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To See or Not to See: Communication, Cooperation and Co-creation in the Use of Liturgical Media Art in Protestant Worship

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Abstract

This research examines why churches are using Liturgical Media Art (LMA), specifically the use of projected or displayed images and texts, in their worship. Using a long term ethnographic study of four congregations, two in the UK and two in the USA, the research reveals a number of important issues for those who lead and those who prepare the materials used in the worship. The results show that LMA is providing added educational, missional and liturgical value through increased participation of the congregation in the worship of the churches researched. The research also identifies that those who lead worship, those who are the congregants in the worship and those who prepare the materials used in worship all have a very different perspective on the use of LMA. In seeking to understand the different approaches this research posits the role of self-esteem as a way of interpreting the three viewpoints. In looking at one possible measure of the effectiveness of LMA, this research examines the role of 'surprise' in relation to memory as well as how memory traits may be encoded so as to provide a long term retrieval of the images and associated service content.

Using the work of McLuhan as a lens to examine the way churches employ LMA, this research focuses on the learning that can be found when there are problems with the use of LMA and its presence in the worship becomes obvious. The research posits a number of outcomes for ministerial formation and ministry that would aid the use of LMA in worship today. The research draws on the work of many writers from various theological, sociological, philosophical disciplines to reflect theologically on the use of LMA in our worship today. It also briefly considers the new 'environmental projection' being adopted in some churches.

This research confirms much of the anecdotal evidence offered for the use of LMA and adds to the current literature about the use of LMA.

To See or Not to See: Communication, Cooperation and Co-creation in the Use of Liturgical Media Art in Protestant Worship

by

Andrew David Holmes

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Why a Study of Liturgical Media Art in Protestant Worship?

In recent years there has been a significant increase in the use of 'high-tech' visual media technology in worship. This has been especially prominent in Pentecostal and other Reformed non-liturgical worship styles which have embraced the more assertive methods of the business world and the marketing and advertising industry to reach the modern culture. Although the rate of growth has slowed, there are still a very large number of churches that have media technology in their worship and who have not critically engaged with the reasons for its use. This research seeks to use McLuhan's 'Laws of Media,' particularly the fourth law, as an interrogative tool to investigate the use of such media in worship. In partnership with philosophy, psychology and other academic disciplines this study will consider the various outcomes and look to answer the fundamental question 'why' this practice continues to be regarded as an effective aid to congregational worship today.

Crowley, in her work looking at the use of such media (Crowley, 2007, 12-16), sets out a persuasive argument that there needs to be an unambiguous working vocabulary for effective engagement and dialogue within academia about this subject. Writing from a Roman Catholic perspective, she argues that 'Liturgical Media Art' is a better description of the wider output that is often seen in churches, including that which is on screens or visual displays,

> 'Liturgical Media Art distinguishes media art that is integral to the actions of a community's liturgy, that is, media art *of* the liturgy, as opposed to media simply being used *in* liturgy.' (Crowley, 2007, 15)

Crowley says that:

> 'Media art is a hybrid art.' (Crowley, 2007, 14)

Hybrid in this context refers to,

> 'Artistically created products or experiences that can result from any combination of electric, electronic, or digital technologies. This art can be found in combination with other art forms such as prose or poetry, music or other artistically generated sound, two dimensional visual art,… three

dimensional art, … kinetic art, … or performance arts.'
(Crowley, 2007, 14)

In this thesis, whilst acknowledging Crowley's wider encompassing definition,
Liturgical Media Art, (hereafter LMA), refers to all forms of output on electronic
visual displays as well as projected images and text etcetera which are used in a
corporate act of worship.

1.2 Previous Research

Research carried out in 2003 by Koster through the Calvin Institute of Christian
Worship in Grand Rapids MI, questioned 800+ churches of different denominations
in the Kent and Ottawa counties in Michigan, and showed that,

> '60% of churches in the West Michigan region use some
> form of visual media technology, which appears to be part of
> a rising trend 25% in 1998 to somewhere over 50% in 2003'
> (Koster, 2003, 17) [1]

Koster's findings in relation to ecclesiological use is confirmed by those of Dyrness
whose book 'Senses of the Soul' (Dyrness, 2008) identifies the various practices of
the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant traditions' use of visual images in worship and
their widely different place within the tradition. For that reason this study has
confined itself to corporate worship within the Protestant tradition.

Though a very limited data set from an extremely small geographic area within the
USA, Koster's findings showed over half the evangelical and mainline Protestant
churches use some form of visual media technology. Surprisingly, some 15%
frequently used projectors as a standalone 'worship leader.' In this instance Koster
means that the worship is guided by the use of LMA with little or no additional
words from a person. (Koster, 2003, 41).

The Barna Group[2] survey of Protestant churches in the US in 2007 showed that 65%
used a large screen projection system which was an increase of 2% since 2005 and
had risen from 39% in 2000 (Barna Group). The significant growth in video and

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[1] Koster included the use of overhead projectors, slide projectors as well as computer based
technologies.
[2] www.barna.org The Barna Group is widely considered to be the leading organization in the US
focussed on the intersection of faith and culture. Its research is relied upon by government agencies
and charities for planning and strategy.

audio manufacturing companies now establishing 'houses of worship' divisions within their business and employing worship specialist consultants would support the argument that numbers have continued to rise in both the USA and UK since 2007 and that more and more churches and their leaders are having to come to terms with the impact LMA is having in corporate worship. Schultze observes this in his work stating,

> 'a large industry promotes the use of electronic and now
> digital project technologies in worship.' (Schultze, 2004, 13)

He points to the large and on-going costs of using LMA in Church today. Carson (Carson, 2005a, 1; Carson, 2005b) relates some of the concerns of a minister within a megachurch, eight million dollars per year setting, who experienced great pressure to conform to the latest technological advances. Like Schultze, he has witnessed the snowball effect of churches spending, justifying their expenditure and as they continue to justify their spending so they continue to spend. Twenge identifies that technology,

> 'May make life easier,' but that it does not, 'lead to
> happiness.' (Twenge, 2006, 136)

Schor observes that new technologies,

> 'promise freedom but often feel enslaving.' (Schor, 1998,
> 102)

Churches have and continue to spend far more resources, both financial and human, than they anticipate which presents a challenge to church leaders.

Hipps, in 'The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture' (Hipps, 2005), seeks to provide ministers and others church leaders with an introduction to the emotive question of media power and the proclamation of the Gospel in the Church today. He later re-states his ideas and a large part of the content in 'Flickering Pixels' (Hipps, 2009), which was written for a more general audience. Murphy argues that,

> 'PowerPoint™ has become a dominant force in worshipping
> communities across the theological and liturgical spectrum.'
> (Murphy, 2006, 10)

Murphy states that congregations are 'smitten' with technology and rarely consider how they, 'shape congregational identity.' She maintains that church leaders fail to recognise that such technologies are not value-neutral and, as was found in this research, that ministers and worship leaders spend more time worrying about technology failure and about delivery than they do about content.

With so many churches today using some form of projected image or display screens in worship there is a real need to understand why we would choose to use such media? What does the use of this technology bring to the worship of the congregants? Is the 'liturgy,' 'the work of the people' enhanced by the use of this media in our churches today?

The development of the use of LMA in the Christian Church has been well documented by Crowley in her work (Crowley, 2007, 18-36). Looking back as far as the 1910s and drawing on the work of Lindvall (Lindvall, 2001) for the early years' history, she notes how Congregational ministers used silent movies as part of their worship. By 1920 the Community Motion Picture Bureau of New York had a library of over 2000 reels of film that were for use in churches. Crowley plots the development of film based work through the decline in use in Church in the 1920s due to the scandals in the movie industry to the re-emergence in the 1950s through to The Charismatic Renewal Movement of the 1960s to the Willow Creek Movie Theatre opening for worship October 12th 1975, which became the start of Bill Hybels' media driven seeker services. Such was the interest in this church programming that Willow Creek continually invested in the use of sound, lighting and media.

> 'Having long recognized people's deep indifference to typical
> church services, Hybels committed half of his church's
> meagre weekly offerings to pay for multimedia to feature in
> the services.' (Mohrmann, 2002, 32)

As the smaller church settings experimentation with media appears to die out in the 1980's except for special large scale youth gatherings, the megachurch's use led and modelled the way forward. It was not until the mid-1990s that digital video projection systems become cheap enough to be affordable to the average church. The megachurch paid media professional gives way to the members of the congregation

who volunteer their time and expertise to create and operate the equipment so freeing up the minister to work on the overall presentation. By 1999 many smaller churches have embraced LMA as an enhancement of their worship using it either as a marketing tool and/or simply as a better way to communicate.

In the UK, though to a lesser degree, particularly as it relates to the megachurch, the pattern was the same. In the late 1920s and early 1930s encouragement of LMA came through Joseph Arthur Rank of Rank Films (Wakelin, 1996). J Arthur Rank was an earnest member of the Methodist Church and as a young man taught in Sunday School where he began to show films to the class. This practice was copied by other churches and some schools prompting Rank to form the 'Religious Film Society,' through which he distributed the religious films he had produced with 'Mastership' being his first. A series of articles in the then 'Methodist Times,' now the Methodist Recorder, began to criticise the influence that American and British cinema was having socially in the UK, it was the editor of the London Evening News who issued a challenge that the Methodist Church should do something instead of just complaining. Rank responded and formed the British National Films Company and because of challenges in distributing his films in competition with the American led UK market, in 1935 he founded General Film Distributors and began to get recognition as a major UK film maker. In 1937 the Rank Organisation was formed, a consolidation of Rank's movie interests in both the Denham Film Studios and Pinewood Film Studios together with companies like the Bush Radio company, which would be added to the group a few years later. Through this new organisation, Rank would go on to encourage the greater use of films in Methodist Churches by providing equipment such as projectors and screens as well as assisting with the building costs of suitable projection rooms within existing church buildings.

I can recall several Methodist Churches from my childhood where these facilities were installed and many today still have unused projection rooms. It was a practice that would also find its way across to the USA as in these photographs of the derelict remains of the City Methodist Church in Tolleston, Gary, Indiana.

Figure 1-2 City Methodist. Used with permission.

Figure 1-1 City Methodist. Used with permission

The transition over three decades to video projection rather than film came in to a
large degree as the cost of video and computer equipment became more portable and
affordable. In identifying the large megachurches of North America as the catalyst
for the growth of video technology, Crowley's study is corroborated by the works of
Wilson (Wilson, 1999) and Moore (Wilson and Moore, 2002; Moore and Wilson,
2006) who, as technical pioneers of LMA in Ginghamsburg Church, one of the early
megachurches, left to form, 'Lumicon', a commercial production company and
author materials that provide and teach how to create media for worship. Wilson and
Moore, in the action they undertook, highlight what is a growing dilemma for a lot of
church leaders in America today, and one of the consequences of the use of LMA in
churches, namely that paid staff who become very proficient then move to larger
churches who offer better remunerated jobs, and volunteers with an appropriate level
of skill and training are simply very hard to find. In contrast, the UK does not face
those same pressures as the question of remuneration is present only in a very small
number of the larger churches which model themselves on the megachurch. Of the
thousands of technician volunteers who are in the churches service by service, there
appears to be little desire or opportunity to look elsewhere to offer their time and
talents.

1.3   Thesis

It has become clear through this research that the 'how we do' and the 'why we do'
LMA in worship are intrinsically linked and co-dependent. Through application of
the fourth of McLuhan's laws in particular, I will argue that the key to understanding
this is in the examination of the moments when the use of the screen in worship fails,
for any number of reasons, to meet the expectations of those present in worship. This

failure can be a single instance, for example the operator of the technology fails to press a button at the correct time, *or* the technology itself fails *or* it can be over a longer period of time, (in some cases years), where the use of LMA has been allowed to drive the format and content of the worship itself to such an extent that it becomes so intrinsic to worship that, to quote a member of one of the researched church congregations,

> "I was thinking that worship would be impoverished
> significantly if we were without it now" (Church B)

It is my thesis that in order to have consistently constructive and effective use of LMA in the corporate worship of a church, there needs to be much greater participation in the worship by all present. This greater participation, in the fullest sense of the word liturgically, will find expression through a more intentional communication, collaboration and co-creation between the leaders of worship, those tasked with creating and delivering the LMA output, and the members of the congregation if the worship is going to fulfil what this research has identified as the particular and unique aspirations of each of those participant stakeholders. Currently theologically competent trained leaders of worship are more often giving way to the computer/video technically competent. Many churches today are worshipping with LMA designed and controlled by the people who 'can do it', but who are seldom, if ever, theologically trained to any recognised level and both they and the church leaders are often unaware of the impact that the use of LMA has on the worship life of the congregation. I will argue that greater communication is needed between the stakeholders coupled with a more inclusive and integrated approach to the 'production' process will offer benefits to the worship of the people. Within the churches I studied there was very limited interaction between those who were the paid appointed leaders of the worship and those who prepared the visual material and operated the equipment in worship. This is compounded further when the material used for worship is bought in from a third party so that the church leader, and technical personnel are even further removed from the process of selecting appropriate supporting materials for the worship service and thus the output is not 'the work of the people' in its full sense. This reluctance in communicating, I believe, betrays a more fundamental lack of understanding generally within the local

church context, and wider throughout the Church, about the effectiveness and
reasons that LMA is used in worship. Seldom do churches have any sense of shared
vision, as Easton would advocate,

> 'This vision should include the spiritual goals of your
> [media] ministry and reasons for starting the ministry. Once
> there is clear understanding of the vision, the next step is to
> present that vision to your church. It is very important that
> the church members understand the spiritual motivations for
> using media ministry, otherwise they will perceive media in
> church as supporting equipment for "Church as usual."'
> (Spiegel et al., 2004, 53)

Churches, either through strong leadership of the paid minister(s) in conjunction with
others or through a 'gift' of equipment by a member of the Church, often fall into
using LMA without ever really stopping to think about the 'why' beyond that of the
pragmatic outcomes. Congregations too, seem eager to 'be more relevant,' or 'to
attract more young people,' and so embrace the notion that LMA is the answer they
seek. As the results of this investigation and analysis will show, the members of the
congregations almost exclusively focus on the practical application of LMA and
therefore have a different expectation for the worship and have seldom thought or
been asked to think about the deeper issues that Easton identifies. Similarly, and not
unlike some other areas of ministry within the church, music for example, LMA
requires a skill set and a degree of specialist knowledge which marks this ministry
out as one with influence over both the direction and content of worship. When there
is the ability within the congregation and a resource to do the 'how,' the 'why' is
often regarded as redundant. Furthermore, as I shall argue later that in accordance
with McLuhan's fourth law, this tension between the constituent parties in the
worship, when pushed too far, leads to the technology revealing our own fallen
humanity, becomes destructive to the worship experience and can become divisive
in the Church.

There are many people who have authored books on how to put together LMA for
use in worship (Bausch, 2002; Eason, 2003; Miller, 2004; Wilson, 1999; Wilson and
Moore, 2008) or who have provided courses for people to learn how to use

'PowerPoint' or similar software.[3] Equally many companies both in the UK and USA can provide materials designed for use in corporate worship. Google the search term, 'digital worship media' and you get around 18,700,000 website results returned.[4] Companies like 'Twelve Baskets' in the UK[5] and 'Sermon Spice'[6] in the USA provide a range of media support to churches or individuals. The 'how to' do LMA therefore is well documented and supported, the effects on the stakeholders and the 'why' we use LMA is significantly less, if at all addressed by practitioners and academics alike. Some commentators (Jewell, 2004; Jewell, 2002) have considered some political ramifications of technology based changes in a congregation, others such as McLaren (McLaren, 2001; McLaren, 2004) venture into a discussion on culture, particularly in relation to young people in worship and Sample (Sample, 1998; Sample, 2005) simply demands that churches,

> 'join the practices of an electronic culture,' (Sample, 1998,
> 122)

urging congregations to embrace any available technology arguing that availability obligates a church to do so.

This thesis seeks to investigate the issues through the lens of the work of Marshall and Eric McLuhan in their book 'Laws of Media'(McLuhan and McLuhan, 1988) before then applying other disciplines to help bring some understanding and outcomes.

1.4 McLuhan's legacy

Marshall McLuhan, Canadian by birth was a linguist speaking several languages. He gained his doctorate reading English Literature at Cambridge and received ten other honorary doctorates in his life time. For nearly twenty years from the mid1960s McLuhan was the leading voice on popular culture and, despite his criticism of what he saw as the pervasive effects of television, appeared in countless TV shows, in newspapers and journals. The interview with him in Playboy Magazine highlighted his popularity and was titled 'A Candid Conversation with the High Priest of Popcult

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[3] See http://www.familyfriendlychurches.org.uk/NewSite/mmt.php (accessed 25/10/2012)
[4] http://google.co.uk/ (accessed 25/10/2012)
[5] http://www.twelvebaskets.co.uk/ (accessed 25/10/2012)
[6] http://www.sermonspice.com/ (accessed 25/10/2012)

and Metaphysician of Media' (Playboy, 1969). Coming from almost obscurity
McLuhan published a couple of other books with very limited success before
'Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man' (McLuhan, 1964) which became an
instant best seller with little promotion. It was the subtitle for this book that provided
McLuhan with a new definition of 'Media' and the definition this thesis takes,
namely that, *'all media is an extension of our humanity'* It is a broad definition and
so encompasses many different mediums; print, television, film, magazines are easily
recognisable but McLuhan would extend that to all forms of data management, to
mobile telephones, books and email etcetera, Hipps, who also uses the Laws of
Media as a framework within his book, argues that,

> 'Understanding media as extensions of ourselves is crucial to
> understanding media, period.' (Hipps, 2005, 35)

I would agree that when we can see media as an extension of ourselves we can begin
to more readily understand the demands that technology can place upon us and on
institutions. The mobile phone is now common place, its persistent ringing can cause
anxiety in some akin to the need to respond to the cry of a new born baby; unless the
device is picked up, cradled and attended we cannot settle; some may even become
aggressive. The technology of a new 'smart phone' as an extension of our voice,
ears, eyes, and memory utters forth its cry till we address its need to pass on the text,
email or call and so meets its purpose and our anxiety:

> 'When we fail to perceive media as extensions of ourselves,
> they take on godlike characteristics, and we become their
> servants.' (McLuhan, 1964, 41ff)

1.5   The Medium is the Message

'The medium is the message' is one of several 'McLuhanisms' that have found their
way into the Oxford Dictionary (Soanes and Stevenson, 2003, 1052) under his name.
Many in the life of the Church talk about LMA as if it were neutral and simply a
means of communicating the Gospel today. In my study, church members were
unable to readily identify any really significant difference, except that of having to
go back to hymn books, that LMA has had on the worship services they attend citing
that the service has not changed because of LMA. McLuhan writes,

> 'Our conventional response to all media, namely that it is
> how they are used that counts, is the numb stance of the
> technological idiot. The 'content' of a medium is like the
> juicy piece of meat that is carried by the burglar to distract
> the watchdog of the mind.' (McLuhan, 1964, 18)

From my observation and findings in all the locations I have studied in this research where LMA is regularly used; the corporate worship service has changed as a direct result of the introduction of the medium. McLuhan would argue the content of the media, namely the projected images, texts etcetera, have distracted many of the congregants and so the full impact of the changes that have happened have therefore been missed. This is not true of those who lead worship, they did articulate a number of changes that had taken place and, in one case, came to realise in the interview just what impact LMA had in the mission of the church he led.

The Four Laws of Media, which some commentators, (Levinson, 2001) see as a 'tool of tools'(p186), and others consider to be more aphorisms, bring together McLuhan's ideas as a concise tetrad of media effects and are a way of interrogating the medium to try and discover patterns of effects that the technology under examination produces. McLuhan believed there were four inevitable effects of all media and such was his conviction that a cash reward is still available to anyone who can successfully create a fifth 'law' that is not covered by the previous four. With his abiding concern for pedagogy McLuhan phrased them as questions,

1. What does the medium extend?
2. What does the medium make obsolete?
3. What does the medium retrieve?
4. What does the medium reverse into?

These four laws exist simultaneously. McLuhan did not intend for them to be considered in a chronological order even though at times his language speaks of them as succeeding each other. The tetrad is not a scientific tool as such but one that explores the,

> 'grammar and syntax of each artefact, a dynamic tool to
> describe "situations that are in progress."' (McLuhan, 1988,
> 116)

Of these four questions, the fourth in particular, has helped form the basis of the
investigative elements of this research.

1.6   The Four 'Laws'

What does the medium extend? McLuhan's states that all media extends some human
attribute, enhances or amplifies it. McLuhan was convinced that the application of a
medium or technology changes how humans think, feel and act, even the individual's
perception and information processing. New technologies have had psychological,
physical and social effects. Borrowing from Winston Churchill's dwellings speech in
the House of Commons, October 28th 1944, which was later reproduced in 'Time
Magazine' as 'buildings,' in 1960, McLuhan famously, concluded that,

> "*We shape our tools and our tools shape us*"(McLuhan,
> 1964, xxi)

Using McLuhan's own example, the car is an extension of the foot and leg. The use
of a car allows us to go greater distances and often at a faster speed. The extension is
essential in understanding how the media will impact the user or recipient of the
technology or media.

What does the medium make obsolete? When something new is brought in,
something older is made obsolete. This does not mean that the older media is
necessarily made redundant but rather its purpose or function changes. In McLuhan's
example, the car made the horse and carriage obsolete. No longer was it to be the
major form of transportation but it would become a 'quaint' holidaymaker attraction
on Blackpool promenade or in some city centres, or be reserved for ceremonial
occaisions.

What does the medium retrieve? Just as new media makes an older media obsolete so
new media retrieves some ancient experience or medium from the past. When it
comes to technology etcetera, there is hardly anything new under the sun, just a
changed or improved version of something that has been there in the past. McLuhan
identified that the pioneering spirit was retrieved by those, who in using the car, have
adopted a 'have a horse will travel' attitude.

What does the medium reverse into? When pushed too far what does the technology 'flip' into? McLuhan was clear that when pushed to its extreme, every medium will reverse or flip into its opposite or an alternative intention. The use of the car when it is pushed to the extreme produces traffic jams and gridlock on the roads to the point that it becomes quicker to walk. This law is often the hardest to predict and yet if sensitive to it, the indicators can be sufficiently in advance of the flip that it may be possible to prevent or manage a smoother transition to some alternative. Considering the possible future effects of a technology in isolation is difficult. It appears to demand the wisdom, knowledge and theological insight to perceive what may happen in advance of the event itself. However, there are parallels from history and within other technologies that can provide the capacity to consider possible future options. For example what might the introduction and use of email allows us to consider about the future issues around the use of new forms of social media?

It is important to recognise that while linked to the question of reversal, this is not what McLuhan termed the 'rear view mirror' (McLuhan and Fiore, 1967, 72-73). The rear view mirror effect was how McLuhan explains our ability to describe, and therefore accept new technology; by taking comfort in the fact they resemble something already known. The latest electric piano, looks like a piano, plays like a piano, sounds like a piano, yet has no strings. We call it a 'midi' or digital piano. The car was first called the 'horseless carriage,' the term obscuring some of the revolutionary functions of the new medium. The term horseless says nothing about the internal combustion engine that would go on to make oil one of the world's precious commodities. LMA relies heavily on 'digital projectors', we take comfort in the fact that this technology reflects that which we have known, 35mm slide projectors, 16mm film projectors, 'magic lanterns' etcetera all of which have had their place in the Church as we have already seen. Yet unlike their predecessors which had to have material 'loaded' into them and the projectionist had little interaction, this technology can show images that are capable of being manipulated 'in real time.' The projectionist is no longer 'dumb' but is able to interface with, and speak directly, through the projector.

1.7   Critiquing McLuhan

McLuhan's work has been and still is not universally accepted, particularly in some
sections of academia where he is often criticised among other things for his lack of
scientific rigor, see (Venable, 1976). It was in part to address these critics that,
before Marshall's death on 31st December 1980, his son Eric McLuhan began to
work with his father on the 'Laws of Media' and published it posthumously to try
and silence the critical voices. Broadly speaking there are four areas of criticism of
Marshall McLuhan's work.

Firstly, there are those in academia who simply found his style of writing and his
complex arguments too unintelligible to make sense. Dwight MacDonald,
reproduced in Stearn, reviewed 'Understanding Media'(McLuhan, 1964) and wrote,

> 'the parts are greater than the whole... A single page is
> impressive, two are stimulating, five raise serious doubts, ten
> confirm them...' (Stearn, 1968, 237)

In general terms one could agree and in some cases, for example the typographical
layout in, 'The Mechanical Bride' (McLuhan, 2002) or 'The Guttenberg Galaxy'
(McLuhan, 1962), would confirm it to be very different from what might be
expected, but MacDonald fails to find the logical conclusion of studying the parts if
the whole is so much more complex. Others too, Jonathan Miller (Miller, 1971),
refuses to read McLuhan on his terms.

> 'Since I remain unconvinced by McLuhan's reasons for
> eschewing a linear arrangement of his ideas, I shall try, for
> the sake of the uninitiated reader, to reduce his argument to
> that very form to which he so violently objects' (Miller,
> 1971, 8)

In one sense of course, Miller is correct, but it also shows a lack of understanding of
the work which misses the point completely, and becomes a criticism that betrays a
response of 'typographical man.'

Secondly, there are the semioticians like Pierce and Eco who call McLuhan's
understanding of communication theory into question,

> 'McLuhan's theses on the nature of media stem from the fact
> that he uses the term … broadly, for phenomena that can be
> at times reduced to the Channel and at other times to the
> Code, or to the form of the message.' (Eco, 1986)

Eco offers several arguments but implicit in all is Eco's inability to determine 'media form' and 'content form' and so misses McLuhan's theses on 'media form.' For example James Joyce's literary style may have used many various content forms, but he only ever wrote in one media form, that of the book.

Thirdly, several people such as James Carey or Raymond Williams accused McLuhan of being a hard technological determinist.

> 'It is an apparently sophisticated technological determinism
> which has the significant effect of indicating a social and
> cultural determinism […] If the medium – whether print or
> television – is the cause, of all other causes, all that men
> ordinarily see as history is at one reduced to
> effects.'(Williams and Williams, 1990, 126-127)

To level the charge of technological determinism is difficult for a couple of reasons. Firstly it is problematic in so far as McLuhan employed a more dialectical nature when thinking of the future. McLuhan was not dystopian or utopian but rather apocalyptic (Babe, 2000, 279). In addition, Postman identified that McLuhan's apocalyptic view of the future was necessarily ambiguous as the end of the story could turn out one way or another. As a Christian and convert to Roman Catholicism, McLuhan saw the whole of life as ambiguous. McLuhan was always at pains to say he never ascribed any autonomy to the technology; they were always extension of a human being and so were controlled and used by humans. He was clear the limitations were set by the constraints of a given technology. Humans would react to their surroundings in ways that were different with given technologies and understanding.

A fourth area of criticism is concerned more with McLuhan's style of aphorisms and their insensitivity in some cases in dealing with some controversial issues. Ricks takes McLuhan to task over his 'Olympian' epigrams which come across as crass and without feeling. McLuhan would argue he was offering no value judgements yet as

Ricks says,

> 'In fact his terms are as neutral as a bigot' (Stearn, 1968, 247)

One cannot deny that McLuhan's style does not easily lend itself to providing complex analysis of social phenomena and the subjects he chose to reduce to media effects can be very contentious,

> 'What is the key factor in the Southern civil rights struggle?
> The internal combustion engine….Why were Jews murdered
> by the million? Because radio came before TV. [these] flip
> comments [are] deadening of feeling and sympathy that
> distance holocaust and shame.'(Stearn, 1968, 279-280)

Even with all of this valid criticism, it is impossible to dismiss outright all of McLuhan's insights as history as proven. Eisenstein, who has spent considerable time filling in the detail of some of McLuhan's broad brush approach, indicates that,

> 'By making us more aware that both mind and society were
> affected by printing, McLuhan has performed in my view at
> least a most valuable service. But he has also glossed over
> multiple interactions that occurred under widely varying
> circumstances in a way that may discourage further study. It
> follows the we need to think less metaphorically and
> abstractly, more historically and concretely about the sort of
> effects that were entailed.'(Eisenstein, 1979, 129)

McLuhan has always had a very mixed response to his work. After the high profile media exposure of the 60s and 70s which even included a cameo role in the film 'Annie Hall,' McLuhan's influence and output waned till his death. It is only in recent years that the work of McLuhan has again found favour within academic circles as having made and continuing to make a contribution to the understanding of media such as multiple television channels and the internet.

1.8 Liturgical Media Art in Worship

As McLuhan purports the content of the media is of itself a distraction from the effects of the message being communicated by the use of LMA. It is the medium which, extending human attributes and emotions, provides the congregant with a significant part of the experience of worship.

I will set out my methodology in greater detail in the following chapter and reflect on some of the issues it raises as a participant observer for me and the congregations. In my findings chapter, I provide the key results of my observations and interviews with the congregations that I studied over a period of nearly three years with a significant period of time in each community. Initially the congregations and their ministers spoke in terms of, 'attracting or retaining young people' or 'being relevant' as reasons why a particular church is using LMA. This would support the findings of Fultz, who in his doctoral thesis relating to the worship preferences of university students at one university in America asserts that,

> 'The first major finding of this study suggests students who are more involved with on-campus religious activities are more inclined to prefer both the use of digital projection and more contemporary music styles than students who are less engaged. The second major finding reveals students that with high levels of technology use in other parts of their lives are more likely to desire the use of technology in their worship services.(Fultz, 2010, 75)

However, the congregation's initial views were broadened to encompass more reasons for the use of LMA including some that reflected the individual's approach to LMA. They spoke of 'excellence' in worship and becoming frustrated when the technology became evident through an error or failure. The congregants do not recognise that the anxiety that is caused is because the medium is, as I shall argue later, an extension of their humanity in terms of their self-worth and this connection is both positive and negative in its impact on an individual as they worship.

Chapter 2: Methodology

2.1   Methodological Approach

This research has drawn on a qualitative methodological approach primarily from the
anthropological and sociological 'participant observer' ethnographic study model. It
is based on very significant periods of observations supported by interviews in four
Protestant churches studying the use they make of LMA in their regular worship
services. The study uses two churches as research sites in North America and two
churches from the North of England in the UK.

From its early beginnings with the work of Malinowski (1884-1942) and his research
among the Kula of the Trobriand Islands and the work of Radcliffe-Brown (1881-
1955) who described his own methodological approach as,

> 'a natural science of society and one better able to furnish an
> objective description of a culture,' (Gobo, 2008, 8)

Ethnography has developed and been refined over the years to become,

> 'a cluster of values that shape how research is conducted,
> rather than a specific, closely defined methodology' (Ward,
> 2012, 8)

Silverman (Silverman, 2011) identifies that the ethnographic study draws on four
defined methods, observation, analysing documents and texts, interviewing and the
use of recordings and transcripts. Ethnographic study has observation as its primary
source of information. The principal concern is to always observe the actions as they
are performed in their most natural settings. I have been fortunate enough to have
been able to move in and out of the four participating church communities for nearly
three years over the period of my study affording several months of observations in
each of the locations. I also undertook to interview a number of people within each
church setting as part of my research noting, that as Heritage stresses, to ensure that
if one is interested in actions then, the statements made by participants during
interviews cannot be treated,

> 'as an appropriate substitute for the observation of actual
> behavior'[sic] (Heritage, 1984, 236)

There is a recognised and well documented gap between what people say and what they do, see (Gilbert and Abell, 1983) and the presence of the researcher in the field enables them to better understand the conceptual categories of the participants, their points of view (emic), the meanings of the actions and behaviours instead of opinions and attitudes only.

Ethnographic methodology is criticised by some because they argue that the results are impossible to generalise due to the very small number of cases, sometimes one, that are studied by the researcher. However, several academic disciplines, for instance, archaeology, biology, astrophysics, history, genetics, anthropology, linguistics and the cognitive sciences work with one or a very limited number of cases. According to Becker, (Becker, 1998), these disciplines are unconcerned with their use of a very small number of cases to draw inferences and generalisations about thousands of people, animals, plants and other objects. Moreover, science studies the individual object/phenomenon not in itself but as a member of a greater class of objects/phenomena with particular characteristics and properties (Williams, 2000a) (Payne and Williams, 2005). For this reason I would think it anything but odd that the results of ethnographic research cannot be generalised. Furthermore, the emphasis of ethnography is on behaviour, and given that these are stable in time, then it is likely that generalisations are possible. Obviously, good selection of samples, cases or research sites are needed, see (Gobo, 2008) but I believe that ethnography is not precluded from giving insight into general principles.

I would argue that the assertion regarding generalisations is strengthened when coupled with inductive reasoning. Sometimes referred to as a 'bottom up' approach, inductive reasoning begins with specific observations. The researcher then begins to identify some patterns and formulates tentative hypotheses to explore. These may then lead on to general conclusions or theories. As with other investigative tools, care must be exercised in applying inductive reasoning; it is possible that with all the premises true in a statement that the conclusion derived may be false. One of the important aspects of inductive reasoning is constraining the investigative element. The philosopher CS Pierce working in the 1950s set out the question of constraining induction in order to prevent people generating countless fruitless hypotheses in the search of useful generalisations. Pierce believed that constraints were based on an

innate knowledge which he termed, 'special aptitudes for guessing right.' Holland et al, offering a more pragmatic rather than syntactic approach, as offered by Frege and Russell in their deductive models, identify that reflexivity in the analysis provides some suitable methods of constraints. Holland et al argue that plausible constraints can be determined only by reference to the current system and data. They posit that,

> 'Induction then is highly context dependent being guided by prior knowledge activated in particular situations that confront the system as it seeks to achieve its goals.' (Holland et al., 1989, 5)

The researcher then must seek to ensure that in formulating hypotheses from the data gathered they allow the inductive process to be both guided and constrained by the particular situations under investigation and the data available at the time.

This research's methodology and the data analysis draws on a multi-disciplinary approach because as Woodward and Pattison identify,

> 'Practical theologians need to be flexible in the methods they use. They must be prepared to engage in interdisciplinary learning, because the theological tradition in itself does not provide all the information about the modern world that is needed to have a good understanding of many issues'(Woodward et al., 2000, 9)

Cameron sounds a word of caution here though as she identifies in the Theological Action Research (TAR) model that the multi-faceted, interdisciplinary practical theologian is,

> 'in danger of becoming an impossible person.' (Cameron, 2010, 26)

I acknowledge the concerns being highlighted by Cameron regarding the personal limitations of knowledge and competence and recognise that whilst the more, 'group' focussed research method of the TAR model has its place and can offer significant benefits in some work, I do not believe this research would benefit from such an approach.

2.2   Genesis of the Research

'Obviously, choosing where and with whom to do your
"mucking around" is crucial to the overall outcome of the
research process. … On the other hand, there are times when
one's own circumstances provide the entire.' (Scharen and
Vigen, 2011, 230-231)

The desire to do this research began from observations and questions being raised in
my mind as one having come in to full time ministry from a professional broadcast
television and the performing arts background. The research did not begin with a
specific hypothesis, as perhaps in a more quantitative methodological approach, but
rather started from a more general approach to what Swinton and Mowat would
describe as the 'situational problems.' In this research approach my initial
observations and questions regarding the use and practice of LMA in worship
become a 'general field of study' which allows for the,

'development of hypotheses begin to emerge...*from* the data
rather than being imposed upon it by the researcher.'
(Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 52)

As I progressed further with the initial research it became clear through a process of
refinement that my initial questions were too broad and unfocussed enough and that
the data began to offer greater insight into the congregational perspective than I had
at first thought probable and resonates with Pattison's view of practical theology as,

'contemporary enquiry' (Woodward et al., 2000, 137)

A pilot study was undertaken at one church with which I was familiar and with
leaders who were broadly supportive of my research. The pilot was undertaken over
a series of visits to the preparatory meetings and the worship service held on Sunday
mornings together with interviews with members of the congregation, clergy
leadership and technical team. Through the attendance at the worship services I was
able to identify more appropriate and less obtrusive ways of recording my
observations of the worship than were initially planned.

The questions for the different interviews were developed over many weeks. Initially
from my own thoughts and experience, the questions were refined through
conversation with supervisors, the pilot study, discussions with other doctoral

students at the regular DThM Summer School presentations, and the Ethics Committee. The pilot study proved useful in identifying a number of areas that my research should encompass that were not initially considered. The final lists of questions (Appendix 1) were not prescriptively used in the interview but acted rather as a prompt or guide and were brought into the natural flow of the conversation as required, a way of working that was endorsed by Mowatt in a seminar in the 2012 DThM summer school in Durham.

The pilot study also highlighted two major considerations I would need to bear in mind in the data collection phase in my research churches. The two issues are related in the sense that one concerns the perception of the individuals in the church as to the role of the researcher, often ascribing a sense of greater expertise to him or her and thereby assuming they must have the right answer, the other concerns the changes that occur in a church's practice due to the research.

2.3 'Power' in the Researcher – Interviewee Relationship.

The first issue is related to 'power' in the research process. Ideally the researcher should be seen as an 'equal' in the relationships with the church members in general and the interviewees in particular. Charlotte Aull-Davies postulates that there are three levels to an interview, the discourse and the text which comes from it; the interaction of the interviewer and interviewee which produces and interprets the text; and the social context or conditions that affect both the text and the interaction. Furthermore these elements are inextricably linked,

> 'as differences *[between interviewee and interviewer]* – such as those based in gender, class, age, status – which have implications for differential access to power in the wider society will affect the interaction during the interview.' (Aull-Davies, 1999, 101)

It is therefore very important that in recognising both self and others in the interview the process demands reflexivity in the ethnographer, openness to the fact that the researcher must discuss his or her role,

> 'in a way that honors [sic] and respects the site and participants.' (Creswell, 2005, 448)

I believe the aim of qualitative research is to understand and represent the experiences and actions of people as they encounter, engage, and live through situations. In qualitative research, I as the researcher attempt to develop an understanding of the phenomena under study, based as much as possible on the perspective of those being studied. Qualitative researchers accept that it is impossible to set aside one's own perspective totally and I do not claim to. Nevertheless, I believe that being self -reflective attempts to 'bracket' any existing theory and my own values and so allows me to understand and represent the informants' experiences and actions more adequately than would otherwise be possible.

This requires awareness in the researcher of the aspects of trust, bias and power that form part of the research in a given location and with other people. As a 'participant observer' the researcher can move between being a 'participant' in the worship and an 'observer' of it and so develop a rich set of data over time, see (Patton, 2002) (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, 605). Yet care is also needed as it is not simply a case of recognising these issues, even if the researcher has acknowledged the potential for them in a study, as it is possible for the researcher to become blind to, or not conscious of, the underlying reasons for his or her actions. For example, in the analysis of data Wolcott, addressing the issues of themes within a data set states,

> 'it is I who put the themes there. I did not find them, discover them, or uncover them; I imposed them.' (Wolcott, 1994, 108)

Yet the need for interpretation of the data is paramount as it takes what is 'said' and 'observed' and puts it down for others to read and offer one view of reality. The researcher will see the use of LMA one way, the congregation another, the clergy and the technical support yet another. In analysing and juxtaposing these perspectives we can come to see what is real from a variety of viewpoints. To understand that there is never a completely objective account is to realise the multiple perspectives. Yet ethnographic research is not about presenting the view of the researcher alone, but rather is about incorporating the voices of the participants in the research through the rich use of quotations and views expressed. Therefore to fail to acknowledge the issues of power in the relationship between the researcher and the participants in the research can lead to unintentional silencing of the contributors.

Those participating in the research have to be acknowledged as 'active subjects' and not 'passive objects'. According to Lather, empowerment in research requires reciprocity, which,

> 'implies give-and-take, a mutual negotiation of meaning and power' (Lather, 1990)

As the descriptions and interpretations are negotiated with participants, greater control is given to them in relation to theory building and outcomes. In my study it was my aim to invite the participants to work with me as co-researchers through the contribution they made to the subject. As I reflect on this aim I am aware of the fact that I did not meet the outcome I set for myself in full. Yet it has, and still is the case that recognising these methodological concerns and issues became central to promoting integrity in my work and a way of helping to negotiate the various tensions that come from being in the lived experience. The process of negotiation created an active research process that was taking place in response to the lived experience of the participants whose perspectives I sought to understand. This resulted in a number of 'identities' that came into play during the data gathering phase of the research. Some of these identities were ascribed by me as I sought to establish myself as the researcher, and some identities were put onto me by others and included, 'student as minister', 'consultant', 'DThM student', 'colleague or former colleague' and 'Senior Minister's spy'. I recognise that some of these 'identity' issues proved to be barriers in trying to enable the participants to see themselves as co-researchers with me.

Self-awareness by the researcher of his or her preconceptions, prejudices and biases is a very important part of each of the stages of the research. Swinton and Mowat state that reflexivity is,

> 'the process of critical self-reflection carried out by the researcher throughout the research process that enables her to monitor and respond to her contribution to the proceedings.' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 59)

Such awareness on the part of the researcher is also to be accompanied by a degree
of sensitivity,

> 'While the researcher's primary task is describe the
> encounter, in reality, she is inevitably a co-creator of the
> mode and content of that encounter.' (Swinton and Mowat,
> 2006, 61)

This is particularly true when undertaking interviews which are not in themselves
conversations. Davies provides a very workable view of reflexivity which she argues
is,

> 'a turning back on oneself, a process of self–reference.'
> (Aull-Davies, 1999, 4)

Recognition of the difficulty of retaining the actuality of the research on a reality that
is outside of us. It is assumed we are connected to and therefore both an influence on
and influenced by the social reality within the research process; but is there a reality
that can be investigated? Postmodern critiques can lead us to a deconstruction of
reflexivity that leaves only the researcher,

> 'the extreme relativism and antipathy to generalised
> explanation that is essentially destructive of the research
> enterprise.' (Aull-Davies, 1999, 25)

However, Davies identifies a critical realist alternative which,

> 'provides a philosophical basis for ethnographic research to
> provide explanatory (law-like) abstractions while also
> emphasising its rootedness in the concrete, in what real
> people on the ground are doing and saying' (Aull-Davies,
> 1999, 20-21)

Critical realism,

> 'accepts the reflexivity of the social sciences in the fullest
> sense recognising that the development of knowledge and the
> development of the object of knowledge are themselves
> linked' (Aull-Davies, 1999, 21)

Swinton and Mowat suggest that reflexivity in the researcher,

> 'is perhaps the most crucial dimension of the qualitative
> research process' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 59)

For it is,

> 'not simply a tool of qualitative research but part of what it
> actually is' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 59)

Furthermore Swinton and Mowat argue that by their definition and understanding,

> 'Reflexivity is a mode of knowing which accepts the
> impossibility of the researcher standing outside the research
> field and seeks to incorporate that knowledge creatively and
> effectively' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 59)

In order that,

> 'rather than seeking after tools and methods that will distance
> her from the research process, the researcher becomes the
> primary tool that is used to access the meanings of the
> situations being explored.' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 60)

2.4   Change in the Subject of Research

In the pilot study I also observed that the subject of the research is changed by the
process of researching it. In the same way that a body in motion tends to stay in
motion until acted upon by another force, so an individual church's use of LMA
tends to stay the same until it becomes the subject of research. A very simple
practical example of this would be the changes seen in the presentation of the
projected words on the screen on the Sunday but one following a group interview at
Church A where the comment was made during a discussion on issues of LMA.

> "even if the song were in the hymnal we are not told what
> page it is"

This comment was reaffirmed by a number of the participants in both that interview
and subsequent interviews in Church A and was repeated in sentiment at other
Churches in the study. Within Church A the comment was obviously taken up by one
of the participants, unsolicited by this researcher, and relayed to the individual who
prepared the material for display. As a result of that conversation the hymn number
of a particular hymn, when it appears in the church's hymnal, is now displayed on
the screen and printed in the bulletin or order of service. I subsequently found out in
a later interview with a technician that they also used the hymn number in the
hymn's filename in the database of the hymns in the computer to identify the

'correct' version, by that he meant the one that matches the words of the churches

hymn book and had the hymn number incorporated in to the opening slide of the

sequence.

Reflexivity then is not just the domain of the researcher but also can be found in the

interviewees, who sometimes for the first time, are being asked to reflect on the

practices that are 'normal' to their environment and which have been observed by the

researcher. From that reflection, there can sometimes be a realisation that brings

about a change in action.

This reflexivity parallels that of theological reflection in the Ministerial Cycle. An

experience becomes a starting point which recognises the contribution that other

disciplines, people and academics bring and through the reflexive approach is moved

to change a behaviour or attitude. However, there is the danger that it is seen as a

process with clearly delineated stages with a one way linear approach. Theological

reflection is more than that; Emmanuel Lartey offered a revision to the initial models

in which he sought to incorporate more feedback and the deliberate and positive

involvement of others to bring about,

> 'collective seeing.' (Woodward et al., 2000, 128-134)

Pattison takes this even further by offering a more flexible approach.

> 'The basic idea here is that the student should imagine herself
> as being involved in a three-way conversation between (a)
> her own ideas, beliefs, feelings, perceptions and assumptions,
> (b) the beliefs, assumptions and perceptions provided by the
> Christian tradition (including the Bible) and (c) the
> contemporary situation being examined.' (Woodward et al.,
> 2000, 139)

However the question is asked by Swinton and Mowat if all the voices in the
conversation should have equal weighting? In their model they question,

> 'whether it is theologically appropriate to give all of the
> dialogue partners equal weighting within the research
> process… Can the social sciences really challenge theology
> at a fundamental level as the wider implications of this model
> would suggest?' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 83)

They argue that theology must be present in all stages, yet it feels like things have moved back towards the basic approach of Lartey where they stress the role of experience in practical theology but make it clear it is not a place of fresh revelation.

The TAR model bears a remarkable similarity to the ministerial cycle with its, 'Action –Reflection' cycle and is intended to be theological at all stages. It seeks to bring about insights in the subject of its investigation through structured conversation between,

'theology in four voices' (Cameron, 2010, 50-60)

These four voices 'operant theology,' 'espoused theology,' 'formal' and 'normative' theology are divided into two 'teams' of 'inside' and 'outside' and is designed to facilitate productive critical reflection between these four voices and so give rise to the theological insight. As I have indicated earlier I do not believe this model to be right for this study but acknowledge that the four voices are present in this research methodology and indeed in many of the models discussed above.

My methodology is derived from Pattison's 'conversation' model. The key processes draw on the physical and social sciences in a reflexive 'conversation' with a critical application of current theological debate, underpinned with prayerful reflection and Bible study as a link with God's presence and continuing activity. In this way it is hoped that the application of theological insight and of the sciences should inform each other on a continuing basis. There is recognition too that the Christian tradition, theology in its widest sense, is a changing element that both informs and in turn is informed by the other participating elements in the methodology. Such an approach acknowledges the subjective viewpoints of all the human participants including those of the researcher whose own predispositions can be recognised. Through this approach, the unavoidable personal bias is not then an obstacle to being able to discover something real.

2.5   Research Sites & Data Collection

Selection of the research sites principally related to the frequency of LMA used in worship. I wanted to study churches that used LMA every week in worship and which had been established in that practice for at least two years. It was important to

ensure that sufficient time had passed for the 'normalisation' of the use of LMA to have occurred and for there to be patterns of use established both by those who were using it and for the use of LMA throughout the liturgical year. In selecting two from the UK and two from the USA, I wanted to try and match the churches in terms of size of congregation in attendance, age range in worship, theological viewpoint and church management structure. Having viewed a number of possible sites after an initial contact and conversation with the senior minister about their participation I selected the four for this research. I had initially thought of using six churches but it became clear that this would be too much for this study and too costly to arrange in terms of travel and preaching cover in my own churches. In looking at UK and USA churches I wanted to see if the more established practice of LMA in the USA churches revealed any data that could inform the UK about the possible long term issues of use.

Following their work on examining spirituality and religion with Gen X'rs, (Flory and Miller, 2000), the authors set out a typology in their new work on post boomer spirituality and that generation's influence on churches in America. (Flory and Miller, 2008) Their typology is in contrast to that of Weber's mysticism and asceticism (Weber, 1993, 166-183) or Niebuhr's (Niebuhr, 1951) five-part Christ and Culture typology, both of which operate on a continuum between resistance to or accommodation of cultural influences. Flory and Miller present four different forms or types that offer a more complex relationship between religious groups and their socio-cultural environment. Briefly they are:

- **Innovators**. Have a constantly evolving or innovating approach to religious and spiritual beliefs and practices. Many are affiliated with the 'Emerging Church' movement others are more in line with the 'Fresh Expressions' established within traditional denominational structures. They are focussed on building community within the religious group and to engage in various ways with the larger culture. They introduce various forms of ritual and symbol in to their worship services by introducing new forms of religious and community life that stress commitment and belonging as well as service within and to the community outside the Church.

- **Appropriators**. Seek to provide a compelling and 'relevant' experience for both the congregant and those who are performing in the service or event. The churches or independent ministries imitate or 'appropriate' trends found in the larger culture and popularise these through their various networks into a form of pop-Christianity that is primarily oriented toward an individual spiritual experience. The mega/seeker church ideology best demonstrates this typology though some para-church organisations, Christian music bands and other consumer oriented locations may well be included.

- **Resisters**. In seeking to establish and maintain the place of the written word and rational belief as the dominant source of Post Boomer spirituality and practice, resisters reject any incursion of what they see as postmodern culture within Christianity. They resist the 'threats' of the larger culture to what they see as the historic Christianity.

- **Reclaimers**. Are in one way or another seeking to renew their experiences of Christianity through the symbolism, history and practices of ancient forms of Christianity found in the liturgical traditions particularly the Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches. They therefore 'reclaim' the ancient symbols, rituals and practices of these traditions in their own spiritual quest. Reclaimers are often converts from other non-liturgical forms of Christianity or from non-churched or de-churched backgrounds. It is the connection with the larger historical tradition through smaller congregations that prove attractive together with the perceived authenticity that these traditions provide.

  See (Flory and Miller, 2008, 13-15) for further details of the forms or types.

It would be naive to think than any one church or faith community fell neatly in to one or another of the above descriptors. Nor should the descriptors be understood as somehow having impermeable boundaries. It would be perfectly possible to find an individual, or an institution in one part of the typology and also in another part, for no individual or church ministry will feel completely comfortable being placed in just one of the types. But it does allow for a lens to be applied through which dominant characteristics can be discerned and to allow for self-analysis if that were appropriate for an individual or a church.

Flory and Miller set out three ways in which the four types relate to each other, they are through the visual and experimental, secondly community and thirdly outreach, (Flory and Miller, 2008, 164-167) however, I shall focus on just one, the use of the visual and experimental dimensions.

> 'Innovators and Reclaimers emphasise their attraction to the visual and experimental elements of their particular church traditions. For innovators this is a much more fluid element that is often created or reinvented from week to week, while for Reclaimers this is part of the longer Christian tradition they seek.' (Flory and Miller, 2008, 164)

The appeal lies in participating with the divine rather than simply being a passive observer of an experience produced by others. They are not seeking to be spectators of a show but rather they want to participate physically and intellectually in the worship experience.

For Appropriators that is not the case, they very much want to be 'spectators' to the event. They can appreciate the visual and can have individualistic experience of the divine; however, the participatory and community aspect of the ritual is missing. An Appropriator service many look like an Innovator service, but in reality it is all being done for them and it all leads to a sermon centred on and around the minister. The congregants are not participating in the experience other than as an internal individual experience.

As the visual and experimental are key elements of post-modernity, Resisters position themselves in opposition to it.

> 'God, says philosopher J.P. Moorland – echoing Neil Postman- "is a God of the word," and thus can only be understood in relation to the written word; experience, emotion, visual symbols, rituals, and the like are not allowed for Resisters.' (Flory and Miller, 2008, 165)

That which Resisters dismiss in their approach, the other three types to varying degrees and with different emphasis embrace. 'The word' did not remain in written form, according to John's Gospel; it became flesh, embodied in Jesus, something the Resisters seem to overlook.

In undertaking this research I have been able to speak with a number of church ministers and leaders including one who 'resisted' the introduction of LMA in the church he served. Having left that charge, the succeeding minister has now regularly introduced LMA in to the worship life of that congregation. As I have already indicated it is not possible to place a particular church or individual in one type therefore in the following descriptions I will seek to present where I understand the church to be on the spectrum using the above typography.

Later in this work I will return to this typography in the light of the research finding.

2.5.1 Church A

Church A is an Innovator/Reclaimer congregation with strong Innovator characteristics. It is a suburban church about 11 miles from the centre of Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. It employs a full time Senior Minister who has been in active ministry over 20 years and a part time Associate Minister who was ordained in 2012 and four part time lay support staff. In addition there are several lay leadership roles for the ministry areas and a student minister intern from the local Seminary. The Senior Minister has been at this church for five years having served previously in another denomination. It has a regular worship attendance of around 175 people each Sunday across all ages over two worship services which principally have contrasting styles of music. In the first service worship is led by members of the 'Praise Team' (usually three or four lay people) and the Senior Minister. Singing in this service is almost always accompanied on a baby grand piano with additional supporting instruments. In the second service, worship is jointly led by the Senior Minister and the Associate Minister supported by the student minister and lay members of the congregation who will do readings or lead a children's message. Musical accompaniment for the singing is provided by an organist and occasional use is made of additional musicians including a bell choir. At the beginning of my study of this congregation there was a regular choir in the second service but this has temporarily ceased due to a number of changes in the paid music director position at the church. The church has a 'congregational' management structure with an elected board.

The technical facilities for the worship service provide for sound reinforcement via

several radio and cabled microphones and additional instrument amplification together with a PC computer based system for LMA. During my research the church applied for and was awarded a $30,000 matching grant for the improvement of technology in the church. The $60,000 was spent on computer upgrades for the offices, new computer servers, a graphic based messaging system that is connected to two large LCD screens in the entrance and equipment for the sanctuary. The sanctuary received two new high power data projectors, two new 16:9 format screens (one for the congregation to see and one at the rear of the church for those leading worship to see), a new computer and presentation software, subscriptions to image and music databases and tech support. It also benefitted from additional theatrical lighting and controls being added as well as audio links to a single video camera system used for recording the worship for distribution later via the church website.

The church has a team of five volunteers, both male and female who work the sound equipment week by week and one man who regularly programmes and operates the media computer system in the rear of the sanctuary area. In my time observing this church the person operating the media system has changed once. The previous operator has acted on a couple of occasions as a stand in for the current operator when he is not able to attend worship. It has always been a single person operating the LMA equipment.

2.5.2 Church B

Church B is an Innovator/Reclaimer Church leaning more to the Reclaimer type. It is a suburban church about 7 miles outside Leeds in the North of England in the UK. It employs a full time Senior Minister who was has been in active ministry over 19 years and a part time lay worker. There are also a number of lay leadership roles for the ministry areas. The present Senior Minister has been at this church for eight years. It has a regular worship attendance of around 150 people across all ages at the main Sunday morning worship service. There is another service held on Sunday mornings which has a very small number of attendees. The church has its roots in another denomination that came together with others some twenty or so years ago

In the principal Sunday service, worship is led by the Senior Minister or a visiting Minister or very occasionally a lay leader. Each service has support from lay

members of the congregation who will do readings or lead the prayers. Musical accompaniment for the singing is primarily provided by the organists. This service is supported by a choir of about 10 members who are under the direction of the worship leader. There is occasional use made of a keyboard/piano and guitar to support singers performing more contemporary music before and in the worship.

The church has a 'congregational' management structure with an elected church meeting and additional ad hoc committees as required. The technical facilities for the worship service provide for sound reinforcement via a couple of radio and cabled microphones and additional instrument amplification together with a PC computer based system for LMA. The sanctuary has one data projector and one 4:3 ratio format screen for the congregation to see, a computer and presentation software. It has one tripod mounted and manually controlled colour camcorder camera which is routed via a simple switch to the data projectors..

The church has a team of 5 volunteers. There are currently 4 who work the vision desk, with 2 being principally involved in the production of LMA materials on the computer system week by week. Each will do the 'programming' of the media computer system for the month they are on rota, though others are available to assist if required.

2.5.3 Church C

Church C is a Reclaimer/Appropriator congregation. It leans more to the Appropriator type with multiple points of engagement with the church and small groups which seek to accommodate likeminded people. It is a suburban church about 14 miles from the centre of Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. It employs a full time Senior Minister who was has been in active ministry over 37 years and a full time Associate Minister who has six years' experience of ordained ministry. There is also a full time paid Youth Minister and nine part time lay support staff. In addition there are several lay leadership roles for the ministry areas. The present Senior Minister has been at this church for less than one year with the change taking place during my period of observation. It has a regular worship attendance of around 650 people of all ages over one midweek service and three Sunday morning worship services which principally have contrasting styles of music, though one of the Sunday morning

services and the mid-week service does not routinely make use of any VMT during the worship.

In the first Sunday service, worship is led by members of the clergy team with a lay person and the Senior Minister. In the third and principal service, worship is jointly led by the Senior Minister and the Associate Minister supported by the youth minister and lay members of the congregation who will do readings or lead the offertory prayer. Musical accompaniment for the singing is provided by an organist and occasional use is made of a bell choir and additional musicians. This service is supported by a robed choir of about 25 members who are under the direction of a paid musical director.

The church has a 'representational' management structure with an elected church council and additional ad hoc committees as required. The technical facilities for the worship service provide for sound reinforcement via several radio and cabled microphones and additional instrument amplification together with a PC computer based system for LMA. The sanctuary has two data projectors, two 4:3 ratio format screens (one for the congregation to see and one at the rear of the church for those leading worship to see), a computer and presentation software. It has four full functional remotely controlled colour CCTV cameras which are routed via a vision mixing desk to the data projectors.

The church has a team of 2 part time paid staff and five volunteers, both male and female who work the vision desk, sound equipment and LMA computer system week by week from the balcony area of the church sanctuary. It is the paid personnel who carry out the 'programming' of the media computer system.

2.5.4 Church D

Church C is a Reclaimer/Appropriator suburban church about 10 miles outside Newcastle upon Tyne in the North East of England in the UK. It employs a full time male Senior Minister who was has been in active ministry over 25 years and a part time lay worker. There are also a number of lay leadership roles for the ministry areas. The present Senior Minister has been at this church for eleven years. It has a regular worship attendance of around 250 people across all ages over two Sunday

morning worship services which principally have contrasting styles of music and liturgical approach.

In the first Sunday service, worship is led by the Senior Minister or a visiting Minister with support from a lay worship leader. In the second and principal service, worship is jointly led by the Senior Minister and the worship leader supported by lay members of the congregation who will do readings or lead the prayer. Musical accompaniment for the singing is provided by the worship leader who directs a small (4-8 member) worship band. This service is supported by a choir of about 30 members who are under the direction of the worship leader.

The church has a 'representational' management structure with an elected church council and additional ad hoc committees as required. The technical facilities for the worship service provide for sound reinforcement via a couple of radio and cabled microphones and additional instrument amplification together with a PC computer based system for LMA. The sanctuary has two data projectors, two 4:3 ratio format screens (one for the congregation to see and one at the rear of the church for those leading worship to see), a computer and presentation software. It has two colour camcorder cameras which are routed via a simple vision mixing desk to the data projectors. One camera is in a fixed position near the front of the sanctuary and one is tripod mounted and manually controlled from the purpose built technical desk at the rear of the worship area.

The church has a team of 4 volunteers, currently all male who work the vision desk, sound equipment and LMA computer system week by week. One of the four currently does the 'programming' of the media computer system, though another is available to assist if required.

Having selected the churches I made arrangements to spend a minimum of six months in contact with the church and attending worship on at least 8 occasions. With the exception of Church B where I was able to spend more time than planned and so attended more worship services. In addition to worship, I attended at least one planning meeting for worship in each church. I was able to build good relationships with the staff, technical personnel and members of each of the congregations. For the reasons identified earlier regarding the changes to LMA use as a result of

conversations, the interviews were scheduled for late in the study time at each church. 73 people from teenagers through to 80 years plus participated in the recorded interviews as part of this research.

Following the interviews the recordings were copied to computer disk and backed up. Careful consideration was given to the question of producing full verbatim transcripts from the data recorded. There are some obvious benefits for producing full transcripts in terms of 'mining' the data for valuable information. If undertaken by the researcher it can bring a greater familiarity with the data itself and help recall the interview and any particular emotions or other non-verbal signals that were present at the time of the recoding. However, Halcomb and Davidson question the validity and reliability of data through a full transcript stating that the potential for errors means that the data is best taken from the original. (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006). Given that my practice was to transfer the recording to computer and then using Adobe Audition® software both listen to and mark the recording electronically with the ability to add a text based note to each marker which were then printed out, I would strongly argue that the benefits of listening to the actual recordings with all its nuances and inflection provides many, if not all, of the advantages of providing a full written transcript. Given the accuracy of the markers in the software to $1/100^{th}$ of a second and the ability to jump to and hear the portions of recordings almost instantaneously, I believe it was the most effective use of time and resources and when coupled with contemporaneous notes at the time of recording gave a very good data management tool. By adding my own notes to the electronic recordings I was able to remain consistent in notation and interpretation of the data and so improve its accuracy. It also allowed the process to remain flexible to meet specific needs and context, and to act as a reminder that the choices being made by me as the researcher were reflecting the theories I was postulating and the limits of my interpretation as Lapdat and Lindsey highlight (Lapadat and Lindsay, 1999).

 In this research I agree with Halcomb and Davidson who point out that the process of transcription is more about interpretation and generation of meaning from the data and a not a simple clerical task and so I question the need for verbatim transcripts. (Halcomb and Davidson, 2006, 40). Straus and Corbin state that,

> 'The bottom line is that the theory should guide not only
> what you look for and where to go to find it in the field, but
> also what you look for in your data… In the end it is you who
> must decide… just how much of your interviews and field
> notes you transcribe.' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, 30)

Data analysis does not happen as a single event in time but is part of an on-going and iterative process of conversation between the researcher and the participants, the researcher and other disciplines etcetera Swinton and Mowat identify that analysis is,

> 'a cycle of tentative construction, deconstruction, and
> reformulation.' (Swinton and Mowat, 2006, 146)

My chosen methodology looks to ensure that the analysis remains a process of engagement with the participants, with people outside the research context and with both theological and scientific texts. I believe that the constant referencing of the recordings allows for this iterative process to continue even to the point of writing this thesis where again further reflection and refinement of the arguments drive me back to the recordings which remain an integral part of the hermeneutic process.

I will present my findings in the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Findings

The use of LMA within the churches studied, and I believe replicated to a greater or lesser degree for other churches regularly using this media, is providing added educational, missional and liturgical participatory value to the worship. Of importance in these findings, which does not appear in other literature, is the fact that leaders of worship, technicians and members of the congregation all see the output from significantly different points of view which have impact on how LMA is regarded by those constituents and the value of the content.

In presenting these results I will link my research findings to statements from other commentators and academics where it is appropriate to do so as well as offering my own comments on the outcomes.

After careful examination of all the data from the interviews together with my own observations it is clear that overall the use of LMA is welcomed in the churches I studied by congregants, leaders of worship and the technicians whom I define as those who assemble the worship materials and operate the equipment. The following comments are typical of many that were made.

> "I have always viewed it [LMA] as an optional extra but it's become less optional and more extra all the time." (Church B)

> "I love it [LMA], we are such a visually stimulated society today that you know I think it caters, it allows things to be put visually that maybe you have in your own head." (Church A)

> "Our worship would be impoverished significantly if we were without it [LMA] now." (Church B)

> "I was a sceptic at first but it has grown on me quite a lot, I like the use of it [LMA]. Anytime you add an extra sense, it makes understanding, makes retention and comprehension a little better and I like that." (Church A)

Some of the participants spoke in terms of LMA assisting with memory or retention of the message with various percentages given; these were very much in line with

what Coppedge (Coppedge, 1996) quotes,

> 'people remember about 30% of what they hear and 70% of
> what they see in the same 24hour period.' (Coppedge, 1996,
> 41).

I will come back to the question of the links between LMA and memory later in this chapter when I consider it as one measure of the effectiveness of LMA.

For participants in the study the use of LMA brought other benefits.

> "It [LMA] enhances worship." (Church C)

> "It [LMA] enhances worship hugely in terms of reflective
> worship in particular. The use of imagery during the anthem I
> find very helpful, or the use of images during prayers… it
> adds another dimensions which sometimes listening to a
> spoken word is hard to do." (Church B)

> "As Church… we have got to move with society and within
> our community and the way that it's moving and if there was
> no other reason than that, the Church has to move with you
> know what's going on in society and community so that
> people can connect and it's [LMA] good." (Church D)

This concept of 'moving with the times,' underpins a lot of the participant's responses as to why LMA is being used in their churches. Dyrness argues that although the Protestant imagination is fed by the spoken and written word, an exclusively verbal diet is no longer sufficient for the worship of today.

> 'Our children and their friends have been raised in a different
> world; they are often uninterested in our traditional word-
> centered [sic] media. Instead they are looking for a new
> imaginative vision of life and reality, one they can see and
> feel, as well as understand.' (Dyrness, 2001, 21)

But LMA is not universally accepted, for some the architecture of the building is a problem either because of the shape of the building,

> "The way our present system is set up it's not catered to
> every seat in the house…the main screen covers about 85%
> of the sanctuary." (Church A)

Or there are significant decorative features that are obscured by the screen(s),

> "One of the things I dislike is having the screen there all
> through the service I find it hinders, I like the east window to
> look at in the service erm, and I think erm, it's not necessary
> to have the first hymn up there if the first hymn were a hymn
> out of the hymnbook with the music that you could follow…
> there are advantages but that really puts me off having it there
> all day." (Church B)

Similarly,

> "(Congregant) The screen is retractable but it is staying down
> a lot more and I think that's what I object to.
> (Andrew) I was present in communion when it was
> withdrawn for the communion, retracted for the communion,
> (Congregant) It was such a relief to see that window, I
> suddenly felt I had come to Church, sometimes it feels like
> school assembly with everyone learning off the screen."
> (Church B)

> "I much prefer the earlier service where the screen isn't used
> because I like to see the cross and the use of the screen covers
> it" (Church C)

The minister at Church B recognises the issue of the stained glass windows being
blocked by the screen and has sought to address the concerns of a minority within the
congregation by having the screen retracted for the Eucharistic part of the majority of
the communion services, and when retracted, the hymns sung are taken from the
hymnbook.

For others it's simply a question of seeing the screen both in terms of visual
impairment and physical challenges,

> "I can't see the screen and people in wheelchairs would have
> a harder problem, so if you have a tall person in front of you
> and you are not that tall and we are not using hymnals and
> even if the song were in the hymnal we aren't told what page
> it is erm its kinda well that's nice!" (Church A)

Application of McLuhan's Laws of Media to the data gathered via my observations
and the recorded interviews regarding use of the screens in worship provides

evidence to support the value of the Laws in both assessing and critiquing the rationale employed in the participating churches for why they use LMA in their worship. Hipps (Hipps, 2009; Hipps, 2005) advocates the use of this approach in his books but then does not apply the Laws to worship specifically choosing instead the CCTV camera as his example. In this thesis I will apply the Laws to the evidence from this research.

I will illustrate the first three laws from the data collected but I propose to more extensively discuss and evidence the fourth of the laws, that of the technology 'flipping' into something else. I believe the learning outcomes from the application of this particular 'law' provide significant opportunity for us to identify the constituent parties to the worship and their attitude to the use of LMA. The outcomes also provide both confirmation of hitherto often anecdotal evidence around the practice of LMA in worship and identifies areas for further research around its effective use.

3.1 All Technology is an Extension of a Human Attribute

The use of projected/displayed images in worship extends the capacity of the hands and eyes. This from a participant from Church A talking about the introduction of the first screen in worship in 2002.

> "We had great response from what we thought would be the most reluctant part of the congregation which was the older population and most of them loved and appreciated the fact that they no longer had to ca.. handle the hymnal, um, they missed not having the music but for many of them holding the hymnal or holding the Bible was becoming just physically a challenge for them or for some of them and they couldn't read and see the music so this [LMA] became umm.. a very positive thing for them." (Church A)

The other churches all spoke of the benefits they had found for the older members of the congregation in terms of not having to struggle to read small print in books, of not having to handle books. In particular one lady who had a damaged hand spoke, of not having to find page numbers. Another individual reported she was always in a muddle with the numbers and so was grateful for not having to find them in books, and those with children in the worship reported not dropping books.

In much the same way as a magnifying glass enables the reader to see the object placed below it, the use of images and words that are projected or displayed at a sufficiently large enough size provides the congregants the ability to read with greater ease. For text to be legible the Kodak 8H rule, as quoted in (Haddad, 1978), is still used by many professionals in audio visual design work. The 8H rule indicates that the recommended maximum viewing distance for a text character with a height of $1/25^{th}$ of the screen height is 8 times the height of the screen for a person of average visual acuity. The application of this rule provides for a text size that is very close to the eyesight test reading requirements of the UK practical driving test. One technician at Church B during one of my observations was overheard telling another technician that if the congregation cannot read the text on the screen he would question whether they should be driving to church.

For some participants in this research the absence of books etcetera meant they were able to grip the chair or pew in front of them to assist them stand or remain standing,

> "I really like the screen because I'm a bit wobbly and I like to
> hang on to the chair and I can't hang on to the chair and hold
> a hymnbook at the same time so I like the screen." (Church
> B)

There was also an acknowledgement that not using books provided a better environment for visitors to the congregation,

> "That is also helpful for people who are coming to church
> for the first time and who are not churchy and who are seen
> struggling… looking for the page number rather than the
> hymn number and things." (Church B)

Don E Saliers, a retired United Methodist Church minister and liturgist reminds us that our worship is multisensory and that for many in today's Church an intellectual approach reliant on the spoken word alone excludes many from fully engaging in worship.

> '...the physical senses are crucial to the recovery of awe,
> delight, truthfulness, and hope. For worship depends upon
> our capabilities of sensing presence, of hearing, seeing,
> touching, moving, smelling and tasting. This is perhaps
> especially so when one or more of those senses is limited, as
> in a specific disability, simply because Christian worship is

> physically, socially and culturally embodied…and knowledge
> of God is never purely intellectual.' (Saliers, 1996, 14-15)

My own observation would support the fact that the provision of LMA in this way has made worship more accessible and inclusive and not just for those with a physical disability but for those who are not as familiar with the language and practices of the Church. This is also evident from the research of Crowley (Crowley, 2007, 50-51) whose work included conversations with leaders from the Church of Brethren, Maryland and a Catholic Church in Oregon.

For some participants the greater engagement of the congregation is seen in how they worship.

> "[LMA] frees up people's bodies to be able to worship the
> way they want to do. If they want to worship with a hymn
> book in their hand they still can. If they want to worship with
> their hands in the air it's possible, erm and anything in
> between." (Church D)

Other churches spoke of people being able to raise their hands, clap, of it being a more vibrant atmosphere by not having to handle hymnbooks in particular.

I did observe several people in Church D being expressive in worship through raised hands or clapping and certainly the use of the screen allowed both arms and hands to be used in that way, I do though wonder if the use of a book would negate such an expression or simply restrict it perhaps to one arm being raised etcetera?

3.2 What Does the Use of LMA Make Redundant?

It is printed media that, to a greater or lesser degree, is made redundant in the sense of their primary function being changed from a requirement in the worship, to optional or obsolete, in so far as material being used in worship is not part of their contents. Hymnbooks or Hymnals, Bulletins or Orders of Service, Worship books and Prayer books have become secondary to LMA generated texts. The extents to which the printed materials have been replaced vary from church to church and in what books etcetera, if any, are being retained. The use of print media has not gone away, congregants were still handling printed materials but these were being used in the participating churches for a number of very different reasons. They included attendance slips that required completion, printed notes either in full or partial that

are offered for completion by the congregant in the sermon or message, notices for
the forthcoming week or special events and service outlines with or without
additional text for congregational responses.

In all of the churches I observed hymnbooks were available to members of the
congregation but with the exception of church B were not used during worship
services, though some members of the choir at church C did have hymnbooks
together with other printed sheet music in a folder. In church D, large print versions
of the material used in the worship were available for some congregants who
required them.

This comment from a minister talking about the impact of the screen on worship,

> "I think if you tried to take it away now you would have a
> hard time because people haven't picked up their hymnals
> since probably long before I got there." [Over 5 years]
> (Church A)

And from the technician,

> "I think that they expect now to have everything on the
> screen, I think they have become accustomed to the screen so
> all the words that are, that we sing, they expect it to be on, I
> think people would be kinda shocked trying to use a hymnal
> now." (Church A)

But the use of LMA for hymn words etcetera is not universally accepted. Congregant
at Church A explains that for her,

> "Looking in the hymnal and finding my hymns is a comfort."

And for one gentleman it was more than just the words he wanted.

> "I always still look the hymns up in the hymnbook because I
> want to know who wrote them and when they date from and
> who wrote the music." (Church B)

The lack of musical notation is a significant factor for people in all of the churches I
studied.

> "The media has not caught up with the way in which they can
> put music on the screen, you become very limited when you
> are trying to teach or sing a song that maybe isn't as familiar

to people unless you suddenly have someone who is a strong
leader that can lead you or either vocally or musically your
lost and your frustrated." (Church A)

Several participants, drawn from all the churches, spoke of music related issues as being problematic. Those who considered themselves musically inclined felt they were doubly challenged when there was a new hymn or song to sing and no music or words available in print form.

In contrast the absence of any need for a hymnbook has its advantages for some of the participants.

"Sometimes you would sing three songs after one another
you'd have to kinda quickly flick through and you think well
its starting but I mean with having the screen you don't"
(Church D)

Other churches spoke of not wasting time finding material in books. The ease with which hymns, songs and other elements of the worship service are presented both for the congregant and the leader of worship will be considered again later in relation to how the use of LMA may cause worship to 'flip' into something else.

By far the most universal answer given to the question, "what are some of the benefits of using LMA in your church?" relates to the singing. All the churches spoke of an improvement these are typical of participant's comments.

"I think it's more lively, the songs, the songs project up there
and people get a little bit more involved than if they have
their heads bowed looking in the book." (Church A)

"I think singing is much improved because people look up as
they sing rather than down into a hymnbook." (Church B)

Yet there are far more significant aspects to this than simply the volume or quality of singing. Borgmann (Borgmann, 1984) in his seminal work on technology and the character of contemporary life, like McLuhan, argues that technology has become so integrated in our modern life that we fail to see the effects that it is having on our everyday lives. Borgmann offers the 'device paradigm' (Borgmann, 1984, 40-48) as a pattern for technology, it is the great promise of freedom that comes with so much technology. 'Availability' is how Borgmann describes the combined effects of

freedom from work and suffering coupled with the greater life enrichment, enjoyment and pleasure that are brought about by the use of technology. Borgmann uses home heating as an example of the device paradigm. Before the application of the technology of central heating, a home owner needed both time and physical labour as well as access to materials in order to heat a home. Felling trees, then chopping logs or digging up peat was needed in order to heat the home. A fireplace needed regular attention to keep it stoked and involved increased risk (burning the house down) whereas the modern central heating system isolates 'heat obtainment' as a commodity from the work that is needed and suggests that's a good thing in terms of comfort and safety. Borgmann also notes that the isolation of 'heat obtainment' from the social engagement and the physical effort needed to obtain it results in a loss to human interaction, the teaching that may go one in families about building and maintaining the fire, the loss of time together as people gather for warmth.

Participants in this research also identified the device paradigm at work in the use of LMA though from different viewpoints.

> "The fact that folks are singing up and out, it's more of a communal kind of experience rather than with their nose buried in a book and I think that's very important" (Church A)

> "Sometimes I see the sharing of a hymnal kind of a interpersonal community, err, relationship as you get with the person next to you if there's a limited amount of hymnals that err, or family members that you share it with them and that's a shared experience rather than all staring at the screen straight ahead." (Church A)

The mother from Church D whose five year old son was with her in worship identified for her a positive benefit of not having to have hymnbooks in her hand. I would argue that the lack of interaction between parent and child through the opportunity to share a book, to reinforce teaching on number sequences in looking up hymns or songs, or to point to words being sung is part of the social engagement that is so often lost in family groups and within the larger community of faith and reinforces as sense of individualism over the more corporate nature of worship. I accept that the parent/caregiver needs to be in possession of the knowledge in some

form themselves in order to pass that on. It is therefore more complex when it comes to other areas of church life such as liturgical or biblical knowledge given that within the UK we are now in a second generation of people who have little or no contact with the Church. Furthermore the lack of seeing the written text for the hymn in full has consequences when it comes to the comprehension of, and the cadence of, the whole hymn or song. Given the emphasis within Methodism for teaching theology through hymnody the failure to appreciate the complete set of words in a single context can be troublesome at the very least. There is a real challenge to the educational value of the hymn when it is presented in a format suited to a screen rather than the printed page.

The use of LMA for hymns and songs is less contentious than its use for the projection or display of bible passages. The loss of knowledge of the Bible is of concern to some participants in two of the churches.

> "I kinda wish the scripture wasn't [on the screen] because I
> think then erm, I wish people would use their Bibles, I think
> it helps our kids to become familiar with where a book is in
> the Bible, you know to have to find it." (Church A)

For participants in other churches there were concerns voiced about the inability for the worship projection software to display more than one translation at a time. The fact that a passage is read and there may be a different version of the words on the screen, or the decline in knowing what a Bible looks like or where to find readings in the Bible. Church D tried a sustained period of only giving the bible reference and page numbers on the screen to encourage the use of pew Bibles or personal copies brought to church. There was great resistance to this from the congregation for some of the reasons articulated earlier in relation to the elderly members of the Church. It was dropped after several weeks and the full text is now displayed.

3.3   What Does LMA Recall From the Past?

Individuals and the Church have for centuries struggled with the development of technology in their lives and its role in religious life.

> 'Men and women in every age have had to integrate
> technology into their personal and communal perspectives,
> and to manage the social, moral and intellectual anxieties that

the relationship with technology occasions. Every age then is
truly an "Age of Technology"' (White, 1994, 15)

LMA, and in particular the use of screens in Protestant worship, are part of the on-going debate as the Church seeks to stay true to the Gospel, make disciples and worship God. White in illustrating the point sets out the very significant changes that came about as those in early monastic life sought to ensure they were fulfilling the 'offices' at their appropriate time and that the wider church was celebrating Easter at the right time. In seeking to maintain a sense of 'celestial' time as the standard for producing the 'canonical' hours necessary to his Order, the Benedictine Abbot, Richard of Wallingford of St Alban's devised a 'mechanical device' to replace the sundial and water clock which was prone to freezing or only worked in daylight. The wider church viewed this device, which sought to provide an accurate means of measuring unequal lengths of time, with suspicion while at the same time continuing to argue against the use of a device that would measure equal lengths of time and required constant adjustment or changes to the liturgy, which included the removal of some of the appointed biblical lessons from Easter to the end of November in order to compensate. This led to psychological effects on the monks who would have 'anxiety dreams' about missing prayers, see (Landes, 1983, 65). Eventually the mechanical clock gained favour and as Gimpel argues, by the mid fourteenth century it not only becomes accepted but transforms the Western Church's liturgy and understanding. In 1370 King Charles V of France issued decrees to all subjects to synchronise,

'their private, commercial and industrial life to the tempo of
the … equinoctial hours' (Gimpel, 1977, 168-169)

The subsequent order to have all churches ring their chimes when the royal clocks struck on the hour, as opposed to the seven canonical hours,(matins and lauds, prime, terce, sext, nones, vespers, and compline), added to the dominance of Charles V over the liturgical practices of the Church and saw the church turn its back on eternity.

The Monastics, whose definition of 'the arts' was very much wider than that of today's for it encompassed technology, informs McLuhan's law in so far as they would have included,

'anything that by its existence extends the range of human
capability beyond its natural limitations.' (Noble, 1997, 44)

Their view was that as humanity continued to develop and promote all of 'the arts,'
they would start to reclaim the divine likeness that was lost at the fall. In contrast the
Millenarians understandings about future of life on earth were very different did have
a similar view about technology. Millennial advancement and the fulfilment of
divine prophecy would come about through progress in 'the arts'. They held to the
concept that things were generally improving through technology and as such it was
ultimately going to bring about Christ's kingdom on earth.

'The evangelical effort to expand the reach of Christianity in
accordance with its universal claims and eschatological
expectations encouraged exploration and thereby advanced
the arts upon which exploration depended.' (Noble, 1997, 29)

The use of LMA and particularly displayed or projected images in churches today
draws on the use of stained glass in churches and monasteries. As far back as 675 CE
there is evidence of Benedict Biscop bringing artisans from France to glaze the
windows at the monastery of St Peter in Monkwearmouth in the North East of
England. In the Middle Ages the use of stained glass as an art form became the
principal way by which the stories of the Bible were told to the mainly illiterate
population. In 'Gospels in Glass,' the authors state that,

'they were sermons which reached the heart through the eyes
instead of entering at the ears.' (Luebbering and Burnett,
2000, 47)

Wilson notes that,

'The screen is the stained glass and the cross for the
electronic media age, except now we have the privilege of
working in a dynamic rather than static form.' (Wilson, 1999,
21)

Both church B with its large stained glass East window and church C with its central
cross have the screen blocking the objects behind it. Church C has successfully
photographed the cross in situ and been able to project it back onto the screen so that
it appears in its original setting. This has, to a large extent, negated many of the
comments from the congregants about not seeing the cross in worship as it is

displayed as a default slide when no other image or text is needed. Attempts to do the
same at church B with the windows have not proved to be acceptable and are
therefore still a contentious issue for some in the congregation.

3.4 What Happens When the Technology is Pressed Too Far?

In the application of this law, McLuhan provides the opportunity to consider what
the possible consequences are of the overuse of the applied technology and what
other outcomes there might be if pressed to far? In examining the factors surrounding
the question of technology being pushed too far and using the research data, I have
looked at what happens when the technology goes wrong as well as some of the other
observed and possible consequences of over use. I have also included the limitations
of the minister and the operator/technical staff both of whom may be being asked to
do more than they are capable of and so the technology fails to meet desired
outcomes or needs.

3.4.1 Lead Us Not into Temptation - Preaching or Performance?

Crowley notes the temptation to 'idolatry' in her book and my research would
confirm the concern is a real one both in terms of the Protestant suspicion of visuals
in worship, and as media theorist Quentin Schultze would point out (Schultze, 2000,
118-120) of the technology itself being the focus of the worship.

Crowley quotes Dyrness from a lecture at Union Theological Seminary in September
2002 who identifies that for Protestant worship the ear is more important than the
eye,

> 'as a means by which God can be accessed in worship and
> devotion' (Crowley, 2007, 46)

I agree with Crowley and Dyrness when they observe that some within Protestantism
may argue that,

> 'any visual attempt to mediate the presence of God is at best
> a distraction from this encounter, or at worst a temptation to
> idolatry.' (Crowley, 2007, 46)

The minister at church B highlighted this in his interview.

> "There was a small but vocal anti screen, you can still see it,
> there is one gentleman who pointedly holds his hymnbook

> …. It was a slight sop to some of those who were wary of
> over using the screen when we began that we wouldn't
> always use it."

Schultze on the other hand draws attention to the overpowering role that the technology itself can have in worship. My research would confirm that is both present and affecting some people in the churches I studied. This from a gentleman in church A,

> "I left a church because of that very thing, Sunday was a
> production, it was a show, it was not worship and the media
> had overtaken the, I mean you had four big screens …. and
> lights and smoke …. It was such a production and such a
> show it was terrible I mean the media had overtaken
> everything. …. I think it's used to put butts in the pew to be
> quite honest about it, I mean you know that if we have a good
> show we'll have a large crowd." (Church A)

All the churches interviewed had something to add to this point. Some were concerned to lose the personal neighbourly reaction stating it was like going to the cinema and being screen focused and not people focussed.

> "Thinking about our attitude towards violence, how that has
> changed when it becomes depersonalised and are we
> depersonalising our worship and our relationship erm, by
> making it on the screen and we are watching and we are not
> really part of that?" (Church A)

Others from a more technical point of view wanted to ensure that the minister was using it for worship. For here is another possible temptation, the use of projected images of the worship leader.

> "Well I think in our size sanctuary, you know, when you get
> to where you're having to put the video of the minister
> preaching up there to where instead of looking at the minister
> you're looking at the screen, now if you are in a large theatre
> type setting... you need that …when you start broadcasting
> live that's duplicating what you should be able to see on the
> stage area, I think that's when you cross the line a little bit."
> (Church A)

> "I really like the use of the camera with the children and
> being able to see the interaction." (Church B)

> "Having the camera enables a great deal of flexibility in
> worship to be achieved." (Church B)

Image magnification (IMag) is where the output from a video camera is displayed on the screen(s). In large auditoria it provides a useful way of ensuring that the subject of the camera's lens is seen by all assembled there. The minister of Church C was introduced to the possibilities of LMA through such an application,

> "I do remember one of the very first times I did see screens,
> we were at a large convocation, this is well before 'Promise
> Keepers'[7] but a similar situation, where we were a long ways
> away but two very large screens can zoom right up on the
> speaker and it just made it far more effective as far as
> following the speaker, his content, his words err rather than
> just trying to see a little err blip err on the stage. So there's
> the first introduction and I thought that's very effective how
> can we utilise that in the local church?"

Church B, C and D all have IMag as part of their LMA output in worship. At the time of this study church A did have a video camera that was being used to capture parts of the worship service to put them on the church website but had no capability of showing the images on the big screen. Church C uses it for the large part of the worship when words are not being projected. In particular it is used for the sermon when the preacher is either at the lectern or moving about at the front of the sanctuary. This simulates the situation he saw when first introduced to the possibility of IMag several years ago. In churches B and D the use is less general and more intentional in terms of what service and how it is used. In church D the use is more for special events such as baptism or when children are at the front of the church. The minister explains it this way,

> "We do try to use the cameras to enhance what is happening
> at the front particularly if the children are involved in a
> participative exercise on the main floor level, erm, that's
> quite important and that's helpful."

At church B IMag was used in all of the 11 services I observed with one exception, which was when a lay leader of worship took the service. IMag is used at the children's message time and is via a manually operated camera set up to one side of

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[7] For a review of the LMA of Promise Keepers see FENIMORE, J. A., JR. 2001. *How a Congregation's Identity is Affected by the Introduction of Technology-Based Ministries.* D.Min., Drew University.

the front row of the church. It shows the interaction of the worship leader with the
children, allowing the leader to sit at the same level at the children. My observation
notes of the services showed that I felt this element of the worship was being handled
very well from an LMA point of view. The congregation were able to see the
interaction of the children and the minster and the detail of the exchange could be
seen e.g. the presence of the carved mouse on a chair leg at the front of the church
which could not possibly be seen by others in the congregation. It was particularly
effective when used for more of the service when the young 'beavers' and 'rainbow'
children (ages 5+) from the uniformed organisation connected with the church
helped to lead the parade service. The minister explains his thinking for its use but
also recognises a major issue.

> "If I had a slight anxiety, I think for me the purpose in
> engaging with the children is to engage with them and to take
> their spirituality seriously…… I would worry if that ever
> became entertainment even though the intentionality of it is
> to do something that engages with the children." (Church B)

The question of entertainment was raised by others as a potential
problem,

> "For me I need to make sure I don't come across as an
> entertainer where the emphasis is upon me and not the words
> and the message up on the screen. I would have to say,
> Andrew, that every Pastor struggles with that who wants to
> be progressive but not aggressive erm, and we do have
> churches in our conference where they kinda gets nips saying
> well that's nothing more than showmanship but then again if
> they have several hundreds, if not thousands of people
> come…but the people come with that anticipation what is
> going to happen and the minister has a captive audience for
> the next twenty, twenty five minutes to share God loves you,
> you can be forgiven, Jesus is the only way. So it's a fine line
> it really is." (Minister Church C)

Although referring to television, Postman makes this point which I believe applies to
the screen in worship.

> 'our priests and presidents, our surgeons and lawyers…need
> worry less about satisfying the demands of their discipline
> then the demands of good showmanship.' (Postman, 2006,
> 98)

It can become too easy to concentrate on giving the best possible show with all the techniques that preacher and techie guys can provide to impact the emotions of the congregation than making sure the 'good news' is shared and God is truly worshipped.

There is also the added danger with IMag of deifying the church leader, particularly in terms of the minister or preacher being projected on the screen throughout the service or sermon when the size of the building does not warrant its use. I attended a church in Indianapolis, which was not the subject of this research, but at which the minister was less than 120 feet from the furthest congregant but whose image was shown on two very large (12ft x 8ft) screens either side of the communion area behind her. My eye could not fail to be continually drawn to the towering images of the minister in close-up even though she was speaking just a few feet from me. Again as Postman observes the,

> 'persistent image of the preacher carries the clear message
> that it is he and not He, who must be worshipped … the
> power of the close-up … makes idolatry a continuous
> hazard.' (Postman, 2006, 122)

3.5 LMA and Memory

It was not the intention of this research to do a detailed assessment of the effectiveness of LMA, though in light of the results of this work it has become clear that the subject would significantly benefit from further comprehensive research. This investigation did seek to offer some insights into one possible measure of the effectiveness of LMA through the ability of those present in the church services to recall images and video clips etcetera that had been used in the course of worship in order to seek to understand the role of visually presented information. For some participants the images provide a prompt for them to recall aspects of the act of worship.

> "I go out of here remembering and thinking about things
> during the week that were presented on Sunday." (Church A)

For others the image is remembered for a negative impact on the individual.

> "The other thing I remember is the Gethsemane pictures; I
> remember that because I didn't find them helpful because
> they destroyed my vision of what I thought it was like."
> (Church B)

The ability to recall or remember aspects of the service and specific elements of its content is indeed desirable but it should also be acknowledged that worship itself relies on our memory. It would certainly be wrong to say that all of Christian worship is simply an act of 'remembering,' but worship that does not have 'remembrance' within it is poor indeed, lacking in the central element of recalling to mind the person and attributes of God. It is through this recalling of individual and corporate memories that the salvific work of God from the remotest times to the present day are celebrated and hope for the future is established.

> 'God is present because of the past, and God is affirmed as
> protective of the future.' (Atkins, 2004, 34)

In this research, participants were asked as part of the interview process to very specifically recall any images or video clips that they could remember being used in worship whether they had a positive of negative reason for remembering them and what they were linked to in the worship. When general statements were given, e.g. "I like the pictures of nature," the participant was asked if they could describe the image(s) or features of the image(s) in a more detail and what they recalled about the images linked to worship. Analysis of the answers given by the participants falls broadly into three interlinked categories, a) images that are recalled in very general terms with very limited detail, b) images that have a deep and lasting impression because of a 'surprise' element and c) those which are recalled for another 'emotional' effect on the participant.

Examples of the first category of general recall include:

> "The ocean scenes or water scenes do it for me." (Church A)

> "There are … times like, I can't remember exactly but it was
> like a tree blowing or something. I like that." (Church A)

> "I haven't had any one way or the other on the content,
> because most of the content is mostly the Bible or the songs."
> (Church A)

It was interesting that even when the group spoke of a particular minister using
classical paintings and other art in a worship series, the participants couldn't recall
the detail of images they had seen, they spoke in general terms like,

> "Participant: I've enjoyed some classical paintings that *the*
> *minister* has used, incorporated in to his sermons….
> Andrew: Any particular painting that stands out?
> Participant: No I can't remember what it was actually."
> (Church B)

Another participant in the group spoke of a painting of Jesus at a doorway and the
group helped her out by naming the William Holman Hunt painting, 'The Light of
the World,' the participants spoke in general terms of the things they had never seen
in this and other paintings before the minister pointed them out, e.g. the lack of the
door handle which one participant found surprising.

The emotion of 'surprise' in this instance relates to the sudden and unexpected
occurrence of discovering something new when set in the context of a cognitive
evaluation of a situation or event. Work in the 1970's and 80's by Taylor and
Crocker (Taylor and Crocker, 1981) , Mandler, (Mandler, 1984) and Meyer et al.
(Meyer et al., 1997) identified that our thought, action and perception are subject to
the control of complex knowledge structures identified as 'schemata' which can be
understood as informal, unarticulated theories about situations, events and objects.
Baddeley defines them this way,

> 'Schemas comprise the knowledge and experience that we
> have of the world' (Baddeley, 1997, 241)

This theoretical framework provided the basis of the work done to identify the role of
surprise. Where there is consistency between a particular schema and the events
being perceived or encountered by an individual, the interpretation of the event and
the actions it brings are largely automatic and is better remembered through efficient
encoding mechanisms and consolidation processes. When there is inconsistency
between a schema and the event then the emotion of surprise is generated, the
automatic schema processing is interrupted and a more conscious and therefore
effortful and deliberate analysis is required of the event. Surprise therefore begins
with an appraisal of a situation, looking at the painted door in the picture, the

accessing in memory of a schema for exterior doors, which in memory at that time would normally have a handle, the realisation that some element of the cognised event has an inconsistency or unexpectedness outside of what might be regarded as normal within the schema such as, size, shape, style, position of the door handle, this brings about an interruption in the processing and so a reallocation of processing power to the inconsistency within the schema, no door handle, and the simultaneous occurrence of the surprise emotion, and concludes with a re-evaluation of the event and if required an extension or revision of the relevant schema, that this door and therefore some exterior doors may not have a handle. There follows then a series of sub-processes which result in the evaluation of the surprise in terms of wellbeing as a pleasant or unpleasant experience. In both cases the subsequent memory is affected and will often be recalled easily from memory long after the event, The Homan Hunt picture had been used in a church service that had taken place several months before the interview but the participants memory was clear and had taken away the idea that the door and her life could only be opened from the inside.

French and Richards (French and Richards, 1993) highlighted this understanding of surprise in work they did with memory of common everyday objects such as a clock with roman numerals. The schema for roman numbers has IV for the number 4 yet clock manufacturers, for largely aesthetic reasons, use IIII on the clock face to balance the VIII of the number 8 position. The 'surprise' in discovering that information anchored the new knowledge in memory such that it was recalled long after the initial discovery as this new or novel information is preferentially encoded in memory before being assimilated into prior existing schema.

More recent work on understanding memory and schema (van Kesteren et al., 2013) has identified that this is not always the case across all types of memory and stimuli. Van Kesteren argues that in some situations,

> 'Consolidation of a memory after encoding is moreover found to favor strengthening of salient and important memories, such as memories that are emotional, rewarding, or semantically related, thus suggesting that consolidation, next to encoding, can have profound effects on long-term storage of a memory trace'. (van Kesteren et al., 2013, e56155)

The emotional content of an image or its positive affect on the individual can be just as powerful at consolidating a memory over time. Emotional responses and/or the emotion of surprise are found in several of the participants' answers when they can recall details of the image(s).

> "Another thing that stands out in my mind is that polar bear
> and that, what was it a husky dog or something in the sermon
> on play? I mean you could sit up there and or should I say
> someone could stand up there and tell you about that but
> seeing it, one picture's worth a thousand words as the say."
> (Church A)

In the film clip shown, the narrator sets up the encounter of a tethered husky dog on the arctic ice being approached by an adult male polar bear[8] as if the dog would be attacked. The images then show the two animals at play, both a 'surprise' and with a positive emotional relief content as the preconceived notion of the imminent danger of the dog gives way to a play filled experience.

In another example, a participant who could recall the sermon title, 'Keep Calm and Carry On' and the theme of 'perseverance' after a period of several weeks has passed since its delivery, noted that these images had an impact on him.[9]

> "There was a series of slides showing that parents knowing
> their children were in danger of bombs actually had their kids
> moved to the countryside and be kept by total strangers
> because they feared for their lives and the slides of these
> children getting off the train and walking in the dark with
> strangers err, was very moving to me. It helped me realise
> how much perseverance those people must have had to be
> able to do that." (Church A)

Again there was surprise, this time a culturally based as an American parent contemplates the actions of many parents in the UK who through, 'evacuation' sent their children away and the emotional consequences of such a separation.

All the churches had examples of using the screen to project people, events or situations they knew from the congregation or community.

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[8] See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iHj82otCi7U for video footage used
[9] See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=voUe1WFBD9Q for video footage used

"When I see a video or something, clip where it's one of the members of the congregation who has a story to share, to me that has really stuck." (Church A)

"I don't think I have forgotten a single graduation Sunday because we have always flashed the pictures of the kids that have graduated and for many of them, I'm sure for some of you who have been in the church longer than I erm, watching those kids literally grow up." (Church B)

"I like the videos when like the Sunday School kids were talking about what they do if they didn't have Sunday School, and the most moving one was, oh I taken mine off, when we got the little blue ribbons for child abuse and they showed pictures of all the children, that was, oh well, everybody was crying at that one." (Church A)

The final example above referred to prayers of intercession in which pictures that had been made public, of children in the area who had been killed in the previous twelve months as a direct result of child abuse were displayed on the screen. As was reported by the participant it was a very emotional moment in the worship and as such was recalled by several people at the interview together with the linked theme after nine weeks.

Phelps (Phelps, 2004) using functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) and brain scans identified two distinct parts of the brain linked to memory the amygdala and the hippocampal complex, are both involved in how emotion effects the encoding and recalling of memories. This early work, though not universally accepted due to the research being carried out mainly on animals, does give some insight into how these two independent parts of the memory system within the brain can act in concert when it comes to emotion. In particular how, what was once thought a one way process, amygdala to the hippocampal complex is in fact a bidirectional connection and one that reveals new ways that the working memory is involved with longer term stored memories.

The use of emotion in communicating the gospel is not of itself new. Gifted orators have preached in ways that have stirred emotion and enabled their message to be retained in the memory of the listener for long periods of time. The additional use of music to back the spoken word at moments in a service or meeting can further draw the emotion of the listener in to play and may be used at times such as an alter call.

The linking of photography and the printed word in the 19th century brought about a revolution in allowing images to be mass-produced and shared to wider audiences. The introduction of the photograph added a more efficient and greater emotional component to the communication of a message. Hipps (Hipps, 2005, 72-75) identifies that neither the printed word or the use of picture can of itself accomplish what the other can as he argues that they are fundamentally different in their outcomes. The two media require separate parts of the brain to process them with pictures being primarily right hemisphere which processes intuition and the gestalt or 'all at once' view and printed matter being left brain in which the main function is logic, sequences and categories. In worship, the efficiency of an image or video clip to get through at an emotional level is one of the great assets of the use of LMA. As part of an interview with participants in Church D it became clear that this element of LMA was moving to a far more conscious level,

> "so really it's our emotions I suppose are touched especially
> when we see the joy of the children this morning for instance
> and we can probably identify with grandchildren or children
> in that respect only in different circumstances for different
> reasons." (Church D)

The use of a video clip from WaterAid highlighting the need for clean water and appropriate toilets in parts of the world and which was part of the harvest festival celebrations in the church two weeks before the interview had these responses from the interviews.

> "They help us make connections all sorts of technology that's
> what good about it in a variety of ways they help us to
> connect and encounter." (Church D)

One mother talking about her five year old child's response,

> "It's a lot easier to actually, you know, bring a point to
> something, you know that, you know some people around the
> world don't have the same kind of facilities. I know my little
> boy was saying, "but that's a shed mum," and I said, "yes but
> that's where they have to go to the toilet darling."… without
> having to pass a piece of paper around everyone at the same
> time saw that image." (Church D)

It became clear from the discussion a week later that an individual had been so moved she was organising a fund raising event.

> 'It's first of all an emotional response then sometimes
> practical like the coffee morning for WaterAid" (Church D)

I think that is a good example of the effectiveness of images in worship. The ability to link the emotional to a pragmatic response enables a lasting expression of the gospel to be worked out in reality.

Yet the role of memory in worship is more than just prompting a pragmatic response, memory is more than simply recalling past events; rather memory, particularly corporate or collective memory serves as a heuristic model for the present. Through the act of recalling or remembering the person and attributes of God within worship, we implant or re-enact and so reinforce and consolidate within our own memory the truth that is God at work amongst His people.

In worship we use memory to bring the past into the present and in doing so we perpetuate our understanding through representation and re-enactment. To remember presupposes that there is something memorable, recalling our memories allow us to re-imprint that memory trace and so consolidate and strengthen it within our long term memory. In the context of worship this means that the ultimately unknowable God has become at least partially known for we can remember what He means to us individually and as a worshipping community.

What is important as a human being is that we remember God because God first remembered us. In the covenantal relationship that has existed between humankind and God from the early years and recorded in the Bible (Gen 1: 26-28), remembering has practical outcomes. For humankind it is that God will remember and so never again destroy us (Gen 9:15-16) for God it is that He responds to human deeds and actions and remembers them (Ps 20:4).

The worshipper remembers God, this is fundamental to the Christian faith. Though it is more than remembering His name, it is living the covenant, encountering in the here and now that which is transcendent and ineffable. To remember the covenant requirements is tantamount to doing them (Num. 15:39).

In the New Testament this act of remembrance is worked out in the Eucharist. A new covenant as an expression of Passover, itself a memorial to the exodus redemption (Exod. 13:14-16), so, the Eucharist is a reminder that we 'join ourselves in a perpetual covenant',[10] of the new and greater exodus by which all humankind can find release from the bondage of sin and deliverance into a new and everlasting life. The Eucharistic liturgy reflects the very act of remembrance, 'anamnesis', of Christ. "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me." Paul in 1 Corinthians clarifies the interpretation; both the eating of the bread and the drinking of the wine are in remembrance of Jesus and when these are done properly Paul says,

> 'you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes' (1 Cor. 11:26).

It is the ritual and drama of the liturgy that promotes the act of remembrance in both Eucharistic and non -Eucharistic worship. Our worship should reflect the fact that memory encoding relies on all the senses and memory traces are strengthened through regular recall to the short term memory and back into long term memory. The repeated use of a set words, a set of images, smells or sounds accompanying an action or speech all serve to reinforce the future recall of the memory created by the event. This is what Vatican II refers to as 'active participation,' I will explore this more detail in the following chapter.

Sacramental moments where an earthly action reflects a heavenly event can be very moving and deeply spiritual. At such heightened times strong memories can be created or evoked. In a similar way to 'flashbulb' memories (Brown and Kulik coined the phrase) which are episodic memories rather than semantic factual memories, some events, such as the children's photographs used in Church A are so emotionally charged that they become encoded, positively or negatively, in a very strong way.

The introduction of LMA into worship has stimulated a debate which often depicts multi-media worship as a powerful way to communicate the Gospel and worship God. Whilst this might be true for a large number of people, I am conscious now of good reasons for some of the limitations it presents to a few members of the Church.

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[10] The Methodist Service Book, Collect for Covenant Service p 283

Given that the brain, as part of the encoding processes using schema is looking for patterns, there will be an increased sense of frustration within the worshipper if they are constantly subjected to a screen filled with words that do not form complete lines of a hymn or reading. The brain will be seeking to try and recall the missing information or predict what it might be. Images that change rapidly without any apparent logical sequence will result in a loss of attention much sooner than ones that builds on previous images or sequence of images.

For those with a strong Myers Briggs 'J' element in their personality, the lack of seeing the complete picture, both literally and in terms of the overall presentation, i.e. no book to follow to look ahead in or re-read back, will be very frustrating and may lead to negative memories of worship being formed, which, having a strong emotional content will be vivid.

Care is needed in image selection to support a particular set of words or music. We use mental imagery within our memory as a means of 'tagging' the information and so making retrieval easier. The image we hold for a particular concept within a schema is a powerful element in how we understand that concept. The picture of Jesus as a white skinned man with a gentle smile and beard, flowing white robes sat on a rock with children gathered round him adorned many a Sunday school room and shaped a view of Jesus. Moving images too can distort our concept. For many people of a particular generation, Moses looks like Charlton Heston because of the Cecil B DeMille's epic film 'The Ten Commandments' on the life of Moses.

What is also true of visual and auditory supporting material is also true of the part played by the sermon (Watts, Nye and Savage, p136). Sermons must engage and get attention; there should be a clearly structured progression with information being in comprehensible segments that allow a person to make up their own mind with clear application in the current situation. The use of LMA to support the sermon or message may by it's often liner nature, e.g. PowerPoint technology, actually be an aid the construction and delivery.

We worship not just as individuals but in community too. Corporate memory is therefore important in our worship. The worship of the Old Testament was about Israel remembering Yahweh as their God. This involved an active response that was

communal and focused round the temple. For the Church today every word of praise, every petition, every act of ritual and ceremony, every obedient work, are all worship and triggered by remembrance and depend on corporate memory if they are to be carried into the future as part of the living tradition and mission of the Church. Memory, particularly in a corporate sense has a cumulative effect and over time builds to form the heritage of the past and the basis of hope for the future. God has not abandoned his people; we can commit that fact to our individual and corporate memory. From that basis we can therefore worship with a renewed and real sense of the expectation that God will continue to be there and respond to our worship.

In practical terms the leader of worship and the Christian worshiper must seek every means to stimulate worship to enable the past to be brought into the present through a coherent narrative that also looks to the future. We draw on our memory to fill in the gaps of that narrative or make inferences based on our expectations, beliefs and prejudices.

As Watts et al. state in their book 'Psychology for Christian Ministry,' we would do well in worship to remember that,

> 'Human beings are not perfectly rational or logically
> consistent creatures; they process information heuristically as
> well as systematically' (Watts et al., 2002, 136)

It is never just the force of argument or the development of an emotionally charged atmosphere within which to deliver such a discourse; other heuristic factors such as whether the worshipper trusts the speaker or leader contribute to the whole cumulative experience we call Christian Worship.

3.6   Three Perspectives

When considering factors that might contribute to the technology flipping into something else the way failures within the system are handled offers insight into a key area of understanding which I have not found in any other literature looking at LMA. Examination of the data reveals three distinct perspectives on the use of LMA, the viewpoints of the worship leader's, the congregation's and the technicians are all subtly different and have a significant impact on the understanding of the use of LMA. This complex relationship needs further study in order to increase the

effectiveness of LMA in worship and to enable those who are called to lead worship
do so with greater understanding of the dynamics of LMA production.

During the interviews participants were asked about times when the screen became
very obvious in worship in either positive or negative way. The negative experiences
ranged from total failure of the LMA system, through distractions caused by
projected images or scenes, to observation of mistakes on the screen that drew
attention to the fact that the technology was present in the worship.

> "What distracts me is some of these animated scenes of
> clouds rolling by or erm grain waving in the field because I
> find myself watching for the loop, is it a 17 second loop or a
> 27second loop what is it you know?" (Church A)

Others spoke of the 'hypnotic effect' of some of the waving cornfields or rippling
water. The fact that they happened during the sermon or message was being
delivered particularly distracted many.

These responses though show the 'subjective' nature of the comments as others from
within the same church interview find their use to be very positive and something
that would not be possible without LMA.

> "It's nice and peaceful it puts my mind at ease." (Church A)

> "While they can be distracting I'm not quite sure they are as
> distracting as you guys lead on to it to be." (Church A)

The screen becomes very obvious when there is an error which is usually attributed
to the technicians or operators.

> "I find it extremely distracting that we are not Johnny on the
> spot with things, you know, we hear we're going to do a film
> clip and then there's no film clip or there's audio but no
> video… boy that just crashes my entire experience" (Church
> A)

> "The skills required to operate the system aren't acquired
> overnight, it requires a team, it requires a lot of development
> and careful thought and we are very fortunate in that respect
> to have a team that has been together for many years but it is
> not easy for a church or any other organisation to do this
> quickly." (Church B)

Or it is the content that is problematic.

> "Typos, you know I do my best to think we are all volunteers
> and we all love each other and we are all trying our best but
> when I get up there and see turth [sic] instead of truth or
> something, it just makes a knot in my stomach the size of a
> grapefruit, it just ruins the whole thing for me." (Church A)

> "We've had the wrong words on the screen and everyone's
> kinda going err, err, err, what do I sing now? Spelling
> mistakes and everybody chuckles when they see them"
> (Church D)

Or the technology hardware and infrastructure is the cause of the failure and so makes the screen obvious. Particularly when there is no backup plan, new operators change computer settings that have a direct impact on the output, or the homemade source material is just poor.

> "My drawback always is when it doesn't work, when it's not
> as quick as we want it to be and when the techy's aren't quite
> on the ball erm, it's a constant pain that we have adapted the
> system to be dependent upon SongPro™ and our main techy
> .. is sold to SongPro™ but somehow it means that sometimes
> things seize up it seems to go very very slow." (Church D)

The above comment regarding SongPro™ is interesting given the comment of the technicians about the lack of an internet connection to the main computer hosting the software.

> "that was purposeful so that we did not corrupt our main
> driving PC with any bugs that should have been prone at the
> early days, we say stop no, fix the computer it's there only to
> do the display of this and not to run all the other fancy
> software that connect to the internet to do communications,
> it's a dedicated purpose machine."

This conscious decision by the technicians not to have an Internet connection at their main computer means that they are not accessing the latest versions of the software and downloading bug fixes and patches etcetera that the manufacturers make available. The facility to do upgrades via CD Rom or external memory devices was not being done either at this location and at Church B the technicians only upgraded the machine at the point of changing the computer and then only if there is a problem that effects their particular needs.

The issue was pushed a little further in asking the participants to consider what the effect might be on the week by week worship if LMA were not available for several consecutive weeks. The answers given began to indicate a clearer division between ministers, technicians and congregants. The following are illustrative of the congregant's answers to the question of a long period of weekly worship without LMA.

> "I think essentially no, we are using the same music, the same erm order, the same liturgy so we are worshipping in the same manner… I don't think we would worshiping any differently than we would without it [LMA]". (Church A)

Other churches participants spoke of the need for more concentration by the congregation as they would have to work to keep up, or of it adding to worship but being able to worship just fine without it.

There is recognition that something maybe missing from the worship and yet a clear sense of being able to carry on almost as normal without it. It may be that the participants feel that they should say they can worship in other circumstances as to do otherwise would indicate they would not be able to meet a basic Christian response. It could be that the participants believe that is what the interviewer wants to hear? The interviews did not push the responses beyond that of asking the question and a supplementary question seeking to try and get an understanding of the benefits of LMA. The worship of all the churches in this study, and I believe of all churches using LMA regularly, is changed through the introduction and the use of LMA, yet the congregants perhaps for a variety of reasons, that would bear further detailed research, do not seem to want to admit to the changes or can articulate them. I will return to this observation in a short while.

Ministers when asked about the long term absence of LMA have a different response.

> "it is part of our tradition and er, that that's, isn't it strange to say it's part of our tradition, videos part you know that, if we didn't have that people would be upset I think." (Church B)

> "I think if you took it away it would be shocking."(Church A)

"I think that we have a whole generation probably of kids at *church A* that know nothing but the screen" (Church A)

"Well it would change my first address for starters……. I think it would have a radical change there actually."
(Church B)

 "I think *church B* would be a very different place without it [LMA] and I think most people would say much the poorer erm and its because it does help us engage with the younger generation which over the last few years is increasing in number at our church." (Church B)

"If we took away the screen I would be looking for different ways for the people too. We would certainly go to the inserts …. I think now the people are, I don't want to say are, are trained, but I do think there is an expectation that there will be something err, over and above someone being up and speaking." (Church C)

"I think it would hard to imagine it going back to how it was." (Church D)

"I think it means that, that for the preacher erm, there's an added erm worry that the technology might not come on we are almost dependant on technology… so at the point where the system siezes yeah we all just come to a grinding halt and it's, it obviously interrupts the flow and momentum of worship. Erm but we are getting a greater confidence as time goes on although the fact that there's quite a group that's doing the 'techying' which vary in their competence."
(Church D)

The ministers express recognition that the use of LMA has brought significant change in the way they approach the act of worship and the mission of the church. There is an acknowledgement of the additional visual element in worship through LMA and how they would need to replace the visual component with something else other than just the spoken word. With the exception of Church D's minister who oversaw the introduction of LMA into the church the other ministers interviewed said they could not imagine the worship of the church without out LMA and Church D's minister said he would not want the church to go back to being without it and,

"Certainly going to some of our other churches…where it's all audio you know, it just seems to be half baked now when you can do so much more." (Church D)

The realisation of the impact of LMA became apparent to one minister in the interview.

> "It would greatly change our engagement with children and young people in putting together the worship. I think our special services at Christmas for the community would be much the poorer …. Through the years we have been using the technology and the people know they are going to have something. Therefore it might well have an impact on our whole mission and life because that which is left is more likely to appeal to the senior generation and less likely to the younger generation, so I think it could be without over stating it, we have been steadily increasing in our children and youth work but it could turn us the other way round." (Church B)

Later in the interview,

> "It is interesting this conversation because you know; perhaps you have helped me reflect on just how critical it [LMA] is if I'm honest for our mission."

I do not think this is over stating the case generally for churches regularly using LMA. One of the common factors in terms of the congregations in each of the participating churches is the presence of children, young people and young families in very significant numbers. In both churches B and D in the UK there is a large 'Messy Church' congregation of all ages that meets at times other than a Sunday and all four participating churches have an annual Vacation Bible School or Holiday Club which attract in one case over two hundred children and in the other cases tens of children each year.

For the technicians involved in the act of worship in either preparing the materials and/or operating the issues of dealing with the screen being obvious are:

> "when what's on the screen isn't following what's on the service in other words the operators have cocked it up or there's a problem. It becomes obvious when there is nothing being projected and it's a white screen and it's obvious when it's been put up and down in worship." (Church B)

> "If you don't notice me that's good, it's when things go bad that, that I get kinda frustrated with and that's only because we don't practice we don't run through things very often and we do it right before the service. (Church A)

"I now notice it when the camera is not available for birthday
books and baptisms etcetera for whatever reason maybe there
is not enough people available or whatever." (Church B)

"Oh no don't look, that was what was so funny I mean
everybody knew where to look [*towards the technicians
desk*] so they all looked to see what was wrong you know."
(Church A)

There is a sense in which the issues identified by the technicians relate to problems
with resources both physical and human rather than themselves. This is supported in
part by the understanding that the technical personnel have of their role.

"Those ideas that the minister has I would go off and
implement." (Church A)

"I have always seen my role as an enabler and not as a
prescriber, it's taking whatever the worship leader wants to
present and making that available and if opinion is asked then
give the best opinion I can." (Church B)

"I see the job as assisting others to be able to worship,
hopefully there are people who will get more out of the
worship, the service, because of what I am doing." (Church
D)

"I see myself as a servant, an assistant to the leaders . . . and
the musicians who are doing. . . I am just providing a service
… I am just a support worker." (Church D)

These responses do not tell the whole story for it is in meeting the ideas and desires
of others that the technicians have a far greater impact than they perhaps choose to
take credit for. The observations I have made in all the churches studied is, that the
technician has almost total control of how and in what way worship is presented to
the congregation. The ministers say this,

"He usually does it himself with the information that the
secretary gives him and I bet he doesn't do it till Saturday but
he has the information." (Church A)

"They [*the technicians*] would say and I would agree that me
minister is not in the techy category. I mean I can put
together a PowerPoint™ but that's not my, that's not what
excites me. Well I can do PowerPoints here [*in the home*] but
actually sticking all that stuff on the machine it not where
my…" (Church B)

> "I wouldn't say that I'm artistic in any manner, I come more
> from an athletic background…. As far as the message the
> image is mine as far as the backgrounds to the
> announcements, the backgrounds to the songs that would be
> the tech guys up in the balcony they have full reign to do that
> I trust their judgement"(Church C)

> "The techy's receive an order of service and they go away
> and produce whatever they need for the delivery of that."
> (Church D)

Talking about a lack of understanding about the technology failing in terms of delivery this was said.

> "from an amateur not knowing what on earth any of this is
> about sort of perspective that I come from, you know where I
> understand a little but that's almost worse than not
> understanding anything you know it can be very worrying if
> you are dependent upon the technology for the impact of
> whatever and then it doesn't happen" (Church D)

3.7   Self-esteem as a Way of Understanding the Viewpoints

Practioners and researchers have three fundamental assumptions regarding self-esteem which are supported by a huge volume of research.

1. Human beings are driven to protect, preserve and enhance their level of self-esteem.
2. High self-esteem is characteristically more desirable than low self-esteem as it brings many psychological benefits.
3. Raising self-esteem improves psychological well-being and creates desirable changes in a person's behaviour.

For a full discussion of above assumptions and their validity see (Leary, 1999).

The many disciplines within psychology have all investigated self-esteem from their particular perspective. Developmental psychologists have looked at where our self-esteem comes from and how it has shaped our development as humans. In Barkow's work (Barkow, 1980) which takes a more ethological perspective, it proposes that our sense of self-esteem has evolved to maintain our dominance in social relations. The research argues that we use our position of dominance to acquire a mate and

other reproductive enhancing resources. With having a more dominant position within a community, self-esteem becomes tied to social approval and deference, so self-esteem becomes less about evaluating oneself positively and more a motive to enhance a dominance over others.

Humanistic psychologists have looked at how high self-esteem is seen as an indicator of when a person's ideal self and real life are in agreement and signals that they are behaving in an autonomous self-determined way. The goal contingency of self-esteem in Crocker's work is also found in the research of Bednar, (Bednar et al., 1989) who argues that self-esteem is more of a subjective feedback loop about the adequacy of self. A negative sense of self-worth comes when we avoid threats to self-esteem and a positive view when we cope with a situation that threatens us.

Perhaps more controversially, Solomon (Solomon et al., 1991) in the terror management theory has the role of self-esteem as buffering people from the existential terror they experience at the thought of their own death. Some experimentation carried out by the team would point to the emotional buffer theory but yet nothing that is conclusive to say it is annihilation and death that self-esteem protects us from.

Crocker, coming from a more social and personality driven perspective examines human behaviours and how they seek to maintaining our self-esteem. The work of Crocker (Crocker et al., 2003b) helps us begin to understand why the respective viewpoints of the three different groupings may be as they are. Crocker argues that two hypotheses of James, (James, 1890) the fact that our global self-esteem has qualities of both a 'state' and a 'trait' (James, 1890, 43) and that people are highly selective about the domains on which they stake their self-worth, should be seen together and not in isolation from each other. According to James, and subsequent researchers have confirmed, a person's trait level of self-esteem is unrelated to how successful an individual is in their domains of contingencies of self-worth but is a direct and elementary endowment of her or his nature. On the other hand, an individual's 'state' level of self-esteem rises and falls with their momentary successes and failures. Crocker states that this assumption leads to an important statement about the nature of self-esteem,

> '[the] global state of self-esteem rises and falls relative to its
> typical trait level in response to achievements, setbacks, and
> altered circumstances related to one's contingencies of self-
> worth.' (Crocker et al., 2003b, 291-292)

Work done with college students in the USA led Crocker and her team (Crocker et al., 2003a) to develop a measure of common contingencies of self-worth known as the CSW scale. (Appendix 2) The outcomes measure seven contingencies namely, outdoing others in competition, others approval, appearance, love and support from family, academic competency, virtue and God's love. The test has a high internal consistency and high test-retest reliability giving robust findings for the individual undertaking the test.

Further work by Crocker with African American and European American students (Crocker and Wolfe, 2001) identified that a person's 'trait' self-esteem depends upon a person being able to satisfy their contingencies of self-worth. According to their study it does matter what contingencies of self-worth a person uses as standards to evaluate their self-worth. E.g. A person who bases their self-esteem on approval from others will find it almost impossible to maintain a high level of self-esteem without surrounding themselves with admirers or constantly trying to impress people.

Crocker suggests that our contingencies of self-worth develop over time and are influenced by many forms of socialisation and social influence such a child-parent relationships, (Bartholomew, 1990) cultural norms and values, (Harmon-Jones et al., 1997) together with observational learning (Bandura, 1991). Personal acceptance or rejection by others for our achievements, or at our failures, may also play a part in forming the contingencies (Leary and Baumeister, 2000). Crocker suggests and my experience in this research would confirm that,

> 'contingencies of self-worth develop based on personal or
> vicarious experiences that lead people to believe that they
> will be safe and secure (and accepted by others) if they
> succeed in those domains. Because contingencies of self-
> worth develop over the life span, they are relatively stable,
> but not immutable.' (Crocker et al., 2003b, 295)

Contingencies of self-worth shape the interpretations of situations and emotional responses, personal goals and reactions to events. People having invested in their self-

worth through their contingencies strive to be worthy rather than unworthy and so self-worth is linked to self-standards. As a result the affective reaction to an event is greater and more intense the more relevant the event is to a person's contingencies of self-worth. For this reason Crocker hypothesises that people organise their lives around their contingencies of self-worth (Crocker et al., 2003b, 296) as this both validates their own sense of worth by being with others who share their contingencies and to avoid the consequences of a drop in self-esteem.

> 'Selecting situations in which others share their contingencies of self-worth may provide reassurance that the domains on which people have staked their own self-worth really do determine who is worthy and who is not.' (Crocker et al., 2003b, 297)

Contingencies of self-worth embody the domains in which self-esteem is vulnerable – in which successes or failures can lead to increases or decreases in self-esteem. I believe it is this that lies behind the perceptions of the worship leaders, technicians and congregants. The degree to which all are 'invested' in the actual act of worship leads each group to see the use of LMA in different ways. As human beings, we seek to mitigate the opportunities or circumstances that can have a negative effect on our self-esteem or sense of self-worth. These actions can range from avoiding the situation altogether, lowering the expectations, self-handicapping , dealing with perfectionism, reacting to or dismissing the threat to self-esteem, compensating or abandoning the contingency altogether. The more personal the threat then coping mechanisms such as distancing from others, focussing on another's short comings particularly through stereotypes or even using antagonistic behaviour towards another and in some cases aggression or violence are possible.

This is a complex set of interactions that would benefit from a greater study of the various elements, but within the limitation of this research, it is possible to see some of the strategies of management of self-esteem being fulfilled.

The fears expressed by one church leader that the LMA is not going to work correctly or that the competency of the technician(s) may lead to problems in the worship (Church D), that the technician leaves everything to the last minute, or is not artistically competent (Church A) are examples of the 'lowering of expectations' on

the part of the ministers. If the use of LMA causes problems in worship, then it was anticipated and the minister can accept that it's just the way it is in the circumstances.

The observation of the ministers creating the material that will support their message, even though they publically admit to not always being technically as competent as others to do so, see discussion in (Kolditz and Arkin, 1982), reveals some of the 'self-handicapping' in so far as they can say they are not as good as others at creating the presentation materials if there is criticism, but can take the added credit of being talented if they perform well in spite of the self-handicap.

In some cases I observed the minister simply 'dismiss the threat' to their self-esteem by attributing the failure to another, "It was the technician's fault," or, "that wasn't what I had selected the file must have been changed". If your sense of self-esteem is wrapped up in the contingencies that deal with the love you have for God, which presumably a minister does have, and you care about what others think of you as a person, and maybe have a competitive tendency, particularly in America over the numbers of people attending worship etcetera, then the fact that worship is not how you might have planned or expect it to be will be seen as a setback in terms of self-esteem so lowering the sense of self-worth.

Being seen as the one responsible for the worship either through Church statute or primarily the expectation of the congregation, even if that is limited on most weeks to the sermon or message as in the case of Churches A, C and D, presents huge challenges to self-esteem if it fails to meet the goals set by the minister. There is a level of personal investment by the minister in the act of worship that is not present in the congregation in the same way and may not be found in the technicians or indeed other participants in the worship such as organist, choir, intercessors or other musicians and singers. I believe that this is a significant contribution to the viewpoint of the ministers, which though not exclusively a factor in the formation of the standpoint, given the theological training and experiences of the minister, nevertheless it provides an understanding of the concern at the long term removal of LMA from the worship they help plan and lead and the losses they articulate would result from such a change.

Within the technicians cohort there is a similar protection of self-esteem which relies heavily on shifting the responsibility to the leader of worship or minister. This dismissing of the threat to self-esteem based on the attitude of being only a servant of, or enabler of, the worship leader's wishes was present in the statements of the technicians at each of the participating churches. This point is over stated in some cases, particular Church D where elements of 'compensation' in order to protect self-worth are evident, as is 'self-handicapping' through pointing out the deficiencies of the equipment or the lack of it. I was party to a number of conversations that contained statements like, "If only we had … we could do so much more, so much better". Likewise the lack of communication with the worship leaders or the fact that changes come right at the last minute also point to attempts to mitigate the effects of errors or failures, particularly if there is little or no rehearsal time.

In all of the churches studied the basic format of the worship in terms of the order of service remained almost unchanged from week to week. The changes in content were offered by the minister in terms of scripture text and sermon or message title either directly to the technicians or via a secretary, songs and music by the musical directors in churches A, C & D and by the choir leader in conjunction with the minister or leader of worship in church B, church notices by the secretary responsible and then additional items from ad hoc groups such as Messy Church or other ministry teams as well as PowerPoint™ material from the minister in support of the sermon/message. The technicians were responsible for compiling these various sources of materials into the presentation that would be used in the worship. The technician at Church A had been to seminary but did not finish the training for ordained ministry; he had not received any formal training on the use of the equipment or software. The technicians at church B have had no formal training in the operation of the equipment or the use of the software and only some partial training in leading worship, though did themselves lead worship at church B two or three time a year. The technicians at churches C and D have had no formal training in the operation of the equipment or software and no training in leading worship. It appears that the technical competent are being left to fulfil a role for which they have not received adequate training and that the liturgically competent ministers of the

church are ready to pass on that responsibility for all but the element of worship they have a direct hand in namely the message or sermon.

My observations at the planning meetings and in worship services where there were technical problems confirm the comments made by congregants that the technician is the one to whom the whole congregation turns and stares at if there is a noticeable problem with the LMA. Even if the responsibility lay elsewhere, the technicians are often the bearers of the blame, which sadly can be articulated, as on one occasion in church D, by the leader of worship in the service itself. There does not often appear to be a sense of shared responsibility for the worship.

The congregation's general attitude of, 'we will get by if there were no LMA in the service,' can also be identified as being related to the contingencies of self-worth. In one sense the congregation is the least invested in the worship unless they happen to be the subject of a visual element of the worship, as in appearing on the screen or being related to someone appearing on the screen, or perhaps have been involved in something that will be shown in worship. This for me was highlighted on overhearing a comment by a congregant to the Snr. Pastor at Church A, who on leaving the service at which there had been a number of problems with LMA, and who had just introduced the minister to a friend she had brought along, said something to the effect of,

> "That was terrible this morning; I was embarrassed to be here today."

Clearly her expectations of the worship service had not been met and were almost certainly compounded by the fact that she had brought a friend along to 'her' church. The person who spoke to the pastor was one of the participants who, in an interview as part of this research, talked of the benefits of LMA for visitors in so far as it served to lead people through the worship. I do not know what was said to get the friend to accompany her that day but one can only speculate that it was all positive in relation to the ease the visitor would have in following the service. The difficulties in the worship service both with the technology and in part the presentation of the message for that day would bring into question her comments to the friend as part of her invitation, even if it was passed off as, 'one of those things' or not typical

etcetera. If friendship and being liked by others was a contingency in her self-esteem then the challenge to it would be a driver in the, 'dismissing the threat' comment.

The notion of self-esteem linked to relationships is made explicit in the 'Sociometer Theory' (Leary et al., 1995) which was updated later (Leary and Baumeister, 2000). The Sociometer Theory view of self-esteem is that self-esteem is a psychological meter that monitors the quality of our relationships with others. Central to the argument in Sociometer Theory is the inescapable drive that humans have to create and maintain significant interpersonal relationships. In the early days of humanity people belonged to social groups, primarily as a means of survival and reproduction. To be outside or ostracised from the group was devastating. It was for this reason, it is argued, that humans developed this method of gauging the relationships of those around them to ensure they were being accepted and not rejected. The 'Sociometer' is always monitoring at a pre attentive level (because a person cannot think about another's reactions all the time), the social environment looking for anything that might give a clue, e.g. disinterest, avoidance, disapproval or rejection, as to the level of acceptability the individual has vis-à-vis the rest of the group. Leary argues that the 'Sociometer' is very sensitive to changes; particularly negative ones, in relational evaluation, the degree to which others in a group might view their relationship with the person as valuable, important, or close. If a decrease in relational value is perceived the Sociometer attracts the person's conscious attention to the impending threat to social acceptance and motivates him or her to action. The self-appraisals that constitute the output of the action is what Leary argues is self-esteem. The monitoring then is of social inclusion and any threats to a person's inclusionary status in the group. Leary would argue that when people are self-handicapping or using similar defensive behaviours, they are not trying to preserve self-esteem per se but are protecting their inclusionary status. Leary further argues that this is not just limited to interpersonal threats to self-esteem but also to 'private' or internal threats. Events do not have to happen in public for them to affect relationships with others. All individuals have done things in private that if made public would undermine relationships with others. In these cases Leary suggests that the Sociometer is working to offer the possible consequences so that they will take action to minimise the potential damage. It further serves to prepare the individual for an interpersonal

relationship, for to be convincing to others one must first convince oneself of the rationale for the action. This is often done in ways to enhance their acceptability and social desirability in a group.

I particularly like the 'relational' aspect of the Sociometer Theory as being one that, as we shall discuss in the next section, aligns with a more theological approach for the use of LMA. Yet Crocker's work does provide a clear way of both assessing an individual's sense of self-worth and of allowing that individual to grow into the gifts that they have. This is something that the Church using LMA needs to take seriously, too often the need for LMA, at whatever standard, drives the output and not the spiritual gifts of the people who, all too often, are ready to sit back and enjoy the worship with little apparent engagement.

I would note that the research methodology I adopted of not having a predefined hypothesis so allowing the data to raise the questions, whilst identifying this issue, has not been sufficiently rigorous to provide a more conclusive argument in this particular situation. The work of Crocker came too late on my research to test out this theory with the congregants, but a question that I would ask in future would be akin to this situation and something like, "how would you feel if you had brought a friend to the service and there had been a significant problem with the LMA?" My hypothesis would be that the answer would reveal a greater protection of their self-esteem through dismissing the threat by indicating it is, 'not always like this' and attributing the failure to someone else or something else such as poor equipment, bad sighting of the screen etcetera. This would be particularly strong if one of the reasons given for the invitation was the part LMA played in the worship, even if they were unable to articulate that. I will argue later in this research for a greater involvement of the congregation in worship through the use of LMA both in terms of increasing the effectiveness of LMA and as a counter to what is described by Rowan Williams as the passivity of much of contemporary worship, see (Tilby, 2009) for discussion. I would also want to sound a note of caution too. This from a teenager at Church A,

> "I think in some ways it [LMA] kinda makes us lazy, I mean
> because, we have already got it all handed to us on this new
> technology stuff that we forget all about the books and also
> the Bible all the important things we could still be doing but
> we are making it easier on ourselves." (Church A)

Another teenager in the same interview had this to say,

> "It takes like the time from opening the books in the pews
> and everything, they just put the stuff on top of the screen and
> we can read them from right there instead of flipping through
> all the pages in the Bibles and everything. It helps a lot with
> that kinda stuff." (Church A)

The change in worship sanctuary furniture from the pew to the much comfier padded chair, the wooden floor to the carpeted covering which has been made in churches B and D are consequences of a desire to become more relevant to society today.

> "I think because we realised that, erm, if we were ever to try
> to erm, compete as it were against all the other things that can
> happen for young people, young adults, families etcetera we
> had to present err, a much more rounded presentation of
> everything that we're about. That includes comfy chairs err,
> and proper carpet and a good sound system but it also
> includes I think getting our act together with regard to all
> kinds of other aspects including visual imagery and appearing
> to be modern rather than appearing to be Victorian." (Church
> D)

Williams (Williams, 2000b) in looking at the changes taking place in churches today suggests that one of the disconcerting aspects of the modern society is the way in which a more consumerist culture has formed humanity to see itself as a bundle of wants and needs which demand satisfaction. The Church should take seriously the 'McDonaldization'[11] (Drane, 2002) of religion as it seeks to offer a more comfortable, predictable and friendly way of being Church today. There is a sense in which it can be too comfortable, the changes in posture, standing to sing, sitting or kneeling to pray, serve not only to maintain attention and prevent daydreaming but to remind us that all that we are is a part of worship, physical and mental. An element of ascesis, of being slightly uncomfortable, is part of expressing our whole response to God.

3.8   A Transatlantic Comparison

The choice of research sites was deliberate in terms of seeking to identify elements within the use of LMA that could give a broader understanding of the use of such technology in worship.   It is not the intention of this researcher to present the data as

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[11] First used by George Ritzer in *The McDonaldization of Society* (1993)

a conflated single source, yet equally this is not simply just a comparative study of UK, USA use of LMA. There are a number of cultural differences that have an impact on the use of LMA both within the USA and across the transatlantic divide in the UK. There is also a significant difference in the ability to find reliable data sources as little or no national surveys are carried out in the UK to the same scale as the USA. Farnsley in (Guest and Tusting, 2004) highlights the massive funding opportunities in the USA for congregational research not only by the churches themselves but by the charitable arm of large corporations who can also benefit from tax incentives for funding of religious studies as one of the main causes for the wealth of data in the USA.

The churches studied in this research are all predominately white, middle class suburban churches. Chaves identifies from the National Congregations Surveys in 1998 and 2006-7 that there was a big growth in the use of technology by congregations. (*The NCS 2012 data is not yet available*)[12]

> 'The number of congregations with websites increased from
> 17 percent in 1998 to 44 percent in 2006-7. The number
> using email to communicate with members increased from
> 21percent to 59 percent. And the number using visual
> projection equipment in their main worship service increased
> from 12 percent to 27 percent. These are very large increases.
> … 32 percent [of church goers] are in congregations using
> visual projection equipment in their main worship service.'
> (Chaves, 2011, 59-60)

This trend though upward is not even across the technological, religious or social spectrum.

> 'When it comes to email and websites – but not PowerPoint
> slides in worship – synagogues and congregations associated
> with the more liberal Protestant denominations lead the way,
> and black churches lag behind. There is a digital divide even
> within the religious world. (Chaves, 2011, 60)

There are over 300,000 religious congregations in the USA according to Chaves, (2011, 55) therefore about 96,000 are using visual projection equipment in their main

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[12] In email correspondence as late as 23rd July 2013 with Shawna Anderson of Duke University Department of Sociology who analyse the data in the National Congregations Survey she states, "Our preliminary analysis of the 2012 data indicate that the use of visual projection equipment is now even more common, but we are not yet able to share exact figures."

service. This is a huge number in contrast with the UK and the main reason why there is a whole industry in the USA to support LMA in terms of products and services. LMA is big business with monthly on line publications like *Technology for Worship* and others providing editorial, educational and advertising opportunities. Many of the main suppliers of equipment have, 'houses of worship' divisions set up to specifically service the needs of church congregations. There are annual conferences and exhibitions to attend where everything needed for LMA and much more are available to see and to play with. The last three years have seen InfoCom and Technology for Worship venture in to Europe for a conference and exhibition but with very mixed results.

Much of the UK technology is still being designed and delivered by audio-visual companies who provide a service across a range of clients and so take time to build up knowledge of the needs of Churches. The leading software is either American produced, if specifically for worship, or a more business based package such as PowerPoint.™

Part of the design of this research was to see how the access that the USA based churches have to more specialised resources could inform the UK perspective.

One of the striking differences between the USA and UK use of LMA is in the role of the technicians. In the USA, Church C pays the two principal technicians for the work they do week by week. Church A currently doesn't pay the member who acts as their technician, but it has a strong desire to do so and has had an offer from another church member to fund such a post for one year. This is in line with other posts in the American church such as organist, pianist, music director, choir director, all of whom are paid positions. Unlike their counterparts in the UK, they do not see the role as simply just another job to be done and which may be one among many, as in both UK churches, but as a ministry in the church, and it is in that capacity the technicians at Church C are paid approximately £120.00 per week, for their time and skills. In more affluent larger churches in America there is often one, if not more, full-time technician staff members.

Part of the issues raised in this research is the apparent lack of support and recognition that is afforded those in the UK, and to some extent in the USA, of the

role they have in the worship. I will address this in the next chapter on theology and in more detail in the final chapter.

A second difference is in the attitude to purchasing and upgrading of the hardware necessary for LMA to be offered. The churches selected have all had the technology for about the same number of years. The churches in the USA have spent more developing this ministry over the years, in part because of grants from the charitable foundations of big businesses, to help do so, as with Church A, and because they have followed the cultural trends of the megachurch model as with Church C and seen it as a necessary investment. In the UK both Churches B and D made no special provision for the upgrading of equipment though they both produced detailed capital and revenue budgets each year and indicated in the interviews that where required money could be made available if it was necessary. In church B, the recent upgrade to the computer used for LMA in worship came from the widow of a member who had died and recently purchased the computer and for which she had no need. In the USA the churches there appears to be a greater emphasis on, 'the arts' and Chaves in reporting the first findings of the National Congregations Survey in 1998 states,

> 'No one will be surprised at the centrality of worship and
> religious education to congregational life. Although it might
> be more surprising, the evidence at hand leaves little doubt
> that artistic activities are far more important to congregations
> than even political or social services.' (Chaves, 2004, 201)

The fact that singing, drama and other presentational art finds expression in the church would support the attitude of the two American churches that they should invest in this technology as it both services the need of worship and promotes a greater artistic endeavour.

The UK churches studied have a more team based approach to using LMA than their USA counterparts, with both the research churches having a number of volunteer technicians available to them. This team approach does extend to the ministers or leaders of worship who will often prepare significant elements of the material used week by week themselves and pass this to the technicians to integrate in to the materials they have produced. This has both its benefits in terms of the content of the material matching the need of the individual minister and its drawbacks when it is

prepared by someone other than the church's own minister and who has used different software or a different version of the software that the church has and which cannot be read by the church system. What is still noticeable though is the lack of any meaningful communication, collaboration or co-creation between the technicians and the ministers or leaders of worship in terms of a shared vision for the worship or its contents. This is further exacerbated when the attitude of the technician is more of a functional role of enabler. In these circumstances when errors occur through a lack of knowledge of the material by the technician or a miscue by the leader of worship, it is often a source of greater tension and erodes the confidence of the minister or worship leader in the technical support.

The USA churches studied have a more delineated approach with the technicians working more independently of the worship leaders. The worship leaders may identify materials to be used or provide text files of materials to be formatted for use in worship and so leave more to the technician to design and provide. In church A the paid musical director is responsible for ensuring the words to hymns etcetera are available to the technician for inclusion in the worship material being prepared and that the right number of verses and repeats of choruses are in the file.

Attracting and retaining members and regular worshippers to the church is important on both sides of the Atlantic but perhaps more so in the USA than the UK, particularly when the church income and payment of salaries and stipends is derived from the week by week giving of those in worship. The USA churches are very conscious of numbers in attendance as income from pledged and unpledged giving by those in worship has a significant effect for the various ministries of the church. The same could be said for the UK churches in this research though I was not able to detect the same concerns as I observed and heard about in the USA. For one member at church A, the use of LMA in worship was seen as a positive attraction for some in the congregation, particularly the younger generation. He felt sure that given a choice young people would rather be in a church with LMA rather than one that did not make use of it in worship.

It has simply not been possible in this work to fully report all the details of the observations and recordings made of the interviews. This thesis reports the main

themes and elements that have come from the analysis of the data. I am confident that over time further work may be possible from the data gathered and I would hope that it would continue to inform my own development as a minister and be made available to others through articles in academic journals.

In the following chapter I will examine the theology of worship and the application of technology as an aid to the increased participation in the liturgical sense of that word.

Chapter 4: Towards A Theology of Technology and its Role of increasing Participation in Worship

4.1 Introduction

What is behind the statement made by the congregant at Church B when speaking about the use of LMA in worship when s/he states?

> 'I was thinking that our worship would be impoverished
> significantly if we were without it now' (Church B)

Or a worship leader who notes,

> "I have always viewed it as an optional extra but it's become
> less optional and more extra all the time." (Church B)

In this chapter, I will present some theological underpinning and reflection to my analysis of what I believe is the main element of the effect LMA has in the worship I have studied and, I would suggest, in other churches where it is being used regularly. Through the application of the fourth of McLuhan's laws we have seen that when the use of LMA in worship fails to produce the expected results either through a mistake, being overused, or through the lack of information about what is required in the service itself, or not understanding the capability and operation of the production equipment, the congregation becomes aware of the presence of the technology in worship in a very real way for what it is. As I detailed in the previous chapter, the response is initially emotional and perhaps can be understood in terms of the impact it has on self-esteem. The practical result of this in terms of worship is that both the individual and the worshipping community as a whole undergo a change in their level of engagement with the worship, in other words, their level of participation in the liturgy is very significantly changed in that moment. Participation in this context is far more than just standing to sing or bowing their heads to pray, as I shall set out in the following sections, the use of LMA is one way to mediate the message of the church to those present or watching from outside the sanctuary, the degree to which we are affected by the 'failure' of LMA to transmit or support the message is related to the degree of 'participation' felt in the worship itself.

4.2   Worship and Participation

Any consideration of how worship is undertaken must begin with the theological
understandings. To start anywhere else is to risk serious diminution of the integrity
of worship.

> 'Worship is the faithful human response to the revelation of
> God's being, character, beneficence and will. …. Worship is
> participation in the life of God in the mode appropriate to the
> created being." (Bradshaw, 2002, 455)

Churches who ask will often find people who are creatively gifted in using all forms
of LMA in worship. In the Postmodern world where the primary cultural currency is
image based, there is great prestige and wealth to be had for those who create,
manipulate and display visual art. Those who offer to work in this area of the Church
need to understand it as a ministry offered to God in worship as part of the corporate
expression of the Priesthood of all Believers, and as an aid to others to participate in
the worship.

Nowhere does the Bible actually define worship, yet the key biblical terms used in
the context of worship point to a number of central ideas. These concepts include
reverence, homage and service. In the Old Testament there are several descriptions
of 'how' to worship in terms of rituals and 'where' in terms of the sanctuary,
however it is constructed, that worship may take place. The rituals are prescribed by
God and are carried out by those chosen and ordained to the priesthood. Such activity
is only honouring God if it is followed by obedience and praise in every aspect of the
life of the individual and the community itself. In the New Testament the birth, life,
death and resurrection of Jesus, the High Priest of the new covenant replaces the old
cultic worship of the temple which was at the heart of approaching God. Jesus
provides the means whereby all can worship, 'in spirit and truth,' and this will find
its completion in the unending worship of the new creation.

Worship in New Testament, (verb *latreuein)* points to its origins in servitude to a
master and from which we still have the common term 'service' to describe an act of
worship. It finds its English roots in the Anglo-Saxon *weorthcipe (worth-ship)* or
honour.

> 'Worship is prayer, especially public prayer, the honour
> expressed through praise, thanksgiving and
> acknowledgement given to God by believing communities in
> word, symbol and action.' (Hastings et al., 2000, 762)

In every Christian community that gathers to worship, those present seek to respond to the love of God as they further make God known to themselves and demonstrate the relationship they have with God through Christ and in the power of the Spirit to those both inside and outside the community through words and actions, what might be described as *leitourgia,* service rendered, often without charge or wage. The gathering of the people and the enactment of the rituals of a particular Church become a human response, a visible and outward demonstration of what Searle would argue is the 'sign-sacrament Church.'

Writing from a Roman Catholic post Vatican II viewpoint, Searle et al. trace the development of liturgy through the two liturgical movements to arrive at the conclusions in their book regarding the liturgy and participation which is defined in this way,

> '.. liturgy is a process by which we are taken up into
> something that transcends our individual lives and become
> involved in an enterprise that is far more than the sum of the
> efforts of the individual participants. The act of joining
> oneself to a larger enterprise is called "participation."'(Searle
> et al., 2006, 15)

In arguing their thesis, Searle et al. based their work on the principle laid down by the post conciliar liturgical reform,

> 'Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to
> that full, conscious and active participation in the liturgical
> celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the
> liturgy.' (1963, 14)

Though not specifically defined, the Vatican II document points to what it considers 'active participation' to be,

> 'By way of promoting active participation, the people should
> be encouraged to take part by means of acclamations,
> responses, psalmody antiphons and songs, as well as gestures
> and bodily attitudes. And at the proper times all should

observe a reverent silence.'(The Second Vatican Council,
1963, 30)

It is not simply the fact that people stand or sit to sing, or share in responsive
readings that brings about participation, but that these actions and responses are more
than just ritualistic performance, they are participation in what Searle identifies as,
'the church-as-sacrament' which he argues,

> 'is encountered most strikingly when the faithful assemble
> for the celebration of the liturgy… and that full conscious and
> active participation occurs when we so engage in the ritual
> celebration that as to become engaged in the divine, invisible
> life of the world-to-come.' (Searle et al., 2006, 17)

Rather than the semioticians more bi-directional understanding of signifier and sign,
the Catholic understanding, Searle suggests, points to three dimensions. The
sacramentum tantum is the signifier on its own, the human action taken as a whole.
Through sharing in the various different ways in an act of worship the congregant
participates in the rite. The *res et sacramentum* is what is signified by the rite, but
which in turn points to something more than itself. The rite of ordination is a
signifier; it signifies that someone who was not a minister is now a minister. The
signifier both identifies what is happening and brings it about, a new ecclesial reality
with unique rights and responsibilities specifically related to the mission of the
Church. The *res tantum* is what being ordained ultimately means, what the sign
ultimately points to our union with God through sanctifying grace and the gift of the
Holy Spirit. Participation at this level requires the individual to be open to the gift of
God's own self and to participate in the very life of God, allowing the love that is of
God and from God to fill the heart and mind.

Searle argues that these three elements of the sacrament require different levels of
participation with each being constrained by the relationship at the particular level.
He argues that 'participation' is greater than getting a congregation to appear more
involved, it is participating in the rite, according to one's role, in such a way as to be
participating in the priestly work of Christ on behalf of the world and so participating
in the Trinitarian life of God as a human being.

This complete, 'active participation' is perhaps what the Psalmist was seeking to
convey in phrases like,

> 'O my soul, *come,* praise the Eternal
>   with all that is in me—*body, emotions, mind, and will—*
> *every part of who I am*— praise His holy name.' Ps 103:1,
> The Voice Translation (Nelson, 2011) *Emphasis added*

The Hebrew *nephesh* which is translated 'soul' does not really have a suitable
equivalent English word and according to Nelson's dictionary refers to,

> 'the inner person' or 'what one is to oneself' (Unger and
> White, 1980, 388)

For the Psalmist our worship is something that engages our whole being body,
emotions, mind and will. *The New Dictionary of Theology* seems clear when it states,

> 'Mind as well as emotions, physique as well as feelings are to
> combine in God's praise.'(Ferguson et al., 1988, 731)

Emotional worship should not replace intellectual content but be complementary to
it. The legacy of the Enlightenment is still around today for many and our culture,
though open to more expressions of an emotional nature, still wants to analyse and
dissect and rationalise. It cannot be argued that the Church has grown over the years
through the benefits brought by the Enlightenment, yet if rationality alone were the
test of the Church's life then the life of the Spirit would suffer and vice versa.
Worship can be a challenge to this aspect of our culture as it seeks to convey the
insufficiency of a purely rational approach by highlighting the inscrutability and
transcendence of God. Expressive worship points to the intensity and joy of being
devoted to God in both heart and mind. Worship that touches the emotions is also
one way of nurturing humility. For many, the vulnerability that is coupled with
showing emotions is a barrier, for they see such activity as losing control over their
life. Worship that is expressive and so nurtures the emotions helps people to release
their pride while at the same time remaining flexible in the Spirit. Where worship is
expressive, there is often a greater sense of fellowship, which in turn can help create
a climate for evangelism and foster a greater sense of commitment. Although people
may look for opportunities to engage emotionally in worship, they are often
intimidated to do so. It is important therefore to remember why we should create acts

of worship that appeal to the emotional side of humanity. I believe that God desires
that we engage our emotions, but not for their own sake, worship leaders and
technicians needs to prepare material that graciously encourages participation in its
fullest sense. It may mean on occasions explaining why a particular action or
imagery has been chosen. Appropriate biblical rationale may need to be shared to
support or encourage people to become more engaged in the worship. Yet that alone
may not be enough and so even though you may invite people and explain why, there
may still be some who are anxious, fearful or self-conscious and so careful and
reassuring verbal instructions may need to be given as well as gracious opt-outs.
Congregations are not gathered for only an intellectual encounter, or as observers,
they do participate with their minds but also with their emotions.

Hoon in *Twenty Centuries of Christian Worship* argues that,

> 'Worship needs to go beyond the verbal and engage the
> whole person in the praise of God. It is not commonly
> understood that we function as a multisensory and
> multiphasic creature, and that worship must therefore be
> multisensory and multiphasic—that its forms must engage
> the body, the imagination, and the emotions as well as the
> reason, and at the same time take into account something of
> the dynamics of the human subconscious as well as conscious
> life.' (Webber, 1994, Vol 2: 403)

The use of LMA seeks to address something of the multisensory and multiphasic
needs set out in Hoon's article and goes a long way to counter the boredom which he
calls the curse of free-church when our whole being is not met in worship. This is
what is what I believe is behind the comments shared by the participants of the study
when they say of LMA in worship.

> "[LMA] frees up people's bodies to be able to worship the
> way they want to do. If they want to worship with a hymn
> book in their hand they still can. If they want to worship with
> their hands in the air it's possible, and anything in between."
> (Church D)

> "Anytime you add an extra sense, it makes understanding,
> makes retention and comprehension a little better and I like
> that." (Church A)

> "The use of imagery during the anthem I find very helpful, or
> the use of images during prayers… it adds another
> dimensions which sometimes listening to a spoken word is
> hard to do." (Church B)

I would contend that both the relational sacramental approach and the more emotional approach to worship need to be held in tension particularly in the content of corporate worship.

In general terms, the worship witnessed at the churches in this study had the similar four fold liturgical structure that would be typical of many of the acts of worship attended in the Western Protestant tradition and perhaps all Christian worship. The elements of 'gathering and approach,' of 'hearing the Word,' of 'remembering and responding through the Spirit of God,' and of 'looking forward with anticipation to what is to be,' what liturgists would term synaxis, anamnesis, epiclesis and prolepsis. These four structural foundations support the six main elements of adoration, confession, proclamation, confession of faith, intercession and expectation. All of which could be presented in spoken word or song, with or without some form of ritual gesture. One of the features that differentiates the churches in this study from other church services is the degree to which a more creative, contextually and culturally appropriate approach through the use of LMA has been taken to help those present engage with the liturgy and so have a greater sense of active participation in the worship.

Such participation and engagement are central to the doctrine of the Priesthood of all Believers. That is not to say that all Christians are to be preachers, or preside at communion, but rather that the main focus of this doctrine is to do with election and holiness. It speaks to the whole Church of God rather than the specific rights and privileges of individual Christians. Speaking about the classic proof text of 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10 Erickson says,

> 'It says nothing about who may or may not exercise priestly
> rights and functions within the church. In fact, the whole
> thrust of the passage directs the church as a corporate entity
> outward to the world to witness to the gospel. ….. it says that
> the church is called to be a universal priest*hood*.' (Erickson,
> 1989, 127-128) *Emphasis in the original.*

This missionary and collective view of priesthood is an extension of what St Paul teaches regarding the differing gifts of individuals. According to Paul's teaching there are different gifts but one Spirit and it is this Spirit that distributes and uses these gifts in various people. In the liturgical gathering of the Church roles are apportioned according to gifts. The assigning of liturgical roles is an ancient tradition. Clement's *First Letter* (41:1) AD96, cited in Cross says, each should serve in his or her own rank,

> 'We must not transgress the rules laid down for our ministry,
> but must perform it reverently.' (Cross, 1960, 62)

The role of lay people in leadership of worship is an expression or demonstration of the community's 'priesthood' as it acknowledges the diversity of the gifts and sets people aside for these acts of liturgical leadership. In exercising this leadership a particular individual's understanding of worship grows and often when they return to the body of the congregation having served in a role, their participation is deepened.

4.3   Mediation

Drawing on the work of Williams (Williams, 1976), Ward identifies that mediation refers to the old understanding of the action of an intermediary and that perception can be extended to the technology that aids communication.

> 'Media of all kinds act as intermediaries, for instance the
> postcard or popular song are both intermediaries, as are
> newspapers, television and the internet.' (Ward, 2008, 107)

Given this definition, all who are engaged in the production of media are capable of shaping communication. To provide text and images for an act of worship demands that a number of people are involved in both the service event itself and the wider 'production' of the materials. In larger churches with 'creative arts teams' this can be a number of people. In smaller churches it may only be one or two that are directly involved in the production, but others may have been involved in providing logos, typeface style guides etc. which may or may not be known to the technician undertaking the work.

Mediation also takes place through the work of the worship leader.

> 'mediation is found in more traditional forms of
> communication in the Church such as preaching, the
> construction of liturgies,' (Ward, 2008, 108)

Within the Free Church settings I observed, the churches had a fairly set overall worship liturgy within the scope of being able to change the elements of worship if required. The worship leaders in the churches did make changes to the elements as they needed to in the context of a particular act of worship. Sometimes these changes were communicated well, at other times it was the source of some of the issues that brought about the failure of the LMA to transmit the desired outcome to the congregation gathered for worship. Transmission here refers to wider dissemination of the representation, it brings attention to how the various, 'texts' are communicated through mediation. The medium of transmission is both an enabler and an inhibitor to the message being transmitted as the medium shapes the way the message is both produced and received by the consumer, in this study the congregation. The medium of LMA at the centre of this study has and continues to evolve so allowing the skilled communicator to maximise the capacity to convey the message and all that can engender in the congregation. The early days of PowerPoint, ™ with its very linear progression, did not easily lend itself to the spontaneity demanded by some of the music led worship ministries who wanted to jump back to previous verses etc. New versions of PowerPoint are better in this respect but it has given way to software that is more suited to meeting these needs and more. So the message is 'transmitted' by a medium that is now more suited to the task and as such is less of an inhibitor.

Ward also reminds us that this concept of transmission also serves to animate the theological expression being communicated. Animation being,

> 'the way that through mediation the expression is set in
> motion… it is quickened and brought to life' (Ward, 2008,
> 110)

Such mediation of the gospel, when carried out in the corporate act of worship within a church is both spiritual and cultural. Through it, those who are involved in the production of materials also have as a significant factor the social relationships they share. As worship leader and technician collaborate, or the technician sources

materials from within the membership of the church, so the mediation within the social relationships adds to the 'feel' of the materials being offered. As Ward notes,

> 'The presence of the Spirit in the Church is animated in and through the mediation of social relationships.' (Ward, 2008, 111)

I agree with Ward when he states that,

> 'Both mediation and participation imply that there is a significant place for human agency in the circulation of 'theology', but this action does not construct, instruct or necessitate encounter with God. Mediation becomes a transforming encounter as it is made so by the Spirit of freedom.' (Ward, 2008, 112)

As worship leaders, technicians or members of the congregation we need to remember that we do not summon the divine presence it is already present through the Spirit of God and it is not by our clever design that lives truly touched and changed.

This theme is taken up by Taylor who argues that our attendance at weekly service helps form us to be the Christian that we are and so we must be attentive to what is being provided in our corporate worship as a means to help our growing in faith. In his article which makes the case for the use of art in worship, Taylor asks,

> 'What if we saw the arts as essential, rather than optional to the Spirit's work of forming us in the image of Christ when we gather as a corporate body?'(Taylor, 2012, 41)

Taylor argues for art in worship as another form of communication, he supports Dyrness who recognises that purely verbal communication, whilst important, is not the only way for today's culture.

We need to acknowledge the inspiration of the Holy Spirit as a participant both in the creation and the interpretation of any visuals inside and outside the Church. The Spirit is present in the imaginative task of re-creating something that more often than not is received visually, the meaning and association drawn from the memory of what has been previously received by the visual artist. This is perhaps more so with an artist or technician who is a person of faith. The faith and commitment they have

are dimensions that inform the work they produce whether it will bear witness to the gospel, emphasise a form of personal expression or reflect an understanding of the human condition in creation. The inspiration of the Holy Spirit in designs that interpret and re-create meaning, whatever the medium, is a dimension of the making of the work. (For further discussion see (Sherry, 1992, 100 ff)).

Some theologians have pointed to how the arts are one way that humans participate in the redeeming work of God. Gunton says,

> 'All true art, and certainly not just religious art or "Christian"
> art, is therefore the gift of the creator Spirit as he enables in
> the present anticipations of the perfection that is to come at
> the end of the age. It is redemptive in the sense that it is an
> activity which enables the creation to reach towards
> perfection that is its destiny. And it enables us to articulate
> the criterion for an ethic of creation: action for glory of God.
> (Gunton, 1998, 234)

However a word of caution is required. This language may suggest that there is a human contribution in the act of redemption, this is never the case, it is God's gift through Christ in the power of the Spirit. Secondly, what is 'true art' that is gifted by the Spirit? Is it not the case that any art that speaks to the receiver of the work may give an opportunity for the Spirit of God to commune with the person, particularly if the art work alone is not the focus of the encounter but the meeting with God is. Speaking in this way, the contribution of the arts can be used to serve the purpose of God by becoming opportunities for His participation in the life of the world.

4.4   Images in the Homiletical Context

Cottin in Theissen (Theissen, 1994, 253-270) critiques the work of Schwebel and his theory of visual preaching and offers an approach that seeks to find a middle ground between the secular approach that says visual art has nothing to inform the Christian faith and the sacred image that has nothing to say to the secular world. This approach he identifies as the 'confessional character' of the image. He then provides five main arguments for the use of images in worship.

First is the hermeneutical reason. In the world of mass communication the Bible must be interpreted in the present context. Visual communication can be regarded as one of the primary elements of media communication and the Church should not

ignore it. Secondly, the Church has long recognised the roles of images in teaching children. What is seen is often easily remembered. Reception theory highlights that memory is not only to do with repetition but also the personal recreation of what is being committed to memory and a person's imagination is used. Thirdly, as was noted by many participants in the study,

> "We have music we have you know the spoken word we also
> have visual and to leave it out would be choosing not to use a
> tool that was at our disposal." (Church A)

> "I love it, we are such a visually stimulated society today that
> you know I think it caters, it allows thinks to be put visually
> that maybe you have in your own head." (Church A)

We live in a world where non-verbal communication is seen as being increasingly effective as we understand more about how it works. The receiver is not passive and s/he reconstructs what is received. Through the judicious use of images preaching, for example, can become more participatory for the congregation. The fourth argument is more anthropological. Our humanity demands that we think in images, and at least for the majority, the images we attach to encode memory aid imagination in the receiver. The fifth argument termed kerygmatic, is related to the nature of the gospel and its proclamation.

This is the core of Cottin's thesis and offers an argument for the image to function in the way the Protestant tradition understands preaching to do, a way to encounter God. He argues that the image of itself is not the theological thought because,

> 'The image always has a linguistic component in its
> signifying dimension and evangelical preaching cannot be
> replaced by aesthetic experience.' (Theissen, 1994, 269-270)

However, imagery is another form of human communication and as such it can have an indirect kerygmatic role.

> 'By the possibility which [the image] offers to be the place of
> aesthetic experience which totally draws our attention, and
> setting this alongside another source which is the biblical
> message, the image can contribute something more, not only
> existential, but also spiritual. It becomes Word when it stands
> at the conjunction of the two sources constitutive of the
> gospel message which are experience on the one hand, and

biblical text on the other. Then, but only then, and in keeping
with certain conditions which are those of visual preaching,
can one speak of a kerygmatic function of the image in the
homiletic context.'(Theissen, 1994, 270)

Cottin, drawing on semiotic and hermeneutic theories, argues that the image becomes
Word when it participates in an event in which the image as encapsulating the Word
of God, speaks to a person together with the biblical message as part of the
imaginative and cognitive dimension of that encounter. For LMA to have a value
there needs to be both the image and a biblical base. Cottin goes on in a further work,
Le regard et la Parole, (Cottin, 1994) to speak of faith, which he argues does not
come from seeing with our eyes, but rather as being able to create a new way of
seeing. The kerygma does not depend on the image but the proclamation of the
gospel can create images which signify as Christ.

Lawrence, of the United Church of Christ in the USA, also sees the image as having
a particular ability when he states,

'The arts have an especially great power to represent not only
the ordinary in our experience of faith, but the very deepest
aspects of it. Sometimes these representations become so
powerful they not only represent, that is point to something
beyond themselves, but they also become joined with that for
which they stand. When this happens, they may take on such
a power in a person's experience or point of view that they
are called symbols. Thus, they not only point beyond
themselves to something else, they *contain* some essential
element of what is represented within themselves. The
representor (the form doing the representing) *fuses* with what
is being represented… The divine is present in the symbol.'
(Lawrence, 1994, 10-11) *Emphasis in the original.*

It may be that Lawrence, from his Protestant background is speaking metaphorically,
as this does appear to have the strong ontological component that was identified by
Searle.

In 600 CE Serenus received the advice of Gregory the Great that images were to be
read and not adored. This does not mean that images can ever substitute for Scripture
as perhaps the ideas behind *Biblia paupernum,* the Bible for the illiterate might
suggest, but that images are another means by which the Bible continues to be
interpreted and received. The experience of the participant at Church B with the

Holman Hunt, Light of the world picture is a good example. Hunt set out his thinking and iconography in this way,

> 'The closed door was the obstinately shut mind, the weeds the cumber of daily neglect, the accumulated hindrances of sloth; the orchard the garden of delectable fruit for the dainty feast of the soul. The music of the still small voice was the summons to the sluggard to awaken and become a zealous labourer under the Divine Master; the bat flitting about only in darkness was a natural symbol of ignorance; the kingly and priestly dress of Christ, the sign of His reign over the body and the soul, to them who could give their allegiance to Him and acknowledge God's overrule. In making it a night scene, lit mainly by the lantern carried by Christ, I had followed metaphorical explanation in the Psalms, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,' with also the accordant allusions by St. Paul to the sleeping soul, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand." (Hunt, 1914, 350-351)

Hunt was emphatic that the iconography of the painting,

> "Was not based upon ecclesiastical or archaic symbolism, but derived from obvious reflectiveness." (Hunt, 1914, 350)

Hunt would go on to say his symbols,

> 'Were of natural figures such as language had originally employed to express transcendental ideas'(Hunt, 1914, 350)

Hunt believed that the painting created its symbolic language in the same way that humanity had formed language to express spiritual and abstract concepts. He thought that since the symbolism came from what Hunt understood to be essential habits of the mind, the meaning behind the painting would be fully understood by anyone because such 'natural' symbolism does not need a detailed understanding of iconographic traditions and concepts. Hunt records that he worked,

> 'with no confidence,'(Hunt, 1914, 351)

that anyone else would find the symbols interesting but the fact that the painting has,

> 'in the main been interpreted truly,'(Hunt, 1914, 351)

without further assistance from him, convinced Hunt that he had been successful. Yet without the knowledge of the texts from Revelation 3:20[13], Psalm 119:105[14] and Romans 13:12[15], that which the artists conceived cannot be fully realised in the receiver of the art and furthermore, an encounter with God will not be achieved without the Spirit being active in the event. Within the Protestant tradition, which this study has focused on and in particular in the worship I observed, the images used complemented the reading and expounding of the word of God and never competed against these central acts of the Church yet always with the recognition that the Spirit of God interprets in the process of reception.

4.5   Adopt or Adapt?

> We seek variety, not for its own sake or because we want to
> put on a good show, but because we serve a God of infinite
> variety. We want to catch a glimpse of his face and his
> character from every possible angle. Each new revelation of
> truth and beauty and every expression of love and concern
> help us to understand him more. (Hayford et al., 1990, 33)

LMA technology should work to enhance and not detract from the worship we give; it should not be an end in itself or be the focus of the worship but rather should complement or augment the liturgy which has been adopted by the various traditions. Even the 'emerging' or 'fresh expression' churches that are often significant users of LMA, acknowledge the dangers that inappropriate or over use can bring, though they too need to be wary of the next generation of visual projection, a point I shall return to in the final chapter.

The latter half of the twentieth century saw the decline of the age of print in favour of the rise of the age of image. The Church has sought to reflect that change but can it do so without, as Marva J Dawn would say, 'dumbing down' the substance of the faith? For Postman, television is just the latest in a string of related technology that he traces back to the wireless telegraph, which he says robbed us of relevance, power

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[13] 'Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.' (NIV translation)
[14] 'Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.' (NIV translation)
[15] 'The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.'(NIV translation)

and coherence (Postman, 2006, 65- 67)[16] as it gave legitimacy to the idea of context
free information i.e. that information need not be tied to function in any social or
political sense. The current plethora of 'news,' documentaries and 'current affairs'
programmes testify to the barrage of 'facts' that we consume today, yet they have
become increasingly fragmentary, taken out of context and at times almost
incoherent. Given that image has replaced language as the primary means of
constructing, understanding and testing reality, the focus on image has,

> 'Undermined traditional definitions of news, and, to a large
> extent, of reality itself.' (Postman, 2006, 76)

Society has therefore been overloaded with 'information' and 'facts' that is often
meaningless as it has no context. Games shows on TV and award winning board
games such as 'Trivial Pursuit' became the outlet for, and a reason to store up, these
bits of disconnected information and so create entertainment that appeals to our
emotions.

Campbell in her work with the internet and religion,(Campbell, 2010) draws on
Ferre's chapter from *Mediating Religion* (Mitchell and Marriage, 2003, 83-92) to
highlight the historical way that religious groups have conceived of the media as a
conduit, a mode of knowing or a social institution. Ferre in describing media as a
conduit is addressing the perception that some religious groups have of the
technology being neutral and can be used for good or evil. Media as a conduit is
often employed by those looking back in history to see the innovation and
development of technology by different communities to meet certain needs e.g.
(Landes, 1983) cited earlier in this research. Ferre also suggests that some groups see
media as a mode of knowing which is similar to McLuhan's, 'the medium is the
message.' The media technology is seen as having its own set of biases based on its
production process and history. Postman's lament over the decline of print media
would be an example of such an approach. The media is perceived as having the
ability to shape culture. McLuhan, Ellul, Schultze and Postman are all proponents of

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[16] Postman argues that the introduction of the telegraph made information a commodity that could be
bought or sold irrespective of its uses or meaning. The abundant flow of information had little or
nothing to do with those to whom it was addressed; that is with any social or intellectual context in
which their lives were embedded. It may have turned the world into what McLuhan described as a
global village, but it was one populated by strangers who knew nothing but the most superficial facts
about each other.

the argument that technology is not value neutral and simply a tool to accomplish religious goals. Working with Monsma, Clifford Christians puts forward the argument that technological objects are,

> 'Intertwined with their environments and loaded with the values of those that create and govern them which may be antithetical to religious views.' (Monsma, 1986, 31)

According to Campbell,

> 'The work of scholars such as Schultze and Christians provided a key challenge to the pronounced techno-optimism in society and even among some religious groups.' (Campbell, 2010, 47)

Ferre offers a middle ground between the rejection of media as a deceptive mode of knowing and the embracing way of media as a simple conduit. He identifies that religious groups can choose to engage with media as a social institution. This requires religious groups to be both technologically savvy and be able to identify the long term implications of their decisions. The emphasis that Ferre places on the human centred approach rather than the technology centred is something that would bear greater engagement and is very close to the social construction of technology discourse about the nature and study of technology. This is the basis of Campbell's work on developing the social shaping of technology research to one she identifies as religious-social shaping of technology. She argues that,

> 'Religious communities are unique in their negotiations with media due to the moral economies of these groups, and the historical and cultural settings in which they find themselves.' (Campbell, 2010, 58)

Campbell argues that technology is shaped by the setting in which it is used and by the agents who use it. In this research I have sought to examine the setting in which the technology is being used and the users themselves, an approach that is in line with Campbell's, 'religious social shaping of technology'. The recognition of worship leaders, congregants and technicians as distinct 'actors' within the user community who are required to negotiate the use of LMA from within the moral and theological codes of practice of their churches is what sets this analytical framework apart from the Social Shaping of Technology. It recognises the theological context

for the justification of the use of a particular technology and where necessary
monitors and controls the group's use of a particular technology in very deliberate
ways.

LMA is often said to just appeal to our emotions in worship. LMA can be used to
spark creative imagination and so help people to engage with God in different and
diverse ways. But the Old Testament reminds us we should ensure there are
safeguards in place. We need to ensure that what is done in worship is not for the
wrong reasons or in such a way as to cause harm or offence that may be damaging to
those attending the services. It is right in some cases to take the communication
technologies of a particular culture and bring them to the service of God in worship.
PowerPoint™ and more recently Prezi™ have been successfully used in education
and business for a number of years. However the Church should not simply 'adopt'
the practices of education or business but it should, as Campbell would argue, work
to 'adapt' the technology to use in the Church. In this way the Church transforms the
technology to be an instrument of and for God.

If churches are debating these points and then making informed choices, it could be
said that they are taking a more responsible attitude to the technological advances,
however, there is little evidence of that having taken place and where consultants are
being used these issues almost never form part of the consultative process. For the
churches in this research, Church A had a projector and screen gifted to it after a
particular, 'Graduation Sunday' some ten years ago had used the technology and it
had been well received. Church B had the equipment installed as part of the
refurbishment of the church premises about 8 years ago, initially to make it more
attractive to external clients to use the building for conferences and meetings, but
was then introduced into worship and not without some complaints. Church C as a
large and growing congregation modelled on the megachurch, determined that it
needed the technology and staff to operate it, as that was the way that successful
'church' was being done. Church D, in seeking to be more relevant to today's world,
removed the pews from the church and put in comfortable chairs and carpet and
added the technology to give good sound and LMA. Through the interviews
undertaken as part of this research it seems clear that no real discussion or debate
was had as to what should be used and for what purpose. With the exception of

Church A, who had the technical knowledge in house, the other churches employed audio visual companies to specify and install the equipment. As such the equipment and supporting software was that typically provided to education and businesses, though in the case of church B and D they did acquire 'Songpro'™ software which was designed for worship situations. Until this research required people within these churches to share in interviews about the use of LMA in their church, no formal appraisals had taken place with the churches about how and why they were using LMA. The implementation had come through the appropriate committee and governance structures which is in line with Cambell's assertion that,

> 'Again and again it has been shown that religious authority
> plays an important role in religious community's negotiation
> with new media.' (Campbell, 2010, 185)

Yet there has been little if any formal discussions within the churches studied as to what may or may not be acceptable use of LMA.

The denominations too have had little engagement with the implications of this technology. The Methodist Church website has five short paragraphs on image projection[17] and in 2003 produced a ten page booklet called, 'Using Technology in Worship' authored by Mark Pengelly which sought to help with selection of equipment and some of the issues around copyright.

Unlike Campbell's study of the kosher cell phone, (Campbell, 2010, 162-178) or Umble's work (Umble, 1996) with the Mennonite and Amish community's use of cell phone technology, or the work of numerous other companies to produce goods that meet the specific needs of Islamic and Orthodox Jewish religious practices, the use of LMA in Protestant worship is perhaps far less complicated. Yet it does present its challenges. If, as I shall posit in the final chapter, LMA can be seen to be more effective when it is reflective of the community in which it is set, what does that do for our understanding of the diversity of God's creation? If that which we see on the screen during worship in terms of ethnicity and gender or relationships reflects those who are already present in the religious community, then where do we celebrate, 'the other' that is in the community around the church or in society in

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[17] http://www.methodist.org.uk/ministers-and-office-holders/technology-and-church/image-projection

general? The power to make these specific pictorial choices is very often in the hands of a very few people within a worshipping community, in the case of Church A, it is mainly one person. How is the liturgy, 'work of the people' represented in this way? How does the community care for those who work to create the materials for worship?

The work of the LMA technicians in a church has often been compared to that of the organist or other musician in a church. I would agree that both require a specialist skill set in order to perform the task they do in church; they need to be technically proficient in their respective ways. Both require a degree of sensitivity to the needs of worship and to be adaptable in the worship setting to changes that may be required in a particular service. Yet, the organist having either been given the hymn selection or chosen it to fit the theme of the service then has the music which is already written available to them. The technician may call up the hymn words from a database for inclusion in the service, but he or she spends a significant amount of time selecting the visual material that will be used to support the hymns, if appropriate, and the rest of the worship. I concede that in some circumstances the musician is required to improvise or play incidental music which may or may not be 'scripted' and so be creative in that way, but I would argue that the pressure that is often felt by those who are charged with creating something new week by week is both significant and challenging. Our theological understanding must extend beyond the technology to the 'whole system' that is needed for the production of LMA. It is how the Church deals with the human 'mistakes' or 'failures' of the LMA system to deliver that is important, for these I believe to be reflections of our own fallen state. Our theology of LMA technology in these circumstances must include compassion for, and a readiness to forgive, the errors of those, who through their own endeavour, seek to serve the wider religious community.

The transforming nature and power of God is at the heart of the Gospel and not technology. Of itself technology will never be the salvation of the Church. Technology comes at great cost both in terms of development and then the on-going commitment to maintain and further develop it to keep up to date.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

5.1 Methodology

The reflexive element of the methodology has ensured a constant review of both the approach to, and the practical outworking of this research. I am confident that the basic method of the research has proved satisfactory and it would work well in other church settings if it were to be applied. There were some revisions to the questions used which were incorporated in the research as it progressed, but as has been mentioned previously in this work, I would include a greater exploration of the self-esteem issues as they pertain to the various constituent groups in any research that sought to continue the examination of this issue. I will expand more on this later in the chapter.

The resurgence of academic interest in McLuhan's work over the recent years with the burgeoning communications technologies like the Internet and social media networks is testimony to the fact that perhaps his ideas were a little more prophetic than first seen. Acknowledging the debate that can be had about how best to describe the 'Laws of Media,' and the fact that no one has yet added to his work in terms of a fifth Law, I believe there remains a significant pedagogical value in the Laws of Media, not just in researching LMA, but indeed in examining how all technology is impacting our lives. It is true that it is not possible to predict precisely what the particular technology will 'flip' into if pressed too far when considered in isolation. Even though he was in many ways a media determinist, a label he constantly resisted as he argued he was not looking to predict the future direction of technology, McLuhan never produced any theories as to how media operated; he offered no single direction in which he saw technology moving. The Four Laws do not form a theory with the predictions that theories inevitably imply; rather, as with, 'the medium is the message,' or 'the rear view mirror' they provide us with insights. Insights can, of course, lead to some predictions; but unless they are all connected in some larger theory, there is no reason to assume that any such predictions will indicate a particular direction. Borgmann offers some assistance here in that he examines the 'system' to discover the patterns in the use of 'devices' that reveal behaviours which can then be extrapolated. Comparisons with comparable technologies can also provide reasonable checks and balances on the extent of any

outcome and offer insight through past transitions that have taken place as a
technology has been implemented and adopted by society as a whole or in part.

In contradiction to McLuhan, I agree with Levinson (Levinson, 1979; Levinson,
1988, 225-226) that human beings are in still in charge of technology with the ability
to apply a conscious rationality, as demonstrated in the application of what Levinson
terms 'remedial media.' Remedial media is that technology which counters or
modifies some of the effects of the application of another technology e.g. the
application first of the video recorder and now simultaneous multiple channel
'digital' recording provides time shifting of the linear mode of television, which
itself is now moving to 'on demand' in the digital platforms. Furthermore, I do not
see technology generally, or LMA specifically, overwhelming our powers of choice
and selection. It may be that we become temporarily blinded as we look in the rear
view mirror, or mesmerized by the effects of technology, but we can look away from
the mirror to the road ahead. McLuhan's Laws do provide an opportunity to look
forward to the future, as Levinson puts it,

> 'Not a single, grand, unified future – not at all a species of
> determination that sees a definite way that the world must be
> – but a multiplicity, even a myriad, of futures from a myriad
> of technological possibilities, a kaleidoscope of futures in the
> multiple potentials of the media currently before us.'
> (Levinson, 2001, 186)

As Campbell reminds us, religious groups are in a position to 'negotiate' their
engagement with media from a different perspective and should do so. As with
Borgmann's 'system' approach I would want us to examine the use of LMA as a
complete system extending that to include the human element that is dynamic in the
technology. By doing so we honour the relationships that exist between God and the
various stakeholders in worship and the ministries of those called to serve the Church
in leading worship and providing the resources to assist in the worship. In being
faithful proponents of technology we need to seek a loyalty to God that tries to hear
an ethical judgement on our use of LMA and technology in general. Faithful
technology will not just assist in being fruitful, subduing, creating but will seek to go
into all the world and love your neighbour and your enemy, heal the sick, set the
captive free, comfort the lonely and welcome the stranger.

Our faithfulness to God should also govern our relationship with others. The faithful application of technology should not subordinate people to 'technique,' or reduce them to technical categories. It should express faithfulness to partners, neighbours, friends and fellow human beings. It will invite others to help define, rebuild the boundaries, discern and support good technological work.

The rest of this concluding chapter seeks to identify the ways in which LMA and those in church can best be served by the technology.

5.2 Key Elements of What LMA brings to Worship and Challenges it Presents?

This thesis has identified the use and growth of LMA in worship over the years. Today the relative low cost of new technical equipment and the 'gifts' of used computers and data projectors to church congregations make it attractive for churches to begin this type of presentation in their worship.

In general terms a screen or screens and projector(s) or display monitors are placed in the worship sanctuary in order that the congregation and those leading worship can see their output and follow their content. This research confirmed many of the previously identified uses for the screen are still regularly being used and highlighted some more (Koster, 2003; Crowley, 2006; Tilby, 2009) and others. They are as,

a. **A song or hymnbook** to display the words of sung material in the worship. In the churches I studied, none made provision to display musical notation as well as words though this technology is now available in software such as 'Sibelius.'™ which requires more technical knowledge to incorporate it into the worship and currently is only available in a format that is similar to PowerPoint ™ which restricts its use to a more 'linear' presentation unless verse order agreed in advance etcetera

b. **A Bible** to show the words of passages of scripture so that the congregation might follow along with the spoken voice which in all my observations accompanied the displayed text. The restriction of having only one version of the Bible on screen at a time, the software can have multiple versions but not simultaneously, was noted to be problematic for some particularly when the

version didn't match one available in the church or that the spelling was not the normal way for the country, particularly American spelling in the UK.

c. **A prayer book or worship book** to show liturgical texts for various parts of the liturgy requiring congregational responses. It was frustrating to see on a number of occasions that the full text of the liturgy was not displayed for the congregation to follow. More often than not the leader's part was truncated to opening and closing words of a litany as a means of alerting the congregation to their need to speak.

d. **A display or message board** to show upcoming events, impart information about church related activities. Some more creative examples of this type of use are akin to the 'Pearl & Dean' type advertising sequences that still are found in cinemas, or are done in a newscaster style with interviews and little 'clips' of the activities.

e. **A clock** some of the worship I observed made use of a five minute count-down to worship which took many forms in terms of content but consisted of a clock counting down from five minutes to zero accompanied by images or moving graphics.

f. **A telescope or magnifying glass** allowing those at the back of the church seating arrangements to see action and events taking place at the front of the church in greater detail than they can with their naked eye from the position they are in. In some buildings such as cathedrals with large columns etcetera, the screen may be the only way they can see anything of the action at the front of the church.

g. **A banner or similar liturgical device** that may give the congregation an indicator of the liturgical season through use of colour and content or to accompany a sacramental aspect of the worship in terms of baptism or communion.

h. **As a television** to depict various places around the world in support of charitable giving or partnerships between the local congregation and congregations being supported elsewhere in the world. To bring news and information that would be of relevance to the local congregation.

i. **A picture frame** particularly at pastoral services such as funerals where pictures of the deceased may be shown during the service or at weddings when the history of the couple is told in a visual form.

j. **A window on the world** to bring images that will aid meditation or reflection, illustrate bible passages, to provide textual and visual accompaniment to a range of types of prayer.

k. **An atlas** to bring various parts of the world to the local context, particular maps and images to support and contextualise biblical settings.

l. **A whiteboard/blackboard/flipchart** to provide textual and image support to the message or sermon and as a means of both structuring and summarising the content.

m. **A teleprompter or 'autocue'™** given the ability to show different material on a screen at the rear of the church or located near the speaker, it is possible to provide notes and scripts for the speaker that are not available to others. Thus helping the delivery of content without handheld notes or providing a form of words that can be delivered after careful consideration beforehand.

n. **A screen** that can show 'movie' clips or other materials sourced from film or television and new media sources such as 'YouTube'™ and other social media websites with which the congregation are asked to engage or are to illustrate a point being made.

The positive benefits that come from the regular use of LMA in worship include:

a. A reduction in the need for numerous sources of bound or unbound printed materials being available to the congregant to use or refer to during the worship service. As this research has identified in some churches the use of paper based resources is not removed altogether. The use of paper based note taking devices such as, 'fill in the blanks' or 'complete the three key points,' is still used as part engaging the congregation on a different level with another medium and different part of the brain.

b. It enables a wider source of material to draw upon for the worship, particularly with music, where printed texts would be impractical. Yet it can also mean that many liturgical elements and texts are taken out of context and used in ways which do not lend themselves to the original sense of the text. I was

present at a service in the North East Oecumenical Course, where the Covenant Prayer, a very significant Methodist prayer of rededication used annually in the Covenant Service or at times of renewal, was used as a Call to Worship for a gathering of the community with no words of preparation or explanation. This is perhaps an example of the technically competent student from another denomination not being fully aware of the 'liturgical' aspects of the content of the LMA used in worship. I will expand on this later in the chapter.

c. The screen can often promote what most people consider to be, 'better singing' and participation through not having to look down at the text in the hands all the time. Without a more scientific approach to measuring the amplitude of the singing it may be difficult to gauge how much difference there is, but the consensus appears to be it is louder. I would note though that in some of the churches I visited the screen is set very high so that people nearer the front can have their heads at an uncomfortable angle for quite a while which I think would be equally detrimental to singing and speaking.

d. It offers greater inclusion to those with visual impairment and for those with reading difficulties who struggle with the smaller printed text but can see the larger displayed text. It does not, however, help those who are blind or with a significant visual loss such that they cannot read the screen even with the larger type. Crowley in acknowledging this point indicates that,

> 'Services heavily dependent on visual reinforcement and video segments may put them at a disadvantage. Worship should ideally include a variety of communication arts, lest any worshipper be excluded from full participation.'
> (Crowley, 2007, 51)

e. It offers greater inclusion to those who are linguistically challenged or who do not have the native language as their first language. Immigrants and migrant workers who do not understand or speak the local language can easily benefit from having visual guidance as to what is going on. Different language translations of biblical or others texts can be displayed to aid inclusivity in the worship.

f. It aids those who by reason of the distance from the action of the worship may otherwise not be able to see the speaker or the actions being undertaken in the worship. As indicated earlier in this work, IMag was in use in three of the four the churches I researched and with the exception of its use with the children in Church B the other uses were not really necessary because of the size of the building.

g. It can aid a greater sensitivity to the sacramental elements of worship. See (Scanlan, 2005). The theologian Rahner identified that,

> 'The Christian of the future will be a mystic or he or she will not exist at all.' (Rahner, 1981, 149)

Christians need to develop a greater appreciation of the mystery that is all around them. This is the goal of much of what is undertaken to promote 'active participation' in the whole liturgy of the worship. It is more than just taking part it is being open to the transforming power of the Spirit of God through engagement with the worship.

h. It promotes a spirit of unity a sense of togetherness. This may be particularly true when there is only one source screen or display to look at. Church settings with two or more screens I think will not express the same sense of unity; particularly where they are large buildings with décor or equipment that does not lend itself to a single screen solution. Planning is being finalised for the visual presentation elements for the Methodist Conference 2013 which will take place in Westminster Methodist Central Hall, London, a large 3000 seat venue. After much debate and discussion the Conference has insisted that the organ pipes of the newly refurbished organ located centrally in the building, not be covered. This means that a multiple screen solution will be needed which will have the effect of the various congregations and delegates choosing which direction they look to see the texts needed and not having a single focus but rather several around the sanctuary. Doing the same thing in terms of singing etcetera and having a sense of unity is not equivalent, particularly when a congregation is divided as to which screen becomes the source of their text etcetera

    i.   A reflection of the culture and is synchronous with contemporary methods of presentation and teaching. There is nearly a whole generation of young people who have grown up in the Church that do not know anything but a screen or visual display unit of some sort as part of worship. A generation who as part of their education are subjected to 'interactive whiteboards,' 'computers' and 'social media concepts of networks of interconnectedness. What is 'the everyday norm' for them is simply reflected in the way the Church engages with them and the community around them. It is the language by which the present culture communicates and the Church has been challenged in every generation to find the language that best addresses the community it serves. It is compatible with a visually literate and image aware culture. The use of LMA can both overtly and subtly keep the significant theme of the worship in front of the congregation. It can highlight useful information and draw on everyday events to illustrate the Gospel to a community.

5.3 Negative Consequences That LMA Brings.

Services that regularly use LMA can create the expectation that the worship will always be different. In this context the difference extends beyond that of simple content which changes from week to week. It has been stated previously in this thesis that the worship I observed in each of the churches followed the same structure week by week within in location. The difference therefore is not in the overall liturgy but in the expectation that the 'media' itself presents. According to Tilby,

> 'Innovation and novelty, (key values derived from media)
> take precedence over familiarity and repetition.' (Tilby, 2009,
> 2)

There were many comments from church B regarding the increased attendance over the recent years at the Community Christmas carol services in December and the annual Act of Remembrance in November. The growth was attributed to a large part to the use of LMA. In particular at Christmas it was felt that special effort was made to ensure that the LMA was a central feature of the message offered. In 2012, although I was not able to be present in the actual service, I did observe some of the planning and the choice in particular that was made to use a YouTube sourced video called 'Bethlehemian Rhapsody,' based on the music of the very successful popular

song, 'Bohemian Rhapsody' by the band Queen[18]. The nativity story is told through puppetry, song and humour and was a central element to the message to be given in the worship. What was clear through the discussion was that the service had to be 'different' from a traditional nine lessons and carols service and that people coming would be 'expecting' to see something visual in this way and in the minds of the planning team 'better' than last year.

> "at Christmas we do a number of services, community carols,
> the church is packed lots of children and young people.
> We've used thoughtful but amusing clips from YouTube, I
> hope it's not entertainment, but actually it's about, ... if it has
> a message it's that the Church can be light but has a serious
> point as well and it's not dull and boring … through the years
> we have been using the video technology and people know
> they are going to have something." (Church B)

Of course these requirements could be applied in other places and worship contexts where good music or drama is offered through a church community. However, I believe the accessibility of high quality third party productions and the drive to be seen as 'relevant' in the culture makes this easier for LMA users. There is a real danger here that the technology, in perhaps the same way a choir, may be seen as being the focal point of the worship in that the service is consistently built around the LMA content. When that begins to happen the need to be innovative and or provide a novelty factor leads the choices being made and the 'liturgy' of the worship in the sense of the overall construction of the service becomes less familiar in terms of the liturgical elements of the worship identified in chapter four. This contrasts with the Act of Remembrance that occurs in November. Here Church B use the technology to, 'join' the national Act of Remembrance from Whitehall in London by showing the television broadcast coverage of the two minutes silence and the Queen laying her wreath in the worship. Here the strict requirements of meeting a scheduled event that is carefully timed means that the service has to be constructed to fit the timing of the broadcast technology. The 'liturgy' is well known to the majority of those attending the worship service, this from the minister,

> "People feel they are coming to gather locally but feel part of
> something nationally." (Church B)

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[18] See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pW1pbuyGlQ0

The sense of community both at local level and as part of the nation is very clearly a feature of the worship that technology can facilitate and builds upon the sense of corporate identity that this research has shown some participants feel is engendered through the use of LMA.

In memory terms the element of 'surprise' will be a factor in the worship experience that will contribute to the congregant's reaction to the service, particularly if they are a first time visitor. Of course it is not just the LMA, previous memories of such a time from earlier visits to a church, or the building itself, the sense of the occasion, of candles if used, the smell of incense, even taste of food or drinks related to the event can all be methods by which the associated memory trace is encoded and later decoded. The adaption of a popular song for the purposes of telling a biblical story is of itself not new; Charles Wesley and other great hymn writers took secular tunes of their day and wrote sacred words to them. Yet the juxtaposition of a well-known (to a certain generation of people), pop song with an almost child-like hand puppetry sequence, telling what would be hoped was a familiar bible story, is I believe sufficiently 'surprising' as to be remembered in positive terms long after the event. Such memories then become invoked when the next opportunity to attend a similar event is presented and the desire to attend is greater.

Atkins (Atkins, 2004) does sound a word of caution here though. He argues, and I would agree, that worship has the role of providing the connection with the whole of God's character he states that,

> 'the occasional worshipper is handicapped if the only
> remembrance of God for them is focussed on a narrow range
> of worship experiences. To attend worship in the context of a
> funeral, wedding and a Christmas pageant can hardly build
> up a relationship with a God who embraces the whole of
> creation and the whole of life.' (Atkins, 2004, 29)

We do need to ensure that our worship is more than any one element of the liturgy, one method of presentation, or one individual alone. The worship is 'enhanced' by the use of many senses and not just those that relate to the use of LMA, but to focus on them is to diminish the possibilities of engaging in something that fully explores the nature of God.

5.4   The Time Cost of LMA

In all of the churches studied the creation of LMA materials was almost exclusively shared by the technician(s) and the minister, Church A did have one service in which children had taken some photographs that were used in the worship. The technicians indicate that they spend between five and eight hour per week preparing materials for worship in a 'normal' week. Church A had this to say about the time cost when they started to use LMA.

> "[There was] an underestimation in the time, it is almost has to be that's their ministry that they're going to do this. And I think if you were warning people out front they should be prepared because everybody is going to get enthusiastic about getting all the gadgets .... but to make it all together, the real challenge is having that person who is dedicated to doing it."
> (Church A)

> "but it also gives somebody an opportunity too. Maybe they're not evangelisers or good speakers or something maybe they're really assisting, helping type people and that gives them a place to, you know, contribute." (Church A)

Others were equally clear about the time and skills needed and the ministry opportunity LMA offers.

> "I think it also could be a means by whereby we keep people with particular skills who may feel that they're underused in the church, erm, so we've got some people who have stayed around because they're on the techy rota erm, in a way that they might have drifted off otherwise." (Church D)

> "The other point to make is the skills required to operate the system aren't acquired overnight, it requires a team, it requires a lot of development and careful thought. We are erm fortunate in that respect that we have a team that's been together for many years, but it isn't easy for a church or other organisation to erm, to do this quickly so the skills have got to be acquired over a period." (Church B)

> "It does take lots of time and is a ministry" (Church B)

I know that the recognition of this work as a ministry, similar to that of the organist or choir director, is very important both in pastoral terms and in order to recognise the very large contribution to the worship in time and talents. All the technicians I

spoke with said they couldn't worship when they are 'working.' This is typical of the comments made.

> "I find it very difficult to worship when I am on the desk at
> the back, err as such really worship. There are times I can do
> it when I am on the sound desk because it's a bit different,
> but on Songpro™[19] very difficult personally." (Church D)

 Pastorally this requires sensitivity to the needs of the individuals. Church B operates a rota of technical support for the service that allows the principal technicians to be one month on and one month away from the control desk. Church A has only one technician, who with occasional holiday relief, prepares and runs the control desk every week for both services. The individual also serves as an elder of the church and so is periodically required to assist with communion; this role takes him away from the control desk and was the cause of one of the major technical difficulties that arose in a service for which he had to return to the desk at the rear of the sanctuary and then go to the front again. The event was the source of some of the comments by the congregation recorded earlier in this thesis. Running the technology is a full time role within the worship and should not be interrupted by other competing demands. Even with the possibility of remote control of the computer equipment, it still needs 100% attention to give the best possible results, so reducing the possibility of criticism from either the worship leader or members of the congregation.

5.5   Training Needs.

All of the technicians interviewed indicated that they had not received any formal product based training for the software or equipment that they were using. All had learnt to use the equipment by the, 'sitting next to nelly,' method so learning the mistakes their colleagues made as well as the way to operate the equipment. In terms of self-esteem and particularly in contingencies of self-worth terms this is used by the technicians as a form of 'self-handicapping' that presents a more positive self-esteem through being successful in spite of the lack of training. In Sociometer theory the claim to no formal training is a pre-empting of a possible negative reaction from a colleague that may come as a result of technical difficulties in the execution of

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[19] SongPro™ is the name of one of the worship software packages that is widely used throughout the country.

what may be poorly produced pre-programmed materials or mistakes in not operating the system correctly.

There needs to be a greater understanding of the roles of the respective ministries through a more intentional communication and collaboration between the ministers and technicians and other ministries such as music, than was clearly demonstrated in my research. The ministers may say they are communicating effectively, but the technicians disagree and the output used in worship would often indicate differently, particularly when there is a problem with the LMA. From a psychological self-esteem point of view and from a theological co-creation standpoint I would argue that the ministers of the church and the technicians need to work far more collegiately than demonstrated in my research.

I am grateful to my fellow researchers the peer review group at the 2012 DThM summer school for their helpful comments and to Rev Dr Calvin Samuel for his helpful reminder of the fact that within the Standing Orders of the Methodist Church in the UK there is this requirement of every ordained presbyter.

> '740 Connexion with the Conference. (1) (a) […] Presbyters admitted into Full Connexion or recognised and regarded as such enter into a covenant relationship with the Conference as laid down in Standing Order 700. In this relationship they accept a common discipline of stationing and collegially exercise pastoral responsibility for the Church on behalf of the Conference in the stations to which they are appointed, **working in collaboration with others**, in the courts of the Church and individually, who bear proper responsibilities in those situations.' CPD(The Methodist Church, 2012, 567) **emphasis added**.

I am sure that training institutions on both sides of the Atlantic teach and model this aspect of ministerial formation in their curriculum; however, I would argue that greater emphasis should, and could be placed on this vital component of ministry. This is not just in respect of LMA but in the wider work of ministry too, particularly with musicians and musical directors. In addition to any elective courses relating to psychology and ministry offered as part of a syllabus, the psychological aspect of understanding ourselves and others in relation to self-esteem and self-worth as one

way of understanding relationships should form part of the curriculum of the formation of a minister.

I am aware that there are a number of courses in the UK and USA that offer training on how to prepare materials for LMA in worship. Having attended one of these courses offered by the Family Friendly Churches organisation[20], the content focussed exclusively on the practical aspects of creating materials and operating the equipment. It is my intention that, post completion of this doctoral degree, I will offer a one day programme of training for minister's in active ministry and technical personnel that will address the technician's role in terms of a 'media ministry,' a term first coined by Wilson (Wilson, 1999), and will explore the communication and collaboration I believe necessary to support that ministry and enable it to flourish. I will also provide insights and offer some practical suggestions for engaging with the congregation in involving them in the creation of materials as well as exploring what active participation in the liturgy of the worship may mean for the congregation. I will expand on the additional training I believe is necessary for those in a technical capacity in the co-creation section of this thesis as part of the following section.

5.6 The Congregation and LMA

> 'I think that has to do with worship being fundamentally a
> form of entertainment in which the congregation doesn't do
> any work. …. When the congregation is not part of the work
> of prayer that is at the heart of the liturgical life then
> something has desperately gone wrong.' (Hauerwas, 2012,
> 2'27")

This research shows that where an individual congregant or the whole congregation has a direct link with the content of the LMA used in worship the greater the emotional impact and the deeper the memory trace of that event and its linked message. This practical outworking of involvement in the worship is underpinned by a more foundational theological understanding of 'active participation' as set out in chapter four. The multi-sensory nature of the worship offers opportunity for greater engagement with the overall liturgy and as such is more effective in communicating. Crowley in her work (Crowley, 2007, 91-97) provides some initial thinking on the process she calls, 'Communal Co-Creation.' This is set within the wider, 'framework

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[20] See http://www.familyfriendlychurches.org.uk/NewSite/mmt.php for details

for evaluation' that Crowley offers. Crowley in a conversation with this author at the early stages of my thesis agreed that her work in this area was very much 'theoretical.' I would argue that this thesis evidences parts of the framework offered by Crowley, in particular the, 'functions of Media in Worship'(Crowley, 2007, 60) and builds on that work to provide more concrete steps that can be taken. I would agree with Crowley's statement that,

> 'at the heart of Communal Co-Creation is a core of people
> who are highly interested in reflecting upon them and
> creating media for worship.' (Crowley, 2007, 92)

Since completing the research phase, and as part of the feedback given to the participating Churches, Church A has now instigated a process to bring such a group together and Church C had such a group recently in place, it had met twice before the interview, and is beginning to see the benefits of the group.

> "The message ministry team, I went out and found probably
> ten or twelve of the most creative people who is able to think
> outside the box and I say I am doing a message on family or I
> am doing a message on forgiveness or I am doing a message
> on unconditional love, what movies, what theatre, what plays
> err YouTube anything like that comes to mind, because I just
> have one brain, they have their own and I find that when we
> strategize that way that is very, very helpful." (Church C)

One of the requirements for such a group is that it is not 'closed' but 'open' welcoming all to bring their ideas. Some members of the group may be regular attenders and others more on an ad-hoc basis and need not be in person; email, Skype and other similar technologies can be effective in these meetings. Crowley cites one example of a church member who contributed to such a group via mail from his prison cell (Crowley, 2007, 93).

Participation in such a group brings benefits to the individual as well as the LMA in worship. Reflecting on how scripture and worship and how it impacts their lives and what they might offer to a worship experience is a new spiritual practice for many. When this reflection is more sacramentally focussed the personal experience is often heightened. Gaillardetz (Gaillardetz, 2000) argues that the growth of a sensitivity to God in the everyday is linked with development of a more sacramental worldview. He says,

> 'ordinary human activities and relationships are a privileged
> place for the encounter with God, [that] can help us cultivate
> the skills of discernment necessary to negotiate successfully
> the demands that this technological age places upon us.'
> (Gaillardetz, 2000, 52)

Crowley posits that the regular use of media clips in worship, particularly when drawn from popular film and television shows, introduces and develops a habit of 'looking for God' in the daily lives of people. (Crowley, 2007, 52) This view is supported by my research, this from a participant at Church A,

> "There is nothing more powerful than taking a secular clip
> and being able to have a Godly moment in that and when you
> do that I think you open up, you get people thinking, to start
> looking at everything a little more theologically." (Church A)

This is particularly true in the context of 'surprise' as it relates to memory and the depth of the memory trace. The media clip in question is moved out of the 'normal' schema of the brain's memory, for that particular media experience, and is set into a different context that requires more processing power of the brain to comprehend. The media is never seen in quite the same way again. Future interaction with the material is coloured by the worship experience. When next it is encountered it is associated with the theme, sermon or scripture used in the worship service and linked to the clip. Congregants can become more attuned to the divine in the world and be stirred in powerful ways to attend to the needs of others whose suffering they may not have noted, as with the Water Aid video at Church D. However, I would also sound a note of caution in the use of such materials in the light of the experiences of the more 'appropriator' style of church as found in the Megachurch 'seeker' worship. Moore in her study of several churches response to the film, '*The Da Vinci Code*,' (Deacy and Arweck, 2009) highlights the problems,

> 'Firstly, it challenges the strategy of appropriating and
> reframing secular media images to create religious messages,
> and thus exposes the significant tension that arises when the
> boundaries between main stream culture and religious faith
> are blurred. In addition, it recasts Christianity's own symbols
> by using a vehicle that resonates with evangelical individuals:
> popular culture itself.' (Moore, 2009, 124)

There is a particular cultural element to the conclusions that Moore draws but nevertheless I would argue are applicable to the UK church too. Members of the American evangelical churches see secular media having a powerful role in their personal faith, so when a film like *The Da Vinci Code* very effectively reverses the usual pattern and challenges the authenticity of Christianity's own symbols and appealing to the Americans' love of science, then the church leaders appear to be at a loss.

> 'the very instrument that was so effective in evangelizing –
> the secular media – has become a competing source of
> information and 'truth'.' (Moore, 2009, 137)

Using such materials is therefore best done when suitable theological reflective practices can be shared by all involved in their selection and application.

5.7 Co-Creators

There are similar effects for the creators of media material for worship. As part of the creative process there is reflection and discernment practice that enhances spiritual sensitivity and encourages their sacramental imaginations. The process of creation requires reflection of the function that it will have within the worship, the makeup of the local congregation and context, together with the technical capability that restricts their production capacity. Furthermore, those who create materials for worship must dwell on the nature of the liturgical service itself: the season, the service theme and the scripture chosen for the service.

The encouragement and training of media ministers is vital to the church's ministry and the spiritual wellbeing of the people involved. Irrespective of the number of people in the media ministry team, the minister of the church has a pastoral responsibility to ensure that the media ministers receive teaching and support in liturgical, biblical, theological ethical and spiritual aspects of the ministry. The minister does not have to conduct any or all of these themselves but I believe it is incumbent upon them to encourage and facilitate training in these areas in order that those exercising this specialist ministry develop a deeper spiritual and theological foundation with which to work. Given that my research revealed the universal lack of any formal training that addresses these issues, I would strongly argue that churches

should invest in the future of the people that serve them as well as the technological needs that the ministry requires.

As has been stated before, theological reflection is a key component of being in media ministry whether as an individual in a church or as a group. Kinast states as,

> 'a creative task employing imagination and freedom and leaving the final results open-ended, theological reflection resembles a work of art more than an intellectual exercise, and it appeals more to a sense of aesthetics than to the criteria of scientific rationality.' (Kinast, 1995, 15)

Kinast would argue that the process of doing any kind of theological reflection leads participants to a common pathway which,

> 'begins with the lived experience of those doing the reflection [within their social and cultural context]; it correlates this experience with the sources of the Christian tradition; and it draws out practical implications for Christian living.' (Kinast, 2000, 1)

To provide a media ministry within a church requires those who exercise such a ministry, whether lay or ordained, to ask the fundamental theological question, "Where is God in all of this?" Very often the use of LMA frees up both those who lead and those who create the media from their Church traditions view of worship, with a result that the congregation feel the benefits in the worship. When asked what they enjoyed about the worship of the church they served, the ministers spoke in terms of a sense of freedom, often earned through the trust in them by their congregation, to experiment and to be creative. This requires a liturgical theology and Christology that, like Jesus, privileges inclusion. Founded in an ecclesiology of right relationship and of mutual relationship, reflecting Jesus' own treatment of people and hospitality for all, the local creation of LMA can become a process and ministry in which all are truly welcome. In the knowledge that the Spirit is active through the act of Co-creation, a faith community lives from a deep confidence based on its pneumatology. Furthermore, since the ministry is designed to reach out to those both inside and outside the Church, it encourages reflection on missiology. McGrath (McGrath, 2002) identifies the use of technology and the open hospitality of many modern, 'seeker-friendly' services as providing a norm for mainstream

Western denominations. He argues that the media event that is worship, with a multiplicity of video clips, of short biblical sound bites, often in a paraphrase form, will be supported by small tight knit groups that meet away from the worship space at other times in the week and through which people will receive the pastoral support and discipling. The eleven years that have passed since writing his book have not seen the transformation of worship to the degree McGrath indicates, but I would acknowledge that the churches regularly using LMA in their worship do appear to be bucking the trend for their denomination in retaining and attracting new people to their worship. I would put a lot of that down to the increased sense of full and active participation that is felt, if not fully articulated, by the congregation.

LMA in both its creation and reception have the possibility and potential to become occasions of Grace. However, the mere presence of LMA in worship does not mean that any of these positive possibilities may occur. To explore this potential ministers' technicians and congregants will benefit from a regular and on-going dialogue on the connections between liturgy, 'the work of the people' and everyday life.

5.8   Further Implications for Church and Ministry

The Church will continue to wrestle with technology, particularly as it relates to all forms of communication which is central to the Great Commission of Jesus to,

> "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." (Math.
> 28v19a)

I think it incumbent upon the Church in collaboration with Academy to continue to examine carefully the various means by which it seeks to use technology to communicate the Gospel. The Church should do so in order to ensure that it is not only being as effective as it can be in proclaiming the Good News, but that it is explicitly aware of what new technologies make redundant both in terms of the 'devices,' and in relation to the patterns of human 'behaviours' that change because of the new technology. This I especially true for changes which bring about a loss of shared knowledge or limit a set of skills that are important to the whole Church of God and not just a few members of it who can benefit from the use of technology. There needs to be a critical, ethical and prophetic component to such research, one that keeps the question, 'Where is God in all this?' at the forefront of the pioneers

who seek to design or take up the latest technology for the cause of the Kingdom of
God.

In terms of LMA the latest technology is found in the church today is what has been
termed Environmental Projection. Churches are now using projection systems to
transform the worship space they are in. According to Cameron Ware founder of the
Visual Worshipper company,

> 'As the originator and leader in Environmental Projection for
> churches, our passion is providing churches with the best
> transformational visual experiences. We not only help
> transform your worship space from a blank pallet into a
> digital canvas, but also how to transform your team from
> simply operators to visual worship leaders.' (Worshiper,
> 2012)

Figure 5-1 Example of Environmental Projection

Cameron tells of the idea for Environmental Projection coming to him after having
some projectors left over following a children's event in his church in Texas. He felt
the bare walls of the building could be transformed to help create a better worship
experience. The photograph above is just one example of such a transformation, the
bare walls of a modern church serve as the screen for the projection of a gothic style
cathedral. Like so much of the emerging church movement that draws on elements of
Celtic liturgy, this Environmental Projection example really is a McLuhan, 'looking
through the rear view mirror' event. McLuhan noted,

> 'We look at the present through a rear-view mirror. We
> march backwards into the future. "Faced with a totally new
> situation," he explains, "we tend to attach ourselves to the
> objects … of the past." (Levinson, 2001, 173)

Given the complexities of negotiating the use of LMA in its present form, particularly for the volunteer who seeks to put the elements of the worship service together, one does wonder what challenges the advent of EP might bring. Given that at least one West End musical, 'Ghost' makes prolific use of digitally displayed images for the scenery, so allowing for a greater sense of realism as characters appear to run down a street with the scenery moving behind them as they run on the spot on a conveyor belt mechanism, might the charge of our worship becoming entertainment become ever more real? Could there be a time in the future when the projector in the Protestant Church suffers the same fate as the icon or images of the past and they are confined to the scrap heap?

5.9   For Further Research.

This research has opened up a number of further questions and two principal areas of work that I would wish to see further research in. Firstly the question of how we can become more effective in developing active participation in worship that allow us to maximise the capacity we have as humans to remember. Atkins (Atkins, 2004) has a great deal to offer in terms of an understanding of the place of memory in the composition and practice of Liturgy. Many of his conclusions, though not explicitly stated, find expression in the practical application of LMA in all its forms, as well as in the presentational format researched in this work.

At Christ's instigation, and utilising all the human senses, Jesus took bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciple's saying, "Take, eat, this is my body given for you, do this in remembrance of me." See (Atkins, 2004, 61-68). The Church has continued to use signs and symbols that are associated with the Gospel and through which we recall the Good News. In addition to the explicit use of objects and symbols to assist the formation of memory, the location, sounds, smell of the surroundings etcetera, together with the viewing of LMA are all ways to help develop both positive and negative memories of the experience called worship. In some cases it is still the imagination of the listener hearing the spoken word that forms the mental images that link to a concept and schema. The use of LMA can make that process more efficient but both oral and visual communication tools are capable of creating surprise which strengthens the memory trace. As the practice of LMA continues to grow it will be important to research not only the best practice in

production but also how effective the medium is communicating through forming
memories of the worship event.

The second area of research relates to how self-esteem and self-worth help inform
our relationships within the context of being a church community. As I have
indicated earlier in this work, I believe that the various viewpoints on how LMA
effects worship can be understood through the lens of self-esteem. I would expect
that the same would be true for relationships between other ministries such as music
etcetera A greater understanding of how self-esteem impacts the worship of a
congregation would greatly enhance the pastoral nature of those in various leadership
roles both with each other and with the congregation.

LMA in all its forms can help create an environment in which people can experience
God; the use of screen based technology is simply one in a progression of devices
that have been employed in supporting the proclamation of the Gospel. It should be
the goal of every church using LMA that congregants encounter God in the worship
services they offer. LMA in combination with music, lighting, spoken word and
visual stories engage people in the culture of today. LMA has a very significant
missional component that can reach to a wide demographic within a community.

The message of the Church has not changed in two thousand years but the way it is
proclaimed must always change to be relevant to the generation it seeks to address.
Media is the language of our culture today and where the Church is able to use LMA
it gains the attention and to some degree the respect of the community around it.
Through using LMA the message of the Gospel is being communicated in a way that
is accessible to many in today's world and makes it easy for people to see and hear
the Good News. The Church must always critique its use of this communication tool
and not lose sight of the bigger purpose of communicating the love of God through
the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. There is a balance needed in knowing LMA
should serve the Church in its work and not be the centre of focus. It is a ministry
within the overall ministry of a church and needs to be integrated into the whole of
the life of the church for LMA, in the context of this thesis, is a resource to other
ministries in a church. LMA needs to be sensitively approached and requires
constantly evaluated but in today's world the far greater danger is not utilizing it

enough. There is a lot of specific technical training that is needed to do it well and churches need to do media with excellence or it will lose all the advantages and credibility that comes with seeking to communicate in this way. It requires people with a particular skill set to enable LMA to work but it is so much more powerful a communication tool when many different people contribute to its content, especially in terms of enabling a greater recall of the message illustrated through the LMA. If a church loses sight of the message it doesn't matter what the skills are of the ministry teams it will never be a successful as a church which proclaims the Gospel without LMA.

I cannot think of a better way to use a person's creative gifts than through all forms of LMA, to share the Gospel with a world hungry for Good News in a way that engages as many of our senses as possible. As people do so they are,

> 'crafting a new liturgical art for worship in the midst of
> today's and tomorrow's media culture.' (Crowley, 2007, 100)

How successful the art form is for today's world and for the future will

have to be the subject of further research.

Appendix 1: Congregation Questions for the Recorded Interview

Thanks and reminder of the aspects of confidentiality and anonymity, fill the consent forms and sign. General statement about the research and the focus being the visual elements (screen etcetera) LMA

There is no right or wrong answers and not asked to come to a consensus.

Accept that same question made be asked in a different way but that is not a trick question.

Treat this as a discussion and not a Q&A session.

Round the group

- Introduce Name (it will not be used except by me to identify comments), how long you have been at the church and which service you most frequently attend.

Questions for discussion starters

1. Who would like to start us off by giving some comments about the use of LMA (screens etcetera) in the worship?

2. What would you say were some of the benefits you have noticed about the use of LMA?

3. Are they things that you don't like about the use of LMA?

4. Are there any times in worship where the screen or other LMA has been very obvious to you in a positive or negative way?

5. Why do you think this church is using LMA in worship?

6. How important do you think LMA is in worship?

7. What have you seen on the screen in the worship here that you have really liked or that has not been to your taste? *Specific images or similar*

8. Do you think having LMA has changed the way the church worships now?

9. What do think worship would be like if for the next few months LMA was not used in worship?

10. Has the use of LMA allowed you to see something in a new light or way?

11. Is there anything you would like to say that you have not said about this subject?

Questions for Technical Crew

1. What is your religious background? Were you exposed to Visual Media Technology in it? How and to what extent? Was this connected in any way into your faith development?
   a. If applicable: where did you do your theological training?

   b. Did your theological training include any training in visual Media Technology?

   c. Did your theological training include any visual art form?

2. What is your work background? To what extent is visual media a part of your life away from church?

3. Have you ever had an experience inside or outside the church in which an image or picture has had an impact on your spiritual life?

4. How long have you been at this church?

5. What do you like best about the worship of this church?

6. What are the elements of the worship experience that are most important to you?

7. At what points do you expect congregants to be moved to prayer, or experience the presence of God? What event or object do you expect might trigger these experiences?

8. What aspects of worship do you expect to have the most direct impact on the believer's life?

9. Explain to me the process by which your church uses LMA in worship, who does what and in what way?
   a. What equipment do you have available to you? Both Hardware and software

10. Are there times when the church more intentionally uses LMA?

11. Are there times in the year when the content of LMA might become more prominent?

12. How, if any, has the use of LMA changed the worship of the church?

13. From your point of view, are there visual aspects of the worship that are critical to the worship?

14. Are there perhaps other kinds of images that are important to worship e.g. mental images or memories for example?

15. What do think worship would be like if for the next few months LMA was not used in worship?

16. Do you expect that these visual aspects would play an important role in the worship of your congregations?

17. Is there anything important for you about the use of LMA that we haven't covered? Any closing thoughts?

Questions for church leaders

18. Let's begin with a little about your professional background. What was your religious background? Were you exposed to Visual Media Technology? How and to what extent? Was this connected in any way into your faith development?

19. If applicable: where did you do your theological training?

20. Did your theological training include any training in Visual Media Technology?

21. Did your theological training include any visual art form?

22. Have you ever had an experience inside or outside the church in which an image all picture has had an impact on your spiritual life?

23. How long have you been at your present church?

24. What do you like best about the worship of your church?

25. What are the elements of the worship experience that are most important to you?

26. At what points do you expect congregants to be moved to prayer, or experience the presence of God? What event or object do you expect might trigger these experiences?

27. What aspects of worship do you expect to have the most direct impact on the believer's life?

28. Explain to me the process by which your church uses LMA in worship, who does what and in what way?

29. Are there times when the church more intentionally uses LMA?

30. Are there times in the year when the content of LMA might become more prominent?

31. How has the use of LMA changed the worship of the church?

32. What do think worship would be like if for the next few months LMA was not used in worship?

33. From your point of view, are there visual aspects of the worship that are critical to the worship?

34. Are there perhaps other kinds of images that are important to worship- mental images, or memories for example?

35. Do you expect that these visual aspects would play an important role in the worship of your congregations?

Appendix 2: Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale

Permission to Use the Measure

Researchers who wish to use the Contingencies of Self-Worth Scale in their research have our permission to do so, with the caveat that it is properly acknowledged by including the correct citation for the measure in any reports. We would appreciate learning about what you are using the measure for, and what you find.

CONTINGENCIES OF SELF-WORTH SCALE

*Item is reverse-scored such that 7=1, 6=2, 5=3, 4=4, 3=5, 2=6, 1=7.

FAMILY SUPPORT: items **7, 10*, 16, 24,** and **29.**

COMPETITION: items **3, 12, 20, 25,** and **32**.

APPEARANCE: items **1, 4*, 17, 21,** and **30*.**

GOD'S LOVE: items **2, 8, 18, 26,** and **31.**

ACADEMIC COMPETENCE: items **13*, 19, 22, 27,** and **33.**

VIRTUE: items **5, 11, 14, 28,** and **34.**

APPROVAL FROM OTHERS: items: **6*, 9, 15*, 23*,** and **35.**

Scoring

- First, reverse-score answers to items 4, 6, 10, 13, 15, 23, and 30, such that (1 = 7), (2 = 6), (3 = 5), (4 = 4), (5 = 3), (6 = 2), (7 = 1).
- Then sum the answers to the five items for each respective subscale score, and divide each by 5.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please respond to each of the following statements by circling your answer using the scale from "1 = Strongly disagree" to "7 = Strongly agree." If you haven't experienced the situation described in a particular statement, please answer how you think you would feel if that situation occurred.

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
1.	When I think I look attractive, I feel good about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.	My self-worth is based on God's love.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3.	I feel worthwhile when I perform better than others on a task or skill.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4.	My self-esteem is unrelated to how I feel about the way my body looks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5.	Doing something I know is wrong makes me lose my self-respect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6.	I don't care if other people have a negative opinion about me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7.	Knowing that my family members love me makes me feel good about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8.	I feel worthwhile when I have God's love.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9.	I can't respect myself if others don't respect me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10.	My self-worth is not influenced by the quality of my relationships with my family members.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11.	Whenever I follow my moral principles, my sense of self-respect gets a boost.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12.	Knowing that I am better than others on a task raises my self-esteem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13.	My opinion about myself isn't tied to how well I do in school.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14.	I couldn't respect myself if I didn't live up to a moral code.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15.	I don't care what other people think of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16.	When my family members are proud of me, my sense of self-worth increases.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17.	My self-esteem is influenced by how attractive I think my face or facial features are.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18.	My self-esteem would suffer if I didn't have God's love.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Neutral	Agree Somewhat	Agree	Strongly Agree
19.	Doing well in school gives me a sense of self-respect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20.	Doing better than others gives me a sense of self-respect.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21.	My sense of self-worth suffers whenever I think I don't look good.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22.	I feel better about myself when I know I'm doing well academically.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23.	What others think of me has no effect on what I think about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24.	When I don't feel loved by my family, my self-esteem goes down.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25.	My self-worth is affected by how well I do when I am competing with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26.	My self-esteem goes up when I feel that God loves me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27.	My self-esteem is influenced by my academic performance.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28.	My self-esteem would suffer if I did something unethical.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29.	It is important to my self-respect that I have a family that cares about me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30.	My self-esteem does not depend on whether or not I feel attractive.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31.	When I think that I'm disobeying God, I feel bad about myself.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32.	My self-worth is influenced by how well I do on competitive tasks.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33.	I feel bad about myself whenever my academic performance is lacking.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34.	My self-esteem depends on whether or not I follow my moral/ethical principles.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35.	My self-esteem depends on the opinions others hold of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

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