music in Christian services is to facilitate access to spiritual realities and to induce religious feelings—such as love of God, devotion, gratefulness, and contrition—there have been strikingly few empirical studies to investigate whether, in practice, worshippers experience such feelings through music and, if so, to what degree. In Chapter 13, Melanie Wald-Fuhrmann analyses the results of two empirical studies involving Catholic congregations in Germany as well as proposing new lines of inquiry, while, in Chapter 14, Jonathan Arnold, surveys the results of three empirical research projects in England and the Netherlands on the spiritual effects of Anglican Evensong. The COVID-19 pandemic, with its temporary restrictions on in-person Christian worship, has dramatically changed the profile of contemporary worship for good, with in-person, online,

and mixed-ecology worship now the norm for many communities. In Chapter 15, Elspeth Manders charts the theological and musicological implications of these changes, and analyses the results from two local empirical studies in the Chelmsford diocese; in Chapter 16, Tihomir Lazić deploys netnography—ethnographic principles to study digital communities and the collection of data from online spaces—to explore the theological, ecclesiological, and moral implications of online worship. But what of the spiritual experience of singers themselves? In Chapter 17, Michael Ferguson draws on his perspective as Director of Music at St Mary's Catholic Cathedral in Edinburgh to explore the spiritual effects of bodily positioning in the liturgical space, clothing and robes, and the relationship of individual singer to the ensemble on the spiritual experiences of choral singers; in Chapter 18, Martin V. Clark examines comparatively the spiritual experiences of British Methodists and Welsh sporting (rugby and football) fans, in which music-making appears to give spiritual expression to the function or purpose of the communal gathering.

The volume opens with a Foreword by Sir James MacMillan, whose faith has been so central to his own compositional process, and closes with an Afterword by John Sloboda, who reflects on the progress, or its lack, in the study of music and religion since his seminal paper 'Music and Worship: A Psychologist's Perspective' of 1998.<sup>25</sup>

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25 The paper is reprinted as John A. Sloboda, 'Music and Worship: A Psychologist's Perspective', in Astley, ed., *Creative Chords*, pp. 110–25.

