

# The American Center of CHURCH MUSIC

Volume 2, Number 3

January 1991

## Knowing and Naming God:

### Hymns and the Language of Worship

The Reverend Dr. Brian Wren holds degrees in Modern Languages and Theology from Oxford University, England. Following ordination, he served a Congregational church and subsequently spent many years as educational consultant to the British Council of Churches and the Roman Catholic Church, working on third world issues of peace and justice. For the past few years, Dr. Wren has travelled to the United States as a worship educator, writing hymn poems and offering skills to encourage creativity, enliven worship, and put theology into the hands of the congregation.

Brian Wren's hymn texts are widely published, including (in the USA) 14 entries in the United Methodist hymnal(1989), 11 in the Presbyterian Hymnal(1990), and contributions to Hymnal 82(Episcopal), Psalter Hymnal(Christian Reformed Church), Rejoice in the Lord(Reformed Church in America), Worship III(Roman Catholic), and the Lutheran Book of Worship.

He is the author of many books, one of which is a unique contribution to the topic of worship language: "What Language Shall I Borrow?" (Crossroad Books, New York, 1989)

A videotape has also been published: "How Shall I Sing to God?" intended for adult and senior high groups on the topics of hymn writing and God-language. All of Dr. Wren's published materials will be available for sale at the February 23 workshop.

#### **Take This Opportunity**

to study and become more informed about the issues which are generating new hymn texts in these decades. As a community of pastors and musicians in the southeast Michigan area, we are fortunate to be able to hear and to work with Brian Wren to further understand our role in developing additional material for our worshipping congregations. The 90's is a new day and a new age. Come and join us!



Brian Wren

#### **Brian Wren in Ann Arbor**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1991, FROM 10 A.M. TO 4 P.M.

**Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints  
1385 Green Road, Ann Arbor (ample free parking available)**

A workshop for pastors, musicians, and everyone interested in worship. Sponsored jointly by: The American Center of Church Music, the Ann Arbor Chapter AGO, The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada, and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lansing.

**Fee: \$5.00 for members of participating organizations, \$10.00 for all others. Fee includes handouts and snacks during the day. Participants are asked to bring a sack lunch.**

#### **Issues for the Day**

**I. Hymns in congregational life**

a) Ways of using learning, and learning from hymns

b) How hymn poems get written

c) Hymns as sung theology

**II. Language – more than words.**

A man shares his journey toward inclusive language and hopes to meet people who are annoyed by it, delighted by it, or just curious! Lectures, hymn-singing, small group discussions, worship. Enjoy the environment of one of Ann Arbor's most recent church buildings and the unusual 20-manual, 13-rank mechanical action organ by Michael Bigelow of Provo, Utah, built in 1983.

## Messages from the Executive Director

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### Inspiration, New Year Resolutions, and All That Other Stuff

Happy New Year! For church musicians, this present season of quiet to collapse after Christmas and building energy to begin Lent is all too short. Ash Wednesday is February 13 already! Still, let's take a moment to pat ourselves on our respective (or each other's) backs and say, "well done". I imagine that we have all done the best we can do with what we have had in the way of time, talents, and treasures. A pat is definitely in order.

We all know that music is not just an art form. For church musicians especially, it is an instrument of the Holy Spirit. It is a ministry of the Gospel of

Jesus Christ. Music is the vehicle and we are called to teach people to hear the message through this vehicle.

•I recommend to you an article from "Letters", a publication by the Chorister's Guild (December, 1990, page 129). It is entitled, "The Bottom Line: What Provides the Chief Influence in the Direction of Church Music in the Late Twentieth Century?" Paul Westermeyer, the author is, in my opinion, one of America's finest thinkers in the field of church music. He is currently Professor of Pastoral Theology and Ministry, Church Music at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He is also the author of "The Church Musician" (Harper & Row, San Francisco, 1988), a book reflecting his life-long interest and his expertise in theology, music, and liturgics.

### The Healing Power of Music

Have you ever compared yourself to a medical doctor in terms of healing? Think of it! The doctor and the musician are really "agents" of healing rather than the source of it. They cannot do their jobs without tools; physical/material tools, that is. In addition, there is the psychological or "human" touch. bringing reassurance and comfort through words spoken by the physician or through words conveyed on the melody of a song beautifully sung.

If music heals in the secular realm, how much more can it heal in the spiritual realm of our religious activities? It expresses the emotions we feel but cannot find the words to express. We can perhaps move to a deeper level of understanding of the Word through this medium. May you be a musician/healer in 1991!

### Can We Be Optimists?

As we begin the major planning and move toward the Easter season, do we ever need a pep talk or reassurance? Of course we do! Alan McGinnis has written a book entitled, "The Power of Optimism". When we meet the obstacles (whatever they may be), the following twelve traits of optimists set forth in Mr. McGinnis' book can perhaps be our pep talk. They are general but we can certainly effectively bring them into our choirs and worship committee meetings.

#### Optimists

- 1.....are seldom surprised by trouble.
- 2.....look for partial solutions.
- 3.....believe they have control over their future.
- 4.....allow for regular renewal.
- 5.....interrupt their negative trains of thought.
- 6.....heighten their powers of appreciation.
- 7.....use imagination to rehearse success.
- 8.....are cheerful even when they can't be happy.
- 9.....think they have an almost unlimited capacity for stretching.
- 10.....build lots of love into their lives.
- 11.....like swapping good news.
- 12.....accept what cannot be changed.

## Coming Events

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23

- **Brian Wren Workshop**  
(see page 1)

WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 13 -  
MARCH 27 12:15 P.M.

- **Lenten Music Series 1991**  
Thirty minute lunch hour concerts on the Karl Wilhelm organ of the First Congregational Church, Ann Arbor. Beginning Wednesday, February 13, at 12:15 p.m. the series this year will feature performers from the Ann Arbor Chapter of the American Guild of Organists. Continuing each Wednesday through Holy Week. Light lunch follows each concert.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 1991

- **Handbell Workshop**  
for directors and experienced players: Polishing Your Bell Program (This workshop was so successful in Detroit in October, 1990, that we will repeat the workshop after Easter in the Western part of the State.) First Presbyterian Church, Grand Haven.

SUMMER AND FALL 1991

- **Pipes, Brass, and Bells**  
a program of music for organ, brass ensemble, and concert bell choir. featuring Golden Oldies, special arrangements of your favorites, and a new work commissioned by a Detroit composer. Summer and Fall, 1991.

FALL 1991

- **Third Annual Festival of Hymns and Songs:**  
Celebrating the Third year of the American Center of Church Music. Fall, 1991.

NOVEMBER 1991

- **Third Annual Worship School**  
November, 1991. Our annual smorgasbord of presenters and topics has proven to be a good way to stuff a lot of information down in a short time. Plan on this if you haven't already experienced it!

## Music Makes the Difference

### *A project for the Music Community*

YOU CAN HELP in this national campaign (see newsletter insert) to influence decision makers and the public about the value of music in every child's education. As church musicians we are also educators and the future depends upon our children.

The music educators National Conference has coordinated a coalition of related organizations seeking to establish the acceptance of music and the other arts as valuable components of a sound and balanced curriculum. Its efforts will culminate in a formal report, to be delivered at a national symposium March 6-8, 1991, in Washington, D.C. Signatures gathered throughout the country will speak loudly in support of the project.

Copy the petition, gather signatures, send to the address on the petition. Make your support known!

## Marilyn Mason Master Class

MONDAYS, APRIL 8, 15, 22, 7:30 P.M.

Plan to study the and play the "Neumeister" chorales of J. S. Bach, a recently discovered and unusually lovely volume of pieces from this composer (Bärenreiter edition #5181). Marilyn Mason will also continue the teaching of the Magnificat settings of Jean-François Dandrieu (Kalmus edition #4151).

All classes held at the Karl Wilhelm organ of the First Congregational Church, State and William, Ann Arbor. Fee: \$20 per class or \$50 for the series.

### REGISTRATION FORM: MASON MASTERCLASS

Please enclose a check for \$20 (payable to ACCM) as a non-refundable application fee which will be credited toward the Class.

#### RETURN TO:

The American Center of Church Music  
3339 Burbank Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
**(313) 662-8612**

I plan to attend the Mason Master Classes:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Community

➤ A Project for the Music

➤ Marilyn Mason Master Class

➤ Brian Wren in Ann Arbor

In this issue:

The American Center  
of CHURCH MUSIC  
3339 Burbank Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

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U.S. Postage  
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Ann Arbor, MI

## Registration for Brian Wren Workshop

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Church Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address of Church \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_

Number Attending from your church \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a member of a participating organization? (check one)

Ann Arbor AGO \_\_\_\_\_

Diocese of Lansing \_\_\_\_\_

The Hymn Society \_\_\_\_\_

Non-member \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (payable to The ACCM)

### RETURN TO:

The American Center of Church Music  
3339 Burbank Drive Ann Arbor, MI 48105  
(313) 662-8612

## The American Center of CHURCH MUSIC

An Ann Arbor, Michigan  
based non-profit organization  
for the promotion of church  
music and the enrichment  
of church musicians

*Executive Director & Editor:*  
**Michele Johns**

*Artistic Director:*  
**Marilyn Mason**

*ACCM Board Members:*  
**Jack H. Chisholm**  
**Lawrence W. Jones**  
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# MUSIC MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

## A DECLARATION OF CONCERN ABOUT MUSIC EDUCATION

During the 1980s, educational reform made it onto the front pages of American newspapers for the first time in decades. Politicians, policy makers, and business figures have been quick to trace much of the nation's "competitiveness gap" to the schoolhouse door. They have voiced ringing alarms over the slippage in math and science scores. But when the discussion has turned to making sure our children learn to understand and participate in music and the other arts, there has been silence. We believe such near-sighted concern short-changes our children because it leaves them only half-educated. Since the beginnings of civilization, music has been universally recognized as crucial to quality education, for two reasons.

*First*, every civilization recognizes that both formal and informal music education prepares children for what life ultimately requires. Music education fosters creativity, teaches effective communication, provides basic tools for a critical assessment of the world around us, and encourages the abiding values of self-discipline and commitment.

*Second*, music and the other arts have been recognized as unique to human capabilities and creativity, as a means to self-discovery and self-expression, and as a fundamental part of civilization itself.

We, whose lives are marked indelibly by a love for music, and, who understand the essential role music education can play in developing the whole human being, call on the parents of our school children, on teachers and school officials, on local and state boards of education, and on the American people to join us in establishing the rightful place of music in the schools.

### OUR CREDO IS SIMPLE

*Just as there can be no music without learning, no education is complete without music. Music makes the difference.*

### TO THAT END

We call on all who care about education to destroy, once and for all, the myth that education in music and the other arts is mere "curricular icing";

We call on all who cherish the arts to insist that instruction in music and the other arts be reestablished as basic to education, not only by virtue of their intrinsic worth, but also because they are fundamental to what it means to be an educated person;

We call on parents, educators, and citizens who know and understand the value of music in our common life to bring the message about the value of music education to decision makers at all levels and to encourage them to establish music as a priority, so our children can continue to learn and make music and;

We call on those whose livelihoods depend on music—as manufacturers, technicians, retailers, educators and performers, composers and others—to lend their support to the cause of music education in our schools.



In witness to our commitment to these goals, we have signed our names to the accompanying petition.

P E T I T I O N S H E E T

# MUSIC MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON MUSIC EDUCATION

*Just as there can be no music without learning, no education is complete  
without music. Music makes the difference.*

**YES!** I want to make music education a driving force in America's schools. If our children are to succeed in the workforce and world of the future, they must be provided with a well-rounded educational curriculum incorporating music and the other arts.

N A M E

A D D R E S S

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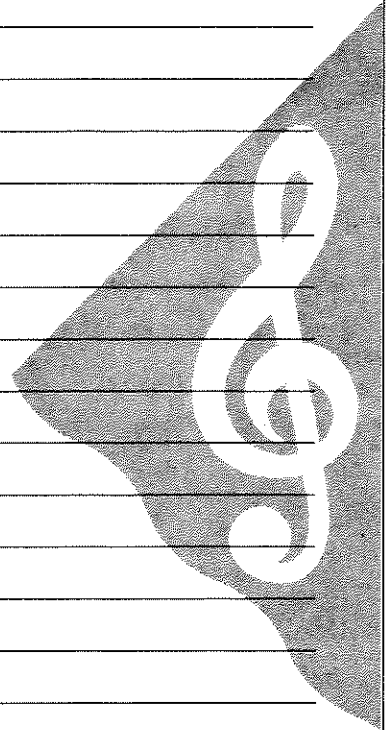
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**IMPORTANT:** We can accept signatures from adults of legal voting age only. Please be sure to sign your name to verify the authenticity of the signatures.

This petition sheet voucher authenticity verified by NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Please return to: The National Commission on Music Education  
1902 Association Drive  
Reston, Virginia 22091-1597