

Mar 31 2023.150 Years of Hymnody.Dick Clothier.editedaudio

Wed, Mar 01, 2023 8:10PM • 48:16

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

hymns, hymnal, church, sing, community, christ, graceland, written, music, saints, call, important, years, experiences, people, lds, theology, hymn writers, committee, zion

SPEAKERS

Dick Clothier, Josh Mangelson, Brittany Mangelson

Josh Mangelson 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.

Brittany Mangelson 00:33

Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of *Project Zion Podcast*. I'm your host, Brittany Mangelson, and I'm really excited about this interview. We are going to be talking about a topic that is well loved by Community of Christ and by seekers alike. We are going to be talking about hymns, hymns over the history of the Reorganization, the RLDS Church/Community of Christ. I'm really, really excited. So, if you enjoy singing hymns, if you care about hymns, we are going to be talking today with someone who really knows what they're talking about. We're going to be talking with Richard or Dick Clothier, and he is in Lamoni, Iowa and has done a lot of research into the history of the hymns in the Church. First of all, Dick, why don't you tell us a little bit about yourself, where you're from, what your occupation has been, etc.

Dick Clothier 01:32

Hi, Brittany. I was actually born into a church family in western Iowa, one of the hotbeds of the Reorganization, and when I was only about three years old, my family decided to gather to Independence. And so, I grew up in Independence, and, of course, I went to Graceland, like everybody did in those days, and there I met my wife, Louita, also a musician. In fact, I sat behind her in the Graceland orchestra and we met that way. I didn't ask her out for a date until the last day of her senior year because I thought it was not good for college people to date high school students. Anyway, we finally married and we returned to actually join the music faculty at Graceland five years later. I was young for my age in those days. I ended up conducting the orchestra, heading the music department, the whole Fine Arts Division, and also the new Shaw Center, when it was completed. And we retired 23 years ago after 40 years of service. But we're still here and we live across the lake from the campus. We watch it every day.

Brittany Mangelson 02:45

I love that. I love that that's where you started your relationship and met each other, and that you're still there today. That's really beautiful. And what a beautiful view to live that close to Graceland.

Dick Clothier 02:56

Oh, yeah. I should take the camera out the window and show you.

Brittany Mangelson 03:01

It's a really, really beautiful area. So, Dick, what has your involvement been with Community of Christ?

Dick Clothier 03:08

Well, it was pretty total, really. Dad was pastor at one of the Independence churches or another during most of my young life, in addition to working on a part time farm and had a normal job, too. And so, we grew up going to the church every time the building was open, practically. So, I've always been active in the Community of Christ. I served over the years as assistant pastor for several years, both in Independence and here. I was worship commissioner in Lamoni. Nowadays, however, without an orchestra to conduct, my only musical involvement, really, is taking my turn on the wonderful pipe organ at Lamoni Community of Christ.

Brittany Mangelson 03:54

It sounds like you have a very rich history with the Church and that you continue to serve it in the ways that you can. So, I'm now wondering, when did you become interested in the history of Community of Christ hymns?

Dick Clothier 04:09

Well, hymns have always been one of my loves. Started taking piano lessons at five years old, and I played for the junior church at Spring Branch Congregation and they suffered all the wrong notes and so forth. And then I started upstairs, then, later playing for services. But all my life, really, I've been active in the hymns of the Church and the loved of the hymns. I taught a number of music courses during my time at Graceland. Late in my experience at Graceland, we were teaching a Church music class, and I inherited that from Harold Neal and passed it on to Jack Ergo, who is doing it now. But we had a unit on hymnody, of course, and we talked about various hymns of various churches, but we didn't have much information about Community of Christ hymns, so I just decided to do a little research of my own. Cheville had written about the hymns in the gray hymnal of '56. By then, of course, we were using *Hymns of the Saints*. So, I decided to write to all the living Community of Christ hymn authors, about 20 of them, asking for information, testimonies from them, about their hymns. Low and behold, I was surprised when I thought I might get a few back, but I heard from every one of them except one. They had many wonderful responses, most, some of them very moving, like Naomi Russell was, wrote a hymn about, it's not in the *Community of Christ Sings*, but her daughter was dying of cancer, and she wrote "Help Us to See the Breadth and Depth of Thine Eternity", and some pretty moving stuff. And so, I decided that we needed to share some of this information more widely. And Roger Yarrington at Herald House agreed, and so my 1995 book, which is no longer in print, regrettably, *Heritage of Hymns*, was written and published.

Brittany Mangelson 06:07

Yes, you've written two books about hymns in the Restoration and Community of Christ. So, can you give us an example of some of the things that you found as you were researching for this book?

Dick Clothier 06:20

One of, I remember particularly the late apostle, Jeff Spencer, really found his niche as a hymn writer during the 10 years, it actually took 10 years to put together the *Hymns of the Saints*, and he was a member of the committee. He ended up with, I think, a record number of 11 or 12 hymns in the *Hymns of the Saints*. He told me about each one of them. Just one of them I could mention is hymn, in *Community of Christ Sings* 607, "Let Us Give Praise to the God of Creation". He said in this hymn that he had attempted to respond to a question often asked of him when he was traveling for the Church. The question was, what does the Church believe today? And he answers this in the hymn, actually, with nine basic beliefs. And if you look through *Hymns of the Saints* 607, you'll see that these nine precepts that he mentioned. One was restoration, two: the living presence of divine power for the task, three: the sacredness of all things, four: the unity of Spirit and element, five: the ongoing search for truth, six: men and women together in ministry, then the role of the Church as sin bearer, the power of our heritage, and of course, the experience of the God who calls us into the future. So, if you want to look those up, it's really a commentary on what, all the basic beliefs of the Church. And then, of course, there's the wonderful Barbara Higdon, who's, also was a member of the committee. The thing that most of these people are gone now, and so, I'm feeling really fortunate to have their testimony. I'm disappointed that it's not more easily available. But Barbara wrote, in *Community of Christ Sings* 107, "Creation Flows Unceasingly Out of the Timeless Mind of God". And she responded with a long commentary about Spirit and element, as Jeff Spencer mentioned, "Intelligent energy of Divine Creation, the revealed word proposes enveloping unity of all creation, Spirit, as well as matter, and a mysterious purpose known only to the Creator." And that's in 107. You can get a lot of inspiration by these hymns, I think.

Brittany Mangelson 08:56

I absolutely agree. I'm a convert to Community of Christ, and when I was learning about the Church, the hymnal, for me, it was *Community of Christ Sings*, that was the first place that I wanted to go...

Dick Clothier 09:07

Oh yeah.

Brittany Mangelson 09:08

...because hymns are important. And I do think that we sing our theology and I love that you cited the basic beliefs in *Hymns of the Saint* and then continued that through this relationship with the Divine through Barbara Higdon's hymn. So, thank you so much. So, I'm curious, is this kind of information what led you to research and to lead so many historical hymn festivals for JWHA and MHA, because I know you've done that.

Dick Clothier 09:37

Actually, since retirement, that's been kind of a occupation for me. It just happened that when I ran out of courses to teach in Graceland, I started on that project. I've taught, I guess, for about 15 years, until my Parkinson's led me to stop doing that. I've led a hymn festival practically every John Witmer Association meeting and a couple of the Mormon History Association meetings, which are very large and very important. I've always maintained, when you study history, you learn what happened. When you study hymnody, you find out what people felt about what happened, and you can actually share a bit of their experience. Anyway, when my first book came out, Oliver Houston, my wonderful colleague and organist at the time, suggested that we organize a Restoration hymn festival at Graceland to use our new Casavant organ, and to celebrate what we call the various flavors of Restoration membership, represented on the faculty and staff, Community of Christ, there was LDS, and there were Restorationists, and it went so well, after a couple of years, the word spread and lo and behold, I was invited to Mormon History Association festivals, and particularly the John Whitmer Historical Association meetings.

Brittany Mangelson 11:03

And are there any of those experiences that particularly stand out that you remember?

Dick Clothier 11:09

All of them, of course, are wonderful experiences for me, and they must have been for other people, because they kept asking me to do it. One that stands out particularly, one of the first ones, 2003, the Mormon History Association, a large group, met at Kirtland and we decided to see if we can sing for, the final service was in the Temple. And we thought we could maybe organize a small choir to sing for that service. I discovered how much the Mormons really love to sing because we had a large choir participants in the congregation who volun-, in the conference, who volunteered to sing for that closing Sunday worship. It took a little doing because we rehearsed after the conference meetings at 10 o'clock every night, and we met really early on Sunday morning in the Temple. What we did was we tried to recreate the music from the original service of dedication in 1836, in the Temple, including seating the large choir in all four corners of the Temple. I don't know how often that had been done since early days, but it was especially memorable to me because with all the pillars there and so forth, it was a challenge to conduct the large choir, but in the four corners, but it was great, and several other experiences there in the Temple. One more I might mention, we had a very memorable hymn festival in the Auditorium, it was televised, actually. It was for Joseph Smith Jr's 200th birthday anniversary in December 2005. We had a large volunteer choir. The music office took the names of people. It was supported by the local LDS officials, and I could tell a lot of the choir was actually LDS because when we started rehearsing "Redeemer of Israel", and they have a little different take on the melody, which I kind of like, but we started and one of the sopranos raised her hand and said, "Can we hear that again? It's, course, it's, it's the most popular hymn, but we have a little different version. So, I could tell a lot of them were LDS, but we had a great time doing that.

Brittany Mangelson 13:28

I love that story. It just warms my heart. Yeah. I definitely am aware that there's some tune-age differences between some of the common hymns so that's great.

Dick Clothier 13:40

Yeah.

Brittany Mangelson 13:41

Let's talk about your second book, *50 Years of Song*. How did that book come about?

Dick Clothier 13:48

Actually, *150 Years of Song*, because it was...

Brittany Mangelson 13:51

Yes, excuse me.

Dick Clothier 13:53

...it was for the sesquicentennial, which...

Brittany Mangelson 13:55

Yes.

Dick Clothier 13:55

...is long way of saying 150 years Community of Christ. It was in 2010, and historians like Barb Walden and John Hamer and so forth, lobbied me for a book. The Herald House wanted to put out some books especially celebrating that occasion, and I had not written about the hymnals of the church through the years, so I decided to go ahead and do it. I told Barbara it was a cold winter and so I stayed at the task and got it done, and that's the one that is still in print. I think you can still get it, *150 years of Song*. It goes through all the hymnals of the Church and I tried to make it as interesting as I could.

Brittany Mangelson 14:41

Well, I will say it definitely was interesting. I was able to get my hands on a copy before this and I read it. It was really beautiful and meaningful but also entertaining. You did well. You did very well. And yes, I did know 150 years. I'm one of those folks that just still thinks that the 1980s were 20 years ago, and they definitely weren't, so.

Dick Clothier 15:05

A long time ago.

Brittany Mangelson 15:08

Yes. So, can you share a little bit about the various hymnals that Community of Christ, the RLDS Church, that we have published throughout the years?

Dick Clothier 15:18

Yeah, some of the interesting experiences for me were with the very first hymnal of the Church before there were LDS and RLDS and so forth. Emma's very first hymnal, most of us, I think, realize and remember that section 24, at least the Community of Christ section 24 of the *Doctrine and Covenants*, it was about three months after the organization, and he not only asked, but commands his wife to put together a new hymnal, the first hymnal for the church. It took several years because she was busy

raising kids and moving around and so forth. But shortly after that, a very important convert to the church, W. W., William Wines Phelps read the *Book of Mormon* soon after it was published first, and he decided to move his family to Kirtland and get to know Joseph Smith. Well, very soon, Joseph, of course, delivered a revelation to him that he needed to be baptized and ordained an elder and head to Independence with, this was the way things happened in those days, to be a printer for the church. He had a background in journalism, and so he really helped a lot in getting things going. He's established a print shop south of the square, on Liberty Street in Independence. A lot of you will know that and not there anymore of course. For just over a year, he was publishing periodical called *The Morning and the Evening Star*. It's started in 1832 and what he did was, he had been so engaged in collecting and correcting hymns, he'd been asked to collect and correct, which meant to change them and, so they fit the local LDS philosophy and theology. And he started issuing in, there's six of them in the first issue and probably three or four in almost all of the monthly issues of *The Morning and the Evening Star*. So, he actually printed hymns that he'd been collecting in there. Some of them, a lot of them in fact, were actually an adaptation of existing hymns. For example, the very first issue had this hymn that was based on Joseph Swain's poetry. If I read the original poetry to you, you'd probably realize what hymn is. It says, "Oh, thou and whose presence my soul takes delight, on whom in affliction I call. My comfort by day and my song in the night, my hope, my salvation, my all." And that, of course, became in Phelps's hands, "Redeemer of Israel". You got it, right?

Brittany Mangelson 18:04

Yup, yup. I was just unmuting myself to say that.

Dick Clothier 18:08

And so, and that became really one of the battle hymns of the Church. There was one verse nobody sings anymore, in its last verse said, this is Phelps writing, "The secret of heaven, the mystery below, that many have sought for so long, we know that we know, for the Spirit of Christ tells his servants they cannot be wrong." A lot of the hymns, actually 40 of the 90 hymns in the first hymnal, most of them were adapted or originally written by W. W. Phelps. The one he wrote all by himself was another famous one, and of course, it was "The Spirit of God, Like a Fire is Burning", probably one of the battle hymns of the Church. And that, of course, was written, and is the last hymn to be put in the very first hymnal, and it had to be squeezed in with small, small type. I think you can still buy these replicas of that, Emma's first hymnal, just little pocket sized thing. But that was written in response to the really Pentecostal experiences that they had leading up to the dedication of the Temple. And he wrote that "The Spirit of God, Like a Fire is Burning". And they actually referred to some of the meetings they felt that fire in their bones, and they felt that, and so he responded. This is one of the famous hymns of the Church. We have, of course, in the Community of Christ, have altered the third verse by referring to, "the Lion and the Lamb", and that's one that is, we didn't like the way it was written, and so, it's much better, I think, that have been corrected by Community of Christ.

Brittany Mangelson 19:52

I absolutely agree. I don't know if I mentioned this or if you knew this, Dick, but I grew up LDS and so...

Dick Clothier 29:59

Oh ha.

Brittany Mangelson 20:00

...being a convert to Community of Christ, that was one of the first differences that I noticed, because I knew that both churches had that hymn. And I was very happy to see the rewrite of Community of Christ. I think that it is much more representative of creating Zion here and now and living in peace among one another and with our neighbors, and is much more applicable to the mission of Community of Christ, the way that it was rewritten. So, I'm glad that you mentioned that.

Dick Clothier 20:29

Yeah, that's a Randall Pratt and Andrew Bolton. They wanted, they include the lion and lamb, and it's on the Church seal, of course, but the original version talked about, I can't remember exactly, but it's something that we don't really worry about much anymore. Interestingly enough, several years ago I was at Nauvoo for the celebration that they have every year, of the burial that's in the spring, and there's a large contingent of both Community of Christ and LDS there. And they started singing from memory, "The Spirit of God...", and when it got to that third stanza, everybody's looking at one another. What is this? And it was very embarrassing, really, was not much unity involved that day.

Brittany Mangelson 21:14

Oh, that makes me giggle. But there's real theological implications. I mean, the words that we sing matter, and so, the fact that, yeah, there wasn't quite harmony on that verse does not surprise me and also makes me chuckle a little.

Dick Clothier 21:31

Another thing that's interesting to me is, after the first hymnal was published, it's actually in 1836, just in time for the dedication of the Temple, although it says 1835, Emma was asked to get to work on another one, because those 90 hymns were not enough. So, in Nauvoo finally, she came out with another hymnal, was 1841, it had 300 and some hymns. Soon after the dedication, apostles Pratt, Taylor and Young were assigned to England, and they wrote back to Joseph and said, "We really need a hymnal over here." There were only about 1000 of those first hymnals published, and really were taken up pretty quickly in Kirtland. So, they had no hymnals in England with the mission, and so they wanted to see if they could publish one on their own. Well, Joseph, reportedly anyway, wrote back to them and said, "Well, Emma's working on a new one here in Nauvoo. Just be patient. Those come out soon." And evidently, they didn't get the letter, or they chose not to worry about it, because they went ahead and put a hymnal together anyway on their own. And Parley P. Pratt was one of the chief authors in that. And those hymns, we call it the *Manchester Hymnal*, in 1840, because it was published in Manchester, England, those hymns are a little more distinctive like. And there's, some of them are still used, like Phelp's verse, "If you could hie to Kolob", you remember that one? "If you could hie to Kolob", and see that I remember it goes. Michael Hicks, who's the LDS historian on hymns of the Church there, calls it, "text relating the expanding theology of Joseph's last years". I think Community of Christ would agree that his theology really expanded in his last years. But the, an important thing, I think, is the LDS hymnals flow from that time, because all three of those apostles went west, and through some 27 or so revisions into the current year. Those, that, it's a very distinctive hymnal. If you look at both the hymnals together, the Community of Christ and LDS hymns are very, very different hymnals, very different. Emma's Nauvoo hymnal, 1841, had more mainstream hymns, like Amazing

Grace". And one of the hymns, it's been called the best one of the English language, "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross". And so, all of our Community of Christ hymns flow from that hymnal because she was asked also to do a hymnal for the Reorganization, and it was printed in 1861, but it's very close to the Nauvoo hymnal, almost a rewrite of that. So, our hymnals today, if you compare them, are very, very different.

Brittany Mangelson 24:26

They really are. And I think it's interesting, rumor has it the LDS church is working on a new hymnal and I'm curious...

Dick Clothier 24:33

Yeah.

Brittany Mangelson 24:34

...to see if those hymns like, "If you could hie to Kolob", end up in the new hymnal because, even my generation, that was kind of out there...

Dick Clothier 24:44

Yeah.

Brittany Mangelson 24:44

...theology, and I think people younger than me are even more detached from it. So, I do, just to reiterate what you're saying, you can really see the progression of Community of Christ and of the LDS Church in the hymnals. And yes, it's important. Hymnody is extremely important to the culture and theology of a denomination.

Dick Clothier 25:06

I like to say we sing what we believe, and we believe what we sing. Sideline for a moment, tomorrow's Valentine's Day. We can say I love you, but if we sing a love song, it's much more important. It's much more emotional. It involves the feeling, as well as just the words. I like to refer to the apostle Paul, who said, "I will pray with the Spirit, and I will pray with the mind also. I will sing with the Spirit, and I will sing with the mind also." He would pray with his mind and with his spirit, and it's important that we have both.

Brittany Mangelson 25:45

Absolutely, yeah, its importance cannot be overstated, I think, so. Thank you for that. Okay, so you just mentioned that Emma did a hymnal for the Reorganization and that was patterned closely after the Nauvoo hymnal. What's next?

Dick Clothier 26:04

The Plano Lamoni period, Plano-Lamoni. Mark Forscutt was a British convert to the Church. His life is so interesting, but I've often said his life would make a good movie. He was kicked out of the house in Godmanchester, England, by his parents, because he converted to the LDS church and he had a place at Cambridge University. He was very brilliant, but somebody told him that you don't need a education.

God will give you everything you need to say. So, he didn't take his place at Cambridge, but he became so converted that he decided that on his wedding day, 1860, he'd sail with his wife to America. He pushed a handcart to Utah, became a private secretary to Brigham Young, but he was so disillusioned with what was going on there, that he eventually ended up back in the Midwest as a good friend of Joseph III. He was a very important and talented preacher. He was also one of the Graceland administrators in the early days. He prayed at the dedication of Graceland. And comments say, "Brother Forscutt prayed. Oh, how he prayed." He decided to put together, from all of his notes, the number of hymns that he collected from Britain, from Utah, and elsewhere, and that, the words only, the collection in the hymnal amounted to 1,120 hymns, if you can imagine. Now, the present hymnal, "Community of Christ Sings", is largest since, 664 hymns. Can you imagine almost duplicating that and trying to get it into small size. It was amazing. People say well, that's great, but we should have music with it. So, he got to work on that, and in 1889, he published a really huge, I mean, 8½ x 11 by about an inch and a half thick. It was *The Saints Harmony*, 1889, published in Lamoni, with music, for all the 1,120 hymns from the harp. And if we had video, I could show you the book. It's the one with split pages. The melody, the music and the text are on different parts of the page, and you can mix and match. You'd think it was very well accepted, but actually, it wasn't because it was too big. It was too expensive. I think he charged a couple of dollars instead of 50 cents that they were used to paying for hymnals. And the Conference, then, in 1895 took specific action. They wanted a smaller hymnal with no more than 200 hymns, plus 15 sets of words in the back. And they said if it was put together by music leaders it be, cost only 50 cents, and be called *The Saints' Hymnal* and even named a new committee, and Forscutt was not included. I would have imagined it must have been a big shock for him. It was his life's work to put that together, and it was a failure, and he was not even appointed to the committee again. That's pretty much the Lamoni story, although in 1903, and, in 1903, the *Zion's Praises* was published in Lamoni and that had more lively songs for the Sunday school movement, but everybody else enjoyed them too. And there were also new hymns that had been written like, "The Old, Old Path", and some hymns by Joseph III, who actually wrote a number of hymns himself and that was published Herald House in Lamoni. So that's the Lamoni story and I'm sticking to it.

Brittany Mangelson 29:50

I have to say that it would be so sad to not be on the new committee after you had arguably done a over the top job, for what?

Dick Clothier 30:02

Yeah.

Brittany Mangelson 30:02

For the hymnal. I mean he almost did it a little too well.

Dick Clothier 30:06

That's right.

Brittany Mangelson 30:07

But yeah, that is fascinating. So that takes us through the Lamoni period, and what's next?

Dick Clothier 30:15

Well then, everything moves to Independence of course, the headquarters of the Church, and at that point there are two hymnals in current use, the *Zion's Praises*, 1903, and then the adaptation of Mark Forscutt's work, the 200 hymns plus *Saint's Hymnal*. So, they decided the next *Saint's Hymnal* in Independence, it was published in 1933, and it combined selections from both the *Zion's Praises* and the *Saint's Hymnal*. So then after that, of course, we go really quickly. 1956, Franklin Weddle is the first full time music director for the Church, but what we call the gray hymnal or just called *The Hymnal*, some people say it was gray in style, as well as color. He wanted more dignity in worship and he left out all the *Zion's Praises* hymns and left out all of what we call syncopation in music. So then, the other committee was formed with, Harold Neal took Franklin Weddle's place, and I was actually on that committee until we moved to England. Then there was, *Hymns of the Saints*, 1981. Again, more variety and inclusive language. We worked on that a long time in the committee, trying to get inclusive language for humans, not for God, but for humans. And it's 10 years getting that put together. The current hymnal, of course, attempted, and I think they did a wonderful job, inclusive language for divinity, which is very difficult. What pronouns do you use there? And they put that together, and it was printed in record time, because the committee was only headquarters people. So that's a brief rundown over the twelve hymnals of the church.

Brittany Mangelson 32:04

So, thank you so much for that really good overview. I know that I learned a lot, and to me, it's just so interesting to see the evolution of hymnody in the Church. What are some of the similarities and differences that you noticed between the various hymnals?

Dick Clothier 32:23

Well, of course, when you go back and look through, there's many more differences than there are similarities. For example, not many of the early hymnals have texts that we can sing today. You look through the 90 in the little first hymnal and there are only seven or eight from Emma's first collection in today's hymnal. Even a few we do sing contain some phrases that we might leave out if they weren't so popular today like, "Restoring their judges and all as at first", going back to the early days of the organization. "We know he's coming to gather his sheep and plant them in Zion". We don't think of Zion is going to be the destination for all of us. Let's go a little further here. Our theology has changed so much, that we no longer insist on being the one true church. We don't believe we have a monopoly on all light and truth. We no longer preach the imminent return and the Zonic reign of Christ with the intended destruction of nonbelievers. We no longer think of Zion as a specific place, and Missouri to which all the saints will repair for safety. And, in fact, just for fun, I want to read another hymn by Phelps, which was called, "There is a Land the Lord Will Bless". His printing press in Independence was destroyed by a mob after about a year and the type was scattered in the street, and the next installment of *The Morning and Evening Star* came from Kirtland. But here's one that makes the point. It's a revision of an existing hymn, but he says, "There is a land the Lord will bless, where all the saints shall come. There is a day for righteousness when Israel gathers home. Before the word goes out, destroy and all the wicked burn. With songs of everlasting joy, the pure in heart return." And where are they going to return to? "The fields along Missouri's flood.", in other words, along the Missouri River, "...are in perspective seen as unto Israel, Canaan stood, while Jordan flowed between." I used to say, as we would go and visit Independence, we drive across the Missouri River there south of Liberty and

would say, “Well, we just crossed the Jordan River, so we're back to Zion now”. And it's making that comparison, it's a lot of fun. It illustrates some of the differences really, between theology in the early hymns and the current ones. There are some similarities that continue. We still affirm the importance, as well as the practice, of the ongoing revelation of divinity. It's in our DNA, and it's in our procedures we count on happening. We rely on a well prepared, self-sustaining ministry. We still value the wisdom of the scriptures, and we enjoy a unique sense of community with members throughout the world. And I can testify to that because wherever we go, we run into Community of Christ folks, and it's just like we were home again. They welcome us as there. Even in our travels abroad, we felt right at home with Church people.

Brittany Mangelson 35:46

That is one thing that I love about Community of Christ, is the feeling of family and welcome is absolutely consistent wherever you go.

Dick Clothier 35:54

We'd been on the Graceland faculty for 13 years. It was a long time toward retirement. We really loved it and Graceland, and we didn't want to leave, but we decided we would see if we could go somewhere for a year or so, just for change. We applied a lot of places, of course, and we both were in the field of music, so it really was not very possible particularly to go abroad, which we were interested in. But we had a friend who taught at probably the best international school in the world, except perhaps for the one in Japan. It's the one in downtown London, England. We'd written and sent our credentials and didn't hear back. All of a sudden, one Friday morning in Lamoni we got a call from the assistant headmaster. “We'd like for you to come and teach for us in London.” We couldn't believe it. I mean, it was a miracle, really. Those things just don't happen, but it did. We moved to London. We enjoyed, the kids grew up there. And we became a British people really for six years, and we had an opportunity to return to Graceland after that. But it was one of the most incredible experiences. It just could not happen, but it did, both of us in the field of music. I was asked to head up the music department and shape it up a little bit, and later was promoted or demoted, whichever, to assistant principal for the rest of the time. It was an incredible experience. When we talk about miracles, this is one of those that happened in our life. The saints over there and are still very dear to us. We went back numerous times while we were still able to travel that way, house sitting for the summer with people we used to know on the faculty, and just becoming really British people for a long time, and we are so accepted. Dunfield House, we have so many dear friends. We still tune in to their live services on Sunday, and join with them there on internet by Zoom.

Brittany Mangelson 38:01

I'm so glad that you shared that story, and I'm so glad that you are able to still connect with them. That was going to be a question of mine, is whether or not today you're still able to communicate and be connected with those folks. And it sounds like you are which is a miracle in and of itself.

Dick Clothier 38:18

That's right.

Brittany Mangelson 38:20

This has been such a lovely interview, and we just have a couple more questions to wrap up. We talked about the similarities and differences that you've noticed through the various hymnals, and you've touched on this a little bit, but do you have any more thoughts on how our theology has changed through our hymnody?

Dick Clothier 38:39

It's changed so much that we wouldn't really recognize a lot of the early hymns and we certainly wouldn't sing them, but there are some that still are dear to us. In terms of believing what we will sing, we tend to repeat and to sing words that just become a part of us, and so they became part of our beliefs. In the *Community of Christ Sings* there are a lot of forward looking hymns and texts, really, that stretch us a bit. They have included a lot of hymns and there's a whole new movement by hymn writers, the Hymn Society of America, and they have very talented hymn writers. I think that one of the most talented ones, who's really a wordsmith, passed away a few years ago, Shirley Murray in New Zealand. I think she has a record number of hymns. You can check it. And every time I sing one of those, there's an insight that comes from what she says.

Brittany Mangelson 39:35

Dick, I'm so grateful for all of the stories that you have shared. As you've been talking, it's reminded me that we've had Presiding Evangelists Jane Gardner on to talk about the hymnals before and she has mentioned that we, "sing our beliefs into being", that might, a paraphrase quote from Jane, but essentially that we start acting and believing, and our values are based on what we sing. So, what kinds of things do you see us experiencing and believing in *Community of Christ Sings*? And how do you think hymns have taken us into the future?

Dick Clothier 40:10

There are a number of challenging hymns in *Community of Christ Sings* that are new to us, not only the tunes, but also the texts, that seem to challenge us. Some of them, we're not there yet to really be able to grasp those and incorporate them into our lives. But we do tend to sing what we believe, and then by singing that over and over again, we come to believe what we sing, and it works the other way around too. Hymns are so important to that, help teach us and also, they'll express what we feel, as well as teaching us new concepts. I mentioned the effort to use inclusive language for humanity and divinity, and that's something *Hymns of the Saints* struggled with, and didn't really solve the problem of divinity. *Community of Christ Sings* has done a good job of that. I think it's important that we realize that we need to accept some of the new ideas, try them out, sing them, because by singing, they work their way into our brains, just like Valentine's Day that says, I love you. And we sing that, and it makes a lot more impact than just saying it.

Brittany Mangelson 41:24

Absolutely, because that emotion and words are combined to deliver a really powerful message.

Dick Clothier 41:31

I sing with the Spirit, and I pray with the Spirit, and with the mind also, and it really does have that effect, I think.

Brittany Mangelson 41:42

Absolutely. Where do you think *Community of Christ Sings* is taking us?

Dick Clothier 41:48

It's taking us to a new level, I think, of experiencing things from other authors and other composers, both music that challenges us. A lot of it we can't sing without the tape, because unfortunately, we don't have the musicians in a lot of the small congregations who would be able to do them. The new modern composers, many of them from outside the church have stretched us with our thinking. And I think that will carry us into the future really very well.

Brittany Mangelson 42:20

Dick, I just have to say that this has been such a joy to chat with you this morning, and I always like to end these interviews by just saying, is there anything else? Were there any other stories, any other last minute thoughts that you wanted to make sure that we hear?

Dick Clothier 42:35

Let me just share one final anecdote. When I was putting together the testimonies of the hymn writers from *Hymns of the Saints*, from my first book, I did a lot of them by written material, but here in Lamoni, one of the real great poets of the Church and of Graceland was Cleo Moon. By that point in her life, she was in her 90s. I went out to visit her at the local care facility, and I asked her if she could share something about the writing of her hymns, 'cause she had several hymns in *Hymns of the Saints*, and some of us still in *Community of Christ Sings*. She looked at me, she says, "I can't remember writing these anymore. I can't remember anything from back then." She could no longer remember her hymns, or remember even writing them. So, we sat and read through each one of them together. After each one, she turned to me and said, "That's good, isn't it?" I said, "Cleo, it's very good." And she could no longer remember, but she could evaluate the works that she'd done. And after we read through all of them, and she said, and it's something I'll never forget. She said, "I'm glad I did it then because I couldn't do it now." And that, it's very important to me now, in my getting close to the 90s myself, but the *Doctrine and Covenants* scripture, "... to work while it is yet day, because for many of my people, the night will come when opportunity to assist will have passed." I think that's where we are today, that we need to evaluate where we are, and to keep working because someday we won't be able to do it anymore. I think it's a challenge for all of us.

Brittany Mangelson 44:26

That's really thoughtful and thought provoking, and like you said, is challenging. And when you think about what legacy are we as individuals, or we as a local community or larger world church community, what legacy are we leaving? I think that those are really important questions and that's really thoughtful advice. So, I appreciate it, and I appreciate people who go for it and say, "Yes", when they are able to bring ministry and to write things down and to do all the things that ends up becoming their legacy, because that's what we leave others, and that's what we leave our kids and our grandkids, and it's, it's really important. So, thank you for that. Thank you.

Dick Clothier 45:07

As a pastor, you recognize the importance of that, particularly, I'm sure.

Brittany Mangelson 45:12

Yeah, I want a community for my kids and grandkids and one that teaches them that God loves them, and that all are called, and that they can be part of this larger story and this larger song. And that's, that's really, really good advice.

Dick Clothier 45:28

The reason they know that Jesus loves them is because they sang that song in Sunday school, and that's important to be able to sing what you believe, and you eventually you'll become to believe what you sing. It's a good example. "Jesus loves me, this I know, 'cause the Bible tells me so." And the music of the song tells me that too, and you remember that. You have a way to remember words that have been set to music. Just like the hymn "Admonition", that was written over 100 years ago, because it was put to music. Joseph Luff sang it in an experience at the Stone Church prayer meeting, and it was a divine message. But we wouldn't remember it today, if it hadn't been set to music. There's other stories like, "The Old, Old Path" and so forth, that we can sing from memory. Over 100 years ago, it was written, and we still remember it because it ingrained in our being through music. That inspired texts, together with music, are incredibly important.

Brittany Mangelson 46:31

I absolutely agree. And I'll just say, really quick, that in my congregation, we've recognized that and we have picked out a handful of hymns that we really want to teach our kids, and we're having the kids do musical numbers. So just yesterday, the kiddos sang "All Things Bright and Beautiful", and they worked on that for weeks and weeks, if not even a couple of months, really since the beginning of the year, I think, and so they all know it, and we taught them little hand actions so they could remember the words. And we're gonna continue doing that because, like you said, music sticks in your memory a lot better. I remember songs of my childhood. In fact, I could probably sing you the 29 counties of Utah right now because I learned them to song. Absolutely, music is important, absolutely. Well, Dick, this has been a delight and I'm so grateful that you said, "Yes" to this interview.

Dick Clothier 47:27

Well, thank you. I've enjoyed it too, and I appreciate the opportunity to look back on some of these experiences and to share them. I don't get a chance to do that very much.

Brittany Mangelson 47:38

This has been a really meaningful interview. So, thank you.

Josh Mangelson 47:50

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