University of Alberta

Making Room for Difference: Identity Reconstruction in a Mennonite Church

by

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Abstract

Mennonites are a religious minority undergoing a significant cultural transformation. A few generations ago, they lived separate from mainstream society—now they are not only integrating with surrounding society, but also with immigrant cultures. Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon is one example of a congregation that is attempting to merge with another culture.

This study examines the relationship between the cultural groups at Mount Royal and investigates the balance between difference and sameness within previous and current group identities. It also looks at music's role in the construction of this relationship and the group's identity, arguing that music acts as the means by which the congregation is able to communicate.

Preface

This study focuses on the interaction between to two culture groups, how they communicate, how they begin to form relationships and how that relates to their identity. It is looked at largely from the perspective of the dominant group, who was joined by individuals and families from another culture. My intent is to examine the infant stages of cross-cultural contact and how it is that some people find greater ease in adapting to group identity changes than others do.

My fieldwork took place at Mount Royal Mennonite Church in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan over approximately eight months from fall 2006 to spring 2007. This congregation consists primarily of congregants whose Mennonite ancestors are known as "Russian Mennonites" for the time they spent living in colonies in Russia; and it is entering into uncharted territory as a number of Columbian refugees from a variety of religious backgrounds have started worshipping with them.

My interest in this topic developed after witnessing the excitement and curiosity with which the Canadian members of the congregation shared about their interactions with Columbian members. It was clear that they understood this circumstance as a significant change for their community.

I would like to acknowledge the help of my supervisor, Regula Burckhardt Qureshi, as well as the church leaders and congregants at Mount Royal. I would also like to thank my husband for graciously offering his Spanish-speaking skills whenever they were needed.

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Introduction

> "I think music is universal. If there's someone playing music in a public place, people will stop to listen, but if there's someone just rambling on, like a politician, they probably wouldn't stop." (Mount Royal Mennonite Church member)
>
> "There's been quite a transition [in our worship] in the last fifty years. Some of that comes from multicultural Mennonite life, like Mennonite World Conference. We're more global; people travel to world conference and visit missionaries. Then people realize that those Christians there are singing in a different medium, but there's still a relationship and commitment [to faith]." (Mount Royal Mennonite Church member)
>
> "In one chapel [at university], there was a Japanese speaker, so we sang all Japanese songs. I didn't like it, so I asked myself why. Something inside me turned off. I'm a *theology* student. If *I* have to think about it first then there's no way [a regular church member] is going to give it a chance." (Mount Royal Mennonite Church member)

One Sunday late in October, a large wooden door with the sign "Wittenberg" appeared at the front of the sanctuary at Mount Royal Mennonite Church; and the ushers were handing out bulletins with a picture of Menno Simons and the title "Reformation Sunday" on the front.[1] Instead of focusing on a particular scripture passage and following the customary standard order of service similar to other

[1] The sign "Wittenberg" refers to the church in Wittenberg where Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses, indicating his dissatisfaction with the church. Menno Simons, after whom Mennonites are named, was a sixteenth-century priest-turned Anabaptist leader. He is not necessarily the founder of Mennonites; rather he has written a significant amount of influential literature that shaped the Mennonite faith.

protestant churches, this worship service was concentrating on the Reformation and Anabaptism, the precursor to the Mennonite faith. The prelude was being performed not by the piano, as is usual, but by the warm sound of a trombone quartet, three players of which were visitors to the church and friends of the fourth, who is a member at Mount Royal. They played some tunes familiar to the congregation, like "Great is thy faithfulness" (HWB 327)[2] and "When peace, like a river" (HWB 336), and some others that were perhaps not as widely known, but still fit with the reformation theme of the service, like "Wind who makes all winds" (HWB 31).

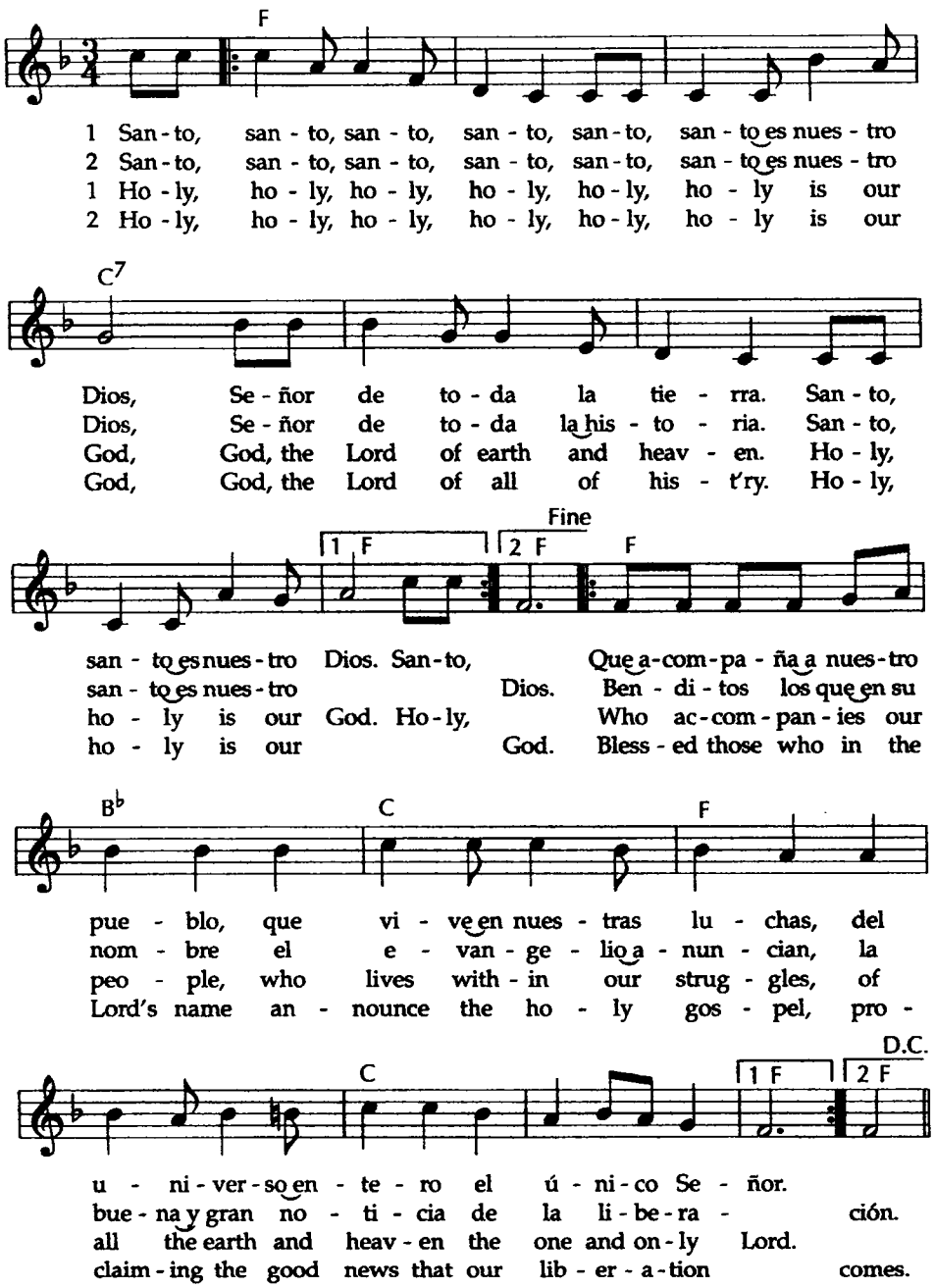
Most orders of service centered on a scripture verse and built up to the sermon as the climax of the service, but this one was different. It was divided into four sections, highlighting different stages of early Anabaptism: The cry for reform, The story of the radicals, The continuing reformation, and Activities of our church. The first two sections each featured the stories and main beliefs of two historical figures prominent in Anabaptist-Mennonite history, namely Martin Luther, and Menno Simons, and two congregational hymns, one written by each of them. During the focus on Luther, the congregation sang "A mighty fortress is our God" (HWB 165), one of a number of his hymns in their hymnal, and "We are people of God's peace" (HWB 407) was sung after hearing about Simons. The third section highlighted Gustavo Gutierrez, the founder of liberation theology, after which the congregation sang "Santo, santo, santo" (HWB 400; see Figure 1). This particular hymn is not written by him, but was representative of the Hispanic culture from which he came

[2] By "HWB" I am referring to *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, the main musical resource used at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, where most of the musical examples can be found.

WITNESSING: Mission/Evangelism

400 Santo, santo, santo

SANTO Irregular



Text: Guillermo Cuellar, ca. 1986, *Misa Salvadoreña*; tr. Linda McCrae
Music: Guillermo Cuellar, ca. 1986, *Misa Salvadoreña*

Figure 1. "Santo, santo, santo" from *Hymnal: A Worship Book*

and celebrated his idea of liberation in Christ. English was definitely prominent among the voices singing in the congregation but it was possible to hear people attempting to sing in Spanish as well. The final song in the worship was "We will walk with God" or "Sizohamba naye" (SJ 78),[3] a song which was chosen by the song leader in order to "reach out perhaps even a little farther across the ocean and share with our sisters and brothers in Christ in Africa."

Rather than the pastor speaking a sermon, members from the congregation were selected to represent the three historical figures, the first two of which were even in costume. To share Gutierrez's thoughts, a Columbian man was chosen. This particular man had a rather busy morning as this was the first Sunday Mount Royal offered simultaneous Spanish translation of the service and he was the translator. And, as the only Hispanic member fluent in English by this point, he represented the Hispanic community in publicly thanking the church for the translation service.

> Good morning. I think most of you know me. In the name of all the Hispanic community who attend this church, we want to thank all of you and God who made possible the dream of hearing the service in Spanish. From today on, we will understand the sermon, the announcements, the joys, the concerns, and your jokes [laughter]. I still remember my wife and many others saying, "I didn't understand," but they still continue coming every Sunday to the service with the same enthusiasm. We know there are other churches with services in Spanish, but it was hear at Mount Royal where we wanted to stay, to bring our children and to grow in this community. Dear friends, this is a big step toward that objective. Eric, Jack, Bill, all of you, thank you for believing in us and God bless this church. Thank you.

This is a slightly atypical Sunday for Mount Royal in its programming and its focus on specifically Mennonite history, but it is symbolic of the path the church is

[3] By "SJ" I am referring to *Sing the Journey*, the supplemental songbook first introduced at Mount Royal in the summer of 2006.

taking and of the reconciliation between its past and its present. For many years the Mennonite Church in Saskatchewan was comprised of a fairly homogeneous bunch, recognizable by their tendency to farm, by the use of Low German, by their inclination towards four-part hymn singing, and by their food like verenicke, borscht, pluma moos, rollkuchen, and what is now known as Mennonite farmer sausage. Like many other ethnic groups, this community has gradually blended into the rest of North American society and has assumed an identity that Pratt (2003) might say has functioned like an airbag—an identity that deploys during change or crisis but remains relatively dormant during stable periods.

Within the last generation and the last few years especially, this mostly stable identity of the Saskatchewan Mennonites has been challenged by an increasing awareness of Mennonites in other cultures and a call to solidarity with these other Mennonites (cf. Stucky, Garcia, & Oreggo, 2007; and Jancek, 2005). Knowing that for many Mennonites in Saskatchewan being Mennonite has just as much to do with food as it does with faith, I have begun to wonder how or whether the common Mennonite practices would be altered by this new multicultural image. Would congregations be able to make room for Mennonites who differ from them on a cultural level? Or have the ethnic elements become too closely attached to the belief system to allow any flexibility? These questions are particularly applicable to Mennonite churches who have welcomed refugee families into their midst.

Topic: Negotiating an Identity amid Difference

Alan Rew and John Campbell (1999) propose that identities are constructed in relation to Others in that as individuals and groups formulate their own identities, they also form the identities of Others around them by distinguishing themselves from the Others. Along similar lines, Fredrik Barth (1996) suggests that ethnic identities are preserved by maintaining boundaries around them to define who is in and who is different. According to Barth, the differences are the focus in identity maintenance. The question I want to pose is: what happens when those boundaries are challenged? To provide an answer to this question and to investigate the process involved in constructing identity, I will examine the attempted merger between two cultural groups and investigate how they react to each other. Will they choose to focus on the things that draw them together, or the things that separate them? Will the boundaries remain firm? More specifically, I want to see how a congregation of Saskatchewan Mennonites, a people born out of a history of separateness, responds to a challenge to their identity. After adapting fairly quickly to modernization and urbanization, how will they fare with multiculturalism?[4]

I will also investigate how the congregation makes music together. Music-making has commonly played a central role in Mennonite worship and community formation but it also has the capacity to relate to individuals on a very personal level. What then is music's role in their creation of a joint identity? Some people, like the first Mount Royal member quoted above, believe that music can communicate across boundaries, while others believe that it can reinforce them. I will examine the role of

[4] For a discussion on Mennonites and modernization see Kauffman and Dreidger (1991).

congregational song not only as an expression of faith, but also as a tool for identity transmission.

This study comes at a time when the Mennonite literary world is only beginning to see articles on multicultural worship issues. Until a few years ago, the focus on Mennonite music has been either on its choral legacy (cf. Berg, 1985) or on the transition in worship music genre from hymns accompanied by a piano or organ to contemporary praise choruses accompanied by a band (cf. Dueck, 2004). In addition, little of what has been written on multicultural music in worship goes beyond the argument that singing music from other cultures is good because it reminds the congregants that there are Mennonites in other parts of the world (see for example, Oyer, 1998). I do not wish to refute this argument, rather, I would like to add to the discussion and hopefully spark further conversation among both pastors and congregants.

Domain: Mount Royal Mennonite Church

The congregation at Mount Royal is relatively young for a church, being less than fifty years old. A handful of its charter members are still worshipping there. It began as a branch of another Saskatoon Mennonite church that was growing too big for its building, at a time when many young people were moving to the city from the country. The building is located in a fairly quiet corner of a middle class residential area and backs onto a park complete with ball diamonds and the neighboring high school's track and football uprights.

Saskatoon, the city home to Mount Royal, is also home to a number of other Mennonite churches, some of which are in the same Mennonite Conference as Mount Royal, namely Mennonite Church Canada. The Conference provides resources to its churches such as media, Sunday School curricula, and resource people, and facilitates gathering times where church members elect leaders, discuss current issues and set direction for the church.

The Conference also helps church members maintain contact through national and provincial conferences and other events. For example, the churches affiliated with Mennonite Church Saskatchewan, a provincial branch of Mennonite Church Canada, work together to help to finance a private Mennonite high school and three summer camps in Saskatchewan. Events connected to these institutions such as fundraising efforts and musical programs become gathering places for Mennonites across Saskatchewan, bringing the larger Mennonite community together.

Like Mount Royal, a number of these other churches have had Columbian refugees join their congregations, but the concentration of Hispanics is the highest by far at Mount Royal.[5] Among these churches then, and even among some rural churches, Mount Royal is gaining a reputation for its 'multicultural ministry', as it is often called.

The Canadian people at Mount Royal are involved in a wide range of professions and, in comparison to each other, they hold to a wide range of variations

[5] Throughout this study I will be referring to the group of Columbian refugees as either Hispanics or Columbians. My intention is not to show that they are not a part of the Canadian culture. Rather I am using this terminology because of two reasons. Firstly, they have not yet received Canadian citizenship, so they are still Colombians; and secondly, these are the labels with which they refer to themselves within the congregation

on the Mennonite faith, but they share a history together as members of this particular congregation. The Hispanic people at Mount Royal also come from a variety of professions and also vary in their interpretations of their faith; however, they are not a part of each other's histories as anything beyond bring fellow Columbians. This community of mostly Catholic Hispanics was not formed before arriving at Mount Royal—arriving at Mount Royal formed them into a community. In this way, the two groups are at very different stages in their collective identity formation: the Canadians are trying to find a place for the Hispanics within their already established identity, whereas the Hispanics are working at constructing their own collective identity while figuring out how to fit in to the larger picture at Mount Royal. Because of this difference, and because the Canadian congregants have the advantage of still being in their home, one must acknowledge the asymmetry between the two groups. While each possesses a degree of power in the relationship, the Hispanics are entering into a preexisting group who can ultimately decide whether or not to accept them.

Ethnographic Approach

After receiving permission from the lead pastor and the congregation's executive committee, I spent seven months with the congregation at Mount Royal, observing and participating in their worship, fundraisers, Sunday School, various committee meetings and other social events. The congregation quickly welcomed my research as I was frequently offered resources such as the worship planning guide they were using for the advent season, the records of the worship committee's meetings, a photocopy of an article from a Mennonite journal, and a key to the

church. After explaining my project to people, I often heard comments like, "Well, don't sit in front of me – I don't want you to hear me singing flat!" or "That's really interesting! I'd love to read it when you're done," or "That will be really good information for the church." They seem genuinely interested and supportive.

Not being able to live among my informants like many researchers do, I attended as many different kinds of church activities as I could to learn to know the community on a number of levels. My participation in worship services generally consisted of singing along with the congregational singing, reading along with the litanies, and keeping notes in a small notebook that I could fit in my purse when the service was over. I did not need to make any recordings because the church records all of their services, and was willing to let me borrow any when I needed them. My participation in worship also extended into leading music by accompanying the congregation on the piano, singing the descant to a new song, or providing what the congregation calls, "special music," which is music for the congregation to listen to.

I was able to get to know a number of Columbian families through my involvement in the Spanish Sunday School class, and on the Hispanic Ministries Committee. The former is not actually a Sunday School class conducted in Spanish, but rather it is has become a time of sharing, practising English, and reading that morning's scripture passage together in each other's language. I attended other culturally integrated social events including fundraisers for the youth program, church potlucks, family games evenings, the Ladies Advent Salad Supper, and the church curling bonspiel. I was also able to be present at the Annual General Meeting as well as a Worship Committee Meeting.

I conducted interviews with various members of the church including four song leaders, two members of the band, former choir directors, lead pastor and associate pastor (youth pastor), charter members, relatively new members, a Hispanic family and the Mennonite pastor who has been giving leadership to the Hispanic families while visiting from Columbia for about six months. These were helpful in providing not only information about topics and events that I was not able to witness, but also varying perspectives on issues within the church. Other sources that proved to be useful were archived bulletins from previous years, pamphlets displayed in the church foyer that describe Mennonite views, Mount Royal's yearbook published for its twenty-fifth anniversary, and the *Canadian Mennonite*, a national magazine printed for Mennonites by Mennonites, which contain articles about what is happening in Mennonite churches on a local and global scale.

Finally, to obtain a better idea of where the congregation is coming from musically, I looked through their archived bulletins and tallied the songs and hymns sung in worship. This database was helpful in analyzing trends in the congregation's song and in providing a lens through which to examine their current musical repertoire.

Looking at Otherness from the Inside and Outside

After exploring the place of insider and outsider researchers, Mellonee Burnim argues that each researcher is not necessarily explicitly one or the other. She explains that the terms "insider" and "outsider" are multidimensional (1985, 444), meaning that a researcher may be an insider on one level but an outsider on another. In my experience at Mount Royal, I found that I was an insider among the Canadian

members of the congregation, but an outsider to the Hispanic community. Because I was involved in the congregation growing up, and because I am a baptized member of the church, I was an insider. Because I was living out of province when the Columbian families began to arrive, and because I have no Latin American ancestry, I was an outsider.

I found that the difference in my connection to the two sub-communities was my understanding of them. I had experienced the 'rhythm' of life as a member of the congregation but I had only heard about the new families arriving from Columbia. Jeff Todd Titon's description of two kinds of knowledge is helpful here. He differentiates between explanation, or "knowledge-that," which is concerned with facts, objects and analysis, and understanding, or "knowledge-of," which is concerned with people, experience, and interpretation (1997, 89). My previous history with Mount Royal did not include any Columbian members, so I had to gain knowledge of not only the new members, but also the dynamic of the congregation since those new members had joined. I quickly learned that one of the central aspects of the new dynamic was the language barrier.

Since the arrival of so many Spanish-speaking families at Mount Royal, communication has obviously been complicated. Until the fall of 2006, nobody for whom English is a first language could speak Spanish, and the Columbian families had only begun to learn English. In an effort to understand the frustration, I decided to learn no more Spanish than that which I could pick up from spending time with the Columbians. This provided much insight into the difficulties of building a community when communication is at a minimum. Although it is customary for fieldworkers to

learn the language of the community they are studying, I felt this would have given me an unrealistic advantage over the rest of the congregation. Instead of fluent Spanish, I learned of the hesitation with which the congregants approached a bilingual conversation, and I learned about the assumptions people make when speaking to a new member. These were the barriers—hesitation and incorrect assumptions—that seemed to characterize most initial cross-cultural interactions within the church. This was the true language of the people.

There was, however, a translator available when I needed one. At Mount Royal there are two people who understand both Spanish and English—one is a man from Columbia who had international experience prior to coming to Canada, and the other is my husband. Having someone who can translate when necessary has taken considerable pressure off of the language barrier and has made us a bridge between the Spanish-speaking community and the English-speaking community. This means that my husband and I have been a welcome addition to many meetings and social gatherings, both formal and informal.

Due partly to my easy access to a translator and partly to my interest, I quickly built friendships with a number of Columbians and soon felt comfortable and welcome as a part of their new community. Like the translators, I eventually felt like a bridge between the Canadians and Columbians and found myself taking on a role that Kay Kaufman Shelemay might call a mediator. In her discussion of ethnomusicologists' involvement in transmission of tradition, she suggests that some researchers become mediators between the cultures they study and the outside world (1997, 199). In this context, I felt like an unofficial mediator *within* the community.

In this role, I was approached by Canadians who were curious about the opinions of the Columbians and I was approached by Columbians who wanted me to teach their songs to the Canadians so we could sing them in Sunday worship services.

Although I was an insider, outsider and mediator all at once, it seemed that my position as an insider outweighed my roles as outsider or mediator. I noticed this both in my perception of my place in the community and in they way they treated me. I knew they saw me as an insider because I had their trust. I was invited to join committees, to conduct the adult choir, to write an article for the *Canadian Mennonite* about the annual church retreat, and to apply for the recently vacated position of Associate Pastor. They trusted me with their music, their story, and their people.

While there were helpful aspects of being an insider, like understanding the nuances of the congregation, there were also challenges. Because I had studied music at Canadian Mennonite University, a Conference-supported institution, I was viewed as a musical insider. This seemed to intimidate some of the congregants in interviews or conversations when I asked for their opinions (see for example the conversation I cite at the beginning of Chapter Six). Many of the responses I received were framed with disclaimers expressing a lack of "significant musical training."

A second problem due to being an insider was distinguishing between my knowledge of the Mennonite Church and common knowledge. I tended to accredit outsiders with a greater than actual understanding of the Mennonite Church. Rather than working to immerse myself in the culture, I needed to remove myself to an extent to see what outsiders might see. Furthermore, I had to allow myself to see what other insiders saw as well.

Coming into this project I brought along my own preconceived understanding of the community, its music and the role of music in forming a collective identity. I needed to learn, however, that though my experiences were valid as an insider, they were only mine. Each member of the church brings a different narrative with a different set of assumptions that will shape his or her interpretation of the community. I feel, though, that learning to see other members' perceptions is all a part of the experience of working with music in a church. I believe it is this type of experience to which Titon is referring when he says, "Fieldwork is no longer viewed principally as observing and collecting ... but as experiencing and understanding music. ... The new fieldwork leads us to ask what it is like for a person (ourselves included) to make and to know music as lived experience" (1997, 87).

At Mount Royal, experiencing music could mean conducting, listening silently while holding a hymnal, playing an instrument, singing amid dozens of other voices, or not understanding what is going on or being sung. In addition to the physical experience of the music, there is also the emotional experience. Some people feel comfort and reassurance when singing familiar hymns while others feel alienation or frustration. The music can take on a number of meanings depending on each person's perspective.

Chapter Outline

In chapter two I provide the theoretical background for my study by reviewing literature on identity construction and group identity. I base my study on the

framework that one's identity is constructed and maintained through participation in symbolic activities that not only represents affiliation with a desired group but also demonstrates separation from other groups. A key element in the construction is the "Other," whose identity acts as the springboard against which one's own identity is constructed. A group's identity, then, is built on a combination of two factors: the negotiation between the individual identities present, and the transmission of the symbols used to signify membership in that group—both of which are placed within the context of the group's social organization. I also outline the groundwork for music's role in identity construction. I suggest that music acts as both a medium through with identity is formed, and a symbol that represents that identity.

In the third chapter I provide a glimpse into the collective memory of many of the Mennonites at Mount Royal. I present the historical backdrop by offering three vignettes from Mennonite history and, in each one, focus on the relationship established between Mennonites and the surrounding society. In all of these relationships, Mennonites were outsiders to society both because they chose to be and because their neighbors did not always accept them. Gradually, separateness became a fundamental element in their identity. Even though not all Mennonites share this biological lineage, it may be that having a mindset of separateness contributes to the difficulty they find in accepting change in worship. On the other hand, sharing a history of separateness and persecution with the Columbian refugees could be why some members at Mount Royal have found ease in incorporating musical changes.

In chapter four I focus in on the congregation itself, how it began, and the egalitarian-minded organizational structures that it has in place. One main feature of

Mennonite doctrine is the conviction that all believers are empowered by the Holy Spirit to interpret scriptures and minister to others. This kind of mentality crosses over into the organizational structures of each church, resulting in a democratic approach to decision-making, a variety of people taking on roles in church leadership, and a system of committees to facilitate the planning of church programs and events.[6] In this chapter, I also address the issue of diversity within the church and how that has been a challenge for the congregation to address.

In chapter five I examine the community's worship patterns and beliefs about the significance of worship. I compare their worship to group identity construction and find that they are working to balance their focus between the individuals in the community and the united community itself—between difference and sameness.

In chapter six I study the congregational song performed in worship and investigate its role in the construction of the congregation's new identity. Examining the musical resources available, I show that the community's musical identity has adapted to social contexts in the past and has the potential to do the same in the future. In this chapter in particular, one can see the affects of the context in which a group is constructing its identity. In the same way that a group's identity depends on the individuals in it, the ability to transmit or participate in that identity can be enhanced or limited by the resources available.

In chapter seven I investigate more closely the problem of difference and examine the situation at Mount Royal in light of writings by R Stephen Warner,

[6] For further discussion, see Articles 15 and 16, "Ministry and Leadership" and "Church Order and Unity" respectively, in the General Conference Mennonite Church and Mennonite Church's *Confession of Faith in a Mennonite Perspective.*

Michael Asch, and Luke Bretherton, who have all addressed the issue of overcoming otherness. I also compare the strategies employed by Mount Royal to bring the two communities together to strategies used by two other groups with similar intentions: a church set on becoming racially inclusive (Becker, 1998) and leaders of a nation who are trying to unify two culture groups (Baily, 1994). The comparison will demonstrate that in constructing a collective's identity, what matters most is the implementation of a symbol representing an effort to collaborate.

In chapter eight, the conclusion to the study, I tie together the theories of identity and symbolic boundary maintenance with the congregation's musical worship patterns and historical context. I suggest that, given the flexible nature of group identity, both the Hispanics and the Canadians are able to choose whether or not they are going to make room for the other one in their identity. Through participating in activities representative of each other, they are able to express commitment to their new combined identity. I argue that music has played a central role in constructing an identity together as a symbol of who they want to become.

Chapter Two

Thinking About Identity and the Other: Construction and Context

The basic question that identity seeks to answer is "Who am I?" or "Who are we?" These questions indicate a concern for current and immediate identity, but it is never that simple. "Who are we?" is always formed by "Who *were* we?" and "Who do we *want* to be?" because identity is malleable entity. It is constantly being constructed and renewed. Individuals and groups practice their identities over and over, refining and adjusting them according to changes in their surrounding environment.

Practicing Identity

Katie Graber supports the notion of a practiced identity in her discussion of Mennonite music, where she argues that identity is fashioned through a process of participating in actions associated with that identity. She explains that membership in a church, and therefore the label 'Mennonite', is connected to involvement in church activities (Graber 2005, 62). Music fits into this paradigm because "each time we call singing 'Mennonite' we are able to experience it as such, and each time we experience singing as Mennonite we are able to label it accordingly." (Graber 2005,

66) Graber places a heavy emphasis on the *act* of singing because it carries experience-based feelings of connection to history and other people. Participation is key in identity construction, as is "mutual belief in the meaning of symbolic practices" (Graber 2005, 72). She maintains that identity should be seen as flexible "interplay between language, social action, and physical sensations" (Graber 2005, 72).

The foundation that Graber lays for this discussion presents the common view that identity formation and maintenance is achieved through participation and action. In other words, one must practice one's identity. In some circumstances, identity can be passively accepted through lineage, for example, but it often requires a certain amount of effort to preserve it. In the Mennonite church, however, a Mennonite is technically anyone who has received baptism within the Mennonite church, which essentially means that person is agreeing with the beliefs and practices of Mennonites and promises to act in the same way.[7] Here, identity is based entirely on one's actions and the relationship of those actions to the set precedent.[8]

Interacting with the Other

What Graber does not address is the place of the Other—other people who are decidedly a part of a different social circle, or perhaps other activities that signify

[7] This is not to say that Mennonites find no meaning in their cultural heritage—many Mennonites are strongly devoted to maintaining their "ethnic" traditions, so to speak. The problem is that the variations in meaning of a "Mennonite heritage" are so numerous that recognizing one over another would be unfair. Also, there are quite a few people who call themselves Mennonite because of their Mennonite lineage, but are not baptized. Baptism in a Mennonite church, however, is currently the only way to officially publicly declare affiliation with the Mennonite church.

[8] This precedent, though, is constantly being challenged and reviewed to the extent that where one stands on the issues is also a sign of identifying with a certain facet of Mennonite-ness.

another set of values. Campbell and Rew state that "all social identities—racial, ethnic, gendered, sexual, religious and national—find their definition in relation to significant Others just as they articulate ideas of self or selfhood which are communicated and given meaning through social interaction" (1999, 13). If identity is defined and constructed against an Other, then identity must be both discovered and played out through social interaction with the Other. Identity, then, is relational. It can change according to who the Other is, or rather, various aspects of an identity can emerge according to who the Other is, or what kind of an Other is present. Looking at it from the opposite perspective, our image of the Other will change according to the identity we choose to perform, which means that as we construct our own identities, we are also constructing the identity of the Other. It is impossible, then, for any identity to maintain the same meaning if it is being expressed in the same manner from context to context. In each new social situation a person's or group's identity must be reconstructed—often using new techniques.

I would suggest that understanding identity as a situationally based relationship between the Self and the Other leads to two implications. First, there has to be some sort of difference between the Self and the Other, otherwise there would be no reason for the two to be separate entities. This often translates into the assumption that anyone outside the Self must be different and, in the case of group identities, anyone who appears different must not fit into the group. Secondly, because of the need for difference, identity construction comes down to the maintenance of boundaries to differentiate the Self from the Other.

Distinguishing from the Other

Barth makes a case for boundary maintenance as the key distinguishing feature of ethnic groups, saying that when ascription is the focus, "[s]ocially relevant factors alone become diagnostic for membership, not the overt, 'objective' differences which are generated by other factors" (1996, 79). With this argument, Barth is disagreeing with earlier explanations of ethnic groups in anthropological literature, which defines an ethnic group according to more biological and ecological factors.[9] He considers that position problematic because "it allows us to assume that boundary maintenance is unproblematical and follows from the isolation which the itemized characteristics imply: racial difference, cultural difference, social separation and language barriers, spontaneous and organized enmity" (Barth 1996, 76). Like Graber, Barth is supporting an understanding of identity based on social interaction, which allows for influence from surrounding contexts and pressures.

Secondly, Barth posits that the difference existing between the Self and the Other must be maintained through a system of symbols representative of each other's assumed knowledge and experiences. Not being privy to insider information is what pushes out the outsiders. He states that "a dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of another ethnic group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared

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[9] The definition of an ethnic group against which Barth is arguing is stated as follows:
"The term ethnic group is generally understood in anthropological literature to designate a population which:
1. is largely biologically self-perpetuating
2. shares fundamental cultural values, realized in overt unity in cultural forms
3. makes up a field of communication and interaction
4. has a membership which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order." (Barth 1996, 75)
Barth cites Narroll (1964) as an example of the anthropological literature that would hold to this definition.

understandings, differences in criteria for judgement of value and performance, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest" (Barth 1996, 79).

Herbert Gans develops the idea of symbolic ethnicity within a slightly different framework, where people choose to express their ethnic identity through practices and rituals apart of a functioning mainstream social system. He believes they are acting out of a feeling of nostalgia and attaching themselves in their imagination to "an abstract collectivity which does not exist as an interacting group. That collectivity, moreover, can be mythic or real, contemporary or historical" (Gans 1979, 8). According to Gans, people behave this way because it makes them *feel* ethnic—ethnicity is no longer prescriptive or instructional, but recreational.

I would argue that while Gans is speaking about individuals using symbols to remind themselves of their chosen ethnicity, they are also reminding others of their chosen ethnicity, and in doing so, they are establishing social boundaries. Furthermore, if individuals are choosing the identity they are constructing, and if narrating the identity of the Self conversely narrates the identity of the Other, then these individuals are choosing not only who they want to be, but also who their Other will be.

Group Identity Construction

If an individual's identity is formed through interaction with others, then one could assume that similar strategies are employed for group identity construction. In his study of the Yoruba people, Christopher Waterman (1990) argues for a relational

understanding of cultural identity as he finds that the identity of the Yoruba people was shaped largely by people who were not a part of the group. Similarly, the Hispanic people at Mount Royal did not choose to be a group. True, they have since bonded and now consider themselves to be a community, but they were first formed into a community in the minds of the other congregants at Mount Royal.

Martin Stokes takes a similar position when he states that "Groups are self-defining in terms of their ability to articulate difference between self and other, but issues of colonialism, domination and violence have to be taken into account" (1994, 7–8). Here Stokes acknowledges the agency that group members have in their own identification while recognizing the power exerted over them. In the context of the congregation at Mount Royal, Stokes might point out that while the Columbians and Canadians were brought together by the combination of a civil war and a fairly welcoming immigration policy, they do retain the capability of redefining themselves.

The one aspect of group identity that Stokes and Waterman do not address is the internal identity, the significance of the group according to its members. In his study of online communities, René Lysloff argues that community is based on relationships between the group's members and earns its legitimacy in "a collective sense of identity, of feeling that one belongs and is committed to a particular group" (2003, 55). In this case, it is the meaning that each person associates with the group that is valued. Even though Lysloff is not referring specifically to the identity of the community per se, such an experientially-based angle on the definition of community suggests that the identity of the group could also be understood from each

individual's perspective, that the meaning of the identity is what each member attributes to it.

Combining the above three aspects of group identity provides us with a model that acknowledges both the outer and inner influences in the identity's construction, but ultimately values not the identity itself, but the meaning associated with it, either on the part of an insider or an outsider. People at Mount Royal find merit in being a part of that community, otherwise they would not choose to attend, but the value one person attributes to membership at Mount Royal is likely not the same as for the next person. It is when these clashes in meaning surface as intentions to steer the community's focus in sometimes contrasting directions that conflict arises and identity negotiation begins at an interpersonal level. This negotiation is what I will refer to as identity transmission—the process by which members of a collective pass on their interpretation of the collective's identity to other members in that collective.

Here I will refer back to Barth's focus on boundary maintenance through social interaction and use of symbols. I would suggest that, in groups, this negotiation occurs on two levels: between group members, and between insiders and outsiders. Insiders communicate through symbols to determine ranking and to express to each other their impression of what the group stands for and means to them as individuals.

The use of symbols also creates a boundary around the group that separates those who understand the meaning of the symbols from those who do not. Symbols represent insider's knowledge. This means that in order to fully join or participate in a group, one must understand its symbols. It also implies that a group can control its boundary through determining how and to whom it shares insider knowledge.

Communicating Identity within Social Structures

If understanding a group's symbols represents membership in that group, and if controlling transmission of those symbols is how a group maintains its social boundary, then the next question to ask is: how is that knowledge passed on? I want to suggest that in a community like Mount Royal, where people join on their own initiative and where they have established a governing authority structure, knowledge is transmitted in two ways: in a vertical manner from authorities, and in a horizontal manner between community members.

First, I will examine the horizontal communication of identity. Michael Pratt offers two ways to look at collective identity by examining its locus. The first is the aggregate perspective whereby the identity of the group is the sum of the each person's "identity-related cognitions" (Pratt 2003, 170). The problem with this perspective is that it does not account for disagreement between individuals. If half of a congregation believes something to be a certain way, and the other half feels the opposite, which perspective is actually true to the congregation's identity? Does that mean the congregation's identity is multidimensional?

The second approach is called the gestalt perspective, which places the group's identity in "collective cognitive structures that are not immediately irreducible to the sum of individual cognitions" (Pratt 2003, 171). Two examples of this kind of structure would be the group mind and relationships within the group. According to Pratt, the group mind concept depicts groups:

1) where members shared similar beliefs, values, or other cognitions;
2) where groups, as a unit, could think and act; and
3) where configural properties of groups could not be traced back to a single individual
(Pratt 2003, 171).

Such cohesiveness paints a picture of a community completely united in thought and feeling. For that to come about, there must be a strong sense of a community history—a community narrative—and a strong desire to pass on that narrative. It would also be essential that all new members be socialized into that narrative.

I would argue that group identity is developed out of a combination of both the aggregate and gestalt perspectives. While the aggregate is focussed solely on the impressions of the individuals, the gestalt is concerned mostly with the group as a whole. It is true that the group identity is more than the sum of its parts because as the individuals share and interact with each other, they begin to form bonds and grow together. Those relationships, however, are between individuals with varying narratives. I will illustrate this point further with a story,

I was informed of an encounter that happened one Sunday between a college student, who is relatively new to the congregation, and someone who has been a member of the congregation for a long time. This student, along with her boyfriend, who was born into the congregation, and a number of other congregants, introduced a few new songs during the worship service. These were songs they had learned at college and were more contemporary in nature—the kind of music that many members associate with the worship band. After the service, the long-time member

approached the student and advised her, "We don't sing that kind of music here at Mount Royal."

My informant then asked, "Now who decided that for the whole congregation?"

This story clearly depicts the conflict between contrasting individual views of the congregation's identity. The group of people leading the music thought that the congregation might be open to another type of music, but the long-time member was not open and seemed to assume that rest of the congregation was in agreement. Or, perhaps, the musicians wanted to share with the congregation that portion of their identity, and the congregant was not interested in sharing it.

What we have in this situation is what Louise Meintjes (1990) would call a polysemic sign vehicle, which is an object that means different things for different people. The college student and her fellow musicians found the music they led to be worshipful, but to the long-time congregant, the music carried other meanings. To the congregant the music symbolized some sort of Other—an Other from whom this congregant had already separated himself by constructing a barrier. Perhaps this incident would not have occurred if the congregant had been a part of the student's life while she was learning to find meaning in this music or if the student had been a part of the congregant's life when the barrier was being constructed. They could not agree on the meaning of the music because they did not share the same narrative.

Applying this perspective to the vertical aspect of identity transmission makes it possible to see how easily the identity of the group could be swayed according to whoever is giving direction. People in leadership positions are no different from

typical members in that they too have individual narratives which they are contributing to the collective's identity. The one difference is that the experiences of the leaders will affect the way the congregants relate to each other. For example, if a song leader were to choose congregational songs based on his own tastes without taking the congregation's ability into consideration, the congregation would be deprived of the bond they feel when confidently singing together.

The authorities most obviously communicate insider knowledge through organized activities like worship, church events, baptism, and membership acceptance. On the other hand, community members possess the power to express their feelings to the authorities through the level of their participation or non-participation in the activities encouraged by the governing body. At Mount Royal, the authorities include people present in the community, such as pastors, and committee chairs, and people absent from the immediate community, such as conference administrators and resource people. There is a constant negotiation between one another regarding who they think the church is and should be. This is the crux of the problem in collectives—simply that it is a collection of individuals who can never function completely as a unit because this collective is only one part of their individual identities. In the same way that individuals shape collectives, however, a collective also shapes the individuals in it and passes on symbols of meaning which later transform into symbols of that portion of the individual's narrative and therefore identity.

Music and Identity Construction

Music as Social Activity

One major role that music, particularly *making* music, plays in identity construction is that of a central activity that draws the community together. It unites the voice of the collective in a "social practice involving relations between people, musical sounds, images and artifacts, and the material environment" (Cohen 1998, 276). By singing together, members of the collective are affirming each other as individuals and as a whole. As I will show later, music at Mount Royal was largely a congregational activity in worship. It represented the people's voice. When the language barrier limited spoken communication at Mount Royal, congregational singing became the means through which members welcomed each other. They acknowledged each other in song when they were unable to converse with words.

Moreover, music provides the means by which communities both construct and transform a social space. Sara Cohen suggests that music can recall a place by reflecting the "social, economic, political, and material aspects of the particular place in which it was created" (Cohen 1998, 287). In recalling a place and recreating it in the present, the music is superimposing the two (or more) instances in time, adding the present to the bank of memories this music could recall. It can transform the community's sense of place either by recalling a familiar place, or by presenting an entirely new sense of space. When a community sings a new song, for example, they will be transported to an unfamiliar place.

Music as Symbol

Both Bethany Bryson (1996) and Thomas Turino (1999) affirm the role of a people's music as an icon of their identity. Bryson argues that individuals associate different styles music with specific social categories of people and respond to those styles of music based on how they feel about the category of people they represent (Bryson 1996, 892). People are, in a sense, branded by their music, and vice versa. This model of representation is based on the assumption that the musical associations are already established.

Like Bryson, Turino proposes that a group of people can be represented by a specific musical style. He goes a step further by saying that in blending styles together, "the resulting sonic image projects the imagined possibility of forging a new synthetic social group and identity" (Turino 1999, 245). While Turino's model acknowledges the potential for group restructuring, it still relies on the use of symbols that have previously been encoded with meaning. I would argue that music is valuable not only as a symbol that holds meaning but also as a symbol that can be assigned meaning. At Mount Royal, when the Canadian song leaders wanted to sing songs that the Columbian refugees might enjoy, they chose songs to take on that role. They encoded these songs with meaning. They were not working from a repertoire of musical symbols; rather, they constructed their own. In this way, music played a significant role as a symbol of each other's identity.

The above cases show how music can be associated with an individual or a collective and that the association can be initiated by either an insider or an outsider. I would expand on this to say that, considering the malleable nature of identities, music

could represent event a mere segment of an identity, in which case several songs or styles would be needed to represent the whole person or group. The question I would like to ask then is: if a community is comprised of a collection of people who are identified by different songs, what should the group sing to identify itself? Should they sing each other's songs or should they form a new song together? Furthermore, what is happening when someone participates in music that represents someone else's identity? Does it represent a sign of giving up one's identity to adopt or encourage another's? Does it have to be a choice between the two? These are the questions I hope address in this study.

Chapter Three

The Historical Context: A Glimpse into the Others in Mennonite History

Since so much of identity is based on either defining oneself against an Other or against or according to the past, examining the relationship between Mennonites and non-Mennonites in the past will offer insight into their current self-identification. Over and over, when a community is faced with a new challenge an instinctive response is to see what has been done in the past, or to look to elders for wisdom and guidance. Actions taken in the past are understood as justification for possible responses to the present situation.

Not all Mennonites are well-versed in Anabaptist history, but most Mennonite educational institutions offer and require some form of course on Anabaptist theology or history, which shows that, for Mennonites, it is an essential element to a well-rounded education. Many of the books used as texts for these courses are written by Mennonites—a further testament to their emphasis on history.

Rather than examine the complete and complex development of Anabaptist beliefs and their progression into the practices Mennonites hold today, I will focus in on three scenarios representative of different stages in the movement's progression, highlighting the community's perspective on how they relate to the church and the

world. I will then examine past Anabaptist-Mennonite interpretation of Otherness and strategies for dealing with difference.

The scenarios I will use are not necessarily common knowledge for all Mennonites, but they do represent pieces of the Euro-Canadian Mennonites' collective memory. Many will have learned about the Anabaptists' role in the reformation in their Sunday School classes, in youth activities, or in courses at Mennonite institutions. The knowledge of the Mennonites' experience with immigration, however, is not taught at the institutional level as much as it is communicated through family albums and traditions. Also, I must clarify that in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, different groups of Mennonites lived in a number of locations throughout Europe and had varying contact with their neighbours. Many of them did experience some hostility, however, and my focus on the Mennonites in Russia is one such example.

Early Anabaptism: Setting the Boundaries

The Anabaptist movement developed out of the reformation in the early sixteenth century, building on Martin Luther's work (Clasen 1972, 5). Versions of it sprang up concurrently in a number of different places in Europe with slight variations, but with a general underlying frustration with the current state of the church at the core. Early Anabaptists found the church to be corrupt, and they wanted it to be a collection of only believers, rather than a state-enforced practice (Clasen 1972, 5–6). To have a church of only believers meant to them that people should be baptized as adults by their own choice, rather than as children. The first few

Anabaptist adults received baptism in January 1525 and went on to baptize other believers (Weaver 2005, 46). The authorities considered adult baptism to be sedition and reason enough to execute them. At that time, the church was controlled by the government, meaning that defying the church was synonymous with defying the law.

Due to the threat of "death, galley slavery, flogging, chaining, branding, jail, expulsion, exile, loss of civil rights, confiscation of property, fines, extra taxes, prohibition of certain trades, and other measures," (Kirchner 1974, 12) most Anabaptist leaders spent years in hiding or as fugitives trying to find a city tolerant enough accept them. Menno Simons, from whom Mennonites would later acquire their name, was one such leader. He was working as a Roman Catholic priest when he began to doubt Catholic doctrine. Simons eventually joined the Anabaptist movement because of his like-mindedness to them (Weaver 2005, 143).

Much of the discussion between Anabaptist leaders centered on the relationship of the church to the state, which gave rise to many variations about how the church should relate to the outside world. All agreed, however, that there should be "some sort of church-world dualism" in which the government has no authority in the church (Dyck 1993, 146). Some people believed that Christians could be in government while others disagreed on the grounds that the government would eventually make them act contrary to their beliefs.

Early Anabaptists knew their chosen beliefs would separate them from the rest of the world and while some recanted their beliefs in order to save their lives, many of them decided to live them out regardless of the consequences from both government and church authorities. In fact, this notion of suffering became an

essential part of the church according to many Anabaptists including Menno Simons who believed that "the faithful church would always be a suffering church" (Dyck 1993, 47).

It is clear that this aspect of their identity was developed through negotiations with the outside world. Had the surrounding society and leaders been sympathetic to Anabaptist thought, suffering would likely not be a characteristic related to Anabaptism. On the other hand, Anabaptists and non-Anabaptists alike labeled people involved in the Anabaptist movement as Others to society. The decision, however, was up to each individual despite race or national origin. Anyone could choose to follow.

For the purpose of this study, it is important to note that though Anabaptist doctrine distinctly separated its believers from other people, Anabaptists still worked within the surrounding society. They continued discussing issues of peace and baptism with authorities and with each other in forums, conferences, and public debates. Leaders were continuously printing treatises, pamphlets, and confessions and distributing them not just within Anabaptist circles. They were actively working to spread their ideas to whomever would listen.

Mennonites in Russia: Living Apart

We will now skip ahead to the nineteenth century, to a time when Mennonites in Europe found more places to live that were tolerant of different religious practices. Many Mennonite groups developed into successful farming communities, simultaneously causing interest from governments and jealousy from neighbours

(Dyck 1993, 166). Whereas it was their belief in adult baptism that most defined them and, in actuality, labelled them in the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, now it was their belief in pacifism that separated them most definitively from non-Mennonites. As a result, they moved from country to country looking for a place where they would be allowed to live according to their pacifist principles and avoid being drafted. Once landed in those countries, Mennonites would normally live together in closed communities.

Catherine II was one leader that invited Mennonites, along with other German immigrants, to settle new Russian land and offered them "the guarantee of complete religious freedom and exemption from military service for all time" (Dyck 1993, 170). Because of political unrest in Prussia, where one group of Mennonites was living at the time, they decided to send scouts to Russia to investigate the land and to meet with the government. Gradually hundreds of families migrated to the new land and by 1806, 765 families had established two major colonies: Chortiza and Molotschna (Pannabecker 1975, 87). This soon expanded into four flourishing colonies. They were grateful for the opportunity to govern themselves and, more importantly, to control their children's education. They were also able to choose the language of instruction. Generally the Mennonites were wealthy and well-educated, with a number of students "attending higher Russian educational institutions" (Dyck 1993, 182).

The relative peace that Mennonites enjoyed in Russia did not last long as the Russian reform began in 1866 and started to threaten their exclusive nature. School was now to be taught in Russian, and sometimes by Russian teachers (Dyck 1993,

183). Classes about German and the Bible were kept in German, though, and C. J. Dyck suggests that this may have "conditioned the Mennonites to see the German language as an essential part of the Mennonite faith itself" (Dyck 1993, 184). In 1874, a universal military service law was passed, causing great distress among the Mennonites. After negotiations with the Imperial Council, they were granted alternative service. This was not satisfactory for a number of families, totalling approximately 18 000 people, who then departed for North America (Dyck 1993, 185). The people who stayed behind experienced many more years of "material, intellectual, and cultural growth"—that is, until 1917 which marks the Bolshevik revolution (Berg 1985, 26). With the revolution came much upheaval and Mennonites became targets for pillaging and other forms of violence due to their wealth and use of the German language (Dyck 1993, 185–186). Once again Russian Mennonites began migration, this time to Canada and the United States.

From Faith to Ethnicity

The lifestyle of this group of Mennonites is clearly different from the Anabaptists in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Their beliefs were generally tolerated by the governing authorities and they experienced a comfortable life most of the time. Living in colonies, however, presented a new challenge to their doctrine because one of the main articles of their faith was that the church was formed of believers only. Now their whole community was defined as Mennonite, including all those who were not yet baptized. Catherine II had stated that the colonies of immigrants should "consist of a homogeneous population, whereby homogeneity was defined according to church affiliation and country of origin" (Francis 1948, 104).

Over the course of a number of generations, the Mennonites adjusted to their now distinct community and way of life and, as E. K. Francis argues, developed behaviour similar to that of an ethnic or folk group (Francis 1948, 105). In many ways, due to both the government's and their own initiative, they were cut off from the Russian population. Once again they took on the role of an Other to society, this time set apart by not only their religious beliefs, but also their language and their previous nationality. Practicing a lifestyle characterized by segregation soon became an identity feature for this group of Mennonites, as is evidenced by their intent to establish communities upon their arrival in North America. "Their principal aim was to safeguard their social heritage by founding after the traditional pattern territorial communities of their own, from which all outside influence was banned" (Francis 1948, 105). Now more than ever the outside world was subjected to intolerance from the Mennonites.

Comparing these two points in Mennonite history highlights a contrast in collective identity. The early Anabaptists made themselves Others to society by rebelling against religious authorities but remaining actively involved in their surrounding society. The Russian Mennonites, however, were Others to society by excluding themselves from it. Many Anabaptist leaders travelled from town to town, making connections with other Anabaptists and inviting more to share the identity. Though this was not always the sole intent of their travels—sometimes they were fleeing persecution—it was often the outcome. The Russian Mennonites, on the other hand, did not seem to be as concerned with inviting outsiders into their fold. Although they were somewhat involved in Russian society in later years, conversions were few.

Protective barriers had been constructed around the community. Mennonites were now labelling themselves as Others from the rest of the world, resulting in a very closed community. Now non-Mennonites were not only those who had not yet been baptized, but also those who were not of their biological lineage—a much more difficult barrier to break.

Adapting to Canada: Separation Within and Without

The final vignette will focus on Mennonites in Canada around 1920. By this time, many waves of Mennonites had migrated from Prussia, Russia, and the United States and had settled all over Canada, particularly in Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Ontario. They were seeking land and, as usual, the opportunity to live peacefully. Many of the problems with which Mennonites were struggling at this time were still centering on issues of how to relate to the surrounding societies.

One major concern was education, over which the government had originally promised them complete control. Gradually, like in Russia, the government took away this freedom and began instituting public schools taught only in English (Epp 1982, 17). This caused much distress within the Mennonite communities, both in dealing with the issue and in dealing with each other's opinions on the issue. Some believed that the public school system would not be a problem because the Mennonite faith and the German language could still be taught within the home. Conversely, some were completely against it and wanted to look for another country. One response to this situation was to start schools where Mennonite teachers could be trained so that they could "supplement the regular curriculum with daily ethnic and

religious additives, such as the German language, Bible stories, and appropriate music" (Epp 1982, 18). As a result, three schools were founded: Mennonite Collegiate Institute in Gretna, Manitoba; Mennonite Educational Institute, in Altona, Manitoba; and the German-English Academy, now Rosthern Junior College, in Rosthern, Saskatchewan (Epp 1982, 18).

As Frank Epp notes, the reactions to the above situation reveal three approaches Mennonite community members used when addressing issues. One can see "the acceptance of newness and adaptation; the stubborn resistance to accommodation; and the middle-of-the-road position, which emphasized both, keeping the best that tradition had to offer and allowing adjustments which were believed to be necessary and useful but not threatening to the faith" (Epp 1982, 18). In their varied approaches to relating to the other, members of the community were establishing 'Others' within their own folds. As such, relating to each other and negotiating diversity was sometimes just as difficult as relating to surrounding societies.

Epp lists a number of general beliefs that all Mennonites held in common, but he also demonstrates a lack of cohesion within and between Mennonite circles. They were tied together by their commitment to voluntary adult baptism, non-resistance, and community. Mennonites were also characterized by their largely isolated lifestyle, which usually centered on farming and commitment to family. These beliefs and interpretations of them were emphasized to varying degrees within each community and from one person to the next, resulting in many contrasting and occasionally opposing viewpoints. He explains that "since all believers were 'priests',

free to read and interpret the Scriptures for themselves, there were frequent differences of opinion, some of which could only be accommodated by divisions in the community" (Epp 1982, 23).

Fragmentation within the larger community is a trait that, as Epp states, was present from the very beginning of Anabaptism. Because of their belief in the church as a body of voluntary believers, because of disagreements between leaders, and because of frequent migrations due to persecution, Anabaptists tended to form independent and autonomous congregations. Clashes and incongruence between these congregations led to many different Mennonite groups. This phenomenon is visible numerous generations later as well. Epp notes three Russian Mennonite immigrant groups coming to Manitoba in 1870 who divide into eight separate groups over the course of a mere thirty years (1974, 293). Inability to reconcile differences in ways other than division and segregation "confirmed the so-called 'Anabaptist sickness' as a permanent condition" (Epp 1982, 23).

Conclusion

These three illustrations portray the extent to which Otherness holds a place within the Anabaptist-Mennonite mindset. They perceive themselves as different from the rest of the world, and they are taught via stories about martyrs and their persecuted ancestors that the rest of the world sees them as different. Other people will not understand their Mennonite faith and might not accept them because of it. This has resulted in an inward-looking, self-protecting frame of mind that tends to make Mennonites hesitant to include outsiders.

Because of disagreements about their faith and differences in heritage, Mennonites also see fault lines within their own communities. This is most obvious at the Conference level in disputes about central issues in the church like ordination of women pastors. It also trickles down into the personal interactions within congregations, especially during times when congregations need to make decisions together like whether or not to hire a new pastor or renovate their building. Combining a history of collective marginalization and persecution with a constant presence of segregation within the church explains the difficulty Mount Royal is encountering while attempting to manage diversity. Historically their identity has been threatened on so many occasions that they have built up a barrier to try to protect themselves.

The second feature I would like to draw out from these three portraits is the use of symbols to indicate identity. In all three situations we have Mennonites who are labelled as such both by themselves and by others. As one can see, though, the criteria required for a Mennonite identity changes between the three contexts. In the first, a Mennonite is someone who follows Menno Simons and agrees with his beliefs. In the second scenario, Mennonites distinguish themselves still by following their Anabaptist principles, and also by living in segregated communities. In the third, Mennonites are identified as a group that is somewhat separate from society and treated mostly in the same manner as any another immigrant ethnic minority. The symbols that are used to maintain the boundaries are adapted according to the larger social framework, thus indicating the need for an understanding of identity as a flexible entity that is constantly being revised.

Chapter Four

The Immediate Context: Mount Royal Mennonite Church

The History of the Congregation: The People's Narrative

The congregation at Mount Royal Mennonite Church began in 1963 as an extension of a young but fast-growing neighbouring Mennonite church. Most of the people in this group of charter members were under forty years of age, leaving behind a congregation who, according to one charter member, "liked things the way they were." The new congregation largely consisted of families with young children—the average age in 1965 was a mere thirty-three years (Mount Royal Mennonite Church, 73).

After only one year of gathering as a congregation, the community at Mount Royal and its sister church decided to separate and become two independent churches. By this time, the original branch that had started with approximately twenty-five families now had sixty-two people applying for charter membership (Mount Royal Mennonite Church, 9). Programming was soon in place for children and youth including, Sunday School, DVBS (Daily Vacation Bible School), Wayfarer Girls Club, and Christian Service Brigade boys club. Junior Choir for children and

Senior Choir for adults were also quickly established, along with two Ladies aid groups and a ball team.

The church's yearbook for their twenty-fifth anniversary describes the beginning congregation as a diverse group of people, having come from not only Mount Royal's sister church but also many smaller communities from around Saskatchewan.

> There were carpenters, railway employees, a bus driver, teachers, electricians, a medical doctor, a barber, an electronics repairman, a university professor, truck drivers, a mail carrier, a mechanic, nurses and missionaries. ... Some of the members had attended Rosthern Junior College. Others had attended Bible School at Rosthern or Swift Current Bible College and some the Mennonite Biblical Seminary. This diverse group, with various interests, understandings and experiences was conscientiously trying to discern and learn what it meant to be one in Christ as they attempted to live out what it meant to be the church at Avenue O and 29th Street. For many who had grown up in the rural setting, it meant learning to make a living in the city as well as learning what it meant to be the church in an urban setting (Mount Royal Mennonite Church, 12).

Even though the congregation was still mostly Saskatchewan-raised, European Mennonite descendents, they felt diverse, and within a few years, friction came to the forefront of the community. One member explained that the exact issue causing the main disagreement was unclear, and thought that perhaps people were stressed at home and work and were bringing that stress into congregational matters. The yearbook confirms that "the areas of concern were not definitely identified publicly, [although] they appeared to focus on the nature of evangelism, conversion, youth work, Sunday evening services, and some theological issues" (Mount Royal Mennonite Church, 15). In order to discern the problem, visitation teams were

established to visit homes to discuss pressing matters and a questionnaire was circulated, but still nothing was settled.

The congregation seemed to think they were missing a sense of unity and, because they were so young collectively and individually, they felt they were lacking "a patriarch that could pull the congregation together and cause it to look at the many positive things that were there and to assist it in working out the differences" (Mount Royal Mennonite Church, 15). They were troubled by their diverse views. The pastor had a different outlook, however, and in his annual report for 1968, he shared his opinion that diversity should not be something to work against, but to work with.

> This diversity can look to us like a real handicap and we can resent it for fear that it will eventually tear us apart. And we sometimes feel that we would get along much better if we were all a little more alike. But it is wrong for us to think this way about it. The fact that we are one congregation, with one basic aim and job description which is to give glory to God and live in His fellowship to meet the needs of the world; that Jesus Christ has called us out of diversities in order that through our diversities we should demonstrate His glory and power, that to me, is the greatest thing going. ... We are called to be the community of the Holy Spirit and not just a community of human affinity, e.g. a group of identical persons. We must capitalize on our diversities and intensify our life together" (Mount Royal Mennonite Church, 15).

The church was not able to resolve their differences easily, and it took a toll on the congregation. Within two years, many of the leaders submitted their resignation including the pastor, deacon, director of Christian Education, chairperson of the Board of Trustees, chairperson of the Missions and Service Committee, and the music co-ordinator. Between 1969 and 1971 roughly one-third of the congregation gradually left for other communities and other congregations (Mount Royal Mennonite Church, 16). Since then the congregation at Mount Royal has doubled in

size, but not without its struggles and disagreements along the way. One member commented that the church is more diverse now than before, making it difficult to be united.

The Extended Community

Outside of the actual congregants at Mount Royal exists a series of larger communities to which the church belongs. The Mennonite churches in Canada are organized into conferences according to geographic location and differences in belief. Mount Royal Mennonite Church is a part of a national conference simply called Mennonite Church Canada (hereafter called MC Canada), and to its provincial branch, known as Mennonite Church Saskatchewan (hereafter called MC Sask). MC Canada acts as a support to its conference churches in immediate tasks like offering worship and educational resources, and assisting congregations in finding pastors.

It also serves to keep Mennonites in Canada connected to each other through publications like the *Canadian Mennonite* and *World of Witness*, a book containing pictures and short biographies of all the mission workers on overseas and local assignments who have been commissioned by MC Canada. The other way MC Canada brings its congregants together is through national conferences that offer workshops, seminars and worship, often incorporating discussion on issues the churches are facing.

MC Sask offers similar support and resources, but on a smaller and more local scale. For example, one recent project has been to set up a Daily Vacation Bible School troupe that would travel around to congregations in summer in Saskatchewan and lead a week of activities, worship and bible study for children. Congregations like

Mount Royal show their connection to the conference by supporting it financially, using its resources and taking part in the events it organizes.

Some of the major organizations supported by these conferences are Mennonite schools, colleges and universities. Two such institutions are Rosthern Junior College (RJC) in Rosthern, Saskatchewan and Canadian Mennonite University (CMU) in Winnipeg, Manitoba. These are not the only schools supported by MC Canada or MC Sask, but these are the only two for which Mount Royal appoints a representative from the congregation. It is the duty of these representatives to keep in touch with the schools and provide reports to the congregation at their Annual General Meeting. The congregation at Mount Royal also displays pictures (provided by RJC and CMU) of their youth which are attending these institutions to serve as a reminder to the congregation.

On a global scale, Mount Royal is affiliated with Mennonite World Conference (MWC) through its connection with MC Canada. This association is perhaps further out on the periphery of identity for many of the congregants at Mount Royal, but there is an awareness that Mennonites are living all over the world and integrated with many different cultures. This awareness is maintained, according to some song leaders, by singing songs from other cultures.

Multiculturalism: Columbians and Congolese

Recently the community at Mount Royal has had to adapt from knowing that other cultures are a part of their extended community to having people from other cultures within their immediate community. It has changed from racial homogeneity to ethnic diversity—at least visually. A leaflet appeared in the Christmas concert

bulletin of 2000, telling the story of a Congolese family who was hoping to come to Canada. A committee was suggesting to the church that they sponsor this family. Since then, the family has arrived, and the church is now working at sponsoring other members of that family. Sponsoring a family from the Congo was meaningful for a number of members at Mount Royal, because three couples had spent time working voluntarily in the Congo.

The influx of Columbian families began in 2003 when the pastor at Mount Royal received a phone call from another pastor in Saskatchewan who had heard from the Columbian Mennonite Church president that the Canadian government was sponsoring a Mennonite family from Columbia as refugees. This pastor, who had previously attended Mount Royal, and who, along with his wife, was once sponsored by Mount Royal to go on a voluntary service assignment, was now asking the congregation would be willing to relate to the new family. The pastor agreed to meet the family of sixteen, showed them some helpful centers in Saskatoon, and brought them to Sunday morning worship three days after their arrival in Canada.

This family would then serve as the link between Mount Royal and the Hispanic community in Saskatoon. As they settled in the city, they met other Columbian families and invited them to Mount Royal. Also, through their maintained contact with the Mennonite Church in Columbia, they heard about other families coming to Canada, and again invited them to Mount Royal. Some families come because of a connection to the Columbian Mennonite Church president and others hear about the Hispanic community at Mount Royal after coming to Canada. It is difficult to tally the number of Columbians currently affiliated with Mount Royal

Mennonite Church, but the Spanish worship services are attended by between five and thirty people each week.

As I mentioned earlier, the Columbian refugees did not know each other before coming to Mount Royal. Each family came to Canada for a slightly different reason, but many came because it was no longer safe for them to be living in Columbia. The stories vary from people in power wanting their land, to children being recruited into guerilla groups, to receiving personal threats. Likewise, they come from a variety of religious backgrounds, including Catholic, Mennonite, Pentecostal, Seventh-Day Adventist, and some with little religious affiliation. This information, however, was not necessarily clear to the Canadians at Mount Royal—because communication was limited, the personal details of each individual and family was not discovered until much later, until the group was already labeled as "Columbians."

Community Dynamics

Organizational Structure

The organization of leadership at Mount Royal is built on a collection of committees and chairpersons, a system it has employed since its inception and one that is standard among Mennonite churches (see Figure 2). The Church Executive is chaired by the Congregational Chairperson, and is made up of the Senior Pastor, Associate Pastor, and the chairs of all of the church committees. These committees include the Trustee Committee, Education Committee, Missions and Service

Committee, Spiritual Care Committee, and Worship Committee. Some of these committees also have sub-committees, one of which is the Hispanic Ministries Committee, which is a combination of Canadians and Columbians who determine how to best integrate together, and essentially, how to make Mount Royal an inviting place for Columbian refugees. The committee structure thus possesses a kind of trickle-down effect that ends up affecting a large percentage of congregants. For example, the Education Committee is responsible for finding Sunday School teachers each year – often amounting to roughly twenty people. The Worship Committee maintains a rotating schedule for song leaders and pianists and recruits volunteers for worship leading, special music, and the weekly children's feature.

The Spiritual Care Committee facilitated the start of small fellowship groups, which are intended to help congregation members get to know each other outside of worship and to offer a context for Bible study. Now, being a part of a small group is a sign of inclusion. During one interview, I asked the participant whether or not she knew if a couple new to the church was having success fitting into the church socially. Her reply was, "Well, they're in a small group."

Every organizational aspect of Mount Royal is governed by or accountable to some sort of committee. There is even a Nominating Committee to find people to sit on committees. This style of administration allows and also requires a large number of people to have a say in the goings on of the church. It distributes a small amount power to many different people. For example, during the season of advent, the worship committee decorated the stage with dark cloths, candles, poinsettias, evergreen trees covered with lights and a bare deciduous tree. The decorations were

Figure 2. **Committee Structure at Mount Royal**

Church Executive

Members:
- Congregational Chairperson
- Lead Pastor
- Associate Pastor
- Congregational secretary
- Treasurer
- Trustee Committee Chairperson
- Education Committee Chairperson
- Missions and Service Committee Chairperson
- Spiritual Care Committee Chairperson
- Worship Committee Chairperson

Nominating Committee

Three congregants

Trustee Committee

Members:
- Committee Chair
- Vice Chair (elected too)

volunteers responsible for:
- sidewalk shovellers
- grass mowers

Education Committee

Members:
- Committee Chair
- Jr Sunday School superintendent
- Sr Sunday School superintendent (adult)
- Club leaders
- Associate pastor

volunteers responsible for:
- Sunday school teachers
- Sunday School Singers Leader
- Youth sponsors

Missions & Service Committee

Members:
- Committee Chair
- Three other congregants

Hispanic Ministries Committee

Members:
- one member from Missions & Service
- A number of Hispanic members
- A few Canadians

Spiritual Care Committee

Members:
- Committee Chair
- Lead Pastors
- Associate Pastor
- All the deacons

Worship Committee

Members:
- Committee Chair
- Head usher
- Music person
- Power point person
- Lead Pastor
- Hospitality person

volunteers responsible for:
- PA/power point operators
- accompanists
- song leaders
- choir directors
- weekly ushers
- greeters

more ornate than previous years, to the extent that the piano and organ also bore decorations. The organ, however, was not in its usual place—it was moved over to the outside of the sanctuary, pressed up against the wall in a way that made it unfeasible for an organist to play it, and covered with a cloth and candles. This simple decorative decision exhibited enough power to prevent anyone from playing organ during advent. In all fairness, the organ is rarely played during worship due to a lack of willing and able people, but now it was impossible.

The committee system of structuring is typical in Mennonite churches all over Canada, though particular tasks and names of committee vary from congregation to congregation. It is not a mandate but a reflection of their belief in the priesthood of all believers, which emphasizes each member's entitlement to read and interpret the Bible on his own. This kind of perspective on faith leads to a congregation governed as much if not more by the people than by the priest or pastor.

Diversity in the Church

Diversity among members at Mount Royal has always been a difficult issue for the congregation to address. In the early years, the congregation felt that its array of educational levels and occupations contributed to the wide range of perspectives present. Now the community at Mount Royal spans almost double the age range that it did in the 1960s. It includes people from three different continents, as well as a number of people from a Catholic background. Never before has the congregation faced such a feeling of diversity.

Many interviewees shared their frustrations with the segregation in the church. They seemed to feel that separating the congregation into smaller categories was

pulling it apart. One member said, "Mount Royal has a wide age span. It would be great to use those resources. But lately the church has been focussing on providing needs for specific groups. We're losing the family." The categorization according to age was especially noticeable for one couple who started attending recently. "In Sunday School, there is no mingling between age groups. It's unfortunate." The church programming easily backs up this sentiment. There are Sunday School classes, clubs, and junior and senior youth activities for school-aged children and teenagers divided according to age. There is even an associate pastor whose main role is to work with the youth. And for seniors, the 55+ Group organizes social events. One middle-aged member commented that they tried organizing a 40+ Group for the people who were feeling left out, but it fell through.

Conclusion

We have seen here that the congregation at Mount Royal struggles with the issue of diversity. I suggested in chapter three that this difficulty with diversity stems from European Mennonites' history of separation and threats to their identity. There is undoubtedly a portion of the congregation, or even a portion of each congregant, that feels intimidated or threatened by the possibility of a change. They have commonly dealt with this by highlighting the diversity and using it as a reason for dividing into subgroups. They are used to focusing on what separates them, not what brings them together. This habit, however, strengthens the diversity by practising it in the same way that the church practises its identity as it worships (see Graber, 2005). By segmenting themselves they are labeling each other as "Others" and limiting the

interaction that could be happening between the groups that they see as different. It is easy to see how, within this social framework, the Hispanic community could become a category, so to speak, in the same way that the seniors and the youth are. While this may assist the Hispanic community in finding an identity for themselves, it could hinder the congregation's ability to create an identity encompassing everyone on an equal level.

Chapter Five

Sunday Morning Worship: Finding a Place for the Individual in a United Body

Like in most churches, Sunday morning worship is the central gathering at Mount Royal. It is where people connect, announce other social events in which the community can participate, and actively practice their faith as well as their identity. Because this is the principal medium through which the members act out their beliefs, and because this is the main context in which group singing happens, it is important to investigate exactly what they believe worship to be and how they go about practicing it.

A group's worship is a valuable resource for study because in the community's praising and interpretations of God's works, they are reminding themselves of the God they are choosing to follow (cf. Kreider 1998). They are also highlighting the values they cherish, which, in the case of a volunteer community like Mount Royal, is what binds them together.

Weekly Worship: An Ethnographic Perspective

Sunday morning worship at Mount Royal holds higher significance than other church events like a potluck or the annual bowling and chili night. Attending worship

is how members show their commitment to the church community. When someone's attendance declines or becomes sporadic at Mount Royal, other members notice and comment just like they would if a new individual were to join the community.

Furthermore, worship is the primary context in which theology is taught and expressed. At Mount Royal, theology is taught most explicitly through the sermon and it is expressed in both the atmosphere created and the manner in which the congregation worships. My conversations with the congregants revealed that they believe worship to be an expression of praise and thanksgiving to their God. They sing together, share with each other, and read Biblical excerpts focusing on the "works" of God. Worship, then, is the place where they reflect on and utter the very reason for gathering—their commitment to their community and their God.

The Weekly Ritual

Mount Royal's Sunday worship services consist of a number of elements that are somewhat flexible, including scripture reading, congregational singing, prayer, a message, an offering, and a children's time, but the whole ritual begins in the foyer. Beginning shortly after 10:30am, when Sunday School ends, until the scheduled start time of the worship service at 10:45, there is a constant whir of conversation. People greet each other and check in with their friends to catch up on the events of the past week. Some will take a moment to glance over the mobile bulletin board and sign up to bring something for the next church meal or read letters from members away on trips or mission assignments. Others are taking care of last minute details for worship or picking up their headsets so they can hear the service translated into Spanish. All the while, children are running underfoot in and out of the toddler room and gym.

Beside the front doors a family or couple is poised ready to greet everyone with a handshake and a "Good morning!" while two ushers with handfuls of bulletins wait at each doorway to the sanctuary to walk people to their seats. The preparedness of the volunteers reminds me of a hostess and waiter at a restaurant.

Generally the pianist has begun the prelude by 10:40am, usually playing hymns or hymn arrangements, and a handful of people are sitting in the sanctuary reading over their bulletins or visiting quietly. The congregation steadily files in and by 10:47, or 10:50 if the congregation is especially chatty, the pianist is heading into a final cadence as either the worship leader or the song leader approaches the stage to issue the first welcome. The service continues, thoroughly-announced as printed in the bulletin (see Figure 3). Following the benediction or sending, as it has more recently been labeled, the pianist plays through the closing song once more as some people reflect and others pack up their belongings. The congregation begins to exit as the pianist switches to another piece. Outside in the foyer, the conversation continues from before the service as people gradually leave.

Worship at Mount Royal is typically guided by a theme taken from the scripture passages for that Sunday. On special Sundays, like World Fellowship Sunday, significant days on the church calendar, or a baptism, the event takes priority. The theme normally appears near the top of each bulletin and sporadically on the screen at the front of the church. It directs any sort of communally spoken litany, the children's time, the sermon, and the songs chosen. Sometimes the welcome, the sending, or the worship music will fit with the theme as well.

Figure 3. **Sample bulletin** taken from Mount Royal's Web site.

Welcome to

Mount Royal Mennonite Church

Learning to live - through relationships with Jesus, our neighbours and each other

Greeters - Elmer & Agnes R. Worship Leader - Myrna S.
Song Leader - Grace P. Pianist - Sue S.
Worship Music - Ray & Grace P.
Ushers - Dory I., John S., Myrna S., Bernie W.

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"You shall love the Lord your God with all your soul, and with all your strength

Prelude
Call to Worship/Opening Prayer
Singing "Halle, halle, hallelujah!" StJ #17
"I will call upon the Lord" StJ #19

Announcements
Scripture Reading Psalm 24
Worship Music "Psalm 19"

Congregational Sharing of Joys and Concerns
Prayer
Singing "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord" MH #536

Children's Time Russ & Val R.
Worship Music "Come, taste the beauty of the Lord"

Scripture Reading Romans 12:9–21
Message **Worshipping God with my whole being** Henry B.
Singing "Open my eyes, that I may see" HWB #517

Offertory Prayer
Offering

Singing "The Lord lift you up" StJ #73
Sending/Blessing
Postlude

A minimum of five people is needed to execute the elements of each service. This includes a worship leader, song leader, pianist, speaker (usually the pastor), and someone to lead the children's story. Often more people are involved with activities like special music, or in accompanying congregational singing. All of these people, except the pastor, are asked by the Worship Committee to take on these responsibilities (see Figure 2, Chapter Four). In that way, these volunteers are representatives of the congregation. These volunteers are allotted a certain degree of power because they are able to shape the people's verbal expression of their faith. While the volunteers are free to choose material for their part of the worship service, it is understood that song leaders, worship leaders, and children's story leaders will be in conversation with the pastor or speaker regarding the emphasis of the sermon, which usually directs the focus of the service.

Within the basic service structure there are times for the congregation to participate actively and other times passively. Congregational singing, taking the offering, and reading the litany are the opportunities for the congregation to participate. While they are participating physically, they are not necessarily participating on any other level because these are somebody else's words they are reciting. This is not to say that these activities carry no meaning—lyrics from the songs are often very meaningful to those singing them, because over time they have come to internalize the lyrics and melody. Rather, the congregation's participation is limited to the instructions from the leaders for that service.

The only two points in the service where the congregation has control of the momentum is the sharing of "Joys and Concerns" and the point near the beginning

where the worship leader asks everyone to "Stand and greet those around you." More recently, the greeting time, which is not listed in the bulletin, has become longer and much jollier in nature. The aisles tend to fill up with people attempting to mingle further and further away from their seats. The time for sharing is open to anyone who wants to request prayer from the congregation and is most often occupied with concerns of employment, health, birth, and death.

The remainder of the worship is not closed off from the congregation, but it is fed to them rather than dependent on them. The other elements are the sermon, which is placed as the climax of the service, scripture reading, prayer, and sometimes worship music or special music. Recently the pastor has made an effort to make the sermons more accessible to more people by using the projector to display pictures and key phrases on the screen as he speaks. Throughout this time, it is intended that the congregation listen attentively or read along, but these components could actually be performed without the congregation being present.

Sight and Sound

Incorporation of visual elements has become more and more common at Mount Royal. For special celebrations like advent, thanksgiving and lent, there are decorations or a display of objects related to the season. For thanksgiving the display table will be full of vegetables, preserves, bread and sometimes wheat. Candles and lately poinsettias will be out for advent, and some sort of cross, likely draped with a cloth, will be at the front of the church for lent and Easter. Since the introduction of the projector and the screen mounted at the front of the church, many more pictures have been used in worship.

The sounds of the worship also require some attention. The sanctuary at Mount Royal is shaped like a concert hall with sitting room for just under two hundred people on the main floor. There is also a balcony hanging over approximately one third of the back pews. This sort of layout, especially with so many seniors, requires the use of a sound system. Two large speakers hang from the ceiling near the front of the pews, and others are installed in the underside of the balcony. Such a set-up creates two very different atmospheres. While sitting under the balcony, one is made more aware of the sound amplification because the speakers are physically closer to the congregants. Moving closer to the front of the church, and out from underneath the balcony, the sound feels more natural because there is increased space for resonance. Furthermore the congregational singing sounds fuller near the front than the back due to the fact that people are singing in that direction. Though unintentional, the people under the balcony are not experiencing the same aural worship as those closer to the front. Dividing the acoustics of the sanctuary allows for a distant experience of worship under the balcony. Not only do the people on stage look farther away, they also feel farther away because they are only connected through a microphone and speaker rather than eye contact.

The significance of this separation is that it makes it possible for members of the congregation to choose their level of involvement in the worship. In the same way that individuals can choose whether or not to sing along, attend social events, join a planning committee, the worship is designed in a way that makes varying levels of involvement not only possible but normal. It would be difficult to fit the entire

congregation in the pews in front of the balcony just as it would be to involve all members in the planning of each service.

Multicultural Elements

Shortly after the first Columbian family arrived, a few changes occurred in the worship practices. Within one month, bulletins were being printed with a Spanish order of service. That continued fairly consistently from about the middle of January 2004 to July of that year. Starting in April, a French bulletin was also printed for the Congolese family. Also in April, the congregation began reciting the Lord's Prayer in Spanish. Another attempt to include the Spanish family in the service was to have one of them read the scripture in Spanish. I was told, "He would pray beforehand. Once for five minutes! That created vibes. People said it disrupted the worship service." Like the Spanish bulletins, these habits also died out in summer.

Once every few years the congregation will be led by a choir from an African church in the city. This group came even before the Congolese family joined Mount Royal. They have been back since then, but not for a few years. Other times, Mount Royal will label a worship service "African Sunday," and have African songs and either a focus on Africa in the sermon or a speaker from Africa.

As another attempt at representing the congregation's multiculturalism in worship, song leaders have selected songs in Spanish to sing with the congregation. According to the pastor, "The Columbians enjoyed them immensely, but the notes were difficult. But the simple tunes worked." Some of the Spanish songs were familiar to the Columbians but most of them were new. Song leaders have also

periodically chosen songs from various regions in Africa for use in services other than African Sunday.

These efforts at multicultural expression indicate two points. The first is that the members of the congregation feel that it is important to have the congregation's corporate musical expression represent those who are a part of it. Also, their incorporation of elements representative of the new families shows their desire to include them in the worshipping body and to help them connect to the worship service.

Secondly, the choice of the elements employed to help the Columbian and Congolese families feel at home shows that the Canadian portion of the congregation holds rather large and generic stereotypes for these two ethnic groups. The Columbians are represented by anything in Spanish—songs, prayer, or a scripture reading—and the Congolese family is represented by anything 'African' or French. These symbols have come to symbolize the presence of these community members in worship, which is especially the case for the Columbians. Simply because of a higher population, the Hispanic community has had a greater influence on the congregation and the way they are worshipping. These efforts have not gone unnoticed, either. "Whenever you try to sing in Spanish," one Columbian man commented, "it feels supportive, understanding and welcoming. It shows that you are committed to us."

Spanish Worship Services

In winter of 2006, the pastor at Mount Royal received word that pastor from Columbia, Carlos,[10] was coming to Canada for a few months and that he would be available to work with the Spanish community at Mount Royal. In January, the Spanish community began worshipping together on their own on a weekly basis. These services are planned primarily by Carlos, who chooses the music and prepares the sermon, and, as such, reflect his Mennonite training rather than the Catholic practices of many of the congregants. One of the members acts as worship leader and some musicians from the Canadian portion of Mount Royal lead music. This is only because there is no one in the Columbian community who feels comfortable leading music.

The Spanish services are scheduled to start some time after 6:00 in the evening depending on when enough people arrive. The pastor is usually the one to start ushering the people into the sanctuary as there is no prelude. Everyone moves to the front of the sanctuary, leaving only the front pew empty. The worship leader stands on the floor, not the stage, and, without using a microphone, welcomes everyone to the service.

The sequence is similar to the English service using a combination of song, scripture, sharing, prayer, and a sermon. All of these involve the congregation in varying levels. Carlos will often ask someone on the spot to read the selected scripture reading from their Bible. Many people have something to share, and if there are few enough people, the worship leader will ask each person for something that

[10] To protect privacy, participants' names have been changed.

requires prayer from the community. Prayer is more of a congregational activity here than in the English service since many people will quietly speak or whisper their own prayers while the pastor or the worship leader is praying. The sermon also feels much more personal because the pastor addresses people in the congregation by name from time to time and because there are much fewer people in the congregation.

What Does it Mean?

In interviewing congregants about the worship practices at Mount Royal, I came across a manifestation of the conflict in finding a balance between allowing for individuality and conforming to the unity of the group. I have found that the common thread between members at Mount Royal is their belief in God and their interpretation of that belief's significance. Some feel that God, and therefore the community's unity, should be the focus of worship. Others feel that the individual voices should be represented by focusing on the diversity within the community. One informant said, "Worship is about who God is and what He has done even in the last hour or week."

Another said worship is a "corporate expression of praise, adoration, thanksgiving, petition and commitment to God. It's listening, discerning and responding to the voice of God."

Still another: "Worship is for worship and that's it. It's to praise and glorify God—the focus is God."

According to these statements the emphasis of worship is not the worshipping people, but on the figure they are worshipping. It seems that more value is placed on the actions of the corporate body than on individuality among the members. At the

same time, many of these people commented that 'there needs to be something for everyone in the service' so that everyone can encounter God, thereby acknowledging the presence of individual narratives. One member stated in the same breath: "Worship is about community and worshipping one God together. Each person needs something to take from it." To this member, togetherness means each person being able to relate to an action in the worship service and find meaning in it. Worship has become a place where this congregation deals with reconciling individuals to each other and to the group. They want to feel bound together but they also desire to express their individuality.

A similar perspective was offered by a couple who came from a Catholic background in Columbia, where Catholicism is the most popular religion. The Catholic churches in Columbia were very large and generally held services every hour all day on Sundays and people attended a variety of churches without connecting to the other congregants at the service. Every church had the same worship patterns, it seemed. During the week, many worshipers would go to church to pray alone. In one way, worship in Columbia was focused on God simply because it was a relationship between a big God and a mass of unnamed people. It was also individual because it heavily emphasized personal prayer. Upon connection to Mount Royal, the biggest change they experienced was realizing that a church could be a community. "Here you can put a prayer request into the bulletin and people will pray because they know who it's about. When we focus on someone else, it helps build community." For this couple, having a strong community is about recognizing each person's narrative.

I will turn now to study materials on worship that circulate throughout the community in order to show the kinds of ideas that might be influencing the congregants' perspectives. The following is from John Rempel's *Planning Worship Services*, a handbook published as a resource to accompany the hymnal that was published in the same year. This excerpt also appears in a booklet entitled "Worship Leading at Mount Royal Mennonite Church, May 1997" that is handed down to each new Worship Committee Chairperson, along with binders of past minutes and other resources.

> Worship is our response to the utter and inexhaustible goodness of God toward us and our world. Our response takes many forms. Our awe at God's goodness prompts us to adore him, our trust in God opens us to listen to him, and our gratitude for his goodness leads us to offer ourselves to live according to the will of God.
>
> Worship is intended to take place in all of life, as much in acts of self-sacrifice as in those of adoration. We gather for worship to thank God that his "rule is just and wise and changes never" (HWB #122); we gather to petition God on our behalf and to intercede for others. Our gathered worship gives us the strength and vision to go out into the streets of life. There we set out to practice and preach what we have confessed in the solemn assembly: to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God (Micah 6:8). Our scattered worship leads to encounters, demands and victories which draw us to seek God's and each other's presence in immediate ways. This, the movement in worship from scattered to gathered to scattered is the basic rhythm of the church's life (Rempel 1992, 9).

This view acknowledges the corporate body in its united focus on God, as well as the personal narratives in the rhythm of gathering and scattering. Not only is there a place for both the group mind and the individual members, but they are also required elements. In recognizing the value of the scattered community, Rempel is allowing for and encouraging the diversity gained from individuals. This diversity,

then, becomes a key element of the group mind and shapes the relationships formed among the members.

The next two texts come from a series of articles on worship printed the *Canadian Mennonite* in the weeks before Canadian Mennonite University's annual Refreshing Winds conference on church music. The first article focussed on the views of Marva Dawn, who was the keynote speaker at the conference. Dawn understands worship as focus on and praise of God using a variety of styles of worship. She is quoted as saying that worship "brings people together as we focus on God and praise God" (Longhurst 2006, 9). Dawn also states, "The 'worship wars' have become so destructive, ... it grieves me when I hear people say they don't like one kind of style or another, or they refuse to sing when a particular style that's not their favourite is used in worship. To me, that shows they don't love others in their church enough to sing somebody else's song" (Longhurst 2006, 9).

Like Rempel, Dawn values the variety present in a congregation, and recommends using all kinds of styles in worship in order to help bring the people together. Her main emphasis, however, is that God be the focus of worship. The most important aspect is what ties the community all together. "Let's begin by realizing that worship is our glad response to the immense grace of the Triune God" (Dawn 2003, xi). That community, though, is an assortment of people, and, according to Dawn, would function best and be able to worship best if the people could acknowledge the difference and not only tolerate it but participate in it.

Similar notions are expressed in the final article, which shares thoughts of three CMU staff. One of the staff members, an assistant professor of practical

theology, comments that worship should not be so concerned with satisfying individual needs. "Worship should focus on the things that bind congregants together, she says, adding, though, that the goal of worship 'is not to unify us. Through Christ, we are already one body.... We don't get unity through worship. Rather, through worship we acknowledge our unity in Christ. By singing, praying and praising together, worship helps us recognize it'" (Longhurst 2007, 8).

These articles and the sentiments of the congregants show that worship is understood to be about God and for God, but it is also about the work God has done, which includes binding together the narratives of the community members. The worship services themselves, both Spanish and English, are organized in a way that allows for both group unity, as expressed in corporate activities like song and prayer, and individual experience, as seen in the attention given to specific people in prayer and in each person's interpretations of the service's events. They are able to find a balance between the individual and the group because the God they believe in allows them to be different; the identity they share has diversity as one of its main features. In worshipping the same God all together, the congregation is participating in their unity and focusing on what they have in common.

Conclusion: Worship and Group Identity

A religious community is similar to any other collective in that the people work within their authoritative structures to maintain an identity using symbols to erect boundaries. As is evident by commonly lengthy church meetings and occasional church splits, the identity of religious groups is also subject to negotiation between its

members. The transmission of this religious identity is most clearly seen in the community's worship. Other aspects of the community's character are also negotiated outside the worship setting, but in worship, they are acting out the very reason they claim they are gathering together.

It is possible to see how the congregation at Mount Royal negotiates its collective identity in both the English and the Spanish service. In both services the people are brought together through the simple act of physical gathering. They sing together, recite prayers together, and speak with a common voice in reading litanies. The individuals and their narratives are also present in each service. In the Spanish service, this is seen in personal interaction possible with such a small group. In the English service, the individuals may not be as distinguishable, but the worship is recognizing the variety of narratives by selecting a variety of music. Realizing the need for individuality within the corporate body is what allows the congregation the flexibility required for change. Instead of teaching the new members the original symbols of identity, the congregation is working to create new symbols to represent the new community. Making this step in worship shows that there is room for the new members within the core of the group.

Chapter Six

Congregational Song: Negotiating a Corporate Identity

> One fall Sunday morning in a full foyer, I was checking hymn tempos with the song leader in preparation for accompanying the congregational singing. We got to chatting and she asked me about my plans for the year. I briefly explained that I was researching church music and that Mount Royal was my case study.
>
> "Well I don't take responsibility for what goes on!" she exclaimed. I described my project in greater detail to reassure her that I was looking at the larger picture of how cultures interact, and not only at her conducting techniques. "Well I didn't pick any Spanish songs today," she remarks.
>
> She went on to tell me that she had asked 'them' once what they thought about what the church sings. "They said the beat's a little funny. We try to sing like them but we aren't really close. Boy, they could teach us a thing or two—teach us to loosen up." She wiggles her hips, grinning. Then she points to the bulletin, "These are old songs. I'd like to sing them with energy. Not necessarily faster, but with energy. I don't know if it will work, but we'll try."
>
> September 17, 2006

Mennonite music is influenced and affected by many factors—the most prominent of which is worship. The hymns and songs that are selected for worship, however, reflect experiences and beliefs of particular congregations and individuals. The choice is also influenced by the tradition of singing that has been passed down, as in any other ethnic group. Therefore, Mennonite music in worship represents a

reconciliation of theology, ethnic habits, individual narratives, and community dynamics.

What Does it Mean?

In corporate worship, congregational singing takes on a major role as a representation of the congregation's voice. It is not the only way congregation participates, and it is true that they are singing words chosen for them, but it is still the congregation that is giving voice to the words. One song leader believed congregational singing offered the congregation another way to connect with the message and a chance to say "Amen!" Other people felt very strongly that singing is a way to express themselves.

> Music is really personal. I think even non-singers recognize that when they do sing, they are giving voice to thoughts, emotions, and commitment to other people. It's about voicing who you are. That's why we argue so much about it. There's a deep a profound need to express ourselves, so we try to provide something for everyone, which is very hard.

Still others reason that singing together binds the group together as one voice.

Amid these interpretations, it is possible to see the same variance in perspectives that were present in the discussion of worship. Some feel that congregational singing is a unifying activity while others see it for all its divisions by trying to tailor it to individuals' preferences. While facing this dilemma, congregational singing is also supposed to be a part of a worship experience. One of the associate pastors, who also plays bass in the band from time to time, said that singing together is "formative as a community. It's personal, emotional, and

memorable," and he quoted Deuteronomy 6:7. "Recite [these words] to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise." Music can be functional in teaching the word of God. There are three factors at play in the congregational singing then—the individuals' narratives, the gathered community, and the desire to make the songs fit with the worship.

In the same way that ideas about worship are circulated via community magazines and other Mennonite publications, beliefs about music in the church and Mennonite music are also distributed through various means. One such book is *Singing: A Mennonite Voice*, which is essentially a celebration of the Mennonite tradition of singing. In this case, that tradition is assumed to be hymns in four-part harmony. The book is based on information gathering from interviewing Mennonites about their feelings on music in worship, specifically congregational singing. It presents a heartening image of Mennonites and their affection towards and commitment to their singing.

> For in our interviews, we heard that matters of experience, association, and the challenges of hymn singing are often most important to people who sing. We heard that the physical pleasure of singing is prized, that images that speak to a person's life are useful handles, and that singing is the most important activity in which people engage in worship (Kropf & Nafziger 2001, 14).

Song is presented as a sensuous and experientially based form of communication between members, expression of faith, and prayer to God. It is depicted as having an aura of mysterious capabilities that unites the congregation

together. The congregation is presented as a loving community that willingly sings the songs of all the different kinds of people present.

> The love of singing among Mennonites springs from deep wells of faith nurtured in both the family and the congregation where singing functions ... as an expression of the community's love of unity and harmony with each other. One man observed that in a cappella singing, Mennonites create an image of themselves as they most want to be and which they hope to sustain throughout the week: a people in love with God and with each other (Kropf & Nafziger 2001, 67).

Two details in the language used in the book merit highlighting here. The first is the use of the word 'hymn' when referring to any congregational song. Although 'hymn' is technically defined as any religious praise song, congregants tend to use it to denote songs that are in four-part harmony, are either English or German, and have steady and simple rhythmic patterns. This same category is also referred to as 'traditional' in comparison to contemporary choruses. Using 'hymn' to refer to everything from chants, to spirituals, to gospel songs, to contemporary songs, to songs from other cultures shows that the authors believe everything should be included in the hymn repertoire, and, perhaps, that using one term to symbolize all types of congregational singing will enforce the commonality between songs and the people who love them.

Secondly, Marlene Kropf and Kenneth Nafziger highlight the specific hymns that are considered favourites by the people they interviewed and in a way award special value to those hymns. It is as though once a hymn becomes someone's favourite, it is a part of the musical canon. When hymns are granted status for being a person's or many people's favourite, personal taste is outweighing the criteria song leaders use to select hymns for worship. The authors are affirming personal

attachment, which is helpful in that it encourages congregants to become familiar with these hymns and to make them personal, but it can also foster hostility when congregants begin to limit their own canons and expect to sing only their favourite hymns.

Kropf and Nafziger present an image of a people who love to sing and who appreciate each other's experiences of singing. Such a depiction, although encouraging for the reader, is not necessarily accurate for all congregations. Mount Royal is one such congregation that is dealing with conflicting views of music. Some people feel unified in singing together while others feel alienated. Some are happy to learn songs in Spanish while others would rather only sing the songs they already know. *Singing: A Mennonite Voice*, however, does not really address these issues; it assumes that every Mennonite feels the way their participants feel. The problems begin when congregations fail to match this standard.

A second text is printed in the *Canadian Mennonite* and focuses on demographics in the Canadian Mennonite church, specifically the aging congregation. Robert Suderman examines relationships between seniors and youth in particular and highlights congregations that exhibit a strong connection across generations. In all of these cases, the musical practices of the congregation include both a worship band and traditional hymns. The generations in these congregations are shown as supporting each other when they support each other's music. For example, Suderman tells of an older woman who was particularly skeptical of the youth's intentions to establish a worship band. After hearing the band play once, however, she secretly offered to finance any other equipment they might need (Suderman 2007, 8).

Conversely, Suderman also shows that when people love each other, they will be more willing to sing each other's songs.

Suderman presents a very different view of church music than Kropf and Nafziger. He acknowledges the clashes between congregants and encourages diversity and an open mind. It is not coincidental that Suderman uses musical tastes to represent various groups' participation in worship—many congregations associate youth with bands and seniors with hymns. In praising the diversity of music these congregations are using to express their faith, Suderman is praising the diversity of people. He is also saying that categories of people are represented by genres of music, and inclusion of that music in worship is what signifies the people's voice in worship.

The pastor at Mount Royal refers to Suderman's article in his sermon on "Spiritual Care Sunday" to emphasize the importance of being a loving community. John 13:34–35 served as support for such a community. It reads: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." He compares the worship band of the youth in the story to changes happening at Mount Royal, particularly the recent addition of power point and the presence of Hispanic brothers and sisters in the congregation. Loving each other means including those who have been sidelined and accepting their ways of expression.

Both of these texts present music as a personal activity brought into a corporate space, wherein singing together with a group of appreciative people

represents the ultimate goal. They also portray optimistic views of congregations that are able to negotiate peacefully—a possible though not universal picture.

Music at Mount Royal

Musical Structure

Responsibility for music in worship at Mount Royal is divided up between a number of people. The person who does the most large-scale coordinating of arranging for music leaders and other musicians would be the 'music person' on the worship committee. This is a term position, often filled by one of the pianists or song leaders.

The people who actually decide what the congregation sings, and essentially have the most control over the congregation's musical experience, are the song leaders. The song leaders at Mount Royal all have some sort of musical training or background and have either volunteered or been asked to lead the singing. Like the overall committee structure, a song leader rotation is common in Mennonite churches. The song leaders at Mount Royal tend to choose songs based on the theme of the service and the song's placement in the service (ex. gathering, praying, sending, etc.). One song leader prefers to meet with the pastor to discuss the service and its focus before choosing the songs. Many feel that it is important to be considerate of what the congregation wants to sing, and to try to offer something for everyone, or to choose a familiar song each Sunday.

One song leader commented that together the song leaders provided a good balance. She felt that she often chose more familiar hymns because, though she appreciates and enjoys singing choruses, she has trouble leading them. "I do not do choruses well—I get mixed up. Sing this twice, then this once..." In this statement, she realized that the people leading the music are individuals with unique narratives. They are not privy to heightened understanding of the group mind; rather they are common group members, with their own experiences and interpretations, who happen to be in influential positions in the community.

Despite their individuality, the song leaders did seem to share common priorities. The conversation at the beginning of this chapter highlights a few. The first is the feeling that the congregation should be singing Spanish songs and that they have yet to master that genre. The second is the idea that their role as a song leader is only one of many on a Sunday morning. It is merely a part of the service, not a position of power. Finally, they all want the music to be engaging for the congregation. This means that they will occasionally try something new, even if it is only adding energy to "old songs."

Like the song leaders, the pianists who accompanying the congregational singing are volunteers on a rotated schedule. The pianists and one organist are the only instrumentalists on the schedule, but song leaders frequently invite other musicians to help lead. Common instruments are guitar or percussion, but sometimes flute, brass, or even marimba will be added. The type of instruments incorporated in song leading is based purely on who in the church is able and willing to play. Anyone wishing to play will likely have an opportunity to do so.

The procedure for song leading is much like that of directing traffic: the song leader stands on the stage facing the congregation, announces which hymn to sing, even though it is already printed in the bulletin, gives directions for repeats, if any, and indicates with conducting gestures when to start and stop. On occasion the song leader will introduce songs by explaining the reason for selecting it, or by pointing out the connection between the lyrics and the theme for worship. Hymns led by a song leader always end with a slight *ritard* in the last measure or two. Upon completion of the song, the song leader gestures for the congregation to sit, and returns to his or her seat near the front of the congregation.

The Worship Band

In the last few years, Mount Royal has begun incorporating a band into worship. The band usually consists of two or three singers, piano, lead guitar (either acoustic or electric), and drum set. The guitar players vary but the same percussionist and pianist are consistently involved as nobody else in the church has demonstrated interest or skill in playing percussion and the other pianists are more classically trained and find this sort of playing intimidating. It is also clear that the percussionist and pianist enjoy their role in music leadership.

The band most often selects songs in contemporary praise and worship style that tend to be sung in unison and sometimes have a descant. The lyrics for these songs are often projected onto a screen mounted at the front of the church or found in booklets tucked into a pocket at the back of each blue hymnal. Having a screen permanently mounted was a big change for many congregants. Some saw it as an unnecessary expense while others saw it as the church finally committing to musical

open-mindedness. A note in the September 25, 2005 bulletin shows that there were likely more people with the former mindset. It reads: "In an effort to save paper, and also because we are not sure of which of these songs we will be doing again, today's music (text and notation) will be projected onto the screen at the front of the sanctuary." This particular Sunday was entitled "Youth Sunday," which means that the high school-aged youth group planned and led worship, and as has become customary, selected contemporary songs for the congregation to sing accompanied by a band.

The concept of the band was initially suggested with the youth in mind, assuming that the youth wanted a worship band and would be more likely to stay if the church started one. "We have to show them that we'll do this for them, even if not everyone likes it," said one band member. In the same way that Spanish elements in the service are put in place for the Hispanic community, so the contemporary songs are incorporated on behalf of the youth.

Musical Resources and the Inclusion of International Song

The singing tradition at Mount Royal is based almost entirely on print culture, which is embodied in their hymnal. "Mennonites' relationships to the hymnal allow them a feeling of stability as they orient themselves as individuals and as communities around this conception of an unchanging physical object that is present in so many churches across North America" (Graber 2005, 70). The song leaders at Mount Royal say that they select congregational songs based on the theme, mood,

and scripture verses of the service, but there is an assumption between all of those criteria that they will most likely choose from the congregation's hymnal, *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, or as it is sometimes called, 'the blue hymnal'. Even within this collection, there are songs that have never been sung and others that have been sung many, many times. Over forty percent of the songs in the book have not been sung in the last twelve years of worship at Mount Royal while others have been sung on more than thirty occasions. Clearly, fitting the theme of the service is not the only decisive factor in song selection. There is also a fairly sturdy canon of music or musical genre that is expected. For example, the only chant Mount Royal has ever sung is "O Come O Come Emmanuel," which was notated not as chant in the previous hymnal, but as a metered, four-voice hymn. The change in notation for the current hymnal still causes some confusion because in reverting back to its original form in chant, one or two notes have been assigned a different duration.

The canon is largely dependent on and shaped by the material available, and as one member noticed, many more resources are accessible now than in previous generations. "Nowadays there's a lot more music available. You can get music from anywhere in the world. But in a little country church when I was young, you only had one hymnbook and that was it!" Although the blue hymnal has served as the main songbook for Mount Royal, the song leaders and worship band are by no means restricted to using it. After *Hymnal: A Worship Book* was purchased, the previous hymnal—*The Mennonite Hymnal*, or 'the brown hymnal'—remained in the pew racks. In fact, the worship committee advised the song leaders to continue choosing one hymn per service from the brown hymnal after the purchase of the blue ones in

order to ease the transition. Since the spring of 2006, a supplementary songbook entitled *Sing the Journey* has been available for use with the congregation. All three of these books were produced at least in part by the Mennonite conference of which Mount Royal is a member.[11] As such, singing from these books symbolizes a congregations support and participation in the larger conference.

In addition to the printed hymnals and supplements, Mount Royal also incorporates a small amount of music from outside sources. These songs can come from a tune book in someone's home, from a summer camp program, from a conference, or from a CD and are used at the song leader's discretion. At first the lyrics for the songs were printed in the bulletin each time they were sung and the congregation would learn by rote. Gradually, in the late 1990s, a small repertoire began to emerge and the lyrics of the more popular songs were printed in booklets that were then tucked into a pocket at the back of each hymnal. Since the purchase of a projector and a screen permanently mounted at the front of the church, the use of the booklets and those songs has declined.

The Mennonite Hymnal

Although each book represents different time periods and reflects the issues facing different generations, all three demonstrate in the kinds of music they embody and in the books' introductions that the Mennonite-Anabaptist musical tradition is malleable. The preface to *The Mennonite Hymnal* describes church music as "living rather than static" and explains that the previously used *Mennonite Hymnary* "needed

[11] The *Mennonite Hymnal* and *Hymnal: A Worship Book* were published while Mount Royal was a part of the General Conference Mennonite Church. Between the printings of *Hymnal: A Worship* Book and *Sing the Journey,* the General Conference Mennonite Church merged with the Mennonite Church to form Mennonite Church Canada.

to be brought up to date" (Neufeld 1969). *Hymnal: A Worship Book* and *Sing the Journey* contain a higher percentage of songs from a variety of national and cultural origins, showing that the repertoire is changing.

Three issues playing into the compilation of *The Mennonite Hymnal* were a growing awareness of other cultures, language used to address God, and civil rights. Civil rights activities prompted the inclusion of hymns with social justice themes and Mennonites were discussing whether or not it was appropriate to address God as 'You' instead of 'Thou' (Oyer 2005, 25). Multicultural awareness grew in the 1960s as people began to realize the arrogance embedded in some Western Christian hymns about missions. Oyer demonstrates this arrogance with a quote from the *Church and Sunday School Hymnal*, number 35:

> Over the ocean wave, far, far away,
> There the poor heathen live, waiting for day;
> Groping in ignorance, dark as the night,
> No blessed Bibles to give them the light (Oyer 2005, 24).

These lyrics make three assumptions. The first is that anyone who is not Christian or has not been introduced to Christianity is a poor, lost soul. The second is that the people singing the song are Christians, because it assumes the singers know what the heathens are missing. Finally, it associates non-Christians with distant lands and, presumably, other cultures. The relationship between North American Christians and, essentially, everyone else in the world is portrayed as a very unequal one with the former definitely having the upper hand. This sort of mindset would not lend itself well to the possibility of establishing a multicultural congregation, but Mary Oyer describes a shift in philosophy that changed this mentality. "The idea that we might

sing hymns by Christians from those countries to which we had sent missionaries gave a completely new perspective to those of us who worked on the 1969 *Mennonite Hymnal*" (Oyer 2005, 24).

Seeing the music from other cultures, and even considering participating in it began to cultivate an understanding of equality among peoples. Cross-cultural music in the brown hymnal consists of a total of six songs, all from Asia. This was a small but significant contribution to the hymnal. In a history of General Conference hymnody, Marilyn Houser Hamm writes that the 1969 hymnal "opened the door to the significance of the global church's song in the North American context" and that "the richness of the music of the global church began to be owned" (Houser Hamm 1993, 38).

Hymnal: A Worship Book

The blue hymnal in many ways represents a continuation of the issues confronted in the brown hymnal. Again, language and multicultural music were in the forefront. This time the language concern was determining how to be gender inclusive, both in reference to God and to humanity. In both cases, simple changes were made by replacing 'man' with 'folk' or 'Him' with 'God', but some instances called for more significant alterations. One example is "Heart with loving heart united," a fairly popular hymn at Mount Royal. In *The Mennonite Hymnal*, the second verse appears as follows.

> May we all so love each other And all selfish claims deny,
> That the brother for the brother Will not hesitate to die.
> Even so our Lord has loved us; For our lives He shed His blood.
> Still He grieves and still He suffers When we mar the brotherhood (MH 386).

In the blue hymnal, not only is the brotherhood language is replaced, but the capitals on 'He' and 'His' are lost.

> May we all so love each other and all selfish claims deny,
> so that each one for the other will not hesitate to die.
> Even so our Lord has loved us, for our lives he gave his life.
> Still he grieves and still he suffers, for our selfishness and strife (HWB 420).

In addressing inclusive language when referring to God, the intent, it seems, is not to completely abolish the image of God as a father, but to remove the limitation that God is only a father and nothing else. Hymns such as "This is my Father's world" (HWB 154) and "Of the Father's love begotten" (HWB 104) and many more maintain that image, but others, such as "Mothering God, you gave me birth" (HWB 482), are challenging it and expanding on it.

Inclusive language was a difficult topic because it was "a new territory with no neutral guide" (Oyer 2005, 27). The congregants at Mount Royal largely agreed with this sentiment. One song leader expressed appreciation for the inclusive language but thought at the same time that it might have been a disservice to change the poetry of the hymns. Another explained the tension it created in the congregation: "It mad some people mad, but it comforted other people." This is also evident among other conference churches, as some were very slow in purchasing the new hymnals specifically because of the hymn "Mothering God, you gave me birth."

The inclusion of multicultural music is given significance in the blue hymnal's introduction. "The presence of African-American, Asian, Native American, Hispanic, and African hymns deepens our sense of unity in Christ through the Spirit. We share a rich hymnic legacy with many Christians, past and present" (Slough 1993,

iii). This statement shows a complete turn away from the attitude in the hymn Oyer quoted from the *Church and Sunday School Hymnal*. Now people over the ocean and far, far away are also considered members of the body of Christ. Furthermore, North Americans are being encouraged to sing the songs of these other cultures to demonstrate their connection with them. Anna Janecek echoes this sentiment by saying that, as a collaborative effort between the General Conference Mennonite Church, the Mennonite Church in North America, and the Church of the Brethren, *Hymnal: A Worship Book* "was an attempt to provide an updated collection of hymns that not only recalled the historic traditions of each of these groups, but also exemplified their contemporary and *increasingly global identities*" (Janacek 2005, 189, emphasis added). This is quite a shift in mindset from the tokenistic approach of the brown hymnal and it was likely spurred by the publication of two Mennonite World Conference songbooks—one in 1978 and the other in 1990.

In 1978 Mennonite World Conference was held in Wichita, Kansas and, for the first time, Mennonite World Conference published *International Songbook*. The songs in the collection are divided into five chapters according to their continent of origin—Africa; Asia; Europe; Caribbean, Central & South America; and North America. Everything in the book including the preface, introduction and explanation of symbols is printed in English, German, Spanish and French. The majority of the lyrics are printed in at least as many languages. *International Songbook* was used a second time at world conference in Strasbourg, but a new edition, *International Songbook 1990*, was printed for the 1990 world conference, which was held in Winnipeg, Manitoba. This conference marks a turning point in the song of the

Mennonite church in North America because many new songs were introduced and given a meaningful context. Participants could meet people for whom these new songs were old treasures. Also, at the completion of the conference, people who attended were able to offer song requests to the committee compiling *Hymnal: A Worship Book* (Kropf & Nafziger 2001, 144).

One couple at Mount Royal describes the sessions of 10 000 people gathered in a stadium at the Winnipeg world conference as "just awesome." The songs were "new but they taught them and I still like them. Some are in the blue book now." Another couple could still recall the names of the ladies leading the singing, which actually is not completely surprising as these women have come to be well-known among Mennonite music circles.

The effects of the conference were far-reaching and the music at Mount Royal soon began to show subtle changes. In 1990 one international song was sung,[12] and it came from the Mennonite World Conference *International Songbook.*[13] By 1995, the total was up to seven songs, all of which were taught from one of the *International Songbooks.* Because these songs were not available in the hymnal, the song leaders had the lyrics printed in the bulletin when needed. In this way, they became a part of the congregation's oral repertoire. The number or international songs quickly increased over the next few years until reaching its peak of 31 songs or over ten percent of the congregational singing. This is higher than the percentage of

[12] I will use Janecek's definition of international song, which is music that "originated in countries and cultures outside of Western Europe and North America" (Janecek 2005, 191).

[13] The statistics I sight here and following are based on the results of my own research. Using past church bulletins from Mount Royal, I tallied song use in 1985, 1990 and 1995 through 2006. This also serves as the information for the three tables.

international songs in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, which sits at seven percent. By this time the idea of international song had caught on and the congregation was branching out from the *International Songbook* to try out multicultural songs from other resources, including their current hymnal.

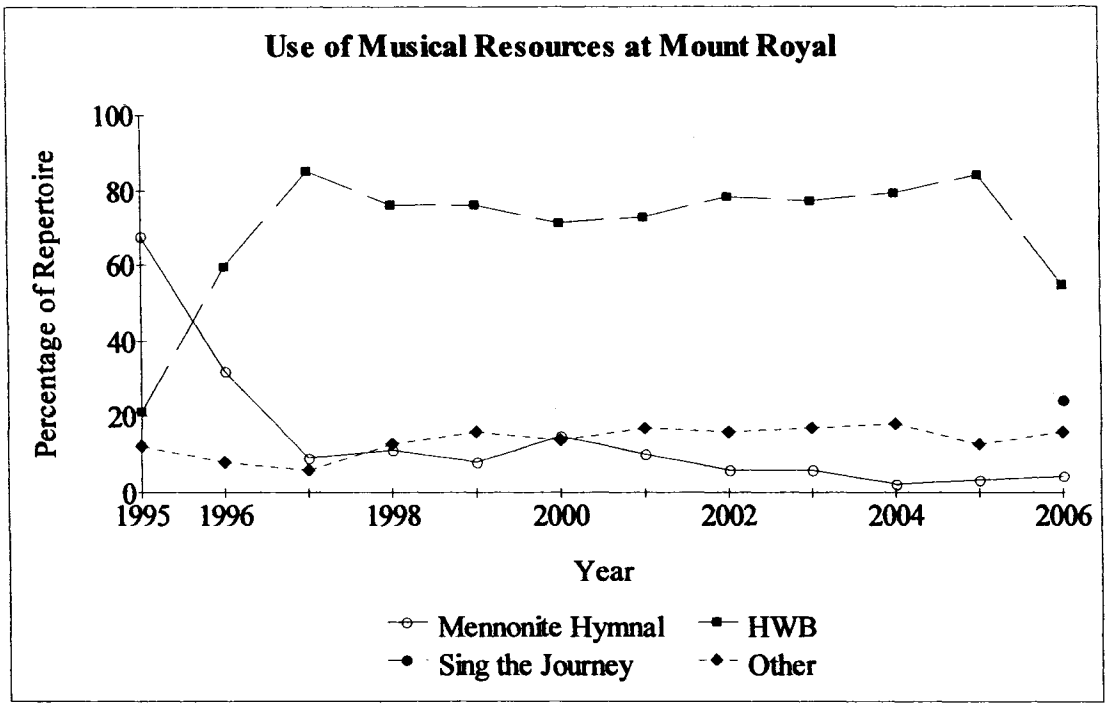


Table 1. **Use of Musical Resources at Mount Royal** measured in percentage of congregational music sung from each source.

Patterns of reliance on musical resources have changed considerably in the last twenty years at Mount Royal. In 1985, every congregational song was sung from *The Mennonite Hymnal*. It was the only songbook in the pew racks, a status *Hymnal: A Worship Book* has never attained. From 1995, the year Mount Royal purchased the blue hymnals, to 1997, a steady exchange of rank occurred between the blue and brown hymnals (See Table 1). Use of the brown hymnal gave way to the blue hymnal's prominence—but by no means completely. Over the course of anyone one

year since its purchase, the blue hymnal has never been used for more than 85 percent of the congregational singing. Song leaders have maintained use of the brown hymnal for a small and declining portion of the music, and have looked to a variety of other resources for other music.

The change over to the blue hymnal, however, did come with a clear amount of positive support—the entire amount needed to purchase a set of hymnals for the church was raised in one offering taken specifically for that purpose at the Junior and Senior Choir Christmas program. The following announcement appeared in the bulletin for the subsequent Sunday worship:

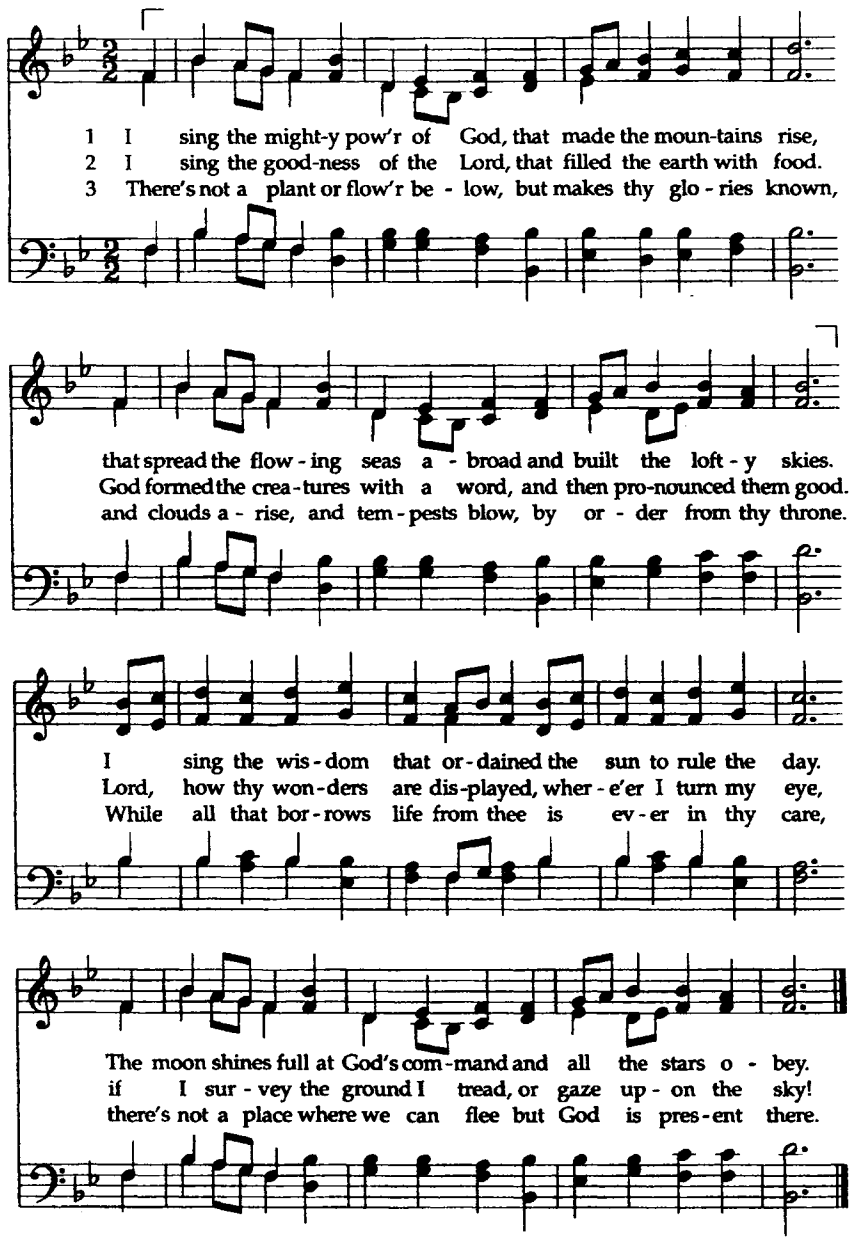
> **Special Offering for New Hymnals in our Church**
> Last Sunday at the Junior and Senior Christmas Choir Program, $4,530.64 was donated for the new hymnals. Your generosity in this area is a good indicator that we need to purchase new hymnals. ... This is a time of celebration for us as a church; together we have enabled our worship to be a little richer.
> (December 17, 1995)

One member recalls the senior choir director announcing at the end of the program that there was enough money from the offering to pay for the hymnals, which prompted immediate applause from the audience. Though the change was difficult at times, *Hymnal: A Worship Book* has generally been well-appreciated and accepted at Mount Royal. Figure 4 shows an example of a hymn, printed in both the blue and brown hymnals, that has been sung many times at Mount Royal.

PRAISING/ADORING

46 I sing the mighty power of God

ELLACOMBE CMD



Text: Isaac Watts, *Divine Songs for Children*, 1715, alt.
Music: *Gesangbuch der Herzogl*, 1784; harmonized by William H. Monk, *Hymns Ancient and Modern, Appendix*, 1868

Figure 4. "I sing the Mighty Power of God" from *Hymnal: A Worship Book.*

Sing the Journey

The newest resource, *Sing the Journey*, has quickly made its impression on the congregation at Mount Royal. Like the hymnals of the past, it is compiled by a committee representative of the conference and is endorsed by the conference. It was purchased in May 2006 not by the congregation but by an anonymous donor from within the congregation. Its introduction to the congregation happened quite smoothly in the opinion of many song leaders. One thought it was so well received because it was portrayed as a companion to the already-deemed 'friendly' blue hymnal. "And, any friend of yours is a friend of mine." Being a supplement instead of a staple allows for more freedom in music because this music is seen not as an attempt to replace the previous canon but as an addition to the canon.

Sing the Journey has had the benefit of an enthusiastic initiation to the churches. In January of 2006, only months after its printing, a music and worship retreat was held in Saskatchewan at a centre one hour away from Saskatoon. The retreat was entitled "Sing the Journey" and its main resource was, not surprisingly, *Sing the Journey*. The weekend consisted of sessions, workshops, worship and singing; and it had an effect similar to that of the Mennonite World Conference in 1990—people who attended were excited about the new music and eager to teach it to their home congregations. This is exactly what happened at Mount Royal. In 2006, *Sing the Journey*, which contains only 118 songs as compared to 658 in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, was used for almost one in four congregational songs sung. In the first three months of 2007, *Sing the Journey* was used thirty times whereas *Hymnal: A Worship Book* was used only thirty-two times. With such concentrated use, *Sing the*

Journey must be having an impact on the congregation, the question is, what kind of impact?

Compared to *Hymnal: A Worship Book* and especially to *The Mennonite Hymnal*, *Sing the Journey* has a much wider range of musical genres represented. When the songs are categorized according to Janecek's definition of multicultural music, over twenty percent of the repertoire can be classified as international song. That is only the portion that clearly labeled as originating from a particular country or that bears clear resemblance to one cultural style or another. There are many others that could be considered international song as well. A large portion of the music in *Sing the Journey* is comprised of folk tunes from various European countries, North American traditional tunes, and a number of contemporary hymns.

The use of *Sing the Journey* at Mount Royal, however, does not match the proportions of the genres in the book. During 2006, it was used on 76 occasions, and 28 of those were for international songs; and, of the total multicultural music incorporated in worship, more than two-thirds was from *Sing the Journey*. The start of 2007 shows similar trends, only more extreme. Of the uses of *Sing the Journey* from January to March in 2007, half have been for singing songs originating from either Africa or Latin America.[14] In addition, *Sing the Journey* has been the source for more than three-quarters of the multicultural music used in worship. These statistics show that even though *Sing the Journey* is not used exclusively for its international songs, it has been influential in stimulating multicultural music.

[14] For an example of a typical Latin American hymn from the hymnal, see Figure 1, Chapter One.

The impact of *Sing the Journey* is particularly noticeable looking at the large scale use of international music. As mentioned earlier, inclusion of international songs peaked in 1999 at just over ten percent of the congregational songs. (See Table 2). After that year, the percentage dropped steadily until 2002, when it leveled off at about five percent. This decline is not uncommon, as Janecek found in her study of the use of multicultural music in worship in churches after purchasing *Hymnal: A Worship Book.* She discovered that churches used international hymns as soon as *Hymnal: A Worship Book* came out, followed by a gradual and slight decline in use. In most cases, the peak occurred around 1998 and 1999, just like Mount Royal (Janecek 2005).

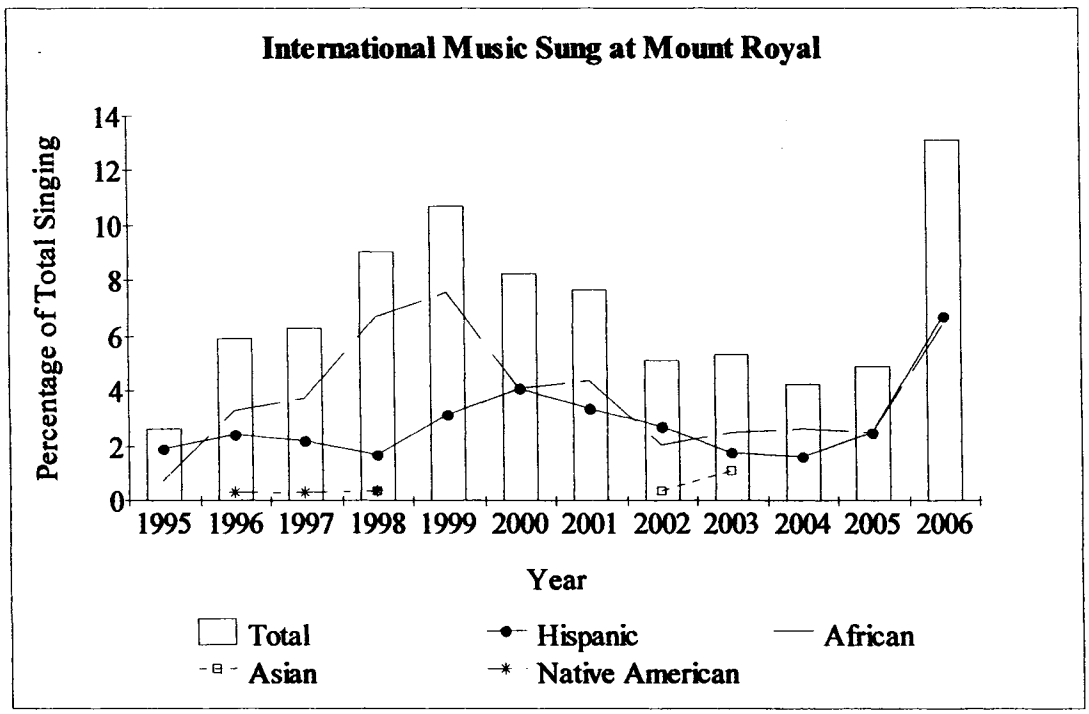


Table 2. **International Music Sung at Mount Royal** with the congregation showing division according to musical origin.

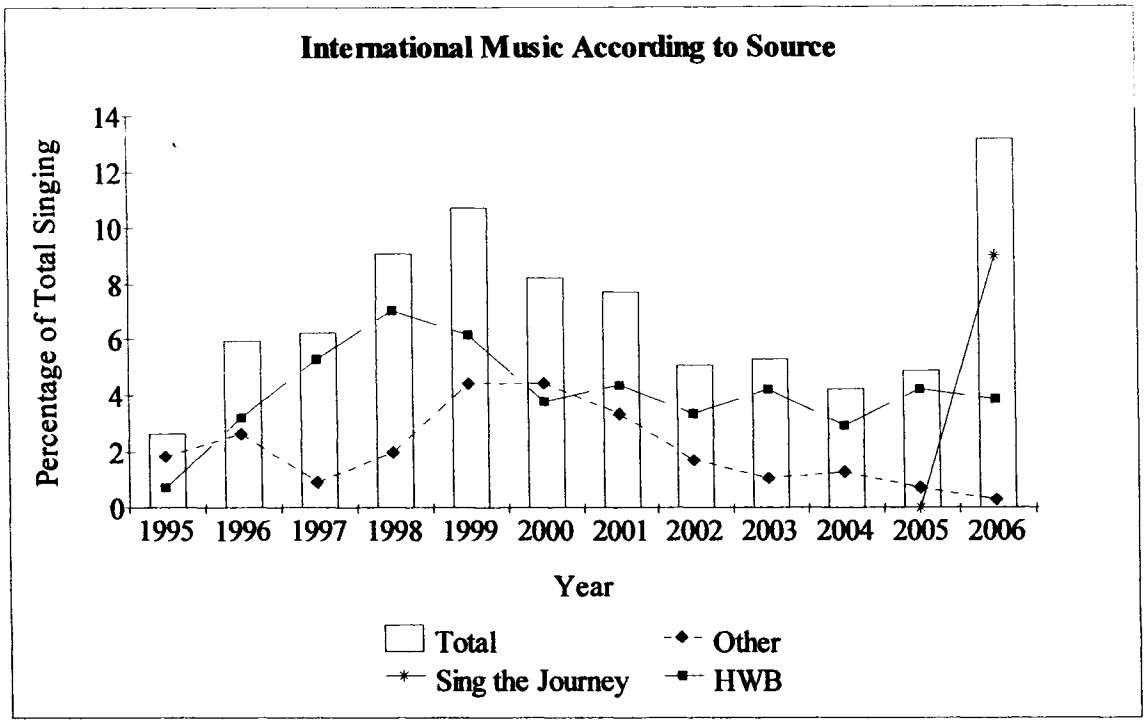


Table 3. **International music sung at Mount Royal** with the congregation showing division according to musical resource.

Suddenly, in 2006, more than thirteen percent of what the congregation was singing was international hymns. The added increase was entirely from *Sing the Journey*, as is visible from the graph (See Table 3). The trend seems to be continuing as the beginning of 2007 indicates a further escalation in use of *Sing the Journey* in proportion to other sources. It has been used only two fewer times than *Hymnal: A Worship Book* and has been the resource for close to eighty percent of the international songs incorporated into worship. Within the first three months of 2007, close to 25 percent of the congregational singing has been songs originating in either Latin America or Africa, as compared to thirteen percent in all of 2006, and less than five percent in 2005. *Sing the Journey* is clearly being used for its multicultural song.

Why Sing Songs from Other Cultures?

What is it that prompts the song leaders to choose songs from Africa or Latin America? The most common reason I heard in interviews is that people feel it provides a connection between cultures and bridges the diversity they sense is a part of the larger church. Much of this awareness is from hearing about organizations like Mennonite World Conference or from personal cross-cultural experiences. One woman said, "Christians all over the world are worshipping the same God—God is the God of all these people. What a foretaste of heaven!" To numerous people in the congregation, singing songs from other cultures symbolizes an acceptance of the people of those cultures as members of the faith community.

Many people feel that it is good to sing Spanish songs in particular because of the presence of the Columbian community in the congregation. "Having the Columbians has changed the music. Now we're singing in two languages—that's beautiful! I think it's amazing that we can sing in a style that's familiar to them and in their language," exclaimed one song leader.

Another member said, "Especially with Spanish people here, I think we should sing more Spanish songs—for their sake. Or even encourage them to sing Spanish while the rest of us are singing English." Just like the other Spanish elements that were incorporated into the service, these songs are associated with the Columbian community simply because they are in Spanish.

In conversations with Hispanic members about the music in the English services, I found that issues of genre seemed less important to them than the lyrics of the songs or their ability to sing along. Many commented on the complexity of the

notation and the confusion they have experienced trying to learn the tunes. While they generally enjoy the congregational singing at Mount Royal, opinions about the use of Spanish songs in the English service vary. Many Columbian members seem appreciative of the Canadians' efforts to include Spanish songs, but are still overwhelmed by the notation. One man recognized that the Hispanic music was good for the Columbians, but questioned its worth for the Canadians. Others seem more appreciative of songs that are not necessarily in Spanish or from Latin American origins, but that have either enough repetitions or few enough words so that they can catch on and join in.

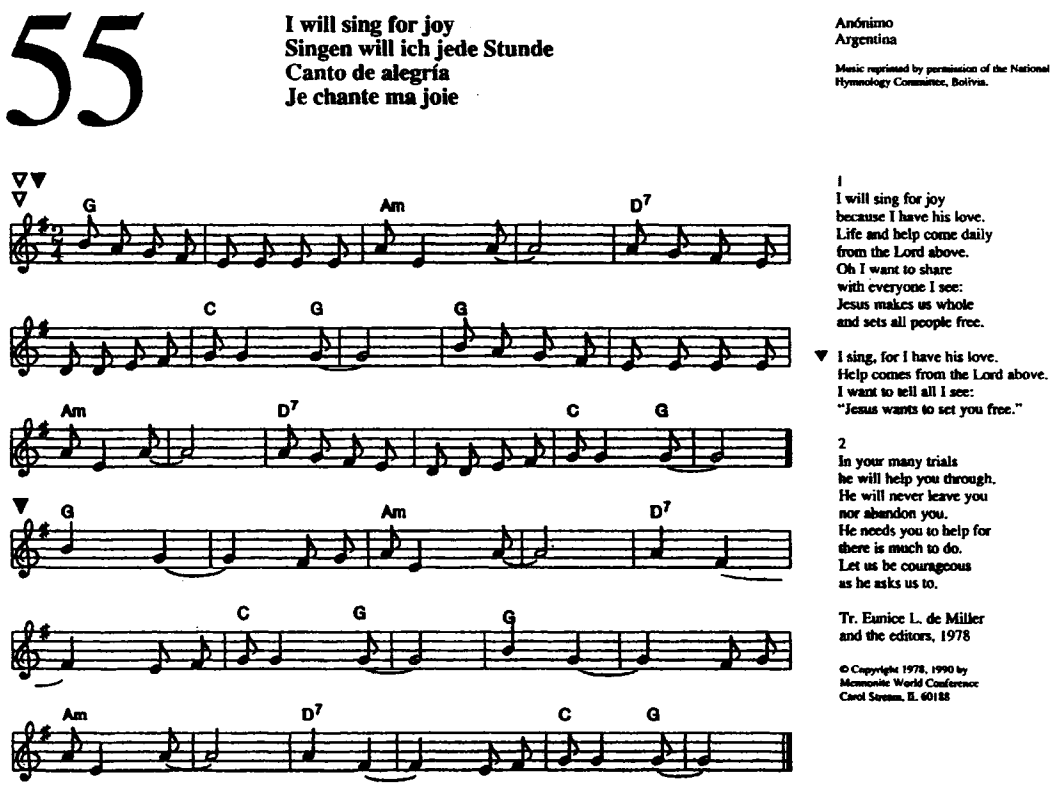
Music at Spanish Worship Services

The music in the Spanish worship services takes on a different flavour than the majority of the music in the English service. The sound of the music is what sets it apart. The Canadians have traditionally taken a choral approach to congregational singing and are used to printed music, whereas the Columbians have learned their songs by ear and tend to prefer to sing lower in their voice range. The Canadians are still trying to sing in four part harmony, but the Columbians sing in unison.

The repertoire, however, is not so different. At the outset, Carlos's main musical resources were the *International Songbooks* from Mennonite World Conference because that was what was available and because his church in Columbia had sung a number of its songs. Most of the songs he chose would, in fact, be familiar to the Canadians at Mount Royal as they have sung them many times. Two songs in particular—Yo canto como David/Like David the shepherd I sing and Canto de

alegria/I will sing for joy (see Figure 6)[15]—have been sung in English at Mount Royal periodically since the early 1990s. Two others—Pescador de hombres/Lord, you have come to the lakeshore and Por la mañana/At break of day—both of which worked their way into Mount Royal's repertoire in the late 1990s, are printed in *Hymnal: A Worship Book*. One of the songs, Cuán grand es El, is a translation of the originally Swedish hymn, How great Thou art, which is also found in *The Mennonite Hymnal*, and is very well known at Mount Royal. Other songs would be familiar simply from circulating within the church community. In all, roughly two thirds of the repertoire is Spanish translations of songs known to the Canadian community.

Figure 5. "I Will Sing for Joy" from *International Songbook*.



[15] Both of these tunes appear in the section of *International Songbook* titled "Caribbean, Central & South America." Both songs are accredited to an anonymous source but Canto de alegria/I will sing for joy is noted as coming from Argentina.

In more recent services, Carlos has tried to include songs from a collection he brought to Canada. The trouble with using this collection is that it does not include notation—only chords—and Carlos is hesitant to sing for people, saying that singing is difficult for him. This makes teaching the songs to the song leader and pianist quite complicated, as they have all been Canadians and unfamiliar with the songs from this collection.

Several people within the Spanish community have also shown interest in using the songs they know from Columbia and teaching them to the Canadians at Mount Royal. During one of the Spanish services, two ladies took the children out to rehearse. When they came back at the end of the service they sang a text based on the Lord's Prayer to the tune of Simon and Garfunkel's "The Sound of Silence." They say this arrangement is quite popular in Columbia. This, along with the other recordings they played for me, suggests that the music used in Columbian churches is similar to mainstream pop music in Columbia.

Finding leadership for the music in the Spanish service is a challenging task because few people in either the English or Spanish congregations are comfortable singing in Spanish in front of a group of people. In fact only one song leader has led the music for all but two services—one week there was a substitute, and the other week they used a CD player. This song leader has been attending Mount Royal for less than a year, but, as the only musician fluent in Spanish, he has taken it upon himself to find a pianist each week. Carlos is glad to have people coming to lead music, but would be even more excited to have the band come to play for one of their services.

Overall, I found it difficult to construct an accurate picture for myself of the kind of music the Hispanic members were accustomed to singing in Columbia because of difficulty communicating, and musical incomprehension. First of all, communication was complicated not because of misunderstandings but because of a lack of musical vocabulary. When I asked them about the music they sang in church, they said they did not know how to describe it. They claimed the music was sort of like the recordings they brought along with them to Canada and not at all like most of the music in Mount Royal's hymnals.

The second obstacle was actually attempting to make music together. The Hispanic members are used to singing by ear, whereas the Canadians are used to having notation but are learning to sing by ear. Also, the Hispanic members generally shy away from singing in front of other people, which makes it very difficult for the Canadians to learn their songs. Sharing music, then, becomes increasingly complicated because the skills needed to communicate and understand each other's music are simply not available at this point.

Conclusion: Working within the Context

In both the English and Spanish worship services, leaders are trying to incorporate new musical elements but are restricted somewhat by the circumstances. In the English service, song leaders tend to be keen on including hymns and songs in Spanish so the Columbians can connect better with the worship, but they are limited in their resources. Comparing the use of Spanish songs in the English service to the

number of Columbians affiliated with Mount Royal produces no direct relation. Families have been steadily arriving since 2003, at time when the inclusion of Spanish songs was dropping (See Table 2). *Sing the Journey* was much more influential on the congregation's song than were the people present in the congregation.

Actually singing in Spanish is also a stumbling block for many Canadian congregants. One member explained his view about songs from other cultures: "It's hard to sing in different languages. They're fun and I like the different beats, but it's hard to get into worship. There's nothing wrong with it, but you don't know what you're saying." Perhaps if the difference between the Canadian and Columbian music was centered more around style and less on language, the music would not seem so intimidating to the Anglophones.

Likewise, singing in English while attempting to read music has been intimidating for the Hispanics. Many find the notation and the sheer volume of repertoire overwhelming. Still, the Columbians show appreciation for the hymns and songs used in worship and welcome help in following the music. They would love to teach the congregation their songs, but do not yet have the musical resources to do so.

In the same way that the community is limited by resources and skills, it is also limited in its connective capabilities by individuals' interpretations of meaning. Every piece of new information and every new practice will find its meaning in relation to what each individual already knows. The associate pastor describes this as incompatibility. "For example, when the lights go down and a spotlight comes up, they're going to think of Broadway. And that's how it always will be. They'll say

they can't worship, and it's true." The incompatibility lies in the meaning of the actions and that meaning is developed through experience. Because of the varied experiences of each member in the congregation, no two people will find exactly the same meaning in one piece or style of music.

Chapter Seven

Dealing with Difference: Managing Otherness and Negotiating Boundaries

> Near the end of my interview with the lead pastor, Carlos came in to say goodbye for the night. He shook the pastor's hand, and he shook my hand and kissed my cheek, a greeting he says is customary in Columbia. Helen, who is hosting him during his stay in Canada and who had come to pick him up, was standing at the door to the pastor's office. Carlos gestures emphatically to her as though she should greet us with the same level of enthusiasm that he demonstrated. Helen laughs, "I think he just likes to kiss all the ladies." She gives both the pastor and me an exuberant handshake.
>
> Carlos sighs. "Ahhh, bueno. Gracias." He holds up one finger. "One mu-nit?"
>
> "One min-uht," I correct him.
>
> "Ah. One minute, Columbia. You like?"
>
> We chuckle. "Si, Carlos."
>
> "Okay, by Jack," and he shakes the pastor's hand. "Bye Laura." He shakes my hand and gives me another kiss. Helen laughs, waves goodbye, and escorts Carlos out the door.
>
> January 17, 2007

Since the arrival of the Congolese and Columbian families, the congregation at Mount Royal has sensed a difference in its community. Other families, both Mennonite and non-Mennonite, have joined and left and have made contributions, but none have impacted the congregation to the same extant that the Columbian families have. The sheer number of the Columbians and their presence in worship has caused the congregation to ask, "Now who are we?" There is an innate understanding that

these new families have a profoundly different history than the Canadian families in the congregation and that those experiences have shaped the way they express themselves and their faith. Even in greetings, as shown in the anecdote above, one can see a sharp contrast between cultures. This understanding is evident both in some congregants' efforts to encourage the entire community to sing Spanish songs, and in other congregants' careful guarding of their own traditions and hesitation to change. Because of the immediate perception of difference, the Columbian and Congolese families were, at least subconsciously, labeled as 'Other'. Just like any other visitor or newcomer to the church, they were strangers to the congregation. Only the pastor had a connection, and a slight one at that, to the Columbian family that arrived first.

Now that there were people from another culture in the congregation's midst, how would they respond? Warner suggests two methods that churches commonly use to address the Other. One response, which he states is characteristic of evangelicals, is to share faith with the newcomers and, in doing so, bring them into the community. The second response, which he attributes to liberals, is to provide for the Other's "secular" needs (Warner 1988, 293). The former leans toward caring for the spirit while the latter cares for the body. While both approaches demonstrate concern for some measure of the Other's well-being, and both are scripturally based, Warner notes that they affect the dynamic of the community in different ways.[16] He argues, in particular, that the liberal strategy creates a separation rather than a connection. "[T]o bring the neighbor into fellowship presumes that the neighbor can be one of us,

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[16] By scripturally based, I mean that both responses are exemplified and condoned by Jesus in the Bible. This indicates to believers that they should imitate these actions. Huebner states, "Surely our view of ethics must flow from our clearest understanding of who God is" (1990, 248).

whereas the sense of obligation to the less fortunate is based on a conviction that they are different. Liberal religion is therefore externally directed; benevolence creates a barrier" (Warner 1988, 293). The key difference between the two responses is the malleability of the group's social boundary. In making room for the Other or the neighbor in the community, the congregation is allowing that individual's narrative to play into the community narrative. Essentially the community is allowing itself to be changed. According to Warner, then, getting past Otherness requires admittance into the community.

Asch echoes a similar sentiment in his discussion of Buber's *I and Thou*. Buber outlines two kinds of relationships—I-It and I-Thou—that demonstrate contrasting levels of interaction with the Other. The I-It relationship keeps the other at distance and only interacts on a surface level, while the I-Thou relationship affects both parties much more deeply (Asch 2001, 4). Asch also acknowledges Emmanuel Levinas's depiction of the I-Thou relationship: "The I-Thou relation consists in confronting a being external to oneself, and in recognizing it as such. The I-Thou relation ... is the very essence of the I: whenever the I truly affirms itself, its affirmation is inconceivable without the presence of the Thou." (Hand 1989, 63–64). In the same way that the neighbour is included in the community in Warner's writing, here the 'Thou' is included in the being of the 'I'. Once again, connection with the Other involves change in the Self.

Using the image of hospitality, Bretherton goes a step further by saying that Christians *should* engage with strangers. He defends this statement using Jesus's actions, which demonstrated hospitality to and acceptance of people regardless of

race or social status, as an example for people to imitate (Bretherton 2004, 94). Bretherton specifically encourages hospitality over tolerance because tolerance neglects to take into account the stranger's history, identity, or needs. Tolerance denies the relationship that is "inherent within the Christocentric performance of hospitality" (Bretheron 2004, 100). With hospitality comes a relationship, and in that relationship "the church seeks to bear witness to ... the eschatological unity given by the Spirit at Pentecost" (Bretherton 2004, 101). According to Bretherton, the hospitality and unity that is portrayed by Pentecost and by Jesus breaking down cultural barriers is essential for a Christian community, and, in the same spirit as Levinas's interpretation of Buber's I-Thou relationship, it will undoubtedly spur changes within the community.

Looking back at the question of how the congregation would respond, we can see in the light of Warner, Asch, and Bretherton that one thing is certain—the community's identity will change. The congregation's response, then, is affected just as much by its willingness to adopt and agree on a new identity as it is by the physical presence of people from another culture. Whether the church becomes more regimented in its practices, worried about losing its original identity, or more open to accepting change and new members, the community dynamic and identity will be transformed. It is simply a question of what will change and what will become more deeply set in tradition. It is the same process of negotiation that occurs between individuals when constructing a group identity.

How, then, has the congregation at Mount Royal responded to the Columbians? In worship, they have incorporated elements in Spanish and have

recently set up simultaneous Spanish translation of the worship service. They have had grocery showers for some of the first families to help get their homes established. They have initiated a committee, the Hispanic Ministries Committee, to assist the Columbians in building a community and to work at the relationship between the two cultural groups. They have brought in pastors from other multicultural congregations to share what their churches have learned about merging two cultures together. And, the song leaders have been trying to incorporate Spanish songs into the worship. Each of these activities acknowledges some sort of difference between the Canadians and Columbians—in economic status, in organizational and worship patterns, in cultural norms, and, throughout all of it, in language. Over and over language has been identified by both Canadians and Columbians as a major barrier

The language barrier is so significant because it obstructs the conversation needed to build a relationship and to move from Self and Other to a community, or, from I-It to I-Thou (cf. Asch 2001). In the mean time, the main method of communication, which is by way of a translator, is shaping the way the two groups relate to each other. Using a translator for worship generally works because it is only one-way communication from the pulpit to the congregation but it does divide the congregation from time to time. For example, at the annual Ladies Advent Salad Supper, the speaker was able to speak English and Spanish. When she spoke, she would alternate between languages, but for the rest of the program, she was translating for the Columbian women. To facilitate the translation, they all sat at one table. The women were separated by their languages.

Everyday face-to-face conversing across cultures is still very difficult and intimidating for fear of being misunderstood. As a result, communication happens slowly and only when those brave enough to attempt are willing to risk miscommunication. Other times a translator is needed. While this does facilitate the beginning of a relationship, the relationship is only experienced indirectly through the translator. The logistics of communicating have divided the congregation, which shows that not only is identity constructed by maintaining boundaries, but also that any boundary or barrier will aid in constructing identity and otherness.

Negotiating a new identity or a revised identity, then, means a negotiation with the boundaries, which, in this case is language. One of the ways the language barrier is being overcome is in the congregational singing. Although the inclusion of Spanish songs took a dive for a couple years during the initial arrival of the Columbian families, perhaps indicating a desire to hold on to previous traditions, the presence of Spanish songs is climbing, and more importantly, signifying to both parties a commitment to each other.

Models for Group Identity Reconstruction

John Baily (1994) describes one model of dealing with difference that he discovered in the Afghan government's efforts in the mid 1920s to become a nation-state. The major obstacles to this process were the number of ethnic groups in the area and, in particular, conflict between the two largest groups: the Pashtun and Tajik tribes. Unity was encouraged by the government through promotion of music that combines elements from the music of both of the dominant tribes. The people were

recipients rather than proponents of an image of a united identity, and they still adopted it as their own. Baily's article shows not only that shared music fosters a shared identity but also that participation (whether intentional or not) in an identity-forming activity can promote personal feelings of attachment to that identity.

Penny Edgell Becker (1998) tells of two churches that, like the Afghan government, made conscious efforts to integrate the racial groups within the congregation. Both of the churches took on a community-oriented mindset that allowed them to see racism as a problem that hindered their ability to be a community. For one of the churches, City Baptist, the first step in amalgamation was adapting the worship service to include cultural representation in leadership and in music. The white pastors worked to ensure that each week there were African Americans helping to lead worship. The musical genres included Baptist hymns, praise choruses, gospel songs, jazz, and blues (Becker 1998, 458–459). More significantly, Becker notes "Listening to each other's music is not about politics ... it is about being a community together. ... [M]embers are still proud of achieving a multicultural music style" (Becker 1998, 459). Clearly, collaboration is a high priority for this community.

Comparing the two models described above highlights contrasting strategies in achieving unity. For City Baptist, being united meant experiencing each facet of the diversity and having a little bit of everything present in worship. The different types of music maintained their character, but their contexts and the way people approached the music is what changed. On the other hand, the sense of unity the Pashtun and Tajik tribes found was stimulated by hearing their music blended

together. At City Baptist, the initiative came from within the entire congregation, including the leaders, unlike the top-down approach in the Afghan efforts. The two contexts show strikingly different strategies to promoting and building a sense of group identity, but the one similarity between the two is that in both cases people constructed or participated in a symbol that represented the kind of group they wanted to become. And, in both cases, the symbol contained ingredients representative of the individual and group narratives involved, whether those ingredients were musical elements or entire songs.

Mount Royal's situation shares elements with both of the above scenarios. It is similar in that the leaders are encouraging two groups to share a unified identity with each other and music is being used not necessarily to achieve but definitely to promote that goal. One major difference, though, is in the leadership. Mount Royal has one Canadian lead pastor, two people sharing the associate pastor position, one Columbian temporarily working with the Hispanic community who occasionally speaks on Sunday mornings, and a handful of Canadian song leaders. The Columbian community has benefited greatly from having Carlos around, but no such music leader is available, leaving the music up to the Canadians. With communication still at such a low level, the Canadians are doing what they think is best, but all they have to work with are songs from their own songbooks. The Canadian song leaders are bound by the limited resources and habits and the Columbians are bound by limited musical experience and training, making musical collaboration difficult. Once again, circumstance impedes efforts to communicate.

Until communication improves, and until the congregation finds a way to learn each other's songs, especially the songs from Columbia, the Spanish songs in the *Sing the Journey* and *Hymnal: A Worship Book* will serve as symbols of a solidified community. Coincidentally, there are two songs—one in each book—that are somewhat familiar to some of the Columbians and both express the theme of many people being united in Christ.

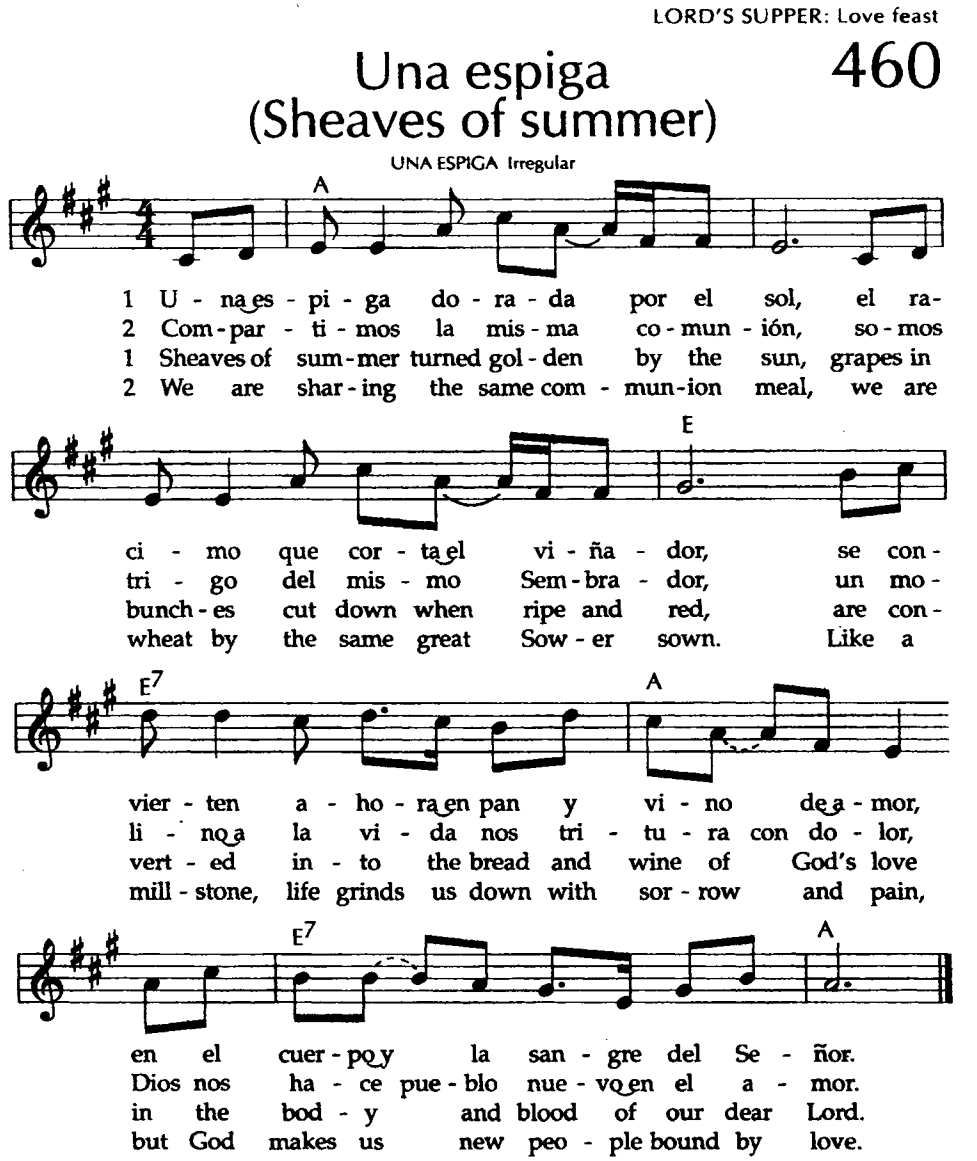
"Una espiga" appears in the Lord's Supper: Love Feast section of *Hymnal: A Worship Book*, but to my knowledge, has never been sung at Mount Royal. I discovered its significance after hearing it on a recording lent to me by one of the Columbian families. It is written in unison with many syncopation rhythms and there are a number of places where the rhythmic emphasis of the lyrics mismatches the rhythmic emphasis of the tune, so it might have seemed too difficult to teach to the congregation. Also, it is about communion, which occurs infrequently at Mount Royal. The lyrics, however, exhibit a clear desire for a united body of people to share in the Lord's Supper—the one symbol that definitely demonstrates that its participants are members in the Christian community.

Una espiga dorada por el sol, el racimo que corta el viñador,	Sheaves of summer turned golden by the sun, grapes in bunches cut down when ripe and red,
se convierten ahora en pan y vino de amor, en el cuerpo y la sangre del Señor.	are converted into the bread and wine of God's love in the body and blood of our dear Lord.
Compartimos la misma comunión, somos trigo del mismo Sembrador, un molino a la vida nos tritura sorrow con dolor,	We are sharing the same communion meal, we are wheat by the same Sower sown. Like a millstone, life grinds us down with and pain,

Dios nos hace pueblo nuevo en el amor.	but God makes us new people bound by love.
Como granos que han hecho el mismo pan, como notas que tejen un cantar, como gotas de agua que se funden en el mar, las cristianos un cuerpo formarán.	Like the grains which become one same whole loaf, like the notes that are woven into song, like the droplets of water that are blended in the sea, we, as Christians, one body shall become.
En la mesa de Dios se sentarán, como hijos su pan compartirán, una misma esperanza caminando cantarán, en la vida como hermanos se amarán. (HWB 460)	At God's table together we shall sit. As God's children, Christ's body we will share. One same hope we will sing together as we walk along, Brothers, sisters, in life, in love, we'll be.

The imagery in these lyrics depicts a body that is made of many parts and brought together by their belief in the same God and the significance of Jesus Christ. The unity is also expressed through appreciation for and a relationship with each member at the table, which is made particularly clear in the last line of the song. Although the congregation has not sung this song, its significance lies in its history with the Columbian people and its presence in the hymnal. There is potential for the congregation at Mount Royal to participate in a piece of the Hispanic community's narrative. Also, the song shows that the idea of Christ unifying the body of believers is not exclusive to North American thought. The two cultural groups do, in fact, share similar ideals.

Figure 6. "Una Esiga" from *Hymnal: A Worship Book.*



LORD'S SUPPER: Love feast

Una espiga (Sheaves of summer) 460

UNA ESPIGA Irregular

1 U - na es - pi - ga do - ra - da por el sol, el ra-
2 Com - par - ti - mos la mis - ma co - mun - ión, so - mos
1 Sheaves of sum - mer turned gol - den by the sun, grapes in
2 We are shar - ing the same com - mun - ion meal, we are

ci - mo que cor - ta el vi - ña - dor, se con-
tri - go del mis - mo Sem - bra - dor, un mo-
bunch - es cut down when ripe and red, are con-
wheat by the same great Sow - er sown. Like a

vier - ten a - ho - ra en pan y vi - no de a - mor,
li - na la vi - da nos tri - tu - ra con do - lor,
vert - ed in - to the bread and wine of God's love
mill - stone, life grinds us down with sor - row and pain,

en el cuer - po y la san - gre del Se - ñor.
Dios nos ha - ce pue - blo nue - vo en el a - mor.
in the bod - y and blood of our dear Lord.
but God makes us new peo - ple bound by love.

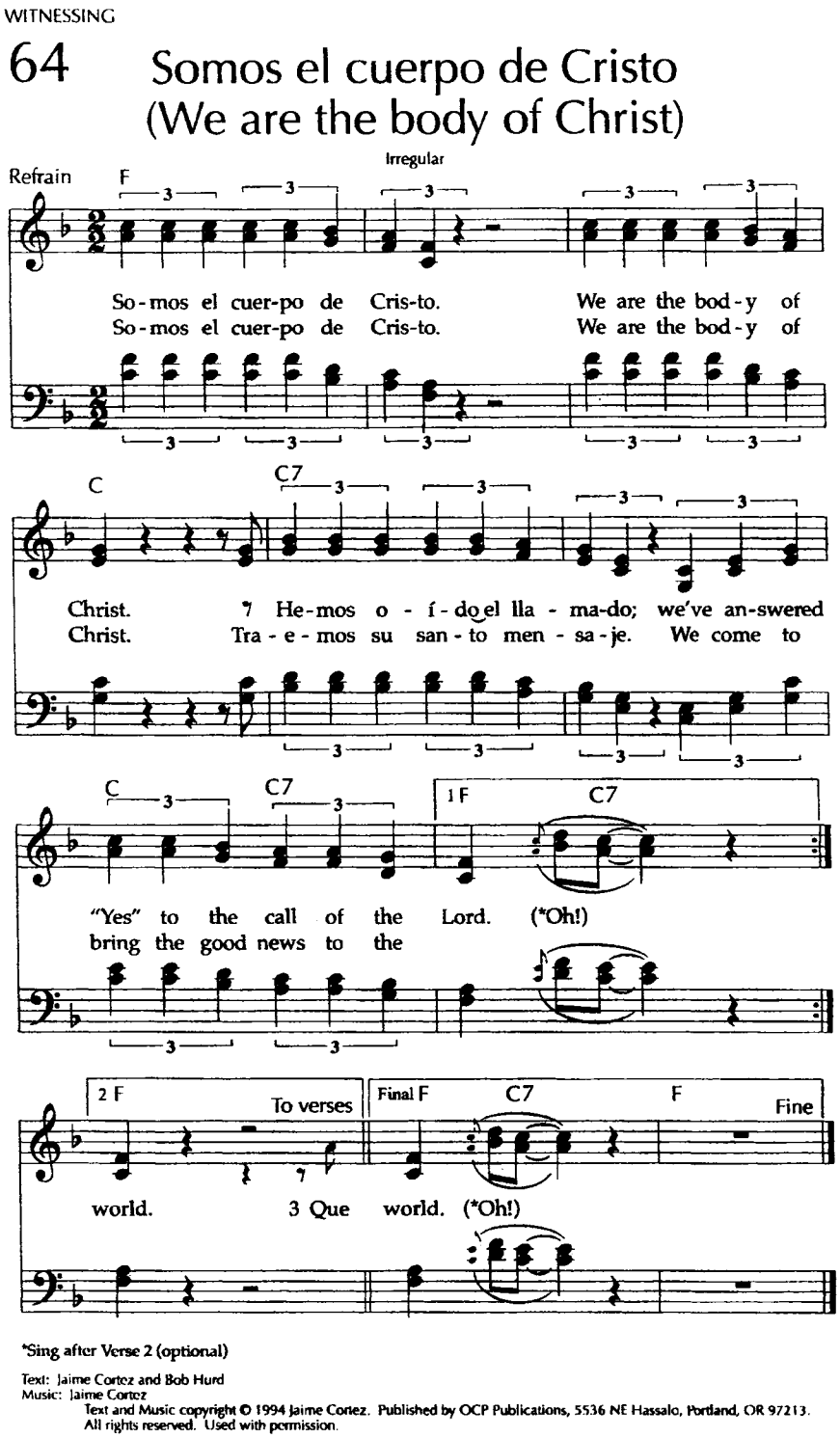
3 Como granos que han hecho el mismo pan,
como notas que tejen un cantar,
como gotas de agua que se funden en el mar,
las cristianos un cuerpo formarán.

3 Like the grains which become one same whole loaf,
like the notes that are woven into song,
like the droplets of water that are blended in the sea,
we, as Christians, one body shall become.

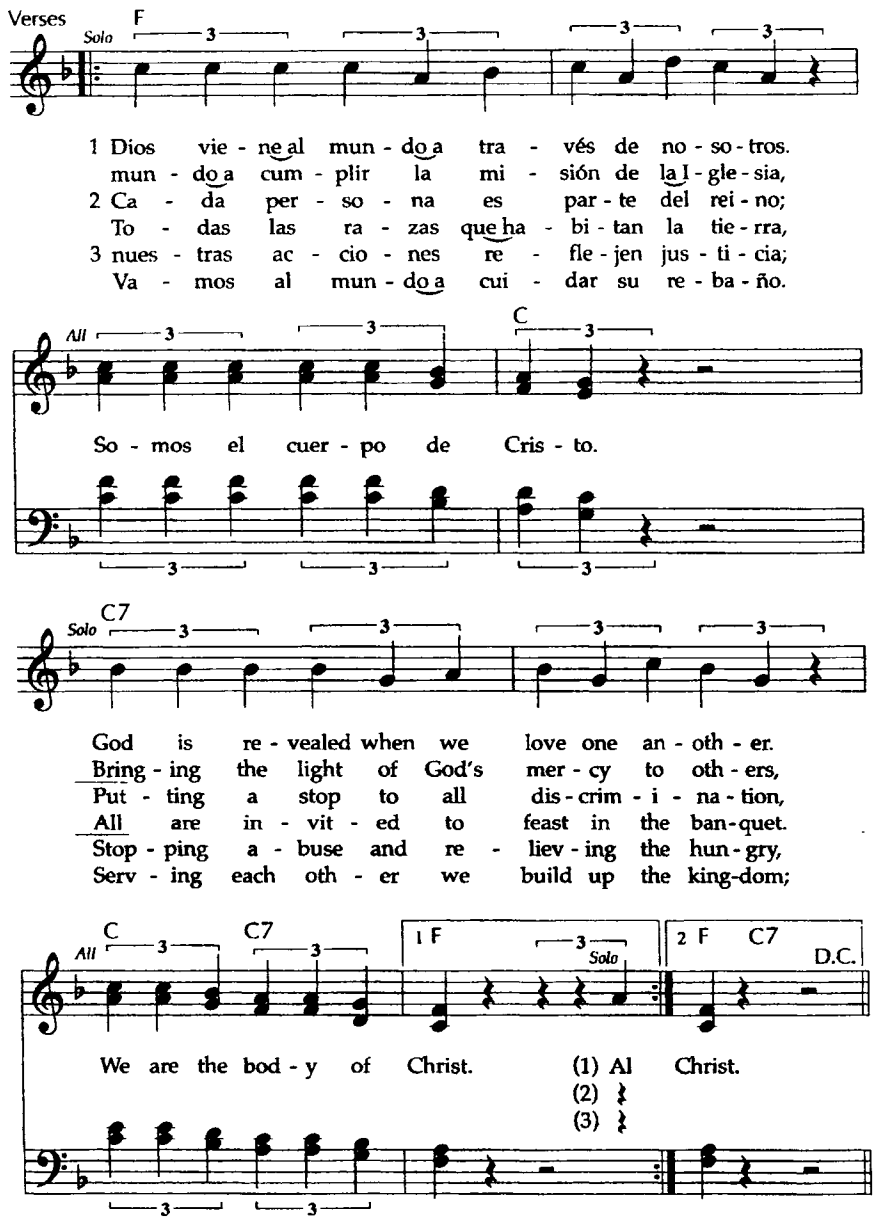
4 En la mesa de Dios se sentarán,
como hijos su pan compartirán,
una misma esperanza caminando cantarán,
en la vida como hermanos se amarán.

4 At God's table together we shall sit.
As God's children, Christ's body we will share.
One same hope we will sing together as we walk along.
Brothers, sisters, in life, in love, we'll be.

Figure 7. "Somos el Cuerpo de Cristo" from *Sing the Journey.*



*Sing after Verse 2 (optional)



The second song is listed in the Witnessing section of *Sing the Journey*, and has been sung three times within the last year. Like "Una espiga," "Somos el cuerpo de Cristo" is written in both English and Spanish, but it is written in a way that makes it necessary to sing both languages because it alternates languages between lines (See

Figure 7). In the chorus, this strategy is helpful for the singer because each line of text that is sung in Spanish is translated into English for the next line of music.

Somos el cuerpo de Cristo.	We are the body of Christ.
We are the body of Christ.	
Hemos oído el llamado;	We have heard the calling;
we've answered "Yes" to the call of the Lord.	
Somos el cuerpo de Cristo.	We are the body of Christ.
We are the body of Christ.	
Traemos su santo mensaje.	We bring his holy message.
We come to bring the good news to the world.	
(SJ 64)	

The verses are in a call and response format between a soloist and congregation, which alternates phrases "Somos el cuerpo de Cristo" and "We are the body of Christ" after each solo line. Instead of the text translating itself as in the chorus, the meaning of the text sung by the soloist flows from one line to the next, maintaining a fluid thought. Although understanding both languages provides a clearer meaning of the lyrics, the verses are written in a way that makes the meaning understandable even for someone who only speaks one of the languages.

Dios viene al mundo a través de nosotros.	God came to earth to walk with us
God is revealed when we love one another.	
Al mundo a cumplir la misión de la Iglesia,	to the world to carry out the church's mission
Bringing the light of God's mercy to others,	
Cada persona es parte de reino;	Each person is a part of the kingdom
Putting a stop to all discrimination,	
Todas las razas que habitan la tierra,	all races that live on the earth
All are invited to feast in the banquet.	

Que nuestras acciones reflejen justicia;	that our actions reflect justice
Stopping abuse and relieving the hungry,	
Vamos al mundo a cuidar su rebaño.	we go into the world to care for your flock
Serving each other we build up the kingdom;	
(SJ 64)	

Once again, the theme of love appears, but this time it is associated with specific actions such as hospitality, and service. The lyrics are more obviously concerned with showing that love is intended for everyone and that everyone has been called by God to share the task of spreading God's love. This presence of this song demonstrates a distinct transformation in belief about who comprises the Christian community. Less than forty years ago, the hymnal committee was approaching the idea that the music from cultures to which Mennonites had sent missionaries was worth singing in the church. Since then, international music has found a small but recognized niche in the North American repertoire, acknowledging the presence of many nations and cultures within the larger Mennonite body of believers. "Somos el cuerpo de Cristo" not only recognizes the multicultural body but empowers *all* of its members to be bearers of the gospel. Expressing this sentiment in a musical style that varies slightly from the comfortable repertoire at Mount Royal indicates a willingness to accept that theirs is not the only way to express the Mennonite faith.

The congregation at Mount Royal has been multicultural for a very short time; they are still in the process of determining what kind of a congregation they want to be and how they can best work the varying cultural groups together. There are mixed feelings among Canadians and Columbians about how the church should change, if at

all. Some Canadians would rather not change the worship, and some Columbians choose to attend elsewhere, but there is a core of people who are dedicated to building cross-cultural relationships and finding ways to communicate. Because a number of those people are in positions of leadership, there is a strong likelihood that the congregation at Mount Royal will have opportunity to participate in community binding activities. Perhaps being encouraged to partake of a new identity will be difficult for some and cause them to hold fast to what they already know, solidifying their perception of otherness between themselves and the Columbians, but perhaps there will be others who will become open to the possibility of a multicultural expression of faith and work at constructing a new identity that includes people from varied cultures and nationalities.

Chapter Eight

Conclusions

As we have seen throughout this study and as I discussed in chapter two, identity is a pliable entity that is sculpted by a combination of surrounding circumstances and authorities, others' identities, and the narrative of the individual or group itself. Identity is also acted out or performed as a way of affirming it and communicating it to others. Because it is worked out in each new situation in a different way using different symbols, we can say that identity is both relational and contextual. In performing an identity among other people, one is at once connecting to and disconnecting from others according to the boundaries one constructs. In this way, constructing one's identity is also formulating the Other's identity. On the other hand, constructing a group identity that incorporates elements of the Other's identity starts to break down the boundary between the Self and the Other and form an identity together.

Here I will address the three main questions investigated throughout this study: boundary maintenance, group identity construction with respect to hierarchical structures and within-group diversity, and music's role in construction group identity.

What happened when the boundaries were challenged?

When the Hispanic people began to arrive, the congregation at Mount Royal was not prepared. Most of the congregants had never experienced such close contact with people from another culture. The shower they held for the first few families and the basic English class they set up shows that they wanted to help and that they cared for the new family. The friction seemed to emerge, however, when elements of the service—when the expression of their identity—were changed. Many English-speaking congregants were frustrated having to sit through prayers in Spanish and trying to sing Spanish lyrics. I would interpret this reaction on the part of the Canadians as fear of losing their identity expressed by way of symbolic dislike (cf. Bryson 1996).

While it could be argued that these congregants were frustrated not with the people but with reading a new language, there were some that did not mind the challenge, and in fact welcomed it. The varied reactions indicate two things: there are different narratives represented among the individuals within the congregation, and they have different interpretations of what it means to be Mennonite. The ones who did not feel threatened by the Spanish must have imagined or constructed their identity in a way that included a space for this adaptation.

To answer the above question, then, some people resisted and others allowed for flexibility. In short, the group did not react as a unit. The group identity was not uniformly affected because it exists not above the congregation but in amidst the people, their interactions, their relationships, and their own personal experiences (Pratt 2003). The one reaction that did seem to occur unanimously was the association

of the Hispanics to anything Spanish. The identifying feature they were assigned by the Canadians was the main element that kept them apart—language. Everyone immediately recognized the barrier.

How is the congregation constructing an identity together?

In chapter two I use Waterman (1990), Stokes (1994), and Lysloff (2003) as my framework to examine group identity construction. I note that a group's identity is meaningful not only to those within the group but also to those around the group. In other words, the members at Mount Royal are not the only ones who are forming its identity. To the other Mennonite churches in the area, Mount Royal is already known as the church with the Hispanic people and many people are interested in hearing about the goings on within the congregation. But this is only one part of the identity. The other part is formed within the relationships of the people at Mount Royal.

Asch (2001) suggests that having a conversation is the way to build a relationship between the Self and the Other. As I noted above, conversing across cultures was very difficult at the start as it was limited primarily to gestures and drawings. After the arrival of people who could translate, relationships began to form at a quicker pace. Where language was a barrier before, now breaking that barrier with a translator was seen as a symbol of inclusiveness. Having a barrier between the two groups and being able to work past it facilitated symbolic inclusion even though they still had difficulty communicating directly. In this way they were able to turn the Otherness into a vehicle for communication.

Looking back at the interaction between the Canadians and Hispanics, one can see how the former used the structures they know to welcome the latter's participation in the community. For example, after recognizing that the winter church retreat was a good experience for many of the Hispanics, the Spiritual Care Committee, which was responsible for planning it, asked two Hispanic people to be on the planning committee for the following year's retreat. Being asked to be on a committee in the church may seem more like an enlistment than an honour, but it does symbolize recognition of their ability and appreciation for their involvement. This may not be a universal sign of acceptance, but it certainly is among Mennonites.

A second example of such an exchange is the support the Hispanics received for the lunch they provided as a fundraiser for the Hispanic ministries at Mount Royal. One Sunday at the end of April, the Hispanic families made a lunch of Columbian food for the whole church and shared a short presentation about Columbia. They wanted to show the congregation all the good things about their country. The congregation demonstrated their support in their remarkably high attendance and donations. In both of these cases, the Canadians are employing symbol systems familiar to them to show their appreciation for the Hispanic community.

In addition to the part of their identity that has already been determined by the circumstances and the other churches in the area, the people at Mount Royal are constructing their identity based on relationships acted out through symbolic activities, as shown in the examples above. As I will address below, music was one symbol that was particularly influential.

Community Dynamics and Power Structures

Admittedly, much of this discussion has highlighted the efforts of the Canadians to include the Hispanics and given little attention to the work of the Hispanics. My intention is not to ignore their part in the relationship—many of the Hispanic families have demonstrated great commitment to the church in their diligent attendance even before simultaneous translation was in place and in their eagerness to be a part of social events at the church. It is simply due to the asymmetry of the relationship. Because the congregation at Mount Royal had already been in existence quite some time before the Hispanic community began to arrive they have had to essentially construct a relationship on two levels: one with the institution and one with the people themselves.

The actions of the Canadians are more visible because they are the ones who have most of the power and therefore the ones who have more influence on what the whole church does as a unit. Having the people who are encouraging a multicultural identity occupy influential positions produces a different outcome than if those people would not be able to voice their beliefs. The difference is that they are able to use their positions to introduce the rest of the congregations to ideas and activities that support and practice being multicultural. This follows the same pattern that Baily (1994) and Becker (1998) find, in which the community leaders could shape their people's focus by instituting community-building symbols. In essence, the congregation is practicing the identity they want to become by participating in representative symbols (Graber 2005) but, like Mackey notices in her study of multiculturalism in Canada, "despite the proliferation of cultural difference, the

power to define, limit and tolerate differences still lies in the hands of the dominant group" (1999, 70).

Difference and Sameness

One limitation Becker (1998) finds at the churches in her study is that they are so set on being one unified community that they would not participate in political or social justice issues for fear that it might divide the community. Their focus on sameness means there is no room for difference even though the musical symbol they use, a mixture of genres representing the cultural diversity in the congregation, incorporates difference.

Howard-Hassmann offers a contrasting suggestion, however, based on Canada's liberal model of multiculturalism. She argues that in encouraging multiculturalism, Canada seems to be promoting integration, stating that, "The more members of minorities are encouraged to retain their ancestral identities, the more welcome they feel in Canada, and the more they identify with Canada and with Canadian citizenship, both vital to Canadian unity" (Howard-Hassmann 1999, 524). Because Canada's approach is based on the understanding that identity is a frame of mind, it allows for not only difference among members, but also a slight difference in the members' interpretation of the collective's identity.

Because Mount Royal has been a multicultural congregation for such a short time, it is difficult to predict what sort of strategy they will employ for the long term, but so far it looks as though they are trying to maintain a balance between sameness and difference. In gathering together each Sunday and often incorporating Spanish songs, they are demonstrating to each other their desire to be a cohesive congregation

but in hosting a weekly worship service in Spanish and allowing the English service to still be mostly dominated by English music, they are recognizing each culture's need to express itself and relate to the larger identity in familiar terms.

What is the role of music in identity construction?

Throughout this cross-cultural interaction, music has played a vital role in affirming both the combined group identity and the identity of the individuals and smaller collectives within the larger community. The most obvious way has been through the inclusion of different styles of music in worship services chosen to represent groups within the congregation. This is not the first time Mount Royal has used this strategy. In chapter six, I mention the worship band and how it was put in place so that songs the youth value could be sung in worship. The band became a symbol of an effort to connect with the youth in the same way that music in Spanish represents an effort to connect with the Hispanic community (cf. Turino 1999).

The difference between the music representing the youth and that of the Hispanic community is that much of the latter was a part of the congregation's repertoire, even if on the fringes, before it became associated with a particular group of people. Even though the congregation had sung them in English, the tunes were familiar. In this way, the congregation was not so much establishing a new symbol for their community as they were adapting an old symbol and assigning it new meaning to fit the context.

For the Hispanics, this process was quite different as they have been learning new songs in the Spanish services. While the songs were in their language, they were

new, and they were accompanied by a piano and sometimes a guitar, not the band to which many of them are accustomed. Some of these songs would later be incorporated into the English services, but it was not so much the songs themselves that were meaningful to the Hispanics as it was the language of the lyrics.

Conclusion

Before the Hispanic and Congolese families arrived at Mount Royal, few congregants found meaning in singing international songs as a way of connecting to other cultures. The songs symbolized a group of unknown people to which they felt no connection because they had no relationship to these foreign people. If group identity is based on relationships, then the songs representing different people in the group will only carry meaning if a relationship is already established. The Spanish songs that Mount Royal sang from the blue hymnal were not new to them, but new meaning was attributed to them once they knew people for whom these songs held meaning. Only then could these songs act as a symbol of a cohesive community.

For this reason, I would argue for an understanding of group identity that is based on relationships and on the feeling of belonging as supported by Lysloff (2003) and Howard-Hassmann (1999). Likewise, the meaning of the group's music is in the individuals' and the collective's relationship to it. The significance is not that the repertoire includes a variety of songs, some of which are understood better by some people than by others. Rather the significance lies in the act of performing the song and in the meaning the congregation associates with it. In singing songs that they feel represent each other, they are affirming their community by taking time to

acknowledge the difference within their congregation—the new, old, and multicultural. Singing each other's songs then becomes a symbol of the commitment to the community. Otherness is exchanged not for sameness, but for committed difference. Therefore, all the music can be owned by each member of the congregation. Music, then, has acted as both the medium and the means by which the congregation at Mount Royal has begun their narrative as a multicultural community.

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Appendix A

Participant Consent Form

This study is about Mennonites worship practices and music-making. It is being conducted by Laura Pauls.

For this study, the researcher will be surveying participants in the congregation to obtain their opinions about the use of cross-cultural music in worship. The survey will be conducted as a face-to-face interview.

Please understand that your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. All information will be held confidential except when professional codes of ethics or legislation require reporting. If there are any questions that you do not wish to answer, ou don't have to answer them. You have the option to stop the interview at any time. The interview recordings will be kept for one year after the study is completed in a secure area accessible by only the research team after which they will be discarded.

DECLARATION

I agree that I have read and understand the above information. I agree to participate in the survey about Mennonite worship practices and music-making conducted by Laura Pauls. I understand that the information given by me will be kept in the strictest confidence by the researcher.

— Name of participant
— Date
— Signature of participant

Appendix B

Interview Questions

How did you come to join Mount Royal Mennonite Church?
Describe your experience as a new member. In what ways did you feel included or excluded?
In what ways are you involved in the community at Mount Royal?
What does it mean for you to be a part of this congregation?
What major changes has the congregation at Mount Royal experienced?
What makes a person Mennonite?
What does being Mennonite/Christian mean to you?
What do you feel is the essence of worship?
What do you think is the role of congregational singing during worship?
How do you feel about the use of multicultural music during worship at Mount Royal?
Is there anything that distinguishes Mennonite music from other types of music?
Are there any particular songs or hymns that have been especially meaningful to you? Which ones?

Additional questions for members involved in leading congregational singing

What is the process involved in selecting songs for congregational singing in Sunday worship services at Mount Royal?
How do you understand your role as a song leader at Mount Royal?
What do you think of the new hymnal supplement, *Sing the Journey*?
What responses have you noticed in the congregation at Mount Royal to *Sing the Journey*?