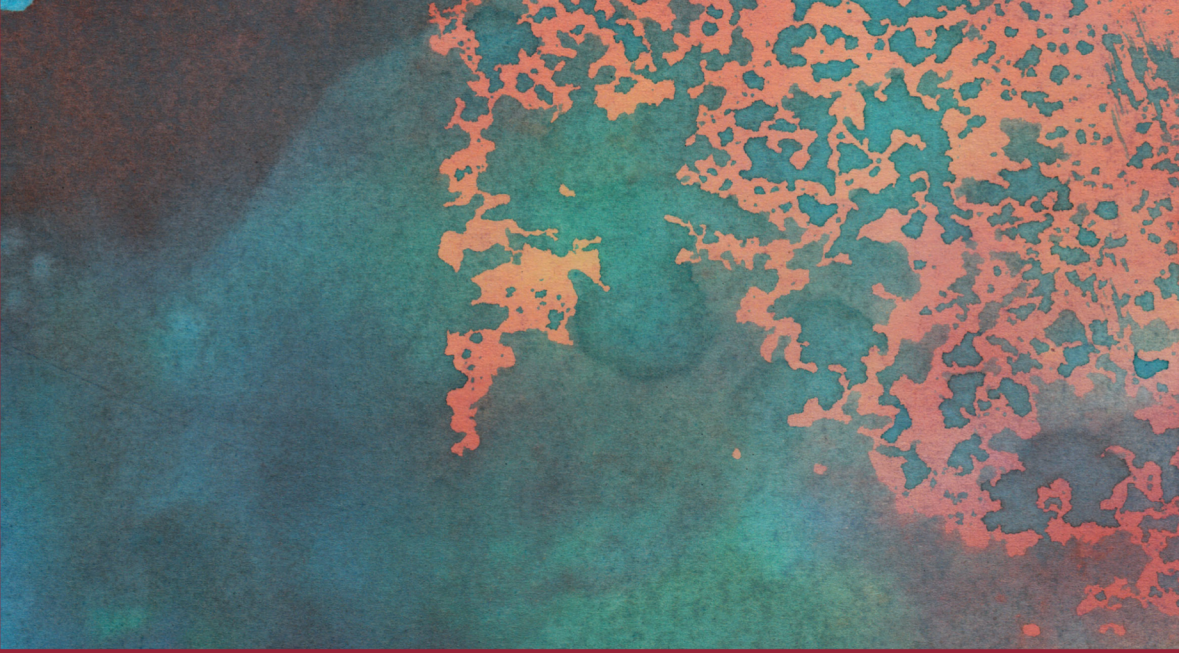

Congregational Music Studies Series

ETHICS AND CHRISTIAN MUSICKING

Edited by Nathan Myrick and Mark Porter

Ethics and Christian Musicking

The relationship between musical activity and ethical significance occupies long traditions of thought and reflection both within Christianity and beyond. From concerns regarding music and the passions in early Christian writings through to moral panics regarding rock music in the 20th century, Christians have often gravitated to the view that music can become morally weighted, building a range of normative practices and prescriptions upon particular modes of ethical judgment. But how should we think about ethics and Christian musical activity in the contemporary world?

As studies of Christian musicking have moved to incorporate the experiences, agencies, and relationships of congregations, ethical questions have become implicit in new ways in a range of recent research – how do communities negotiate questions of value in music? How are processes of encounter with a variety of different others negotiated through musical activity? What responsibilities arise within musical communities? This volume seeks to expand this conversation. Divided into four sections, the book covers the relationship of Christian musicking to the body; responsibilities and values; identity and encounter; and notions of the self. The result is a wide-ranging perspective on music as an ethical practice, particularly as it relates to contemporary religious and spiritual communities.

This collection is an important milestone at the intersection of ethnomusicology, musicology, religious studies, and theology. It will be a vital reference for scholars and practitioners reflecting on the values and practices of worshipping communities in the contemporary world.

Nathan Myrick is Assistant Professor of Church Music in the Townsend School of Music and Director of the Music and Human Flourishing Research Project (funded by a Vital Worship Grant from the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship with Funds provided by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.) at Mercer University. A graduate of Baylor University, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Providence University College, his research focuses on musical activity and human flourishing in the context of Christian communities. He is the author of *Music for Others: Care, Justice, and Relational Ethics in Christian Music* (2021), and the author and series editor of "Music

Matters" for *Ethics Daily*. His work has appeared in *The Yale Journal of Music and Religion, Bloomsbury Academic, Liturgy, The Hymn,* and others.

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Congregational Music Studies Series
Series Editors:
Monique M. Ingalls, Baylor University, USA
Martyn Percy, University of Oxford, UK
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Congregational music-making is a vital and vibrant practice within Christian communities worldwide. Music can both unite and divide: at times, it brings together individuals and communities across geographical and cultural boundaries while, at others, it divides communities by embodying conflicting meanings and symbolizing oppositional identities. Many factors influence congregational music in its contemporary global context, posing theoretical and methodological challenges for the academic study of congregational music-making. Increasingly, coming to a robust understanding of congregational music's meaning, influence, and significance requires a mixture of complementary approaches. Including perspectives from musicology, religious and theological studies, anthropology and sociology of religion, media studies, political economy, and popular music studies, this series presents a cluster of landmark titles exploring music-making within contemporary Christianity which will further Congregational Music Studies as an important new academic field of study.

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Edited by Nathan Myrick and Mark Porter

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Nathan Myrick is Assistant Professor of Church Music in the Townsend School of Music and Director of the Music and Human Flourishing Research Project (funded by a Vital Worship Grant from the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship with Funds provided by the Lilly Endowment, Inc.) at Mercer University. A graduate of Baylor University, Fuller Theological Seminary, and Providence University College, his research focuses on musical activity and human flourishing in the context of Christian communities. He is the author of *Music for Others: Care, Justice, and Relational Ethics in Christian Music* (Oxford University Press, 2021), and the author and series editor of "Music Matters" for *Ethics Daily*. His work has appeared in *The Yale Journal of Music and Religion, Bloomsbury Academic, Liturgy, The Hymn,* and others.

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Introduction: music and ethics in contemporary Christianity

Mark Porter and Nathan Myrick

As studies of Christian musicking as participatory activity have developed over the course of recent years (Porter 2014), questions of ethics have often been present towards the margins of this scholarship. In asking how communities function, what their values are, and why they do what they do, ethical questions are increasingly implied within scholarly investigation. Through work on Christian congregational music in particular (Ingalls, Landau and Wagner 2013), a wide range of communities and dynamics have been opened up to investigation and, with this, a wide range of lived-situations operating according to a broad range of ethical assumptions and ethical entailments. Despite the frequent presence of these ethical questions, either through the moral values of communities themselves, or through the questions which scholars ask as to the functioning of these communities, explicit attention to such issues has yet to become a major theme within such studies. This volume aims to address this lacuna by bringing together a range of perspectives on the ethics of Christian musicking, with a focus on music as an ethical practice, particularly as it relates to contemporary religious and spiritual communities. The collection can be outlined with reference to three keywords from the title:

Ethics: As recent volumes by Cobussen and Nielsen (2012), Hesmondhalgh (2013), Warren (2014), Rommen (2007), Porter (2016), and others have highlighted, as music becomes bound up with human activities and experiences it takes on a range of ethical dimensions. While questions of ethics and aesthetics are often held at something of a distance in contemporary academic discourse, in reality music is bound up with questions of values, significance, good, bad, right, wrong, virtue, vice, harm, flourishing, character, care, justice, and other associated concepts right from the moment it begins. The ethical concerns that it touches on are numerous and diverse, and lend themselves to a variety of approaches. As such, this volume brings together a range of perspectives from different authors, shedding light on the topic from a variety of different

standpoints, each reflecting their own particular interests and specialisms so as to shed as much light as possible on a wide and complex field.

Christian: This volume's work on music and ethics is distinctive primarily through its focus on musicking within a particular set of religious traditions. Religious and spiritual concerns always bring with them their own ethical entailments, norms, and practices—often drawing ethical concerns to the fore in a way that differs from other musical contexts. Traditions have inbuilt values and convictions, and religious communities have their own sets of ethical entailments, all of which are in a constant process of negotiation and contestation. Reflecting on these themes is important not only from an academic perspective, for those seeking understanding, but for communities themselves as they reflect upon their practices, challenges, and experiences in the contemporary world.

Musicking: In common with much recent work within studies of music, the volume looks at the intersection of music, ethics, and religion not through an abstraction of music away from processes of performance, engagement, and negotiation, but through the ways in which it is embedded and constituted within them (Small 1998). In doing so, ethics is not an abstract theoretical concept imposed at a distance to human life and action, but constantly immanent in the undertakings of individuals, groups, and communities.[1]

In bringing together ethics, music, and religion, this collection is situated at a potent and multifaceted thematic intersection, which touches on issues of crucial importance in a world where communities negotiate ever-more complex cultural, religious, and aesthetic realities.

Traditions of thought

The relationship between musical activity and ethical significance occupies long traditions of thought and reflection both within Christianity and beyond. From concerns regarding music and the passions in early Christian writings through to moral panics regarding rock music in the 20th century, Christians have often gravitated to the view that music can, in some way, become morally weighted, building a range of normative practices and prescriptions upon particular modes of ethical judgment (see e.g. McKinnon 1987, Nekola 2009). In particular, alongside a regard for the positive virtues of certain kinds of musical activity in nourishing the soul or drawing individuals to God, there has been frequent anxiety through much of Christian history that certain forms of music might, in some sense, exert a bad moral influence, causing Christians to feel and behave in ways which might lead them astray—whether that be through the allure and power of its aesthetic beauty, its ability to stir particular emotions, moods and

passions, or its association with bodily movement. These views have often been deployed somewhat strategically in relation to different conflicts and situations in which Christian worshippers have found themselves, with particular ethical judgments becoming significant as and when they can be deployed against a religious or cultural other from which particular Christian communities seek to distance themselves. As such, ethical discourse has often stood in close relation to political negotiation, on the one hand, and relational power negotiation, on the other.

Some of these traditions, it is fair to say, are more in line with prevailing patterns of contemporary thought than others. The more-ascetic strands of Christian ethical thought regarding music can, for those not immersed in such traditions, sometimes feel hard to take seriously when popular musical expressions have become a normal part of everyday life. Indeed, the idea that particular kinds of music have inherent moral weight becomes ever-more difficult to countenance as societal musical patterns and experiences diversify in ever-more multifarious ways. Whereas it is possible to imagine more-uniform cultural groupings in which musical forms have agreed upon significance and weight, such a situation is not characteristic of a highly networked global society in which cultural flows lead to multiple competing systems of meaning-making and evaluation within even the smallest worshipping communities. Indeed, even within Christianity, traditions emphasizing music's moral weight have to be understood alongside strands of thought which do precisely the opposite (Nekola 2009, Ingalls 2018), which deny music any ethical significance either as a neutral medium or as a purely aesthetic form, as something largely independent of and incidental to core Christian projects, whether those be framed in terms of doctrinal truth, the inner heart of the believer, or the actions which believers are called to embody in the world around them. In the face of highly visible Christian discourses around morality which can focus on issues such as racial [in]equality, abortion, war, sexuality, or euthanasia, it can sometimes seem that music is, at best, a marginal concern to Christian projects in comparison to such weighty themes. Indeed, this is perhaps an easier route for many to take, to view music as essentially amoral as a result of its seemingly harmless nature. However, such narratives can face equally significant hurdles when the sheer diversity of perspectives on the matter are considered.

While wanting to take existing traditions of ethical thought seriously, this volume is not situated entirely inside of established Christian ethical traditions surrounding music. These do indeed become important at varying points throughout the volume, and the editors do not set out to dismiss such teachings out of hand. However, we do not seek simply to re-repeat church teachings of a given tradition, but rather to enter into critical dialogue with them. Thus, we understand that music is neither ethically neutral nor inherently morally loaded in one particular fashion. Rather, it is able to take on a variety of different ethical significance as part of a variety

of different musical activities. This is a stance which takes both trains of thought seriously, but neither as absolute. In accordance with long traditions of Christian thought, music can have moral weight—but the nature of that weight can no longer be taken for granted. In accordance with competing traditions which allow music a freedom from particular assumptions of ethical worth, we acknowledge music's flexibility and ability to escape particular sets of ethical assumptions; but this freedom does not allow it to escape ethical considerations altogether; rather, we insist upon their contingency.

With this move beyond a relatively constrained set of musico-ethical intersections, other streams of (Christian or other-than-Christian) ethics can also be brought more to bear on music, particularly, perhaps, the imperative to attend to matters of social justice. In acknowledging a degree of flexibility, a door is opened up to a broader range of ethical frameworks; ethical modes of consideration that have developed in situations other than Christian devotional practice can also be brought to bear, just as modes of music, architecture, or language which have developed elsewhere nevertheless find a role within those worshipping practices themselves. Such considerations cannot always be imposed upon the communities themselves as necessarily determinative of practice; but rather, it is a key contention of the authors that the ethical implications of Christian musical activity need, at the start of the 21st century, once again to undergo new reflection in light both of the changing world in which this musical activity takes place, and, in light of the changing understandings of what music is and does, a shift which inevitably brings a different variety of concerns to the fore. Indeed, not only music but ethics has evolved, as the range of ethical concerns with which we have to grapple in a contemporary societal context bring issues to the fore that may not have been prominent concerns at other points in time. Likewise, the nature and form of Christian devotion and community is constantly taking on new forms, which read themselves back into the broader social settings they inhabit, altering existing forms and provoking new modes of thinking and musicking. This dialectical interplay of multiple poles results in something resembling a rhizomatic matrix of dynamic and diverging expressions of musicking in, around, and because of, Christian communities.

Recent turns to ethics

This book is, in part, an outworking of broader scholarly trends that have emerged over the past couple of decades in response to this evolving understanding of musical meaning within glocal contexts. While professional associations such as the British Forum for Ethnomusicology (BFE) and the Society for Ethnomusicology (SEM) have increasingly emphasized the importance of ethics for musical researchers, particularly as a result of the need to engage with institutional processes of ethical review,[2] in recent

years, several scholars have also turned to questions of ethics within studies of music more broadly. In both contrast and complement to traditions within Christianity, recent scholarship has sought to interrogate music's ethical potential in new ways, emphasizing the significance of the diverse ways in which music is employed in relation to different situations and structures. As music studies have increasingly broadened out to take in a wider variety of social and cultural concerns, the ethical dimensions of musical activity have become more obvious points of reflection.

One of the first authors to do this was Kathleen Higgins (2011 [1991]). Higgins insists on the need to consider music as it takes on roles within our lives and experience, and ethics in terms not just of moral dilemma but of virtue and value. Marcel Cobussen and Nanette Nielsen's collaborative work (2012) serves as another important milestone in bringing a renewed focus on ethics to musicological attention and in highlighting some of the potential avenues which scholars might wish to explore when seeking to reflect ethically upon musical practices and experiences in the world we find around us. In drawing attention to categories of listening, discourse, interaction, affect, voice, and engagement, Cobussen and Nielsen locate questions of musical ethics in the processes of interaction that occur during musical performance. David Hesmondhalgh (2013) refrains from foregrounding ethical terminology too strongly in his account of *Why Music Matters*; however in discussing the value of music and its relationship to human flourishing, his work is full of ethical themes. Rather than focusing on interaction, he examines the different ways in which music contributes to private and public realms of life, particularly in relation to affective experience. He emphasizes the value of particular musical practices to individuals and to society more generally and, in doing so, seeks to retrieve an account of music's importance from those who believe music and the arts to be of marginal interest to broader societal interests. Hesmondhalgh's title implicitly raises the concern that there are many who might believe that music doesn't matter, not so much because they don't enjoy it, but because individual and societal conceptions of worth are often focused elsewhere. In complement to the work of other authors, Jeff R Warren (2014) has pursued one particular interactional avenue through his focus on the responsibilities to other individuals that arise through musical activity, highlighting the crucial role that relationships have to play whenever music takes place. Crucially, in foregrounding the role of responsibility, he pushes away from ethics simply as a matter of abstract reflection and moves into a category in which it is hard not to take seriously the implied consequences of ethical reflection for practical engagement. For Warren, "people bump into other people in the world, and have to make decisions about how to respond. Ethics ensues. Music bumps into people, and sometimes is the medium through which people bump into others." (2017, 33). It is through concrete interactions with other people and other things that ethical practice emerges.

It is a consequence of living in the world and the almost-inevitable consequences of doing so.

These varying accounts all serve, in a variety of different ways, to redress a lack of attention to crucial ethical dimensions of musical activity that has emerged precisely through a historical failure to understand music *as* activity. Rich ethical discussion emerges much less-easily from attention to musical objects than from attention to human beings; however, once the argument has been made that we can consider music's ethical significance, and that there might be particular ways in which we can do so, there remains a further task to pursue—that of considering this ethical dimension within the variety of situations in which we work on music. Indeed, this is an essential step once music's ethical significance is acknowledged, because it is in this attention to particular situations that we can begin to develop an understanding of musical ethics precisely as music becomes part of the world around us.

A renewed ethics of Christian musicking

While a renewed attention to the ethical has begun to take shape within music studies more generally, work to explore such re-thought ethical frameworks in relation to Christian musicking is only just beginning. Nevertheless, as studies of Christian musicking have moved to incorporate the experiences, agencies, and relationships of congregations (Ingalls, Landau and Wagner 2013), ethical questions have become implicit in new ways in a range of recent research—how do communities negotiate questions of value in music? How are processes of encounter with a variety of different others negotiated through musical activity? What responsibilities arise within musical communities?

Within studies of Christian musicking the work of Timothy Rommen, in particular, has served to put ethics on the agenda for many recent scholars. For Rommen, ethics and music began to connect, within his fieldwork, as communities develop a variety of potentially competing morally laden discourses around particular styles of music and their associated meaning and value. One of the key achievements of Rommen's work is in pluralizing Christian musical ethics so that rather than being understood as a unitary proscriptive phenomenon it becomes clear that different Christian groups develop their own particular and contingent ethical evaluations in relation to a range of different phenomena and different Christian value-systems. This work has been picked up by a number of different scholars. Monique Ingalls, for example, counterposes Rommen's work with Charles Taylor's ethics of authenticity, focusing on how participants and organizers conceive of ethical relationships between the individual, community, and God during worship (2018, 46–49). Ethics, for Ingalls, is about the relationships which participants are led to aspire to in different musical communities and the imperatives, which shape their engagement

in worship. These are shaped by different theological discourses and relate to the ways in which different styles are performed as well as the basic models according to which different, contrasting Christian musical communities function. Jeffers Engelhardt, in a similar manner, has connected Rommen's work with the imperative in Orthodox Christian traditions to sing in the right way (2014, 13), drawing attention to the connection between right singing and right belief in the context of communities which themselves sustain a particular way of living. Jonathan Dueck, meanwhile (2017), brings Rommen's work into discussion of ecumenical questions of conflict and identity within Canadian Mennonite communities, and numerous other authors have referenced Rommen's coinages in order to pay tribute to the ethical negotiations implied in the practices which they are studying.

The editors, likewise, have both built upon these foundations in different ways in their own work on ethics and Christian musicking. Having spent time grappling with the different experiences of worshippers in his own work with congregations and in attempting to think about the nature of justice within Christian musical communities, Mark Porter (2016) has used the foundations of Jürgen Habermas's discourse ethics in order to argue that music takes on ethical significance within Christian communities as it becomes bound up with the experiences of different congregation members, and as they attribute different value and meaning to it in their experience as parts of broader communities. He argues that the ways in which these different experiences relate to and are (or aren't) allowed to shape communities' understandings and models of worship can be a crucial ethical juncture which exposes the ethical tensions inherent in bringing diverse sets of individuals into collective processes of musical participation. Porter's description of an ethical cosmopolitanism presents a vision of communal ethics shaped by the diverse movements and identities of individuals in contemporary society, offering an ethics of community built upon a constant process of negotiation between individual participants and communal practices. Nathan Myrick (2021), meanwhile, has gone further than this in proposing a particular ethical framework for evaluating the musical activity of Christian communities. Myrick has suggested the applicability of a care ethics oriented towards restorative justice to Christian musical activity, enumerating a number of different ways that responsibilities to others might arise in the course of devotional musical practices. In highlighting the relational ontology of musicking in Christian communities, he argues that musical worship is ethical when it cares, that is, when it preserves people in, and restores them to, just relationships with each other.

While the editors have foregrounded ethics explicitly and intentionally within their work, as already asserted, we also believe both that similar questions are implicit within a much broader range of recent work on Christian musicking, and that these implications deserve to be drawn

out at greater length. In the first volume of this series, Monique Ingalls, Carolyn Landau, and Tom Wagner frame their collection in terms of three categories—performance, identity, and experience. Each of these categories, while not necessarily ethical in and of itself, provides a potential springboard into a variety of different ethical concerns. Performance is the arena in which practices, activities, and interactions begin to take shape, and it is this situation of interacting human beings which begins to put ethical questions back onto the agenda as we begin to take it seriously once more as a crucial realm of research and exploration. Identity, likewise, very quickly becomes bound up with ethics as soon as the relationship between different individuals and groups becomes a focus for exploration. The extent to which different identities are constructed, affirmed, contested, welcomed, renegotiated or rejected in and through music is a realm of ethical concern precisely because it raises questions of how different kinds of people are treated when difference brings automatic relations of solidarity into question. Experience is a category, which almost always comes with an evaluative element. Experiences are rarely neutral, but are something which individuals can understand (or remember bodily) as positive or negative in a variety of different ways, which they evaluate according to a variety of values and criteria which are important to them, and which offer them various affordances which connect to broader life-projects and goals. To reflect upon ethics and music, then, is to reflect upon the implications of musical activity as it becomes significant within the lives and experiences of individuals and communities; it is to take seriously and pay attention to a complex dimension of these activities as value and norms are negotiated and performed, and as those things and relationships which, in some way, become implicated in physical, social and spiritual performance.

Ethics in a cosmopolitan era

Our expectations of performance, identity, and experience are in a process of constant evolution as musical activity, social, cultural, and political reality are in a seemingly continual state of flux. Alongside the evolving dynamics of contemporary scholarship, the constantly evolving condition of the world itself also demands a renewed reflection upon ethics and Christian musicking, and leads us to draw together a book which both has some sense of resonance with previous traditions of reflection around ethics and Christian musicking and which, nevertheless, says things which might not have been said before. Following from Porter's existing research, one particularly important thread to trace throughout the volume is that of a contemporary cosmopolitan condition and the attendant ethical negotiations which this requires. This has to do with both the trans-national movements and flows which are increasingly present in our everyday interactions, whether through different individuals that we encounter, through

products that we consume or through songs that we sing, and the internal diversity that these flows help to create within many of the social, musical, and spiritual constellations which we inhabit.

Cosmopolitanism is a contested concept both in relation to contemporary societies and in relation to Christianity. We can trace increasing political polarization between cosmopolitan and localist impulses in political contestations and, as Etienne de Villiers writes, "'Cosmopolitanism' belongs to a set of concepts, including 'libertarianism' and 'communism', which are mostly used by theologians in a negative sense" (2014, 161). It is a concept which often draws to mind allegiances felt to be in competition with more-pressing local, national or spiritual priorities. Nevertheless, even without idealizing the concept as one which is to be aspired to, it is possible to describe the contemporary condition of the world as one which has slowly evolved towards a more-cosmopolitan condition. In the words of Ulrich Beck, "Cosmopolitanism has ceased to be merely a controversial rational idea; in however distorted a form, it has left the realm of philosophical castles in the air and has entered reality" (2006, 2). What does this cosmopolitan condition mean? To follow Beck one step further, "The cosmopolitan outlook means that, in a world of global crises and dangers produced by civilization, the old differentiations between internal and external, national and international, us and them, lose their validity and a new cosmopolitan realism becomes essential to survival" (2006, 14). This is equally the case with musical practices (both interpersonal and communal) as with political negotiations. It is no longer easy to juxtapose a particular form or style of music belonging to the church as something essentially other from music which occurs outside of that context, neither is it possible to isolate particular musical genres or practices as belonging purely to one location or culture, regardless of the other musical flows, distinctions, and cross-fertilizations in which they participate.

In relation to the particular themes of this book, this means that the musical ethics of contemporary Christian communities are often required to come into negotiation with a broad range of values, cultural forms, and actors at varying levels of distance to those centered upon the worshipping community itself. They find ways of becoming hospitable to difference, make choices and position themselves in relation to a range of near and distant others, creating particular alliances on a musical stage which always transcends in some way the internal logic of the worship gathering itself. It is, therefore, precisely within these complex and multifaceted encounters that a range of different ethical negotiations begins to take place. Whether or not cosmopolitan ethical values themselves are adopted or adapted in some way, musical ethics at the start of the 21st century are nevertheless often shaped by the increasing presence of a cosmopolitan societal condition. These have to be negotiated theologically and spiritually in particular ways, which acknowledge that the connection between Christian faith, and such a condition, while important to negotiate, is not always obvious

or straightforward. Within the pages of this volume, (while contributors rarely reference cosmopolitan dynamics directly) it quickly becomes clear just how pervasive these concerns can become. Haynes Marchesini, Riches and Douglas, Im, and Swijghuisen Reigersberg all focus directly on the negotiations of difference and diversity that come as the result of the plural and interconnected relationships which individuals and communities attempt to navigate in the contemporary world. Silva Steuernagel highlights the challenges to particular values which come about in relation to geographical diversity, and Warren draws in dynamics of global circulation and the way in which different globally circulating sonic practices enable different relationships to the other. Even in chapters which focus less-directly on these themes, there is a continual awareness that each community is able to adopt and negotiate particular priorities in relation to a variety of either immediate or non-local, internal, or external others. It is this ever-present, geographically varied plurality that forms the context in relation to which different options become available, different meanings and values take shape, and different decisions are made.

The assumption that a particular worshipping community contains only members who belong wholly within its bounds, who are shaped according to the same set of ideals, and who possess no competing or concurrent allegiances and experiences may never have been an accurate description of the world, but now, more than ever, it is an ideal which struggles to gain a foothold in our experiences of the communities around us. On a musical level, it is an idea which is almost laughable, when anyone with an internet connection can experience almost any imaginable genre of music recorded or influenced by different nationalities, beliefs, values, experiences, and spiritualities with the touch of a finger. It is precisely this which can make first-century descriptions of Christian musical ethics sound so odd to a twenty-first-century ear. The certainty as to the moral effects of particular kinds of musical engagement which so often seems to form their main backdrop is only possible where there is a background condition of shared meaning stemming from particular cultural givens which result from a sense of shared formation and experience. When the meaning of particular musical practices is tightly bound up with the particular group contexts in which they are enacted they are less likely to be heard or re-used for a range of other purposes by a range of different others beyond the bounds of that particular enactment.

Despite, or perhaps even as a consequence of, the exponential varieties of musical forms, practices, and the values that inhere to these as the contexts for meaning-making, and which are accessible to individuals according to their own needs and preferences, the reality of injustice and perhaps even musical violence persists for many Christian communities. Thinking in more concrete terms, new ethical questions emerge from the cosmopolitan contexts in which many communities are gathered; how is musical appropriation managed in light of the often extreme

and intense power differentials that are even now emerging in contemporary consciousnesses? How might the often-invisible machinations of music industry be negotiated faithfully for cosmopolitan Christians? A significant compounding factor in such thinking is the functional value of "authenticity" in musical worship. For many, authenticity means honesty and integrity together with the vulnerability of making one's self known, inclusive of the postures and attitudes with which one engages ideas and subjectivities with honesty. If authenticity means bringing the breadth and depth of one's being to bear on a given topic—and holding firmly to one's convictions in spite of evidence or opposition—then it necessarily involves disagreement and dissent. The ability to value or even tolerate such authentic dissenting postures is compromised by the competing valuation of agreement; we need to decide how much dissent we will tolerate while still maintaining community with others. It is precisely here that we are reminded that our ethical responsibilities are not to a disembodied concept of music, nor to an abstract system of thought or subjectivity; but rather to the embodied human other who is increasingly made immanent through the ever-evolving glocal and cosmopolitan networks human beings inhabit and generate through their inhabiting. This presence in distance or proximity recurs in a relational refrain; decentering "music" as a metaphysical reality that must be served allows for people to be re-centered as the focal points of ethical reflection. Cosmopolitan realities remind us that it is neither "this music" nor "that music" which configures ethical experiences or responses, but rather that volition and intentionality converge in/as human agency.

The chapters

The contributors to this volume bring with them a range of concerns and approaches. Some come from a philosophical background, some from a theological, and some from an (ethno)musicological tradition. For some these questions are bound up with their own practices and experiences in worshipping communities, for others these approaches are bound up with no such involvement. It is our conviction, in these considerations, that both emic and etic voices, and all shades in between, need to be taken seriously, bringing, as they each do, the ability to observe and notice things not always so immediately present to or graspable from other subject positions. All chapters focus, in some way, on current communities and practices, as the most-immediate arena of ethical concern. These are the arena in which ethical priorities are currently being negotiated and, indeed, the arena in which ethics could be considered, above all, in some way to matter. The chapters cohere into four distinct, although overlapping, thematic subsections in the book according to the different approaches adopted.

The body and beyond

Relationships between the mind, the body, and the material have been at the heart of Christian prescriptions surrounding music from the very beginning. Chapters in this first section therefore cover the trajectories that these have taken through longer Christian processes of evolution and adaptation, the nature of such negotiations in recent situations, and the ways that a broader acknowledgment of the material might contribute to a more-adequate ethical perspective. Marcel Silva Steuernagel emphasizes the constraint that traditional Christian ethics of musical bodies place on worshippers, drawing particular attention to the potential inadequacy of these models when faced with contemporary musical patterns that take place well beyond the constraints of Euro–American musical models. He argues that we have good reason to go beyond the constraints of these models, and that a new ethics of the musical body may be necessitated in order to do justice to the varying situations in which Christian musicking now takes place. Marcel Cobussen, meanwhile, is concerned with the potential for Christian sonic practices to do justice to a world of activity that extends well beyond the limits of human bodies. He suggests ways in which the silent practice of a Carthusian monastery can help to show a sonic ethics of relationships in which the sounds of everyday life help to situate the self in a wider ecology of interdependence and in which qualities of care and humility come most-closely into view. Bo kyung Blenda Im is concerned with the delay that can occur between musical hearing and face-to-face encounter when hearing music that originates far away, drawing attention to the ethical space that this can open up for the renegotiation of racial and colonial power in Korean practices of gospel music. Each of these chapters steers us in a different direction: Silva Steuernagel takes us towards the body, and Cobussen beyond it, while Im works in the space between bodily presence and absence. Within Christian musicking bodies take on ethical significance not simply as self-contained entities, but as they come into interaction with each other and the values and things that configure their being.

Fulfilling responsibilities and negotiating values

Responsibility to others, or the duty to fulfil particular ethical imperatives, stands at the heart of a great many ethical considerations. Chapters in this second section consider some of the different responsibilities and imperatives that are negotiated in different settings, considering not just the notion of responsibility, but the tensions that are felt when particular ethical imperatives stand in potential conflict with one-another. Jeff R Warren focuses in on particular sonic qualities of contemporary Christian worship music, exploring the way in which a particular variety of reverb works on us and, in doing so, shapes the ways in which we relate and respond to one-another

in times of worship. In shaping the level at which we interact, it also shapes the way in which we perform our responsibilities to others, thereby becoming a crucial part of ethical negotiations within different worshipping communities. Josh Busman, meanwhile, focuses on tensions between different ethical imperatives within recent evangelical worship music, as musicians are urged to keep their distance from conspicuous displays of technical skill in order to emphasize their role as amateurs, performing sincerely and authentically whilst also producing performances polished enough so as to retreat from the congregations' awareness when approaching God in worship. Andrew Mall turns in the direction of capital, examining the relationship between economic dynamics and progressive ethical imperatives at the outdoor summer festival Wild Goose. Mall describes the festival's creation of an alternative to the broader Christian music marketplace as a vision of hope, while lamenting the limited reach of this vision until economic forces align to make progressive ethical practices a viable business enterprise for a wider range of festivals and companies. Maggi Dawn, in closing off this section, focuses not on particular events or experiences but on musical texts, drawing out the different responsibilities that arise in adapting hymn and song texts for different congregational groups. Dawn charts some of the numerous competing demands that need to be done justice to when adapting (or refraining from adapting) particular songs for the use of contemporary worshipping communities, and in doing so sheds new light on debates frequently encountered in the use of hymn adaptations.

Identity and encounter

Encounter between different cultural, social, or racial groups can very quickly become ethically charged through the negotiation of different value-systems, but also through the ways that the identity of the other is included, rejected, or acknowledged within different social groupings. Chapters in this third section offer perspectives on these encounters and negotiations. Tanya Riches and Alexander Douglas focus on the extent to which global megachurch Hillsong is hospitable to a range of different racial identities within its worship, and, in particular, the ways that black and non-white attendees at the church negotiate their own identity and practice in relation to a predominantly white congregational identity. Emily Snider Andrews focuses on the relationship between experiences in the moment of worship and broader questions of lifestyle and social and political influence at Bethel Church in California. She draws attention to the ethical consequences of a lifestyle built upon divine encounter in worship, and describes some of the ethical critiques that have been leveled against Bethel's views and influence. In doing so, she highlights the public contestation that can take place in the performance of particular ideals or values. Muriel Swijghuisen Reigersberg reflects on her own encounters as a choral facilitator with the Lutheran Aboriginal community of Hopevale, North

Queensland. She draws attention to questions of influence and response when negotiating reciprocal working relationships in which research and practice are combined. In doing so, she helps to build up a positive vision of applied research which is sensitive rather than manipulative, and which enhances wellbeing, mutual respect, and curiosity. Maren Haynes Marchesini also reflects upon her own experience of writing and practicing an ethical framework for music and worship, in her case as part of a dispersed community. Her chapter helps to paint a portrait of what it is like not simply to reflect on the ethics of Christian musical practices in prose, but to consciously implement ethical strategies in partnership with other individuals. Haynes Marchesini describes modes of deeply respectful engagement in situations of profound diversity, building an ethical model of accompaniment as a means of negotiating the challenges of community.

Valuing the self

Within Christian musical activity, the value of the self is subject to processes of negotiation and contestation. Christianity contains elements within it that draw attention both to negative and positive dimensions of the self and, at the same time, to their possible transformation in relation to the action, evaluation, and gift of God. The final section focuses on questions of individual worth, flourishing, and struggle. How is the value of the self-constructed within different settings, how is this opened up in and through music, and how is this contested between different ethical stances? Sarah Bereza focuses on the moral conceptions of the self which shape contemporary fundamentalist musical practices. She describes a fundamentalist suspicion of authentic self-expression which arises out of fundamentalist understandings of the human heart as a deceitful and morally doubtful source of inspiration. Beyond critique, however, Bereza describes what it looks like to create an alternative model of vocal performance, and musical practices which are the result of deep-felt moral conviction. Tamisha Tyler, in her chapter on Beyoncé Masses, develops a womanist ethics of Christian musicking, emphasizing the close relationship between epistemology and ontology and the power of music which comes from outside of congregational boundaries in articulating lived experience and doing justice to the lives of Black women. Tyler describes what it means to create a space for testimony and in doing so to experience fully embodied honor and love. Finally, Jonathan Arnold focuses closely on questions of human wellbeing, and on the potential for musical activity to provide space for human flourishing both on an individual and on more-communal levels of experience. In considering a Classical concert series during Lent, he contends that classical sacred music is still able to promote healing, well-being, and cohesion in contemporary society not just on a personal level but through further outworking in relation to social justice, bringing benefit not just to the self, but, through the opening up of compassion, to the other.

Beyond the book

The chapters printed within the pages of this book engage with profoundly practical situations which arise in the contemporary world, and they raise issues of profound relevance to contemporary congregations. Questions of ethics are rarely a matter of simply abstract consideration, and raise the question of how we might respond to them, in varying ways, in our own musical, social, spiritual, and religious practices. If Christian musicking is a realm of ethical negotiation—if, to follow David Hesmondhalgh (2013), this musical activity is something that *matters*—then, ultimately, it has to be treated as such. To consider the ethical implications of particular activities means not just to describe them as they are, but to consider how they should be.

For researchers, this often means that simple description is not enough but, rather, that, in writing about particular ethical topics in the communities by which we are surrounded, we are dealing with questions that are bound up with potential questions of value and evaluation, and which, if taken seriously, will have potential implications for those communities. As such, it is better to acknowledge these implications and to reflect upon them than to leave them unreflectively present. For practitioners and those in positions of pastoral responsibility, meanwhile, this means, perhaps, stepping back from established routines and practices in order to reflect upon the values they embody, the individuals who encounter them, and on the tensions between norms, practices, and experience, which are inevitably present within many musical activities. An ethical approach to practice is one that is self-conscious of its various ethical dimensions, and which seeks to develop practices going forward that are informed by this awareness.

Ethics is by no means always a straightforward process, and such practice may involve a variety of different trade-offs. These do not, however, necessitate a complete abandonment of ethical consideration, but rather demand a nuanced rather than completely monolithic response. While research and practice often come into contact through a variety of ad hoc and serendipitous routes, as they have for many contributors to this volume, this contact is also institutionalized within different societal structures which seek explicitly to enable such convergence. A crucial mediating environment between research on Christian musical activity and those who are active practitioners in this area is that of educational institutions, particularly those such as seminaries, which aim to provide instruction for those taking on pastoral responsibility in Christian communities. It is our hope that this book will provide some room for reflection for those going on to consider their own responsibilities in this arena. Music is an arena of profound pastoral importance within contemporary congregational environments, and it is the conviction of the editors that practical musical instruction needs to take place in the context of broader reflection regarding its role in the lives of both individuals and communities.