

The Role of Music in the Sixteenth-Century Lutheran Church

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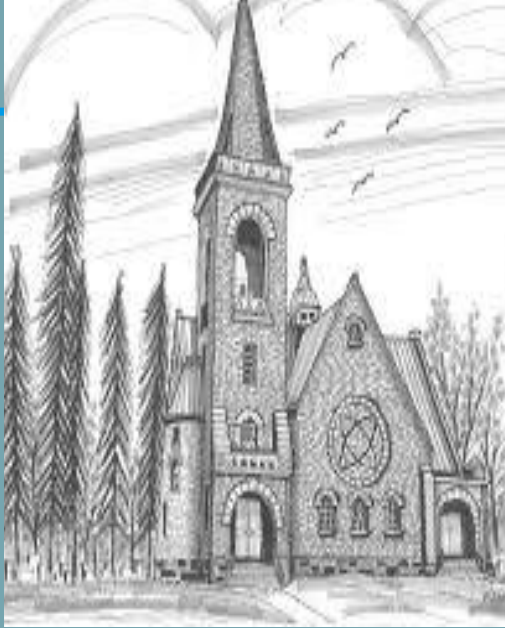
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The Role of Music in the 16th Century Lutheran Church

By Megan Gorog

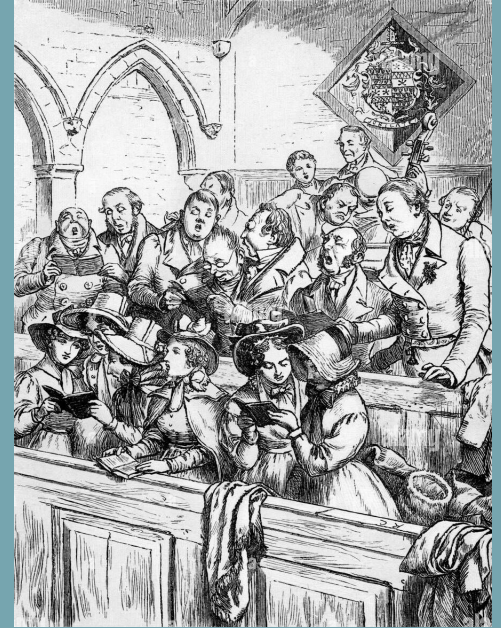
The Roles of Music in Lutheran Church



Structures
the Lutheran
Service



Solidifies
Theology



Unites the
Congregation
in worship



Martin Luther's Views on Music Post-Reformation

- High view of music
- Song was a gift from God specifically to mankind
- Music has a strong moral influence
- The purpose of music was to assert theological truths
- Music should be studied with the intention of stirring hearts to worship.
- Melodies ought not to be overly complex

“I plainly judge, and do not hesitate to affirm that except for theology, there is no art that could be put on the same level with music since except for theology, [music] alone produces what otherwise only theology can do, namely, a calm and joyful disposition”

Music
Solidifies Theology

Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice

Topic: Salvation by Grace

*My own good works all came to naught
No grace or merit gaining
free will against God's judgement fought
Dead to all good remaining
My fears increased till sheer despair
left only death to be my share
the pangs of hell I suffered*

*But God had seen my wretched state
before the world's foundation
and mindful of his mercies great
he planned for my salvation
He turned to me the Father's heart
He did not choose the easy part
But gave his dearest treasure.*

—Martin Luther

Theology in the Words of Hymns

Friedrich Bloom remarks in *Protestant Church Music*, the Lutheran hymnody was an outlet for lutheran doctrine unsurpassed by even sermons

Johann Walter published one of the earliest collections of hymns corresponding the order of topics to the liturgical calendar.

Hymn Topics:

- Lord's prayer
- Ten Commandments
- Baptism
- Salvation by grace
- Nicene creed
- Atonement



Theology within the Music of the Hymns

Luther's melodic Trinitarian model

- Inferior “*ut re mi*”
- Superior “*fa sol la*”
- Melodically, the sequence of “*re mi fa*” representation of the Trinity.
- Harmonically, “*ut re mi*” is represented by the triad (*ut mi sol, re fa la*)
- An example of the pattern of *re mi fa* is found in the German Creed, “*Wir glauben all an einen Gott*”

Wir glauben all an einen Gott

Wir glau-ben all an ei-nea Gott, schepf-fer him-[m]els vn[d] der er-den,
der sich zum vat-ter ge-ben hat, das wir sei-ne kin-der wer-den, Er will vns all-zeit er-ne-ren,
leib vn[d] sehl auch wol be-wa-rea, al-lem vn-fal will er we-ren, keyn leyd soll vns wi-der-fa-ren,
er sor-get für vns, hüt vns wacht, es steht al-les inn sei-ner macht,

Theology within the Music Cont.

- Distinguishing between the Law and Grace
 - Comparable to B flat and B natural of *musica ficta*.
 - Grace: the music in performance
 - Law: the music notation
 - As the law obeys the Gospel (grace), so must the written pitches submit to the motion of the B flat and natural.
 - Just as the Gospel is gracious, the B and B flat are used to avoid unpleasant dissonance when performers made a mistake in recognizing the appropriate solmization.

Unite the Congregation in Worship

Steps Toward Congregational Participation

Simplify the Music

- Contrafactum Lieder
 - Similar to Catholic tradition of paraphrasing/parody/*cantus firmus* mass
 - Contrafactum Lieder coupled popular melodies from German Lieder with sacred text.
 - Lutheran Hymnody also used folk melodies and German Lieder for the hymn tunes.
 - Considered theologically appropriate because familiarity with the hymn tunes was beneficial for maximum congregational participation among the musically illiterate

Steps Towards Congregational Participation Cont.

- Use of familiar musical forms from folk and popular music.
 - Bar Form : *Stollen* (A section, repeated once) and the *Abgesang* (B section).

Overall Form: AAB

- Robyn Leaver notes in *The Whole Church Sings* that Bar Form presented an advantage for learning the melody due to the repetition.

Vernacular Hymnody

- A crucial turning point in Lutheran worship
- 1524 Luther published his first German hymnal
- Means of broadcasting Reformed message across a large portion of society
- Communal music-making united communities and helped create a specifically Lutheran identity through song

“The illiterate, and semi-literate, reluctant and competent readers alike, clergy and laypeople, working people, clerks, teachers, and children all shared a common hymnody.”

–Andreas Loewe

Music as a Lutheran Lifestyle

- *Kantorei*– Lutheran town choir established community singing.
- Johann Walter first choirmasters of the *Kantorei*
- Children were musically trained in school through Luther's catechism
- Headmasters of Lutheran schools in Germany were required to teach music theory and Latin, training up choirs for church worship
- Headmasters were often church organists or choirmasters, and leaders of congregational singing

Latin Influences in Lutheran Hymnody

German Hymn	Latin Original
“Nun komm der heiden heiland”	<i>Veni Redemptor Omnium</i>
“Christum wir sollen loben schon”	<i>O solis ortus Cardine</i>
“Jesus Christus unser Heiland”	<i>Jesus Christus nostra salus</i>
“Komm Gott Schopfer Heiliger Geist”	<i>Veni creator spiritus</i>
“Komm Heiliger Geist Herre Gott”	<i>Veni sancet spiritus, an antiphon</i>

Music Structured the Lutheran Service

Luther's *Deutsche Messe*

- Written in 1526
- Meant to be sung entirely in German Vernacular
- Derived from the Latin Mass
- Change to the Vernacular was gradual
- Often mixed Latin and Vernacular in the Lutheran services
- It was expected that the congregation would sing the portions of the Mass that were in German
- Many decisions regarding the format of the services were left up to individual congregations

Lutheran *Deutsche Messe* Structure

Introit	Hymn or prose Psalm such as “Komm, Heiliger Geist, erfull”.
Kyrie	Threefold, chanted to the first Gregorian Psalm tone. Tropes are sometimes included.
Gloria	“Allen Gott in der Hoh sei Ehr”
Collect	One, monotoned by the priest.
Epistle	Chanted to the eighth Gregorian Psalm tone
German Hymn	“We now Implore God the Holy Ghost” or similar hymn to be sung with the whole choir.
Gospel	Chanted on the fifth Gregorian Psalm tone
Creed	“Wir glauben all an einen Gott” (We all Believe in One True God).

Sermon	Preached on the Gospel for the Day
Lord’s Prayer	
Admonition	Either read from the pulpit or at the altar
Words of Institution	
Distribution of Elements	Sanctus “Jesus dem Propheten das geschah” sung during distribution of bread Agnus Dei or “Christe du Lamm Gottes” (O Christ Thou Lamb of God) sung during distribution of cup.
The Collect	
Aronic Benediction	

Music of the 16th Century Lutheran Church

- Formed Lutheran identity separate from that of the Catholic church
- Instilled theological principles in the congregants through the words of the hymns sung in church and the community
- United the congregation through use of vernacular and simple melodies that bolstered congregational participation in worship
- Structured the Lutheran services using both polyphonic and monophonic portions of the liturgy

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