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Thesis

ABLEISM IN UNITED METHODIST HYMNODY

by

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ABLEISM IN UNITED METHODIST HYMNODY

CORRIE HERMANS-WEBSTER

ABSTRACT

The United Methodist Hymnal includes many hymns which make use of ableist language. This paper sets forth an understanding of disability and ability so that the ableist language in United Methodist hymnody may be identified and, when needed, addressed through suggested revision or omission. Putting prominent themes of disability theology and hymnology into conversation with one another, this paper addresses the theological anthropology present in particular hymns with a particular focus on the difference between healing and curing, the metaphors of disability as sin, and images of disability in biblical texts.

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ABBREVIATIONS

PWD- Person/People With Disabilities

UMC- United Methodist Church

UMH- United Methodist Hymnal

GLOSSARY

Able-bodied Person: Someone with a body which has no physical impairments and can perform social functions according to the dominant social expectations.

Able-minded Person: Someone with a mind which has no physical impairments and can perform social functions according to the dominant social expectations.

Ableism: An act of discrimination in favor of the able-bodied and able-minded.

Developmental Disability: Multiple conditions that impair one's physical, learning, language or behavior areas.

Disability: Both a social construct and a biological reality in which a person is not capable of performing a specific function due to physical or mental limitations.

Mental Disability: A limitation to one's ability to recognize, control, and express emotions. Often referred to as Mental Illness.

Normate: A person without an identified disability.

Physical Disability: A limitation to one's ability to move or preform physical actions.

Stanza: A collection of verses used in poetry and hymnology

Verse: A single line of poetic text

INTRODUCTION

Disability is not only a physical or mental impairment but is also a social one. People with disabilities (PWD) are only disabled because society treats them in a way that makes them feel they are less than others.[1] Another way to say this is that societies themselves are disabling. PWD encounter the disabling society in many ways as they are intentionally excluded from events, denied physical access to spaces, ignored for opportunities generally thought to be commonplace for able-bodied persons. This societal exclusion also impacts able-bodied and able-minded people as they feel uncomfortable around those with disabilities.[2] Able-bodied and able-minded people have pitied PWD because it has been assumed that they were unable to live normal and meaningful lives."[3] People with physical disabilities are ridiculed. The, now-outdated, practice of the Freak Show as a part of circuses displayed PWD for the explicit purpose of mocking them by highlighting their differences as oddities and biological mistakes. This history of mock and ridicule has continued into present society where people are jarred and scared by those who are different.

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[1] In this paper, I will be using "person first" language. This is an active choice to put the person before the disability. Instead of writing "disabled person" I will write "person with disability." People have disabilities, people are not their disabilities. Attention to this order of language reminds the reader to think of the person with a disability as a person first and not as a disabled entity. This choice of language is contested and some people with disabilities prefer calling themselves "disabled."

[2] In 2014, a Scope survey in the UK found that nearly 2/3rds of those surveyed were uncomfortable around those with disabilities. Hardeep Aiden and Andrea McCarthy, "Current Attitudes Towards Disabled People," SCOPE, May 2014, accessed March 12, 2018, http://www.scope.org.uk/Scope/media/Images/Publication%20Dire ctory/Current-attitudes-towards-disabled-people.pdf?ext=.pdf. This is not a phenomenon only found in the UK as Herbert Covey explains.

[3] Herbert C. Covey, *Social Perceptions of People with Disabilities in History* (Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas, 1998), 11.

People with mental illness are treated unfairly and viewed in a negative and violent way, leading most people with mental illnesses to fear disclosing their illness to co-workers or acquaintances. "Mental illness is a highly social phenomenon. People who are labeled as having a mental health problem endure not only the illness itself but its social ramifications."[4] Said differently, people with mental illness are feared. The societal portrayal of mental illness perpetuates this fear, equating mental illness with violence despite the reality that PWD are more likely to be victims than perpetrators of violence. In recognition of this societal pattern, The UMC has committed in its Social Principals "to foster policies that promote compassion, advocate for access to care and eradicate stigma within the church and in communities."[5] As has been established, disability goes far beyond the medical and health problems that are presented as "less than" by the disabling society. Disability "is not merely a medical problem for individuals; it is more a social problem."[6] This social problem is most prevalent in systems and patterns of ableism.

Ableism is expressed through systems and patterns of life that oppress those who society deems are not "able" to participate in or contribute to the wellbeing of society. "Ableism names the discriminatory attitudes, negative stereotypes, and sociopolitical and

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[4] Albert A. Herzog, *The Social Contexts of Disability Ministry: A Primer for Pastors, Seminarians, and Lay Leaders* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2017), 127.

[5] *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church: 2016* (Nashville: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016), 131, ¶162, X.

[6] Thomas E Reynolds, *Vulnerable Communion: A Theology of Disability and Hospitality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2008), 26.

economic structures and institutions that together function to exclude PWD from full participation in society."[7] Similar to what happens with other structures of domination, those with disabilities are equated to a lesser way of being. There are three important ways this lesser way of being is presented. First, PWD are presumed to be subhuman, a menace to society, "or objects of pity, dread, or ridicule."[8] This subhuman view of PWD manifests often in an understanding and treatment of PWD as animals. In the Christian tradition, this animalizing is seen in both the biblical and medieval treatment of people with leprosy.[9] As in other structures of domination, the oppression is internalized and embodied by PWD and expressed in the way PWD and their communities live.

Second, On the opposite side of the spectrum, PWD are sometimes treated as though they have special gifts. Those with a sensory disability are believed to have an added power such as prophecy, improved memory, spiritual awareness, or other highly heightened senses.[10] There is also a "perceived link between insanity and creativity."[11] Those with mood disorders are believed to be extremely creative in their times of high moods, or mania. This is destructive as it attributes professional and creative gains to the mental illness instead of the person.

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[7] Amos Yong, *The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 2011), 11.

[8] Yong, *Bible, Disability, and the Church,* 11.

[9] Covey, *Social Perceptions*, 7.

[10] Covey, *Social Perceptions*, 8.

[11] Covey, *Social Perceptions,* 9.

Third, those with physical disabilities have historically been viewed as evil.[12] Both blindness and mental illness have had time periods where they were romanticized, but other physical disabilities have never gone through such a romanticized period.[13] "A disability perspective would thus call into question the normate readings of these biblical texts and illuminate how these have traditionally functioned to oppress PWD."[14] Expanding such a perspective beyond Yong's biblical criticism, my goal for this paper is; to locate the language which is used within hymnody that perpetuates this ableist culture, to explain why the language is ableist in nature, and, when needed, provide alternatives for the hymns that keep the theological integrity of the text without damaging the understanding of humanity. Before addressing particular hymns, this paper will discuss the exclusion of PWD with a focus on the difference between healing and curing, the metaphors of disability as sin, and images of disability in biblical texts. Since hymnody as a whole is uncontainable, I will be limiting my analysis and discussion to hymns which appear in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (*UMH*). I must note, however, that not every hymn will be addressed at length and some hymns will not be addressed at all. The hymns taken up in this study are regularly used in worship services in United Methodist

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[12] Herbert C. Covey, *Social Perceptions*, 10.

[13] Herbert C. Covey, *Social Perceptions*, 9.

[14] Amos Yong, *Bible Disability and Church*, 57. The term "normate" was coined by Rosemarie Garland Thomson.

congregations. This, together with the particularly damaging language in many of these popular hymns, warrants the attention of this work.[15]

EXCLUSION OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

While PWD are a minority of the population, the majority of people will experience a disability in some way, even if just through a short-term illness, in their life. Additionally, this group who experiences disability is the only group that can be joined at any time.[16] In light of this reality, the Church's call to minister to and with all people must take seriously the work that is to be done to change linguistic and liturgical practices so that PWD, be they temporary or permanent, are no longer alienated. The Church has begun this important work, but this has only been in recent history. Since 1992, The UMC has approved official denominational statements in its *Book of Discipline* regarding disability and disability ministries. These views can be found throughout the *Discipline,* but the main area of interest is found in the denomination's theological statement and social principles. Unequivocally, the Church states that "no person deserves to be

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[15] For the basis of popular hymns, I will be using the 2007-2008 *UMH* study ("New Hymnal Research Report 2007-2008," Discipleship Ministries, accessed March 16, 2018, https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship/new-hymnal-research-report-2007-2008) as well as the UMC Lectionary suggestions ("Lectionary Calendar," Discipleship Ministries, accessed March 16, 2018https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship/lectionary-calendar.) To determine "more" damaging hymns, I have selected hymns which have significantly ableist language.

[16] Disabled World - Disability News & Information, last modified 2018, accessed March 24, 2018, https://www.disabled-world.com/.

stigmatized because of mental illness."[17] This statement is rooted in a theological anthropology which takes contemporary medical information into account as it writes that "persons with mental illness and their families have a right to be treated with respect on the basis of common humanity and accurate information."[18] By identifying the language that does not meet the standard of these statements, this paper addresses the micro-aggressions which are present in the Church's worship, which prevent the Church from truly ministering with those who are oppressed.[19] The Church must examine and change its own role in the ableist society so that it can be in solidarity with those who are oppressed. Standing in solidarity with those who are oppressed moves the Church from the center of value so that all may join with the one true center of life, Jesus Christ.[20]

People with disabilities are the most marginalized group in the United States. They are often physically excluded from communities and places that are inaccessible. This inaccessibility may be from physical barriers including steps, inaccessible transportation, or inoperable doors, but inaccessibility is also due to invisible barriers such as systemic lack of resources, education, or genuine fellowship with others. These

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[17] *The Book of Discipline,* 130, ¶162, X.

[18] *The Book of Discipline,* 130, ¶162, X.

[19] *With* is the operative word here. Often, there is an understanding that people must minister "to" those with disabilities, that they are sub-human and, therefore, have nothing to contribute to the conversation or ministry event. This is not true, and PWD must be included as there is much that able-bodied Christians can learn from PWD.

[20] Letty M Russell, *Church in the Round: Feminist Interpretation of the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993).

barriers often present disability as something that must be eradicated. Though the eugenics movement epitomized this belief, for much of American history, the idea that disability is "a fault, a lesson in lack of faith, a helpless object of pity for the non-disabled faithful to display their charity, a vehicle of redemptive suffering, a cross to bear, or fuel for the inspiration of others" has prevailed throughout society.[21]

Oftentimes, the Church has further alienated or oppressed PWD, many of whom are members of the Body of Christ. In addition to the many theological problems this treatment presents, there are practical concerns for the Church that are important, too. It is important to remember that, "while disability is not the result of sin, all disabled people are still sinners like everyone else and need spiritual ministry and nurture."[22] In other words, PWD are fully members of the body of Christ and we must think of them in that way. Understanding that the Church is to be a place for all people in its ministry, clergy and laity should both make sure our liturgy is not perpetuating painful and ableist narratives. If the Church is to be a place for all people and a place of love and support, then the words we collectively use in worship must reflect the entire body. Language is extremely important in all communities, but this is especially the case for communities of disability. Much like the experience of other oppressed groups, words have been and are used to harm, stigmatize, marginalize, and diminish persons with disabilities. Even the term "disability" is created with the use of a negative prefix. Later, I will further analyze specific words, their usage within hymnody, and the problems various uses present.

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[21] Reynolds, *Vulnerable Communion*, 28.

[22] Chris Sugden, "Biblical and Theological Reflections on Disability," *Transformation* 15, no. 4 (1998): 27.

DISABILITY IN THE GOSPEL NARRATIVES

Before addressing hymnody, it is important to examine how disability is presented in the Gospels. There are three ways in which disability is considered in the Gospels: 1) As a miracle or "healing" story where Jesus "cures" someone with an impairment, 2) as a metaphor for sin or other failings, and 3) as a subject not to be broached "in moments of silence in which traditional readings have tended to overlook the presence of stability or assume able-bodiedness in the text."[23] To address these scriptural understandings, this section begins with a discussion of the difference between healing and curing, the distinction between disability and sin, and overlooked PWD within the Bible. These scriptural understandings of disability will be further broken down in the hymns which are connected to them.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HEALING AND CURING

There is a crucial distinction between healing and curing that must be understood for any further discussion. Healing is something that someone does to minimize symptoms of a greater illness. Taking medication is an example of one way one can be healed from an illness, and putting a Band-Aid over a wound is another form of healing. However, these actions are not a cure. A cure is the eradication of the entire illness and all of its symptoms. Healing and curing do not necessarily occur simultaneously.

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[23] Sarah J. Melcher, Mikeal C. Parsons, and Amos Yong, eds., *The Bible and Disability: A Commentary* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017), 275.

Additionally, healing is not necessarily prior to a cure. Sometimes healing can lead to a cure but not always. They are separate practices.

Healing is a practice that ameliorates the symptoms of an illness. Healing helps release the burden of pain. For someone with chronic mental illness, therapy is a form of healing, it is an avenue for work to be done that can heal the soul as well as the mind. Curing, however, takes away the disease, illness, or disability entirely. Through curing, it is as if the ailment was never even present. Therefore, curing someone would change them entirely. PWD often understand their disabilities to be a large part of who they are. If God, or a doctor, were to come and take away the disability, then the person would not be the same.

John Swinton writes of Arthur, a man living with a disability. He explains that Arthur is who he is and that the disability is a part of Arthur. Arthur is not some soul trapped inside a disabled body, Arthur is a person whose body is disabled. If the disability goes away, then Arthur is not the same Arthur. "Taking away his disability and implanting a whole new set of abilities would make him someone else, a person with no meaningful memories, no past, and a very difficult and confused present and future."[24] Recently, Dr. Stephen Hawking passed away. His death brought about many discussions about the reality of disability and people's understandings of life with a disability. Many memes and comics were written portraying Hawking as now being free, implying that death is better than living a life with a disability.

[24] John Swinton, *Becoming Friends of Time: Disability, Timefullness, and Gentle Discipleship* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016), 9.

Various hymns misuse the differences between healing and curing. *UMH* "Heal Me Hands Of Jesus," (262) and "When Jesus The Healer Passed Through Galilee" (263) are contemporary ecclesial examples of conflating healing and curing. An example of a hymn which deals with cures and healing in an appropriate and informed way is *UMH* 505 "When Our Confidence Is Shaken." In stanza one of this hymn, the singer sings of God being active in the tensions when a cure cannot be found. Despite the lack of a cure, we are still accepted by God.

DISABILITY AS A METAPHOR FOR SIN

Blindness, deafness, and paralysis are often used as metaphors within both the biblical texts and hymnody. "In short, using these terms metaphorically equates the sin of those who can see, hear, and move, with the physical reality of those who cannot."[25] This leads to the implication that blindness, deafness, or paralysis are choices made by those with the disability. "But blindness, deafness, and paralysis are not choices made, but physical inabilities to see, hear, or move."[26] The creation of the image of choice puts a burden on both those with disabilities and those who are sharing the Gospel narrative.

Those who live with the disability "carry with them a negative connotation, and deafness, blindness, and paralysis become equated with sin."[27] Sin, however, is a choice,

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[25] Kathy Black, *A Healing Homiletic: Preaching and Disability* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 55.

[26] Black, H*ealing Homiletic*, 55-56.

[27] Black, *Healing Homiletic*, 55.

and having a disability is not. Sin is the manifestation of evil within a person, through their actions. Disability is neither evil nor is it a manifestation of evil. And those who preach the Gospel narrative often leave the person with the disability believing that, "if only their faith were strong enough, they would be cured."[28] This implies that the disability "is a punishment for sin or for lack of faith."[29] Those with disabilities are, then, emotionally beaten when they attend religious gatherings that preach these understandings of the text. They are ostracized subconsciously by the community, and this leads many to leave the Church. Alternative understandings of these Biblical narratives are beginning to be taught and preached within the Church.[30] However, the majority of hymns that address disability still do so in a negative light.

ERASUE OF DISABILITIES WITHIN THE BIBLE

There are multiple accounts of disability erasure within the Bible. Central figures in the texts, Moses and Jesus, both had a disability. Yet, while both disabilities are mentioned, neither are given serious consideration by the scriptural authors. And, until recently, even less attention is paid to these disabilities in subsequent Christian theology. Moses speaks of having a speech disability (Exodus 4:10), and Jesus uses his disabled

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[28] Black, *Healing Homiletic,* 56.

[29] Black, *Healing Homiletic,* 56.

[30] Some books which are leading the narrative in seminaries and bringing it into the church are Black, *Healing Homiletic* and Melcher, Parsons, Yong, *The Bible and Disability*. The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America made a strong and supportive statement in 2013. ECLA, "The Body of Christ and Mental Illness" Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Nov. 10, 2011, accessed April 18, 2018, http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Mental_IllnessSM.pdf?_ga=2.162523836.1442268095.1523993946-862141385.1523993946.

body as the identifying marker to Thomas following the crucifixion and resurrection (John 20:27). If the risen Christ's physical body was disabled, then the Church, as the Body of Christ for the world, must recognize and end erasing practices of its own disabilities. Within the very fabric of the Christian narrative, prominent figures exist who lived with disabilities. Disability erasure goes much further than the Bible. As the Church has erased disability from stories of the Risen Christ, it has failed to understand itself as the Body of Christ. It has failed to understand its own story of inclusivity of PWD. When disability is being erased from all of life through various routes, the Church must pay attention to the role it is playing in these actions.[31]

THE SUPPORT FOR AND IMPORTANCE OF ALTERING HYMNS

In the life of the Church, practices of worship may be some of the most important practices for the faithful. The rituals found in worship services serve to connect many worshipers with God in significant ways as they communicate the tradition of the faith in steady, repetitive patterns."[32] The connection to God is important, for, "secular or religious, ritual is always concerned with powers that are understood to have their being outside the ritualizers" themselves.[33] Said differently, the ritual, both connects the

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[31] Linda Williams, "Ableism and Erasure," *Invisible Disability Project*, accessed April 24, 2018, https://www.invisibledisabilityproject.org/unseen-zine/2017/6/5/ableism-and-erasure.

[32] Tom Faw Driver, *Liberating Rites: Understanding the Transformative Power of Ritual*, (Lexington, KY: BookSurge Publishing, 2006), 83.

[33] Driver, *Liberating Rites*, 99.

ritualizing people to God and identifies God as the powerful focus of Christian worship. Well-known hymns that are sung in worship have become important parts of these rituals. They are a repeated practice, and most of them have been sung for decades if not centuries. Therefore, the alteration of hymns is, for some, taking away the ritual, taking away the tradition. But, if worshipers truly understand the place that hymn text holds in the ritual and understand the message that is being conveyed through the use of a hymn, then they can understand the need for the change in text. "Ritual loses its effectiveness when it alienates a people from their heritage, their society and their family."[34] Now, to refute those who believe critiquing a hymn through change is because of a negative view of the hymn, it is not. Critiquing a hymn is not a criticism in superiority over the author but is a criticism in support for the hymn. To care for the life of a hymn enough to alter the text is to care for the lasting impact of the hymn.[35] If worshippers support and believe in an inclusive service, then they will understand the need in text alteration. Countless hymns have been adapted to fit into specific hymnals, tunes, or collections.[36] The 1989 *UMH* was told by the authorizing General Conference to "be sensitive to inclusive

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[34] William B. McClain, *The Soul of Black Worship* (Madison, NJ: The Multi-Ethnic Center for Ministry, Wesley House, Drew University, between 1978-1981), 11.

[35] Austin Phelps, Edward Amasa Park, Daniel Little Furber, *Hymns and Choirs: Or, The Matter and Manner of the Service in Song* (Andover, MA: W.F. Draper, 1860), 158.

[36] Other hymns which have been adapted in various publications include: "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," "Christ the Lord is Risen Today," "Ye British Lands Rejoice," "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven." Furthermore, the Doxology is continuously altered as new collections of hymns are published, liturgical seasons change, and communities shape it for their services of worship.

language, but respect the language of traditional hymns."[37] In this attention to inclusive language, authority was given and taken to alter hymn texts.

Brian Wren, a widely published British hymn writer, is known for editing and revising his own hymns. Dr. Wren not only believes in revising his own hymns, but he supports the editing of other writers' hymns, arguing that, since hymns are "communal, a faith community may, in principle, amend them."[38] Wren is not the only person to support this practice. The prolific hymn writer Isaac Watts wrote that, "where any unpleasing word is found, he [sic] that leads worship may substitute a better."[39] The practice of altering hymn texts to suit the needs of the worshiping community has occurred for centuries and lays a practical groundwork for this paper's focus. Care is still of extreme importance when altering a hymn text. A hymn can easily be marred or ruined by "careless menders of hymns," however, often hymn texts are changed into something more appropriate, accessible, or beautiful.[40] I believe this careless meandering is what has led some to oppose the altering of hymn texts.

Though countless hymns have been altered, a notable example that is sung in its altered state is "Hark the Herald Angels Sing."[41] Originally, the first line of Charles

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[37] Dean McIntyre, "Making Hymns Inclusive" Discipleship Ministries, accessed April 26, 2018, https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/making-hymns-inclusive.

[38] Brian Wren, *Praying Twice: The Music and Words of Congregational Song* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 297.

[39] Isaac Watts, preface to *Isaac Watts' Hymns and Spiritual Songs*, ed. Isaac Watts (London: Faith Press, 1962), liii. quoted in Wren, *Praying Twice,* 298.

[40] Austin Phelps, et al, *Hymns and Choirs,* 155.

[41] Wren, *Praying Twice,* 303.

Wesley's hymn read "Hark how all the Welkin Rings." Among other changes within the hymn, George Whitefield altered the line to read "Hark the herald angels sing" to make it more accessible. This hymn has gone through multiple additional alterations in publication, including Martin Madan in 1760, Tate and Brady in 1782, John Kempthorne in 1810, and *The United Methodist Hymnal* in 1989.[42] While most hymn text revisions have been done to remove archaic language, there are other reasons hymns have been altered, including gendered, alienating, and exclusionary language. The critic of the hymn is looking to "find more fitting images, and [they seek] after more appropriate words."[43] While many words that fall into these categories could also be considered archaic, e.g. the use of "men" or "man" to refer to all of humanity, it is important to recognize the intersectionality of the language and the multiple ways this language can be damaging for the faithful. "So, why do it? The answer is to include, to welcome, to invite, to affirm, to love, rather than the opposite."[44] These hymns are texts of theological education, and, as such, they should be adequately addressing questions of God and ultimate reality. The metaphors and archaic usage of terms can be extremely problematic. The Church is working to remove and void language that is alienating to someone based on their gender, race, ethnicity, or sexuality.[45] This is present not only within hymnody but within other

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[42] Wren, *Praying Twice,* 303.

[43] Austin Phelps, et al, *Hymns and Choirs,* 154.

[44] McIntyre, "Making Hymns Inclusive."

[45] Wren, *Praying Twice,* 325.

areas of ministry and theological work.[46] While not every denomination is working on each of these subjects, there is a greater movement within the Church to remove and avoid them.

Language has changed and adapted as humanity has changed and adapted. As we learn and understand these changes in both academic and popular usage, texts begin to bring the new usage into common practice. Dictionaries add new words every year and continue to update definitions for words that do exist. Scripture is continually revisited as new translations are released in relation to the changes in English and other languages. For many hymns, patterns of life are no longer the same as they were when the hymns were written. For Wren and others, "we are too remote from our forebears' culture for the experience to be inspirational."[47] If we are doing this with scripture, a primary text of Christianity, shouldn't we be doing this with other foundational texts? "The problem lies with the theology that undergirds the lyrics of the nineteenth-century… hymns. The theology and imagery don't always speak to the church today."[48] If our theology, ministry, and practices have changed since the hymn was written then the hymns themselves may need to be updated. Indeed, Wren roots his own argument in the observations that many Protestant Americans actually claim the hymnal as their most

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[46] More discussion of the attention to language given by previous hymnal revision committees can be found within discipleship ministries: McIntyre, "Making Hymns Inclusive."

[47] Wren, *Praying Twice,* 298.

[48] Kathy Black, *Culturally-Conscious Worship,* (St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2000), 95.

beloved book, above the Bible.[49] Wren argues that the hymns come from "an inspired writer [who] speaks directly to the soul" in ways that seem accessible to the faithful because of the hymns' common origins and use in worship practices.[50]

However, there is a category of people for whom many hymns are not accessible, those with disabilities. The social justice movements within churches and communities often exclude the work for those with disabilities. Ignored and left behind by many, Christian worship is no exception to this. "When a lyric from the past gets too archaic to be understood, or too out of sync with today's hope, faith, and issues to speak for us, it will eventually cease to be sung, or amended to keep it singable."[51] It is my hope that, through this paper, it is shown how many hymns include troublesome, archaic language surrounding disabilities. Additionally, it should be clear that there is a difference between a change and a fad. "Change is the natural evolution, but faddism is artificial."[52] It is clear that the amendments made for the inclusion of those with disabilities is not a fad, but a needed and natural change. Wren argues that there are limitations to how far the editing or altering should go. He asks "how far should revisions go?"[53] The reviews and alterations he created and analyzed in his book showed "the reviews had two aims: to

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[49] Wren, *Praying Twice,* 315.

[50] Wren, *Praying Twice,* 298.

[51] Wren, Praying Twice, 298.

[52] McClain, *The Soul of Black Worship,*12.

[53] Wren, Praying Twice, 315.

preserve the integrity of the congregation's song and, subject only to this, the integrity of the original author's work."[54] For these reasons, I argue that, if the hymn cannot be changed and maintain the integrity of the text and the authors work, then the hymn should be removed from public worship. As I have argued, "some hymn texts are offensive, exclusive, and hurtful to some worshipers" and these hymns should be altered or removed from worship.[55] Countless hymns have been retired or forgotten while other hymns have remained popular or experienced a renaissance in new contexts. Charles Wesley wrote over six thousand hymns, and Fanny Crosby wrote over eight thousand, yet not all of these hymns have remained. Indeed, not all of the hymns I will analyze in this paper need to remain. As Wren writes, "when a lyric is well known, changes disturb the singer's memory bank. People have to think twice about what they are singing, and are apt to dislike both the disturbance and the change that causes it."[56] I am aware that this will not be a pleasant process for some people involving specific hymns, but I hope the necessity of the action has been proven.

HYMNS INVOLVING LANGUAGE ON DISABILITY

Often, hymns call for the followers of Christ to perform certain actions expressing or otherwise communicating faith. Expectations from hymns that the faithful Christian see, walk, hear, or speak in particular ways have resulted in exclusionary texts, for not

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[54] Wren, Praying Twice, 315.

[55] McIntyre, "Making Hymns Inclusive."

[56] Wren, *Praying Twice*, 297.

everyone is able to perform the actions in the hymn. Some of these hymns are the focus of this paper, including "Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus," "Open My Eyes That I May See," Here O My Lord I See Thee," "Stand Up and Bless the Lord," and Easter People Raise Your Voices."

I have broadly addressed critical disability theory and hymnology above, and I now turn to particular hymns from the *UMH*. The hymns presented below are a small representation of a larger tradition of hymnody in which the treatment of disabilities has been poor. This paper will now analyze particular hymns into further detail and explain where and why the issues are within each hymn. The hymns that are analyzed are divided into three categories: sensory disabilities, other physical disabilities, and mental illness.

SENSORY DISABILITIES

For the sake of this paper, the examination of hymns and sensory disabilities will focus largely on blindness, deafness, and dumbness. I will focus on these three themes as they appear in specific hymns and analyze the problematic implications this language has for the larger worshiping community. A frequently referenced disability in hymnody is blindness. Sometimes, the use is a reference to a specific biblical passage, and we will soon analyze some of those biblical passages. However, blindness is often used as a damaging metaphor. There are various expressions of this metaphor, but, most often, blindness is understood as darkness, insufficiency, or sin. These metaphors and presumptions are made by sighted people as ones who "canonize God in terms of light

and sightedness, thus condemning darkness and blindness as blots within the created order that must finally be eliminated."[57]

The understanding of darkness as a metaphor for blindness comes from various foundations yet is rooted in an understanding of how blindness works from a sighted person. "First, the assumption that equates darkness and blindness presumes to know, from a sighted perspective, that blind people know only darkness and don't recognize the difference between darkness and light."[58] This is not true. Those who are legally considered blind can often still perceive things like lights, shadows, and colors. The idea that those who are blind can only see darkness comes from the idea of darkness or night being a representation of the life that they live. "By extension, all imagery of night, the condition within which no one can see, suggest blindness. The Easter Vigil ritualized this image, and the candle at the front and at the casket recalls it."[59] There are practices found within the greater liturgy of the Church, not just hymnody, which are using this problematic imagery.

Lack of knowledge or insufficiency are really two different ways to describe the same usage for a term. This insufficiency may be lack of knowledge, inability, or inaccessibility. Regardless of the usage, this insufficiency equates blindness with a lesser way of being. The most well-known usage of blindness as a metaphor in hymnody is found within Amazing Grace.

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[57] Yong, *Bible Disability Church*, 55.

[58] Yong, *Bible Disability Church*, 56.

[59] Gail Ramshaw, *Liturgical Language: Keeping It Metaphoric, Making It Inclusive* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1996), 32-33.

Amazing grace! how sweet the sound,
That saved a wretch; like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
Was blind, but now I see.

Amazing Grace is, quite possibly, the most beloved hymn of American Christianity. It is certainly the most well-known. I am aware that the idea of changing this hymn or addressing its problematic nature has been and will be extremely disturbing to many people and faith communities, but, as Brian Wren stated, this is a case in which the need for the change is more important than the need for familiarity.

It is clear in this stanza that being blind is not a good thing; *blind* is to *see* as *lost* is to *found*. In this stanza, one was in a lower place of being, they were lost, they were a wretch or an unfortunate person. This unfortunate and lost wretch is blind. The hymn makes clear that being blind is among the list of qualities that this person holds in an unsatisfactory life. Said differently, sight is something that is to be admired and desired. Amazing Grace exemplifies Yong's argument that "the metaphor of blindness works inexorably toward such conclusions only for those who either cannot or do not question a sighted perspective."[60] John Newton knew a life of sight, and he understood his life to be the only way that life should be. Therefore, he believed that someone who wouldn't be able to live life to his standard would be unfortunate. Blindness "has been stereotyped by sighted people", as John Newton does here.[61] This stereotyping affects the visually

[60] Yong, *Bible Disability Church*, 55.

[61] Maria Papadaki and Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova, "Social Attitudes and Beliefs of Sighted People towards Blindness and Blind Persons," *Beograd* 12, no. 4 (2013): 481.

impaired and the way they are involved in sighted life. This stereotyping has "affected the acceptance of visually impaired persons, the tolerance towards them and their integration into societal life."[62] "History shows that ignorance, neglect, superstition and fear are social factors that have exacerbated isolation of persons with disabilities."[63]

The UMC Disability Ministries Committee suggests changing the line to "I slept, but now I wake," because it is "in line with metaphors used during the time of the New Testament."[64] However, this line does not rhyme with the previous line which ends with "me." I suggest "confined, but now I'm free" as an alternative for the final verse of stanza one. This textual change recasts the image in the hymn from being saved from darkness into lightness and, instead, shows the power of being set free from the captivity of sin. I argue that removal of this ableist language which casts blindness in such a negative light is imperative towards being an inclusive and welcoming church.

Stanza six of "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" presents another interesting case for this study.

> *Hear Him, ye deaf; His praise, ye dumb,*
> *Your loosened tongues employ;*
> *Ye blind, behold your Savior come,*
> *And leap, ye lame, for joy.*

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[62] Maria Papadaki and Mira Tzvetkova-Arsova, "Social Attitudes and Beliefs" 481.

[63] Chomba Wa Munyi, "Past and Present Perceptions Towards Disability: A Historical Perspective," *Disability Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (April 9, 2012), accessed March 21, 2018, http://dsq-sds.org/article/view/3197/3068.

[64] Tim Vermande and Lynn Swedberg, "Disability Awareness Hymns," *Disability Ministries Committee of The United Methodist Church*, last modified 2013, accessed March 23, 2018, https://www.umdisabilityministries.org/dasunday/dahymn.html.

In the *UMH*, an asterisk before the stanza in the musical setting notes that the stanza "May be omitted."[65] Many other recent hymnals have followed this suggestion and removed the stanza from publication.[66] Due to this hymn's length, not all stanzas can be included within the musical setting. Eleven additional stanzas are included on the page following the music. Including the stanza among those set to music leads to a critical question. What is so significant about this stanza and its blatant language of sensory disabilities that it must be included? One could argue that the stanza is simply using poetic devices to refer to various scriptural accounts of Jesus's own ministry with PWD. However, contextualizing the stanza within the broader hymn displays the negative view that is associated with the life of being deaf, dumb, blind, or lame. Put simply, these disabilities are equated to sin. Within the context of the hymn, these conditions are listed alongside imprisonment, fallen race, murder, and broken hearts, leading to the understanding that disability is a result of the fallen world, a result of sin in the world. Finally, the commands included in the hymn – "hear him" "tongues employ," and "leap" – come as an expectation for a cure, which is neither possible nor wanted by many PWD. This stanza should be omitted in future publications of the hymn and should not be sung in worship. Doing so would follow the pattern of removing the original seventeenth stanza of the hymn for its statement that Christ's gift of saving light shall "wash the Ethiop white."

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[65] Charles Wesley, "O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing" *United Methodist Hymnal*, 58.

[66] The stanza is not present in "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing" in *Glory to God*, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2013, 610. And "O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing," in *Hymns of Promise*, Carol Stream, IL: Hope Publishing Company, 2015, 47.

Finally, could it be argued that "Lift Every Voice and Sing" falls into the same problems as previous hymns? I do not think so, for it commands that every *voice* be lifted in song without expectation that every *person* engage in singing. In this hymn, there is, I argue, a theological anthropological distinction between *voice* and *person*. To be a human person is to be a creature, created in the image of God, a unique expression of God's creative grace and love in the world. While many human persons have voices, the possession of a voice does not define the human person. As such, the hymn does not exclude those persons with vocal impairments as it declares solidarity among the oppressed of the world. It, rather, calls upon those who do have voice to sing. But, by focusing the charge to sing on those who have voice, does this action exclude those without voice? No. The solidarity of the hymn is a solidarity of humanity in faith in and dependence upon God. The vocally impaired can still join and praise God with others as they are no less human than one with voice.

OTHER PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

The commands to hear, employ the tongue, and behold are not the only expectations of cure in "O for a thousand tongues to sing." There is another physical disability under consideration: lameness. The command to leap in response to one's sinful lameness is equally as problematic as commands that the deaf hear or the blind behold. "Stand Up And Bless The Lord" (622) also exemplifies this problematic line of thinking, equating the act of standing with the ability to bless the Lord.[67] This is limiting

[67] Hymn texts that are not included in the body of the paper are found in the appendix at the end.

the community of believers to only those who are capable of standing. Not only does this exclude extremely young people as well as the aged, it excludes those with disabilities who are not capable of standing for various reasons.

The second line of stanza one, "Stand up and bless the Lord *ye people of his choice*," makes clear that there are chosen ones of God who are to stand and bless God. The implication of such a command is that those who are not capable of standing are also not capable of blessing the Lord. If standing is a requirement to bless the Lord, then what does this mean for the members of Christ's body who cannot physically stand? Are they not capable of blessing the Lord? In many Protestant denominations in the United States, standing has been equated with notions of proper worship. The expectation of standing is revealed in the worship leader's invitation (which is really more of a command) for the congregation to stand and join in the worship through song. The continued act of forcing people to stand up if they sing is an ableist practice. It excludes those who cannot stand. It makes them feel that their worship is not as worthy as that of other parishioners. If worship is to be a fully inclusive practice, then people should be invited to worship however they feel most comfortable. This could be kneeling, sitting, standing, or prostrate. However, that is only a symptom of a greater problem, like these hymns are. If we are to invite all to worship, not all practices can instantly change, but we should work towards improving the ones we can.

The next hymn to be analyzed is, "Marching to Zion" (733). The biggest issue with this hymn comes from the repeating of marching in the refrain, so the main issue is not with the original text of Watts but with Robert Lowry's additional refrain. Watts does

write the marching command at the end of the fourth stanza, but it is the repetition of the refrain which warps its imagery in problematic ways. Plainly, the refrain is problematic as it leaves those who are unable to march without the ability to get to the "fairer worlds on high." When the phrase is only said once at the end of the hymn, it is more easily understood to be a Biblical reference to Isaiah. The refrain of this hymn can be removed and the hymn restored back to its original nature. This will keep the integrity of Isaac Watts's original image without maintaining the problematic repetitive language of Lowry's refrain. This hymn is an example of an alteration to the hymn text that did not keep the integrity and vision of the original hymn. The addition of the refrain changes the emphasis of the hymn to one in which the physical act of walking becomes central or changes the emphasis to an evangelistic message in which physical ability to walk "up to Zion" becomes essential for one's salvation.

"Walk On, O People of God" (305) has beautiful imagery in which Christ takes into his body all of our "sin, enslavement, and pain," thus creating a new life for people. This can be a powerful reminder for those with disabilities of chronic pain that Christ experienced and understood that pain. However, it leaves the reader wondering why the pain still exists when Christ has removed it. This hymn could be a hymn of solidarity if the refrain were not present, for the refrain tells the singers that they must walk on to continue into the new creation.

Walk on, O people of God!
A new law, God's new alliance,
all creation is reborn.
Walk on, O people of God;
walk on, O people of God.

Those who cannot walk are left behind in the old way without salvation and are not part of the reborn creation. Adjusting the language from "walk" to "go" would solve the major problematic language issue in this hymn.

Additional hymns that present problematic language for people with physical disabilities can be found in The *UMH* as follows: "I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light" (206), "I Stand Amazed in the Presence" (371), "Standing on the Promises" (374), "Stand by Me" (512), "Soldiers of Christ Arise" (513), "Stand up Stand up for Jesus" (514). Many of these hymns could be revised in order to keep them usable. The same can be said for two of the previously discussed hymns, "Stand Up and Bless the Lord" and "Walk On O People of God" have a few possible solutions to keep the hymns usable. One possible word replacement is "move." This can be executed to read "I want to move as a child of God" or "Moving to Zion."

Often, the problematic language found within these hymns corresponds to militaristic language and imagery. Though a discussion of the militarism common to much of American Protestant hymnody is important, it is beyond the scope of this project. The connection between militarism and ableism, however, deserves brief attention here. First, not everyone has the physical ability to join the military. Equating the work of the military with the work of the Church presents a narrow view of the Church that violently ignores the peace of God ushered in by the Church. Second, the constant use of the word "stand" as a faithful action given from God alienates those who are within the church who cannot stand and keeps those who cannot stand from seeing joy in joining the Church's work. If a member of the congregation is sitting in the pew or

using a wheelchair and singing along with a hymn, the repeated command to stand can damage their relationship with God as the hymn renders them incapable of doing what is required of them in Christian duty.

CHRONIC MENTAL ILLNESS

"Silence! Frenzied, unclean spirit" is an incredibly problematic hymn for individuals with mental illness. It equates biblical stories of demonic possession and exorcism by Christ with mental illness. Stanza one recounts the biblical story in well-written and concise verses. Stanzas two and three are where the problems arise and are laid plain. Instantly, there is a connection of demons with mental illness.

> *Lord, the demons still are thriving*
> *in the grey cells of the mind:*

In a time when mental illness is constantly equated with violence, perpetuation of archaic ideas that mental illness is the result of demonic possession is a dangerous theological position for the well-being of people with mental illnesses.[68] Research by Indiana University revealed 58% of people do not want to work in an office with someone with a mental illness and 68% of people do not want someone with a mental illness marrying into their family.[69] It is proven that people with mental illness are 2.5

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[68] Marie E. Reuve and Randon S. Welton, "Violence and Mental Illness" *Psychiatry (Edgmont)* 5, May 2008 (34-48).

[69] Sadie Dingfelder, "Stigma: Alive and Well" *Monitor on Psychology,* 40, no. 6 (2009): 56.

times more likely to have violence enacted upon them instead of causing violence.[70] Even though this is true, people report that they do not want to work with someone who has depression for fear of violence being caused against them.[71]The hymn continues:

Tyrant voices shrill and driving,
twisted thoughts that grip and bind,

While not all experiences of twisted thoughts occur exclusively within the minds of people with mental illness, the hymn clearly judges these gripping and binding thoughts with morally incorrect thinking, reflecting societal stigmatizations of people with mental illness. Additionally, the hearing of voices that are only audible to one person and are found within that person's mind is a serious symptom of chronic mental illness conditions such as borderline personality disorder or schizophrenia. The conditions named in this hymn and equated with the demonic are not ones that able minded people experience regularly. While many, if not most, people may feel that they have been gripped by voices it is not part of their everyday life.

The final four verses of stanza two, however, are salvageable, for they capture feelings that humans without mental illness also experience.

Doubts that stir the heart to panic,
fears distorting reason's sight,
Guilt that makes our loving frantic,
dreams that cloud the soul with fright

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[70] Virginia Aldigé Hiday et al., "Victimization: A Link between Mental Illness and Violence?" *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry* 24, no. 6 (November 12, 2001): 559–572.

[71] Virginia Aldigé Hiday et al., "Victimization"

Dreams are something that most humans experience as well. These feelings and thoughts are not exclusive to those with chronic mental illness. This understanding of demons being something that all people experience and process in different ways is significantly less ableist. In this understanding, all people experience demons at different times. However, not all people experience "tyrant voices" or "twisted thoughts" at least not for extended periods.

Though not as problematic as the second stanza, the third stanza is not without concern. Scripturally, this stanza recalls the healing story of Mark 1:21-28.

> *Silence, Lord, the unclean spirit,*
> *in our mind and in our heart.*
> *Speak your word that,*
> *when we hear it,*
> *all our demons shall depart.*
> *Clear our thought and calm our feeling,*
> *still the fractured, warring soul.*
> *By the power of your healing*
> *make us faithful, true, and whole.*

This stanza is still ableist in its implication that someone who may be experiencing one of any of these thoughts is actually not faithful, true, or whole. Such an implication, as Yong notes, lowers the status of those people to sub-human.[72] Such sub-humanity, however, cannot be the case, for people who are experiencing mental illness can still be faithful servants of God. More fundamentally, they are not incomplete people.

If we are to look more directly at one of the scriptural passages in which Jesus "heals" someone from demonic possession, Luke 8:26-39, we can better see the

[72] Yong, *Bible Disability Church*.

problematic nature of this analogy in the hymn. In Luke 8:26-39, Jesus restores the individual who is possessed by demons to society. In this story, what Jesus is doing is healing the man's relationship to society. Jesus is refusing to participate in his isolation. "Likewise, were we to refuse to accept many of the stigmas and negative stereotypes around people with mental illness, we too could more often make strides in restoring broken relationships."[73]

"Silence Frenzied Unclean Spirit" may not be the only hymn that touches on mental illness, but it is the only one within the *UMH*. This may be a result of multiple factors. Mental illness is often overlooked within the Church as people are afraid how to reconcile something that they cannot see and something that they do not experience. Additionally, people are reluctant to listen to those who they view as lesser than themselves, and mental illness often results in this subhuman view of another. The lack of visibility surrounding mental illness conditions could also be a contributing factor to the lack of the existence of these hymns. Invisible illnesses are often left aside in the discussion of disability. The lack of visibility in the existence and support of mental illness would mean a lack of cultural references. About 42 million American adults, 18.1 percent of the population, live with an anxiety disorder, and 1-in-5 adults has experienced a mental illness. By singing this hymn and standing firm in the theological anthropology this hymn espouses, the Church is alienating 20% of the adult population of the nation, and even more if we consider those who are close to them. Additionally, nearly 60% of

[73] Melcher et al., *Bible and Disability*, 312.

adults in America who have been diagnosed do not receive treatment for their mental illness.[74] This staggering number demonstrates a great lack of availability of resources or tools to help the diagnosed adult not understand the hymn and its imagery as a personal attack.

HYMNS BY AUTHORS WITH DISABILITIES

While many hymn writers have disabilities or are temporarily disabled, I close with a discussion of three well-known hymn writers who lived with different disabilities. Their hymn work is important as it shows the spiritual and religious life of people living with disabilities. These writers do not consider themselves lesser because of their disabilities and their hymns provide us insight into this. Fanny Crosby lived with blindness, Charlotte Elliot lived with an unknown physical disability, and William Cowper lived with severe depression. These different disabilities impact a person's life in different ways, and their work reflects their understanding and beliefs of their disabilities.

One of the most well-known hymn writers, Fanny Crosby, became blind as a young child. Crosby wrote three hymns a week at some times and is possibly the most prolific hymn-writer in history.[75] Even though she was one of the most respected women in her era and a friend to many presidents, Crosby decided to publish multiple hymns

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[74] "Mental Health By the Numbers | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness" NAMI, last modified 2018, accessed March 24, 2018, https://www.nami.org/learn-more/mental-health-by-the-numbers.

[75] Bert Polman, "Fanny Crosby," Canterbury Dictionary of Hymnology, accessed March 10, 2018, https://hymnology.hymnsam.co.uk/f/fanny-crosby?q=fanny%20crosby.

under pseudonyms. She did not believe that her blindness was a fault but saw her blindness as "a gift from God that enabled her to do things that she might not have been able to do with full sight."[76] Three of Crosby's most well-known hymns are Blessed Assurance, To God Be the Glory, and Tell Me the Story of Jesus.[77]

Charlotte Elliot suffered from an illness at the age of 32, which left her with a disability. Her spiritual mentor urged her to find inner peace through using her talents. This led to her writing hymns as a way to release anger.[78] Elliot wrote hymns that were devotional and consoling for those with sickness. Her most well-known hymn, "Just As I Am, without One Plea," is a personal reflection upon her own disability expressed in her hymnody. All are invited to and loved by Jesus. In this hymn, there is particular attention to the message of good news that there is no normative expectation of the person who comes to God. Indeed, anyone can come "just as [they are], without one plea" (st.1).[79]

William Cowper spent much of his life in periods of intense depression and has attempted suicide multiple times.[80] Scholars believed and accepted for years that his hymn "God Moves in Mysterious Ways" was written in response to a suicide attempt.

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[76] Polman, "Fanny Crosby."

[77] Bernard Ruffin, *Fanny Crosby* (Westwood, N.J.: Barbour and Co., 1985).

[78] Irene Ting-Ting Lai, "History of Hymns: 'Just as I Am' Comes from Writer's Struggle with Confining Illness - Umcdiscipleship.org," accessed November 16, 2017, https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-just-as-i-am-comes-from-writers-struggle-with-confining-il.

[79] Nancy Jiwon Cho, "Charlotte Elliot," Cantebury Dictionary of Hymnology, accessed April 5, 2018, https://hymnology-hymnsam-co-uk.ezproxy.bu.edu/c/charlotte-elliott?q=charlotte%20elliot.

[80] John Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology* (London: John Murrary, 1907) 268-269.

However, there are manuscripts that prove that the hymn was begun prior to his suicide attempt.[81] This new evidence powerfully suggests that this hymn is to be understood as a man's faith journey in the midst of depression. Written in the midst of suicide attempts, the text could be comforting for those who are also facing depression. There is solidarity in the midst of depression between the hymnwriter and the singer. It is helpful to realize we are not alone and to know that God "rides upon the storm" (st.1). Regardless of when the hymn began, Cowper spent a great deal of his life suffering from a chronic mental illness, and he wrote many of his hymns as a response to this.[82]

CONCLUSION

The hymns that are discussed in this paper are only a sampling of hymns which contain language related to disabilities. Though the goal of this paper was not to analyze every hymn in the *UMH*, the paper has offered three categories for analyzing other hymns beyond the scope of this project. Furthermore, there are thousands of hymns beyond the *UMH* that deserve careful consideration as the Church seeks to answer God's call to be the Body of Christ for the world. This work has missional importance. The tension between substituting for and removing ableist language in hymnody must be addressed on a hymn-by-hymn basis, taking an account of the hymn's theological message for contemporary congregations.

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[81] Julian, *Dictionary of Hymnology,* 268-269.

[82] John Piper, "Insanity and Spiritual Songs in the Soul of a Saint: Reflections on the Life of William Cowper," *Desiring God*, January 29, 1992, accessed April 20, 2018, https://www.desiringgod.org /messages/insanity-and-spiritual-songs-in-the-soul-of-a-saint.

When selecting hymns for worship, great attention must be given to the language of the hymn as more than just relating to the scripture, sermon, or broad theme for the occasion. If we are committed to including all members in the Body of Christ within the life of the Body, then the ableist language within the hymnody of the Church must be plainly addressed. This paper has continued this work which has been done by those mentioned previously in this paper.[83] Indeed, "it is not enough to have medical programs and special education for PWD. They must be organized, implanted, and funded."[84] Likewise, it is not enough for the Church to understand and preach the importance of inclusion, advocacy, and ministry. The church must work to implement practices that show the full support for PWD as they are included and integrated into all ministries of the Church.

[83] Nancy L. Eiesland and Don E. Saliers, eds., Human Disability and the Service of God (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998); Richard D. McCall, Liturgy as Performance (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007); and Nancy J. Hale, "Dis-abling the body of Christ: toward a holistic ecclesiology of embodiment" (PhD diss., Boston University School of Theology, 2015).

[84] Herzog, *Social Context*, 25.

HYMN TEXTS[85]

AMAZING GRACE

1 Amazing grace how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found,
was blind, but now I see.

2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

3 Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come:
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.

4 The Lord has promised good to me,
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.

5 Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease:
I shall possess, within the veil,
a life of joy and peace.

6 The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
the sun forbear to shine;
but God, who called me here below,
will be forever mine.

[85] All References to hymns in this appendix are taken from *United Methodist Hymnal.*

LIFT EVERY VOICE AND SING

1. Lift every voice and sing,
Till earth and heaven ring,
Ring with the harmonies of Liberty;
Let our rejoicing rise
High as the list'ning skies,
Let it resound loud as the rolling sea.
Sing a song full of the faith that the dark past has taught us,
Sing a song full of the hope that the present has brought us;
Facing the rising sun of our new day begun,
Let us march on till victory is won.

2. Stony the road we trod,
Bitter the chast'ning rod,
Felt in the days when hope unborn had died;
Yet with a steady beat,
Have not our weary feet
Come to the place for which our fathers sighed?
We have come over a way that with tears has been watered.
We have come, treading our path through the blood of the slaughtered,
Out from the gloomy past,
Till now we stand at last
Where the white gleam of our bright star is cast.

3. God of our weary years,
God of our silent tears,
Thou who hast brought us thus far on the way;
Thou who hast by Thy might,
Led us into the light,
Keep us forever in the path, we pray.
Lest our feet stray from the places, our God, where we met Thee,
Lest our hearts, drunk with the wine of the world, we forget Thee;
Shadowed beneath Thy hand,
May we forever stand,
True to our God,
True to our native land.

MARCHING TO ZION

1.Come, we that love the Lord,
And let our joys be known;
Join in a song with sweet accord,
And thus surround the throne.

Refrain:
We're marching to Zion,
Beautiful, beautiful Zion;
We're marching upward to Zion,
The beautiful city of God.

2.The sorrows of the mind
Be banished from the place;
Religion never was designed
To make our pleasures less.

3.Let those refuse to sing,
Who never knew our God;
But children of the heav'nly King
May speak their joys abroad.

4.The men of grace have found
Glory begun below;
Celestial fruits on earthly ground
From faith and hope may grow.

5.The hill of Zion yields
A thousand sacred sweets
Before we reach the heav'nly fields,
Or walk the golden streets.

6.Then let our songs abound,
And every tear be dry;
We're marching through Immanuel's ground
To fairer worlds on high.

O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING

1.Glory to God, and praise and love
be ever, ever given,
by saints below and saints above,
the church in earth and heaven.

2.On this glad day the glorious Sun
of Righteousness arose;
on my benighted soul he shone
and filled it with repose.

3.Sudden expired the legal strife,
'twas then I ceased to grieve;
my second, real, living life
I then began to live.

4.Then with my heart I first believed,
believed with faith divine,
power with the Holy Ghost received
to call the Savior mine.

5.I felt my Lord's atoning blood
close to my soul applied;
me, me he loved, the Son of God,
for me, for me he died!

6.I found and owned his promise true,
ascertained of my part,
my pardon passed in heaven I knew
when written on my heart.

7.O for a thousand tongues to sing
my dear Redeemer's praise!
The glories of my God and King,
the triumphs of his grace.

8.My gracious Master and my God,
assist me to proclaim,
to spread through all the earth abroad
the honors of thy name.

9. Jesus! the name that charms our fears,
that bids our sorrows cease;
'tis music in the sinner??s ears,
'tis life, and health, and peace!

10. He breaks the power of canceled sin,
he sets the prisoner free;
his blood can make the foulest clean;
his blood availed for me.

11.He speaks, and listening to his voice
new life the dead receive;
the mournful, broken hearts rejoice,
the humble poor believe.

12.Hear him, ye deaf, his praise, ye dumb,
your loosened tongues employ;
ye blind, behold your Savior come,
and leap, ye lame, for joy.

13.Look unto him, ye nations, own
your God, ye fallen race!
Look, and be saved through faith alone,
be justified by grace!

14.See all your sins on Jesus laid;
the Lamb of God was slain,
his soul was once an offering made
for every soul of man.

15.Harlots and publicans and thieves,
in holy triumph join!
Saved is the sinner that believes
From crimes as great as mine.

16.Murderers and all ye hellish crew,
ye sons of lust and pride,
believe the Savior died for you;
for me the Savior died.

17.Awake from guilty nature's sleep,
and Christ shall give you light;
cast all your sins into the deep,
and wash the Ethiop white.

18.With me, your chief, you then shall know,
shall feel your sins forgiven;
anticipate your heaven below
and own that love is heaven.

SILENCE! FRENZIED, UNCLEAN SPIRIT

1. ”Silence! Frenzied, unclean spirit,"
cried God's healing, holy One.
"Cased your ranting! Flesh can't bear it.
Flee as night before the sun."
A Christ's voice the demon trembled,
fro its victim madly rushed,
while the crowd that was assembled
stood in wonder, stunned and hushed.

2. Lord, the demons still are thriving
in the grey cells of the mind:
Tyrant voices shrill and driving,
twisted thoughts that grip and bind,
Doubts that stir the heart to panic,
fears distorting reason's sight,
Guilt that makes our loving frantic,
drams that cloud the soul with fright.

3.Silence, Lord, the unclean spirit,
in our mind and in our heart.
Speak your word that,
when we hear it,
all our demons shall depart.
Clear our thought and calm our feeling,
still the fractured, warring soul.
By the power of your healing
make us faithful, true, and whole.

STAND UP, AND BLESS THE LORD

1 Stand up, and bless the Lord,
ye people of His choice;
stand up, and bless the Lord your God
with heart, and soul, and voice.

2 Tho' high above all praise,
above all blessing high,
who would not fear His holy Name,
and laud and magnify?

3 O for the living flame,
from His own altar brought,
to touch our lips, our mind inspire,
and wing to heav'n our thought!

4 There, with benign regard,
our hymns He deigns to hear;
though unrevealed to mortal sense,
the spirit feels Him near.

5 God is our strength and song,
and His salvation ours;
then be His love in Christ proclaimed
with all our ransomed pow'rs.

6. Stand up and bless the Lord,
the Lord your God adore;
stand up, and bless His glorious Name
henceforth for evermore.

WALK ON, O PEOPLE OF GOD

Refrain:

Walk on, O people of God;
walk on, O people of God!
A new law, God's new alliance,
all creation is reborn.
Walk on, O people of God;
walk on, O people of God.

1. Look on Calvary's summit;
on the rock there towers a cross;
Death that gives birth to new living,
a new people, a new light.
Christ has brought us salvation
with His death and rising again.
Everything comes to new birthing,
all creation is reborn!
(Refrain)

2. Christ takes into His body
all our sin, enslavement, and pain;
as He destroys them He brings us
life's abundance, life's new joy.
Christ brings reconciliation
to all things and people with God.
Nature bursts into new flowering,
all creation is reborn.
(Refrain)

3. Heaven and earth are embracing,
and our souls find pardon at last.
Now heaven's gates are reopened
to the sinner, to us all.
Israel walks a journey;
now we live, salvation's our song;
Christ's resurrection has freed us.
There are new worlds to explore.
(Refrain)

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