

“A Peculiar Beat: St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Decatur, Illinois: A
Microcosm of ‘Traditioned Innovation’ and Adaptive Change in American
Protestantism”

by

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in Public History

Middle Tennessee State University

May 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Andrew Polk and Dr. Kristine McCusker for their advice in researching and writing this thesis on religion and music in American culture. I would also like to thank my Public History graduate program advisor Dr. Rebecca Conard for conveying the importance of public history in public consciousness.

ABSTRACT

Since World War II the historiography of American Protestantism has identified two simple categories of Protestants: liberal mainline and conservative evangelical. However, social changes in American Protestantism, especially since the 1960s, reflect not only evidence of amalgamation of Protestantism in America but also the need to identify a category of Protestants that no longer fits the dominant dichotomy. I argue for at least a “third category” of American Protestants, which I term “traditionalist innovators.” These college-educated evangelicals have held to traditional biblical theology but have been willing to innovate in the use of modern technology, music, and intellectual/academic pursuits. To make this case, I apply the work of both American religious historians and ethnomusicologists to a case study of a midsized industrial city in the Midwest and one of its Lutheran-Missouri Synod churches to exhibit, in microcosm, the adaptations of American evangelicals that have produced traditionalist innovators over time.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER ONE: THE NEED FOR A NEW CATEGORY IN AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM.	1
Defining Conservative Evangelical and Mainline Liberal.	7
Secularism and Revivalism.	14
History of American Protestantism as “Traditioned Innovation”.	22
“Traditioned Innovation” Through Music.	49
Conclusion	58
CHAPTER TWO: AGITATION, AMALGAMATION AND GROWTH OF ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1829-2015.	63
A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America.	67
“Book of Memories”: German Lutheranism in Decatur, Illinois.	79
New Music with a “Peculiar Beat”.	96
Epilogue.	114
CHAPTER THREE: FUNCTIONALISM IN CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC: THE APPLICATION OF “TRADITIONED INNOVATION”.	117
Functionalism in Music	120
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church and CCM.	138
Conclusion.	149
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	155
APPENDICES.	162
APPENDIX A: DECATUR HISTORICAL POPULATION GROWTH/DECLINE (1860-1950).	163
APPENDIX B: DECATUR, ILLINOIS LUTHERAN CHURCHES MISSOURI SYNOD.	165
APPENDIX C: DECATUR LUTHERAN CHURCHES (1964).	166

CHAPTER ONE: THE NEED FOR A NEW CATEGORY IN AMERICAN PROTESTANTISM

In his classic on the development of American Protestantism, *The Lively Experiment*, religious historian Sidney Mead lamented the dichotomous nature of American religion in a democracy with religious freedom—conservative fundamentalism and liberal modernism had no in between. In fact, Mead seemed to speak for the reasonableness of the moderate middle when he suggested, “If the theology of the fundamentalists was archaic and anachronistic, that of the liberals was secularized innocuous.” That was 1963 when conservatives argued that Christianity’s survival depended on maintaining its historical identity, including fears America was drifting from Judeo-Christian roots, and liberals countered it must adapt to pluralistic modernism. Both may have been right, but Mead contended “both were wrong in failing to recognize the validity of the other’s view point.”¹

Since World War II the historiography of American Protestantism has essentially identified two simple categories in the Protestant dichotomy: liberal mainline and conservative evangelical. But there has long been, especially since the postwar period, a third category of college-educated evangelicals who roughly correspond to the non-denominational Protestants referenced by some scholars, but are more accurately described as “traditionalist innovators.” These Protestants hold to traditional theology but are willing to innovate in modern technology, music, and intellectual/academic pursuits.

¹ Sidney E. Mead, *The Lively Experiment: The Shaping of Christianity in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), 186.

To make this argument, I will utilize a community study of a multi-ethnic, midsized industrial city in the Midwest and one of its Lutheran-Missouri Synod (LCMS) churches to exhibit, in microcosm, the adaptations of American evangelicals and some mainline Protestants that have produced these traditionalist innovators. Recognizing the relationship between traditionalism and liberalizing higher education among these Protestants reveals not only the elasticity of American Protestantism, but also ways Protestants historically adapted to cultural changes through innovative speaking styles, camp meetings, sentimental publishing, and in the last several decades, experiential worship styles.

Arguing that sentimentality has triumphed over belief and doctrine in broader contemporary American evangelicalism, Todd Brenneman suggested in *Homespun Gospel* (2014) that new research “must continue to move beyond the focus solely on what evangelicals believe” to how some Protestants practice religion. In other words, *emotion* is a key avenue to developing new historiography. New music and contemporary worship practices could, under Brenneman’s definition, more easily be incorporated into a contemporary Protestantism better understood through emotions.²

² Todd M. Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel: The Triumph of Sentimentality in Contemporary American Evangelicalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 157-161; See also John Corrigan, *Business of the Heart: Religion and Emotion in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 2002); Lynn Neal, *Romancing God: Evangelical Women and Inspiration Fiction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

Protestant history has demonstrated that the mind and heart are not alike. Mark Noll noted that French theologian John Calvin himself struggled with reconciling the emotional and intellectual aspects of faith. Noll explained Calvin's approach this way:

. . . Calvin worked to instruct the mind and inspire the heart together. (However, Calvin's theology was not intellectualist; he believed that the Spirit must change the heart before the mind would accept the Gospel.) Calvin believed that the Spirit enabled nonbelievers to understand the workings of nature and human relationships in the world. . . . Calvin championed learning in the home, he broadened the scope of education for the young people of Geneva, and he founded an academy . . . university.³

It is on this focus—the heart and mind of Protestantism—that helps explain the history of revivalism-fundamentalism and scientific modernism in America and more specifically our study of the local history of St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Decatur, Illinois. Despite a long history of traditional liturgy, the mainline church decided in the mid-1990s to introduce contemporary worship with acoustic instruments. Using St. Paul's Lutheran Church as a microhistory is useful because prior to this point the church was a traditional LCMS body before undergoing adaptation in ritual activity and architecture while maintaining long-held conservative theology, including biblical inerrancy and the sanctity of marriage.

I will argue that some theologically conservative LCMS churches with innovative worship style and music fit as traditionalists innovators. The adapting focus is more on emotive, experiential worship activity than belief. Willingness to change worship style,

³ Mark A Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1994), 37; See also Susan E. Schreiner, *The Theater of His Glory: Nature and the Natural Order in the Thought of John Calvin* (Durham, NC: Labyrinth Press, 1991).

not theology, contradicts the accepted linear historical and historiographical narrative of progression from the characterized uneducated fundamentalists to evangelical then to liberal mainline Protestant and secularist. Furthermore, the transition reflected in experiential worship style grew out of innovation and social change of the 1960s folk and rock music era that produced Jesus music and the Jesus movement. Stephen Prothero's *American Jesus* credits the Jesus movement with altering American Protestantism, or at least successful churches, in attracting membership. This cultural change, or what should be observed in my view as traditioned innovation, is an indication of the adaptability of evangelical Protestantism within a changing culture. Thus, contemporary sentimental worship is more than simple emotionalism but draws from doctrinal tradition and belief as the basis for traditioned innovation.⁴

Following a brief introduction of traditioned innovation, functionalism and social change theory, Chapter 1 will distinguish liberal mainline and conservative evangelical Protestantism and introduce "traditionalist innovators" as a third category of American Protestantism. Understanding traditioned innovation requires an historical overview of revivalism-fundamentalism, evangelicalism and modernism in America, the post-World War II *restructuring* of American religion identified by Robert Wuthnow that witnessed a decline of denominationalism amid polarization, and finally the influence of higher education and modern therapeutic psychology in the New Evangelicals. Chapter 2 illustrates the history of American German Lutheranism and St. Paul's Lutheran Church

⁴ Stephen Prothero, "Superstar" In *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon*, 124-157 (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003).

within that history. Understanding German Lutheran identity includes Lutheran migration and immigration, the 1960s-1970s counterculture movement, and St. Paul's adoption of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) in the mid-1990s. Chapter 3 explains "functionalism" theory in CCM, identifying music for its functionality, utility, and vitality in expression, protest, ritual and adaptive cultural change. This chapter includes a biographical sketch of Larry Norman as the father of CCM, a brief history of popular southern gospel, folk, and rock 'n' roll music in CCM's development, the historical and cultural importance of the Jesus movement to CCM, and highlighting specific CCM songs used by St. Paul's in worship. I conclude with CCM's functionality in adaptive cultural change, specifically St. Paul's traditioned innovation.

Princeton theologian Gordon S. Mikoski described "traditioned innovation" in *Theology Today*. Mikoski argued that an *intellectual* theology must be informed by other external sources, "It will have to probe deeply its traditional sources in order to appropriate critically the treasures of the past while seeking continually to reinterpret them creatively in ways that make sense to varied contexts about contemporary issues and problems." More simply, theology must be informed by knowledge of both ancient texts and other history to include, "non-Christian philosophical, literary, and cultural sources." Traditioned innovation, Mikoski argued, should include what can be learned from "unwritten human realities" in nature, "art and action," "psychological and sociological dimensions," and "digital media" of which, I argue, music is paramount. Gregory Jones has identified traditioned innovation as describing the "past and future always in tension, not in opposition." Crucial to growth and vitality of Protestant institutions and cultural stability, rather than traditionalism, or chaos—too much

change—traditioned innovation describes a process of preserving the past with on-going adaptive change.⁵

Thus, scholars of traditioned innovation have advocated a lively center that avoids both traditionalism alone or ceaseless post-modern change. Through innovation, American Protestantism is not secularizing away from religion but amalgamating toward non-denominationalism that reflects changes in worship activity and music but also reveals the need for a third, overlooked category of American Protestant—traditionalist innovators. The historiography essentially ignores this third category of neither mainline liberal nor conservative evangelical. Rather than progressing to the mainline liberal Protestant tradition, evidence reveals how some educated evangelicals hold to traditional doctrine while gravitating toward more culturally adaptive, emotionally-driven activity. This third way includes not only evangelical megachurches but a growing number of so-called seeker-sensitive churches, including some mainline Lutheran bodies. Seeker-sensitive churches seek to reach the unchurched and new generations through adaptation in worship ritual and innovative marketing.⁶

By definition, traditionalist innovators perceive the need for change and develop and adopt new ideas, Protestant behaviors, and activities in response. Traditionalist

⁵ Gordon S. Mikoski, “Traditioned Innovation,” *Theology Today*, (July 2011): 113-115, www.tj.sagepub.com. Mikoski noted that “Christian thinkers of the past engaged in the art of traditioned innovation,” among them Augustine, Aquinas, and John Calvin who argued that rejecting “the classics of ancient Greece and Rome was tantamount to rejecting God’s grace.”; See also Gregory L. Jones. *Christian Social Innovation: Renewing Wesleyan Witness*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2016. <http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/1-gregory-jones-on-traditioned-innovation-in-worship/>, accessed Sept. 5, 2015.

⁶ Prothero, *American Jesus*, 147; Prothero noted in 2003 that Donald Miller, *Reinventing American Protestantism* (1997) “describes the startling rise of these ‘seeker-sensitive’ or ‘new paradigm’ churches as nothing less than a ‘Second Reformation.’”

innovators may be a new descriptive category of a type of American Protestant but the thought process and activity, I will argue, is not new in Protestant history. From Martin Luther and Calvin to American revivalists George Whitefield and Jonathan Edwards to nineteenth century reformers and twentieth century contemporary evangelical apologists C. F. Henry and Billy Graham, making adaptations while preserving the gospel have always occurred. These new ideas or innovative activities throughout Protestant history often created upheavals, awakenings or reforms. Noll observed, “As it was in the days of Whitefield, so it has been in the two centuries since. The most visible evangelicals, with the broadest popular influence, have been public speakers whose influence rested on their ability to communicate a simple message to a broad audience.”⁷

Defining Conservative Evangelical and Mainline Liberal

Scholars of American religion have defined and redefined Protestant evangelicals and/or fundamentalists conservatives a number of ways, but typically in dichotomous, theological fashion. In *The Restructuring of American Religion* (1988), Robert Wuthnow divided liberals and conservatives on differences regarding religious beliefs and social issues, noting in a Gallup study how the two identified each other. Mainline liberals described conservatives as “intolerant,” “morally rigid,” “closed-minded,” “simplistic,” and “dogmatic.” Conservatives stereotyped liberals as “morally loose,” “hung up on social concerns,” “compromised by secular humanism,” and an “inclusiveness that makes membership meaningless.” Additionally, Wuthnow noted, based on theological terms, “Religious conservatives were committed to doctrinally orthodox views of the Bible

⁷ Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 61.

(divinity, supernaturalism, inerrancy of scripture) and of God.” Among conservatives, Wuthnow included those who identify as fundamentalists, and among liberals those who identify with the modernist heritage dating back to the 1925 Scopes trial controversy over evolution.⁸

The Great Divide, according to Wuthnow, was a divide between religious liberals and conservatives that created splintering and splits over the old labels in which modernists became “liberal” and fundamentalists became “conservatives.” LCMS Lutherans, Wuthnow specifically noted, were conservative but “failed to identify with the fundamentalists,” and thus in many ways did not fit, but these Lutherans agreed with the conservative notion that liberals had a naïve view of human nature as basically good. American Protestants are no less divided today than Wuthnow observed in 1988, but Brennenman’s redefinition of emotionalism as the key to understanding evangelicalism, the process defined as traditioned innovation, and the history of the LCMS church in this study, open a new category for defining Protestants more nuanced than the historiography has previously described. Wuthnow emphasized the upheavals of the 1960s and early 1970s, altered American Protestantism. That cultural and countercultural change produced tension between mainline liberals and conservatives that harkened to past hostility between fundamentalists and modernists. Through this cultural conflict, and more specifically the critical aspect of emotionalism and traditioned innovation,

⁸ Robert Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion: Society and Faith Since World War II* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1988), 132-134. The data was “obtained from the Gallup Organization, Princeton, N.J.” and “conceived by George Gallup, Jr., and designed in consultation with the author.” 332n 50, 336n1. According to Wuthnow, liberalizing trends were a catalyst for polarization and restructuring. The divide was 43% liberal-41% conservative.

American Protestantism has shown an ability to adapt to change. St. Paul's, an LCMS church, is an example of Wuthnow's restructuring at work.⁹

In cultural conflict, symbolism and legitimate authority (Scripture, science) are critical aspects of understanding the divide in Protestant history and contemporary religious, social and political change. Liberalizing influences of modernizing techniques, sentimentalism, and most importantly music, alter American Protestantism through innovation, demonstrating the vitality, adaptability and growth of Protestant institutions. Wuthnow examined the importance of *tradition* and community values in corporate or cultural social order. "If values were the cornerstone of culture," Wuthnow noted, "they were also thought to be the pivotal connection between personal faith and the larger society."¹⁰ Similarly, Diane Eck argued in *A New Religious America* that religion provided common values in morality and social order seen as part of America's changing pluralism. Interpreting what could be described as traditioned innovation in America's adaptive change, Eck argued, "Our religious traditions are dynamic not static, changing not fixed" as religions or Protestantism become the American form of that religion. Both revivalism in the American evangelical tradition and American progressivism in liberalism, for example, became an avenue to revive the human heart and society toward the common good.¹¹

⁹ Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 9, 141. In 1988, Wuthnow identified Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Methodist, and some Lutherans as liberal while classifying Pentecostal Holiness, Nazarenes, Evangelical Free, Assemblies of God, and Southern Baptists as conservative, 193.

¹⁰ Wuthnow, 9, 58-60.

¹¹ Diane Eck, *The New Religious America: How a 'Christian Country' Has Become the World's Most Religious Diverse Nation* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001) 9. Eck asked the question, "Will all these

In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, differences between mainline Protestantism's emphasis on educated clergy's intellectual appeals conflicted with uneducated or less educated sects who emphasized emotional appeals. Yale Congregationalist Ezra Stiles criticized George Whitefield's emotional evangelicalism. Noll noted religious historian Sydney Ahlstrom's observation, "A firm opposition to revivalism and the whole pietistic emphasis on a religion of the heart was a settled conviction with the liberals."¹² Tension described in the sect-church process by Finke and Stark's *The Churching of America*, argued "new religious bodies nearly always begin as sects" agitating the traditional church but eventually and inevitably become churches because popular "successful religious movements nearly always shift their emphasis toward this world and away from the next, moving from high tension . . . toward increasingly lower levels of tension." I argue that increased levels of education and associated tolerance contribute to tension and change.¹³

The history of American Protestantism has long been marked by emotionalism from the Reformation and revivalism to Methodism and CCM. George Marsden argued, "from the time of the Puritans down through the awakenings to the end of the nineteenth century British and American evangelicalism has been in many respects part of a single

differences of race, culture, ethnicity and religion fracture our communities, or will they lead us toward the common purpose of an informed, energetic, and even joyous pluralism?, 16.

¹² Noll, 45. The division separated Anglicans and Congregationalist with Methodist and Baptists. See also Sydney E Ahlstrom, *A Religious History of the American People*, 2nd edition (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 45, 474.

¹³ Roger Finke and Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America, 1776-1990: Winners and Losers in our Religious Economy* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 45-46; See also Ahlstrom (1975), 215.

transatlantic movement.” Similarly, Brenneman noted in *Homespun Gospel* there has also been a long history in America of liberalism. Nevertheless, historical trends reveal both to be important to movements, upheavals and social change. Anthropologists, Joel Carpenter noted, demonstrated that “. . . movements arise to implement changes, to pursue goals that people think the established order is unsuccessful in attaining.” In sum, movements from the Reformation to the Jesus Movement are typically popular, decentralized and oppose the established order.¹⁴

The theory of functionalism in both religion and music emphasize the importance of these cultural institutions in America’s adaptive change and cultural cohesiveness. Sociologist Emile Durkheim revealed how religion functions as part of social, moral communities to satisfy human need. Durkheim was among the first to explore religious thought, activity, rituals, and symbols from a sociological perspective as important aspects of shared experience that represent common values. As a secularist, Durkheim was interested in how societies could still depend on common values in an era of social change in which traditional religion was presumably no longer valued. In fact, Durkheim believed, as many did in the early twentieth century, that religion was becoming less important, gradually superseded by science. Thus, he was concerned about unity in society and noted an important psycho-social *function* or force in supernaturalism:

¹⁴ George Marsden, “Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon, A Comparison with English Evangelicalism.” In *Religion in American History: A Reader*, edited John Butler and Harry S. Stout, 315-325 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 316; See Brenneman, 71, also Joel A. Carpenter, “Fundamentalist Institutions and the Rise of Evangelical Protestantism, 1929-1942,” 392; Also, Luther P Gerlach and Virginia H. Hine, *People, Power, Change: Movements of Social Transformation* (Indianapolis, 1970), xvi-xix.

The believer who has communicated with his god is not merely a man who sees new truths of which the unbeliever is ignorant; he is a man who is *stronger*. He feels within him more force, either to endure the trials of existence, or to conquer them. It is though he were raised above the miseries of the world, because he is raised above his condition as a mere man; he believes that he is saved from evil, under whatever form he may conceive this evil.¹⁵

Durkheim's observation informs the ritual and functional aspects of worship in culture. When scholars lamented that American religion in the 1920s and 1930s suffered from a depression that predicted its decline, theologians argued the importance of common values for social cohesion and therefore vibrancy. Anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski argued in the 1920s and 1930s that "various elements of culture [superstitions, rituals, etc.] functioned or played a part in the maintenance of society and the needs of individuals." In an era of evolutionary theory, scholars like Malinowski and Durkheim viewed change as desirable and equated with progress but, as Benjamin Filene noted in *Romancing the Folk*, they "rejected the notions, implicit in evolutionism, that the present day was superior to all that came before and that any remaining traces of the past were anachronistic 'survivals' that had little function in contemporary society." "Functionalists," wrote anthropologist Larry Naylor, "provided the idea that culture is integrated: change any part of it, and there will be effects throughout the remainder of it." Like Durkheim, Malinowski focused on institutions or organized activities such as religion with common values.¹⁶

¹⁵ Emile Durkheim. *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. Mineola (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2008, 1915), 416.

¹⁶ Naylor, Larry L. *Culture and Change: An Introduction* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1996), 9-10. See Benjamin Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill:

Important to my analysis of traditioned innovation in music particularly is how functionalism shaped the study of music in the 1930s. Folklorists B. A. Botkin and Alan Lomax altered the *preservation* of culture approach to an emphasis on how culture, including music, is created and transmitted. Functionalists, Filene noted, “recognized that culture is a living system, not a collection of isolated elements, and that traditions survived because they were integral to that system.” Thus, functionalism encouraged folklorists to see on-going vitality in folk music, “If Appalachian mountaineers sang ancient British ballads, they did so because the songs helped them cope with problems they faced in their lives; and there was no reason to expect a song to cease performing this function anytime soon.” If traditional or new forms of expression survived, they were, Filene noted, “a sign of that form’s extraordinary vitality and cultural utility.”¹⁷

Keeping with traditioned innovation, folklorists began to see their work of observing and recording culture not so much of *preserving* the past “but an opportunity to examine how a culture sloughed off or adapted the old and incorporated the new into a constantly revitalizing mixture.” Or, as Filene reiterated, “Functionalism encouraged an interest in documenting cultures in transition. Charles Seeger, for example, praised American music as ‘a dynamic folk art,’ for ‘while it continually loses old songs, it

University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 137, Also, Malinowski, *Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays*, 27, 32.

¹⁷ Filene, *Romancing the Folk: Public Memory and American Roots Music* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 138.

continually adds new ones.”” In this way, folklorists looked at the pragmatic utility of songs in what they did for producers and listeners in work or life.¹⁸

Thus, American Protestantism has always demonstrated both an intellectual and emotional element through theological belief and activity respectively. But the more important way in which Protestantism and music function in culture speaks to the way some Protestants adapt to cultural change through the process of maintaining tradition and innovating new activities such as music as part of the traditioned innovation process. The Protestants who do this are traditioned innovators—they hold to tradition but innovate in new ways.

Secularism and Revivalism

Changes in American Protestantism, and throughout the history of Protestantism in general, are not a causal progression of secularism, as many American religious historians have suggested. Many Protestants have undoubtedly become more secular over time, and education and cultural changes are often at the forefront of such shifts. However, a great many American Protestants adapt to such changes through revivalism and a return to more emotional forms of worship and practice. In this way, they are often responding to the very secularizing tendencies scholars have noted. For traditioned innovators, these adaptations allow them to conform to the demands of their cultural and intellectual worldviews, while still maintaining the more conservative theological commitments they hold dear.

¹⁸ Filene, *Romancing the Folk*, 141-143; See also Botkin, *Folkness of the Folk*, 464; Also Botkin, “WPA and Folklore Research,” 7-10.

There is clear evidence in history that reveals how the common declension of progressive linearism from so-called uneducated fundamentalism to educated secularism isn't sound. Innovation has historically derived from adopting ideas outside the Judeo-Christian or traditional Protestantism. The children of Israel adopted cultural practices from husbandry, metallurgy, and music from external cultures. The Apostle Paul "employed the wisdom of the world," Noll and William Barclay have noted, in Greek and Roman philosophy, "These biblical precedents suggest to modern evangelicals that heeding instruction from broader intellectual worlds pay great rewards, as long as that attention is critical, selective, and discerning."¹⁹ Turning to external sources has not always proven intellectually strong, according to critics. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Noll stressed that most evangelicals turned to the Enlightenment to adapt and innovate theological ideas to objective truth in science. Reliance on Isaac Newton, Francis Bacon and Scottish Common Sense philosophers provided new ideas to express thought. As Brenneman noted, Bacon "set out to create a great renewal of learning through the promulgation of a new method to approaching nature." Bacon's late sixteenth century inductive reasoning method, understanding the world through the senses and experience, experimentation, measurement, and replication, was particularly influential on evangelicals' moral thinking. Illustrative of traditioned innovation, the new American thought rationalized, Noll argued, a break with Great Britain, instituted "social

¹⁹ Noll, *Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 52. See also William Barclay, *The Mind of St. Paul* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), 20-31.

order” or common values, and “preserve[d] the hereditary position of Christianity” but later exposed its own weaknesses.²⁰

Modern scholars have emphasized innovation in the culture change process. In *Innovation: The Basis of Culture Change* (1953), Homer Barnett suggested the obvious, “Culture groups unable to adjust to changing conditions” become less relevant and cease to exist. Even without influence from outside forces, Naylor suggested “people always seem to come up with some new idea, behavior, or product to better adapt to changing conditions.” In this sense, traditioned innovation describes the process in American Protestantism and culture. In America, diverse denominationalism flourished in an environment of religious freedom to forge *new* expressions of Judeo-Christian tradition that adapted and amalgamated through conflict into a new American Protestantism. That process reflects not a decline of faith tradition but growth in new innovative forms illustrated by the postwar expansion of spiritualism, Protestant informalism, CCM and non-denominationalism. In America, traditionalist innovator Protestants continually transform as they cling to Judeo-Christian tradition.²¹

²⁰ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 53. Brenneman wrote, “Bacon’s new process stood in contrast to the previous accepted method of deductive examination, which sought to expand and detail long-held theories about the world or a specific part of nature.” Common Sense philosophers included Thomas Reid, Adams Smith, John Locke, Thomas Paine, as well as David Hume and French philosopher Voltaire, Noll, 84-87.

²¹ Naylor, *Culture and Change* (Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey, 1996), 49; Sydney Ahlstrom recognized the resiliency of the early American “crucible” in the expression of French-American farmer J. Hector St. John de Creveceur’s *Sketches of Eighteenth Century America* describing how Americans seemed more willing to adopt new ideas, *A Religious History of the American People*, (1972), 7; J. Hector St. John Creveceur wrote, “Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men. . . . The Americans were once scattered all over Europe. . . .The American is a new man, who acts upon new principles; he must therefore entertain new ideas . . .” *Letters from an American Farmer*, 1782.

Bryan Wilson studied social change and secularization, advocating a linear view of change with a secular thesis that “religion is rapidly on its way out.” Wilson argued that “organizations amalgamate when they are weak,” suggesting the ecumenical movement was a sign that Protestant denominations were gathering forces as the last breath of existence. Finke and Stark, on the other hand, argued ecumenism was limited to liberal mainline churches, contending instead that “growing churches do not want to merge.” The notion of moving in linear fashion, superempirical to empirical, or transcendent to naturalism, as Wilson argued, all of one to all of the other, is not supported by traditioned innovation and traditionalist innovators who still hold to “other-worldly” tradition while innovating with “this-worldly” pragmatism. Innovation includes “systematic, structured, planned and routinized management of human” sciences and techniques. It seems reasonable, then, in light of the growth of this third category of Protestants, to observe not a decline in Protestantism, but as Finke and Stark observed, a decline in “old-line” or mainline Protestantism. Traditioned innovation is evidence that religion is not obsolete but having influence on American culture. In “Prophetic Religion: A Transracial Challenge to Modern Democracy,” David L. Chappell argued that secularist fail to account for the “collective strength to keep civilization from succumbing to injustice” found in prophetic religion—speaking out in defiance against the establishment—used by both liberals and conservatives. I argue that many traditionalist innovators, including LCMS conservatives, seek a broader view of social justice while maintaining traditional Protestant values.²²

²² Bryan Wilson, “Secularization: The Inherited Model” in *Religion in American History: A Reader*, edited by Jon Butler and Harry S. Stout, 336-334 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 338-340; Roger

Instead of seeing the Reformation as only “a movement of secularization and reducing institutional power,” as Wilson argued, the Reformation should also be considered as revivalism, or as Wilson himself observed, “a resocialization to deeper religious commitment.” This cyclical view reflects religious freedom in America as an incubator for both revivalism and Revolution. George Marsden observed that while revivalism has flourished in other countries since the eighteenth century, only “in America it came to be almost unchallenged by other formidable traditions and institutions.” In other words, *tradition* was less formidable in America than in England’s High Church movement. In America, innovation operated freely in a system of disestablishment (no state church); whereas in England innovation was stifled by establishment. For instance, religious freedom in America later allowed the counterculture Jesus movement, considered a form of revival or reformation, to flourish. In broader culture, folk, rock, and Jesus music (CCM, which grew out of the Jesus movement) reflected and influenced culture by expressing a new generation’s demand for change. Christianity of the heart, Mead articulated in *The Lively Experiment*, “gave theology a security largely untroubled by the problem of its relationship to the emerging scientific world view.”²³

Much of the revivalism and innovation within American Protestantism has been emotionally-driven and often explicitly sought to avoid intellectual and theologically

Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America, 1776-1990*, 230, 249; David L. Chappell, “Prophetic Religion: A Transracial Challenge to Modern Democracy,” *Social Research* 76, no. 4 (Winter 2009): 1262.

²³ Wilson, *Secularization: The Inherited Model*, 342-344; Marsden, “Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon,” 231; Mead, *The Lively Experiment*, 137 Mead argued that emotional Protestantism “placed the question of the Christian’s role as a businessman and citizen in the democratic society beyond the kind of practical theology.”

challenges, or because it was simply more effective. In the nineteenth century, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, for example, provided a Christianity of the *heart*. By advocating the cause of abolition through an emotionalized story "with the vicarious sufferings of Christ and the Christian myths about sacrifice," Brenneman suggested that "Stowe believed that proper feeling motivated by the fictional accounts of Eva and Uncle Tom would find expression in proper action." In sum, it was an emotional appeal for individual consciousness and social change. In the nineteenth century, Brenneman noted, "sentimental authors were often concerned about issues related to social order, with the home as a prime arena for fostering that order." Sentimentalists then, and in the twenty first century, appeal to emotion rather than intellect because they believe in the effectiveness of such appeals in changing individuals. Regardless, Brenneman found emotional appeals legitimized authority, not in science or even the bible, but in emotional sentimentalist authors. Though a traditionalist and theological conservative, Dwight Moody used emotion, Brenneman wrote, "to elicit a response from the affections, not the intellect." Concerned with individual conversion, Moody delivered messages of "broad appeal to Protestants of diverse theological backgrounds, and avoided the controversial attitude of proto-fundamentalists." Such appeals downplayed controversial doctrine.²⁴

One of the cornerstones of this emotionally-driven change was the use of music in worship assemblies. Scholars have observed gospel hymns dating to the nineteenth century "provided the means to pass on truths about Christianity without engaging the

²⁴ Brenneman, 9, 28, 16; See also Jane Tompkins, *Sensational Designs: The Cultural Work of American Fiction, 1790-1860* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 130.

challenge of science and modernism.” June Hadden Hobbs noted that nineteenth century hymnody utilized first person allowing worshipers to connect to the “emotional experience encountered in the hymnist’s personal life,” or as Brenneman articulated, “Singers relied on the lyricist’s authority as a conveyer of religious truth.” As noted in Durkheim’s study of religion, corporate expressions of ritualist worship legitimate community values and, in this case, feminized values of intimate relation in expressions of sentimentality. Fanny J. Crosby (1820-1915) demonstrated sentimental imagery in songs titled, “Tell Me the Story of Jesus,” “Jesus Is Tenderly Calling,” and “I Am Thine, O Lord” with lyrics that “pleads with God for closeness” which, as Brenneman explicitly argued, “emphasize that believers should have an erotic desire for God.”²⁵

After all, the highly industrialized world of the twentieth century, lacking in intimacy, motivated more, not fewer, to seek fulfillment in supernatural and spiritual ways of seeing the world. In *Restructuring*, Wuthnow illustrated how upheaval and change in Protestantism resulted not in secularization but privatization of religion. Even if Protestantism had become privatized, it certainly had not died. Likewise, Finke and Stark argued that pluralism, “rather than being a source of secularization and decline, . . . strengthens religion.” In this way, they argued revivalism, like the Reformation, is a response to a decline in specific types of older, stale religion, not a decline of religion.²⁶

²⁵ Ibid., 91-93. See also, June Hadden Hobbs, “I Sing for I Cannot Silent”: *The Feminization of American Hymnody, 1870-1920* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997); Hobbs, 10; Brown, *Word in the World*, 190-208; Examples of sentimental hymns included “Never, My God to Thee (1841) by Sarah Adams and “More Love to Thee, O Christ” (1869) by Elizabeth Prentiss. Brenneman argued that Hobbs personalized hymns “bypass intellectual or theological questions that troubled many in the nineteenth century.”

²⁶ Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 205, 46. Finke and Stark argue, “Secularization is a self-limiting process that leads not to irreligion, but to revival.”

Recognizing the importance of emotionalism as a key to revivalism also challenges the notion that increased levels of education inexorably leads to increased secularism. Robert Wuthnow is right that upheaval in the 1960s and early 1970s, including expansion of higher education, altered American Protestantism. The cultural and countercultural change produced tension between conservative evangelicals and liberal mainline Protestants. Suggesting that rising levels of higher education *changed* American Protestantism after WWII, Wuthnow noted declining denominationalism in liberalizing religion. Education opened-up cultural shifts in egalitarian values and emerged as a basis of attitudinal divergence. Better educated mainline Protestants tended to be more liberal on a wide variety of issues; the lesser educated fundamentalists tended to be more conservative.²⁷ Wuthnow was right about post-World War II social forces impacting American Protestantism but in 1988 he missed how a significant cultural force like popular music impacted the sentimental, heart-felt emotional aspect of Protestant worship. More recently Brenneman addressed music in nineteenth century revivalism and twentieth century CCM as a powerful force in the “sentimentalizing of evangelical thought.” Wuthnow completely missed worship as a vital form of expression and adaptation which should be re-evaluated and refined if we are to understand how tradition is innovated in cultural forms and adaptation of Protestantism to American culture. Brenneman highlighted emotional aspects of music in American evangelicalism, and I will isolate that importance in mainline conservative St. Paul’s LCMS as well.²⁸

²⁷ Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 5, 9, 155-158.

²⁸ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 91.

History of American Protestantism as “Traditioned Innovation”

The history of American Protestantism is not simply a history of extending Judeo-Christian culture into the modern era. It is also a history of Protestantism’s response to modernism. Although American religious historians have often cast the history of American Protestantism as a gradual secular progression, their own work reveals that simple narrative is not always the case. These same scholars note the ways that Protestants turned to emotionalism and cultural innovation in times of theological or cultural crisis. These adaptations reveal the ways that traditioned innovation allows many Protestants to hold to their conservative theology, while confronting the changing American religious landscape. In this way, these scholars’ own work reveals the third category of American Protestantism that their dichotomous worldview causes them to miss.

Evangelical Charles Finney (1792-1875) published techniques learned from the innovative successes of George Whitefield and “stressed that revivals did not simply happen . . . but [were] carefully staged, ‘[A revival of religion] is not a miracle. . . .It is a purely philosophical result of the right use of the constituted means.’” As Brenneman argued, “Evangelical practice since the inception of the movement has frequently involved as much consumerism as it has consecration.” Publishing houses historically packaged emotional products. Finney’s measures for revivals were articulated in 1835 as

planned and organized events. Evangelicals like Finney learned that intellectual, doctrinal sermons were not as effective as emotional appeals.²⁹

Ordained Anglican John Wesley (1703-1791), who emphasized a *new* conversion experience over Calvinistic belief, came to America in 1735 with his brother, Charles, “with the pious intent of converting the Native Americans to Christianity.” William Horton disputed with John Wesley on board the *Symond* in defense of other passengers, “Besides, they say they are Protestants. But as for you . . . they cannot tell what religion you are of. They never heard of such religion before.” Wesley’s experiential religion grew from an encounter with a Moravian missionary and an Anglican society meeting. Sydney Ahlstrom suggested, “. . . this experience transformed his career and provided the central theme of his amazingly powerful preaching.” It led to American Methodism. His brother, the great Methodist hymnist, *experienced* a similar conversion.³⁰

A non-denominational spirit of Wesleyan revivalism and anti-formalism created experienced-based Methodism, Sidney Mead argued. The Wesley brothers went about “spreading ‘scriptural religion throughout the land, among people of every denomination; leaving every one to his own opinions, and follow his own mode of worship.” The

²⁹ Brenneman, 84; See also Frank Lambert, “Peddler in Divinity”: *George Whitefield and the Transatlantic Revivals, 1737-1770* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 8; Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 86-90. Finney’s measures included good ventilation, prayers intense but short. Finney wrote, “Religion is the work of man. It is something for man to do. . . [But] Men are so spiritually sluggish, there are so many things to lead their minds off from religion, and to oppose the influence of the gospel, that it is necessary to raise an excitement among them, till the tide rises so high as to sweep away the opposing obstacles,” 92.

³⁰ June Hall McCash, *Jekyll Island’s Early Years: From Prehistory Through Reconstruction* (Athens: University of Georgia Press), 2005, 47; See also n224 Curnock, *Journal of the Rev. John Wesley*, I:234; Sydney Ahlstrom, 325; It is important to note, as Ahlstrom pointed out, that musician Charles Wesley was heavily “influenced by the mystical writings of William Law” and “Jacob Boehme.”

universal appeal to the *heart* in pietistic revivalism that led to inner life contemplation and transforming conversion was not shared by all Protestants including reserved Lutherans. Revivalism became an alternative to lifeless formalism. Mark Noll argued that “the Second Great Awakening . . . witnessed a further loosening of institutional bonds and had further undercut the deference to tradition.”³¹ Emotional appeals to the heart not only saved souls but effectively persuaded many, as Wuthnow noted, to energize common American values:

The traditional emphasis on revivalism in American religion was a prominent feature in these discussions. Religious values could grow stale and ineffective. . . . Values had to be animated by moral commitment, by the kind of commitment that only genuine spiritual conviction could supply. Religion, therefore, needed continuously to be revitalized.³²

Perhaps the most explicit examples of traditioned innovation come from the revivals of the First and Second Great Awakenings. Scholars have argued the Awakenings, revivals, and evangelicalism initiated a *new* evangelical spirit. Harry S. Stout noted Alan Heimert’s observation, “there emerged with the rebellion an egalitarian impulse that pointed the creation of a society fundamentally incompatible with traditional conceptions of order, hierarchy, and deference.” In *Southern Cross*, Christine Heyrman illustrated how evangelicalism brought together spiritual brothers and sisters in egalitarian ways, noting, “Before the appearance of evangelicals in the South there had been no tradition of according women any kind of spiritual authority.” Noll wrote of the

³¹ Mead, 40; See John Wesley, *Sermons on Several Occasions* (New York: Lane and Tippet, 1851), II, 392; See Mark Noll, *Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 62.

³² Wuthnow 60; See John C. Winston, “Christ or Communism,” *Christian Life*, Dec. 1947, 25. Winston argued, according to Wuthnow, “that a formal religion kept alive by the power of tradition . . . will not suffice to save a nation from destruction.”

successful innovation, “Those like the Methodists and the Baptists, which exploited innovative revival techniques to carry the gospel to the people, flourished.” Through new techniques and egalitarianism “[t]he conversion of the population in the early United States by Methodists, Baptists, and like-minded innovators is one of the great stories in American Christian history.”³³

The most significant demand evangelical Protestantism places on followers, as previously eluded, is elicited conversions—emotional experiences that came to be known as “born-again” or giving one’s whole life to God. Dating to Jesus’ edict that one must be “‘born-again’ to see the kingdom of God,” emotional appeals have inspired life-altering convictions. Finke and Stark identified studies of paradoxical evidence that increased demand increased membership. Being forced to choose, for example, was evident in the twentieth century preaching of Billy Sunday to Billy Graham as well as late Jesus rock artist-preacher Keith Green who regularly made uncompromising appeals, “If Jesus truly was who he claimed to be, what decision are you going to make?” According to religious scholar David Stowe, Green had been deeply affected by Ravenhill’s *Why Revival Tarries* (1959) and Finney’s *Revival Lectures* (1835/1868) with “invented . . . techniques used by later evangelists like Dwight Moody, Billy Sunday, and Billy Graham.”³⁴

³³ Stout, “Religion, Communications, and the Ideological Origins of the American Revolution,” 92, Heyrman, *Southern Cross*, 173, Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 62-63.

³⁴ Finke and Stark, 250; David W. Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil: Christian Pop Music and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism* (UNC Press Books, 2011), 218-219; The often quoted bible reference to the conversion experience is John 3:3, “Truly, truly I say to you unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,” NAST. Finke & Stark’s persuasion techniques included group behavior dynamics: “positive experience in worship increases to the degree that the church is full, members

Dependence on emotion reveals important aspects of traditioned innovation in American Protestantism. In a comparative evaluation of Louis Hartz's classic *The Liberal Tradition in America* with Hans Vorlander's "Hegemonic liberalism," Klaus J. Hansen credited Vorlander for recognizing the importance of Protestant tradition in reform movements. Temperance, abolitionism and missions are nineteenth century examples.³⁵ Mead and other scholars recognized emotional appeals in America's social justice reform. The Temperance movement was led by women seeking to stop abusive drinkers and liquor makers from destroying families; Quaker abolitionism morally persuaded slave owners to free slaves. Prophetic religion, or calling out wrongs in society, came from outspoken Protestant-progressive women driven to recreate society.³⁶

In *The Lively Experiment*, Mead examined how tensions between traditionalists and enthusiasts in the eighteenth-century flourished in America's *new* system of religious freedom, noting that "a mingling through frustration, controversy, confusion and compromise" shaped American Protestantism. This adaptation amid social forces supports how new ideas and activity innovated into new forms of American Protestantism. Religious freedom became the incubator for innovation and the free form of disestablishment denominationalism. Rationalist Ben Franklin argued the necessity of morality to, as Thomas Jefferson put it, "preserve peace and order" in a new system in

enthusiastically participate, and others express their positive evaluations of what is going on," helping create a belongingness beneficial to social connectedness and community cohesion.

³⁵ Klaus J. Hanson, "The Liberal Tradition in America: A German View," *The Journal of American History* (March 2001): 1397-1408.

³⁶ Mead, 93-98. See Brenneman, 9; See also Ann Douglas, *The Feminization of American Culture* (New York: Anchor Press, 1977; reprint 1988), 77. Douglas illustrated that "sentimentality provided one way for women to craft a sphere of authority for themselves to criticize the wrongs or inequalities they saw in society," providing women agency, noted Brenneman.

which established Anglican uniformity was seen as a questionable artificial structure. Mead wrote in 1963 that it is difficult for contemporaries to understand how innovative was free religion, “These views are so ingrained in the American mind that it requires some efforts to realize that at the time they were considered a very daring innovation—an experiment worth trying but of uncertain outcome.” Jefferson, in large measure, borrowed the notion of religious freedom for *Notes on the State of Virginia* from the Quaker colony, ““Our sister States in Pennsylvania and New York, . . . have long subsisted without any establishment at all. The experiment was new. . . .Religion is well supported; . . . all sufficient to preserve peace and order; . . . Let us too give this experiment fair play . . .”³⁷

Jefferson was no evangelical, but as a rationalist innovator and part of an Awakening and revivalism spirit he helped forge the ideology of the Revolution. Jefferson’s influence on religious freedom in the fair experiment, also detailed in Jon Meacham’s *Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power*, reveals how denominational differences were overcome with innovation. Jefferson studied at William and Mary under Scottish-born professor William Small who lectured on Common Sense moral philosophy of Bacon, Locke, and Adam Smith. A thinker in an age when Reason, not Revelation, deserved place in human affairs, Jefferson’s “journey from loyal subject to leading rebel reveals . . . a pragmatist as well as an idealist, a man who understood the importance of

³⁷ Mead, *The Lively Experiment*, 36-38, 40-59. Mead described this *experiment* as one by which “American denominational Protestantism is the offspring of this second marriage [between pietism and rationalism] living in the house of religious freedom which was built during the first marriage.” Traditionalist were Anglicans: enthusiasts’ revivalists. Jefferson penned “Act for Religious Freedom,” *Notes on Religion* (1777) and *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781,1782).

using philosophy and history to shape broad public sentiment.” Arguing for disestablishment, Jefferson opposed state-enforced coercion of religion, a point of agreement expressed in a letter to Virginia Baptists in November 1808, ““We have solved by fair experiment, the great and interesting question whether freedom of religion is compatible with order in government, and obedience to the laws.””³⁸

Disestablishment provided evangelicalism with space to innovate and invigorate Protestantism. The competitive consequence of disestablishment or “religious deregulation,” Finke and Stark described, as a free-market Protestant economy. Traditioned innovation caused a breaking down of the old ecclesiastical order with something *new*. As Mead articulated, “The emphasis upon success in numbers was to play havoc with all tradition-rooted standards of doctrine and polity in the American churches.” Denominationalism drew unchurched into *new* sects and created *new* identities (Enthusiasts, Unitarians, Baptists, Methodists) or, as Wuthnow noted, a denominational American culture. Instead of suggesting a fractured nature of denominationalism, as in H. Richard Niebuhr’s *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* (1929), Finke and Stark argued freedom and competition strengthened rather than weakened religious faith.³⁹

³⁸ Jon Meacham, *Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power* (New York: Random House, 2012), 18, 35, 124. Meacham noted, “The bill, Jefferson said, was ‘meant to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and Mahometan, the Hindoo, and infidel of every denomination,’” 124.

³⁹ Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 60, 18; Mead, *The Lively Experiment*, 33; Wuthnow, *Restructuring of American Religion*, 72.

The *lively* experiment that resulted in a republican theory of politics and Protestant denominationalism grew out of the crises of the American Revolution and the Constitutional Convention. Mead and others have addressed challenges the founding fathers confronted protecting minority rights in establishing democracy based on majority rule, “It is for this reason that democracy without faith in God is likely to sink into demagogic mobocracy.” Democracy needed to be predicated on the “belief that majority opinion does not determine truth.” In other words, legitimacy must stem from something higher than the majority. Given events in American history of the forces of Scottish rationalism and revivalistic evangelicalism forging what Noll identified as the evangelical Enlightenment, America’s incubator for traditioned innovation clearly emanated from rationalist-moralist Thomas Jefferson.⁴⁰

In *Southern Cross* (1997), Christine Heyrman detailed emotional Methodist evangelicalism and the beginnings of the bible belt, locating nineteenth century Methodism in the South. Influential in Illinois’ crossroads before influencing contemporary evangelicalism in the born-again movement and CCM, Heyrman revealed the impact of innovation in mission-driven Methodist circuit riders, camp meetings, and conversion enthusiasm in a southern brand of Protestant evangelicalism.

That mode of deploying their clergy enabled the Baptists and Methodist to reach an increasingly dispersed population—the tens of thousands of southern families who, during the postwar decades, filtered southward into the Georgia frontier and

⁴⁰ Mead, 86, 141; Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* 69; Noll wrote, “In the midst of an era marked by a radical willingness to question the verities of the past, the intuitive philosophy provided by the Scots offered an intellectually respectable way to establish public virtue in a society that was busily repudiating the props upon which social hierarchy, an inherited government, and the authority of religious denominations,” Noll, 87.

swarmed westward into Kentucky, Tennessee, and southern Ohio.

Methodist circuit riders “proclaimed the Methodist message and sold Methodist tracts or books” to convert followers. Stith Mead described his conversion in 1789 at a Methodist meeting, “Quick as lightening my mourning was turned to joy, and all distress vanished from my mind—Heaven burst into my soul, and I was filled with joy and peace.”

Yearnings for an eternal or heavenly home challenged family ties with notions of a new family of God, in which Heyrman wrote, “evangelicals challenged the primacy of the family, undercut privacy of households, and diminished authority of husbands and parents.” These theological-cultural innovations stretched boundaries of tradition with egalitarian bible readings, camp meetings and love feasts that united men and women and created new identities from traditional norms.⁴¹

Revivalism left footprints throughout American Protestantism but scholars have also argued negative consequences. For Brenneman, the influences of evangelical revivalism ushered in sentimentality, “These revivalists sought ways to encourage their audiences to have experiences of feeling as the true demonstration of their conversion to Christianity.” For Noll, revivalism, the evangelical Enlightenment, Americanism (or the Christian-American cultural synthesis) and the twentieth century fundamentalist movement left a paradox, “each preserved something essential in the Christian faith, but

⁴¹ Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1997), 83, 118, 136-155. Heyrman noted, “Identifying the church as family endowed converts with a new circle of spiritual kin, often one more sympathetic to their religious strivings than were relatives by blood marriage.” The new egalitarianism “challenged prevailing ideals of family life” and unconventional bonds “forg[ed] a new kind of kinship based on spiritual affinities rather than blood and marriage.”; See also Brenneman, 85.

each also undercut the hereditary Protestant conviction that it was a good thing to love the Lord with our minds.”⁴²

The problem, as Noll assessed contemporary evangelicalism, was that emotional evangelicalism had pursued an over-simplistic bible alone approach for legitimizing authority without sufficiently considering broader social science and cultural complexities. Noll’s argument needs attention because it explained, in large part, contemporary evangelicalism’s reasoning or justification for the emphasis upon the therapeutic sentimentality as argued by Brenneman and found in CCM.⁴³ To understand Noll and Brenneman’s arguments, its important to understand the impact of the new naturalist, organic science that emerged out of Darwin’s *Origin of the Species* (1859) as a challenge to the old systematic, mechanistic science introduced by Bacon in the sixteenth century. Prior to Darwin’s naturalistic science, Christian faith and scientific rationality had operated in harmony under the old Baconian inductive science. The new deductive science divided evangelicals and liberals. Mead delineated Protestant thought on science into three broad strands: traditional orthodoxy, romantic liberalism, and scientific modernism.⁴⁴ Noll also divided the second half of the nineteenth century into three categories. Liberals “conceded the hegemony of the new science” and evolution but also “sought to preserve in a new form the old harmonies of the American Protestant

⁴² Brenneman, 3, Noll, 8, 60; Noll identified evangelical revivalism impulses in Whitefield, Wesley, Edwards, and Moravian Church bishop and reformer Nicholas von Zenzendorf who all “worked to revive churches in northern Europe and North America and so brought ‘evangelicalism’ into existence.

⁴³ Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 12,

⁴⁴ Mead, 171-172; See Charles Hodge, “Inspiration,” in *Princeton Review*, XXIX (October 1857), 662.

Enlightenment. Populist conservatives (later fundamentalists), “moved both with and against the times” by adopting the new applied technologies of mass media and public marketing but “against by resisting the evolution of the old science into the new.” A third group, “Middle” (moderate) evangelical protestants understandably “vacillated in the middle.” According to Noll, this third group remained “nostalgic for the old intellectual harmonies, [but] unsettled by the tendency of the new science to dismiss traditional Christian conviction.” All three contributed to traditionalism, but the third group most closely represented, in my opinion, traditionalist innovators who, in Noll’s words, are “unwilling to decide decisively for either the old paradigm with its harmony between science and theology or the new with its division between theology and science.” Traditionalist innovators are open to science and innovation in this way.⁴⁵

Conservatives who strongly resisted evolutionary science and modernism in the twentieth century became committed to fundamentalism, a movement Marsden argued as “closely tied to the revivalist tradition of mainstream evangelical Protestantism.” In “Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon,” Marsden recognized Pietism, Puritanism, the Awakenings, and nineteenth century evangelicalism in the same movement that originated in England. With Darwinian evolution and biblical criticism questioning inerrancy, conservative fundamentalists responded to cultural change with

⁴⁵ Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 101, 112, 180; As a moderate, “Middle,” Benjamin B. Warfield, for example, Noll wrote, “thought it possible to affirm evolution with the boundaries of historic Christian doctrines.” See also William Hutchinson, *The Modernist Impulse in American Protestantism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976); George Marsden, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism, 1870-1925* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), 55-62 and 212-2; Grant A. Wacker, “The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age in American Protestantism, 1880-1910,” *Journal of American History* 72 (1985): 45-92.

inner spirituality and innovation: new ways to spread the gospel, inner spirituality in the new Holiness and Pentecostal movements that later birthed the contemporary Prosperity Gospel and Therapeutic evangelicalism.⁴⁶

Between 1910 and 1915 and the eve of World War I, conservative fundamentalists attempted to engage the world intellectually in opposition to modernism. *The Fundamentals* was a series of articles that maintained a commitment to the bible and the older science “as an intellectual framework that conservatives were committed to despite the weakening of both a Baconian approach to science and a Common Sense approach to reality and scripture.” Among its writers were Americans Hodge and Warfield. Although *The Fundamentals* opposed Darwinism and modernism, Warfield, an innovator of sorts, “allowed for large-scale evolution in order to explain God’s way of creating plants, animals, and even the human body.” Generally, however, the fundamentalists of *The Fundamentals* were, as Brenneman articulated, inspired by a Baconian approach to science:

[T]he authors argued that true science and historical-critical approaches toward scripture did not contradict traditional, biblical views of the world. True science followed the Baconian method—reasoning inductively from facts that observers gathered. The competing science of modernism relied, according to the conservatives, on games of the mind—creating speculations, hypotheses, and theories.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Marsden, “Fundamentalism as an American Phenomenon,” 316; The cultural change included new science, modernism, urbanism, liberalism, secularism, and relativism.

⁴⁷ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 56; See also Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 189.

Another aspect of conservative fundamentalism grew out of the Keswick Convention (1875) in England that emphasized bible study, evangelism, missions, personal piety, and perhaps its most distinctive aspect the “victorious life.” Keswick avoided conflict as one of its innovative approaches to missions. Keswick did, however, influence the Holiness and Pentecostal movements in America.⁴⁸

Crediting Methodist John Wesley as founder of the Holiness movement in “reaction to perceived worldliness and secularity of the Church of England,” Finke and Stark noted Wesley’s Christian Perfection drove him from Anglicanism to America and later founding Methodism. Methodism emphasized sanctification and devotion to publishing, a key component of evangelicalism. As Methodism became more church than sect, the responding Holiness movement spawned a growing Pentecostalism (1906) the Assemblies of God and Church of the Nazarene. Phrases like a “‘deeper walk of grace,’ a ‘closer walk’ with Christ, the ‘baptism of the Holy Ghost,’ ‘victorious living,’ or ‘overcoming power,’” reflected “a growing concern, according to Noll, to experience the realities of Christian spirituality” and deeper commitment amid a perceived lifeless Methodism.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Marsden, 318. See also Noll, 115; As Noll noted, Holiness or “higher life” spirituality “. . . accentuated . . . the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit,” “personal sanctity,” and “growing in grace throughout human life. It impacted evangelicalism’s emphasis on the changed life.

⁴⁹ Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 175. Noll, 116. Methodism later attacked the Holiness Movement; For Holiness phrases see Grant Wacker’s “Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age in American Protestantism, 1880-1910”; With the help of experiential Protestantism, the “Assemblies of God increased fully fourfold from 47,950 in 1926 to 198,834 members in 1940,” according to Joel Carpenter, “Fundamentalist Institutions and the Rise of Evangelical Protestantism, 1929-1942,” 391.

Many scholars, including Robert Wuthnow, have identified the Scopes trial (1925-26) as marking the division between conservative fundamentalism and liberal modernism but, as Mead argued, it also marked the beginning of the decline of denominationalism. Noll countered that Holiness, Pentecostalism, and dispensationalism (separating the bible into distinct periods or epochs), which can be considered theological innovations, should be considered rather than the Scopes trial “[for] push[ing] evangelical political reflection into a new era.” He contended, “Each of the three innovations . . . emphasized features of Christianity that were increasingly being called into question by the cultural elites. . . .” The new movements sought to defend, for example, the “control of God over history,” “the ability of God to break into the life of the . . . ordinary person” or the power of God to perfect or sanctify the individual. As most Americans grew dependent on pragmatism and scientism for solutions to *social* ills, a Wesleyan pietistic-Holiness advocated the counter return to the transformed life of the *individual*.⁵⁰

The liberal and conservative tension that emerged out of the fundamentalist-modernist conflict in the twentieth century posed consequences for both mainline liberalism and fundamentalist conservatism. Joel Carpenter argued, however, it is too simple to view fundamentalism as simply a retreat from modernism, finding evangelical conservatives responded in innovative ways beginning in the 1920s. This is important to the traditionalist innovator thesis. Carpenter described not a religious depression but *growth* of evangelical Protestant institutions that revealed innovations by New

⁵⁰ Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 134-135, Mead, *The Lively Experiment*, 169, Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 120, 165. The Scopes trial pitted John T. Scopes, a Dayton, Tennessee high school teacher defended by Clarence Darrow against preacher-politician William Jennings Bryan in a battle over whether Scopes should be allowed to teach evolution in public school.

Evangelicals and a force in American culture. Through innovation, traditionalist innovators transitioned from old-line liberal Protestantism to new institutions and created a broad coalition of evangelicals and fundamentalists that advocated conservative values. The so-called millenarian evangelicals, who await the Second Coming, according to Carpenter, included Baptist, independent denominations, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Churches of Christ, Holiness, and Pentecostal churches, “an estimated half of the nation’s sixty million Protestants” at the time. During the period, 1929-1942, Carpenter noted four areas of strength in the New Evangelicalism: Non-denominational bible institutes, radio broadcasting and publishing, bible conferences, and foreign missions. The bible institutes provided evangelicalism with innovative educational institutions, expanding into magazine publishing and radio broadcasting as “a way to increase their constituency.”⁵¹

Founded in 1857, Chicago’s Wheaton College, producer of evangelical leaders Carl F. H. Henry and Billy Graham, was the nation’s top-growing liberal arts college between 1926-1941. Carpenter cited a survey of Bible college students that revealed a sign among youth that the process of traditioned innovation was well underway. Music was a major component. At Winona Lake in 1944 Billy Graham’s Youth for Christ staged its first nationwide convention for high school and college students that within two

⁵¹ Joel A Carpenter, “Fundamentalist Institutions and the Rise of Evangelical Protestantism, 1929-1942,” In *Religion in American History: A Reader*, edited by Jon Butler and Harry S. Stout, 384-396 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 386-387. The Christian and Missionary Alliance (1882), Philadelphia School of the Bible, and Moody Bible Institute (1886) were located mostly in larger cities. Magazine publishing included Revell, Loizeaux Brothers, Moody Press. Moody Bible in 1925 owned WMBI that “By 1942 . . .transcribed programs to 187 different stations” in the country; See also Noll, 222, The Reformed Dutch community of Michigan linked with evangelicals an important Eerdmans publishing outlet in Grand Rapids and Noll argued “The result was productive cross-pollination.”

years sponsored 900 rallies nationwide. A Wheaton College graduate, Graham's "evangelistic team . . . [of] George Beverly Shea, a former soloist at WMBI, and song leader Cliff Barrows," was an early sign that Graham would emphasize youth and music as part of his innovative and effective national evangelistic crusades. Wuthnow noted Graham's southern roots and sensibilities, coupled with northern education and connections, enabled him to become a regional interdenominational unifier who "steered consciously away from the conservative fundamentalist." Graham was fond of "preferring the label evangelical because it had a more dynamic, progressive, nondefensive connotation." Whether less offensive or sentimental, sophisticated publicity or anti-communist rhetoric, Graham's persuasive power from his first crusades attracted thousands and produced transformative conversions. Rather than a decline or religious depression, Carpenter cited a rise of new institutions in higher education, bible conferences, radio broadcasting and foreign missions as evidence of "a growing, dynamic movement."⁵² Brenneman singled out Youth for Christ for innovations in music and organized crusades as reminders of Whitfield revivalism:

Evangelicals, especially ministers holding crusades, tried to reach large audiences of young people by creating new styles of music that they believed would attract and keep those large audiences. Even though they faced resistance, Youth for Christ organizers created new music that they believed was entertaining and upbeat, some of which used revivalistic lyrics.⁵³

⁵² Carpenter, "Fundamentalist Institutions," 388-392. Seventy other evangelical colleges saw enrollment double between 1929 and 1940. The non-denominational nature of conferences included, "a Methodist Bishop, a Baptist evangelist, a Presbyterian professor, a Lutheran pastor, a Christian layman and a Rescue Mission superintendent could stand on the same platform and preach the common tenets of the Christian faith . . ." 389. See C.H. Heaton, "Winona Lake Bible Conference," 826. See also, "Why Attend A Summer Conference?" SST 79 (May 15, 1937)" 348; See, Wuthnow, 175.

⁵³ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 94.

Given the growing population of youth and the postwar emphasis on education and missions, it is not surprising that Graham's Youth for Christ turned to that demographic for missions. Not only were New Evangelicals seeking alternatives to secular education, the liberalization of denominational Protestantism was also a concern. Based upon resilience and innovation, Carpenter contended that the new Protestant institutions revealed a continuance of revivalism rather than a rise and fall, "Revivalism had not died during the depression. Rather, the fundamentalist movement nurtured that tradition, introduced innovations and produced a new generation of revivalists." In viewing evangelicalism under Carpenter's argument and later influences in music in the 1980s and 1990s, perhaps, as he argued, "a reassessment of the nature and influence of fundamentalism" and music, for that matter, is warranted. More than a response to modernism and liberalism, evangelicalism, Carpenter contended, is part of a larger movement in Protestantism. Thus, out of a period viewed by some as a transition away from Protestantism and a decline or depression, Carpenter recognized a *new* network of evangelicals that differed in theology and innovation from the declining liberal mainline or conservative fundamentalist for that matter. Rather than disappearing in defeat, the events of the twentieth century, Carpenter argued, "forced fundamentalists to strengthen their own institutional structures outside of old-line denominations." In fact, he noted that New Evangelicals "responded creatively to the trends of contemporary popular culture."⁵⁴

⁵⁴ Carpenter, 392. Carpenter argued "The revivalistic, millenarian movement that flourished in the urban centers of North America in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries continued under the banner of fundamentalism and left no break in the line of succession from Dwight L. Moody to Billy Graham. Fundamentalism bears all the marks of a popular religious movement which drew only part of its identity from opposition to liberal trends in the denominations."

In *The Restructuring of American Religion*, Robert Wuthnow argued that significant social forces—including higher education—changed Protestantism after WWII. Wuthnow was right, but his dedication to the Protestant dichotomy caused him to miss the full emergence of a third category in American Protestantism: the traditionalist innovators that his own work exposed. Declining denominationalism and higher education in the liberalizing of Protestantism, Wuthnow argued, opened-up cultural shifts in egalitarian values as a basis of attitudinal divergence. Better educated Protestants tended to be more liberal on a wide variety of issues; the less educated tended to be more conservative. Following the decline of liberalism, a return to traditional doctrine in neo-orthodoxy and the response to modernism in fundamentalism, Wuthnow observed something larger resonating with those who still held to tradition but whose higher educational background opened them to new avenues of *experiencing* religion that foreshadowed Brenneman's triumph of sentimentalism, "To the typical worshipper," Wuthnow noted, "religion was less a matter of theology than of simple experience." Experienced-based Protestantism had come to dominate the twenty first century. Brenneman's *Homespun Gospel* argued, "The historical and cultural changes of the twentieth century increased the presence of sentimentality and combined it with a therapeutic concern about individual psychological well-being." Publishing, marketing and music became avenues for emotional sentiment. One important non-denominational trend of sentimentality, according to Brenneman, was the "downplaying of doctrine and differences between denominations." And yet there were intellectually-minded Protestants, identified but not categorized by Brenneman, who were viewed as "a very

important strand of evangelicalism.” I argue Brenneman’s manifesto evangelicals should be classified as traditionalist innovators. In this way, Wuthnow’s *Restructuring*, Noll’s *Scandal*, and Brenneman’s *Homespun Gospel* all observe some sense of a third category of evangelical without fully categorizing the Protestants by name. Past historiography has perpetuated the Protestant dichotomy. The remainder of this chapter will articulate social, political and cultural changes since the 1950s that have polarized and produced, or in Wuthnow’s word “remolded” a contemporary Protestantism that is more therapeutic and politically active than traditional doctrine-based Puritan-Calvinism. We need a new categorization.⁵⁵

Wuthnow illustrated, most notably, higher education and governmental expansion for impact on religious life with corresponding tension, conflict and controversy in response. Responses from fundamentalist conservatives and mainline liberals on controversial issues resulted not in less religious conviction and action but even greater religious passion and activism. As a significant aspect of American culture, Wuthnow argued that the strength and vitality of Protestantism enabled it to adapt to social change, transforming into new forms of activity. Expansion of higher education was in large part a result of postwar government policy. Supportive, then, of Prothero’s later adaptation to change thesis, Wuthnow argued that Protestantism’s “capacity to adapt has, in fact, been one of the impressive features of American religion.”⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 9, 155-58, 144; Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 70, 146.

⁵⁶ Wuthnow, 5-6. Issues included racial justice, Vietnam, school prayer, gender equality.

Postwar social factors contributed to both the strengthening and eroding of religious values. Higher education, televangelism and ecumenism contributed to growing non-denominationalism. More important, however, and missed by Wuthnow, Jesus rock music, grew out of the social upheavals of the 1960s and 1970s era of rock ‘n’ roll. CCM has contributed to the homogeneity and amalgamation of evangelical Protestantism and is now penetrating the old Protestant mainline. Wuthnow found homogenization allowed more Americans to “move across religious boundaries” and created greater tolerance such as “attitudes toward other faiths show a considerable higher degree of acceptance”. In other words, “denominationalism has become less significant as a basis for social and cultural tensions and divisions.” Wuthnow’s argument is supported by declining denominational identity and growing non-denominationalism in America.⁵⁷

It was identity that Wil Herberg recognized as “why Americans could be so secular and yet take such an interest in religion.” While scholars have recognized denominationalism as a distinctive feature of American religion, Wuthnow identified trends in the late 1970s that contributed to a breaking down of denominationalism. Wuthnow failed, however, to identify Jesus rock music among those factors. In 1988, he should have recognized the influence of the Jesus movement among the impacts of

⁵⁷ Wuthnow, 55-61, 72, 97. According to the Pew Research Center, 42 out of 100 people no longer identify with their childhood religion in which they were raised. Of the 42, 21 identified as Protestant (including those who have left Protestant and switched to another Protestant tradition), Dec. 12, 2016; See also Danielle Kurtzleben, “Nonreligious Americans Remain Far Underrepresented In Congress,” NPR, January 4, 2017 http://www.npr.org/2017/01/03/508037656/non-religious-americans-remain-far-underrepresented-congress?sc=17&f=1001&utm_source=iosnewsapp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=app, accessed Jan. 5, 2017; One in five Americans, 23% is religiously unaffiliated (atheist, agnostic etc.), 48% are Protestant, 21% are Catholic, 2% are Jewish, all others 1% Buddhist, 1% Muslim, 1% Hindu, 1% Unitarian Universalist, 2% Nondenominational 6%, Unspecified/Other 5%, based on Pew Research Center’s 2014 U.S. Religious Landscape Study , conducted June 4-Spet. 30, 2014, <http://www.pewforum.org/2017/01/03/faith-on-the-hill-115/>, accessed Jan. 3, 2017.

denominationalism. What Wuthnow did observe, partly I believe as a result of the impact of Jesus music, was how more Protestants were transferring across religious boundaries. Wuthnow concluded that denominationalism had become “less significant as a basis for social and cultural tensions and division.” At the time, Wuthnow noted that “despite the apparent growth of independent churches that carry no denominational affiliations, the number of people who are members of these churches, in comparison with the number who hold membership in denominational churches, is extremely small.” In 2010, however, that number had increased to roughly 15%, according to studies by Thumma and others, and were described as “the fastest growing Protestant churches in America.”⁵⁸

This traditioned innovation was also, and perhaps most, effective as America saw increased levels of higher education after the Second World War. Early indication of the liberalizing effects of higher education and non-denominationalism emerged among evangelicals or traditionalist innovators, Brenneman noted, at Fuller Seminary in California (1947), “conceived . . . as a conservative school that moderated between the fundamentalist hard line” and the liberalism of eastern universities. Harold John

⁵⁸ Wuthnow 71-72, 97. Herberg and Gerhard Lenski, *The Religious Factor*, Wuthnow noted, revealed “wide differences in religious practices, social positions, and attitudes” among not only the three major religions—Protestants, Catholics, Jews—but also among Protestant denominations—Methodists, Lutherans, Baptists. See Thumma, Scott, “A Report on the 2010 National Profile of U.S. Nondenominational and Independent Churches,” Hartford Institute for Religion Research, <http://www.hartfordinstitute.org/cong/nondenominational-churches-national-profile-2010.html>, accessed Dec. 30, 2016. Thumma’s 15% nondenominational was based on the General Social Survey. Thumma: “If we begin to think of them as not just individual aberrant outliers or lone isolated congregations but rather as a unique religious phenomenon – as a distinctive religious market segment – then we can begin to address the question of why they have become so popular in the past few decades. As a group, they are a significant reality – one that demands consideration, study and reflection on why they are so prevalent currently.” In the half-century before WWII, it was almost unheard of for a Lutheran to marry a Catholic. Since the 1970s, those who identified with these traditions in childhood have had no qualms marrying across the Catholic-Protestant divide. A significant number from these traditions have crossed over into non-denominationalism.

Ockenga (1905-1985), Noll recognized as a leader who “called for a ‘new evangelicalism that would value scholarship and take an active interest in society while maintaining traditional Protestant orthodoxy.’” Carl F. H. Henry (1913-2003) “expressed concern for an intellectually responsible evangelicalism” teaching at Fuller and as founding editor of *Christianity Today* (1956). Fuller student Bill Bright (1921-2003), who founded Campus Crusade “engaged the counterculture,” Brenneman noted, with “smart use of the media.” Noll concluded, the leaders “sought better education, better theology, and better cultural analysis.” The moderate evangelicals or traditionalist innovators separated from pessimistic fundamentalism with a more optimistic ecumenism expressed in *Christianity Today*, Brenneman concluded. Perhaps more important in Wuthnow’s estimation, these and other moderates remained associated with their former institution of learning, forming a national network. *Christianity Today*, though “conceived of as a deliberate alternative to liberal theology, secularism, and modernism,” Wuthnow contended, avoided biblical literalism, focused on essential tenets, and promoted Christian values as part of the culture, polity, and society. In function, the publication was a blend of both tradition and innovation for its interdenominational approach to disseminating American Protestantism.⁵⁹

Some New Evangelicals have moved toward an emotional evangelicalism and away from doctrine partly out of a new approach to theology and effective marketing.

Max Lucado, Joel Osteen and Rick Warren, according to Brenneman, emphasize in

⁵⁹ Brenneman, 116-117; Noll, 213-214, Wuthnow, 174, 181, 185. Noll noted that Edward John Carnell (1919-1967) served as a professor and administrator at Fuller after “completing doctorates at both Harvard and Boston University.” Wuthnow noted that Billy Graham and moderate evangelicals were attacked by fundamentalist Bob Jones, Carl McIntire, and Bill Hargis on views on Civil Rights and Vietnam, 190.

sentimental ways a God of affection rather than wrath. Warren, a Fuller graduate and author of *The Purpose-Driven Life*, believes in emotional appeals because in avoiding intellectual arguments they are more effective. The new, emotion-based evangelicals, argued Brenneman, are closely related to early American revivalists Whitefield and Finney. In emotional technique, Brenneman acknowledged, “evangelicals have come to trust that emotion is the key to a relationship with God.” It explains why it is used by revivalists, CCM artists, and political activists. Life is complicated but *emotional* religion simplifies life. Brenneman wrote,

In such a mind-set, human beings complicate life, but God offers something more straightforward. Doctrinal division, intellectual inquiry, and elaborate constructs of religiosity all move humanity farther from God, whereas emotionality can make them closer.⁶⁰

In the upheaval of the 1960s, Wuthnow noted activism in alignments of liberal ecumenical churches and conscientious leaders: “As questions of justice, equality, war and peace, rights and responsibilities burst onto the stage of national attention, [white] religious leaders found it impossible to sit quietly on the sidelines.” Presbyterian, Episcopal, Catholic and Jewish leaders participated in civil disobedience as part of a “broad ecumenical endorsement to civil rights demonstrations.” Civil Rights activist Tom Hayden, a white student at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor, founded Students for a Democratic Society. He would be beaten and jailed in the deep South for a radical approach to stopping racial injustice. His S.D.S. manifesto “envisioned an alliance of college students in a peaceful crusade to overcome what it called repressive

⁶⁰ Ibid., 13, 145, 3, 64. See Rick Warren, *The Purpose Drive Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 290-291.

government, corporate greed and racism,” according to the *New York Times*. The liberalizing influence of higher education is poignantly expressed by Hayden’s manifesto: “‘We are people of this generation,’ it began, ‘bred in at least modest comfort, housed now in universities, looking uncomfortably to the world we inherit.’”⁶¹

The 1960s, therefore, became a marker of restructuring of American religion because it revealed, in Wuthnow’s dichotomous view, the major demarcation of polarization between Protestant liberals and conservatives but also the new possibilities for bridging the gap. This point should not be underestimated. Centered on cultural change and the speed of change, the “new breed” of liberal social justice activists wanted change *now* and were willing to engage in direct activism to achieve quicker change for peace and justice. Conservatives, on the other hand, sought to maintain the status quo of which civil rights and Vietnam were dividing points. Theologically, these divisions stemmed from a deeper worldview over how best to change individual behavior and culture. Religious conservatives, Wuthnow wrote, relied on individual conscience and consequently “continued to stress . . . personal salvation, personal piety and morality.” Modernists liberals relied on “direct action because cultural values were not being reflected in practice, and therefore required radical “acts committed to bring about social justice.” In the 1960s, therefore, America became increasingly divided between those who emphasized evangelism for inward change and those who advocated action for

⁶¹ Wuthnow, 145. Robert D. McFadden, “Tom Hayden, Civil Rights and Antiwar Activist Turned Lawmaker, Dies at 76” *New York Times*, Oct. 25, 2016. Liberals, Wuthnow identified as Congregationalists and Unitarians in the 1950s before the Cold War and Communism “silenced the religious left.” Wuthnow noted that by the 1980s, evangelicals had come to resemble broader society: 1 in 3 had been to college, 1 in 3 no longer believed in the devil, 1 in 3 used alcoholic beverages, only 1 in 3 believed the Bible should be taken literally, 3 in 10 scored as ‘liberals’ on a range of social, economic, and political questions.” 194; The data was produced in a survey of 2,000 students at evangelical colleges in 1982.

societal change. Population shifts, economic change, migration and urbanization were forces that changed American Protestantism as much as Protestantism changed itself. Expanding numbers of youth contributed to new ideas with “innovative religious beliefs and practices.” Migration to cities and the West Coast “exposed people to new ways of life.” Higher education and “regional migration contributed to weakening denominational boundaries” as youth experimented with new lifestyles in California. Educational developments were important contributors to restructuring because they opened cultural shifts in egalitarian values.⁶²

Protestants became more tolerant of Catholic, and prejudices separating Protestant denominations from one another eroded to all-time lows. . . . intolerance of blacks underwent a significant decline, new attitudes toward gender began to be evident, and support mounted for civil liberties in areas such as freedom of speech for Communists, atheists, and homosexuals.”⁶³

Opinion surveys led to one overwhelming conclusion: “Education, therefore, seemed to be emerging as a fundamental basis of attitudinal divergence in American culture. The better educated tended to be more liberal on a wide variety of issues; the less educated tended to be more conservative.” Thus, the restructuring of American Protestantism in the 1960s was part of broader social and cultural change influenced by higher education that eroded denominationalism, negatively impacted institutional

⁶² Wuthnow, 147-153. Within American Lutheranism, this division sparked splits and mergers. More liberal-minded leaders created the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America while conservative Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod expanded its membership. The mergers and splits also resulted in other smaller splits creating the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations and Concordia Lutheran Conference. The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations split from denominations organizing American Lutheran Church to protest merger and the World Council of Churches (1962), Wuthnow, 186

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 156.

religious participation, and diminished commitment to doctrinal belief, even as the influence of religion, Wuthnow observed, seemed to be increasing. Higher Education, in other words, creates tensions in American culture while contributing to the breaking down of denominationalism. The college educated differentiate on doctrinal tenets, more readily engaged in social activism, “favored cooperation” and were “more likely to switch denominations” leading to a significant weakening of denominational strength among the educated:⁶⁴ “a sizable number of the better educated who switch denominations cease to affiliate with any denomination, rather than joining the better educated denominations.”⁶⁵

Wuthnow’s observation relative to non-denominational growth is important. If the number of college-educated Americans was increasing and in the early 1980s “persons with college education were about twice as likely to be religious liberals as . . . conservatives,” wouldn’t that suggest that more liberal denominations such as old-line Episcopalian and Presbyterian churches would benefit in membership growth? To the contrary, however, Wuthnow discovered in 1988, as Finke and Starke did in 2005, that “the Episcopal and Presbyterian churches had not grown in overall membership, even though the general population was becoming more highly educated.” What appeared to be happening, borne out by recent surveys, is that increasing levels of education, rather

⁶⁴ Ibid., 158-163. Wuthnow also noted: “Between 1960 and 1972 the proportion of members in evangelical Protestant sects who had been to college tripled” and thus “evangelicals were participating in the broader educational upgrading. . . in the whole society” including “a more diverse mixture of social opinions,” “attributable to the growing number of evangelicals who were exposed to the liberalizing atmosphere of the nation’s college campuses.” The result, according to Wuthnow, was a “new breed” of evangelical liberals. Wuthnow, 187-189.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 171.

than creating more liberal denominational participation instead shifted support for growing non-denominationalism. Thus, Wuthnow concluded the postwar period, 1945 to 1985, witnessed a restructuring and counter-restructuring, while moving to the left. Pendulum swings between traditionalism and liberalism are recognizable. Leftward shifts of the 1960s did not prevail in the 1980s no more than rightward shifts of the 1980s did not prevail in the 1990s. As Wuthnow observed about America's polarizations, "They . . . generated countermovements and have been resisted by a strong enough constituency to have resulted more in polarization between the right and the left rather than a clear victory for either side."⁶⁶

The new emphasis of traditionalists innovators-centered evangelicalism found recently in some mainline churches relied more heavily on scholarship than revelation *alone* and on optimism about keeping Judeo-Christian values relevant in culture rather than pessimistic separatism found in fundamentalism. The difference between conservative fundamentalists and moderate Protestants is best identified with pragmatism and educational institutionalism. The key point about the New Evangelicals is that relative to the broader culture, these moderate evangelicals were more culturally adaptable than militant fundamentalists. Open to new translations and interpretations of the Bible based on academics, Wuthnow found "these orientations placed the evangelical movement into a much more prominent position in American society than the fundamentalist movement had been." Rather than a rural Midwest and South movement,

⁶⁶ Wuthnow, 169-172. Wuthnow also noted college educated Southern Baptists questioned "the denomination's traditional stand on biblical inerrancy."

the New Evangelical movement grew out of larger population centers of media and higher education. In sum, the New Evangelism organized effectively, demonstrated growth, and during the 1950s and 1960s escaped mainstream media attention. That was until the counterculture movement of the late 1960s and 1970s.⁶⁷

“Traditioned Innovation” Through Music

The principal reason Wuthnow missed the implications of his own thesis, apart from his apparent investment in the dichotomous view of Protestantism, was that he undervalued the extent to which music became both a vital means of religious expression and a key identity marker for Protestants after the Second World War. In the 1970s, evangelicalism, which had organized effectively in the 1950s, began producing the fruit of respectability. Suddenly, mainstream media identified a Jesus movement and new Jesus rock “hippies who attempted to Christianize the bohemian lifestyle of the sixties,” Brenneman noted. Jesus people may have been anti-church establishment, but their traditional message with unorthodox and innovative tactics soon resonated into a subculture and successful consumer market. In *No Sympathy for the Devil*, religious historian David Stowe “noted that [New] evangelicals became aware of the need to create new styles of music to reach a new style of youth: ‘To save hippies inspiring music was needed.’” The growing popularity of the innovative blend of contemporary gospel message and electronic music created followings that coalesced into new megachurches

⁶⁷ Ibid., 173-185.

that emphasized sentimentality in music. The result, as Brenneman described, nondenominational evangelicalism and a new genre:

Jesus rock incorporated evangelical teachings with music that tapped into the emotion-laden culture of the sixties and seventies that influenced not only hippies but evangelical churches as well. Praise music or worship choruses became a staple of a new style of churches and megachurches throughout the last part of the twentieth century.⁶⁸

The success of contemporary Praise Worship hymns and later CCM crossover artists demonstrated the innovation of traditionalists Protestants and the popularity of sentimental theology and emotional language in the new music. Stowe has considered the force of Jesus music and the highly marketed CCM as perhaps the most important factor in evangelical growth. The power of southern gospel music and radio had existed since the early twentieth century but not the popular and profitable business it became in the 1980s and 1990s.⁶⁹

In 1985, a disc jockey who played Jesus rock on radio in the 1970s before it became popularized in CCM published *Contemporary Christian Music: Where It Came From, What It Is, Where It's Going*. Paul Baker's first edition in 1979 was titled *Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?* The title was based on a phrase often repeated by innovative Jesus rock artist Larry Norman who first composed the music in

⁶⁸ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 95. Also, 94-95, 117. See Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil*, 26. Wuthnow identified Calvary Chapel, Santa Ana, Calif., Melodyland Christian Center, Anaheim, First Baptist Church in Van Nuys, Calif. with over 7,000 members as megachurches as well as similar-sized churches in Dallas, Phoenix, Indianapolis, and Atlanta. Megachurches now exist in nearly every city in America.

⁶⁹ Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil*, 200. See also James R. Goff Jr. *Close Harmony: A History of Southern Gospel* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 238-242, 273; Also, Brenneman, 118.

the late 1960s. Though raised in a church, he could not relate to hymns.⁷⁰ Jesus music bridged the gap between churched and unchurched as well as evangelicals and other Protestants, according to Brenneman:

Coming out of the Jesus Movement and Jesus rock, CCM evidences an attempt to connect to both evangelicals and nonevangelicals in an effort to distance religious music from its institutional stereotypes. Much like the people of the Jesus Movement criticized *Churchianity*—the institutional religion of the sixties—the musicians of early Jesus rock thought that older forms of music were too reminiscent of church services and wanted to mimic the styles of nonreligious music, particularly rock and roll.⁷¹

In the mid-1990s, when St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Decatur, Illinois became the first LCMS church to adopt CCM in worship, it was an indication that the Jesus movement, Jesus rock, and contemporary evangelicalism had impacted broader mainline Protestantism with sentimental Christianity. In the newer music, “the fatherhood of God and nostalgia for home” became more prominent, argued Brenneman, emphasizing the goodness of God in inoffensive language. Chris Tomlin’s “Good Good Father,” Matt Redman’s “The Father Song,” and Jonathan David and Melissa Helser’s “No Longer Slaves (“I am a child of God) are examples. Redman, who experienced estrangement from his earthly father, expresses the comfort of being a child of God:

From my mother’s womb/You have Chosen me/Love has called
my name/I’ve been born again/Into your family/Your blood
flows through my veins.

⁷⁰ Paul Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music: Where It Came From, What It Is, Where It’s Going* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1985), xi.

⁷¹ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 95. See also Prothero, *American Jesus*, 136-139, 151-153; Randall Balmer, *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory: A Journey into the Evangelical Subculture in America*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 297-300; See also Heather Hendershot, *Shaking the World for Jesus: Media and Conservative Evangelical Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 55-57.

In contemporary evangelicalism, Brenneman observed deeper expression of the language of romance in connecting with the deity. “Love Song” by Third Day, for example, makes it difficult to distinguish between the vocalist’s love for God or, as Brenneman argued, “between two lovers” expressed in the song’s chorus:

Just to be with you, I’d do anything/There’s no price I would not
pay/Just to be with you, I’d give anything/I would give my life
away.⁷²

Relying on media scholar Heather Hendershot, who observed “‘ambiguous romantic language of some CCM songs,’” Brenneman noted lyrics “He loves” and “I love him” replaces “Jesus loves me” and “I love God.” In the new music is willingness to sing to God in sentimental love. From the First century, however, hymns and spiritual songs were always passionate expression of belief and devotion to Jesus, not to mention the Psalms. Doctrinal beliefs are expressed in the letters of Apostle Paul, who had converted from Judaism to Christianity. Unlike Mark Noll’s suggestion that the “scandal of the cross” or redemptive power can inspire worship, Brenneman’s sentimentality thesis criticized contemporary evangelicalism’s shift away from doctrine in the lyrics of CCM:

Their message, therefore, is not about the intellectual validity of Christianity or the theological nature of Jesus Christ but about the romantic relationship they should have with Jesus. Like lovers, they want Jesus to ‘consume’ them, to ‘run through their veins.’⁷³

⁷² Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 95. Matt Redman, “The Father’s Song,” <http://www.metrolyrics.com/the-fathers-song-lyrics-matt-redman.html>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4wawhBPkrkM>.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 96. See Jonathan David and Melissa Helser, “No Longer Slaves,” Bethel Music, accessed October 16, 2016 <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/bethelmusic/nolongerslaves.html>; Chris Tomlin, “Good Good Father,” Sixsteps Music, Vamos Publishing/Housefires Sounds/Capital CMG Paragon/Common Hymnal Digital, Tony Brown, accessed October 12, 2016, <http://www.songlyrics.com/chris-tomlin/good-good-father-lyrics/>; Mac Powell, “Love Song,” Third Day (Provident Music Group, 1996); for Paul’s blinding

In some sense, however, Brenneman readily acknowledged that deeply felt expression in song reflects the doctrine of an indwelling Christ, a more intimate, less ritualistic religious experience some believe as the Spirit at work. After all, it was a born-again movement, surveys revealed, that showed in the 1970s and 1980s a growing number of Americans identified as having *experienced* a born-again conversion or deeper emotional relationship with Jesus. This movement was no doubt enhanced by CCM. Among the born-again, an evangelical Christian who supported liberal causes and became President—Jimmy Carter. Scholars have generally recognized the election of evangelical Jimmy Carter, the rise of the Moral Majority and anti-abortion political activism “changed the face of evangelicalism.”⁷⁴

Wuthnow argued in the late 1980s the stereotypical, negative images dividing conservatives and liberals as not over denomination but over educational levels. As denominational affiliation had diminished in importance, Wuthnow argued, “the division between religious liberals and conservatives is one that *cuts across* denominational lines, rather than pitting one set of denominations against another.” Important, because the tensions also created, Wuthnow noted, cross-religious alliances among evangelicals, Catholics, and Jews, illustrating the restructuring or amalgamating of American religion into a larger more cohesive Judeo-Christian identity. That mainline Lutherans and conservative evangelicals could overlook doctrinally differences yet coalesce in

light experience, see Acts 9:3-9, NAST. In Ephesians 5:19, Paul encourages Christians to “Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spirituals songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.”

⁷⁴ Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion*, 192-193.

contemporary style of worship music is worth observing. Unlike the 1960s, the 1980s and 1990s revealed “denominationalism had largely dropped out as a distinguishing factor.”⁷⁵

In the 1960s Protestantism and culture swung to the left then back to the right in the 1980s. By the mid-1990s when St. Paul’s introduced innovative CCM in worship, the polarizing rhetoric of feminist and pro-life movements with uncompromising figures like Phyllis Schlafly and Betty Friedan gave way to a more moderating tone as issues became nuanced and the voices of New Evangelicals began to downplay doctrine for more sentimental language. In maintaining a connection to nineteenth century sentimentality in the new twentieth century era of therapeutic evangelicalism and the liberalizing upheavals in the postwar era, Brenneman identified sentimental devices of New Evangelicals: God as father, children of God, and nostalgia for home. It should be noted, however, that Brenneman’s characterized “devices” are also part of traditional ancient text. The sentimental relationship with God is expressed in CCM songs such as “Desperate for You” by Michael W. Smith and Tomlin’s “Good Good Father.” In such lyrics, the relationship with God is deeply intimate and sentimentally favored toward God’s perfect love over God’s vengeful wrath:

You’re a good good father/It’s who you are, it’s who you are, it’s
who you are/ And I’m loved by you/It’s who I am, its who I am,
it’s who I am.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 219-225. Wuthnow described the emerging division and declining denominationalism this way: “In the earlier period people within a particular denomination might agree with one another on Vietnam but were likely to be internally divided over race relations. . . . In the 1980s, in contrast, most of the major issues that animated religious leaders seemed to divide the theological world nearly into two opposing camps,” 224-225. Wuthnow also noted that due to separation of Church and State, conservatives like Jerry Falwell and Tim LaHaye understood that organizing church cooperation had to be “moral, not theological” for broader reach, 211.

God may be father of all but Brenneman observed “the rhetoric of therapeutic evangelicalism centralizes God as father of the individual.” If God is father, and Jesus and Paul identified God as Abba in scripture, it seems natural that New Evangelicals would utilize references such as “children of God” as a sentimental device. However, Brenneman observed the Prosperity Gospel in Warren’s *The Purpose Driven Life* by what a child of God inherits: “the family name, the family likeness, family privileges . . . and the family inheritance! . . . As children of God we get to share in the family fortune.” Tomlin’s “Good Good Father,” however, seems to imply a different theology prosperity; rather, when things don’t go well or material blessings don’t come, God is still good:

Because you are perfect in all of your ways/You are perfect in all
your ways/You are perfect in all of your ways/You are perfect in
all of your ways to us.⁷⁶

Meanwhile, the use of “nostalgia for home” conceptualizes an imperfect and broken present with longings for both the nostalgic past and a perfect future. These longings, Brenneman recognized as the “traditional nuclear family,” “reconstructions of the past,” “orphans” without families who receive new ones and a future when there will be no pain, crying or loss. “By putting their readers in the position of children . . . with God as father, ministers like Lucado . . . Warren, and Osteen are not relying solely on traditional theology. They are psychologizing.” Mixing traditional theology and modern therapeutic psychology found in songs like “Good Good Father,” therapeutic evangelists and CCM artists, are “psychologizing” as traditionalist innovators. New Evangelicals are

⁷⁶ Chris Tomlin, “Good Good Father,” Sixsteps Music, Vamos Publishing/Housefires Sounds/Capital CMG Paragon/Common Hymnal Digital, Tony Brown, accessed October 12, 2016, <http://www.songlyrics.com/chris-tomlin/good-good-father-lyrics/>.

psychologizing, I argue, because these moderate Protestants utilize both tradition and innovation. They are combining Protestant tradition with the therapeutic approach of modern psychology in meeting needs of individuals, or guiding them to meet their own needs with reliance on a higher power. Sociologist James Davison Hunter, Brenneman noted, has argued contemporary “evangelicalism . . . had been domesticated in modern culture” as an intolerant Protestantism gave way to narcissism.”⁷⁷

Evangelical conservative Protestants may not be able to create an ideal world out of the polarization, fragility, and brokenness around them, but through theological psychotherapy, Brenneman argued that hope and healing are found in the emotional recovery of dependence on the transcendent. In contrast to the secular, Brenneman wrote, “. . . God offers protection and provision. The narcissism that evangelical ministers offer provides an opportunity for evangelicals to resolve the psychological tensions that contemporary life creates.” If God is the *perfect* father, as Louie Giglio, pastor of Atlanta’s Passion City Church tells his followers, they can trust God’s goodness as part of a collective spiritual family.⁷⁸

⁷⁷ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 31-36. Brenneman argued, “[B]y capitulating to American culture including American therapeutic culture, the strong intolerance and brashness of nineteenth-century evangelicalism was being displaced by an evangelicalism that tempered the drawing of rigid boundaries and give rise to a narcissistic impulse, 49. See also James Davison Hunter, *American Evangelicalism: Conservative Religion and the Quandary of Modernity* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press), 1983, 99-101. See Matt 18:3 “. . . converted and become like children”/Matt 19:14 “. . . children. . .the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.” “. . . spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’” Ro. 8:15-16, NAST.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 34-35. See also Louie Giglio, “Seeing God As A Perfect Father,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6nfR8Y7Rp7E>; See also <https://www.rightnow.org/Content/Series/163>.

While the fatherhood of God, children of God, and the nostalgia of a romanticized past and future heavenly home are all aspects of tradition found in the ancient texts, Brenneman criticized some contemporary evangelicals as combining Protestant tradition and psychological therapy with an emphasis on individual needs over social needs. Sentimentality, Brenneman argued, is not only “prevalent across a large section of evangelical literature,” but in an argument that would seem to categorize therapeutic traditionalists innovators negatively, evangelicalism “operates in a narcissistic individualism” because the focus of attention is on the use of emotions and recovery to heal what’s *wrong* with the individual, not society:

The purveyors of therapeutic evangelical works postulate that there is something ‘wrong’ not only in the universe but also in the lives of human beings. Human beings suffer. But for evangelicals, God has the answer for that suffering, and the ministers of evangelical sentimentality claim to know what that answer is. Through emotionality, they guide [evangelicals] along a path of healing, staking out positions of authority through their emotional language.⁷⁹

Combining modern psychology and traditional stories found in biblical figures, recovery through therapeutic evangelicals begins with illustrating the *failures* of figures in the past or the failures of the ministers themselves. Whether in *The Woman at the Well* (John 4) in which Jesus interprets a Samaritan woman’s failed marriages or Max Lucado’s own personal challenges, Brenneman finds “Lucado is attempting to produce a way for his readers to see themselves and the world through the repetition of biblical accounts, sentimental rhetoric, and narcissistic allure.” Lucado innovatively contemporizes the ancient story into symbolic language: “The wounds of five broken

⁷⁹ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 37.

romances” “he stitched her wounded soul back together.” Therapeutic evangelicals use ancient texts and contemporary therapeutic language with emotional appeals in what could also be considered traditioned innovation. Not all traditionalist innovators are alike just as evangelicalism is not monolithic. What unites therapeutic evangelicals, however, is practicality and purpose, the utility found in God’s concern for the daily needs of the individual satisfied through therapeutic appeals and music.⁸⁰

Conclusion

Much of contemporary evangelicalism, then, is influenced by popular psychology, individual change rather than societal transformation, and emotionalism over doctrine. In this new Protestant evangelicalism Brenneman argued, “The rise of therapeutic culture and the influence of sentimentality place emotion in the center of the evangelical experience, a feature of evangelicalism that current definitions do not address.” Rather than relying on belief and doctrine to identify Protestants, Brenneman contended that activities such as worship may better describe many contemporary evangelicals. As Protestants shift away from dependence upon doctrine, worship and music may better identify what many evangelicals do.⁸¹

Scholars Marsden, Noll and others argue a continuum from early America’s anti-establishment religious freedom to contemporary Protestantism nondenominational evangelicalism as part of the same trend. Similarly, sentimental evangelicals, Brenneman

⁸⁰ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 41-48. Brenneman argued, “The work of modernizing the narrative, assimilating the reader and biblical character, and resolving emotional tension is all done to create a reiterative approach to the Bible.”

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

argued, “demonstrate the culmination of the historical trend of disestablishment” when they attempt to distance themselves from denominational Protestantism. Thus, the influence of megachurch evangelists, popular evangelical authors and CCM artists shape culture in new ways.⁸²

Sentimental evangelicalism, Brenneman argued, has resulted in downplaying and modification of traditional doctrine. The trend toward softening doctrine in the twenty first century through emotional, non-denominational messaging differs from the nineteenth century. Doctrinal differences, as the history of American Lutheran identity demonstrates in chapter 2, were a way that various denominations “emphasized distinctiveness in an attempt to gain adherents.” As Brenneman stressed, “distinction was a mark of identity.” Identity in the twenty first century, however, has become secondary to the need to reach the unchurched with non-denominational inclusiveness amid cultural change. Although denominational differences still exist, emotionalism and liberalized tolerance have lowered doctrinal distinctiveness and emphasized the essentials. Like much of the growing Protestant evangelicalism in the late twentieth and early twenty first century, successful churches believe, as Brenneman illustrated, “distinctive doctrines are small compared to the element that unites them—belief in the saving work of Jesus Christ.” In this way, denominational distinctiveness diminishes and opens avenues for Lutherans, who long identified with liturgical tradition, to adopt new instruments and informal approaches to worship. Brenneman interpreted such ecumenical shifts in Protestantism as an “attempt to elevate elements of Christianity that are intentionally

⁸² Ibid., 126.

noncontroversial about matters of Christian doctrine” but internal conflict over contemporary worship shows that adapting religious activity can also be controversial. Similarly, understanding the connection or lack of connection people make with different music speaks to either a dull, lifeless style or a vibrant, passionate style, depending on class, racial identify and generational differences. Those who have long identified with organ music and liturgy differ from those who favor guitars, drums and popular music. In the age of rock ‘n’ roll, many discovered that they could not connect with God in churches where worship music had no rhythm or beat. The sentimentalist felt he or she could not enter a right relationship with God, or even one God desired, without the power and *emotion* of music with a beat. Though music certainly presents doctrine through lyrics, it also has the power to bypass doctrine and appeal directly to *emotions* of the heart. The anti-establishment Jesus attacked the religious establishment, according to Scriptures, for ritualism that lacked a sincere heart. The Protestant tradition has been a history of calling out the establishment over pettiness and distinctiveness that created injustice, indulgences, and division. For many non-denominational Protestants, Brenneman wrote, “The solution is . . . a dismantling of organized religion.”⁸³

In *Homespun Gospel*, Brenneman acknowledged some Protestants who “are both intellectuals and evangelicals” a group which he noted as “a minority.” In his description

⁸³ Ibid., 95. In *No Wonder They Call Him the Savior* (Multnomah Press, 1986), 125, Brenneman notes, Lucado writes, “It makes me think of us. The religious. Those who claim heritage at the cross. I’m thinking of all of us. Every believer in the land. The stuffy. The loose. The strict. The simple. Upper church. Lower church. ‘Spirit-filled.’ Millennialists [sic]. Evangelical. Political. Mystical. Literal. Cynical. Robes. Collars. Three-piece suits. Born-againers. Ameners. I’m thinking of us. . . . (I’m sorry to say.)’ Lucado calls for : “‘One church. . . .Not Baptist, not Methodist, not Adventists. Just Christians. No denomination. No hierarchies. Not traditions. Just Christ.’”; Lucado, 127.

of these evangelicals he stressed their education as “evangelicals with advanced degrees” but who still “rely more heavily on emotion than intellect in appealing to the evangelical masses.” Some evangelicals, therefore, choose to position themselves not as fundamentalist conservatives or mainline liberals but nearer to the appealing moderate image of inclusiveness and ecumenism. From this viewpoint, Brenneman made a strong argument for the need to include emotional activity among such sentimental evangelical appeals and CCM in the proper study of evangelicalism. Brenneman’s conclusion is worth quoting:

A reliance on sentimentality by these ministers and the acceptance of a sentimental approach by their audiences allow for this fusion that muddles the downplaying of intellect in favor of emotional response. Any investigation of evangelicalism, therefore, that ignores sentimentality or depends only on intellectual categories to examine the movement simplifies the complex reality that exists both in evangelical religious thought and evangelical practice.⁸⁴

Some evangelicals, as traditionalist innovators, use both scripture and modern social science and these Protestant “consumers, give authority to emotionality and the authors[,]” ministers and musicians, “who rely on feeling to create their distinctive messages.”⁸⁵ Brenneman, therefore, recognized the historical Protestant evangelical

⁸⁴ Ibid., 82. Brenneman also noted that sociologist Christian Smith’s *Christian America?* suggested many Christians “‘disavowed . . . aspirations to domination’ found in the dichotomous approach to politics. They reject “legislating morality” and coercive conversion for “transforming society through the spread of one’s loving influence that will produce voluntary converts” known in evangelicalism as lifestyle evangelism, 119.

⁸⁵ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 90. Brenneman also argued, “Constructing God and humanity in . . . characteristic ways through a repetitive formulation of how to read scripture is the foundation for healing that results in a type of behavior for being in the world,” 127. The doctrine of the resurrection is articulated by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. 15:3 “For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried and that He was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures.” NAST

dependence on innovative marketing dating back to Whitefield and continuing into the twenty first century. There seemed little room on the part of Brenneman and Noll, at least in the historical sense, for the notion that a third category of Protestants deserved categorizing. These Protestants, neither conservative nor liberal, trust in the gospel and the doctrine of resurrection, appreciate traditional authority and Judeo-Christian tradition but make room for innovative activities in worship and moderate theological positions—egalitarianism in the roles of women and open-mindedness to how the earth was formed based on science.

The process of cultural change born out of social upheaval and demographic shifts in the 1960s and 1970s altered evangelical Protestantism in the 1970s and 1980s through anti-institutional protest and contemporary worship vocalized through new music. It took more the twenty years, however, for the innovation to begin changing the traditional structures of mainline Protestantism. In the next chapter, the history of German-American Lutheranism illustrates how these Protestants migrated across America, mixing with streams of evangelicalism and immigrating directly from Germany with a strong sense of identity. Changing an identity centered in liturgy and organ music took time and agitation, but St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Decatur, Illinois, located in the crossroads of mid-America, supports the argument for a third category of Protestant. It also reveals the amalgamation of American Protestantism through the new music—traditioned innovation at work.

CHAPTER TWO: AGITATION, AMALGAMATION, AND GROWTH OF ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1829-2015.

In 1876, the first historian of Macon County Illinois, John W. Smith, published a well-documented history in the “Centennial year of the nation’s history” noting a “somewhat general interest pervaded the public mind . . . regarding our more local affairs.” In his first chapter, Smith informs readers about Illinois Indians along “Lake Michigan, extending down the Illinois [R]iver, and to the mouth of the Ohio” which emptied into the mighty Mississippi River. “They were known as the ‘Illini,’ or ‘Illinois’ and it is to them,” Smith noted, “we owe the name of our State and of our principal river.” In its earliest days of the Algonquin Illini to the present, Illinois is a land of rivers and crossroads inviting seekers. The Sangamon River running through the community of Decatur became home to a hearty group of pioneers from the South and East, including Abraham Lincoln and his family, who made a homestead where before the 1820s only Indians, French fur trappers and wild game roamed, as Smith wrote:

Settlers now began to increase more rapidly, but the rich, rolling prairie, with all its fertility and beauty, seemed to have few charms as a dwelling place for these early settlers. Instead, they invariably selected some spot in the timber for their abiding place, and it was not long before the first settlers had neighbors in all the belts of timber that line the banks of the Sangamon, Okaw, Camp Creek, Goose Creek, Willow Branch and Madden’s Run.¹

¹ John W. Smith., *History of Macon County, Illinois from its Organization* (Springfield, IL: Rokker’s Printing House, 1876), V, 10, 28; See also Oliver Terrill Banton, ed. *History of Macon County 1976* (Macon County Historical Society), 14.

Chapter 2 illustrates the history of American German Lutheranism and St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Decatur, Illinois within that history. In the early 1800s German Lutherans migrated across America and immigrated up the Mississippi from Germany to settle the rich farmland of Illinois. The conservative Lutherans founded Missouri Synod churches among vibrant twentieth century manufacturing cities that suffered decline beginning in the 1970s. Yet, in the 1990s, St. Paul's altered its historical liturgical identity to adopt informal worship music as traditionalist innovators. These Lutherans willingly adapted to the dominant evangelical Protestant culture. Understanding German Lutheran identity, the 1960s-1970s counterculture movement, and St. Paul's adoption of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) as part the restructuring of religion demonstrates, in microcosm, traditioned innovation at work. It also supports the need for a third category of Protestant beyond the dichotomous historiography.

The story of the vast prairie, Decatur, Illinois and German Lutherans dates to some of Macon County's earliest names: Wards, Stevens, Widick, Croninger, Shonkwiler, and Stickel. Many traveled to central Illinois from the Southeast. "The great majority of pioneers in Illinois were southerners, men and women of Scotch-Irish or English descent who previously had lived in Kentucky, Tennessee, the Carolinas, or Virginia," wrote historian Richard Jensen in his 1978 history, *Illinois*. Jensen divided the pioneering migrants between southern traditionalists and New England modernists who sought reform.² Historian Roger Biles noted that word of mouth traveled south and east, reported in "A Boston newspaper . . . 'For miles and miles we saw nothing but a vast

² Richard J. Jensen, *Illinois: A Bicentennial History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978), 4.

expanse of what I can compare to nothing else but the ocean itself. . . . We saw at intervals, groves of trees, which looked like islands in the ocean.”³ First, rivers for transportation, then rich farmland for agriculture, railroads for manufacturing, the thriving community of Decatur on the Sangamon River would by the 1950s and 1960s become a vibrant city known as the Soybean Capital of the World, a mini-Pittsburgh, attracting A.E. Staley, Archer Daniels Midland., Caterpillar, Inc. and Firestone Tire Company. By the time Smith published the city’s first history in 1876, Decatur had attracted a significant number of German-Americans who established a Lutheran church at Wood and Edward streets in 1864. The German stock helped engineer the city’s infrastructure and build the community with names like Hieronymus Mueller, “a mechanical genius trained by artisans in his native Germany,”⁴ and later in the 1970s Wray Offermann, whose staunch Lutheran father farmed with a German enclave along the Mississippi in southern Illinois. Offermann would spend forty years pastoring a Missouri Synod Lutheran Church in a community he loved:

Decatur has a wonderful breadth of people from high-level executives who run large corporations, large banking facilities, to a broad middle class. Decatur, though known to be a blue-collar town, a tough union town, has changed, has a middle and upper middle class now which is more what we would have classified white collar, a lot of people in middle management.⁵

³ Roger Biles, *Illinois: A History of the Land and Its People* (Dekalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2005), 63.

⁴ Oliver Terrill Banton, ed. *History of Macon County 1976* (Macon County Historical Society), 225, 217. See also <http://www.idaillinois.org/cdm/ref/collection/posttest/id/93>, Accessed Nov. 15, 2015.

⁵ Wray Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

At the height of its growth in 1980, Decatur reached a population of 94,081 but declined from the loss of manufacturing in the '80s and '90s. The city's estimated population in 2014 was 74,100, a loss of 20,000 people.⁶ Reflecting on Kevin McDermott's "Decatur, Down and Out" Biles suggested, "No community in Illinois felt the sting of economic contraction more severely in the 1990s than Decatur, which became known as "striketown, U.S.A."⁷ "[Decatur] certainly has experienced some decline in population," the St. Paul's Lutheran Church pastor lamented in 2015, "I think the inability of our manufacturing base to adapt to changing demands hurt us."⁸ The inability to adapt to change became a central issue in churches and factories. In the 1990s, "Caterpillar's workforce dropped from more than five thousand to twenty-five hundred . . . Bridgestone/Firestone . . . closed completely in 2001." Diversifying the economy to expand beyond manufacturing was key.⁹ The decline in population also impacted the faith community. At one time, there were close to ten Lutheran churches in Decatur; in 2015 half as many with mainline churches especially feeling the brunt. Offermann explained:

Churches that used to worship 500 now worship 250. Churches that used to worship 250 now worship 90 people a Sunday. It has happened not just in Lutheran churches, it happened in a lot of what we would call mainline Protestant churches.

⁶ U. S. Census, <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs>.

⁷ Biles, *Illinois: A History of the Land and Its People*, 300.

⁸ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

⁹ Biles, 33.

Even more impressive that Offermann's Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) did not suffer decline but experienced membership growth. The growth in membership was attributed to a mid-1990s decision to offer informal contemporary worship in one of its services: "There's no question that the growth generally was our more contemporary worship service," Offermann added. "Our traditional services held their own but did not grow. Our contemporary services grew in numbers."¹⁰ For a traditional, mainline, conservative Missouri Synod Lutheran Church (LCMS), which had long been committed to formal liturgy, to adopt informal worship in a community not known for readily accepting change, seemed remarkable. Yet it is this very adaptation that demonstrates the ways that St. Paul's represents, in microcosm, traditionalist innovators in American Protestantism. Rather than adopting more liberal theological views or slipping toward a more secular form of Christian practice and belief as their community became more educated and modernized, St. Paul's was able to hold to traditional theology, while innovating through music, worship and ritual. The way these adaptations developed also reveals traditioned innovation as a willing cultural adaptation by not only mediators such as pastors and worship leaders but also their own congregants.

A Brief History of the Lutheran Church in America

For early Lutherans, the problem of competing for congregants with Methodists and Baptists foreshadowed future challenges. To understand this peculiar development

¹⁰ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

and what first attracted conservative German farmers to Central Illinois two centuries earlier; how Decatur developed into an agricultural processing and manufacturing center with religious roots; and the more recent Protestant amalgamation influenced by Methodism, the relevant history must reach back two centuries before Americans of white Anglo-Celtic and German descent began pouring across the American landscape. The nation was undergoing change in 1800 in ways that would shape the next century. In Washington, D.C., Thomas Jefferson was inaugurated as the third president of the United States, replacing John Adams.¹¹ Off to the west in that same year a young teenager in Kentucky had a religious experience at a “memorable place called ‘Cane Ridge.’” It was the beginnings of a personal and public revival that would help shape Illinois’ frontier through his evangelistic impulse. As Methodist evangelist Peter Cartwright (1785-1872) told it, he had “attended a wedding about five miles from home, where there was a great deal of “drinking and dancing.” Returning home, the sixteen-year-old later described in his *Autobiography* an emotional experience that dramatically changed his life:

‘I began to reflect on the manner in which I had spent the day and evening. I felt guilty and condemned. I rose and walked the floor. . . .It seemed to be, all of a sudden, my blood rushed to my head, my heart palpitated, in a few minutes I turned blind’ an awful impression rested on my mind that death had come and I was unprepared to die. I fell on my knees and began to ask God to have mercy on me.’

In *The Churching of America* (1992), Roger Finke and Rodney Stark illustrated that in the competition for church membership in America, by 1850, the Methodists

¹¹ Jon Meacham, *Thomas Jefferson: The Art of Power* (New York: Random House, 2012), 347.

became the winners. Cartwright described the hardiness of a Methodist itinerant in this passage:

‘A Methodist preacher in those days, when he felt that God had called him to preach, instead of hunting up a college or Biblical institute, hunted up a hardy pony or a horse, and some traveling apparatus, and with his library always at hand, namely, Bible, Hymn Book, and Discipline In this way he went through storms of wind, hail, snow, and rain; climbed hills and mountains, traversed valleys, plunged through swamps, swam swollen streams, lay out all night, wet, weary, and hungry, . . . slept with his saddle blanket for a bed, his saddle or saddle-bags for his pillow, and his old big coat or blanket, if he had any, for a covering.’¹²

Cartwright considered German Lutherans who arrived in Illinois without pastors destitute and without a deeper sense of Methodist conviction. Within his Sangamon District (1824-25), Cartwright, preached at camp meetings in Decatur. Camp and small group meetings were a large part of Methodist success. Throughout the nineteenth century camp meetings were viewed by mainline Protestant clergy as disturbances of the peace.¹³ Similar criticism was lodged against St. Paul’s Lutheran Church for introducing guitars and drums into worship—they were violations of the divine

¹² Cartwright, Peter. *Autobiography of Peter Cartwright* (1856), 13, 141, <http://www.cblibrary.org/biography/cartwright.htm>, accessed Sept. 2, 2015. Cartwright was ordained by Bishop Francis Asbury in 1806 and would spread his brand of gospel far and wide as a circuit rider in in Kentucky, Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, Cartwright, 16. “The Illinois [Methodist] Circuit, as a mission, was formed in 1804,” according to Cartwright, but it wasn’t until 1812 that the Illinois District of the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized. That year Cartwright was appointed to Illinois’ Wabash District, Cartwright, 68. “[T]he General Conference of 1816 formed the Missouri Conference, which covered that State, and Arkansas, Illinois, and Indiana States. . . .The Missouri Conference was composed of Illinois and Missouri Districts, covering the principal settlements in four large states, though only two districts,” Cartwright, 93; See also Roger Finke and Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America, 1776-1990: Winners and Losers in our Religious Economy*. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 56.

¹³ Banton, 141, 102; See also, Finke & Stark, 72, 102. In the early days, “The local congregations were divided into small, close-knit groups called classes. Each class met on a weekly basis and was composed of approximately a dozen members.” This early Methodist structure was the forerunner of Sunday schools and smaller, in-home community groups adopted by many churches today for more “intimate fellowship.”

service.¹⁴ Many early settlers of Central Illinois in the 1820s and 1830s were of Scotch, English and Irish decent. Buel Stevens, the eldest son of a Connecticut Yankee father, settled on a homestead northwest of Decatur, on what became Stevens Creek. The Stevens' were part of a group who "established a Methodist Society" and later The First United Methodist Episcopal Church of Decatur—the city's first church building in 1834. "The Methodists, with a brilliantly organized system of circuit riders, built the most successful network of churches," according to Jensen. Unlike reserved German Lutherans, Methodists engaged in "extemporaneous prayers . . . intense soul-searching confessions, even emotional outbursts."¹⁵

A determined group of German settler-farmers moved into Central Illinois from east and south by land and west via the Mississippi and Illinois rivers to clear timber forests and prairie grass for farming, as generations in America and the old country had done before them. It is important to understand that ethnic Germans came in separate waves of differing social and political orientations that included the South, the Mid Atlantic, and directly from Europe. The European arrivals, a conservative confessional group, traveled from Germany and up the Mississippi River from New Orleans to settle around St. Louis. The first wave from the Carolinas is highlighted in Duane E. Elbert's "The American Roots of German Lutheranism in Illinois." Beginning in 1807, the first

¹⁴ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

¹⁵ Banton, 140; See also Mabel E. Richmond, *Centennial History of Decatur, 1829-1929* (1930). "In the Stevens creek settlement were a number of adherents to the Methodist faith. That fact came to the attention of Rev. Peter Cartwright, a militant leader of Methodism in Illinois, who was the president of the Sangamon district. In the fall of 1829, he started the first Methodist 'society' in Macon county." Richmond, 84; See also Jensen, *Illinois*, 20-21.

group is described as “a pioneer band of German-speaking Lutherans [who] trekked overland from the North Carolina piedmont to the rolling upland of Union County, Illinois,” in the southern portion of the state known as “Little Egypt” for the convergence of Ohio and Mississippi Rivers. Their German forefathers had first arrived in Pennsylvania before moving “down the Virginia Shenandoah Valley and by 1800 had fully occupied the Carolina piedmont.”¹⁶ Methodists could not help but notice the influx of Germans. A Methodist convert, Dr. Nast, who converted Germans to the Awakening, helped initiate a full-fledged Methodist-German Mission. Where Cartwright had limited impact, German preachers, he wrote, brought “salvation” to an influx of their people both in the New World and from the Old country:

Many who were Catholics, Lutherans, rationalists, and infidels, were happily converted to God; the work spread and increased, till stations, circuits, and districts were formed . . . and they come the nighest to old-fashioned, or primitive Methodism, of any people I ever saw.¹⁷

Germans in tight-knit ethnic communities, Jensen suggested, “frequently converted to Methodism, abandoned their mother tongue, and assimilated into the

¹⁶ Elbert, Duane E. “The American Roots of German Lutheranism in Illinois.” *Illinois Historical Journal* 78, Issue 2 (1985): 98; Elbert takes note of Richard J. Jensen, *Illinois: A Bicentennial History* (New York: Norton, 1978), 38, 49, 55, 74-75, 113, 159, 173 recounts the tug of war between traditionalists and modernizers but considers Lutherans primarily as traditional German immigrants and refers specifically only to the Missouri Synod. Elbert notes, “None of these books discuss in any way the pioneering work performed by the American-born German Lutherans from North Carolina and Pennsylvania.” (n. 97-98); Roger Biles’ more recent *Illinois: A History of the Land and Its People* (2005) noted the geographic landing of the early wave of Germans: “In the early years of migration, these foreigners congregated in the more settled areas of southern Illinois such as St. Clair, Madison, and Edwards counties, but increasingly they established residences in the north alongside the Yankees,” Biles, 62.

¹⁷ Cartwright, 268-269; “It is only a few years since it pleased God to awaken and convert Dr. Nast, now editor of the German "Apologist." He came to America a German rationalist, or infidel. He was awakened and converted under the labors of the ministry of the Methodists. He was soon licensed to preach, and was the first German missionary to thousands of our foreign German population.”

Yankee community,” an adaptation that has always been a part of America’s Protestant amalgamation. But a larger majority, especially Missouri Synod Lutherans, maintained tight-knit allegiance and identity. The differences between conversion experience Methodists and conservative Lutherans should not be understated. While Methodists participated in revivals, “Immigrants from Germany . . . established their identity in this strange new land by enthusiastic participation in . . . Lutheran activities.” In this way, the traditionalists opposed reform.¹⁸ By 1830, a second German-American wave from the Carolina piedmont relocated to southcentral Illinois.¹⁹ A worker in Methodist missions sized-up how to convert Germans to Methodism,

‘He must first be converted in his head, for his head is wrong. Secondly, he must be converted in his heart, for his heart is wrong. . . .’ If, said he, ‘we can convert him in all these respects, we can soon Americanize him and make a good Methodist of him.’²⁰

Despite these religious-cultural barriers, the Methodist missionary impulse was egalitarian in spirit with little respecter of persons other than to see conversion and individual change. Methodists were not seeking to live in enclaves and form identity like Germans but sought to bring all men to Christ. This speaks, Elbert stressed, to the

¹⁸ Jensen, *Illinois*, 50; Jensen further provides that these inwardly directed religionists “avoided outsiders, married within the fold, paid careful attention to orthodox beliefs and followed closely their leadership of their pastors.” Jensen, 55.

¹⁹ Elbert, “The American Roots of German Lutheranism in Illinois,” 98; This second wave of Germans from the North Carolina piedmont settled further north in Montgomery County in what became the community of Hillsboro, not far from Decatur and Macon County.

²⁰ Cartwright, 269.

frustration of Lutheran missions.²¹ In *Southern Cross*, Christine Heyrman traced Southern evangelicalism to the Calvinist-Puritan reformers of New England who in the 1730s and 1740s inspired the first Great Awakenings. Heyrman reveals numerous encounters between itinerant Methodist preachers and converts who invaded the South with an “exotic” evangelical brand of Christianity.²² As a circuit rider, Cartwright took this evangelistic, *experiential* Christianity into the heartland, attracting large numbers in Illinois with calls for transforming conversion. Later, a twentieth century generation of evangelist, Jesus rockers traveled the country in the 1970s and 1980s, denouncing drugs and quoting Matthew 8:20: “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head.” Convinced that they were walking in Jesus’ footsteps as “an itinerant dropout who left his job and family in order to seek God,” historian Stephen Prothero illustrated how Jesus rockers developed a new brand of popular Christian music and carried on the experiential tradition of Methodists.²³ In addition to German-speaking Lutherans from North Carolina, still other Lutherans came

²¹ Elbert, “The American Roots of German Lutheranism in Illinois,” 112; Elbert notes in 1835 a German Lutheran correspondent, expressing to the *Lutheran Observer*, Methodist and Presbyterians “do not stop to enquire whether there by an English or Scotch at the West, like we do whether there by any Germans, but they dispatch their men with instructions to hew their own timber—Let the Lutheran church do the same[,] for the moral timber with which this Western country abounds, is as free for our use as for theirs.”

²² Christine Leigh Heyrman, *Southern Cross: The Beginnings of the Bible Belt* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1997), 8; Heyrman later adds, “They [evangelicals] taught their adherents to regard drinking and joking, gambling and dancing, fiddling and cockfighting not as innocent amusements that made strangers into neighbors but as sinful frivolities that set men and women on the path to hell,” Heyrman, 18.

²³ Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus: How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 139; Larry Norman, the father of Christian rock, would even develop a song: “The Outlaw” roaming “across the land/with a band of unschooled ruffians and a few old fishermen.” Jesus rockers “traveled the country spreading the good news of the hippie Jesus.”

to Illinois from Pennsylvania.²⁴ Writing about Gossner missionaries sent from Germany in the 1840s to pastor Germans in America, George B. Arbaugh wrote:

When the great German immigration to America began flooding across Pennsylvania, down the Ohio River, up into Ohio and Indiana, and out into the states west and north, it was impossible for the small American Lutheran Church to supply sufficient pastors for the care of these immigrants.²⁵

Germans did not, at first, catch on to the effective method of Methodists who traveled and preached with westward movement. Heyrman illustrated that the “mode of deploying their clergy enabled the Baptists and Methodists to reach an increasingly dispersed population—the tens of thousands of southern families who . . . swarmed westward into Kentucky, Tennessee, and southern Ohio,” and in time the evangelistic impulse propelled Methodist to the Illinois frontier.²⁶

Lutherans who migrated from the piedmont or Pennsylvania were thus more ecumenical than newer German immigrants. So-called confessional Lutherans arrived around St. Louis, spilling across the Mississippi into Illinois. Wray Offermann’s heritage was among these later arrivals:

Our ancestors would have been part of the latter group that sailed into New Orleans, came up the Mississippi River. They were part of that Perry County group and the history of that, a leader by the name of [Martin] Stephan [1777-1846] organized Lutherans . . . and kind of led the early group in Perry County, Missouri, which would have been south on the Missouri side of

²⁴ Elbert, “The American Roots of German Lutheranism in Illinois,” 98.

²⁵ George B. Arbaugh, “Gossner Missionaries in America.” *Church History* 8, no. 3 (Sept. 1939): 222.

²⁶ Heyrman, *Southern Cross*, 83.

the River. And Stephan was the self-proclaimed bishop of that group but got himself into moral difficulties.²⁷

Perry County (Perryville) is in Missouri, south of St. Louis. Led by Martin Stephan, a charismatic, pietistic preacher in Saxony who convinced a group of followers to immigrate to the United States, these Lutherans arrived in 1839. While the group's past rarely appears in the Lutheran Missouri Synod (LCMS) history, Mary Todd's *Authority Vested: A Story of Identity and Change in the Lutheran-Church Missouri Synod* (2000) described it as financial malfeasance.²⁸ Offermann knows the story well. Told by the Lutheran church in Southern Illinois where he grew up, it is part of the same area Stephan was forced into exile.

And the elders of the church there put him on a boat and sent him across the River to Illinois and said, 'Don't ever come back over here.' And he gathered together their people around Red Bud. Red Bud is about 14 miles from my [birth] home. He is actually buried in a little Lutheran cemetery outside of Red Bud.²⁹

Perry County, Illinois (Pinckneyville) is in Southern Illinois, east of St. Louis. In Stephan's exiled absence, C. F. W. Walther, pastor of what became Missouri Synod Lutherans in St. Louis, stepped in as the new leader, and "insisted on congregational autonomy rather than episcopal authority." Todd illustrated how Stephan's removal

²⁷ Wray Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

²⁸ Randal Balmer. Review of *Authority Vested: A Story of Identity and Change in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, by Mary Todd (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans. 2000) *The American Historical Review*, 106, no 3 (June, 2001), 1003; Balmer: "Stephan began construction of his sumptuous bishop's residence in Perry County, Missouri, using the band's common fund, which he controlled. His followers eventually confirmed their suspicions about Stephan's financial malfeasance. . . .The clergy ousted their leader and sent him into exile, literally rowing him across the Missouri River in 1839 and depositing him in Illinois."

²⁹ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

“shaped the LCMS for its first half-century: it was strongly congregational and suspicious of all centralized authority.” Even so others, including Edgar Krentz, have noted Todd’s point that Walther exercised his own form of control as “president of the church body, president of its major seminary, editor of its house organ, prolific theological writer, and defender of what he perceived as the truth in controversies about the ministry.” Thus, the LCMS conservative beginnings in 1847 are characterized by Frederick C. Luebke as the rigid orthodoxy of the German-Saxon community. Missouri Synod Lutherans remained so, wrote Reinhart Kondert, “in order to avoid assimilation by their new homeland.”³⁰ Throughout the 1840s and 1850s, Lutheran missionaries struggled to serve both new immigrants and the older migrant Germans who were very different. A similar challenge surfaced a century later. If leaders, namely pastors and elders, failed to adapt to changing trends in music and worship, they might hold on to older traditional congregants but lose younger members and fail to attract newer generations. In the nineteenth century, the issue wasn’t traditional versus contemporary music styles but German versus English language and adapting to the new American culture. “J. F. Youngken of Mr. Carmel pointed out in 1835 that many of the Pennsylvania-born emigrants were ‘principally German’ and tenaciously retained their language, rarely

³⁰ Balmer, 1003; For Todd, the history of the group from its 1847 reorganization as the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other states to the present can be read as a steady slide back into ecclesiastical centralization and autocracy, especially regarding the role of women in the synod; See also Edgar Krentz, Review of *Authority Vested: A Story of Identity and Change in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, by Mary Todd (Grand Rapids, Mich.: William B. Eerdmans, 2000) *Christian Century* Feb. 2002), 67; “44 leading theologians and pastors . . . call[ed] the church to change” in ordination for women. The LCMS conservative position is based upon the “literalist reading of I Corinthians 14:33-36, I Timothy 2:1-14.”; See also Reinhart Kondert, Review of *Germans in the New World: Essays in the History of Immigration* by Frederick C. Luebke (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1990) *Monatshefte* 84, no 1 (Spring, 1992), 126. See also www.lcms.org/walther200.

attending an English service.” These staunch Germans were wedded to the language of their fathers and the fathers before them in the Old Country.³¹ Offermann remembered distinct differences growing up in Renault, Illinois near Red Bud:

There was also what came to be known as “evangelical” and “reformed” people. They were also of German descent, spoke German, were close in terms of their doctrinal views with the Lutheran folks. The Lutherans would say *they* [LCMS] were a little purer and a little more strict, a little more conservative and held to the traditions of the fathers a little more carefully.

Offermann was baptized in Holy Cross Lutheran Church, same as his father who was also raised by committed Lutheran parents. His mother was even more devout than his grandfather, Detrick. “She always made sure that religious things were carefully upheld,” Offermann recalled, “They were in church every Sunday.”³²

Unlike Methodist circuit riders, the more mainline “Lutheran synods insisted upon some degree of theological training and doctrinal conformity, which effectively eliminated developing a completely home-grown clergy.” Steadfast commitment to cultural precepts and less willingness to adapt to change echoed in the words of one observer: ““They ought either to be native Germans or able to speak the language with perfect correctness, free from all American admixture; they ought to be well educated men.”” Elbert suggested the lesson from the first half of the nineteenth century is that

³¹ Elbert, “The American Roots of German Lutheranism in Illinois,” 106; Elbert wrote, “Throughout the reports of Illinois missionaries there was an emphasis on serving the so-called Germans of the West, both immigrants and the descendants of Germans from the eastern states. That was especially true in Wabash County.” Elbert’s research finds Edward B. Olmstead, a Lutheran preacher in Union County, observing the Germans in Wabash County in 1839: “[I]f they ever be attended to, it must be by a [Lutheran]. . . . [Many church members] are not familiar with the English language, and some . . . are entirely unacquainted with it.”

³² Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

despite handicaps Lutheran churches somehow managed to grow.³³ Early mission pastors were trailblazers. Succeeding pastors and churches would be forced to blaze new trails in worship styles to prevent decline. In the 1840s, the need for German-speaking clergymen captured the attention of a mission-minded Lutheran pastor in Berlin. Johannes Evangelista Gossner sent pastors to the Germans in America. Gossner men were more non-denominationalists, “In Germany they had known the Prussian attempt at Protestant unification. . . .these men, . . . did not seem to have any clear-cut denominational consciousness.” Some were sent to Fort Wayne, Indiana to care for the congregation,³⁴ a center for Lutheran education. Offermann attended senior college in Fort Wayne before advancing to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1967.³⁵

Theological and liturgical disputes divided German Protestants. Gossner missionaries saw nothing wrong with so-called “‘mixed churches’ in which ‘gemischte’ or ‘evangelical’ churches of Lutherans and Reformed people” met in the same congregation. Influences of revivalism and soul-saving were prevalent in the Awakening of the 1840s. Consequently, some Gossner missionaries “absorbed some of the revival

³³ Elbert, 111-112; Elbert: “The Lutheran church became deeply ensnarled in a web of language and ethnicity that severely hampered denominational growth. Even a cursory reading of missionary instructions, which specifically direct preachers to seek out German communities in the West, validates the accusation that Lutherans were concerned only with Germans and descendants of Germans.” Elbert also notes, “In spite of such handicaps the Lutheran church did grow and prosper in Illinois before the Civil War. New congregations emerged every year during the 1840s. . . .They serve as a living reminder that American Lutherans actively paved the way in Illinois for the incoming flood of Old World Germans.”

³⁴ Arbaugh, George B. “Gossner Missionaries in America.” *Church History* 8, no. 3 (Sept. 1939): 222-223.

³⁵ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Concordia Theological Seminary is now located where Concordia Senior College was located in the 1960s. Established in 1846, Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne is affiliated with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod and is considered both theologically and liturgically conservative.

religion of the time.” In 1845, for example, J. S. Meissner “wrote to Gossner that he had ‘saved’ fifty souls.” “Opposed to . . . rationalism,” and “Methodistic practices,” F. W. Wier, on the other hand, “formed tiny churches out of [loyal Lutheran element].” That Methodistic practices were having sway over strict Lutheran ways occurred amid the Methodist church, by 1850 the largest single denomination in America. Meanwhile, the conservative Missouri Synod was growing larger and Indianapolis Synod smaller as “a large part of its laity had been lost through the abandonment of the union churches.” Eventually, the Joint Synod of Ohio would join the conservative Missouri.³⁷ Thus, Elbert ultimately finds “the history of the Gossner men in America is one of a movement away from church unionism, and in the direction of conservative Lutheranism,” helping form what became the conservative LCMS.³⁶

“Book of Memories”: German Lutheranism in Decatur, Illinois

These historic currents are important to understanding the development of German Lutheranism in Decatur as a community. Initially, Decatur suffered an unfavorable location from road transportation crossing central Illinois. That changed, however, when “railroads in 1854 finally accelerated growth,” Biles wrote,

³⁶ Arbaugh, 224-230; While Johann F. Isensee proceeded to “became pastor of those in the mixed or evangelical church,” Johann Kunz “found that he could not secure financial aid in the East from the Lutherans for his mixed church in Indianapolis” and opted for “a strictly Lutheran congregation.” Conservative influence continued to bear fruit. [Pastor] Isensee himself reported that he had given up his evangelical church although he was still serving the Lutheran element in it. The [Indianapolis] synod, having at this time sixteen ordained pastors in twenty-one congregations, voted that no pastor might in the future accept a call to a mixed church. See also Fink & Stark, 56. According to Finke & Stark, *Churching of America* (1992): “In 1776, the Methodists were a tiny religious society with only 65 churches scattered through the colonies. Seven decades later they towered over the nation. In 1850 there were 13,302 Methodist congregations, enrolling more than 2.6 million members, the largest single denomination”.

“establish[ing] Decatur as a processing point for agricultural productions [and] a transportation link to larger markets. . .” In addition to becoming a transportation hub that housed the Wabash Railroad, Decatur sported “several farm implement factories, and a metal-working industry supplying parts for the railroads and plumbing equipment for homes built in the area.” In the 1870s, railroads and manufacturing stimulated the city’s growth and Germans old and new were instrumental in building the community:

The city’s population approached four thousand by 1860 and exceeded seven thousand by 1870. Suitably impressed, the Illinois Republican party held its state convention there in 1860. The convention endorsed Abraham Lincoln, who had tried cases in Decatur courtrooms when he traversed the eighth circuit court from 1838 to 1857, for president.³⁷

In 1860, the Lutheran Church in America, though not as large as the Methodist Church, numbered some 2,219 congregations and 245,726 communicants (over a million of constituency).³⁸ Lutherans in the crossroads of Illinois were among 3,839 people living in Decatur, with German names like Meyer, Stein, Detzer, Weiss, and Dellbridge. These men signed a constitution starting Zion Lutheran Church (later St. Paul’s). In 1861, the General Synod of the Lutheran Church located in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania “gathered a group of . . . people for worship in the basement of the Old Baptist Church, North Water and William [Streets].” The newer German-Lutherans did not have a church building but

³⁷ Biles, 226; At one time Decatur was served by seven railroads but remains a major junction served by Norfolk Southern Railway, CSX, and the Canadian National Railway. See also Banton, 226. *History of Macon County 1976*.

³⁸ Robert Fortenbaugh, “American Lutheran Synods and Slavery, 1830-60.” *The Journal of Religion* 13, no. 1 (Jan., 1933): n91.

well-established Baptists willingly offered space to the German brethren.³⁹ As Decatur Lutherans contemplated building their first church building, the nation was at war. Across the state, “Volunteer regiments, often organized in specific localities, tended to be homogeneous groups. Members of ethnic groups frequently recruited their countrymen into units, and Irish, German, and Scottish brigade’s abounded.” Central Illinois’ conflicted attitudes on the War sparked violent clashes and riots southeast of Decatur. In 1863, a draft riot erupted in nearby Charleston, which was “a noted center of Confederate sympathy,” forcing U.S. troops to restore order. Many loyal Union volunteers, including Germans, organized in Decatur before heading off to fight, then returning to Illinois to help found the Grand Army of the Republic in Decatur, April 6, 1866.⁴⁰

With a large German Lutheran populace in St. Louis, St. Paul’s first pastor came from the burgeoning city on the Mississippi “to make a first payment on the lot on the corner of West Wood and Edward Streets, which was purchased for . . . \$400.00. The first little frame church—28’ x 30’—was erected. In this little church on June 12[,1864] the congregation was organized.” In the *Book of Memories*, a brief history of the church, Rev. F. R. Webber, a Missouri Synod Lutheran pastor, noted:

‘Pastor [Henry E. C.] Grupe, now 27 years of age, arrived in Decatur in 1867. . . . Grupe was young, optimistic with six years of experience in frontier missionary work. He had a firm faith in the promises of the Lord. His optimism was contagious, and it

³⁹ St. Paul’s Lutheran Church. *Book of Memories: 100 Years of God’s Grace and Blessing 1864-1964*. (Decatur: St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, 1964) 2.

⁴⁰ Biles, 104, 114-115; See also Knight, Glenn. B, “Brief History of the Grand Army of the Republic,” http://www.sucwv.org/?page_id=167., accessed Nov. 16, 2015.

did not take long until the discouraged little congregation rallied.⁴¹

From its earliest days St. Paul's had been dedicated to education and missions. A Day School or pre-school has operated since 1870. In its seventy-fifth anniversary in 1935, the church celebrated its mission to Christian training and education with this missionary proclamation:

'To lead children on the way to heaven, to graduate pupils as useful members of society and God-fearing patriotic citizens, to ever point upward and forward—that has been the aim and object of our school. It stands for the cause of Christ, good government, good citizenship, and so, in line with others, is one of the bulwarks of the nation.'⁴²

In 1880, St. Paul's built a stone church with a cornerstone that remains part of the existing church structure now occupied by New Salem Missionary Baptist Church, a mostly African American congregation. "After many meetings and much discussion, especially on the question of relocation, we today, the 26th of August, 1880, lay the cornerstone of this new church building," said Pastor Landgraf, "My heart is happy, but it trembles in fear that a large group of the present members may leave the church, because they are dissatisfied with the location."⁴³ Pastor Landgraf's fear was a harbinger of concerns later expressed in a permanent relocation in 2012 from downtown to an abandoned warehouse building on the northwestern portion of Decatur.

⁴¹ *Book of Memories*, 3. Born in Hanover, Germany, Grupe graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1861 before being drafted in the army near the end of the Civil War. Grupe pastored the church only two years, 1867-1869.

⁴² *Book of Memories*, 4.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

The church building erected in 1880 served St. Paul's as a house of worship until 1929, the year of the U.S. stock market collapse. Under Rev. Landgraf, St. Paul's became a member of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (then Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and other States). The Decatur population was 9,547. By 1885, the congregation purchased its first organ and the German-speaking church had “a special evening service . . . held in which the English language was used throughout, and the citizens of Decatur were invited to attend”:

This was unusual since all services were being held in the German language. It took a long time for St. Paul's to become bilingual, but let it also be said our church [Missouri Synod] went to many countries and learned 'their' language to reach them with the Gospel.⁴⁴

A new influx of Germans in the 1890s and early 1900s ensured that the old language service would continue. These immigrants were working-class factory workers of industrialization in Europe and sought to take advantage of opportunity and freedom in America.⁴⁵ In 1890, *Memories* noted “a large number of immigrants from Germany, especially from East Prussia came to Decatur—many of them worked in the coal mine then in Decatur—and established their homes in the northeast section of the city.”⁴⁶ At the time, Illinois had emerged as the third largest industrial state, with a quarter of the labor force engaged in manufacturing. Farm implements were produced and railroads

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 5; It would not be until Palm Sunday 1945 before the last German service was held at St. Paul's in Decatur.

⁴⁵ Jensen, 94; Jensen wrote, “The new Germans gravitated to cities, especially manufacturing regions like Decatur, where “rapid expansion was underway in a dozen industries, particularly those tied to agriculture, such as meatpacking, flour milling, farm implements, and distilling,” 77.

⁴⁶ *Book of Memories*, 5.

crisscrossed Decatur from north and south, east and west.⁴⁷ By 1891, St. Paul's prospered enough to organize a second congregation, St. Johannes Lutheran. Roughly 66% of St. Paul's congregation separated to the sister congregation, St. Johannes.⁴⁸ The traditionalist influence of German church life, especially on Sunday, was significant: "[I]n America it was an anchor for a person's identity—ethnic awareness and social life both emerged from the church and synagogue."⁴⁹

By 1914, one million people in Illinois, were of German origin. When World War I broke out that year, "German flags appeared and bands played German patriotic songs throughout the Windy City's [Chicago's] North Side."⁵⁰ While Decatur had received immigrants from Prussia, most German descendants in the community were not new arrivals. When Germany continued to show aggression, and violated "neutral rights on the high seas," President Wilson declared war in April 1917. Though there is no evidence of violence in Decatur, tension was no doubt high at St. Paul's and the newly

⁴⁷ Jensen, 77-78.

⁴⁸ *Book of Memories*, 5; Before the separation, St. Paul's numbered 870 souls and 565 communicants. With the addition of the sister church and division of the congregation, St. Paul's numbered 313 members and 190 communicants.

⁴⁹ Jensen., 95; Ethnic identity may have been something to be proud of, but it also had its drawbacks, especially as it manifested itself in the "us" versus "them" mentality. Jensen contends: "The most bitter crusades waged by the progressives impinged directly on the ethno-cultural forces in Illinois. Prohibition, pitting the moralistic, middle-class pietists against the traditionalistic working-class liturgicals, was fiercely contested," Jensen, 105.

⁵⁰ Biles, 185; Biles emphasized a large number of recent immigrants from Europe who supported the Central Powers: "With 319,199 immigrants from Germany and 163,065 immigrants from Austria in 1910, Illinois contained more residents from those nations than any other state." It is important to note when Illinois sent a delegation of German Americans to "dissuade President Wilson from seeking war against the Central Powers," Congressman Mason and Britten were among *five* from the state 'of the fifty U.S. congressmen who voted against the war resolution."

established sister church--Trinity Lutheran in 1917. In that year, Jensen reminded, "most Lutheran churches still conducted services in German and "[d]eclaration of war stunned these quiet people." While many German Lutherans demonstrated loyalty to America by ridding themselves of ethnic associations, St. Paul's did not discontinue German services. In Jensen's view, "The German community in Illinois had always been inwardly directed." Evidence of this strength and resistance to change is seen in the Lutheran Missouri Synod's objection to unification into one church in the mid-1930s.⁵¹ The post-World War I years were prosperous times in Decatur. In 1922 the A. E. Staley Company opened the nation's first soybean-processing plant in Decatur, and in 1939 Archer Daniels Midland [ADM] Company established milling operations. These were good days in Decatur for manufacturing and church growth. Between 1900 and 1930, "Decatur's population nearly tripled as it became a national center for processing the raw materials of central Illinois for export."⁵²

Although there had always been talk of relocating St. Paul's, the congregation remained at the original corner downtown, West Wood and Edward Streets, where St. Paul's stood at the time as a Lutheran church for 148 years. Eventually, however, the

⁵¹ Jensen, 110, 113; St. Paul's did not end German-speaking services until 1945, *Book of Memories*, 10. "State and federal officials monitored enlistments and bond subscriptions in German areas to detect slackers or the slightest hint of disloyalty. When bond sales lagged in the heavily German rural areas . . . the district attorney ordered Lutheran ministers to lecture their congregations on their duty to God and country. Germans "created their own intellectual, religious, social and artistic institutions, supported by the modest wealth of their hard-working, loyal people." The effect of anti-German sentiment was felt, according to Jensen, in the way in which "war hysteria" altered the German culture. See also Finke and Stark, 231. "Of the 33.5% who favored denominational status quo, 89.5% were Lutherans. Only 7.5% of Missouri Synod Lutherans supported unification into a single church."

⁵² Biles, 226; See also Banton, 135: "More than 32,000 acres of beans were raised in Central Illinois in 1922, but prior to that their uses had been limited." "90 % of the downstate families owned an automobile," which could not be said of other parts of the country," according to Jensen, *Illinois*, 91.

flourishing mainline church outgrew its cherished building near the city's center. In 2012, the congregation relocated to a large warehouse, creating tremendous conflict, according to St. Paul's pastor. "I would tell you that probably those years were the toughest years of my ministry life," said Pastor Offermann. "I did then and still do believe the vision was right." Congregational resistance to change became an issue. St. Paul's had long worshiped in an attractive, Gothic sanctuary with ornate stone and stained glass but held only three-hundred to three-hundred fifty worshipers comfortably. Worshipers sat behind pillars in the lower sanctuary and sliding windows or in a side balcony offered no clear view of the altar or minister. The problem was aggravated by St. Paul's decision to adopt contemporary worship:

[A]s contemporary worship grew it was a very limited facility for contemporary-type worship. To have the praise band up front you totally clouded the altar. You couldn't even see the altar and it wasn't designed for contemporary instruments and praise team and drum set. To create a new worship space that allowed us to grow, that allowed us to attract more people--have more broad diverse ministries, I felt was the right thing to do.⁵³

The decision to leave the long-established building for a newer warehouse-type structure on the northwest edge of the city was opposed by those whose identity was attached to a traditional space, "When people have grown up in a church and that's been our church home for many, many years they don't give it up easily," but a growing church, Offermann explained, needs not just a connection to space but adequate space:

So [we] have a church with a campus feel with the ability to spread out. It's a more reflective I think in growing families with kids. We were struggling to have Sunday night youth group activities. Parents didn't want to send their kids downtown

⁵³ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

Sunday night. But that still didn't change the fact that Sunday morning this was home for many years.⁵⁴

The church softened the blow of change by bringing along the traditional pipe organ and stained glass. The congregation converted the warehouse into a mega church with a large worship center and capacity for up to 1000 worshipers. As part of the 150th anniversary celebration, St. Paul's packed the new sanctuary for a celebratory concert by contemporary gospel artist Matthew West, musical expression that would have been unacceptable prior to the 1990s.⁵⁵

In 1928, the congregation had decided to remain at the location where the church was first established including "two additional lots . . . purchased to the east for \$11,000." In 1929, the stone church built in 1880, was removed and "the Parish House became the center of all activities for the congregation." Decatur was a growing manufacturing belt community with a 1930 population of 57,510. Although plans were to build and expand with a new church the country fell into the Great Depression and "the congregation needed all its resources to pay off the debt on the Parish House."⁵⁶

By December 1930, industry payrolls in Decatur were down more than 30% from a year earlier. Central Illinois Railroad, with major operations in the city, cut half of its

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Jim Vorel, "Growing St. Paul's Lutheran congregation now worshipping at new location," *Herald & Review*, March 30, 2012. http://herald-review.com/lifestyles/faith-and-values/growing-st-paul-s-lutheran-congregation-now-worshipping-at-new/article_a251152c-7ab8-11e1-ba76-0019bb2963f4.html, Accessed, Set 20, 2015.

⁵⁶ *Book of Memories*, 8; In 1928, St. Paul's added three lots along West Wood St., 300 block, a total of 180 feet. Architects Brooks, Bramhall, and Dague . . . designed a new Parish House and also a new Church.

employees. Into the 1930s the decline caused class conflict.⁵⁷ These differences and the prospects of the church improved with the New Deal economy. By November 26, 1939, St. Paul's celebrated the payoff of debt on the Parish House only to have another event prevent the congregation from building a new church —World War II. Still, Decatur continued to add its growing population, reaching 59,510 in 1940.⁵⁸ In the years following World War I and Depression, the community developed a crop from which it got its legacy as the Soybean Capital of the World. Farmers began producing soybeans in the declining wheat market of the Depression.⁵⁹

When war broke out again with Germany, ethnic sentiment was different. Viewed with suspicion during WW I, German Lutherans paraded patriotically in World War II. Some Lutheran churches had demonstrated loyalty by abandoning German during U.S. involvement in World War I. Others did so at the outbreak of WW II even though the War Department had reassured Lutheran pastors that German language sermons were acceptable.⁶⁰ Conscious of the emergence of the so-called cultural wars in the 1970s,

⁵⁷ Jensen, 137; “85 percent of CIO members, 80 percent of AF of L members, 72 percent of nonunion blue-collar members.” Among card carrying union members, including Decatur, Roosevelt won roughly 70 percent of the vote; See also Biles, 212; “From 1925 to 1932, factory payrolls fell . . . 63 percent in Decatur.”

⁵⁸ *Book of Memories*, 9.

⁵⁹ Biles, 226. “Agronomists and chemists at the state’s agricultural experiment stations created new strains of soybeans that thrived in the soil and climate of central Illinois. Research scientists developed a host of food products made from the soybean, which was found to be high in protein, and discovered as well as a number of industrial uses for the processed seeds.”

⁶⁰ Jensen, 145; “In September 1942, a nervous Lutheran pastor in Randolph County asked the governor to approve his use of German sermons. He had abandoned it when the war began, but his older parishioners had difficulty with English. They were entirely loyal, he explained, adding that thirty-two young men were already in the armed services.”; See also Biles, The German language had already disappeared from most churches and schools, and expressions of loyalty to the Nazi regime became highly unpopular. More than

German Lutherans, particularly LCMS, refused to back down on attacks against biblical inerrancy.⁶¹ In the 1990s and the turn of the century, LCMS and St. Paul's maintained conservative stands on contemporary cultural issues and biblical directives, including abortion, divorce and particularly homosexuality. Offermann explained:

We've taken very clear stands and tried to not be harsh and judgmental, though when you lay it out black on white people who don't want to grapple with it take offense. We're learning how to speak the truth in love, still—I've lost people over that issue.⁶²

In this way, LCMS, and St. Paul's, are not in sync with most liberal mainline Protestant churches. Lutherans have disagreed with what they say is “the spirit of the age.” Conservative stands more aligned with evangelicalism have not won LCMS pastors like Offermann support of mainline liberals or postmodernists. Instead, Lutheran leaders, Krentz noted, are “identified with the conservative theology of *The Fundamentals* in opposition to ‘modernism’” though St. Paul's contemporary worship style should be identified with traditionalist innovators. While on the one hand, Missouri Synod Lutherans are viewed favorably by enthusiastic supporters, opponents are quick to criticize this brand of Lutheran Protestantism as “captive to its own theological tradition,

twenty years after the year of World War I, German Americans had been fully acculturated in American society,” 230.

⁶¹ Ibid., 173; “Resurgent traditionalist in the larger, basically German, Missouri Synod Lutheran Church took the counteroffensive against ‘modern’ errors (like figurative interpretation of the Old Testament), leading to a bitter schism in the mid -1970s. ‘The church needs a heresy trial!’ cried one minister. ‘A Missouri Synod Lutheran who refuses to accept Holy Scriptures as absolute, immutable truth in every respect is a contradiction in terms.’”

⁶² Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Offermann stated, “I think as a congregation and certainly I as an individual pastor have said, ‘If we don’t hold biblical truth clearly in the areas where its being contested, if we hold the truth in every other area but in this area where the battle lines are drawn we are the worst of heretics.’ This is where it needs to be spoken clearly.”

a fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible . . . and its obsession with the need to be 100% orthodox.”⁶³ More liberal notions of family and marriage may be inevitable, as Jensen stressed years ago, “whether [the] dwindling number of older people like it or not.” Finke and Stark argued, however, that membership success is not simply about clever marketing and energetic selling, such as contemporary stylistic changes, but also “otherworldly” theology with high demands.⁶⁴ Adaptation and compromise, while important, have limitations.

Previous adaptations in the history of the church had shown that attracting membership was considered critical to mission. On Palm Sunday, 1945, St. Paul’s held its last German Service which was noted in *Book of Memories*, “When our elderly people realized that we were turning away worshippers from the 10:45 Service because of lack of room they were willing to give up the German service.”⁶⁵ The year, 1945, is considered by church historians as a turning point for the Missouri Synod. Lueking’s *Mission in the Making* marks a distinct change from confessionalism to evangelicalism in the Post-War years.⁶⁶ In the 1990s many older members of St. Paul’s who were attached to the identity of older traditional liturgy came to realize that accepting and adapting

⁶³ Krentz, 68, 71.

⁶⁴ Jensen, 179. See also Finke & Stark, 17-18 who argued, “To the contrary, we . . . argue that the primary market weakness that has caused the failure of many denominations, and impending failure of many more, is precisely a matter of doctrinal content, or the lack of it.”

⁶⁵ *Book of Memories*, 10.

⁶⁶ F. Dean Lueking, *Mission in the Making: The Missionary Enterprise among Missouri Synod Lutherans, 1846-1963* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964). In reviewing Lueking, Martin Marty noted that Lueking “notices . . . a dramatic theological turn in the Missouri Synod around 1945, a turn filled with promise for evangelism, mission, and ethics. Only when Missouri broke down its exclusivist ethos and began to be ecumenical did it carry on extensive missions,” 503.

newer contemporary worship would attract a younger generation raised in the new culture of rock ‘n’ roll. Traditional hymns had long been a major part of Lutheran worship and the organ the primary instrument. In 1945, Emanuel Unrath had been hired as a full-time director of music and was credited with “enrich[ing] through his performance at the [traditional] organ.”⁶⁷

In the war years, Pastor Wray Offermann’s parents had farmed the fertile land of the Mississippi River bottoms in Monroe County Illinois. Growing up in the postwar years, Offermann helped manage the 537-acre family farm. His grandfather, Detrick Offermann, had cleared the oak and hickory hardwood forests and developed the land near Fultz, Illinois. Offermann’s great-grandfather had emigrated from northwestern Germany as part of a group that first sailed into New Orleans and up the Mississippi River in 1839.⁶⁸

Offermann’s parents were part of a small Lutheran congregation in Renault, sitting on bluffs overlooking the vast Mississippi River bottoms. Baptized as an infant and confirmed at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, his father, Walter Offermann, was confirmed in German. Walter was born in 1910 before the German-speaking church switched to English. At that time profits in corn were generally good and land values on the rise. That

⁶⁷ *Book of Memories*, 10-11.

⁶⁸ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Jensen notes (1870): “The areas of early settlement were generally east of St. Louis running north along the Illinois and Sangamon rivers and south along the Mississippi River and also to the east along the Illinois-Indiana state line running south along the Ohio River.” Jensen, *Illinois*, 33. Monroe County is thirty-five miles south of St. Louis and 150 miles southwest of Decatur.

soon changed.⁶⁹ During the Depression, Wray's grandfather ventured out on his own to buy a piece of land near Waterloo. "The rigors of the Depression," Offermann remembered, "put them in financial difficulties and he lost the farm." The family moved back to Fultz. Farming was equally difficult for Wray's dad: "I had an older brother, three years older than I was and life was pretty good, but then the family increased, economic struggles increased and those things caused my dad to struggle more" with depression. Around 1950-51, life became harder, "The economy for farmers was much more marginal. Our family now has grown so expenses are increasing and those things really were, I believe, triggering things for some of dad's dysfunction." Then in 1954, a drought struck farmers hard in southern Illinois. Offermann remembered, "The crops that you depend on just didn't produce. For those who were fairly close to the edge, many of them had to declare bankruptcy." His dad survived only because he wisely put cash in the bank during the good years following World War II.⁷⁰

In 1949, with Decatur revived after WW II, St. Paul's "congregation again decided to build the new church on the same corner that was the site of both the 1864 and the 1880 churches." The building design that still stands today, though vacated by the St. Paul's congregation, was "a new Gothic Church standing parallel with the Parish House and

⁶⁹ Jensen, 89; According to one estimate, "The average farm, which had been worth \$6,100 in 1890, was valued at \$7,600 in 1900 and an amazing \$15,500 in 1910."

⁷⁰ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015; See also John Kulas. Review of *My Farm on the Mississippi: The Story of a German in Missouri. 1945-1948*, by Heinrich Hauser (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2001) *The German Quarterly*, 75, no. 3 (Summer, 2002): 326.

connected with administration facilities.” The groundbreaking service was held April 17, 1949. By April 2, 1950, *Memories* includes that *Decatur Herald and Review* reported:

‘Building trade craft business agents and members of St. Paul’s building committee get together in one of the unprecedented meetings between building craft unions and management to inspect the progress of the new church building. Close relationship between the crafts and officials of St. Paul’s Church has resulted in saving in construction costs and has assured completion of the project ahead of schedule.’⁷¹

On June 11, 1950, a thousand worshipers gathered for the dedication service in a city with a population of 66,269. There was more to this historic occasion, Offermann suggested, than breaking ground on a new church building:

St. Paul’s had worshipped—there was a brick church on the corner of Wood and Edward Street that in [1929] was torn down, they built the Parish House and they were going to build a new church—had it all drawn and everything ready to go and then the Depression hit and so they worshipped up on the third floor of the Parish House for twenty years.⁷²

So, it was with great pride that a church was finally built. In the words of Pastor Walter Obermeyer: “‘We solemnly dedicate this beautiful [c]hurch to honor and glory of God.’” For the next half-century and into the new millennium, the building served a dedicated congregation who received inspiration from God’s word, dedicated children in baptism, received communion and educated young children, celebrating confirmation, joined sons and daughters in marriage, and comforted heavy hearts at the loss of loved ones.

Lutherans were also hard at work in building the Decatur community. Throughout its

⁷¹ *Book of Memories*, 11-13; The total cost of the new church building, including the connecting wing, furnishings and additional parsonage at 841 West Wood Street was \$435,000.

⁷² Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

history of expansive growth, St. Paul's was about more than land and building. The glue that held it all together, the experience that drew congregants into the house of God was worship.

The type and manner of worship had always been important to those who raised their voices in song. On Oct. 21, 1956, St. Paul's dedicated a "new Schantz Organ before a packed house of worshipers," proclaiming why the new instrument was purchased:

'To awaken the spirit of devotion; to give cheer to the downcast and comfort to the sorrowing; to humble the hearts of worshipers in awe before our great God and heavenly Father, to thrill the soul with the message of the perfect harmonies of God's infinite love; . . . to provide a harmonious setting for the development of faith, the lifting and ennobling of Christ-centered lives we dedicate this organ.'⁷³

In 1956, St. Paul's was noticeably proud of its Schantz organ and traditional notes it pounded out each Sunday near the center of the city. Not only was the \$32,965.00 cost a message itself of dedication to tradition, the organ's pipes were visibly exposed from the second-floor organ chest for parishioners and newcomers to visually see. The organ was advertised as one of "classic design built by the Schantz Organ Company of Orrville, Ohio."⁷⁴ A youngster growing up in Southern Illinois when St. Paul's unveiled its new organ, Offermann, like many in Illinois, had witnessed his family suffer through the Depression and a drought in the mid-1950s. Lutheran pride in the new organ understandably prevailed long after Offermann arrived to pastor St. Paul's:

⁷³ *Book of Memories*, 14-15.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 15; "Our organ has three manuals and foot pedals with a total of 2051 pipes and beside has a 25 note set of Deagan Class A chimes. Emanuel Unrath, minister of music, dedicated the Schantz as an organ for the "clear tone quality of its pipes from the smallest to the largest."

To have a pipe organ was a big deal, kind of the apex of Lutheran worship stature . . . First of all to just be able to get enough momentum and enough resources to build a new church—and then to be able to put a pipe organ in it and to lead the worship and [it] was a facility that was very nicely married up with the pipe organ and stone hard surfaces and it would fill the place.⁷⁵

Since 1873, the Schantz Organ Company in Orrville, Ohio, south of Cleveland, has been the builder of distinguished pipe organs for churches, schools, and public places, and known for artistry, quality, and reliability.⁷⁶

There is something about sound generated from a primary source like a pipe organ. And there is a breadth and a depth and a power of using a pipe organ to generate that is irreplaceable. You can't replicate it. There are moments when a good organist and a pipe organ literally can rattle the pews.⁷⁷

Advocates of well-crafted pipe organs describe the full, powerful breadth and variety of its sound duplicating sounds of a violin, trumpet, and strings much like a full orchestra. Philosophically, some describe the organ as fixed, steadfast and permanent. Resembling the broader universal Church itself, in this view, the organ stands as a visible symbol positioned against cultural change. Though appreciative of the pipe organ's power, Offermann willingly introduced contemporary instruments (guitar and drums) into worship in the 1990s. He did not subscribe to the organ's theological permanence:

Christianity existed for over a thousand years and there was no organ. From about the 1400s to up into the twentieth century organs had great prominence and became the identifying mark of

⁷⁵ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

⁷⁶ Sievert, Jack L., "From Tschantz to Schantz" <https://www.questia.com/magazine/1P3-1178754091/from-tschantz-to-schantz>, accessed Oct. 28, 2015. Founded by A.J. Tschantz, later Schantz, today the work remains in the fourth generation of the Schantz family.

⁷⁷ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

the church. I wouldn't be prophetic but I would say already we've seen a great decline in organs. Very few organs are being built today.⁷⁸

By 1960, Decatur became an All-American City, known for its parks, and a “Lutheran Parish School of Decatur—with classes from kindergarten through the eighth grade—[was] under the direction of the Lutheran School Association (LSA) of Decatur.” Prior to 1960 both St. Paul's, and sister church--St. John's, had their own Lutheran schools dating to the 1870s and 1890s. By 1964, these two Lutheran churches along with three other Lutheran churches: Trinity, Mt. Calvary, and Concordia—became full-fledged members of the LSA. The value placed on education by Illinois Lutherans situated them more in the middle of Jensen's definition of the modern-traditional division.⁷⁹

New Music with a “Peculiar Beat”

In the 1960s, St. Paul's grew with expansion of educational and parish facilities as well as a Fellowship Hall at the Wood Street location. The new Parish and Educational Building was dedicated in September 1963. In 1964, St. Paul's celebrated its Centennial knowing that the mother congregation, which had begun one-hundred years earlier, had established several sister congregations in a city of 82,622 people.⁸⁰ On the West Coast,

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ *Book of Memories*, 18; In 1964, school enrollment was 430 with 16 teachers. Education had been an important part of the Lutheran Church ministry in Decatur. See also Jensen, 49. The German immigrants who made Illinois the center of German-American culture fell on the moderately traditional part of the spectrum. “They were literate, hard-working, and had money, but they also nurtured strong extended families, preferred farming as a way of life, and devoutly practiced . . . extremely scholastic Lutheranism.” They opposed reform, especially temperance, and distrusted banks and Yankee-dominated public schools.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 19-20. Dedication of the new Education Wing was marked with these words: ““Our new facilities, together with what we had, are now being used to the fullest to teach and reach children and adults with the

a whole new type of anti-institutional religion was about to emerge as a counterculture to the counterculture drugs and hippie scene. In *American Jesus*, Stephen Prothero explained: “The Jesus People, also known as “Jesus Freaks” or “street Christians,” traced their origins to Jesus and the apostles.” Jesus movement communes “pleaded with speed freaks and heroin addicts to drop out of the drug culture and turn on to Jesus.” Amid social upheavals of the era, the counterculture nature of the movement, Prothero argued, Jesus freaks “openly distained the institutional church” with a personalized religion.⁸¹ Though Decatur was not the immediate center of this changing youth culture in the 1960s and 1970s, the shifting postmodern values were slowly felt, even on conservative college campuses like Decatur’s Millikin University. Jensen explained:

. . . a drastic change in beliefs, values, and behavior did occur among a large portion of youth. Adults who were at first alarmed and disgusted learned to tolerate long hair, nudity, rock concerts, sexual freedom, even marijuana smoking, though they rarely experimented themselves. In every sector of society, sharp age differentials emerged in the 1960s, pitting the modernist middle-aged against the postmodern youth.⁸²

Previous generations were taken aback by the abandonment of traditional values.

Working the family farm in the 1950s, Offermann grew up conservative. He studied at Concordia Lutheran Junior College in Ann Arbor, Michigan then Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne, Indiana to prepare for the seminary and the ministry.⁸³ He

Word of God and to give the entire congregation facilities for meetings and Christian fellowship.” At the time the total number of Missouri Synod Lutheran congregations in the city was seven.

⁸¹ Prothero, *American Jesus*, 126.

⁸² Jensen, *Illinois*, 170.

⁸³ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

traveled in conservative, institutional circles at a time when a new genre of music and a counterculture movement was born. The English rock band, the Beatles, had invaded the U.S. in early 1964. As Offermann studied Lutheran theology and prepared for the ministry, John Lennon proclaimed in 1966 that the Beatles were more popular than Jesus and liberals proclaimed the “Death of God.” *Time* magazine headlined, “Is God Dead?” Whether God was dead was debatable but there was no debating the growing popularity of the new music. Between 1966 and 1971 something else happened with connections to the new music—a youth culture movement and emerging Jesus Movement that by 1969 had *Time* headlining, “Is God Coming Back to Life?”⁸⁴

Graduating from Concordia Seminary in 1971, pastoring a small church in Missouri, Offermann became associate pastor at St. Paul’s in 1976. At the time he arrived, St. Paul’s was still conducting services with traditional liturgy; in addition to the Lutheran hymnal, the church experimented with the *Dove Song Book*:

It was the era of the Peter, Paul and Mary where guitars were coming into prominence. It was the folk song era and all the kids in youth groups were singing more guitar-driven songs. They’d sing hymns. And some of those found their way into the worship life of the congregation.⁸⁵

Even before the Beatles, the folk group Peter, Paul and Mary introduced a youth culture to a sound that harkened back to Woody Guthrie. The trio’s songs included “If I Had a Hammer” (1962) and “Blowin’ in the Wind” (1963) by Bob Dylan. These weren’t the songs sung in worship service but for a liturgical Lutheran church to experiment with the

⁸⁴ Prothero, *American Jesus*, 124-125.

⁸⁵ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

Dove Song Book, Offermann recalled, was cutting-edge, “Even those songs were led by the organ. So it was change, but it wasn’t radical change. It really spoke to the *hearts* of people and if we needed an extra song during communion an organist could start out playing the melody of “God is so good” and people would just start to sing it.”⁸⁶

To hear a German Lutheran pastor in a denomination known more for reserved *intellect* than emotion speak of what a songbook could do for the *heart* appeared to be notions taken from Methodists. Finke and Stark have suggested that the Methodist design for victory had always been appealing to the *heart* rather than the *intellect*: “The Methodist knew perfectly well what they were up to, what worked and didn’t work in gaining and holding members, and why.”⁸⁷ In 1971, though experimenting with hymns in contemporary song books, Lutheran churches were very traditional. In California, however, the Jesus movement was going mainstream. Larry Norman, who left mainstream rock to spread the gospel through rock music, noticed Jesus had become a superstar pop icon in American culture.⁸⁸ Norman’s reference to superstar stemmed from

⁸⁶ Peter, Paul & Mary Songlist <http://www.peterpaulandmary.com/music/songlist.htm>, accessed Nov, 28, 2015. Other early songs included “Where have all the Flowers Gone” (1962) and “Leaving on a Jet Plane” (1967).

⁸⁷ Finke & Stark, *The Churching of America*, 104-105; The Methodist approach illustrated by Rev. C. C. Goss in 1866 described the appeal to *heart* emotions and common language of the people: “As a rule, a Methodist addresses himself directly to the heart, while many others appeal to the intellect. . . . Methodist preachers never converted the pulpit into a professor’s chair, but with earnestness have urged and beseeched men to flee the wrath to come. . . . To [the Methodist preacher] the mathematical, or dry Scotch mode of working out the problem of salvation, is too slow a process The sermons, too, of these men have been mostly extemporaneous Book language has not been so much used as the common language, hence the people have known where to say Amen. . . .” 105.

⁸⁸ Prothero, 132; “Recalling John Lennon’s controversial remarks [on Jesus’s decline], the Christian rock star Larry Norman gloated (in his song ‘Readers Digest’) about the demise of the Beatles (who split up in 1970) and the emergence of Jesus as a pop icon. Not long ago, Norman observed, people kept Jesus at arm’s length. But ‘this year he’s a superstar. / Dear John, who’s more popular now?’

two rock musicals that opened in 1971—*Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Godspell*. While some conservative religionists criticized *Superstar* because it “portrayed Jesus as insufficiently divine,” *Godspell* was written by an Episcopalian who was bored after attending a church service and sought to “inject some joy and hope into the Jesus story.” Prothero has argued that the musicals and Jesus movement were attempts to rescue Jesus from the Church. Norman had “reportedly left the church because he couldn’t stand the hymns” which he called “funeral marches.” Norman’s evangelical impulse led him to reach the unchurched through his music. The new musical genre with a mission, according to Prothero, became a two-way street in American pop culture, “Jesus rock benefited not only from the openness of pop mainstream musicians to Jesus but also from the openness of evangelicals to popular culture.”⁸⁹ As music underwent change, the appeal of the traditional Christian service declined. Flowing out of the west coast, the anti-establishment Jesus movement called for a truer freedom from those caught-up in the hippie drug scene. The alternative to drugs, according to Prothero, was a Jesus high. “Their Savior rejected marijuana, acid, and heroin, but he embraced enthusiastically the slang, clothes, and music of hippiedom.” Jesus himself, Jesus freaks confessed, “was a dropout, an outlaw, and a revolutionary who scoffed at the religious establishment of his day.” The clothes were casual and their Savior was a wanderer who preached about an alternative kingdom.⁹⁰ Followers of the older mainline high church, which included

⁸⁹ Ibid., 134-137; “His [John-Michael Tebelak’s] intention was to inject some joy and hope into the Jesus story, . . . It also injects some old-fashioned theology. While *Superstar* seems to glory in decimating Christian creeds, *Godspell* weaves old-fashioned doctrines into its book and libretto. Many of the songs . . . affirm . . . the divinity of Jesus and the truth of the resurrection.” Larry Norman’s early LPs included *Upon This Rock* (1970) and *Only Visiting Planet Earth* (1972).

⁹⁰ Ibid., 127.

Lutheranism, were tuning out as attendance plunged. Jensen pointed out, “What expansion did occur was enjoyed by born-again evangelicals and fundamentalists . . . Their . . . message of personal salvation above all else caught a receptive audience in a population tired of relentless modernization.”⁹¹

Amid the traditional liturgy with responsive readings and responsive Psalms, something else happened more broadly in Decatur with vestiges in the city’s Methodist past that also influenced St. Paul’s transition to contemporary worship. The broader impact of the so-called Pentecostal “charismatic movement” was spreading across the country, middle America and Decatur-area churches. Offermann recalled Central United Methodist organizing an ecumenical effort to bring churches of all denominations together for prayer meetings and music concerts. One pastor, Dr. Harold Helms of Foursquare [Pentecostal] Church, described the movement: “There is a new sense of brotherhood in a true ecumenical spirit.” In what foreshadowed an emerging informality in churches, the Methodist church pastor suggested in the late 1970s that “the Holy Spirit has taken some of the humanness and routineness out of Christianity.” As the Wesley’s had complained of lifeless Anglicanism, contemporary evangelicals had grown critical of formalized mainline liberal Protestantism.⁹²

⁹¹ Jensen, 173; “Between the mid-1960s and the early 1970s weekly Mass attendance plunged from 70 to 50 percent, and monthly confessions, daily prayer, and other liturgical practices fell off sharply.” “. . . Protestant denominations such as Presbyterians, Episcopalians and Methodists agreed that organized religion’s influence in American life had declined noticeably,” 172.

⁹² “Charismatics’ share their views,” *Herald & Review*,” March 17, 1979. Decatur churches included Foursquare Pentecostal Church, Church of Our Lady of the Holy Spirit Catholic Church and Central United Methodist Church.

The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, in maintaining its identity, had resisted church unity and ecumenism. In the 1990s, here was a pastor open to ecumenical unity if it served the mission. Perhaps Pastor Offermann believed the ecumenical message or perhaps his brand of Lutheranism was always more heart-centered. Central United Methodist in 1978 sponsored a rock concert at the Masonic Temple in Decatur by one of the Jesus rock freaks. The late Keith Green was an early musician-minister of the gospel who helped usher in a new music genre. Prothero stressed that musicians like Green offered up an anti-institutional message:⁹³

[T]he Jesus People were hostile to what Christian rocker Keith Green called 'Churchianity' and "drew sharp distinctions between themselves and traditional churches. Following so many earlier Americans, they distinguished between the false Christianity and the institutional church and the true Christianity of their own imaging."⁹⁴

Like youth alienated by mainline churches, Jesus rockers felt disconnected. They could not find or *feel* true religion in churches of middle-class America. At the time, the more experiential street movements and rock music churches were pressing for greater fellowship between charismatic and non-charismatic people.

Born in Huntsville, Alabama in 1966, Heidi Schmitz-Sack was part of the new generation and became St. Paul's part-time Music Minister in 1994 after growing up singing contemporary Christian songs in her church in the evangelical South. Reared on her 60's parents' albums from bands like Three Dog Night and The Association, Sack

⁹³ Finke & Stark, 199. In 1959, Eugene Carson Blake, president of the National Council of Churches, complained "that major resistance to ecumenism came from those 'who style themselves as 'Bible-believing' Christians'" and who embrace many 'cultural crudities.'"

⁹⁴ Prothero, 143.

remembered hearing the song “Aquarius” by 5th Dimension. “I would play them constantly. And if they had lyrics with them, watch the lyrics and sing along with them.” Sack recalled Led Zeppelin’s “Stairway to Heaven,” one of the greatest rock songs of all time and the most requested song on FM radio stations in the 1970s. Her Lutheran youth group was also fond of emerging Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) vocalist, Amy Grant:

So, I remember just the beginning of at least that becoming popular in our culture. And I would go to the Christian bookstore and as soon as something new came out I would buy the songbook and I would learn to play the songs and I’d learn to sing the songs.⁹⁵

Amy Grant’s album, *Age to Age* (1978), became the first Christian label to go platinum. Grant, Bob Dylan, who temporarily converted to Christianity, released *Slow Train Coming* (1979), and the band Stryper, who mixed Christianity and heavy metal, propelled the new CCM genre of music into a marketable commodity.⁹⁶

Before long, Grace Lutheran Church in Huntsville discovered that Sack could sing contemporary Christian songs which wasn’t being done in Lutheran churches: “I was asked very quickly, “Would you be willing to do that in church? Would you be willing to sing that solo and play? I said, Sure!” Sack sang songs by CCM artists Twila Paris and Amy Grant. Not only did no one, including the pastor of her Alabama Lutheran church question it, they supported it, “They loved it. And yet everything else in the church was very traditional.” When she told her parents that she wanted to pursue a vocal degree, her

⁹⁵ Heidi Schmitz-Sack, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

⁹⁶ Prothero, 152; “Soon Christian music bins were filled with not only Christian heavy metal but also Christian punk, country, reggae, jazz, blues, alternative rock, rhythm-and-blues, and even Christian hip-hop.”

father, a NASA space engineer, pledged to pay her way if she attended his alma mater, the University of Illinois in Champaign-Urbana. She earned her degree in Music Education Choral in 1988, taught for two years, then returned for her master's degree. Commuting from Decatur to Champaign so her husband could also commute to Springfield to teach college, the couple visited St. Paul's in the early 1990s just as contemporary worship was introduced. The church had conducted a random phone survey of a thousand people from the entire community asking questions about their interest in contemporary worship music and then a second call inviting recipients to the new service.⁹⁷

Scientific opinion surveys were not typical for mainline churches seeking to tap into public opinion on how to present worship style. Traditional liturgy was something for ordained leaders to decide. Only so-called “seeker-sensitive” churches were taking such a modernistic approach. “The goal was to find out why people avoid church,” wrote Prothero, “Then to create a congregation designed just for them.” Tailoring the church to the needs of the unchurched has proponents and detractors. Critics complain that churches catering to these desires have “adapted too much to American culture . . . [and] tried to make Christianity more American. They have molded Jesus to the world instead of molding the world to Jesus.”⁹⁸ For St. Paul's, there was practical justification for

⁹⁷ Sack, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. In addition to Twila Paris and Amy Grant, Sack recalls singing music of Second Chapter of Acts and Keith Green.

⁹⁸ Prothero, 154; North of Decatur, Willow Creek Community Church, suburban Chicago, was “a pioneer in the seeker-sensitive approach,” which Prothero argues, “epitomizes this born-again modernism” of adapting to the changing culture. Even prior to opening the church, “pastor Bill Hybels conducted an informal marketing survey of unchurched residents in surrounding neighborhoods. Supporters, Prothero notes, have “identified adaptationism—the conscious, intended adaptation of religious ideas to modern culture—as one of the hallmarks of *Protestant modernism*.” William Hutchinson, *Modernist Impulse in*

change—a declining community population and declining church membership.⁹⁹ Older generations of Lutherans were dying and newer generations weren't attending mainline churches. Offermann remembered a hundred people came to the first 9:30 a.m. contemporary service which, he admitted, wasn't well-developed or polished:

We were learning as we went. Our strategy was this would be where unconnected people would step in and as they got to know what we were about at St. Paul's they would probably migrate to more traditional services at 8:00 and 10:45. And reality was that the exact opposite took place.

Offermann noticed worshipers in the traditional services “felt the excitement and the freedom” of the contemporary service and began migrating to 9:30 a.m. What started out with 170 attendees within two years grew to St. Paul's most well-attended of the three services. The history of how a mainline Protestant church implemented an informal contemporary service in the 1990s had begun with Offermann's missional impulse to “reach the next generation” amid cultural change:

I think I became convinced in the late '80s that if we were going to continue to reach the next generation that grew up on music with a beat—you think about the era of rock 'n' roll—you know 70s, 80s—all of a sudden we had this whole new genre of music and it was primarily music that had a clear tempo and a beat to it all. All music had the beat to it, but the beat prevailed in that music.¹⁰⁰

Disconnect between music with a beat of the newer generation and the music in his church was a problem. Younger people could not relate to religious music that dated a

American Protestantism, argued that “Christianity needed to change with the times in order to remain a living tradition.”

⁹⁹ U. S. Census, <http://www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/>. Between 1980 and 1990, Decatur lost more than ten percent of its population, declining from its height of 94,081 to 83,885, accessed Nov. 13, 2015.

¹⁰⁰ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

hundred to two-hundred years before their time. Traditioned innovators had found a way to connect to the unchurched, or as Prothero argued, “one of the distinctive features of the Jesus movement was its appeal to those who found church unappealing.”¹⁰¹ Offermann knew the two worlds needed to come together.

For them to see that their faith relationship ought to be a normal part of life—it’s not that I live in this world but then I go to church over here which something “otherworldly”—that faith is at the center, the mainstream of life. I said, If we’re going put that in play, we have to adjust worship styles to speak into the heart language of the people who’ve grown up in this world.¹⁰²

Much had changed from the early days when German Lutherans sought out other German Lutherans to fill the pews. If pews were to be filled in the 1990s, successful Lutheran and mainline churches needed to fill human wants and needs, not ethnic identity. Finke & Stark’s research concluded that successful twenty-first century churches needed to cater to the needs of humans who wanted their religion to be “sufficiently potent, vivid, compelling, rewarding,” and a religion that “imparts order and sanity to the human condition.”¹⁰³ Offermann’s conviction of how to reach the new generation to the point of implementation was not sudden. Like most mainline churches, a committee was formed to study how best to introduce the new genre in a church wedded to organ music and hymnals: “[Assistant Pastor] Bill Woolsey came to me and he said, ‘Let’s put it right between the early service and the late service.’” St. Paul’s

¹⁰¹ Prothero, *American Jesus*, 135.

¹⁰² Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015; Offermann’s usage of the phrase “heart language” is remarkably familiar to Rev. C. C. Goss in 1866: “As a rule, a Methodist addresses himself directly to the heart.”

¹⁰³ Finke & Stark, *The Churching of America*, 282.

contemporary service was about more than simply changing music. The pastors shed traditional robes and administered communion less frequently. The goal, said Offermann, was to make the contemporary service more casual to reach people uncomfortable with some aspects of tradition and formality:

Because we just expected there would be a lot of new people that maybe weren't familiar with Lutheran teaching and kind of our high view of the Lord's Supper and didn't want to confront them with: 'Are we welcome?' or 'Are we not welcome?' We just didn't want that to be a stumbling block. We also wanted them to know that we were a church that had respect for communion.¹⁰⁴

Music Minister Heidi Sack remembered those early days before she became Music Minister:

They were using guitars and it wasn't the kind of contemporary music that we know today. It was very—still older contemporary. But we loved that and we loved the young couples—quickly got involved in the small group and I got involved in the music very fast.¹⁰⁵

In a church with a pipe organ, stained glass windows, and Gothic architecture, and where worshippers wore Sunday dresses, suits and ties, the informality was not welcomed by all. Traditional Missouri Synod Lutherans who had grown up in wooden pews with *The Lutheran Hymnal* in their hand and the familiar sound of a Schantz or Berghaus organ resonating proudly in their ears preferred the comforts of formal church and identified strongly with the LCMS method of worship. A 2010 *Journal of Communication and Religion* study on “Worship Styles, Music and Social Identity”

¹⁰⁴ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015; Initially, the thought was to simply have an additional service in the church gymnasium parallel to the late service at 10:30. Around that same time, a new assistant pastor, Bill Woolsey, was assigned the task to head-up the committee.

¹⁰⁵ Sack, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

examined the so-called “worship wars” and found that “Lutherans who prefer traditional worship . . . identify more strongly with the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod.”¹⁰⁶ In the traditional or formal type of service, a certain order or liturgy is followed. The liturgy includes traditional hymns accompanied by an organ.¹⁰⁷ Even though some order is recognized as essential, Heidi Sack is relaxed about what instruments can be allowed in worship:

If you think about the church in its entirety of history, what are the instruments that were always there?—the lute, the lyre—the lyre is a stringed instrument. That is the steadfast, eternal instrument mentioned even back in biblical times. There’s no organ mentioned. That [modern] organ is a nineteenth century, 1800s invention of man that’s really a new thing.¹⁰⁸

In fact, there are at least twenty-four instances in which the lyre, an instrument similar to a guitar, is used in the Hebrew bible or Old Testament. Interestingly, Martin Luther, the man from whom the Lutheran Church got its namesake, was himself into music. When Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg that ultimately changed the world, his concerns were not only about “purgatory” and “indulgences,” but

¹⁰⁶ Johnson, Terri L., Jill Rudd, Kimberly Neuendorf, Guowei Jian, “Worship Styles, Music and Social Identity: A Communication Study.” *Journal of Communication & Religion* 33 (July 2010): 167. The pipe organ has been a part of Lutheran worship for generations and much of the music produced for the modern organ had been developed in Germany. See Randel, Don Michael (Ed.) (1986). *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press).

¹⁰⁷ Johnson, Rudd, Neuendorf, Jian, “Worship Styles, Music and Social Identity: A Communication Study.” 147; See also Dawn, M. J. (1995). *Reaching out without dumbing down: A theology of worship for this urgent time* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.), 242. Traditional Lutheran liturgy includes an invocation, confession, Kyrie (confession of faith or creed), sermon, and benediction with responsive readings.

¹⁰⁸ Sack, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015; See “Knowing Jesus” <http://bible.knowing-jesus.com/topics/Lyre>, accessed Nov. 14, 2015. In 2 Samuel 6:2-5, not only is the lyre mentioned but also harps, tambourines, castanets and cymbals were used by “the house of Israel . . . celebrating before the Lord.” In 1 Chronicles 13: 6-8, another celebration used all these instruments but also mentions “trumpets.” 1 Samuel 10:5 adds the “flute.” II Chronicles 15: 25-28 includes “shouting, and with sound of the horn, with trumpets, with loud-sounding cymbals, with harps and lyres.”

reforming Catholic worship.¹⁰⁹ “Which is why we kind of connect that whole “A Mighty Fortress [is Our God]” here with the Reformation,” Sack reminded, “Because he wrote those lyrics and used a more common tune of the day and connected them up” to reach the broader community. Luther contemporized worship music.¹¹⁰

Similar to St. Paul’s decision to discontinue German liturgy, adopting contemporary music, though controversial, was recognized by most as worthwhile to mission, “The service grew,” stressed Offermann. “Those within the congregation who opposed it couldn’t argue with it because it was reaching people.” Acceptance within the church was one thing. Acceptance by other Lutheran churches in the Decatur community and beyond was another. St. Paul’s informal worship style became a controversy in the Central Illinois District of LCMS and one church, in particular, Offermann recalled, voiced strong opposition—Pilgrim Lutheran Church:

Pilgrim took exception that we would put together a worship service with a different music genre—not the historic liturgy, not the quote “Divine Service” as many had looked at it. And so, those changes were topic of many Circuit gatherings. Beyond just our Circuit, it was the topic of many District gatherings and conventions.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁹ Johnson, Rudd, Neuendorf, Jian, 146; Scholars including Joseph Herl argue that “Luther devised German text chorales . . . so the laity could participate in worship and gain a collective religious identity.” As religious historian Mark Noll pointed out, Luther wanted “singable Lutheran hymns.” See also J. Herl (2004) *Worship wars in early Lutheranism: Choir, congregation, and three centuries of conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press). Mark Noll (2007) “The gospel truth” *Christian History & Biography*, 95.

¹¹⁰ Sack, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Luther not only wrote the words to “A Mighty Fortress” but composed in his day (1528) a more contemporary melody that could go with the message of Psalm 46. See W. G. Polack, *The Handbook to the Lutheran Hymnal*, Third and Revised Edition (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1958), 193, No. 262.

¹¹¹ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

Some churches sought resolutions forbidding it, contending that contemporary worship was not Lutheran. The debate over what music was acceptable is as old as the Lutheran Church. Prothero illustrated that changing music styles and instruments have always been a point of contention within the church.¹¹² Similar to agitation among Lutheran Synods over German language in the nineteenth and twentieth century, contemporary worship became a flashpoint within the Missouri Synod. In the 1990s, St. Paul's became a trailblazer of a different type of worship within mainline LCMS. "The tensions were strong here [St. Paul's] in that there was a lot of heat put on, in the early days, Bill Woolsey and myself." Lutheran churches opposing St. Paul's argued adamantly for a definitive Missouri Synod decision on whether a Synod church could include contemporary worship. The conflict reached District President Robert T. Kuhn, who later became the eleventh president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.¹¹³ Sack remembered how maintaining at least some sense of ordered service was a necessity: "Our Pastors took a lot of flak for it. They were very careful to make sure there was Gospel and Law in every service," which maintained the traditional aspect of worship service.¹¹⁴ Perhaps the most convincing argument for contemporary worship was its

¹¹² Prothero, 139. "Squarer Christians denounced Jesus rock as an instrument of Satan, just as traditionalists had once denounced the church organ as 'the devils bagpipe. . . . Martin Luther . . . [Jesus people noted] had not apologized for lending Christian lyrics to secular songs. . . . 'Here I stand,' they said with Luther, 'I can do no other.' And then they picked up their guitars and drumsticks and got about the business of praising their Lord in song."

¹¹³ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Offermann stated: "I received little bit of flak from our district president [Robert T. Kuhn]—not really a lot. I think he understood that we were trying to be *relevant* to our culture and relevant to our people here. I think he was able to see that this was not a right or wrong thing—it was not a biblically mandated thing—but he also had a lot of other pastors and other churches out here, who, in part, just felt threatened."

¹¹⁴ Sack, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Sack recalls, "We never missed Confession. That we had the Lord's Supper. That we said the Apostle's Creed. So there were some elements of liturgy in there though we weren't using some things that you think of in the form of the

success in attracting people to the service and the church which grew in membership while other Lutheran churches in Decatur declined (See Appendix B). St. Paul's contemporary worship has grown, according to Offermann, "while the church's traditional services have held their own or not grown."¹¹⁵

The legacy of the counterculture Jesus movement and Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) in American history, according to Prothero, has been the non-denominational church. Thus, many traditional mainline churches have been forced to make a choice between decline or adaptation that transforms them into something more akin to evangelicalism than liberal mainline—more informal and experiential than formal and liturgical. Prothero argued in 2003 that "[t]he Jesus movement represents a culmination of key trends in American Protestantism rather than a diversion from them." In other words, in growing non-denominationalism in America, disassociation with the institutional church, many religious historians find a coming together rather than a tearing apart. St. Paul's Lutheran Church is an example of the evolving transformation into seeker-sensitive Protestantism.¹¹⁶ That a conservative LCMS church adopted what some

"Divine Service." Offermann: "In Missouri Synod polity, power and authority rests with the local congregation. The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod functions in advisory capacity. Its job is to keep congregations harmonious." Offermann added, "Inside those doctrinal boundaries how you want to run your local congregation, songs you want to sing, as long as they are doctrinally OK—what instruments you want to have, whether you want to have a board of seven elders or a board of twelve elders. In other words, your church organizational structure is left up to the local congregation. And as long as the local congregation, pastor and people, are in sink together, it's pretty hard for them to step in and say: 'You can't do this,' unless it is a clear violation of Biblical teachings."

¹¹⁵ Jim Vorel, "Matthew West to help St. Paul's Lutheran mark anniversary," *Herald & Review*, May 31, 2014. http://herald-review.com/lifestyles/faith-and-values/religion/matthew-west-to-help-st-paul-s-lutheran-mark-anniversary/article_65ffd316-3b9a-50c6-8bda-49a577f7bd6d.html, accessed Sept. 20, 2015.

¹¹⁶ Prothero, 146; "Evangelicals and liberals alike [are] transforming Christianity into a Jesus faith. If the Jesus movement was a glacier, it carried with it debris picked up from earlier Americans—an emphasis on

viewed as unpopular stylistic changes while maintaining long-held doctrine speaks to how a church community can, if willing, Krentz articulated in 2002, “make changes when necessity demands without changing its basic [doctrinal] stance”¹¹⁷

A week before St. Paul’s celebrated its historic 150th anniversary on June 7, 2014, with a free concert featuring CCM artist Matthew West, Offermann was asked by a newspaper reporter what the community would most strongly associate with St. Paul’s over the last century and a half. He said:

‘I believe people picture a church of very hard-working people who have invested heavily in children from day one,’ he said. “We’ve always had a school and have sought to raise strong kids with strong work ethics to someday raise strong families. Many prominent members of the community have been active St. Paul’s members. At one time, both the president of ADM and of Staley were both members here.”¹¹⁸

This social unity seemed to accurately reflect the history of Decatur and the history of St. Paul’s. Despite obvious differences among members of the congregation, the differences were no longer as visible in a church where informal worship and non-traditional architecture had abandoned formal fashion dictates. Here, wealthy executives and blue collar union workers worshiped in one accord. Unlike other mainline churches, St. Paul’s demonstrated a willingness to change its worship style with a culture that had grown up

the humanity of their Savior, a preference for Jesusianity over ‘Churchianity,’ and above all the conviction that to be a Christian was not to recite a creed but to walk with Jesus. And when it melted it turned large swaths of the country into its moraine.”

¹¹⁷ Krentz, 71.

¹¹⁸ Jim Vorel, “Matthew West to help St. Paul’s Lutheran mark anniversary,” *Herald & Review*, Feb. 8, 2014.

with a new genre of music. In name, St. Paul's Lutheran Church is not considered non-denominational. But in nearly every other respect it demonstrates a more seeker-sensitive church combining both tradition and innovation than liberal mainline. It has not completely replaced experience over doctrine but while innovating in worship style holds to tradition. Donald Miller has described the transformations taking place in American Protestantism as a "Second Reformation." I argue that adaptive change taking place within this mainline Lutheran church in America's crossroads is a microcosm of Wuthnow's restructuring and to some degree Miller's transformation which Prothero articulated:

While the Reformation of the sixteenth century emphasized faith over works and the Bible over tradition, [Miller] argues, this reformation emphasizes experience over doctrine, emotion over theology, and spirituality over religion. In place of the old hymns and old liturgy, 'new paradigm' churches sing contemporary songs and worship God in new ways.¹¹⁹

It's hard to argue with the success of experiential churches. Membership at mainline churches have declined while non-denominational churches and those adapting new worship style, informality, and community connectedness, are increasing membership. Nathan Hatch defined this new community living in America as not only "populist" but a "Second Great Awakening":

In seeker-sensitive congregations, informality trumps hierarchy, ministers go by their first names, and everyone dresses casually. Architecturally, seeker-sensitive churches look more secular than religious, mimicking malls with their large open spaces, flood with light. Services feature contemporary music played over elaborate sound systems, often with Jumbotron screens and

¹¹⁹ Prothero, 147.

projected lyrics that make singing (and hand raising) easy for newcomers.¹²⁰

St. Paul's Lutheran Church is an example of the transformation or restructuring of American Protestantism and American culture. Though still predominately white Euro-American, this once exclusive ethnic German-American church is more ethnically mixed, non-denominational and evangelically modernist, than its German Lutheran beginnings.

Epilogue

On August 29, 2015, St. Paul's launched a new phase of growth with a groundbreaking for Phase II, a \$4.5 million campaign called "NEXT." St. Paul's had previously purchased the massive building and grounds for \$3.5 million, then spent \$2.5 million to develop the sanctuary and existing space. After paying off the debt in the three years, Offermann said the still growing church in a city declining in population was ready to embark on its new plans:

We're going to build an expanded, refined, up-to-date area for our daycare, pre-school. We're going to redo the whole south part of the building here. We got the footings dug for a beautiful new cross tower with stone on it [that] will be 45 feet in the air here and will make it look like a church campus.¹²¹

In October 2015, Wray Offermann celebrated his 70th birthday. In June 2016, the German-Lutheran pastor with Illinois roots celebrated his 40th year of pastoring a church that had clearly grown with the ages from that "little frame church" in 1864 to a multi-acre campus and megachurch building with room to expand. The NEXT campaign to

¹²⁰ Ibid., 147-148.

¹²¹ Offermann, interview by author, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015.

continue its history of building and growth is in keeping with its long heritage of German Lutheran expansion that first witnessed Germans trekking across the vast frontier and Atlantic in search of wide open spaces upon which to build homesteads, farms and churches. It is in keeping with Psalm 78 from which St. Paul's took its campaign name: "We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done."¹²²

Finally, the notion of the NEXT generation raises an interesting question which permeates the history of this community in the center of Illinois in the heart of America. Will this new generation just being born be *more* or *less* willing to live in harmony in a polarized world of traditionalists and modernists, conservatives and liberals? In *A New Religious America*, religion scholar Diane Eck questioned America's ability to embrace diversity suggesting that it "will require us to reclaim the deepest meaning of the very principles we cherish and to create a truly pluralist American society."¹²³ Building a community of hard-working people who value children and education, as St. Paul's has modeled, requires both strength and compromise, resistance and adaptation. Richard Jensen may have optimistically put it best some time ago in searching for the value that serves vibrant, resilient communities amid diversity:

Happily, one core postmodern value is hostility to coercion, reinforced by a celebration of pluralism, with different people allowed to 'do their own thing.' Moderns and traditionalists, neither very comfortable with diversity in their day, will be able

¹²² Valerie Well, "St. Paul's launches new phase on construction, growth," *Herald & Review*, Aug. 29, 2015.

¹²³ Diana L. Eck, *A New Religious America: How a "Christian Country" Has Now Become the World's Most Religiously Diverse Nation* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001), 6.

to practice their quaint faith in an atmosphere of bemused tolerance in postmodern [Decatur], Illinois.¹²⁴

The next chapter illustrates in detail how the traditional and modern coalesced in the application of traditioned innovation. Traditionalist innovators, both pastoral mediators and congregants at St. Paul's, adopted the new Contemporary Christian Music in worship as an adaptation to countercultural change emerging out of the social and cultural restructuring that spawned the Jesus movement and Jesus rock music. The transition from traditional liturgy and pipe organ to music with a "peculiar beat" of guitar and drums clearly demonstrates the music's function in both contemporary Protestantism and modern culture. More importantly, it persuasively illustrates how these Protestants and their new worship activity, combined with adherence to traditional tenets, serve as a strong example.

¹²⁴ Jensen, 178-179.

CHAPTER THREE: FUNCTIONALISM IN CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC: THE APPLICATION OF “TRADITIONED INNOVATION”

In 2014, the Library of Congress recognized Larry Norman and his *Only Visiting This Planet* (1972) album as a key work in the early history of Christian rock, “Many earlier efforts in this genre concentrated on joyful affirmation of faith, but Norman also commented on the world as he saw it from his position as a passionate, idiosyncratic outsider to mainstream churches.” What made the pioneer of Jesus rock music in the late 1960s noteworthy was his radical approach to introducing evangelistic messages in emotional, hard-driving rock ‘n’ roll. It was years, even decades in some cases, before Norman’s Jesus rock became acceptable in churches. The music’s emotionally driven evangelical message ultimately proved its function both outside and inside the church walls, but not without conflict and adaptation.¹

As an anti-establishment evangelist, Larry Norman could be likened to a modern-day George Whitefield who took to the streets in the eighteenth century with a traditional message and innovative style of communication. Whitfield may have been America’s first evangelical market innovator, but Norman was certainly another in a long evangelical heritage of Whitfield, Finney and Wesley pioneers. Norman’s music confronted both the culture and church, questioning why church music could not be more modern. His confrontational nature seemed to answer both critics, “My primary

¹ “Hallelujah, the 2013 National Recording Registry Reaches 400,” April 2, 2014, Library of Congress, Larry Norman’s “Only Visiting This Planet” (1972) listed on registry, <http://www.loc.gov/today/pr/2014/14-052.html>, accessed Feb. 29, 2016.

emphasis is not to entertain. But if your art is boring, people will reject your message as well as your art.”²

The baby boom generation grew up amid a shift away from traditional Christianity. Youth found new philosophies and new music. The most iconic figure of Jesus music, Norman, emerged out of the same counterculture milieu of improvisational rock and bohemian lifestyle along the California coast. Norman grew up in a Texas Baptist church where he went “forward to accept Christ” at age five, but like many of his generation he found traditional church music uninspiring. Given the shifting countercultural movement dynamics, including a new musical sound and a newer associated approach to religion, it became increasingly apparent that something needed to change in culture and the church to remain relevant to a new generation.³

Critics blamed both materialism and technology as causes for the soul searching and dropping out by the rock music generation. In reality, music became a catalyst for protesting the culture’s values and helps explain how music functions in society. In “Contemporary Christian Music: Where Rock Meets Religion,” scholars Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck suggest that through the institution of music, Christians protested the broader culture’s values, “[Contemporary Christian Music] is representative of a large Christian subculture. The members of this subculture reject, to some degree, the values, morality and worldview of the larger society.” CCM, initially Jesus rock or Jesus music

² David W. Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil: Christian Pop Music and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism* (UNC Press Books, 2011), 6.

³ Paul Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music: Where It Came From, What It Is, Where Its Going*, (Westchester, Illinois: Crossway Books), xi.

in the early 1970s, originated out of the California counterculture, becoming a separate genre of American music.

To a large degree the countercultural shifts and social restructuring of American religion contributed to further growth of a third category of college-educated Protestants described in chapter 1 as traditionalist innovators. In the 1990s, St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Decatur, Illinois, traditional in theology but innovative in music, exhibited in microcosm the adaptation of traditioned innovation. These Protestants were neither conservative evangelical nor liberal mainline, as the historiography of American Protestantism so easily simplifies. The emotionalism and sentimentality of contemporary Protestantism had moved liturgically conservative, German identity Lutherans in a more nuanced direction that defied old categories. Thus, chapter 2 illustrated this complex history across two centuries culminating in the decision to innovate and adopt contemporary music in worship. Central Illinois Lutherans held to traditional tenets of belief while innovating how they do worship. The interesting and somewhat controversial cultural and church process in which these traditionalist innovators did this is the subject of chapter 3. Suffice it say, they adapted a new identity with new music to maintain relevance in a changing culture in the application of traditioned innovation.

This chapter spans to two time periods: 1965 to 1979 when Jesus music emerged out of southern gospel, folk and rock 'n' roll of the counterculture hippie and Jesus movements; and the mid-1990s, when St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Decatur, Illinois, introduced CCM in worship. St. Paul's is an important case study, as chapter 2 examined, because as a mainline Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS) church with

a history of traditional liturgy and pipe organ worship music, deciding to feature guitars and other modern instruments associated with CCM was significant. This chapter utilizes the theoretical notion in culture and music studies known as “functionalism” to argue that CCM is not simply for entertainment but serves a purpose for worship and reaching an unchurched population more comfortable with contemporary music.⁴

Functionalism in Music

The human demand for change and human desire for comfort are expressed in music. Cultural anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski’s theory of functionalism, developed in the late 1930s, is used by musicologists to demonstrate how cultural institutions like music reinforce both societal structures and promote change. Malinowski and Bruno Nettl’s *The Study of Ethnomusicology* are useful as a framework for the argument that CCM was about more than entertainment. It functioned as praise worship but also as a form of countercultural and anti-institutional protest. The musicians who crafted this new music and the Protestant churches who adopted it were, in my argument, traditionalist innovators who held to “other worldly” religious tradition while innovating with innovative styles of music.⁵

Malinowski’s “The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis,” emphasized a symbiotic relationship between the individual and society to include the individual’s “motives” and “interests” to understand culture’s collective activities. That is, functionalism is a way of looking at human culture and human institutions as a pragmatic whole to include

⁴ Jay R Howard and John M. Streck, “Contemporary Christian Music: Where Rock Meets Religion,” *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 26 no. 1 (March 2004): 124.

⁵ Bronislaw Malinowski, “The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis” *American Journal of Sociology* 44, no. 6 (May 1939): 938-964; Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 224-246.

traditions that serve individual taboos and values. In this way, Malinowski argued that individual desires and values are determined by group behavior. Any understanding of how the individual functions must be understood by the two affecting one another in collective activity or institutions. Religion is one institution. Due to challenges and uncertainty, Malinowski argued, humans require affirmation and “dogmatic affirmations of religion . . . satisfy these needs” in which a more comforting view of the world is instituted:

- Death is not real.
- Personality lives after death.
- Forces in the environment can be harnessed for human desires.

In Malinowski’s theoretical framework, religion is a system of organized activities much like economics. In religion, ritual behavior is social. Religious activity, such as ritual worship, is essentially group ritual, “Men and women pray, worship, and chant their magic formula in common.” Corporate worship is designed to praise God but also affirms and encourages the fellowship. Worship is an expression and glorification of the transcendent but it may also satisfy human needs. For the purpose of this chapter, worship activity can be highly *emotional* and observable.⁶

Useful in Malinowski’s theory is symbolism which can explain how cultural traditions like music are transmitted or communicated. Howard and Streck explained, for example, that the sociology of music “is based on the assumption that social reality is embodied in an individual’s activities.” Music is not only a way culture is revealed to people but culture can be studied and understood by taking a closer look at music. From systems of

⁶ Malinowski, “The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis,” 938-964.

knowledge, experience and know-how are transmitted to develop techniques and technology, even create music.⁷

Bruno Nettl, in *The Study of Ethnomusicology*, examined how Malinowski's functionalism is a "way of looking at the music/culture relationship." Nettl outlined Alan P. Merriam's ten basic functions of music—one being entertainment—but also "emotional expression," "validation of social institutions and religious rituals," "contribution to the continuity and stability of culture," and "contribution to the integration of society." Such functions help explain what CCM *is* and the role it *serves* in culture (e. g., protest, worship, emotional expression, and evangelism) outlined by Alan Merriam.⁸ Howard and Streck also addressed these functions, noting that popular music is used to "express religious, social and political messages" and used "by social movements to express their viewpoints as society's underdogs." In this way, music can help convert the non-faithful, raise morale, and increase solidarity.⁹ Nettl's functions support Malinowski's notion of religious ritual expressed through values. Thus, music "control[s] humanity's relationship to the supernatural" and "support[s] the integrity of individual social groups."¹⁰

Before analyzing CCM lyrics specific to songs used in church worship, it is important to understand how the Southern gospel, blues, folk, and the counterculture

⁷ Howard and Streck, "Contemporary Christian Music," 124.

⁸ Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology: Thirty-one Issues and Concepts* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005), 224-246.

⁹ Howard and Streck, 124.

¹⁰ Nettl, 253.

music movements contributed to Jesus rock music. Southern gospel, for example, reflected humanity's relationship to God and supported Christian culture. In *Close Harmony: A History of Southern Gospel*, James R. Goff Jr. argued that early Southern gospel served mostly the church faithful as part of culture and identity. Early in the nation's history, gospel music was an expression of American culture and, in Goff's view, "built a bulwark upon which a developing nation and its people could assembly a religious identity."¹¹

For the most part, gospel singing has been associated with worship rather than pop music. But differences are not easily distinguishable. In the 1960s there were popular songs with religious overtones. Paul Baker, who served as host of "A Joyful Noise Radio Show," and authored *Contemporary Christian Music: Where It Came From, What It Is, Where It's Going*, expressed, "The variety of pop styles allowed some inspirational or gospel songs to become hits right along with the other pop songs."¹²

While most gospel artists developed talent inside the church walls, outside the church gospel music took many forms as part of segregated popular culture. That said, the evangelistic intent of the music was similar in *function*. Andrae Crouch and the Disciples, with roots in African spirituals and Pentecostal music, allowed wider display of *emotion* compared with traditional Protestant and Catholic music. This is important to

¹¹ James R. Goff Jr., *Close Harmony: A History of Southern Gospel* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 1.

¹² Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 18. Examples of inspirational pop hits: "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands" (1958), "When the Saints Go Marching In" (1959) and "There'll Be Peace in the Valley" (1957).

CCM. Among early gospel and folk singers who made records, “Andrae Crouch and the Disciples,” Baker noted, “paved the way in the recording industry for Jesus music.”¹³

Muscle Shoals and Motown also contributed to the development of CCM. C. I. Franklin, the father of gospel and R&B singing sisters Erma and Aretha Franklin, was a prominent Baptist preacher who moved from Mississippi to Memphis to Motown with gospel messages in churches and radio recordings. In *Dancing in the Street*, Suzanne Smith used Franklin’s words to illustrate his influence:

‘We have songs of confusion and trial, burden and tribulation. Then we have songs of peace and a brighter day. We have songs of promise. We have songs of God and destiny. We have songs of life and death. So that any message that you really want to get over, you can get it over in a song. Isn’t it so?’¹⁴

Leaving Columbia Records for the Fame studio in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, Smith credits Jerry Wexler in 1966 with Aretha’s return to gospel, “As he later claimed, ‘I took her to church, sat her down at the piano, and let her be herself.’”¹⁵

Some gospel artists viewed spiritual music as an expression of *feeling* and devotion to be celebrated beyond church walls. Still, anytime religion and commercialism came together questions were raised. Some expanded the genre to reach a wider audience, while others maintained a core Christian audience. This introduced a

¹³ Ibid., 57. Baker also identifies the Spurrflows, Continentals, and Ralph Carmichael. See also Karl Hagstrom Miller, *Segregating Sound: Inventing Folk and Pop Music in the Age of Jim Crow* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2010).

¹⁴ Suzanne E. Smith, *Dancing in the Street* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 43-44.

¹⁵ Smith, *Dancing in the Street*, 209-210. [Released in early 1967, “I Never Loved a Man (The Way I Love You)” became a huge hit. That year, the elder Erma Franklin recorded her original “Piece of My Heart” for which Janis Joplin and Big Brother became famous for their 1968 altered Soul version, See Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 151, 219.

tension relevant to functionalism in CCM. Recorded gospel music and worship are not always the same nor, at times, are they different. In contemporary evangelical culture, CCM can serve as both entertainment and worship, much as three-part harmony in Southern Gospel.¹⁶

Yet another root of CCM is critical in the way it influenced culture and the church. Folk songs served as a transition to rock ‘n’ roll music in churches. In the 1960s, Peter, Paul & Mary helped popularize folk music. So impactful was this rhythmic sound and protest among youth that the music showed up in the *Dove Song Book* (1975), a contemporary hymn book first used in youth groups but eventually appeared in church pews, including St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, along with traditional hymnals. Initially, songs like “Do Lord” and “Say ‘Amen,’” according to Baker, “were used in [youth] fellowships and at camp meetings, but hardly ever in the churches.”¹⁷ Singing from the folk-oriented *Dove Song Book* was an experiment in churches where traditional liturgy and organ music held sway. Wray Offermann, pastor of St. Paul’s, explained the gradual shift in culture, music and the church:

It was the era of the Peter, Paul and Mary where guitars were coming into prominence. It was the folk song era and all the kids in youth groups were singing more guitar-driven songs. And

¹⁶ Goff, *Close Harmony*, 9. In 1995 *Singing News* editor Jerry Kirksey was squarely more concerned with Gospel than audience growth: ‘What makes it Southern Gospel is not the style and not the number of people, it is that the lyrics contain the Gospel of Christ. What makes it Southern Gospel is a message as bold as the messages written by the apostle Paul, proclaiming Jesus Christ is Lord, Jesus Christ is Salvation, Jesus Christ is the way. . .’, 281.

¹⁷ Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 19, 10. Peter, Paul & Mary songs include, “Blowin’ in the Wind” (1963), “Oh, Rock My Soul” (1964), and “Go Tell it on the Mountain,” (1964). Also see, 221. For reference to the songbook: John F. Wilson (compiler), *The Dove Song Book*, (Hope Publishing Company, 1975).

some of those found their way into the worship life of the congregation.¹⁸

At first, folk songs were led by an organ in the Lutheran church but in time that changed as rock music altered a generation and worship. Radio had reached mass audiences for decades with a rhythmic sound but churches were slow to accept the new beat, causing younger parishioners to question both the music and religion. CCM artist Ralph Carmichael, son of a Pentecostal preacher, recalled the theological problem for young folk artists listening to the radio:

‘How can you sing about the joy of the Lord,’ he pondered, ‘when you can only use the organ or the piano? You couldn’t sing about the joy of the Lord using instruments like in the Old Testament—the drums, the cymbals, the sackbut, the stringed instrument, or the loud-sounding brass!’¹⁹

Carmichael’s desire for more emotionally-driven music speaks both to the need for innovation of traditional Protestant music and the triumph of emotion argued by Brenneman in *Homespun Gospel*. The popularity of the folk sound married with radio to deliver the music to American youth but a counterculture movement that changed a generation and a Jesus movement that changed Christian music and churches was birthed in 1960s San Francisco with the emergence of a blues-driven electric sound. The life and times of two influential rock artists, Janis Joplin and Larry Norman, are reflective of this movement and music. Both were from Texas—both influenced by blues. Both emerged from the Haight-Ashbury counterculture community to forge their own contrasting brands of rock—psychedelic rock and Jesus rock.

¹⁸ Interview with Wray Offermann, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Offermann was raised in a traditional German Lutheran church and educated in liturgical worship of LCMS.

¹⁹ Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 13.

Larry Norman and Janis Joplin were different in many respects, including music, but one crucial factor that contributed to their approach and success was creative freedom. Born in Port Arthur, Texas, Janis Joplin sang church choir solos as well as folk songs influenced by African American blues singers. Joplin left Texas for San Francisco (North Beach/Haight-Ashbury) in 1963 where alcohol and drugs were as much a part of her life as music. In Alice Echols's *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, Big Brother band member Dave Getz "claims Janis was 'a maniac with needles. She loved to do other people up, loved the thrill of hitting somebody, shooting them up.'"²⁰

Both in music and lifestyle, Echols argued, hippies in the Haight experimented, "San Francisco bands . . . were committed to eclecticism and experimentation, drawing on everything from free-form jazz and jug band music to Indian ragas." For Joplin, experimenting focused on soul music, blues, and R&B. From Otis Redding's style of soul to altering Big Mama Thornton's "Ball and Chain" and soul singer Erma Franklin's "Piece of My Heart," Joplin and Big Brother's *Cheap Thrills* enjoyed a No. 1 album in 1968. Later, Joplin joined backup Kozmic Blues Band, performing "Work Me Lord," a rock-blues song that expressed a plea for transcendent help:

Work me lord, work me lord, please don't you leave me
 I feel so useless down here with no one to love
 Though I looked everywhere
 So don't You forget me down here, Lord, no, no, no, no
 Ah, ah, don't you forget me, Lord.

²⁰ Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Metropolitan Books Henry Holt and Company, 1999), 9-11, 21. 137. Joplin was influenced by Lead Belly and Memphis Minnie. See also, 48, Joplin recorded Bessie Smith blues in the early sixties before evolving into the rock scene, 133.

In 1970, at age 27, Joplin's life tragically ended from a heroin overdose. She seemed to be searching, as so many were in these times, but unable to connect with something outside herself. Others, Echols noted, would suffer the same tragic fate in the place where experimentation and freedom produced both creativity and painful costs. Amid the crossroads of social upheaval and change, tradition and innovation, there is always tension and conflict.²¹

In response to the costs of freedom, drug dependence and death, there was another side of the counterculture percolating amid the streets and communes. Some youth offered an alternative to drugged out highs and escapism. They witnessed to speed junkies and heroin addicts, encouraging them to drop out of the dangerous drug culture and get high on Jesus. Jesus freaks, as they were called, were also in the Haight proclaiming the way for the blind to see and make their way home. In *American Jesus*, religious scholar Stephen Prothero identified Jesus freaks as "the praying wing of Woodstock nation" who ushered in "another evangelical revival. . ." On the surface, separating the Jesus movement from the counterculture wasn't as clear as it appears. Street Christians, as they were also called, rejected drugs but retained hippie clothes and music as they scoffed at traditional organized religion. Jesus freaks imitated the man who

²¹ Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise*, 144, 151, 240-248. See Janis Joplin, "Work Me Lord," Nick Gravenites, *I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama!*, 1969, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/work-me-lord-lyrics-janis-joplin.html><https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0qp-MVcIsWY>, accessed April 16, 2016. See also Echols, 298. Echols writes, "Nowhere had drugs been so relentlessly hyped and the casualties greater than San Francisco. By the fall of 1970, anyone looking around the Haight could see the high price of expanding one's consciousness, not that it served as much as a deterrent. Indeed, local musicians seemed curiously unruffled, even blasé, in their reactions to Janis's death (the first among the city's homegrown stars)," 302.

preached the Kingdom of God. They also had their own music that was counterculture to conventional Protestantism and institutionalism.²²

By the late 1970s, the Jesus movement spawned a new genre that began as Jesus rock but was later classified as CCM. Larry Norman, who pioneered the new music in the late 60s, was a long-haired Jesus freak. Norman's new musical approach of hard rhythms and critical lyrics agitated both conservative religionists and the music industry. Norman and other radical composers were significant in bridging the gap between traditional composers of southern gospel and innovative so-called street music with its functional message.²³

In 1967, Norman was with secular band called People about to publish a new album titled, "We Need a Whole Lot More of Jesus and a Lot Less Rock and Roll." In the *Popular Culture* journal, Howard & Streck noted that Norman left the band when Capitol Records changed the song's title to a more acceptable "I Love You." This is an example of how Norman and others in CCM had a purpose in mind with music.²⁴ The song 'I Wish We'd All Been Ready' on the *Upon This Rock* (1969) album, transformed Norman, according to Baker, "into the Bob Dylan of the Jesus set." On *Only Visiting This Planet* (1972), Norman asked: "Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?":

I want the people to know
That he saved my soul

²² Stephen Prothero, *American Jesus, How the Son of God Became a National Icon* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2003), 126-127.

²³ Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 74.

²⁴ Howard and Streck, "Contemporary Christian Music," 123. The song "I Love You" hit *Billboards* top ten. See also Paul Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 33.

They say ‘rock and roll is wrong
We’ll give you one more chance’

All I’m really trying to say is
Why should the devil have
All the good music

Norman proclaimed his traditional faith while defending the radical new music as a form of spiritual expression distinguished from secular rock, “I feel good every day/ Cause Jesus is the rock and he/Rolled my blues away.”²⁵

In rock music with a Jesus message, Norman birthed an innovative new genre. The evangelistic motive of rockers like Norman who sought to connect with the unchurched is reminiscent of Methodist circuit riders. Norman simply used rock music as his tool for evangelism. As a Jesus freak, Norman also used the One-Way sign pointing his finger upward toward heaven at concerts making sure the crowd knew who should get praise—not the rock star but Jesus. No matter who started the One-Way sign, it became the signature of the Jesus movement. Norman used it in his lyrics: “One way, one way to heaven/Hold up high your hand/Follow, free and forgiven/Children of the Lamb.” Norman had a clear purpose for his music—evangelism.²⁶

During the Jesus movement a serious debate emerged over whether the movement was a spontaneous eruption of the Spirit of God or organized evangelism (in the heritage of Charles Finney) tailored toward youth. When asked what the Jesus movement was, artist

²⁵ Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 31-32.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 32. Larry Norman’s song “I Wish We’d All Been Ready” (1969) is a clearly stated evangelical message referencing the belief in a pre-millennialism “rapture” when, according to some evangelicals, believers will rise into heaven without dying. Stephen Prothero also likens Jesus rockers to evangelists who “traveled the country quoting Matthew 8:20 (“Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man has nowhere to lay his head) convinced that they were walking in Jesus’ footsteps as “an itinerant dropout who left his job and family in order to seek God,” 139.

Pat Boone wrote in the Prelude to Baker's *Contemporary Christian Music*: "It's Jesus moving, that's what it is. No human people originated or organized the Jesus movement; Jesus did it, through yielded young hearts."²⁷ Evidence, however, tells a different story. Returning to 1970s sources in *Christianity Today* and *Christian Century*, another conclusion can be made about how the Jesus movement emerged in American culture. Edward E. Plowman suggested in 1975 that the Jesus movement followed a "spiritual explosion," but alluded to organized evangelical groups utilizing music as a means of witnessing: "They hit the streets and parks and beaches with guitars and Bibles in a prodigious outpouring of witness marked by its relevance to time and culture." Plowman wrote, for example, about Ted Wise living in Haight-Ashbury with marital troubles when he "became a Christian in 1966 after reading a stray Bible." Wise and his wife attended a Baptist church and worked the first Christian coffee house in Haight-Ashbury opened by evangelical ministers in 1967. Wise also headed-up an anti-drug, youth outreach program. Jeff Sparks, was a staffer for Campus Crusade for Christ, a ministry for university students founded by evangelist Bill Bright at UCLA. In 1969, after working with Campus Crusade, Sparks, a Penn State research Ph.D., founded Christian World Liberation Front (CWLF) at the U. C. Berkeley. CWLF was a social activist and evangelical organization in Berkeley, sponsoring demonstrations, handing out literature, but according to Plowman, "always pointing to Christ in vigorous evangelistic appeals." Many in the drug culture were converted through these evangelical programs that included group fellowship, Bible study, and a Jesus newspaper, *Right On*. Chuck Smith, founded Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa in 1964.

²⁷ Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, x.

Calvary's outreach program was "beamed at young people in the streets" in 1969. Arthur Blessitt, of North Beach Baptist Church, ministered to hippies in the North Beach area of San Francisco then Hollywood's Sunset Strip.²⁸

Despite favorable media coverage in the 1970s, not all were enthusiastic. U. C. Berkeley Sociologist Robert Bellah, who would later write *Habits of the Heart*, criticized the Jesus movement in 1972 arguing, "Many Jesus People are simply narrow fundamentalists in blue jeans and long hair." Bellah attacked the movement's "emphasis on individual salvation" which dichotomized culture, "Jesus people too often tend to say that 'the whole world is split into people like me and those who are wrong.'" Bellah recognized that young people were troubled by a confused world in which a "simplistic appeal" became attractive.²⁹

Bellah wasn't alone in criticism. In "Jesus and the Jesus People," religion scholar Robert F. Berkey likened the movement to nineteenth century revivalism citing evangelists like Billy Graham for "the same invitation to 'come to Jesus.'" What perplexed Berkey was how such a "religious" appeal was being so well-received by youth in a "post-Christian era." Berkey identified the movement with the emotionalism of its associated music and was concerned over the impact of the movement on so-called conventional Christianity,

²⁸ Edward E., Plowman, "Whatever Happened to the Jesus Movement?" *Christianity Today* (October 24, 1975): 46-47. The Christian coffeehouse opened by Ted Wise was called The Living Room and the commune house, House of Acts. See also Prothero, 127-128 and Stowe, 6. Paul Baker also illustrates the importance of Bill Bright's evangelical ministry to the Jesus movement: "Campus Crusade was to the churches of America what the Jesus movement had been to street people. Much more organized . . . Crusade people had worked aggressively at winning college-aged and high school-aged students to Jesus with the help of many churches." 53.

²⁹ *Christian Century*, "Sociologist Bellah Criticizes Jesus Movement" (May 10, 1972): 540. See also Robert N. Bellah et al., *Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 224-225.

sounding much like educated nineteenth century mainline clergy in their protest of emotional evangelicalism. The best of all worlds, Berkey hoped, would be, “Christian communities exclusively identified neither by church spires and black robes nor by jackets bearing signs saying ‘Jesus is my Lord.’” If just such adaptation was occurring in mainline churches, Alan Merriam’s “integration of society” and other functions *were* at work.³⁰

Despite criticism of its brevity and superficiality, the cultural impact of the Jesus movement should not be understated nor the importance of music to its influence. Calvary Chapel attracted youth through an anti-institutional message and music that focused on Jesus and the Bible rather than religion. Among those attracted to the movement, Love Song’s Chuck Girard was inspired by Calvary pastor Chuck Smith’s simplicity: “It was like he was sharing someone he knew—Jesus Christ. . . . he was telling me about his personal [f]riend.” Calvary’s music devoted large segments of worship services to praising Jesus in song and started its own record label, Maranatha! Music, as a form of outreach. Smith became, according to Stephen Prothero, “a progenitor of contemporary Christian music.”³¹

Evangelist Billy Graham noticed the Jesus movement early, admitting in *Christianity Today* in 1971 to not knowing the ultimate impact of the movement but cited what he called commendable features including: “a cure for drug addiction,” “the contribution . . . to the

³⁰ Robert F. Berkey, “Jesus and Jesus People,” *Christian Century* (March 22, 1972): 336-338. One photo is captioned: “Ecstasy lights the faces of two vocalists, members of a Jesus people’s rock group,” 337. Another is captioned: “During a Jesus movement rally, one young adherent lies enrapt in a trancelike state,” 338. See Alan P. Merriam, *The Anthropology of Music*, (Chicago: Northwestern University Press, 1964). Merriam listed “integration of society” and “expression of emotion” as functions of music.

³¹ Prothero, 138-139. See also, Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 141. Also, Mark Powell, “Jesus climbs the charts: the business of contemporary Christian music,” *Christian Century* (December 18, 2002): 25.

American churches (anti-institutionalism), and “zeal for evangelism.” Graham chastised secular media as late to the “Jesus phenomenon” sweeping youth in response to an *organized* campaign. Graham identified in the movement a cultural contrast between youth involved in sex, drugs, and violence and Jesus freaks. “The ‘wheat’ and ‘tares’ are growing together,” Graham wrote, “The devil is at work, but so is God.” The cultural warfare came as America discovered all types of new consciousness from Zen and Scientology to Krishna consciousness, Black Power and Satanism. The trials and tensions of the times had produced Malinowski’s predicted cultural responses.³²

The movement spread from California to revivals and music festivals like one organized at a United Methodist Church in Greensburg, Kentucky in 1971, featuring Bible study, prayer, outreach rallies, and slogans, proclaiming “Join the Jesus Revolution.” A result of the organized revival was the founding of a Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) chapter. The Kentucky revival was small but Jesus festivals were larger and similar to the secular Monterey Pop Festival (1967) and Woodstock (1969). Campus Crusade’s Explo ‘72 in Dallas drew 85,000. Jesus ‘73 in Orlando and a three-day Jesus ‘75 on a farm in Morgantown, Pennsylvania both attracted 30,000. Evidence of evangelical organization

³² Billy Graham, “The Marks of the Jesus Movement,” *Christianity Today* (November 5, 1971): 111. Graham writes: “What the secular media are just now finding out has already been going on for several years. Various organizations working with young people already knew that young people were turning to Christ by the thousands throughout the nation. During the past five years our crusades in America have become youth crusades. At our crusade in northern California this past summer [1970], 70 percent of the audience every night was under twenty-five. . .” See also Malinowski, “The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis,” 943.

included Christian college booths, mission agencies and evangelistic seminars. But what attracted youth to the Texas, Florida and Pennsylvania was the new music.³³

Explo '72 was, in Baker's view, the "coming out" of contemporary Christian music." Between the first Explo and 1974, composers wrote and performed Christian rock music but the music was not heard on radio or at church. Still, the pioneers of Jesus music, as traditionalist innovators, had a clear purpose, wanting their music to have punch but "more substance than the songs of the world." Until the composers could successfully bridge the gap between radical street music and popular music or between street music and traditional church music, they settled for old-fashioned festival tent music. It is, thus, important to recognize the evangelical approach and influence of Jesus music. While the music emerged out of freedom and improvisation on the West Coast, particularly San Francisco's counterculture, it spread across the nation in outdoor Jesus festivals devoted to a new genre and evangelistic outreach.³⁴

Countercultural Jesus rock artist Keith Green was profoundly dedicated to evangelism. Green grew up Jewish before experimenting with drugs and eastern mysticism. He turned to Jesus and joined Vineyard Christian Fellowship in Southern California. Like other hippie musicians along the coast, he and his wife opened their

³³ Edward E. Plowman, "The Jesus Movement: Now It's in the Hamlets," *Christianity Today* (June 18, 1971): 35. See also *Christianity Today*, "Jesus '75" The Spirit Lives On," (September, 12, 1975): 54. The article notes that the Jesus Ministries event was "headed by a Mennonite Harold M. Zimmerman, 48, a concrete contractor; United Presbyterian John Musser, 49, a construction foreman; and a Mennonite Tom Hess, 36, a fruit packer. All are charismatics." It included books by Christian philosopher Francis Schaeffer and seminars on evangelism. Among the musicians were Chuck Girard (formerly of the Love Song) Phil Keagy, and the Andrae Crouch. The Jesus festivals were organized by a group called Jesus Ministries.

³⁴ Baker, 42, 74. Baker notes that the first Jesus music programs or radio stations, KYMS-FM, KBHL-FM, were in 1974-1975, p. 89, 90. See p. 91 for Baker's point about Jesus music evangelism on radio.

home as a sort of commune called “The Greenhouse” for drug addicts and homeless. Green signed with Sparrow Records in 1976 but determined to offer free concerts he financed his own recordings so he could spread the Gospel. Green’s motive was reaching the unchurched who, he complained, were not being reached by what he called “Churchianity.” Green and Jesus People distinguished themselves from traditional church in anti-institutional messages, calling on concertgoers to be sold out for Jesus, an *experience* they could not find in churches and synagogues.³⁵

Soul-searching was a significant part of the 1970s and its music. The rock group Kansas released *Point of Know Return* in 1977 featuring “Dust in the Wind” with lyrics that questioned life’s meaning: “Same old song, just a drop of water in an endless sea/All we do crumbles to the ground though we refuse to see/Dust in the wind/All we are is dust in the wind.” Kansas songwriter-guitarist Kerry Livgren later crossed over from secular rock to CCM in 1983.³⁶ As the innovative Jesus movement music drew in more musicians, followers, and listeners, the new brand became increasingly popular. In 1978, Jesus music sported its own *CCM* magazine. Bob Dylan, who recorded with Keith Green, converted to Christianity through Green’s Vineyard movement. *Slow Train Coming* (1979), recorded in Muscle Shoals, was Dylan’s first Christian album. The song by the same name fit the cultural protest of his earlier music but with a subtle Last Days warning in the chorus: “Sometimes I feel so low-down and disgusted/

³⁵ Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil*, 150-156. See also Last Days Ministries for biographical data on Keith Green, <http://www.lastdaysministries.org/>, accessed April 16, 2016. See also, Prothero, 143.

³⁶ Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 151. See Kerry Livgren, “Dust in the Wind,” Kansas, 1977, Sony/ATV Music Publishing, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/dust-in-the-wind-lyrics-kansas.html>, accessed, April 16, 2016.

Can't help but wonder what's happenin' to my companions/Are they lost or are they found." Dylan directed his protest at the Church's false religion as much as culture:

Big-time negotiators, false healers and woman haters
 Masters of the bluff and masters of the proposition
 But the enemy I see
 Wears a cloak of decency
 All nonbelievers and men stealers talkin' in the name of religion

There's a slow, slow train comin' up around the bend.

Two more Christian albums followed before Dylan returned to secular music.³⁷

Clearly, CCM is an important legacy of the Jesus movement. While pop artist Pat Boone was wrong about the spontaneous nature of the movement, he was more correct about the music, insisting, “. . . no person conceived or organized Jesus music: it's just happening in the hearts and talents of young people, and building to an undeniable crescendo of testimony and praise.”³⁸ Jesus rock, emerging as it did out of the counterculture folk and rock music of the 1960s, served as a protest against both hedonistic society and the institutional church. This important intersection impacted culture with protests found in alternative CCM bands while attracting criticism from secular rockers who called it propaganda, further supporting the argument CCM is used for more than entertainment but also protesting and thus innovating tradition.³⁹

³⁷ Prothero, *American Jesus*, 152. See Bob Dylan, “Slow Train Coming,” 1979. <http://www.bobdylan.com/us/music/slow-train-coming>, accessed April 16, 2016. Also, See Stowe: “Dylan's [lyrical] theology was shaped in the freewheeling evangelical culture of Southern California that Calvary Chapel and Larry Norman helped create,” 7.

³⁸ Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, x.

³⁹ Powell, “Jesus Climbs the Charts,” *Christian Century* (December 18, 2002):20-21. Alternative CCM bands include Jars of Clay, Third Day and D.C. Talk. Howard and Streck argued: “For some it is a subculture sharing in the overall values of society, such as the priority of pursuing material prosperity. For

Whether encourager of the faithful, protestor of the dominant ideology and institutional church, or evangelizer of the unchurched, CCM could be entertaining, but it functioned mostly in facilitating or achieving something. The branding of CCM instead of Jesus rock somewhat altered the music from its original protest spirit to one more palatable to a broader culture. Jesus rock had been used to criticize culture and Church but CCM allowed greater appeal to both. Thus, an entire industry developed around Jesus music as a facilitator of worship but also with labels reaching a broader pop audience. Jesus music affected change in the culture, notably the Church itself, first among evangelically-minded Pentecostal and Baptist churches in California then, more recently, among traditional mainline churches.⁴⁰

St. Paul's Lutheran Church and CCM

CCM influenced mainline traditional church culture in a number of ways. St. Paul's Lutheran Church, long wedded to hymn and organ music, introduced contemporary music as part of worship. The music attracted younger Lutherans and non-Lutherans into the church. It is useful to analyze selected song lyrics for their functionalism—songs of CCM artists used as a part of worship at St. Paul's.⁴¹ In the

others, who find their values in conflict with the larger society, it serves as a counterculture and a basis for resisting hegemonic dominance," 124.

⁴⁰ Baker, 123. The broader CCM labels shared a commitment to evangelizing the unchurched by transposing the good news of Jesus in new sounds, See Prothero, 151. Also, Baker, xii-xvii. Larry Norman writes about Paul Baker in the forward of his book *Contemporary Christian Music*: "He sensed that a very large 'Jesus-music' culture was going to develop, and he was more than prepared for it. It looked to me as though he were the sole historian of a new era in church music." See also Paul Baker's Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/Paul-Baker-Radio-Pioneer-is-Retiring-184029061628127/info?tab=page_info <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuKJhBNczAw>, accessed Feb. 26, 2016.

⁴¹ Heidi Schmitz Sack, e-mail from St. Paul's Lutheran Church Worship Minister, Feb. 26, 2016. Sack provided a list of CCM songs and songwriters used in contemporary worship in the mid-to-late 1990s. For an interesting analysis of "Worship Wars" in the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, see Terri L. Johnson, et

mid-1990s, despite being a mainline liturgical Protestant church within conservative-leaning LCMS, St. Paul's decided to incorporate informal, contemporary music in worship. The unorthodox decision was not without controversy. As illustrated in chapter 2, Pastor Wray Offermann explained that a missional impulse to reach the next generation amid cultural change altered his attitude toward the new music. He became convinced that reaching youth raised on rock music required a change in his church toward music with a beat.⁴²

Among the first songs St. Paul's introduced in contemporary worship in the mid-1990s was "Oh Lord, You're Beautiful" by Keith Green. Published in 1980 on *So You Wanna Go Back to Egypt*, Green performed the sentimental song at concerts. It became a worship song with widespread use: "Oh Lord, You're beautiful/Your face is all I seek/I wanna take Your word and shine it all around/But first help me to just, live it Lord." In *No Sympathy for the Devil*, David Stowe noted Green's evangelical zeal expressed by musician Matthew Ward: "At one of his early concerts, he gave a most unusual alter call. He'd have everybody stand up, ask the Christians to sit down, and then ask those who

al, "Worship Styles, Music and Social Identity: A Communication Study." *Journal of Communication & Religion* 33 (July 2010): 167.

⁴² Offermann, interview by Mike Browning, Oct, 24, 2015. See Jim Vorel, "Matthew West to help St. Paul's Lutheran mark anniversary," *Herald & Review*, May 31, 2014 http://herald-review.com/lifestyles/faith-and-values/religion/matthew-west-to-help-st-paul-s-lutheran-mark-anniversary/article_65ffd316-3b9a-50c6-8bda-49a577f7bd6d.html, accessed Sept. 20, 2015. Interview with Wray Offermann, Decatur, Illinois, October 24, 2015. Offermann stated: "I think I became convinced in the late '80s that if we were going to continue to reach the next generation that grew up on music with a beat—you think about the era of rock 'n' roll—you know seventies, eighties—all of a sudden we had this whole new genre of music and it was primarily music that had a clear tempo and a beat to it all."

were left standing why they were standing.” Ward saw Green as a modern-day John the Baptist.⁴³

While Green worked out of California, other early composers were in Nashville. Michael W. Smith wrote “Great is the Lord” in 1982 as contemporary praise song that was later used at St. Paul’s in the mid-1990s:

Great is the Lord, He is holy and just/
By His power we trust in His love/Great is the Lord and worthy of glory/
Great is the Lord and worthy of praise/Great are you Lord, I lift up my voice, I lift up my voice

Great are You Lord⁴⁴

Some CCM artists took old gospel songs adding contemporary music to modernize them for youth. Twila Paris added flair to “We Will Glorify” and “Leaning on the Everlasting Arms” but it was “He Is Exalted” in 1985 that reached No. 10 on the CCM charts and found its way into St. Paul’s worship:

He is exalted, the King is exalted on High
I will praise You
He is exalted, forever exalted
And I will praise His name⁴⁵

⁴³ Keith Green, “Oh Lord, You’re Beautiful,” *So You Wanna Go Back to Egypt*, 1980, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/oh-lord-youre-beautiful-lyrics-keith-green.html>, accessed April 16, 2016. See also Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil*, 149-150 and Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 170.

⁴⁴ Michael W. Smith, “Great is the Lord,” 1982, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/great-is-the-lord-lyrics-michael-w-smith.html>, accessed April 16, 2016. See also Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music*, 170.

⁴⁵ Twila Paris, “He Is Exalted,” 1985, <http://www.songlyrics.com/twila-paris/he-is-exalted-lyrics/>, accessed April 16, 2016. See also Baker, 172.

Another young songwriter in the 1980s, the late Rich Mullins, wrote “Sing Your Praise to the Lord” and “Awesome God,” which has an unusual lyrical beginning for a worship song:

When He rolls up His sleeves
He ain't just putting on the ritz

But the chorus or repeat is unquestionably praise and worship:

Our God is an awesome God
He reigns from heaven above
With wisdom, power, and love
Our God is an awesome God

St. Paul’s used “Awesome God” in worship along with a 1992 Mullins song “Sometimes By Step.” Like “Awesome God,” “Sometimes by Step” expressed the power of a transcendent creator, yet a personal God who Mullins and listeners could follow daily and worship: “Oh God, You are my God/And I will ever praise You/And step by step You'll lead me/And I will follow You all of my days.”⁴⁶

Finally, female vocalist Darlene Zschech’s song “Shout to the Lord” (1996) became influential both for CCM worship music and for her label, Hillsong. The song was used in St. Paul’s praise worship:

My Jesus, my Savior,
Lord, there is none like You;
All of my days
I want to praise
The wonders of Your mighty love.

Shout to the Lord, all the earth,
Let us sing
Power and majesty, praise to the (King);

⁴⁶ Rich Mullins, “Awesome God,” 1988, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/awesome-god-lyrics-rich-mullins.html>, Mullins, “Step by Step,” 1992, <http://www.metrolyrics.com/sometimes-by-step-lyrics-rich-mullins.html>, accessed April 16, 2016.

Mountains bow down (mountains bow down) and the seas will roar
At the sound of Your name.⁴⁷

In the 1990s “Shout to the Lord” was a number one song on the CCM charts. St. Paul’s Worship Minister Heidi Schmitz Sack recalled widespread use of Zschech’s songs, “Darlene Zschech,” she said, “showed what a female worship leader and music writer looked like.”⁴⁸

Widespread growth of CCM in evangelical church worship, and more recently mainline churches, suggests the music connects and integrates with church and unchurched culture in ways that makes *emotional* connections. CCM does this in ways traditional liturgy and hymns do not. The new music, which grew out of the youth Jesus movement in California, though contentious, permeated evangelical church culture. CCM is likely to continue to affect mainline churches seeking to reach generations raised on a variety of popular music. The contrast between early secular rock and CCM was rather clear. Secular music generally advocated drugs, free sex, even violence, while Christian rock promoted a contrasting radical lifestyle. The revolutionary message of Jesus (“. . . whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also”)

⁴⁷ Darlene Zschech, “Shout to the Lord,” Hillsong, 1996, *Shout to the Lord* was nominated as Album of the Year in the 1997 Dove Awards and was nominated as Song of the Year for 1998, <http://www.azlyrics.com/lyrics/darlenezschech/shouttothelord.html>, accessed April 16, 2016]. Darlene Zschech Bio, <http://darlenezschech.com/>, accessed April 16, 2016, Dove Awards, <http://doveawards.com/>, accessed April 16, 2016.

⁴⁸ Heidi Schmitz Sack, e-mail from St. Paul’s Worship Minister, Feb. 26, 2016. Sack quote: “Every song from this album, same name, [*Shout to the Lord*] probably got some church using it—we certainly did a number of them! And then every album Hillsong put out after that! It was a huge game-changer for worship leaders, especially women worship leaders. Darlene Zschech showed what a female worship leader and music writer looked like!” Schmitz Sack, e-mailed list of songs for St. Paul’s contemporary worship, Feb. 26, 2016, *also* included: Doug Horley’s “We Want to See Jesus Lifted High” (1993); Brian Doerksen’s “Come Now is the Time to Worship” (1998); Matt Redman’s “The Heart of Worship” (1998); and Tommy Walker’s “That’s Why We Praise Him” (1999).

incorporated into Jesus music advocated kindness over self-centeredness and revenge. The music called on people to give up “licentiousness” and give their life away to Jesus and for others. For CCM musicians this meant expanding beyond conventional church culture into new sounds and protests. Musical improvisation was a product of Haight freedom. According to Baker, “It was the experimental, cutting edge for gospel music, constantly looking for new styles, instrumentation, recording techniques—any new way to tell the old gospel story to a new audience.” In the 1990s, the period of CCM introduced into St. Paul’s worship, both a shift in sound away from pipe organs and greater willingness to alter traditional church music got underway with two important functional changes: evangelistic lyrics marked by the Jesus movement and exhortative lyrics that motivated the church.⁴⁹

Bronislaw Malinowski’s cultural functionalism emphasized the importance of stability in culture. The Jesus movement and its music helped change American culture, particularly Protestantism. The adaptation integrated new desires and values articulated by counterculture Jesus freaks of the late ‘60s and early ‘70s. To this, Malinowski would no doubt find a balance of traditional culture and counterculture maintained. As he articulated in 1939:

Culture remains sound and capable of further development only
in so far as definite balance between individual interest and

⁴⁹ Baker, 176. Baker identifies Ozzy Osbourne, AC/DC, Black Sabbath, and Van Halen as bands advocating anti-Christian lifestyle. Stowe provides the Rolling Stones as a single example with songs titled “Sympathy for the Devil,” “Born to be Wild,” “Why Don’t We Do It in the Road?” and “Heroin,” 2. See Matthew 5:38-40 for an example of the revolutionary commands of Jesus. Baker writes, “. . . evangelistic lyrics which reintroduced simple songs of the type that had earmarked the Jesus movement of the late sixties and early seventies, and caustic, exhortative lyrics aimed at shocking the sometimes-sleeping church into new motivation and a cleaning-up of its act,” 184.

social control can be maintained. If this balance be upset or wrongly poised, we have at one end anarchy, and at the other brutal dictatorship.⁵⁰

Malinowski's description of stabilized culture is almost identical to the way Mikoski and Jones describe traditioned innovation as a process of *preserving* cultural stability between tradition and chaos. Though agitating the older generation and religionists, the Jesus youth culture was afforded freedom in American culture to participate in and advocate change. To this change, Malinowski would no doubt observe preservation of culture.

From the beginning Jesus music called listeners, especially youth, to a different lifestyle. The music and its evangelistic impulse changed individual lives. Reflecting on the Jesus movement, Jesus freak turned preacher Chuck Smith contended the Jesus movement continued in creating music, a lasting mark of Smith's Calvary Chapel Maranatha! Music, which until 1985 had been a publishing arm of the church. The music was functionally used in emotional expression in the recording industry as a facilitator for worship and evangelizer of youth. The music increased church membership especially among those alienated by traditional music. Greg Laurie, who became pastor of a megachurch in California, was 17 and involved in drugs when turned-on to Jesus by the alternative music at Calvary Chapel:

'I think it would have been hard to reach me through a *traditional* [emphasis mine] approach,' Laurie says of his conversion. ' . . . The Jesus movement was an awakening. It was

⁵⁰ Malinowski, 963. Malinowski articulated that ". . . any culture which kills individual initiative, and relegates the interests of most of its members to complete insignificance at the expense of a gang-managed totalitarian state, will not be able to develop or even to preserve its cultural patrimony." See also Mikoski, "Traditioned Innovation," *Theology Today*, (July 2011), 113-115. Also, in their edited anthology of inventing tradition, Hobsbawm and Ranger suggested, "It is the contrast between the constant change and innovation of the modern world and the attempt to structure at least some parts of social life within it as unchanging and invariant, that makes the 'invention of tradition' so interesting for historians of the past two centuries," 2. Eric Hobsbawm and Terrence Ranger, ed., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: University Press, 1983.)

the intervention of God in a culture that had been largely written off by society—a culture that was very unique in what it was thinking and what it was doing.’⁵¹

CCM changed culture in other ways. CCM provided a way for popular culture to talk about Jesus. Even though CCM artists Big Tent Revival did not expect its music to be used in worship, their lyrics were arguably evangelical as these lyrics illustrate: “The Bible talks about a book of names/Souls rescued from the flames/Tell me, brother, when it’s all through/will you know Jesus, and will He know you?” As to whether Jesus music changed history, David Stowe argued that American culture would have developed in different ways if not for CCM. As social activity—one of Emile Durkheim and Malinowski’s terms—it unquestionably brought a lot of people together in secular music and the evangelical subculture. Keith Green and Bob Dylan are examples. CCM raised questions about moral, social and government expansion and action, still debated, such as the value of life, economic justice, and gender equality. In this way, CCM serves both Merriam’s “validation of social institutions” and the “integration of society.” It is equally hard to argue with Stowe and Todd Brenneman over how CCM changed the music industry:

- 1) the genre became more sophisticated and market-oriented,
- 2) Christian labels attracted major labels,
- 3) artist made successful crossovers,
- 4) and CCM increased market share.⁵²

⁵¹ Rabey, “Remembering the Jesus Movement,” 55. Maranatha! created worship songs by joining simple melodies to words of Scripture. Maranatha! Music was founded as a nonprofit ministry of Calvary Chapel in 1971. The label is currently distributed by Warner Music Group's Word Music <https://www.maranathamusic.com/>, accessed April 18, 2016.

⁵² Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil*, 2-4. Stowe argues that “Popular music and religion have always been joined at the hip in America. . . . [and] “that the music of the late sixties and seventies . . . helped create a space at the heart of America’s commercial popular culture for talk of Jesus, God, and all things spiritual.” In 2011, CCM records outsold those of classical, jazz, and New Age combined. See also, Powell, “Jesus

CCM is also the outcome of historical change. CCM became a form of expression heard on radio but, perhaps more important, CCM changed church worship. Even mainline churches concerned with growth, have slowly adopted CCM. If mainline churches with organs and hymns are changing worship music style with guitar and drums, demonstrating traditioned innovation, a significant cultural shift is occurring in mainline Protestantism. CCM is about more than entertainment. It serves a function of integrating the culture and demographic segments with a popular language of the younger generations. Stephen Prothero argued in *American Jesus* that the Jesus movement left vestiges imbedded in culture. The outward symbols faded but not the effects. Sure, many, not all, in the counterculture movement, including Jesus freaks, cut their hair and exchanged jeans for business suits, but many kept their Bibles and continued to transform the organized church. Prothero, for one, sees the movement more as a slow religious reformation. In other words, the movement resides in communities across America. So-called seeker-sensitive churches from Cherry Hills Presbyterian Community Church in Denver to Covenant Community Church in Ashville, N.C. adopt the popular style of music and are numerically successful. Thus, CCM helped usher-in an experienced-based Protestantism that is national in scope. New emotional songs replaced old hymns. The new music is an aspect of the New Evangelism reaching beyond evangelical churches. Larry Norman, Keith Green and radical Jesus rockers protested “Churchianity” in America for its emphasis on doctrine and formalism instead of the *person* of Jesus. Some scholars have called the Jesus movement and growth of seeker-sensitive churches a “Second Reformation” or “Second Great

Climbs the Charts,” *Christian Century* (December 18, 2002): 20. See also Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 87.

Awakening” in which experience, emotion and spirituality inspired by the new sound replace doctrine, theology, and religion. The success of mostly nondenominational megachurches that adopt the contemporary mix of experiential spirituality, modern sound, informality, casual dress, and projected lyrics is observable. When mainline pastors express the need to adapt to culture, Prothero argued they proscribe to William Hutchinson’s *Modern Impulse in American Protestantism* with “conscious, intended adaptation of religious ideas to modern culture.” Calvary Chapel in California and Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago pioneered this adaptive approach. Calvary developed Jesus music. Willow Creek pioneered sound systems and projection screens that enhance worship in, borrowing from Alan P. Merriam, the “expression of emotion.”⁵³

Merriam’s “contribution to the continuity and stability of culture,” and “contribution to the integration of society” support these cultural adaptations in evangelistic culture. In the process of traditioned innovation, a left-leaning hippie counterculture and popular music

⁵³ Prothero, *American Jesus*, 145-154. Richard Quebedeaux recognized the trend in *The Young Evangelicals*, suggesting “. . . there are segments of CCM that, like the ‘New Evangelicals’ have rediscovered a Biblical mandate for social action in addition to a concern with more traditionally viewed spiritual matters (i. e., prayer, holiness).” Among scholars identifying the Jesus movement as an Awakening or Reformation are Donald Miller and Nathan Hatch. “In seeker-sensitive congregations, informality trumps hierarchy, ministers go by their first names, and everyone dresses casually. Architecturally, seeker-sensitive churches look more secular than religious Services feature contemporary music played over elaborate sound systems, often with Jumbotron screens and projected lyrics that make singing (and hand raising) easy for newcomers,” 147-148. Prothero identifies how some have criticized the Jesus movement and CCM: “Rather than making America more Christian, the Jesus People, the megachurches, and the CCM industry have tried to make Christianity more American. They have molded Jesus to the world instead of molding the world to Jesus.” Willow Creek Community Church is a non-denominational, evangelical Christian megachurch located in the Chicago suburb of South Barrington, Illinois, founded in 1975; <http://www.willowcreek.org/>, accessed April 17, 2016, 154. On church success, see Roger Finke & Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America, 1776-1990: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*, 1. Other seeker churches include Cherry Hills Presbyterian Community Church, Denver, CO, <http://chcc.org>, accessed Feb. 26, 2017, Covenant Community Church, Asheville, NC, <http://www.cccasheville.org>, accessed Feb. 26, 2017.

combined with the Jesus movement to “create a new cultural formation.” Relying on Michael Denning and Raymond Williams, Stowe suggests a “structure of feeling.” Stowe sees social activities (e.g. new spiritualism, music) and religious institutions (churches and parachurch groups) integrating with industry (recording, radio, media, Hollywood, Broadway) in a movement and cultural change. In addition, another factor relevant to Malinowski and Robert Wuthnow is the trauma of the age—Vietnam, drugs, civil rights unrest, social and economic upheaval, Watergate, and cultural conflict—produced opposing ideological views. Some cultural conflicts have integrated, others remain unintegrated.⁵⁴

Finally, in recalling Nettl’s functional theory and the recognized difficulty of distinguishing between ritual and entertainment, the massive concert hall at a Passion 2013 event in Atlanta is illustrative. It is a gathering for high school seniors and university students, age 18-25. Musician Kristian Stanfill of the Passion Band leads thousands of youth in the song “In Christ Alone.” The song is a passionate creedal anthem of CCM worship. The word song and expressed emotion strike a chord in the first stanza as if the faithful are fighting against Malinowski’s “. . . dangers lurking in the natural environment [world] . . . earthquakes, and tidal waves, snowstorms and excessive isolation . . . dangerous animals and human foes” in his functional cultural analysis:⁵⁵

In Christ alone my hope is found
He is my light, my strength, my song

⁵⁴ Stowe, 5. Recalling earlier discussion in this chapter: Man’s physical world is surrounded by challenges—death and disaster in an uncertain world. Due to uncertainty, Malinowski argues, man requires affirmation and that “dogmatic affirmations of religion . . . satisfy these needs, Malinowski, 959. The turbulent events of the 1960s and 1970s—Vietnam, civil rights unrest, drug culture, cultural conflict, certainly contributed to uncertainty. See also see Bruno Nettl, *The Study of Ethnomusicology*, 246.

⁵⁵ Malinowski, “The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis,” 941, See also Wuthnow, *The Restructuring of American Religion* (1988).

This cornerstone, this solid ground
 Firm through the fiercest drought and storm
 What heights of love
 What depths of peace
 When fears are stilled
 When strivings cease

Midway through the song, the music builds into a heavier rock beat of clashing cymbals, drums and guitar strikes as musicians and concertgoers celebrate the risen Christ as their overcoming power. For Malinowski it is dogmatic ritual. For the faithful or traditionalist innovators, it is a deeply felt emotional identity:

I found my strength, I found my hope
 I found my help in Christ alone
 When fear has set, when dark has fall
 I found my peace in Christ alone ⁵⁶

Functionalism in Contemporary Christian Music is found in “emotional expression,” the “validation of social institutions and religious rituals,” and “contribution to the integration of society.” Rock ‘n’ roll might not be able to save your soul but with CCM the instruments and lyrics function to get there emotionally. The music is certainly more than entertainment.

Conclusion

In *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, Mark Noll concluded his criticism of historical evangelicalism with the hope that conservative Protestantism or neo-conservative Catholicism might lead to greater self-consciousness and political reflection in the spirit of moderate Carl F. H. Henry who had “urged evangelicals to a more

⁵⁶ Kristan Stanfill, “In Christ Alone,” 2013, <http://genius.com/Kristian-stanfill-in-christ-alone-lyrics> , accessed April 14, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNRFumI2ch0> YouTube video of Passion 2013 worship/concert, accessed, April 14, 2016.

reflective engagement with the modern world.” Noll cited scholars and thinkers who articulated Protestant thought in social ethics, world hunger, and politics. Reiterating that evangelicalism is not monolithic, Noll suggested some evangelicals “question traditional populism,” and in so doing, “they are also questioning the historical character of evangelical political thought.” Among these New Evangelicals or traditionalist innovators, Noll noted strong opposition to self-righteous separatism, the dispensational approach to scripture, and anti-intellectualism.⁵⁷ Twenty years later, in 2014, Todd Brenneman concluded his critique of sentimental evangelical Protestantism in *Homespun Gospel* with a discussion of an evangelical manifesto by a nine-member committee, who in 2008 issued a critical statement against contemporary “market-oriented evangelicalism” for inflicting damage on the Protestant mission. The Self-help and Prosperity Gospel, these evangelicals believed, “adulterates the evangelical message.” So-called manifesto evangelicals were, Brenneman suggested, “attempting to redefine what it means to be an ‘Evangelical.’” These evangelicals still wanted to be defined by traditional theological beliefs but with self-consciousness and social consciousness.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ Noll, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 221-227. Scholars identified by Noll included Charles Malik, Dennis P. Hollinger, John Howard Yoder, Ron Sider, Richard Mouw, Rousas Rushdoony, Mark Amstutz, Doug Bandow, Alberto Coll, Dean Curry, Harold O. J. Brown, among others.

⁵⁸ Brenneman, *Homespun Gospel*, 144-145. 1. 7 beliefs: “The dual nature of Christ as divine and human. 2. The importance of the crucifixion for salvation. 3. The transformation and new birth that comes from the Holy Spirit. 4. The veracity and authority of the Christian Bible. 5. The hope of the Second Coming. 5. Involved in both social and ecclesiastical spheres (help “socially disadvantaged” and be “environmentally conscious.”) 6. And ‘know and love Christ through worship, love Christ’s family through fellowship, grow like Christ through discipleship, serve Christ by ministering to the needs of others in his name, 7. and share Christ with those who do not yet know him.” Evangelical Manifesto Steering Committee, http://www.anevangelicalmanifesto.com/docs/Evangelical_Manifesto.pdf, accessed June 8, 2009.

It is interesting that manifesto evangelicals also included No. 6 social conscious activities and No. 7 worship as aspects of evangelicalism that stretched beyond belief or doctrine. The goal of manifesto evangelicals was to be involved in restoring civility in public life and political discourse. As Brenneman interpreted their concern, “Modern evangelicalism in their view had capitulated to American culture and thus has committed a variety of ‘sins.’” And yet, as previously noted, market-oriented evangelicalism has been vital to evangelicalism’s success since Wakefield and his successors utilized innovative techniques. In fact, Brenneman argued, in keeping with Prothero and adaptability advocates, “Christians have always modified their thought and the presentation of that thought in response to audiences and the intellectual currents of their day from the time of Paul.” Where traditionalist innovators differ, I would argue, is to the degree that the prevalent market-oriented evangelicalism replaces long-held tradition. In this way, traditionalist innovators are more like manifesto evangelicals in their criticism of market-oriented, self-help evangelicals because in adapting to modern culture therapeutic evangelicals are, to a fault, more *innovative* than *traditional*.⁵⁹

The criticism lodged by traditionalist innovators, and it seems manifesto evangelicals, is that in adapting to culture many therapeutic evangelicals have become too much like the world and not countercultural enough to speak prophetic truth. The manifesto articulated this point concisely: “In the process we [evangelicalism] have

⁵⁹ Brenneman, 147. Manifesto Evangelicals criticized therapeutic evangelicalism because it “replaced biblical truths with therapeutic techniques,” replaced “worship with entertainment” replaced “discipleship with growth in human potential,” replaced “church growth with business entrepreneurialism” replaced meeting real needs with pandering to felt needs,” replaced “mission . . . with marketing precepts.” www.anevangelicalmanifesto.com/docs/Evangelical_Manifesto.pdf.

become known for commercial, diluted, and feel-good gospels of health, wealth, human potential, and religious happy talk, each of which is indistinguishable from the passing fashions of the surrounding world.”⁶⁰ Brenneman correctly pointed out, along with Prothero in *American Jesus*, that Protestantism’s adaptation to culture “is part of the reason evangelicalism has been so successful in the United States.” But it is also why some evangelicals disdain cultural success for a countercultural Christianity that advocates nonconformity and counterintuitive approaches articulated, for example, in Erwin Raphael McManus’s *The Barbarian Way*. McManus’s radical ideas of nonconformity and disobedience, more in the legacy of MLK and MLK Jr., are as much a part of Protestantism as evangelical sentimentalists’ modern therapies. The evangelical movement is diverse. It has managed to cross ethnicity, race, politics, and denominational lines while speaking effectively to both the *mind* and the *heart*. The growing appeal of CCM in Protestant worship is a testament to Brenneman’s stated thesis, ““In the twentieth and twenty first centuries, however, many evangelicals have demonstrated an overwhelming preference for the emotional strand with relatively few preferring the rational one.”⁶⁰

Noll concluded *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* in 1994 with a critical question relative to whether American evangelical Protestantism could develop an

⁶⁰ Brenneman, 147. See also Erwin Raphael McManus, *The Barbarian Way: Unleash the Untamed Faith Within* (Nashville: TN, Thomas Nelson Inc., 2005). Also, Evangelical Manifesto Steering Committee, “An Evangelical Manifesto: A Declaration of Evangelical Identity and Public Commitment,” http://www.anevangelicalmanifesto.com/docs/Evangelical_Manifesto.pdf, accessed June 9, 2009. The 9-member Steering Committee included “businessmen, theologians, the editor-in-chief of the *Christianity Today* Media Group, and author OS Guinness.” 145.

intellect mindset. In his chapter and question was “Can the Scandal Be Scandalized?”

Noll rhetorically answered that worship *is* the result of proper Christian thinking:

The ‘scandal of the cross’ speaks of the seriousness with which God himself treated the realm of human existence. That realm was the theater of redemption, the arena in which God chose to reveal himself to the created realm—in order to purchase the redemption of sinners—is it imaginable that sinners who enjoy the salvation won in that realm might seek more diligently to fathom the realities of that realm—in order to worship their Redeemer?⁶¹

Quoting Calvin, “‘The human mind is . . . a perpetual forge of idols,’” Noll contended “The solution to idolatry, however, is not to destroy . . . idols. . . . The wood and stone from which idols are made do not deserve to be worshiped; because God made them, however they deserve to be studied as wood and stone.”⁶² In other words, boasting in the bible alone is admirable for its dependence but it is also overly simplistic. Traditionalist innovators hold to revelation as a source of legitimate authority but are also willing to include scholarship from social science, natural science, and other modern techniques to verify and edify that authority. They view the cross as the *only* way to redemption but reject the sharp divide between absolutist Protestants and all others. They reject single-issue politics as simplistic and advocate thoughtful solutions to social and global complexities. They engage in missions and political activism to transform the individual and society through grace *and* social justice. They seek to return the valuable aspect of classical Christian philosophy as a basis for right thinking. And finally, they embrace

⁶¹ Noll, 241.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 242.

emotionalism contained in contemporary music as a part of worship in proper *response* to thoughts of God.

As American Protestant churches reject the restraints of denominationalism and formalism, legitimate questions about what American Protestantism is becoming in the twenty first century are raised. After all, non-denominationalism, it can be argued, does have its own identity. Organized non-denominational churches are part of *organized* Protestantism. Self-conscious assessments of the sentimental rhetoric and music of the new evangelicalism are worth exploring further. The fact that postwar social changes have been occurring in American Protestantism, especially since the countercultural 1960s, reflect not only evidence of amalgamation of Protestantism, in my view, but the need to identify a category of Protestant that no longer fits the clear-cut simplistic dichotomy of liberal mainline and conservative evangelical. Some Protestants cling to conservative theology and long-held tradition. Some abandon doctrine for emotion and sentimentality. Still others, however—traditionalist innovators—engage in wider critical assessment and attempt to forge a balance between order and non-order, between science and scripture and worshiping in Spirit and in Truth.

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APPENDICES

**APPENDIX A: DECATUR HISTORICAL POPULATION GROWTH/DECLINE
(1860-1950)**

U. S Census data shows Decatur, Illinois experiencing significant and steady population growth until the 1980s when the city's manufacturing base suffered heavy losses with job cuts at Caterpillar Inc. and the closing of Firestone Tire & Rubber Plant.

Decatur Historical Population Growth/Decline (1860-1950)

Census	Pop.	%+/-
1860	3,839	
1870	7,161	86.5%
1880	9,547	33.3%
1890	16,841	76.4%
1900	20,754	23.2%
1910	31,140	50.0%
1920	43,818	40.7%
1930	57,510	31.2%
1940	59,305	3.1%
1950	66,269	11.7%

Decatur Historical Population Growth/Decline (1960-2014)

Census	Pop.	%+/-
1960	78,004	17.7%

1970	79,285	1.6%	
1980	94,081	18.7%	
1990	83,885	-10.8%	
2000	81,860	-2.4%	Firestone closes
2010	76,122	-7.0%	
2015	73,254	-3.8% Est.	

Source: U.S. Census

APPENDIX B: DECATUR, ILLINOIS LUTHERAN CHURCHES MISSOURI SYNOD

A recent look at LCMS church membership (defined as communicant) and attendance in Decatur, IL in the last decade reveals a general decline. St. Paul’s has experienced an increase in membership since 1990 but a recent decrease in attendance associated with the controversial relocation from its historic downtown location to a former warehouse on the northwest side of the city.

Decatur, IL Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS)

Lutheran Church	Communicant (Members)		Avg. Attendance	
	<u>2005</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2015</u>
Concordia (1964)	240	100	100	44
Mt. Calvary	240	280	100	150
St. John	1250	1400	500	315
St. Paul	2020	2040	1000	822
Trinity	340	260	140	131

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2013	2014	
St. Paul	1485	1796	2021	2712	2414	2410	2436	(Membership)

InfoCenter@lcms.org

APPENDIX C: DECATUR LUTHERAN CHURCHES (1964)

<u>Churches</u>	<u>(established)</u>	<u>Members</u>	<u>Address</u>
1.	St. Paul's Lutheran Church (1861-64)	1,187	Wood & Edwards St.
2.	St. Johannes/John's Lutheran Church (1891)	1,084	2727 N. Union St.
3.	Trinity Lutheran Church (1927)	427	1960 E. Johns Ave.
4.	Our Redeemer Lutheran Church (1945)	158	(no longer Missouri Synod)
5.	Pilgrim Lutheran Church (1951)	727	(no longer MS) 2155 N. Oakland Ave.
6.	Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church (1954)	165	
7.	Concordia		transferred 150 to Trinity

*Three other Lutheran Churches of America (non-Missouri Synod) were also functioning in Decatur in 1864. (Source: *Book of Memories*, 20)