

Intro Music:	00:15	[inaudible].
Speaker 2:	00:17	Welcome to the Project Zion podcast. This podcast explores the unique spiritual and theological gifts Community of Christ offers for today's world.
Intro Music:	00:32	[inaudible]
Carla Long:	00:33	Hello and welcome to the Project Zion podcast. I'm your host, Carla Long and I'm so excited to be here with our guests today. I've never met them face to face, but I already feel like I know so much about them. They are the Reverend Daniel Damon and the Reverend Dr. Nancy Hall, so Dan and Nancy. Hello and welcome to the podcast.
Dan Damon:	00:55	Hi Carla.
Nancy Hall:	00:56	Hello!
Carla Long:	00:57	Yeah, so I first heard about the two of you very recently when I heard that you use our hymnal, our sweet little Community of Christ Sings, as a basis for one of your classes that you're teaching. And I have to tell you, I was floored. I mean, I know we have an awesome hymnal. It's super awesome. I know they worked for like seven years on it, but I never thought that it might be used as a text in a university class. So I'm super excited to hear more about that and I really can't wait. But before we jump into that, I would love for you to take a minute or two and introduce yourselves. So Dan, Nancy, I don't know who wants to go first, but let's hear about who you are, where you live, what you do, all that good stuff.
Dan Damon:	01:44	Nancy, would you go first?
Nancy Hall:	01:46	So I'd be glad to. So I'm Nancy and I just completed a 30 years as a professor at American Baptist Seminary of the West in Berkeley where I also live. I am a pastor. I've been pastor of First Baptist Church of Berkeley for 10 years, although I'm a part of that church for about 35 years. I am a graduate of ABSW class of 1980. So I've spent many, many years of my life directly associated with the seminary and have been minister of music for 40 some years. My passion is hymnody. That goes all the way back to being a very young person. I grew up in the Lutheran church, so I was steeped in the great German corals and some of the English hymns and early American hymns. So that's just followed me through my entire life and has become

absolutely my favorite subject for and sharing and worship planning.

Dan Damon:

[03:07](#)

So my one sentence bio is I'm a United Methodist pastor, a hymn writer and a jazz pianist. I have a degree in music from Greenville College in Southern Illinois, a Free Methodist Christian Liberal Arts school and voice was my performance area. I wasn't, I don't have any classical background in piano, so that wasn't a path that was open to me, but I've always played you know, 19th Century Gospel Hymns and I learned to improvise all the piano players in the Evangelical Free Church in Rapid City, added notes. We didn't know the word improvisation, but we called it adding notes. And I came out to the Bay Area from the black hills of South Dakota and, eventually was able to find work playing the piano on Gary Street and sing along piano bar called the curtain call. And I worked nine til two in the morning and learned a lot of songs, learn to transpose, started to improvise. And then I went to Pacific School of religion in Berkeley felt the call to become a minister and put myself through school there playing the piano and some of the nicer hotels and restaurants doing private parties and stuff. That's me in a nutshell.

Carla Long:

[04:37](#)

Well, one of the things that really drew me to this podcast is that I lived in California for six years, from 2005 to 2011. And I finished seminary during that time and I was just drawn to the Graduate Theological Union and actually the Pacific School of Religion. And I don't know if it was because you had a quidditch team or what, but I was really, I couldn't afford it. So that was a problem. But I, I did use, make excellent use of your library while I was in seminary. So I felt every time I walked on campus I felt like extra, extra cool. So I already think that you two are extra, extra cool for teaching there. That's amazing. I'm, I mean, I love how you yeah, I just, I love everything about it. So Berkeley's one of my favorite places on the planet. I'm, I'm a little jealous, I must admit. So I, I am really even curious how, how did you even hear about Community of Christ sings if neither one of you are from or you know, no, about us necessarily. We're kind of a small denomination. How did you even hear about this hymnal?

Dan Damon:

[05:48](#)

Well members of your committee came to the Hymn Society conferences for years and they seem to be on the lookout for a new hymns and a hymn writers. So I was friendly to them. I found them to be very nice folks. You know, I didn't try to promote my material exactly, but I was friendly to them and let them know I was glad they were part of the Hymn Society.

- Carla Long: [06:23](#) Well I don't think our friendly listeners, our friendly listeners might know this or not, but Dan you actually have, I just counted them 18 hymns in our hymnal and he has written some of community Christ's what I would say favorites. One is called, "I Have Called You By Your Name." It's number 636 in Community of Christ Sings. Two Easter's ago we sang one of your hymns, "Woman Weeping in the Garden" and it had a profound effect on the congregation and also your hymn, "Come Now You Hungry" was featured at our World Conference in 2019 in this year, 2019 was featured and we sang it every day, I think at our World Conference where 5,000 people from all over the world saying it. So I think it's also become a bit of a favorite. So Dan, I know now why you know, what Community of Christ things is because you are featured prominently in it. And I'm so grateful for your talent.
- Dan Damon: [07:19](#) Thank you.
- Nancy Hall: [07:21](#) My story is a little different with the hymnal, although very much connected. I was trying to figure out this afternoon, which a Hymn Society conference, it was since the CCS was published in 2013. It was either that summer or summer of 2014 so the hymnal was introduced and featured at the conference. And usually what that means is through the generosity of the denomination or the publisher everyone who comes to the hymnals features section gets a copy of the hymnal for free, which I always love receiving. And we sang through, I think it was led by probably Jan Kraybill and Jane Gardner, maybe a third person I don't quite recall. So we each had a hymnal in our hand and they took us through some of the highlights and things about the hymnal that were unique. And I was so impressed. I felt it was one of the best hymnals I had ever seen.
- Nancy Hall: [08:28](#) And ever since then, my husband and I have been kind of evangelists for the hymnal. We talk to people about it and then we always show them the topical index. That's one of our favorite parts. And we start reading off all the topics and people are going, really, you're kidding. Really? There's hymns about that and there's hymns about this and it's, it's really enjoyable to share. That's such a hymnal could exist. It focuses on so many topics we're generally not used to seeing in a, in a Christian hymnal. So the other thing that has intrigued me as I, the idea of a core repertoire for your denomination, we're very impressed by that and excited about it. So those are just two things. Aside from the wonderful collection of hymns that I have been impressed by

Carla Long: [09:23](#) Nancy, you're going to make me cry. That is, that's very, very kind of you. And for our listeners who might not know, do you want to explain what the core repertoire means?

Nancy Hall: [09:33](#) This is a group of hymns. It's a, I think it's about two pages long. Let's see if I can find it here so I can speak intelligently about this. So there's an index. Yes. It starts with non-english language hymns and yes, the core repertoire 824, however many hymns that long. How long the list is. I don't know, maybe 60 or more. And my understanding from the way it was explained to us is that your committee, knowing the life of your denomination so well and your practices and habits, what you love and what you're exploring is a denomination shows this group of humans to say this is a good place to start for anyCommunity of Christ congregation, learn these hymns and, and embody these hymns and, and you will know more about who we are and who you hope to be by engaging in this core repertoire. That's my been my impression.

Carla Long: [10:44](#) That's,

Nancy Hall: [10:45](#) and I'm serious.

Nancy Hall: [10:47](#) Yeah. How do I get it right.

Carla Long: [10:48](#) You nailed it. That's exactly it.

Nancy Hall: [10:49](#) Oh, good. Good. Yeah. And so ever since I discovered that and learned about it, I've been I have plans to work with at least a couple of churches on this idea of core repertoire. I haven't accomplished it yet, but I'm keeping it definitely lively. In some of the work I do with congregations. So that was, I've never seen that before. And I thought that was genius.

Carla Long: [11:15](#) Well they did work on it for seven years. So I'm actually pretty intrigued by this idea of the topical index. I assumed that most hymnals had a topical index. That's not true? Or if we just have a lot more.

Nancy Hall: [11:29](#) They do.

Carla Long: [11:29](#) Oh,

Nancy Hall: [11:30](#) You have so many more topics, wouldn't you say? So Dan?

Dan Damon: [11:34](#) Yeah, they, they, and they have a lot of topics that are not covered in other hymnals.

New Speaker: [11:39](#) Exactly. For instance, I'm just looking at the first page. I have never in my life seen hymnal that had a topic called alienation. I mean, my goodness.

Dan Damon: [11:52](#) Right. Also aging is a new topic in our hymnals. The one right above.

Nancy Hall: [11:58](#) Yes. Yes.

Carla Long: [12:00](#) You two are giving me a new found appreciation for the seminar and I didn't think that was cool. So, Gosh, okay. Well I don't mean, I don't really mean for this to be just like your hymnal. So awesome thing. But I do want to hear more about your class and, and why, in your words, why is it important to discuss hymns, how do they affect people? Why are you singing about justice and everything so important?

Nancy Hall: [12:26](#) Dan, why don't you start with that one?

Dan Damon: [12:29](#) Well way back in 2010, the Hymn Society met in Birmingham, Alabama and, we were I forget what the scene was exactly, but definitely justice. And I was asked to do a plenary lecture there, which I call, The Cry for Justice in hymnody and we, um, it occurred to me at the time that we need a justice for creation, for children, for the elderly, for women for LGBTQIA community justice for people with disabilities, justice for the poor and oppressed and for people of other faith traditions. And so I did a lecture where I featured hymns that address these various things. A couple of mine made it into that lecture, but mainly I was featuring other other writers and I've continued to write on those justice themes. And, and also some others that I didn't think about way back in 2010, but we've, we've ended up using that lecture as the basis for the course called, A Cry for Justice in Hymnody and we've, we've taught it twice now I think.

Carla Long: [13:54](#) Well, you know, I was thinking about it after I heard about your class, part of me was like, is it, I mean, can you teach a whole class simply on hymns? And then I thought more about it and realize that hymns are probably a good quarter of the time that we spend together. We spend at least a quarter of that time singing together if not more. And so of course it's important. Of course we should talk about it. Of course we should think about the message behind the hymns and what we are saying and singing together. So I, I appreciate you saying that very much. Nancy, what about you?

- Nancy Hall: [14:33](#) Well, I think that singing hymns is immensely important. Actually for me, and I have no problem saying this, it's the most important thing we do in worship. Now. There's many important things we do. We pray, we hear the word and have it proclaimed usually by one voice, a preacher through prayer. We share our joys and concerns are laments or praises we give. We have the opportunity and the privilege of giving to go back to God and to the community. But for me, the basis of worship and where I always start is the hymns themselves. So my process of planning, worship week by week is first I find out what the scriptures are going to be depending on who the preacher is, what are they going to focus on. We use a Psalm every single Sunday. And with those in mind, then the very next thing I turned to is choosing what hymns and songs the congregational saying.
- Nancy Hall: [15:35](#) So I don't, you know, wait for a sermon to get that inspiration. I don't look and see what haven't we sung there, you know, in the last few months or something like that. The hymns that I choose and what I feel so passionate about is hymns that will speak to the theme of the morning or sometimes themes. Maybe there's a hymn of praise at the beginning that doesn't necessarily connect directly with the sermon, but a, it will lead us into that part of worship. And we should always leave with some sense of singing about commitment to going out to door and doing justice and caring for others. So I believe that what we sing is what we embody. The words become a part of us. And in a way, even though I'm no longer a credal person, it's almost like the hymns are reciting a creed. It, the hymns at their best, help us understand where our beliefs lie.
- Nancy Hall: [16:37](#) And even more important is I think that hymns and songs are a call to action. And it takes time. In my 10 years as a pastor, we've gone from, you know, good hymns singing and good choices to a much, much deeper engagement with hymns in our congregation where people really notice the words, they now come expecting the hymns to interact with the scriptures, the preached word, and everything else we do in worship. So if justice is at the basis of that, I really do believe that we are by embodying hymns about justice along with other themes. We are equipping ourselves to move back out into the congregation after worship. Oh, excuse me, into the community after worship and live what we sing.
- Carla Long: [17:35](#) I love that. And you have brought me back to a little bit of a moment of shame that I had actually last Sunday because I was planning in presiding and I didn't have my preacher, he, he couldn't come. So at the last moment I had to try and figure out

a service about a preacher and all that stuff and I, I chose this, hymn that was suggested in our worship helps our, yeah. And I realized there was like this one line that really, really bothers me and I kinda hate, but I went ahead and chose it anyway. And I told the congregation, there's one line in here that I really hate to see if you can figure out which one it is. Cause we're all pretty like we're pretty loosey goosey congregation. We have a lot of fun. And at the end of it, for the first time that ever people started talking up about that or speaking up about the hymn and saying, well, I didn't like this line.

- Carla Long: [18:32](#) Well I didn't like this and I realize this is probably a hymn that we should sing anymore in our congregation. It's number 66, "Speak Oh Lord", if you, I dunno, I don't know if you remembered or not, but there's a, there was quite a few people who were like, I don't, there's a lot of lines in here that I don't agree with and don't resonate with me. So actually I think it was a really good thing because people, after I said there's a line in here I don't like, I think people started really paying attention more so to the words anyway.
- Nancy Hall: [19:02](#) You gave them, you gave them permission to do that. You kind of, in a way you kind of opened Pandora's Box. But I think in a good way,
- Nancy Hall: [19:09](#) Well maybe not. We'll see. We'll see what happens later. Um, the line, I did not like talks about full obedience that we're just drives me insane. So you know, especially here in Utah, they talked about obedience a lot.
- Nancy Hall: [19:22](#) Yeah, that's why, that's why the old hymn, Tust and Obey" is the top of my hit list.
- Carla Long: [19:27](#) Oh, I'm cringing. I'm Cringing. So I'm looking through your syllabus. They were kind enough to send me their syllabus and it looks like one of the assignments that you give your students is they have to write an original hymn and they have to write an original music setting for that hymn and write a sermon that addresses one of the topics. So have you gotten some really good hymns?
- Dan Damon: [19:50](#) (inaudible).
- Carla Long: [19:51](#) Oh, what's that?
- Dan Damon: [19:52](#) You do one or the other, one of three.

- Carla Long: [19:57](#) Have you gotten some really good ones back?
- Dan Damon: [20:00](#) Yeah, we did. We tried to, you know, hear parts of a sermon in class or sing the songs in class. Some in some cases the student was able to play and sing the piece. In one case, a student saying it into my voicemail and I wrote it out harmonize the melody and brought it in and we sang it in class.
- Carla Long: [20:26](#) I also in your syllabus, you, you actually have the read through every hymn in our hymnal. It looks like they have to read the hymnal 1 through 50, the first class and 51 through 100. So they read through all of them. And then do you, what, can you walk me through a typical class and what it would sound like and be like?
- Nancy Hall: [20:46](#) Usually we gather when it's, um, we teach from a five to 6:30 PM kind of in between other times that the GTU holds courses. And that my seminary where we are physically located for the class starts evening classes a little after seven. So we slip in there with a 90 minute class that may allow students to take both our class and then go onto an evening class. So the first thing is Dan will sit down at the piano and start playing music. It may be familiar, it may be a little unfamiliar, maybe it's usually sacred, but it might be more on the secular side and that kind of calms everyone down, brings everyone to attention. And then, let's see, we've done it a little differently in the two semesters that we've, we've taught it, but we will collect their weekly 500 word essay and the students write one every week on a hymn text that they choose to write about.
- Nancy Hall: [21:54](#) It can be on the topic of the day or can be something they may have come across in Community of Christ sings. We also begin the semester thoroughly briefing them on hymnary.org which has an incredible online resource and a Hope Hymns Online and some other resources. So they actually can range kind of far and wide on where they look for the hymn that they write on. And we usually will choose one of those brief papers to read a little bit from if we feel we have the time, we might have the student read at least some of the paper. And then let's see, what do we do next? I think Dan, this time around, we turn to you at that point in each class and you would give a mini lecture on the topic for the day. So if it was a cry for justice, for the environment or a cry for justice, for racial equality, whatever the topic might be, you would give us a little beginning lecture on that. And then from there, what did we do next, Dan?
- Dan Damon: [23:05](#) Well, we've tried to sing some songs. We asked them if they found any songs on the topic and, and either I have some we

were using my most recent hymn collection called, "My Child As a Flower" where I've written a lot of justice oriented hymns. So sometimes we'd find something out of there sometimes from Community of Christ Sings,, but we would, we would spend the rest of the time singing hymns on the topic of the day.

- Nancy Hall: [23:36](#) Right. And always with some commentary in between. As the semester goes on, the students get, get bolder and expressing opinions. Kind of like your congregation. Robin, uh, Carla, I mean, I'm sorry, I was staring at the screen and said, Robin, but I know you're Carla.
- Carla Long: [23:56](#) That's okay!
- Nancy Hall: [23:56](#) Yup. And they begin to be more willing to say things like, you know, this hymn really bothers me. And then we'll have a brief discussion about that. And others might chime in or someone might say, Oh Gosh, that reminds me of hymn that I wish I'd brought for us to sing. And they might talk about that a little bit or about an experience in their congregation or in their life related to the hymns. So all along we're gathering experiences and opinions of the students and also of Dan and myself about how we feel about the words and the, and the music.
- Nancy Hall: [24:35](#) We talk about how the words and music go together. And since Dan is one of the, the rare writers that writes both his words and his music I would say those are always pretty well integrated, but sometimes we'll run across the hymn you know, maybe even in the Community of Christ, although I couldn't name one and they say, you know, I think there could be a better tune for that. So those are the kinds of things then we discuss usually for the rest of the class session cause 90 minutes goes by very fast. And yeah. Anything else Dan, that we tended to do in class?
- Dan Damon: [25:13](#) The question could you use this hymn in your church? And sometimes they would say they liked the hymn, but they couldn't use it in their church. Maybe it's too radical, too far out on a theological limb of some kind or, you know, they, they, they'll keep it in, in their bag of tricks. But in their current setting, they don't feel like they'd be able to haul it out and, and use it.
- Nancy Hall: [25:40](#) And that's always an interesting discussion because our, uh, this last semester we had seven students. Our classes don't tend to be very big, maybe seven to 10, but within those, that small number of students is incredible diversity in every way you can think about it. So the students learn so much from each other

about their settings, their churches, denominations, the churches, practices, what kind of music they have. All of those things end up getting shared over the semesters time.

Dan Damon: [26:14](#) We talk about where in the, in the worship service. Would this hymn work? Is it an opening hymn and closing hymn something in the middle? If it's a hymn human human trafficking, which I have one of those in my, my new collection, when human life is bought and sold, it's like, is that a general use hyn? No. You know, if you're going to actually address the theme of human trafficking in the worship service in your sermon or in the prayers or something, then maybe you've got an opportunity to use that. Shirley Murray has a hymn a on that topic. There's only two that I know of. I mean, it's probably something you'll never bring up in your church, but it's, it's one of the great pains of human life. And maybe it, if you have a song to sing about it, it can open a doorway into a difficult topic.

Carla Long: [27:13](#) Oh, absolutely. You've reminded me of something, but before I say that, I just want to say that your class sounds like the most fun class of any class I've ever taken in my entire life. I can't imagine like getting to go to class and get credit for singing and talking about hymns. That is so cool. It's so cool.

Nancy Hall: [27:34](#) It's fun. And I'll tell you, I really believe in this. In all my years of teaching seminary, graduate level classes, theological education is generally pretty sober, pretty demanding. You're studying theology and history, ethics, biblical studies, Pastoral Care, lots of, you know, very serious subjects. I don't make any apologies for this class at all. In terms of how important it is, it is fun and it is, I will even say easy. Mainly show up, participate, do the assignments and you're probably going to be guaranteed a, a good grade at the end. But to me it is every bit as important as any other class students take. And I've had to, you know, kind of do a few rounds about that with colleagues at times that you know, oh, well, you know, this is just to hymn, same class. No, not at all. This is a class where we study one of the most significant and important things that every church does every Sunday across the globe. So excuse me, but I make no apologies for my class.

Carla Long: [28:51](#) Nancy. Go get 'em. You Go! What you reminded me of Dan when you were talking about the, your human trafficking hymn. It was, I don't know if it was last year, the year before. I'm really sad that I can't remember. But there was a shooting in Florida, the Parkland shooting in Florida in a high school and the high school students had had enough and they were speaking out and they were really being vocal about this is not good enough.

And so that Sunday that really touched the, the planner and the presider, which was myself and a, a good friend of mine. And we decided, actually Dan, I didn't know it was your head at the time, but we decided to sing your hymn, "Strong, Gentle Children" for to honor what those kids were doing. And, and there was not a dry eye in the place after we were done because we really wanted to seeing our our appreciation for them and our support for them. So it, it meant a lot.

- Dan Damon: [29:56](#) Yeah, that's one of my favorites from my first collection.
- Carla Long: [30:01](#) It's a beautiful hymn. It's beautiful. So your class sounds incredible. It sounds super fun. And it sounds like something that is desperately needed. For instance, when I'm planning a service, there are times when I just feel a little bit lost on what hymns to choose. And I think that having a class like this would give me some focus and would help me to figure out exactly where I'm trying to go and exactly where I want to be. So I, I appreciate the idea of your class very, very much.
- Dan Damon: [30:34](#) Well Carla, I know you're supposed to ask the questions, but I was wondering, have you read through your hymnal, read the texts of your hymnal?
- Carla Long: [30:45](#) That's a really good question. And I've read through probably three quarters of it, but I don't think I've read through all of it. A lot of people have in our congregation, but I haven't, go ahead.
- Dan Damon: [30:55](#) Yeah. So I mean, I, I think one of the things we try to do in our classes just give our students exposure to a lot of hymns and it, you know, cause they're going to have to be choosing hymns week after week after week for their entire career. And a lot of them, you know, haven't read the Bible and they definitely haven't read the hymnal.
- Carla Long: [31:19](#) That's very true. And I feel like I'm gonna like sit down tonight and read the rest of the hymnal. Um, so back to me asking you questions. Do you, do each of you have a favorite and Community of Christ Sings?
- Carla Long: [31:39](#) I do. I looked at the question, you know, and thought about it before this evening. It's full, chock full of fantastic hymns, some of which I knew ahead of time and others, which I've never seen before, which is a total delight. But two favorites so far. The first one is, Till All the Jails Are Empty."
- Carla Long: [32:00](#) Oh, that's a good one.

- Speaker 4: [32:02](#) I've found that when people sing this hymn for the first time, they are just blown away. They, they can hardly speak after singing it. It's so powerful. The words of course by Carl Daw and then the, the powerful music of the tune that it's set to in Community to Christ's Sings, Work To Do. And then Dan's excellent arrangement. It was just a perfect match for the words. So that one is such a call to action without even having to say, now here's a hymn that's a call to action. I mean, everyone knows it as they sing it.
- Dan Damon: [32:39](#) Well, okay. So I'll just comment on that particular one, "Till All the Jails are Empty". I did that arrangement and self-defense because I the actual composition by John Bell was a little too hard for me to play. It's got these six times, note runs in it and stuff. And so I felt like I needed a, I was, I was asked to play it, I think it was at Saint Olaf, but it was for the Hymn Society conference one year. And so I worked with my teacher on a piano arrangement of it that I could play. So that's what I did.
- Carla Long: [33:14](#) Well, thank God you did. It's amazing. Thank God.
- Nancy Hall: [33:17](#) Yeah, great story. Yeah. I'm my second favorite and then Dan can respond is a "Creator of The Intertwined" by our friend Jackie Jones and I, it's one of the very best intefaih hymns that I know I can't manage to sing the last line. "Your voice speaks many languages, just one of them is mine" without weeping every single time. It's so powerful and it's such a hymn of universal love and the call to understanding and embracing each other and putting aside our differences and just basking in our differences really. And what we, what we can teach each other if we will just open up. So those are my two favorites of many favorites.
- Dan Damon: [34:12](#) I have a few, but just mentioned too, "Sometimes We Wait Expecting God" is on 304. It's actually a facing page with, "Till All the Jails are Empty." Sometimes we wait expecting God to feed the hungry from above. But bread is baked each day and shared by people who are moved by love. And then there's four stanzas. It's a four part setting with chord symbols. So you could, you could do you know, with the choir and a band, I try to write in that style because a lot of our conferences, you know, use bass and guitar and drums as well as you know, choir and so on. I also like "Joseph, Son of an Ancient King." We, we've got, have a lot of Mary hymns but not too much that focuses on Joseph. And I went through the New Testament and found every scripture that referred to Joseph and included all those in that text. The tune is kind of like a, a folk tune and I dunno, I just, it's a personal favorite.

Nancy Hall: [35:26](#) Thank you. On the first one, I'm looking at three Oh four and going, oh my God, that's a perfect hymn for this Sunday, which I'm in the midst of planning.

Carla Long: [35:34](#) Fantastic.

Nancy Hall: [35:36](#) The lectionary reading a Luke 14, the story of the, that goes when you were invited by someone to a wedding banquet. Do not sit down at the place of honor, et Cetera, et cetera. This will fit beautifully and it will be new to my congregation. So thank you.

Carla Long: [35:52](#) Well done. Well that's we as Lectionary too, so I'm, I'm going to keep that in the back of my mind also. Thank you so much!

Nancy Hall: [36:00](#) There you go, Carla!

Carla Long: [36:00](#) Yes, thank you.

Speaker 4: [36:01](#) You can sing the Joseph hymn for a Father's Day hymn. You wouldn't have to do it this day, this time.

Carla Long: [36:08](#) Oh, cool idea.

Nancy Hall: [36:10](#) Great idea.

Speaker 3: [36:12](#) I don't, I have one more tiny little story that you've all reminded me of. Again, once a month we have what we call a spiritual practices worships. So we, we go out of the sanctuary. We go into our fellowship hall and we meditate together, or we have different types of spiritual practices together. And the last, last one we did, or maybe two times ago now, we actually wrote letters to detainees at the border. There's some organizations that will give your letters to them. And so we also saying, "Till All the Jails are Empty" in that service. And it was, it was so powerful. I mean, I agree with you Nancy. When you, the right hymn is chosen, it can really just drive that message that you're trying to get out there. Just drive it home. And that's what happened during that service. In fact, I think we called our service "Till All the Jails are Empty." because we were kind of making it up as we went. It was re, it was a really powerful moment.

Dan Damon: [37:15](#) Wow.

Carla Long: [37:16](#) So what other hymnals do you use in your class besides Community of ChristSings?

Dan Damon: [37:25](#) Nancy, why don't you take that one.

Nancy Hall: [37:27](#) Okay. We've actually never used a hymnal as a textbook before. In fact, the last time we taught the class, Dan, did we have a textbook at all? I think we just relied.

Dan Damon: [37:40](#) Liberation by Michael Haun.

Nancy Hall: [37:44](#) Yeah. And that was for, for a Cry, For Justice through Hymnody or for our other course on, Uhm, through the church year?

Dan Damon: [37:53](#) Singing through the church year..

Nancy Hall: [37:55](#) Yeah, I think so. Yeah. We've taught several years together, so it starts to blur a little bit, but,

Dan Damon: [38:04](#) We just did a packet of different readings.

Nancy Hall: [38:08](#) Yeah, that's right.

Nancy Hall: [38:12](#) Yeah. We have access during the class to the hymnals that my church uses because we hold the class in the seminary at American Baptist Seminary of the West and the room that we hold the class and is also the room where my church worships on Sunday. So we have a cabinet with the 1990 Presbyterian hymnal and the Chalice hymnal from the Disciples of Christ. And then, uh, .

Dan Damon: [38:44](#) The African Heritage Hymnal.

Nancy Hall: [38:44](#) Yes. Yes. Thank you. The African American Heritage Hymnal borrowed from our school's Chapel. So we have other hymnals in the room, although I found that this year, Dan, we didn't call on them nearly as often and you can bring the United Methodist hymnal from church if we're going to need it. So we do use other hymnals and I usually put a, Oh, what do I call it, at each week I have a supplement of hymn that I copy from various sources using our licensing. So it's legal and put that together. And that's another set of hymns that if we have time we can sing on the given topic for that day. So yeah, we, and then the other, the students, of course, some of them have their own denominational hymnal. We've had several Lutheran students over the years and so you know, they're conversant with their own hymnal. So we have a lot of resources. And that to me is one of the, the most important things we do in that class actually is not just sing hymns, but open their eyes to the incredible wealth of resources that are available these days,

particularly through the Internet and hymnary.org is absolutely amazing. You could do a whole podcast on that. And then a Hope Publishing Company has been so generous to have a whole page in their website devoted to hymn as by people like Dan Damon and many, many others.

Nancy Hall: [40:24](#) And those hymns can be accessed easily. And so we're just so grateful for all of these resources that are available. But I've found that our students, my students, at least from my seminary have no idea. You know, they may have a bound hymn in the pew at their church. That's all they know. So I mean it blows their mind that all of this is out there and accessible. So we really try to pound that home that you can do this. You don't have to have a huge library at your house, you don't have to go running around collecting hymnal much of this is accessible via your computer.

Dan Damon: [41:08](#) Well, I think one of the reasons we didn't use the African American Heritage hymnal as much this time is, is that there are a lot of spirituals in Community of Christ Sings and also the non English language pieces, you know, songs in Shona and Swahili and Calsa, Yoruba, Zulu, I'm at, you know, the index is in page eight, 22 and 23. There's a lot of African language hymns in the, in this hymnal. So we, we definitely, we have students have a lot from a lot of different countries in the world. And so it's important in every class that we teach that we include songs from around the world and this hymnal makes it very easy to do that.

Carla Long: [42:05](#) Oh, that's really nice to hear. I actually love the African songs and I love listening to the, you know, the USB that we sell that has all of our hands on it and has our people singing some of these hymns to help out, you know, us with pronunciation. And there are times when I just listen to just those hymns, just the African singing because I don't know what I find in them, but I find I connection with them and with the African members of our church that I might have never had before. So I appreciate you saying that and bringing up the, the different languages that we have in here. Cause I'm sure you know more about this than I do, but I've mentioned before that I live in Utah and the dominant church here in Utah has a hymnal for every country basically. So in France they only sing French songs. And I know South Korea, they only seen Korean songs. Is that pretty typical or is what we've done more typical and trying to incorporate more languages?

Dan Damon: [43:07](#) I think what you've done is more typical. Certainly the Methodist hymnal from 1989 included hymns from around the

world. It was actually one of the first hymnals to start doing that. We call it global song. And you know, they, they began that process in 89 and we're we're still continuing it now.

Carla Long: [43:33](#) Well that's good to know. I, I was, I was hoping that because I can't imagine having a worldwide church and not being able to communicate in song, at least with other members of the church from around the world. So I'm really glad to hear that.

Dan Damon: [43:47](#) Yeah. It connects with the idea of a core repertoire, which again, I don't actually know of another denomination that has declared a core repertoire and listed it in the back of their hymnal.

Nancy Hall: [43:58](#) No.

Dan Damon: [43:59](#) However, I did look up the directions for singing in the United Methodist hymnal. And number one is learn these tunes before you learn any others afterwards, learn as many as you please. So John Wesley in 1761 is saying, learn your Methodist hymns first.

Nancy Hall: [44:18](#) Right. So he had a core repertoire, thanks for pointing that out. Dan, that's great.

Carla Long: [44:25](#) Yeah. John Wesley, I feel like he knew what he was doing and with a brother like Charles writing, how many thousands hymns he wrote. I mean, that makes a lot of sense. Right?

Dan Damon: [44:34](#) But John was a very good organizer.

Carla Long: [44:36](#) He, yes, he absolutely was a, he and Joseph Smith Jr were around or I think John Wesley's a little older than Joseph Smith Jr but they were around around the same time. So we've, we're coming to close the close of our podcast and one thing that I like to ask is if there's something that you thought I was going to ask or you wanted me to ask and something that you wanted to say and didn't get a chance to say, now it'd be the time to say it. So I'll go to either one of you, whichever one wants to go first. Is there something that you're like, oh, why didn't Carla mentioned this?

Dan Damon: [45:16](#) Well, I'm going to jump on that one because I'm, as a hymn writer, I'm always excited about the ones I'm writing now. And I noticed that your hymnal came out in 2013 and I've got you know, "My Child is a Flower. I edited at your altars, a book of short songs with a lot of different writers. In this coming

summer, I'll have about 75 more hymns coming out in a little collection called, "Little Seeds." And so your, your hymnal as good as it is, doesn't have anything written since 2013.

Carla Long: [45:56](#)

Yeah. You know, that's true.

Dan Damon: [45:58](#)

I'm hoping that you'll, you know, continue to do supplements and, and update your hymnal every 20 years or whatever and continue to do the groundbreaking work that you've been doing.

Carla Long: [46:09](#)

I hope so too. I mean hymnals are a great thing, but they're static aren't they? Like once they're printed, they're printed and I mean you're exactly right. We do try and keep up with the hymnal, but it's an expensive venture to make a hymnal and to get to hymnals out there. It's certainly an expensive venture, but, and I think that will keep you in mind for more hymns for sure. Considering some of your favorite hymns are the ones that you've written and arranged or then yeah, I think we're fans.

Dan Damon: [46:39](#)

Thank you.

Nancy Hall: [46:40](#)

There are more really wonderful ones since the time your hymnal was put together. So you'll want to check in, check a Hope Hymns Online at hope publishing companies website because you can access Dan or is every single one of your hymns on there or is it, would you say most of your hymns?

Dan Damon: [47:04](#)

Most of my humns are, are with Hope. I do have one collection with Abingdon Press and I have tunes for collection with a La Peau de Chagrin texts. But all that is coming out with Hope.

Nancy Hall: [47:21](#)

Yeah. So that's a great place. Carla that you could let others in the denomination know who are worship planners, that there's, there's more from Dan and also from a host of other excellent current hymn writers that I'm sure you all enjoy too. Like Shirley Erena Murray, Adam Tice, people like that. All of all of these are friends of ours. And these, yeah. These can be accessed easily.

Carla Long: [47:53](#)

Well that is actually really exciting to hear. That's really cool. So you can just go to, what does it Hope Publishing you said?

Dan Damon: [48:01](#)

Yeah. Yeah. You can get Hope Writers with Hope Hymns Online. If you just Google that, you can get Carl Dar, Shirley Murray, Brian Ren and you know, but if there with GIA, then you have to go to, to that publisher to find their hymns.

Carla Long: [48:20](#) Awesome. Well some of the people that you just mentioned like Shirley Erena Murray, she's obviously one of our favorites as well. So I think she has almost more hymns in our hymnal than almost anyone else. It's it, she really gets Community of Christ, but she is not Community of Christ, but she really gets us. Yeah, we're big fans of hers too. Well, I am so grateful that both of you took time out of your busy, busy lives to come and talk to me about this. This you have given me a new appreciation for my hymnal and you know, shamed me just a little bit for not reading through it, but I needed it. So for that it's about time I read through it and um, Nancy, I didn't even know one of your favorite hymns, the "Creator of the Intertwined"? Yeah, I was just looking at it when you were telling me about it and I need to hear it and sing it and learn more about that. So I appreciate that very much. And thank you so much for being on the podcast.

Nancy Hall: [49:21](#) You are so welcome. It was a pleasure.

Dan Damon: [49:24](#) You're very welcome.

Carla Long: [49:26](#) Well, you two were fabulous. Born podcasters.

Nancy Hall: [49:30](#) Oh, thank you.

Carla Long: [49:31](#) Really good. That was really great.

Outro Music: [49:38](#) [inaudible]

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Outro Music: [50:27](#) [inaudible]