

A Musical Map
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The purpose of this mapping exercise is to help churches think about the ways in which they want their music program to enrich their worship services. You will need a room, some chairs that can be easily moved and someone to take notes and draw out the map.

Begin at the center, because wherever you are, there you are. The note taker will draw out for each map the necessary categories, and plot where people put themselves. Create an imaginary line going north and south, with north representing traditional music and south representing contemporary music. The furthest distance out would be the oldest music available (e.g., a Hebrew chant), the furthest distance in the other direction would be in the other direction would be the newest possible music (e.g., urban hip-hop gospel). Have the members of the group find place on the traditional music line as far out as they are comfortable with that music being a regular part of the worship life of the church. Then have them repeat the process as far to the contemporary side of things.

Thus, the 'circle of sensibility' for this church might find the boundaries for worship music to be something like this:

Psalms	Latin Chants	Reformation hymns	Gospel Hymns	Contmp. Hymns (e.g., Brian Wren)
X		XX	X	XXX
Folk Songs	Civil rights era	Early 'Jesus People'	70s Soft Rock	Urban Gospel
X		XXX		XXX

This congregation might construe its most comfortable boundaries as with contemporary hymns and Urban Gospel, but not exclusively so (they have a wider boundary than most!)

Next repeat the process, but with the theme of 'tradition'. Think of your tradition. How deep in your tradition do you want to go, musically? How far away from your tradition do you want your music to go?

Plain chants	Isaac Watts	John Wesley	Pilgrim Hymnal	New Century Hymnal
English Hymns	Western Culture, but in English	Other cultures, but in English	Other languages	
Happy Music				Holy Minimalism
Ode to Joy				John Tavener

Create as many 'lines' as you think are important to your church (e.g., organ----praise band accompaniment, tune only is important or words are only what is important, congregation-only singing, choir-only singing, etc.)

The note taker should then be able to create some sort of circle that reflects the boundaries of taste for the congregation. A last comparison should be between how closely they want the worship leaders to stay within the boundaries of taste and how often the leaders ought to expand the circle.

What did you learn?
 Do you have a core of music that speaks to you?