



The Historical Developments of Musical Styles and their Functions in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

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ABSTRACT

Music has played a fundamental role in the liturgical activities of the Methodist Church Ghana since its establishment. Thus, this study aimed to gain insight into the integration and significance of various musical genres including hymns, danceable songs, and praises and worship songs within the church's liturgical practices. The primary objective of this study was to document the historical development of these forms and clarify their functional significance in religious worship, taking into account the wider socio-cultural environment of the Ghanaian population. This study utilized a methodological approach that involved the use of direct observations and qualitative interviews. Primary data was collected from 28 participants sampled from chapels located in three regions of Ghana. The primary data was further enhanced by conducting a complete literature review, which included reputable sources relevant to the topic. The findings emphasized the customized musical choices influenced by profound philosophical principles that inform the selection of each musical style for certain liturgical occasions. The research concludes by suggesting that church leaders should take an active role in communicating the importance of these musical traditions to the congregation, assuring their comprehension and continued relevance in worship services.

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Publication History

Received 18th December, 2023

Accepted 11th February, 2024

Published online

23rd February, 2024

Keywords: *Hymns, Praise and Worship songs, Danceable tunes, Choristers, Liturgy, Worship Service, the Methodist Church Ghana.*

INTRODUCTION

Ghana boasts of a diverse cultural heritage encompassing a variety of artistic expressions including music, dance, language, traditional attire, and religious practices. In Ghana, a diverse array of religious denominations exist, among which the Methodist Church holds a prominent position. The Methodist Hymn Book with Tunes' prologue states that Methodism was founded through song, and since that time, Methodists have never stopped singing.¹ Because hymn singing facilitates preaching, healing, communication, education, and a better relationship with God, it has become one of the essential elements during worship service. The Wesley brothers realizing the role of hymns after their Holy Spirit baptism, introduced this musical genre into the liturgy of the Methodist Church. As the church spread throughout the world and later to Ghana, the then Gold Coast in 1835, hymn singing in English became the predominant musical genre, and missionaries established schools where

¹ *The Methodist Hymn Book with Tunes* (Letchworth Hertfordshire SG6 1 JS Great Britain: The Garden City Press Limited, n.d.), iii.

they taught metrical psalms, canticles, and hymns.² It came to a point that the 1936 Book of Office could no longer fulfill the Methodist Church's needs for devotion just before the turn of the century. The reason was that, according to Darkwa, a large number of Charismatic churches and Pentecostal churches developed fervent forms of adoration during the 1980s and they included shouting, singing, clapping, drumming, dancing, and jumping.³ This practice of songs helped the worshippers to express both their physical and non-physical emotions during worship. As a result, the development of new choral groups of Ghanaian flavour of harmonious styles did enter into some of the Christian churches including the Methodist Church Ghana. They used traditional musical instruments such as *frikyiwa*, *donno*, wooden clappers, and drums to accompany their singing at church. They effectively encouraged dancing through their performances, and as a result, dancing entered the Methodist Church Ghana.⁴ To meet the musical needs of all ages in the church, a new musical genre known as Praise and Worship songs was introduced into the liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana. This musical genre was well-liked and successfully attracted and retained a large number of people, particularly young people, unlettered, and women with limited literacy in the church.⁵ In the Church's liturgy, hymns, danceable tunes, praise and worship songs play a significant role from the opening to the closing of the worship service. This study's overarching objective is to investigate the historical developments of varied musical art forms and their roles in the Methodist Church Ghana's liturgy. The study's findings may be used as a reference in the future to inspire and direct liturgists, preachers, composers, choirmasters, organists, and all parties involved in the Methodist Church's decision-making process regarding the choice of musical genres for the liturgy. Additionally, it might make readers more aware of the musical contributions made by the Methodist Church Ghana.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hymns

Together with his brother Charles Wesley, who wrote songs for the Evangelical Revival during the significant Whitsuntide of 1738, the Rev. John Wesley founded Methodism in the 18th century (The Methodist Hymn Book with Tunes, pg. iii). Hymn singing in English complemented the Methodist Church's principles when it spread to other parts of the world, including Ghana, the former Gold Coast, in 1835.⁶ As the church spread throughout Ghana, hymn singing became the predominant musical genre, and missionaries established schools where they taught metrical psalms, canticles, and hymns.⁷ As a result, hymns were introduced into the Methodist Church by the Wesley brothers.

The Danceable Tunes (Highlife)

Despite the disregard for and assault on African culture, Africans convened several discussions and seminars. Their hymns and scriptures were consequently translated into the local dialects. According to Nketia, Africanization is not the rejection of Christocentric reverence; rather, the methods of communication must make it possible for the people to be recognized and feel more deeply at home.⁸ Andoh asserts that the development of European music, particularly the danceable songs, in Ghana, has a close relationship to the history of Christian missions and, more specifically, to the activity of European traders along the coast of Ghana.⁹ According to Dor, Ghanaians were unaware of Western classical music until European settlers arrived in the country, let alone that it was being performed.¹⁰ As a result, they were reliant on their traditional music in many aspects of their

² D. S. Ocran, *Selection of Hymns for Sunday Church Service in the Methodist Church Ghana: An Evaluation* (Published by European Centre for Research Training and Development UK, 2015); Joshua A. Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives," *International Journal of Humanities & Social Studies* 2, no. 2 (2014): 85–99; Timothy E Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933I," *Ghana Bulletin of Theology (NS)* 3 (2008): 77–110.

³ A. Darkwa, "New Horizons in Music and Worship in Ghana. African Urban Studies," (University of Ghana, Legon. Institute of African Studies., 1980).

⁴ Ocran, *Selection of Hymns for Sunday Church Service in the Methodist Church Ghana: An Evaluation*.

⁵ Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933I"; Joshua A Amuah and Kras Arthur, "The Development of an Indigenous Musical Style in the Methodist Church–Ghana (1835–Present)," *Global Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences* 1, no. 4 (2013): 114–25; Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives."

⁶ Ocran, *Selection of Hymns for Sunday Church Service in the Methodist Church Ghana: An Evaluation*.

⁷ Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives"; Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933I."

⁸ Joseph H Nketia, "The Contribution of African Culture to Christian Worship," *International Review of Mission* 47, no. 187 (1958): 265–78.

⁹ Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933I."

¹⁰ George Dor, "Uses of Indigenous Music Genres in Ghanaian Choral Art Music: Perspectives from the Works of Amu, Blege, and Dor," *Ethnomusicology* 49, no. 3 (2005): 441–75.

lives. The form of music-making that was part of the early liturgical activities lacked drumming from the beginning. Additionally, dance and physical activity were halted by the occurrences. Danceable music penetrated the Church as a result of the Singing Band's involvement.¹¹ The singing band was developed to satisfy the demands of the musically unlearned. Songs composed by their singing instructors were taught to them by rote. They accompanied their singing at church with traditional instruments like *frikyiwa*, *donno*, wooden clappers, and drums. Through their performances, they successfully promoted dancing, and as a result, danceable tunes entered the Methodist Church Ghana.¹²

Praises and Worship Music (Gospel music)

Following the emancipation of the slaves, a substantial number of Black people relocated to the northern cities of America, according to historical records. Praise and Worship music is regarded to be an indigenous creation of the Black Church in America, having evolved in the latter half of the nineteenth century.¹³ When African Americans created their own churches, they did not abandon the hymns they had learned in southern White churches. They absorbed the hymns and transformed them into original Black music.¹⁴ According to Acquaaah-Harrison, Black American missionaries who established the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church in 1898 and gained popularity in the later part of the nineteenth century introduced gospel music and the Negro spiritual to Gold Coast (Ghana).¹⁵ The term 'gospel' music refers to music whose lyrics are based on the first four books of the New Testament. Essandoh claims that the lyrics of contemporary gospel music are drawn from the entire Bible and other texts that have Christian overtones.¹⁶ Gospel music in Ghana has its roots in non-orthodox or Pentecostal congregations including the Apostolic Church, Church of Pentecost, and Assemblies of God. The majority of the impoverished and uneducated people regarded the missionaries' style of worship to be colourless and were perplexed by the absence of discernible emotion. The only way to find spiritual fulfillment in Africa is through traditional worship practices like openness in prayer, singing and dancing, and outward displays of emotion.¹⁷ Therefore, during worship, the members who were not lettered or only partially literate felt socially outcast. In the Ghanaian setting, gospel music is essentially a catchy melody to one or more stanzas and a refrain of text from the Bible. Essandoh indicates that the message unlike that in a hymn is direct, and easily understood and the basic rhythm is close to that of highlife music.¹⁸ Accordingly, he mentions that during the performance, handclapping and percussive instrumental accompaniment were encouraged and permitted, thus, propelling the worshippers to some form of dancing.

The orthodox churches which include the Methodist Church Ghana initially shunned gospel music as they felt it too closely resembled the secular highlife of the entertainment spots. According to Amuah, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, the Methodist Church Ghana incorporated new musical genres that had become popular in Ghana into its liturgy.¹⁹ The Methodist Church lost some of its members to newly founded Charismatic Churches because early liturgical activities, which featured a type of music production that was devoid of drumming from the start, placed dancing and body movement on hold. The effort to allow dancing and drumming in the church was critical in preventing members from moving on to Charismatic Churches. The goal was to show that the influence of Charismatic music on the main churches was a major threat since some of the youth were influenced by their energetic music, which directed their bodies in various ways.

Acquaah-Harrison explains that:

They primarily enjoy fast-paced gospel songs, choruses, and chants, as well as syncopated, pulsing, danceable rhythms found in highlife, hip-life, reggae, and calypso music and played with musical instruments such as the piano, trumpet, guitar, drums, and percussion. Any church musical genre that does not inspire them to clap, sway, and dance is out of date. It's not music to them. As a result, people continue to abandon traditional or orthodox churches in favour of

¹¹ J. H. K. Nketia, *Music in African Cultures a Review of the Meaning and Significance of Traditional African Music* (Accra, Legon: Institute of African Studies, University Press, 1966); Dor, "Uses of Indigenous Music Genres in Ghanaian Choral Art Music: Perspectives from the Works of Amu, Blege, and Dor"; Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933!"; Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives."

¹² Amuah and Arthur, "The Development of an Indigenous Musical Style in the Methodist Church–Ghana (1835–Present)."

¹³ S. McClain, *Songs of Zion* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2008).

¹⁴ E. Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History* (New York: WW Norton & Company, 1997).

¹⁵ R. Acquaaah-Harrison, *Music and Church Worship in Ghana, a Crisis Looming* (Accra: Richard Acquaaah-Harrison, 2017).

¹⁶ I.K Essandoh, "The Many Faces of the Highlife," *Unpublished*, 2003.

¹⁷ Agordoh A.A., *The Development of Church Music in Ghana*. (Sundel Services: Accra, 2011).

¹⁸ Essandoh, "The Many Faces of the Highlife."

¹⁹ Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives."

charismatic and autonomous churches that emphasize song, dance, and a joyful type of worship.²⁰

Because of the use of these Pentecostal songs in Praise and Worship, it was clear that the youth were abandoning traditional churches to join Pentecostal and Charismatic groups. To prevent this migration, the Methodist Church Ghana approved the inclusion of these Praise and Worship songs in its liturgy.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The ethnographic study was embedded in the qualitative approach, with observation and interviews serving as the primary data collection techniques.²¹ This type of research tool allowed researchers to collect first-hand information and detailed data without manipulation of facts. Extensive engagements with the study subjects during each service, as well as various rehearsal meetings of the Church Choir, Singing Band, and the Praises and Worship Team, were necessary to comprehend the historical developments of hymns, danceable tunes, and praises and worship songs, as well as their functions in the liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana.²² The researchers went through video and tape recordings, interviews, and the notes generated, which made it easy to use the material for this study.²³

Sample selection procedure and sample size

The study participants were carefully chosen from three regions in Ghana, which are Central, Ashanti, and Greater Accra regions. These regions were purposively selected because the Central Region is where Methodism started or the first place the Missionaries settled. Again, after the church was established in the coastal areas, it moved to the Ashanti Region and also where Methodism is vibrant. The Greater Accra was chosen because that is where the seat of the Church is located. The study subjects included the Clergy, Laity, Choristers and members from the Singing Band as well as members from the praises and worship team. A well-chosen sample provided diverse viewpoints and contributed to a comprehensive analysis. The researchers were therefore persuaded that the study subjects have in-depth knowledge, expertise and diverse perspectives²⁴ and that provided valuable insights based on the topic under discussion.²⁵ By choosing these study participants who have rich experiences, wide-ranging viewpoints, or unique insights, the researchers gained a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation. The sample size for this study was 28. The selection of the study subjects was grounded on willingness and accessibility to take part in the study.²⁶

Table 1. Sample groupings of the study participants

Sample grouping	Number selected
Clergy	5
Laity	5
Choristers	6
Singing Band Members	6
Praises and Worship Team	6
Total Sample	28

²⁰ Acquah-Harrison, *Music and Church Worship in Ghana, a Crisis Looming*, 55.

²¹ J.W. Creswell, *Research Design*, 3rd ed. (United States of America: SAGE Publications, Inc., 2009); J.A. Smith and M. Osborn, "Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis," in *Qualitative Psychology: A Practical Guide to Research Methods*, ed. J.A. Smith (London: Sage, 2008), 53–80.

²² Jack R. Fraenkel, Norman E. Wallen, and Helen H. Hyun, *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*, 8th ed. (New York: McGraw Hill, 2012); Shaun Grech, "Disability, Poverty and Education: Perceived Barriers and (Dis) Connections in Rural Guatemala," 2017.

²³ John Brewer, *Ethnography* (McGraw-Hill Education (UK), 2000); Smith and Osborn, "Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis."

²⁴ John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (Sage publications, 2017); Greg Guest, Arwen Bunce, and Laura Johnson, "How Many Interviews Are Enough? An Experiment with Data Saturation and Variability," *Field Methods* 18, no. 1 (2006): 59–82.

²⁵ F. K. Stage and K. Manning, *Research in the College Context: Approaches and Methods*. (New York: Bruner- Rutledge, 2003).

²⁶ H. Gardner, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (New York: Basic Books, 2004); Hineh Kusi, *Doing Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers* (Accra: Emmpong Press, 2012); Ilker Etikan, Sulaiman Abubakar Musa, and Rukayya Sunusi Alkassim, "Comparison of Convenience Sampling and Purposive Sampling," *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics* 5, no. 1 (2016): 1–4.

Data Collection Procedures

This study adhered to Rubin and Rubin's ethical requirements by requesting participants' permission to record and informing them of the study's purpose and intended usage.²⁷ The researchers used a variety of engagement strategies that were appropriate for data collection. Face-to-face interviews, phone calls or interviews, and video interviews were conducted for the numerous study subjects.²⁸ Structured and unstructured approaches were used to gather information from respondents at their offices, homes, and chapels on the designated days. The appropriate values were observed in telephone and video interviews, such as preserving flexibility and sincerity in the researchers' behavior and tone of voice, as well as keeping the room silent where the calls were placed from disturbances.²⁹ Based on the study's research subjects, three qualified ethnographic researchers examined the semi-structured interview guide for the various study participants. The researchers conducted interviews with study participants in both English and Akan. The comments were recorded on tape recorders and mobile phones with consent from the respondents and replayed at home. The comments were rigorously scrutinized, compared, and contrasted with the available documented information for similarities and contradictions.

Table 2. Age and Regional/ Diocesan distribution of study subjects

Age Grouping of the Study Subjects		Regional/Diocesan Distribution of Study Subjects	
Age range	Number	Location in Ghana	Number
40-49	4	Central Region	12
50-59	4	Ashanti Region	9
60-69	6	Greater Accra Region	7
70-79	8	Total	28
80-89	4		
90-99	2		
Total	28		

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Historical Developments of Hymns, Danceable Tunes, Praises and Worship Songs in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

During the beautiful Whitsuntide of 1738, the Rev. John Wesley founded Methodism with his brother Charles Wesley, who wrote Evangelical Revival hymns (The Methodist Hymn Book with Tunes, p. iii). When the Methodist Church expanded to other parts of the world in 1835, including Ghana, then known as the Gold Coast, hymn singing in English enhanced its principles.³⁰ As the church spread in Ghana, hymn singing became the dominant musical style, and missionaries established schools to teach hymns, metrical psalms, and canticles. As a result, hymns were introduced into the Methodist Church by the Wesley brothers and thus, hymns singing have become an important part of the church's liturgy, from the start to the end of the worship service.³¹

The Singing Band's function brought danceable tunes into the Church.³² When church choirs were formed, choristers were limited to singing songs from the Methodist Hymn Book, the Christian *Asor Ndwom* and anthems from anthem books because one of the requirements for choristers was the ability to read and write.³³ The singing band was developed to meet the demands of the unlettered who happened to be musical.³⁴

²⁷ H.J. Rubin and I. S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*, 2nd ed. (London: Sage Publications, 1995).

²⁸ H. Taherdoost, *Handbook on Research Skills: The Essential Step-By-Step; Guide on How to Do a Research Project* ((Kindle ed.): Amazon., 2021); Dickson Adom, Mavis Osei, and Joe Adu-Agyem, "COVID-19 Lockdown: A Review of an Alternative to the Traditional Approach to Research," *Research Journal in Advanced Social Sciences* 1 (2020): 1–9; Syed Muhammad Sajjad Kabir, "Basic Guidelines for Research," *An Introductory Approach for All Disciplines* 4, no. 2 (2016): 168–80; P. D. Leedy and J. E. Ormrod, *Practical Research: Planning and Design*, 9th ed. (Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc., 2010); K.B. Kumekpor, *Research Methods & Techniques of Social Research*. (Accra: Son Life Printing Press and Services, 2002).

²⁹ Adom, Osei, and Adu-Agyem, "COVID-19 Lockdown: A Review of an Alternative to the Traditional Approach to Research"; Tom K B Kumekpor, *Research Methods and Techniques of Social Research* (SonLife Press & Services, 2002).

³⁰ Ocran, *Selection of Hymns for Sunday Church Service in the Methodist Church Ghana: An Evaluation*.

³¹ Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives"; Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933l."

³² Nketia, *Music in African Cultures a Review of the Meaning and Significance of Traditional African Music*; Dor, "Uses of Indigenous Music Genres in Ghanaian Choral Art Music: Perspectives from the Works of Amu, Blege, and Dor"; Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933l"; Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives."

³³ Ch., personal communication, November 16th, 2021.

³⁴ Amuah and Arthur, "The Development of an Indigenous Musical Style in the Methodist Church–Ghana (1835–Present)."

Their singing instructors composed the songs they learned, which they learned by rote. In church, they used local musical instruments such as *frikyiwa*, *donno*, wooden clappers, and wooden drums to accompany their singing. As a result of their performances, dancing found its way into the Methodist Church Ghana. Later, some church choir composers changed some hymn tunes to danceable tunes, so that the choir would occasionally sing hymns that had been adjusted to this musical manner, and thus, dancing to music found its way into the Methodist Church Ghana.³⁵

Initially, the mainline churches, including the Methodist Church Ghana, did not employ praise and worship songs, often known as gospel music, during worship services. As a result, the early liturgical event of music production in the Methodist Church Ghana was barren of widespread use of musical instruments, handclapping, and bodily gestures, leading to the movement of the youth to Pentecostal Churches. As a result, this Gospel music posed a danger to Orthodox churches.³⁶ In appreciating the influence of this musical type to win and retain the youth and other members in the church, because of the extensive use of all kinds of musical instruments, dancing, jumping, hand-clapping, and shouting, praises and worship songs were added into the liturgy of the church.³⁷

The outline of the new order for Sunday Morning Worship Service

In order to address the what, why, when, where, who, and how these musical genres are chosen and sung at the various portions within the order of service, the researchers in this study concentrated on hymns, praise and worship songs, and danceable tunes utilized for Sunday morning worship services. The Methodist Church Ghana has a musical style for the following activities, as seen during Sunday worship services and substantiated by both documented evidence and the study participants' comments. The Methodist Church Ghana has a musical style for the following activities;

Procession

Introit

Opening

Praises and Worship

Penitence

The Ministry of the Word

Gradual/Sermon

Anthem

Offering

Blessing of offertory

Closing

Benediction and Dismissal

Doxology

Recession

Call to Worship in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

In the new order of the Methodist Church Ghana's liturgy, the call to worship is a way of drawing or bringing the congregants' attention to the fact that the worship service is about to commence and usher the worshippers into the spiritual realm. Any appropriate passage from the Bible can be read or used as a call to worship.³⁸

Procession in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

The established societies of the Methodist Church Ghana frequently begin their Sunday morning services with a procession. The church choir, singing band, and officiating members, including the liturgist and clergy, lead the procession. During the procession, the church choir sings and marches to a hymn or song. Some believe that a hymn can be used in a procession as long as it is written in 2/4 or 4/4 time, whilst others believe that the processional hymn must be a hymn of praise and devotion. In other cases, the processional song is chosen based

³⁵ Nketia, "The Contribution of African Culture to Christian Worship"; Dor, "Uses of Indigenous Music Genres in Ghanaian Choral Art Music: Perspectives from the Works of Amu, Blege, and Dor"; Andoh, "The Choral Music Scene in the Gold Coast (Ghana) Prior to 1933!"; Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives."

³⁶ Darkwa, "New Horizons in Music and Worship in Ghana. African Urban Studies, "; Amuah, "Typology of Choral Music in Ghana: Current Perspectives"; Acquah-Harrison, *Music and Church Worship in Ghana, a Crisis Looming*.

³⁷ Amuah and Arthur, "The Development of an Indigenous Musical Style in the Methodist Church-Ghana (1835-Present)."

³⁸ The Methodist Church Ghana, "Local Preachers' Manual Part II Revised Edition," May 2013, 161.

on the strength of the choir or is dictated by the service's officiant. According to some study participants, the procession that precedes the church should be a marching song, and all officiating persons should march as if the military were on parade and marching, well clothed or in uniform, and the congregation should do things in that sequence, and they cannot march to any hymn. The processional music should be appropriate for the occasion and bring joy to the worshippers.³⁹

Some common hymns used for procession can be found in Table 3 below;

HYMN	HYMN NUMBER	TUNE
Praise, o praise our God and King	19	Monkland
The Lord Jehovah reigns	58	Adoration
Come, let us all unite and sing	22	Better World
And are we yet alive	709	Falcon Street
Let all the world in every corner sing	5	Luckington
Thy Kingdom come, O God	811	St. Cecilia
What a friend we have in Jesus	538	What a friend
Let us with a gladsome mind	18	Ever Faithful
I've found a friend: O such a friend	423	Bishop garth
Come, thou fount of every blessing	417	Normandy

The Introit in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

To prepare for the commencement of the worship service following the procession, the church choir currently sings the introit.⁴⁰ The choir frequently thoughtfully sings introit hymns; they must be an invocation of the Holy Spirit and not an opportunity for the choir to display its technical prowess. To help the congregation's hearts and minds get ready for the ceremony, the hymn ought to be meditative and calming. Some of the research participants explained that; the introit should be expressive and appropriate for the occasion and should lead the worshippers into the worship session, tying what we sing to the Church's theme for that day. The introit promotes the praise and emotion of the day's service while also leading the congregation into the worship service.⁴¹

Table 4: Hymns commonly used for introit

HYMN	HYMN NUMBER	TUNE
Behold the servant of the Lord!	572	Mozart
Jesu, Thou joy of loving hearts	109	Wareham
O splendour of God's glory bright	932	Deventure
Jesus, we look to thee	718	Reuben
Jesus, if still the same Thou art	349	Carey's

Opening Hymn in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

The first or opening hymn is also known as the praise and adoration hymn. Hymns addressing God's sovereignty and characteristics are sung at this time in the service. Hymns from MHB 1-35 that talk about Praises and Adoration, the Holy Trinity (MHB 36-40), Creation and Providence (MHB 41-58), His Love in Redemption (MHB 59-81), and His Glory, Name, and Praise (MHB 82-116) are commonly used by preachers. (From The Methodist Hymn Book with Tunes, page xviii).

The Second Hymn or Hymn of Penitence in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

The second hymn of the liturgy is sung before the completion of the day's scriptural readings. The hymn chosen either alludes to the subject of the service or identifies with one of the day's three readings. This second hymn is characterized as a penitential hymn because it permits the worshipper to plead for the forgiveness of sins. It is also an exhortation to humanity to return to the rescuing grace of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

³⁹ Personal communication, November 2, 2021.

⁴⁰ The Methodist Church Ghana, "Local Preachers' Manual Part II Revised Edition," 157.

⁴¹ Personal Communication, May 12, 2021.

The Sermon Hymn (Gradual Hymn) in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

The third hymn in the liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana is the sermon hymn, also known as the gradual hymn. This hymn is chosen by the preacher. As a result, it represents the preacher's intended message. The gradual hymn gets its name from the fact that it leads or propels the entire worship session to its peak, which is the preaching. An example of a hymn chosen as a gradual hymn is found in the MHB 781 which was composed by Frances Ridley Havergal, and the words state:

***Lord, speak to me that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.***

This hymn attempts to remind the congregation that they are God's earthly representatives. To carry out their diplomatic duties as envoys or messengers, they are obliged to pray to God for divine power. Whatever they do in their capacity as messengers, they do so on behalf of God. They see the homeless and disadvantaged people in their communities who need to hear the good news that Christ brought to humanity. As ambassadors, they must share this good news with the wandering wherever they may be.

Hymns used for the Blessing of Offertory

Several hymns have been classified as offertory benediction tunes. The offertory benediction is frequently preceded by the organist playing a hymn melody, to which the choir and congregation combine to sing a stanza of the hymn before the prayer is offered. Because of the text and the purpose they believe the songs speak to, the Choirmaster or Reverend Minister, or both, carefully pick these songs. Each of the songs chosen aims to urge church members to donate from their hearts whenever they choose to do so.

As written by Folliott Sandford Pierpoint in the Methodist Hymn Book number 35, the texts of the first stanza in its entirety state:

***1. For the beauty of the earth,
For the glory of the skies,
For the love which from our birth
Over and around us lies.***

Refrain:

Gracious Lord, to Thee we raise, this, our sacrifice of praise.

The scripture says how grateful mankind is to God for what He has created the world. Man's desire to thank God for all he receives from God's creation is the main theme of this hymn, which qualifies it for use as a blessing offering. The stanza talks about how man loves the beauty of the planet and the skies. Man's appreciation of God's provision on land and in the skies is complemented by the refrain. The refrain, in which mankind expresses his sacrifice in response to God's care, is the focus of this hymn when it is used as an offering. Though the sacrifice cannot compensate for what God has done, it does demonstrate to God that mankind values and is prepared to value Him. The organist typically plays the main part of the hymn while the church choir and congregation join in on the refrain, which expresses thankfulness to God: '*Gracious Lord, to Thee we raise, this our sacrifice of praise*'.

Again, in MHB 399 which was composed by Charles Wesley, the text states:

***What shall I render to my God?
For all his mercy's store?
I'll take the gifts he has bestowed,
And humbly ask for more.***

The uplifting nature of the text has inspired the choir and the congregation to utilize this song. The hymn's opening line expresses how humankind feels daunted by the enormous structures that God has supplied and offers a mark of gratitude. Even in the token's presentation, it says in the third line, "I'll take the gifts he has bestowed," which amounts to accepting a small portion of what God has given and then asking for more. The reason for using this hymn is that worshippers lack knowledge of a suitable offer to match God's mercy toward

them. Man's heart longs to be able to give God his best while simultaneously making other requests. In two ways, man appreciates God and makes new demands on Him.

The Closing Hymn in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

The closing hymn signals that the worship service is coming to a close. At this time in the ceremony, the song sung may be a charge or response to the sermon heard, an affirmation of the sermon provided during the service, or a petition to God in regard to the sermon. Despite its independence, the closing hymn has a strong connection to the sermon or message conveyed.

The MHB 578, which was composed by Charles Wesley and as indicated below can be used to close the worship service:

***1. A charge to keep I have,
A God to glorify
A never-dying soul to save,
And fit it for the sky.***

This song's theme is to always remember that one's obligation to the supernatural being and duty to humanity is to honour God and serve the current age.⁴² The hymn indicates that to achieve humanity's duty, Christians should pray to God for the ability to make large sacrifices.

Hymns Used for Recession in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

The church choir, like the procession, leads the recession, marching off the ceremony with a hymn after the benediction is pronounced by the senior clergy present. The text of the recessional hymn should ideally match that of the closing hymn and the sermon.

Table 5: Some of the Hymns Used for Recession

HYMN	HYMN NUMBER	TUNE
O Thou who camest from above	386	Wilton
Lead us, heavenly Father	611	Mannheim
Lead, kindly light	612	Sandon
Whosoever heareth! Shout, shout the sound	317	Whosoever will
Who is on the Lord's side?	820	Armageddon
Pass me not, o gentle Saviour	335	Pass me not
Stand up, stand up for Jesus	821	Morning light
Christ from whom all blessings flow	720	Vienna

An example of a hymn that can be used during the recession is given as MHB 317 which was composed by Philipp Bliss:

***1. Whosoever heareth! Shout, shout the sound;
Send the blessed tidings all the world around;
Spread the joyful news wherever man is found
Whosoever will may come?***

Refrain:

***Whosoever will! Whosoever will!
Send the proclamation over vale and hill;
Tis the loving Father calls the wanderer home;
Whosoever will may come?***

The melody invites all who have heard the good news of Jesus Christ to return to the Messiah. There is no need to delay in responding to the message after hearing the joyful news of salvation. As a result, everybody who comes to Jesus will have eternal life. Jesus continues to invite individuals who have traveled and wasted vital time to come to Him, and as the refrain promises, He will accept them. Finally, in the Methodist Church Ghana, hymn singing has become a usual technique of witnessing to people and proclaiming their faith in God.

⁴² T. K. Anderson, *60 Hymn Stories. Revised and Enlarged* (Cape Coast: NYAKOD Printing and Publishing Company Limited, 2009).

During the fieldwork, it was observed that certain church members had chosen certain hymns to reflect their own experiences. As a result, these hymns have become favorites, which they request at times of joy and sorrow, such as weddings, illnesses, and funerals. In these circumstances, they find satisfaction and consolation in the songs. As a result, over the years, these songs have provided significant spiritual value to members of the Methodist Church Ghana.

The Role of Danceable Tunes in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

The Singing Band leads the offertory songs, which comprise a variety of danceable tunes composed by Ghanaian musicians. Among the popular danceable pieces sung during offertory are "Oye" by James Varrick Armaah, "Homma hen mbo se," "Abraham Nyame," by J. Y. Sekyi-Baidoo, "Nyame Ye Osahen," and "W'ahendzi yi so" by Kras Arthur. According to some study participants, when donating their substance, they should not give the offertory as if they were going to the cemetery or marching with their hands behind their backs, but rather be joyous and dance. Some of the study participants explained that there is the need to demonstrate gladness when we come to give offertory, praise the Almighty God and give the best of our hearts to Him. They indicated that if someone is going to praise his or her creator, at least one should be cheerful, and thus these danceable melodies should include sentences that provide joy and happiness.⁴³ It was discovered during the fieldwork that during the offertory, worshippers expressed their appreciation to God by singing and dancing, as well as offering to expand the kingdom business. The catchy tunes tell the congregation what God has done for them, what they have, and what they are giving, before praying for God to bless them even more.

The Role of Praises and Worship Songs in the Liturgy of the Methodist Church Ghana

Local choruses written in English or vernacular are translated and led by the gospel band or praise and worship team during praises and worship time in response to God's magnificent deeds in the lives of the worshippers. Because of the significant dance, hand-clapping, jumping, and singing that figure prominently throughout praises, the worship service tends to be vigorous and inadvertently a sort of exercise.⁴⁴ During worship, some of the congregants swing their bodies and raise their hands in the air, praying and counting God's greatness, and his creative talents, and contrasting his dominance and kingship to others.⁴⁵ During the fieldwork, it was discovered that during praise and worship, the worshippers are more dedicated to thanksgiving, communication, and awareness of God. Because musical performances involve the entire congregation, praise and worship are extremely participatory.

CONCLUSION

The Wesley brothers wrote songs for the Evangelical Revival during the significant Whitsuntide of 1738, in the 18th century and their background as Anglicans motivated them to bring hymn singing tradition into Methodism. It came to light that the Wesley brothers won souls into Methodism and Christ through the singing of hymns. When the Methodist Church was founded in Gold Coast, now Ghana, hymn singing tradition was part of its liturgy and to satisfy the musical needs of the indigenes, the unlettered and the youth, the church allowed the local people to introduce danceable tunes, and praise and worship songs into its liturgy. The worship life, as well as the socio-cultural settings of the Methodists, were characterized by extensive use of varied musical styles and instruments. As the congregants listened to these musical styles in the liturgy of the church, their emotions were evoked and as a result, some were relaxed, calmed, and excited, and others wept. The church's worship activity has become an all-inclusive rite as individuals unite in the singing of numerous musical art forms. Methodist songs are not picked at random; each song in the liturgy serves a significant role, and you cannot simply sing any song at any moment. In every worship session, the Methodists have special music for each occasion.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The area suggested below is based on the significant contributions of the singing groups in the activities of the church: ***The Roles of the Singing Groups in the Methodist Church Ghana and how they Impact the Cultural Unity and Cohesion of the Congregants***

⁴³ SBM personal interview on November 2, 2021.

⁴⁴ A. J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The Invisible Institution in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁴⁵ Timothy J Nelson, "Sacrifice of Praise: Emotion and Collective Participation in an African-American Worship Service," *Sociology of Religion* 57, no. 4 (1996): 379–96; R. E. Webber, *The Worship Phenomenon: A Dynamic New Awakening in Worship Is Reviving the Body of Christ* (Nashville, TN: Abbott Martyn, 1994).

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Authors' contributions

This project was created through the collaboration of all the authors. JKB developed the research topic, led the research team as the lead investigator, collected data, and wrote the report. Authors SK and JAA oversaw the research, helped to develop the research concept, acquired data, and produced the manuscript. Authors DA and EAA were involved in research supervision, helped create the study technique, and wrote the paper. Author JOA read the work, drafted the manuscript, and made significant contributions to its content. All writers read and accepted the final script.

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