



Praying Twice: The Music and Words of Congregational Song

By *Brian Wren*

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In this in depth look at hymns, Brian Wren explores the theological significance of congregational song, asks how music has meaning for its singers, and considers the importance of contemporary worship music. He argues that a hymn is a complex art form, deserving of recognition and study for its contributions to worship, education, and pastoral care.

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Editorial Review

From the Author

This book took several years to write, as I traveled throughout the UK and North America following a freelance ministry relating to hymnody and congregational song. Periodically my spouse would ask, with a smile, "When are you going to finish this stupid book?" Hence the abbreviation, TSB, on the dedication page. I believe this work explores the limited area in which I have expertise, and hope that it has proven to be readable and useful. The opening chapter - historical glimpses - was added at my editor's suggestion. The chapters are -

1. "Through All the Changing Scenes of Life": Glimpses of Congregational Song [historical portraits starting from 1970 and going back in time]
2. "Rescue the Holy Pleasure": Why Congregational Song is Indispensable.
3. "A More Profound Alleluia": Encouraging the People's Song
4. "Some Demand a Driving Beat": Contemporary Worship Music.
5. "And Speak Some Boundless Thing": Assessing the Lyrics of Congregational Song
6. "Sing them Over Again to Me": Refrains, Choruses, and Other People's Songs.
7. "Captured by Gender": Chant and Ritual Song.
8. "Such a Feast as Mends in Length": Hymns as Poems of Faith.
9. "To Me, to all, Thy Bowels Move": Why Do They Keep Changing the Good Old Hymns?
10. "Echoes of the Gospel": How Hymns Do Theology.

About the Author

Brian Wren is Professor Emeritus of Worship at Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. He is a well-known hymn writer and the author of *Praying Twice: The Music and Words of Congregation Song*, published by WJK.

Users Review

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Anthony Thies:

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