Stephen M. Lee*

AFRICAN-AMERICAN SPIRITUALS: A SYNOPTIC ANALYSIS OF SEVENTY HYMNAL INSCRIPTIONS IN SIX PROTESTANT HYMNALS

Introduction

Black folk have been
singin' and shoutin,' moanin' and cryin,'
quiverin,' shiverin' and magnifyin,'
rantin' and ravin,' with black hands wavin,'
praisin' the name of Jesus;
Jesus in the morning,
Jesus in the noon time,
Jesus when the sun goes down.

Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise Him in the morning!
Praise Him in the noon time!
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise Him when the sun goes down!

Black folk praised Him
in the deep woods,
in remote ravines,
in gullies, in secluded thickets
called "brush arbors";[1]
Black folk praised Him

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*Stephen M. Lee is a 1996 graduate of Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia, with a master of arts in Church Music. He is an pianist, choral director, board certified music therapist, and the founder and owner of Professional Music Services, Inc., New Orleans, Louisiana.

[1]Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans: A History,* 3d ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1997), 179.

in the preacher's cabin,
in the "praise house,"[2]
in the "cottonhouse,"[3]
in the white church
in the black church;[4]
Black folk praised Him,
with their moans,
with their chants,
with their cries for deliverance,
with their faith songs,
their sorrow songs,
their meters and their hymns;[5]
Black folk praised Him
in the storefronts, on the waterfront, at work and at play;
Black folk praised Him
through "weary years," through "silent tears";
Black folk praised the Name of Jesus.

Sweet Jesus, Sweet Jesus,
He's the Lily of the valley!
He's the Bright and Morning Star!
Sweet Jesus, Sweet Jesus,
He's the governor of the nations!
Bless His Name!

Black folk blessed the Name of Jesus,
singing "sperichils,"[6]

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[2]Melva Wilson Costen, *African American Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993), 50-52.

[3]Southern, *Music of Black Americans*, 167.

[4]Portia K. Maultsby, "The Use and Performance of Hymnody, Spirituals, and Gospels in the Black Church," *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* XIV (Fall 1986/Spring 1987): 141-159.

[5]Wyatt Tee Walker, *Somebody's Calling My Name: Black Sacred Music amd Social Change* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1992), 38.

[6]Southern, *Music of Black Americans*, 181.

Slave songs,
Black folk songs,
the epitome of the cries and expressions
of the human spirit in bondage;[7]
Black folk sang spirituals:
for cotton picking,
corn shucking,
railroading,
steamboating,
in section gangs, on chain gangs;[8]
Black folk sang Spirituals:
for runnin,'
Spirituals
for shoutin,'
Spirituals
for clappin,'
Spirituals
for worshipin,'
Spirituals
in the ring,
Spirituals
for "jes sittin' around."[9]
Black Presbyterians sang;
Black Methodists sang;
Black Baptists,
Black Catholics and
Black Episcopalians sang.
Black folk sang

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[7]Walker, *Sombody's Calling My Name,* 43.

[8]"Negro Music" in *Harvard Dictionary of Music*, 2d ed., ed. Willi Apel (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1972), 568.

[9]Southern, *Music of Black Americans,* 181.

in the north and they sang
in the south;
Black folk sang
in the east and they sang
in the west;
Black folk sang
of slavery;
Black folk sang
of freedom.

Oh, freedom! Oh, freedom!
Oh, freedom over me,
And before I'd be a slave,
I'll be buried in my grave,
And go home to my Lord
And be free!

From the womb of **Black** bondage,
gushed the souls of **Black** folk;
From the womb of **Black** bondage,
gushed the songs of **Black** folk;
From the womb of **Black** bondage,
gushed the Spirituals.

Approximately 6,000 spirituals in 500 original collections of spirituals have already been catalogued; the list is not complete.[10] With such a staggering number of African-American Spirituals, how does one begin a comprehensive study? How does one "do justice" in researching this body of Black folk song?

The student of the Spirituals, on the one hand, may feel overwhelmed by the scope and complexity of such a vast body of music. The researcher, on the other hand, may feel

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[10]John Lovell Jr., *Black Song: Forge and the Flame* (New York: The Macmillan Company, [1972]), 19.

beleaguered by such variance in research on the African-American Spiritual. In either case, the answer to the above two questions may be found in the *approach* one uses to become acquainted with the Spirituals and the *methodology* one uses to identify, record, and interpret the Spirituals. Both the approach and the methodology are necessary for a thorough study and understanding.

Approach

First, one must pledge a lifelong commitment if one is to know the Spirituals. Not only must one desire to know them, but one must also desire to be known by them. To know the Spirituals is to plunge nakedly into the river of ancient, ancestral archetypes. To be known by the Spirituals is to allow the arrow of compassion to puncture the heart, the light of truth to illumine the mind, and the seed of understanding to impregnate the soul.

Specifically, getting to know the Spirituals involves:

1. Reading the Spirituals,
2. Memorizing the Spirituals,
3. Listening to the Spirituals,
4. Meditating upon the Spirituals,
5. Grappling with the essence of the Spirituals,
6. Swayin,' rockin,' dancin,' jumpin,' foot tappin' and hand clappin,' to the Spirituals.

Getting to know the Spirituals also involves singing the Spirituals.

Sing the Spirituals:

every time you "Feel the Spirit,"
and you just gotta
"Go, Tell It on the Mountain."
Sing the Spirituals:
because you "Trust in the Lord,"
and know you "Shall Not Be Moved."
Sing the Spirituals:
because you "Want to Be Ready,"
and "Soon-a-Will Be Done"
with the trouble of this world.

Sing the Spirituals:
because "the Lord's Laid His Hands" on you,
and you know, that you know that you know,
you've "Been Changed."

Sing the Spirituals:
because you
"Just Come From the Fountain,"
and now "You Got Good Religion."

Sing the Spirituals:
because the "Spirit Says Sing,"
even though "Nobody Knows the Trouble"
you've "had" or "seen."

Sing the Spirituals:
when there ain't nothin' left to do but to
"Steal Away to Jesus,"
on your knees, praying
"Do Lord, Do Lord, Do Remember Me."

Sing the Spirituals:

when "Somebody's Knocking at Your Door,"
late in the midnight hour
and you're prayin' that it's
"Good News."

Sing the Spirituals:
when you got to "Wade in the Water,"
just to "Come Out of the Wilderness."

Sing the Spirituals:
in the "praise house,"
in the out house,
in the fields,
in the streets.

Sing the Spirituals:
when you're up, when you're down,
when there's no one around.

Sing the Spirituals:
in times of joy, in times of sorrow,
sing'em today, sing'em tomorrow.

Sing the Spirituals:
when you're tired,
when you're weak,
when you're worn,
while at work,
in the morn,'
while asleep,
late at night,
on the porch,
in a chair,

combing hair,
on a bus,
going nowhere.

Sing the Spirituals.
Sing the Spirituals.
Sing the Spirituals.

The litany appears to be unending. The emphasis here, however, is not upon the quantity of time one spends in getting to know the Spirituals, but the quality of time. Just as one spends quality time developing any relationship, for the well being of the bond, one must also spend quality time with the Spirituals. One must become "wrapped up, tied up, and tangled up" in them.

The Spirituals are more than words and phrases.
They are more than haunting melodies.
They are more than objects for exegetical study.
They are the "Well of Souls" of the Black folk who created them.
Therefore, to know the Spirituals is to know their creator.
To know their creator is to know God.

A well-defined methodology that involves identification, analysis, and interpretation of the Spirituals, should provide clarification, direction, and momentum to the research process. The following abstract and research design are offered as suggested procedures for researching African-American Spirituals. For the purposes of this essay, the terms "Spiritual(s)" and "African-American Spiritual(s)" are used interchangeably.

Abstract

1. The process began with this researcher getting to know the Spirituals as outlined in the **Approach** section.

2. A sample of Spirituals was taken from six Protestant hymnals representing the six constituent seminaries of Interdenominational Theological Center, Atlanta, Georgia. The researcher limited the number of African-American Spirituals to include only those clearly iden-tified as Spirituals under at least one of the following four index sub-headings and/or index entries:

   "African-American spirituals"
   "Afro-American spirituals"
   "Spirituals"
   "Black Spirituals."

Therefore, in this study, the terms indexed Spirituals and indexed African-American Spirituals refer to those Spirituals clearly identified as Spirituals, i.e., the Spirituals that are listed under at least one of the four above indexed sub-headings and entries. These four sub-headings/entries were either found under the **topical** indexes or under the indexes of **composers**, **arrangers**, **authors**, **translators**, and **sources** in the six Protestant hymnals. Spirituals, however, that were only listed in the **general index**, or in the **index of hymn titles** and **first lines** of the hymnals were identified and recorded but not analyzed.

3. The area of inquiry was further restricted to include only a study of the hymnal inscriptions of the indexed African-American Spirituals, whereby a **hymnal**

inscription is defined as a body of descriptive words, phrases, and symbols affixed to the pages of the hymnal entries of African-American Spirituals. These descriptors provide detailed information.

4. A **synoptic analysis**, i.e., a comparative analysis of the hymnal inscriptions of the indexed African-American Spirituals in the six Protestant hymnals was conducted.

5. The synoptic analysis revealed the presence of **inter-hymnal divergence**. Inter-hymnal divergence is defined as variance, between hymnals, in the quality and quantity of descriptive data affixed to the pages of the musical entries of African-American Spirituals. Specifically, inter-hymnal divergence is defined as variance, between hymnals, in the data that comprise the hymnal inscriptions.

6. The synoptic analysis was recorded on a **synoptic graph** designed specifically for this research study, providing a simultaneous bird's-eye view of the hymnal inscriptions of each indexed African-American Spiritual.

7. The presence of inter-hymnal divergence was interpreted.

8. The researcher summarized the data, stated conclusions, and then posed questions for further research.

Research Design

An initial survey of the indexes of six Protestant hymnals was conducted to determine the number and identity of each

hymnal's indexed African-American Spirituals. The hymnals surveyed and their accompanying abbreviations are presented and are listed in chronological order, beginning with the most recent publication.

The Six Protestant Hymnals

The Presbyterian Hymnal, 1990 (PRESB)

The United Methodist Hymnal, 1989 (UMC)

The Hymnal of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, 1987 (CME)

The African Methodist Episcopal Bicentennial Hymnal, 1984 (AME)

Yes, Lord! Church of God in Christ Hymnal, 1982 (COGIC)

The New National Baptist Hymnal, 1977 (NNB)

The CME, COGIC, and NNB hymnals list their Spirituals by title in their respective Topical indexes. However, the PRESB, UMC, and AME hymnals do not. Instead, these three hymnals list their African-American Spirituals by entry numbers. Since it was problematic to uncover the identity of Spirituals listed only by entry numbers, a page by page survey of the PRESB, UMC, and AME hymnals was conducted.

The page-by-page survey revealed a total of 155 indexed African-American Spirituals and thirty-five additional Spirituals not indexed. From this body of the 155 African-American Spirituals, twenty-three are single and forty-seven are multiple occurrences. The twenty-three single occurrences

combined with the forty-seven multiple occurrences reduce the number of indexed Spirituals to be analyzed to seventy. (See TABLE 1 for an alphabetical listing of these seventy Spirituals and the multiple occurrences of each.)

Because of multiple occurrences of the same indexed Spiritual, and variance in the spelling and wording of these titles, the most recently published hymnals determined the spelling and wording for the listing. In cases where a Spiritual was not indexed in the most recent hymnal publication, then the next most recent hymnal publication, that indexed the Spiritual, was used.

A synoptic analysis of the hymnal inscriptions of the aforementioned seventy indexed African-American Spirituals is the primary focus. The emphasis here is not analyzing the text and music of the Spirituals, but studying those appended words, phrases, and symbols that are descriptors. The presence and/or absence of these is both informative and prophetic. It is informative in that these words, phrases, or symbols provide additional information regarding the Spirituals that cannot be found in their text and music. It is prophetic in that the absence of this descriptive data foreshadows a time when the uninformed and the unscrupulous will lay claim to authorship and/or ownership of the African-American Spiritual.

Findings

As previously stated, 155 indexed African-American Spirituals and thirty-five un-indexed Spirituals were discovered in the page-by-page survey. It was also detected that two Spirituals, "There Is a Balm in Gilead" (UMC) and "Amen, Amen," (PRESB) were actually indexed twice in their

respective hymnals. See the PRESB's listing of "Amen, Amen," #299 (refrain with verses) and "Amen," #587 (refrain only). In this case, the indexing of the same Spiritual twice within the same hymnal is a result of two different musical arrangements and two suggested uses: "Amen, Amen," #299 is included in the hymn section while "Amen" #587 is included in the service music section. It is interesting to note that two separate titles are given to the same Spiritual within the same hymnal.

This dual indexing of a Spiritual has the effect of reducing the overall number of indexed Spirituals, creating the "real number." Further, any reduction in their number equally reduces the total number of extant Spirituals in a hymnal. This total number may be calculated by adding the number of the indexed Spirituals to the number of un-indexed Spirituals or by adding the real number of indexed Spirituals (if present) to the number of un-indexed Spirituals. (See TABLE 2.) In the CME, AME, COGIC, and NNB hymnals, the number of extant Spirituals is greater than the number of indexed Spirituals. Two un-indexed Spirituals were discovered in the AME hymnal, nine in the CME and NNB hymnals, and fifteen in the COGIC hymnal.

The total number of musical entries for each hymnal was recorded so that a percentage of the number of extant Spirituals per hymnal could be obtained. A percentage of the number of extant Spirituals for all hymnals combined was calculated against the combined total of all music entries. The combined 188 extant Spirituals from all six hymnals comprise approximately 5 percent of the 3,752 musical entries.

Regarding two of the hymnals, it must be stated at this point, that the CME and NNB are essentially the same document in their musical content. The CME hymnal does not

"resemble" *The New National Baptist Hymnal* (1977); aside from having its own front and back matter, it is an exact duplication of the NNB hymnal.[11] Thus, data from the CME hymnal is merely a replication of data from the NNB hymnal.

A more recent edition of the CME hymnal was surveyed: *The Hymnal of the Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Discipleship 2000 Edition*, volume IV. Except for an appendix that contains one African-American Spiritual not found in the former edition, #627, "I Will Trust in the Lord," this hymnal is essentially the same in musical content as its predecessor. Ironically, there is no copyright information appended to the credit page at the beginning of this hymnal—a dangerous oversight. The listing of copyright assignment is crucial in maintaining an African-American claim to authorship and/or ownership of the arrangements of these Spirituals.

Analysis

Examining each indexed African-American Spiritual, the researcher discovered the presence of inter-hymnal divergence (variance) in the quantity and the quality of descriptive data affixed to the musical entry pages of each African-American Spiritual. Not only was inter-hymnal divergence present, but there was great difficulty in documenting its presence. Because of this problem, a synoptic graph was designed to identify, record, and provide clarity in interpreting the presence of inter-hymnal divergence. (See TABLE 3.1-3.2.) The headings and categories reflect the information found in the hymnal inscriptions of the indexed African-American Spirituals. The hymnals are arranged from left to

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[11]Jon Michael Spencer, *Black Hymnody* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 46.

right, beginning with the most recent publication.

The synoptic analysis of the hymnal inscriptions of the seventy African-American Spirituals clearly identified the presence of inter-hymnal divergence. Such divergence was observed in ten areas, five of which are presented:

1. Inter-hymnal Divergence: Musical Entries (Spiritual or Hymn?)

There are twelve occurrences of inter-hymnal divergence regarding whether a musical entry is an African-American Spiritual or a hymn. One example of this is examined and two additional occurrences are briefly discussed.

Example One

Of the six hymnals surveyed, the AME hymnal stands alone in its listing of "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" as a Black Spiritual. The CME, COGIC, and NNB hymnals do not list this musical entry as a Spiritual. It is not included in the PRESB and UMC hymnals. When a musical entry, such as this, is listed as a Spiritual in only one hymnal and is not corroborated by one or more of the other five hymnals, nor is it known by this researcher to be a Spiritual through corroboration with additional music sources, then the so-called Spiritual is labeled a *Spiritual in Question*. Labeling a Spiritual in this manner serves as a red flag to the researcher, indicating the need for further research. It must be stated, however, that a musical entry, listed as a Spiritual in the CME and NNB hymnals, and suspected of being a *Spiritual in Question*, still requires the corroboration of at least one of the other four hymnals and/or one additional music source, since the CME hymnal, as previously stated, is an exact duplication of the

NNB hymnal.

Jon Michael Spencer, in his discussion of the hymn section in *Songs of Zion*, states: "'Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray' is included in the category of 'traditional evangelical pieces that Black worshipers from the mid-nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries adapted and have sung ever since.'"[12] Following a discussion and quotation by J. Jefferson Cleveland on the means by which Black worshipers adapted white hymnody, Spencer further reiterates his position by including "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" in the list of old favorite evangelical pieces in *Songs of Zion*.[13] It could be inferred from Spencer's use of the words "evangelical" and "adapted" that "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" is not a Black Spiritual. His categorization raises two questions:

1. Why is the AME hymnal the only hymnal surveyed to list "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray"as a Black Spiritual?

2. Is the AME hymnal correct in its assertion that this entry is a Black Spiritual?

It was this researcher's belief that analyzing biographical data about the composer/author of the above *Spiritual in Question* would shed light upon this inquiry. Working under the premise that Black Spirituals were composed by Black folk during slavery, the attempt was made to determine whether the composer/author of "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" was a slave. If the answer were "yes," then the AME hymnal would in all probability be correct in listing "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" as a Black Spiritual. If the answer

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[12]Ibid., 66.

[13]Ibid., 67.

were "no," then the AME hymnal would in all probability be in error.

The authorship of "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray"—both words and tune—is attributed to Frank M. Davis, 1839-1896. Within the AME hymnal, his name surfaces only one other occasion, as the composer to "Lord, I Care Not for Riches." Other than birth and death dates, no other descriptive information is listed in the AME hymnal. Neither is his name mentioned in the hymnal companions and hymn textbooks readily available to this researcher. Therefore, other additional music sources were consulted to uncover biographical data about this person.

In an April 19, 1999 telephone interview with Dr. Harry Eskew, professor of hymnology and music history at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, Louisiana, this researcher was referred to J. H. Hall's *Biography of Gospel Song and Hymn Writers (1914).* This document provided biographical data concerning Frank M. Davis and also included his photograph. Based upon this evidence, Frank M. Davis would not appear to be of African descent; and "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" in all probability is not a Black Spiritual.

However, the question still remains unanswered. Why does the AME hymnal list "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" as a Black Spiritual? Has this particular musical entry been a part of the AME Black religious experience for so long that it is believed to be a Spiritual? Or could this musical entry, although penned by a composer/author who was not a slave, be an example of a song that originated in the slave community but was heard, claimed, and penned by a white composer/author?

Another possibility yet exists. "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray" could be an example of what Wyatt Tee Walker calls a "Hymn of Improvisation," i.e., hymns that are almost exclusively Euro-American in origin and authorship and that found frequent improvised use in the Black religious experience.[14] Walker states: "Once Black folk laid hands on the Euro-American hymns and gave to them the musical overlay common to the Spiritual and Black meter tradition, the hymn would be forever changed."[15] According to Walker, these "Hymns of Improvisiation" were written/composed between 1875 and 1930. Based upon information from the *Biography of Gospel Songs and Hymn Writers*, "Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray," was written in 1880, situating it within Walker's time line.

Example Two

Another musical entry, listed as a Black Spiritual in the AME Hymnal, but not corroborated by the other five hymnals, is "Time Is Filled with Swift Transition" or "Hold to God's Unchanging Hand." (Words and tune are by Jennie Wilson and F. L. Eiland, respectively.)

Example Three

In the CME and NNB hymnals, "Stand By Me" is also listed as a Spiritual—a composition by Charles Albert Tindley. The other four hymnals surveyed do not index this musical entry as a Spiritual. Again, there appears to be controversy over what constitutes a Spiritual. However, two interesting quotations regarding Tindley and "Stand By Me" are cited.

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[14]Walker, "Somebody's Calling My Name," 110.

[15]Ibid., 98.

> There were song writers and compilers who eschewed the African-American musical heritage but other writers of black religious song did not, for example. . . . Charles Albert Tindley (1859-1933) later compiled his own songs and those of other composers in two collections, *Soul Echoes* (1905) and *New Songs of Paradise* (1916). The content of these. . .was in some way compatible with the African-American musical tradition.[16]

"Tindley's greatest hymn combines the emotion of an Isaac Watts hymn with that of a Black spiritual."[17] Thus, when the storms of life are raging, stand by me, (from "Stand by Me").

These two statements imply that Tindley and other African-American song writers, although not slaves themselves, were so close to the folk musical tradition of the slave that their own post-slavery, musical compositions mirrored the African-American folk musical tradition. This being the case, then a *hermeneutic of adoption* must be applied here, whereby a musical composition written by an African American, or a person of African descent, bearing like stylistic qualities to an African-American Spiritual, and with the emotional essence (pathos) of an African-American Spiritual, is grafted into the fold of African-American Spirituals. Based upon the stated criteria, musical compositions of known authorship such as Tindley's "Stand By Me" would therefore

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[16]Samuel A. Floyd Jr., *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (New York: Oxford University, 1995), 59.

[17]Eileen Southern, ed., "The Music of a Free People" in *Readings in Black American Music*, 2d ed. (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1983), 309.

be labeled an "Adopted African-American Spiritual."

2. Inter-hymnal Divergence: (Word Appellatives)

There are nine occurrences of inter-hymnal divergence in the use of appellatives to label the genre of the words to the African-American Spirituals. These appellatives are appended to the musical entry pages of the indexed African-American Spirituals and are listed below along with the Protestant hymnals where these words and phrases may be found.

Appellatives	Protestant Hymnal Source
1. "African-American spiritual"	PRESB
2. "Afro-American spiritual"	UMC
3. "American Folk"	CME, NNB
4. "American Folk Hymn"	COGIC
5. "Spiritual"	CME, NNB
6. "Trad. Spiritual"	AME
7. "Traditional"	COGIC, AME, CME
8. "Traditional Spiritual"	AME, COGIC
9. "Unknown"	COGIC

In this list, the PRESB and the UMC hymnals append the terms "African-American spiritual" and "Afro-American spiritual," respectively, in their index headings and to the pages of musical entries containing African-American Spirituals. The CME, AME, COGIC, and NNB hymnals do not use these two appellatives. Of the nine terms, the first two clearly identify an African presence in the authorship. The other seven terms do not. The CME, AME, COGIC, and

NNB hymnals are not consistent in their use of the additional seven appellatives, using them interchangeably and seemingly indiscriminately throughout each hymnal. Two questions are therefore raised:

1. Should there be an agreed upon term to label the genre of the words/text to the African-American Spirituals?

2. Why do the CME, AME, COGIC and NNB hymnals continue to use the vague and often misleading terms: "American Folk," "American Folk Hymn," "Spiritual," "Trad. Spiritual," "Traditional," "Traditional Spiritual," and "Unknown"? These terms do not clearly identify an African presence in the authorship of Black folk music. Although this researcher uses the term "Spiritual" for the purpose of this work, the word "Spiritual" is used synonymously with "African-American Spiritual."

By not identifying an African presence in the authorship of these songs, the claim could be made by the uninformed and the unscrupulous that these musical entries are examples of the so-called White Spirituals.[18]

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[18]Lovell, *Black Song*, 81.

3. Inter-hymnal Divergence: (Melody Appellatives)

There are thirteen occurrences of inter-hymnal divergence in the use of appellatives to label the genre of the melodies to the African-American Spirituals. These are listed below. The Protestant hymnals where these words and phrases may be found are also given.

Appellatives	Protestant Hymnal Source
1. "African-American spiritual"	PRESB
2. "Afro-American spiritual"	UMC
3. "American Folk Hymn"	COGIC
4. "American Folk Melody"	COGIC
5. "American Folksong"	COGIC
6. "American Negro Melody"	CME, NNB
7. "American Negro melody"	CME, NNB
8. "Spiritual"	COGIC, AME
9. "Traditional"	COGIC, CME, NNB
10. "Traditional Spiritual"	AME, COGIC
11. "Traditional spiritual"	CME, NNB
12. "Traditional Spiritual melody"	AME, COGIC
13. "Unknown"	COGIC

Again, the PRESB and the UMC hymnals consistently use the terms "African-American spiritual" and "Afro-American spiritual" on the musical entry pages and in their indexes. The CME, AME, COGIC, and NNB hymnals do not use these two terms and inconsistently use the additional eleven appellatives. Similar concerns and questions regarding the use of a consistent term to label the genre of the words to African-American Spirituals and the use of term(s) that clearly identify an African presence in authorship of the Spirituals are

applicable to this discussion.

It is clear from the above two lists of appellatives that the PRESB and the UMC hymnals use terms that reflect contemporary language trends that are socio-culturally and politically correct. The other four denominational hymnals continue to use language that is vague and does not reflect contemporary usage.

4. Inter-hymnal Divergence: (Divergence in Titles)

There are twenty occurrences of inter-hymnal divergence in spelling, wording, and punctuation usage in the titles of African-American Spirituals. Although divergence is often barely noticeable, the fact remains that it is still present. Miles Mark Fisher offers a plausible explanation for this divergence: "No uniform or consistent spelling would be possible when the songs were heard from Negroes on different levels of culture... There were corrections in the orthography, grammar and style of the spirituals."[19] Certain hymnals use the folk vernacular in the listing of the titles of individual Spirituals, while others use standard English as in "Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow" vs. "Dere's a Star in de East." (See TABLE 4.1-4.4.) Certain hymnals use the first line of an African-American Spiritual as its title, while others use the repeated words from a Spiritual's refrain as in "He Rose"/"He Arose" vs. "They Crucified My Savior." (Again, see TABLE 4.2.)

Of particular interest in TABLE 4.3 is the PRESB hymnal's title alteration of "Lord, Make Me More Holy" to "Lord, Make Us More Holy." It may be that the change from

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[19]Miles Mark Fisher, *Negro Slave Songs in the United States* (New York: America Historical Association, 1953; reprint, New York: Citadel Press, 1991), 14 (page citation is to the reprint edition).

"Me" to "Us" reflects a Western belief that worship is a communal or corporate act, and that individualism in corporate worship must be de-emphasized.

However, one could argue that the African/slave understanding of the "Me" in worship was a far cry from the Western understanding of "Me." This difference is clearly reflected in the following statement by John S. Mbiti in George Ofori-Atta-Thomas' discussion on the "Kinship-Inheritance of the Black Church Extended Family: In Rites of Incorporation." "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore, I am complete."[20] Thus, when the slave sang of "Me" or "I" it was an acknowledgment of the existential reality that the "Me" can only exist within the context of community.

Another interesting occurrence of title alteration is found in the COGIC hymnal whereby "Go, Tell It on the Mountain" is altered to read "Go, Tell It on the Mountains." (See TABLE 4.1.) This change may reflect a specific use in language, particular to this denomination and/or an evangelistic thrust of spreading the news of Jesus' birth to all peoples on or near mountains. An interview with members of the COGIC hymnal's editorial team could reveal the rationale for the change.

5. Inter-hymnal Divergence (Tune Names)

There are forty-four occurrences of inter-hymnal divergence in the appended tune names to the African-American Spirituals. See TABLE 5.1-5.3 for a list of Spirituals that have been given tune names. The tune name and its hymnal source are also included.

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[20]George Ofori-Atta-Thomas, "The African Inheritance in the Black Church Worship," *The Journal of the Interdenominational Theological Center* XIV (Fall 1986/Spring 1987): 69.

Some interesting observations can be made from this Table. First, the CME and NNB hymnals do not include tune names in their hymnal inscriptions. The COGIC hymnal includes only one tune name in its entire hymnal: BALM IN GILEAD for the Spiritual, "There Is a Balm in Gilead." The PRESB, UMC and the AME hymnals make frequent use of tune names.

At present, there is no agreed-upon list of tune names for the seventy indexed African-American Spirituals. Compilers of hymnals are therefore free to ascribe tune names using their own criteria for selection. For example, six of the tune names appear to be the last names of historical figures, possibly chosen because of an association of the individual to the Spiritual or to the socio-political meaning of the Spiritual. Two of these six tune names are discussed.

African-American Spiritual	Tune Name	Historical Figure
1.Come Out of the Wilderness	TURNER	Nat Turner
2.Kum ba Yah	DESMOND	Desmond Tutu
3.My Lord! What a Morning	BURLEIGH	H.T. Burleigh
4.Nobody Knows the Trouble I See	DUBOIS	W.E.B. Dubois
5.We Shall Overcome	MARTIN	M.L. King Jr.
6.When Israel Was in Egypt's Land	TUBMAN	HarrietTubman

Nat Turner, after running away and remaining in the woods for thirty days, returned to the plantation because the Spirit told him to go back to the service of his earthly master.[21] Therefore, the hymn tune "TURNER" is ascribed to "Come Out of the Wilderness." Although the words of "Kum

[21]Milton C. Sernett, ed., *Afro-American Religious History: A Documentary Witness* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985), 91; quoted in [Nat Turner], *The Confessions of Nat Turner* (Baltimore: Thomas R. Gray, Lucas and Deaver, 1831), 1-21.

ba Yah," are listed as a Spiritual, the melody is ascribed African origin. The tune name "DESMOND" would most probably be a reference to the African leader, Desmond Tutu.

Five of the forty-four African-American Spirituals have two tune names. They are:

Spiritual	Tune Names
1. Go Tell It on the Mountain	GO TELL IT GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN
2. My Lord! What a Morning	BURLEIGH WHAT A MORNIN'
3. He Rose	ASCENSIUS HE ROSE
4. I Want Jesus to Walk with Me	SOJOURNER WALK WITH ME
5. I Want to Be Ready	I WANT TO BE READY WALK IN JERUSALEM

It would appear that the tune names for African-American Spirituals do not function in the same manner as tune names for hymns. A hymn tune not only identifies a particular hymn, when combined with an indication of its meter, it is useful in categorizing hymns that are alike metrically in order to pair a hymn text to more than one hymn tune. There appears to be no document that categorizes the tune names of African-American Spirituals according to meter.

Summary

A socio-historical description of African-American Spirituals was given. The number of catalogued African-American Spirituals was listed at 6,000. This number, however, is increasing. It was stated that one's approach in becoming acquainted with the Spirituals and one's methodology in identifying, analyzing, and interpreting the Spirituals must be qualitative and well defined in order "to do justice" to the process of studying and researching the Spirituals. The focus of this inquiry was limited to an analysis of the hymnal inscriptions of seventy indexed African-American Spirituals in six Protestant hymnals. These hymnal inscriptions were graphed and examined in a synoptic analysis. The examination was not upon the words and music of the Spirituals but upon the words, phrases, and symbols used in describing them. Definitions for the terms hymnal inscriptions and synoptic analysis were given. The presence of inter-hymnal divergence, also defined, was discovered in ten areas, five of which were presented in this paper. Specifically, inter-hymnal divergence was discussed in the following five areas:

1. Whether a musical entry is a Spiritual or hymn,
2. Use of apellatives to label the genre of the words to the African-American Spirituals,
3. Use of appellatives to label the genre of the melodies to the African-American Spirituals,
4. Use of words, phrases, punctuation marks in the titles of African-American Spirituals, and
5. Use of tune names to label the melodies of African-American Spirituals.

Conclusions

A comprehensive study of African-American spirituals must include more than an examination of their words and music. It must also embrace an analysis of the appended words, phrases, and symbols used in describing African-American Spirituals, i.e., the hymnal inscriptions. Such identification provides a wealth of information that can be used to enrich a study of the words and music. The Spirituals, however, must be examined synoptically if one is to maintain a bird's-eye view of the research process. When a synoptic analysis is employed, questions surface concerning how African-American Spirituals are recorded in hymnals.

The following questions may point to further research:

1. Why are certain musical entries indexed as "Spirituals" when in fact they appear to be hymns? Is there controversy or misunderstanding in what constitutes a Spiritual or, are there other hermeneutical factors involved in why a hymn would be indexed as a Spiritual?
2. Should there be a standardization in the use of appellatives to label the genre of the words and melodies to African-American Spirituals?
3. Should there be standardization in the spelling, wording, and punctuation usage in the titles of African-American Spirituals?
4. Should folk vernacular be used in the titles and text of the "Spirituals" or, should inclusive language and/or language that is socio-culturally and politically correct be used?

5. Should there be a standardization in the tune names used to name the melodies to African-American Spirituals?
6. Should African-American hymnal companions be published to accompany African-American hymnals and hymnal supplements in order to provide biographical data about African-American composers and authors?
7. Should hymnal companions, published by non-African-American publishers, indicate the nationality and/or ethnic identity of its contributing authors, composers, arrangers?
8. Should hymnal inscriptions include biographical data on African-American Spiritual composers/authors, specifically an indication of nationality and/or ethnic identity?
9. Should hymnal compilers strive to include higher percentages of African-American Spirituals in their hymnals?
10. Could Interdenominational Theological Center provide guidance to the hymnal committees of its constituent seminaries in establishing guidelines for the inclusion of African-American Spirituals in future denominational hymnals?

It is hoped that these questions will serve as catalysts for additional research. Further, it is anticipated that the foregoing discussion will goad those individuals and committees, who have been charged with the task of compiling hymnals and other music resources, "to do justice" in preserving the African-American Spiritual.

TABLE 1

Seventy Indexed African-American Spirituals

Spiritual	Single and Multiple Occurrences*
1. Ain't-a That Good News	1/6
2. Amen, Amen	4/6
3. Calvary	3/6
4. Come Out of the Wilderness	2/6
5. Do, Lord, Remember Me	2/6
6. Don't Stay Away	2/6**
7. Every Time I Feel the Spirit	3/6
8. Ezekiel Saw the Wheel	1/6
9. Fix Me, Jesus	1/6
10. Go, Tell It on the Mountain	6/6
11. Good News	1/6
12. Great Day!	4/6
13. Guide My Feet	2/6
14. Have You Got Good Religion?	1/6
15. He Is King of Kings	2/6
16. He Never Said a Mumbalin'Word	3/6
17. He Rose	5/6
18. Hear Me Praying	2/6**
19. I Am on the Battlefield for My Lord	2/6**
20. I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray	1/6
21. I Got a New Name	1/6
22. I Know I've Been Changed	1/6
23. I Know the Lord's Laid His Hands on Me	1/6
24. I Love the Lord, Who Heard My Cry	3/6
25. I Shall Not Be Moved	2/6
26. I Want Jesus to Walk with Me	6/6
27. I Want to Be Ready	2/6
28. I Will Trust in the Lord	3/6

29.	I'll Be Alright	1/6
30.	I'm Goin'a Sing When the Spirit Says Sing	3/6
31.	I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me	2/6
32.	I'm So Glad Jesus Lifted Me	1/6
33.	In Christ There Is No East or West	5/6
34.	It's Me, It's Me O Lord	4/4
35.	I've Got Peace Like a River	4/4
36.	I've Just Come from the Fountain	1/6
37.	Kum ba Yah	4/6
38.	Let Us Break Bread Together	6/6
39.	Lord, I Want to Be a Christian	6/6
40.	Lord, Make Us More Holy	2/6
41.	My Lord! What a Morning	5/6
42.	Nobody Knows the Trouble I See	1/6
43.	O Mary, Don't You Weep	1/6
44.	O the Rocks and the Mountains	1/6
45.	Oh Freedom	3/6
46.	Old Time Religion	3/6
47.	Over My Head	2/6**
48.	Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow	5/6
49.	Savior, Lead Me Lest I Stray	1/6
50.	See Four and Twenty Elders	1/6
51.	Some O'These Days	3/6
52.	Somebody's Knocking at Your Door	3/6
53.	Soon-a Will Be Done	2/6**
54.	Stand By Me	2/6**
55.	Steal Away to Jesus	4/6
56.	Sweet Jesus	2/6
57.	Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	5/6
58.	Take Me to the Water	1/6
59.	There Is a Balm in Gilead	4/6

60.	This Little Light of Mine	3/6
61.	Time is Filled with Swift Transition	1/6
62.	'Tis the Old Ship of Zion	2/6
63.	Wade in the Water	3/6
64.	We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder	5/6
65.	We Are Walking in the Light	1/6
66.	We Shall Overcome	3/6
67.	We Shall Walk Through the Valley in Peace	2/6**
68.	Were You There?	6/6
69.	When Israel Was in Egypt's Land	4/6
70.	Yes, He Did	1/6

* Occurrences are represented in fractions, indicating how many of the six hymnals include a particular Spritual.

** Indicates that these occurrences were identified only in the CME and NNB hymnals.

Table 2: Analysis of Contents: Six Selected Hymnals

Hymnals	No. of indexed Spirituals in hymnal	No. of Spirituals indexed 2x	Real no. of indexed Spirituals	No. of un-indexed Spirituals	No. of extant Spirituals in hymnal	Total Musical entries for each hymnal	% of Spirituals included in hymnal
PRESB	24	1	23	0	(23)	605	@.038
UMC	30	1	29	0	(29)	892	@.033
CME	25	0	N/A	9	(34)	545	@.045
AME	28	0	N/A	2	(30)	670	@.062
COGIC	23	0	N/A	15	(38)	525	@.075
NNB	25	0	N/A	9	(34)	545	@.045
TOTALS	**155**	**2**	**52**	**35**	**(188)**	**3,752**	**@.05**

Table 3.1 (SYNOPTIC GRAPH)
SPIRITUAL: LET US BREAK BREAD TOGETHER

HYMNAL	PRESB	UMC	CME	AME	COGIC	NNB
ENTRY#	513	618	488	530	30	488
WORD APPELLA-TIVES	African-American Spiritual	Afro-American Spiritual	N/I Spiritual	Traditional Folk Hymn	American	N/I
MUSIC APPELLA-TIVES	African-American Spiritual	Afro-American Spiritual	Traditional	Traditional	American Folk Melody	Tradi-tional
TUNE NAME	Let us Break Bread	Let Us Break Bread	N/I	Let us Break Bread	N/I	N/I
METER	10.10 with Refrain	10.10 with Refrain	N/I	10.10 with Refrain	N/I	N/I

Table 3.2 (continued)

TIME SIGNATURE	4/4	2/2	4/4	2/2	2/2	4/4
KEY SIGNATURE	Eb	Eb	Eb	Eb	Eb	Eb
ARR./ADAPTATION YEAR	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I
HARM./ ADAPTATION YEAR	Arr. Melva Wilson Costen 1988	Adapt./arr. Wm. Farley Smith 1986	N/I	N/I	N/I	N/I

Table 4.1 (DIVERGENCE IN TITLES)

PRESB	UMC	CME	AME	COGIC	NNB
Amen, Amen	N/I	Amen!	Amen, Amen	N/I	Amen!
Calvary	N/I	Surely, He Died on Calvary*	N/I	N/I	Surely He Died on Calvary*
N/I	Do, Lord, Remember Me	N/I	N/I	Do Lord, Remember Me	N/I
Go, Tell It on the Mountain	Go,Tell It on the Mountain	Go,Tell It on the Mountain	Go, Tell It on the Mountain	Go, Tell It On the Mountains	Go, Tell It On the Mountain
Great Day!	N/I	Great Day! Great Day!	Great Day	N/I	Great Day! Great Day
He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word	He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word	N/I	N/I	He Never Said a Mumbaling Word	N/I

Table 4.2 (continued)

N/I	He Rose	He Arose	They Crucified My Saviour (He Arose)	He Arose	He Arose
I Love the Lord, Who Heard My Cry	N/I	N/I	N/I	I Love the Lord	N/I
N/I	I Want to Be Ready	N/I	I Want to Be Ready (Walk in Jerusalem Just Like John)	N/I	N/I
I Want Jesus to Walk With Me	I Want Jesus to Walk with Me	Walk with Me	I Want Jesus to Walk with Me	Walk with Me	Walk with Me
N/I	I'm Goin' a SingWhen the Spirit Says Sing	I'm Gonna' Sing	N/I	N/I	I'm Gonna Sing

Table 4.3 (continued)

N/I	It's Me, It's Me O Lord (Standing in the Need of Prayer)	Standin' in the Need of Prayer	N/I	Standin' in the Need of Prayer	Standin' in the Need of Prayer
Kum ba Yah	Kum ba Yah (Come by Here)	Kum ba Yah	N/I	N/I	Kum Ba Yah
Lord, Make Us More Holy	N/I	N/I	Lord, Make Me More Holy	N/I	N/I
N/I	N/I	Oh Freedom	N/I	O Freedom	Oh Freedom
Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow	N/I	Rise Up, Shepherd	Dere's a Star in de East (Rise up, Shepherd)	Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow	Rise up, Shepherd
N/I	N/I	Some O' These Days	N/I	Some of These Days	Some O' These Days
N/I	Steal Away to Jesus	Steal Away to Jesus!	N/I	N/I	Steal Away to Jesus!
N/I	Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	Swing Low	Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	Swing Low

Table 4.4 (continued)

When Israel Was in Egypt's Land	Go Down, Moses	Go Down, Moses	N/I	N/I	Go Down, Moses

TABLE 5.1 (Tune Names)

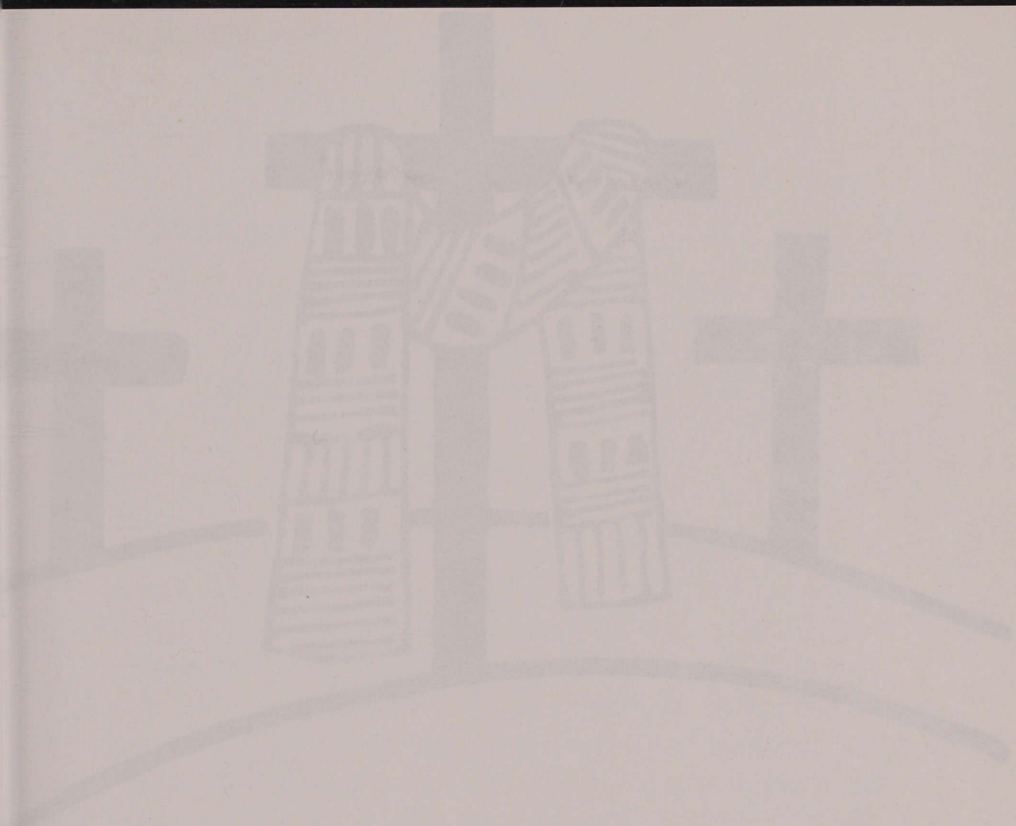
Spiritual	Tune Name	Hymnal Source
Amen, Amen	AMEN	AME
Come Out of the Wilderness	TURNER	UMC
Do, Lord, Remember Me	DITIMUS	UMC
Every Time I Feel The Spirit	PENTECOST	PRESB/ UMC
Fix Me, Jesus	FIX ME JESUS	UMC
Go, Tell It on the Mountain	GO TELL IT	PRESB/
	GO TELL IT ON THE MOUNTAIN	AME
Great Day!	GREAT DAY	AME
Guide My Feet	GUIDE MY FEET	PRESB/ AME
He Is King of Kings	HE IS KING	PRESB
He Never Said a Mumbalin' Word	SUFFERER	UMC
He Rose	ASCENTIUS	UME
	HE AROSE	AME
I Couldn't Hear Nobody Pray	COULDN'T HEAR NOBODY PRAY	AME
I Got a New Name	NEW NAME	AME
I Know I've Been Changed	CHANGED MY NAME	AME
I Know the Lord's Laid His Hands on Me	HANDS ON ME	AME
I Want Jesus to Walk With Me	SOJOURNER	PRESB/ UMC
	WALK WITH ME	AME
I Want to Be Ready	I WANT TO BE READY	UMC
	WALK IN JERUSALEM	AME
I Will Trust in the Lord	I WILL TRUST	UMC
I'll Be Alright	I'LL BE ALRIGHT	AME
I'm Goin'a Sing When the Spirit Says Sing	I'M GOIN'A SING	UMC
I'm Gonna Live So God Can Use Me	I'M GONNA LIVE	PRESB/ AME

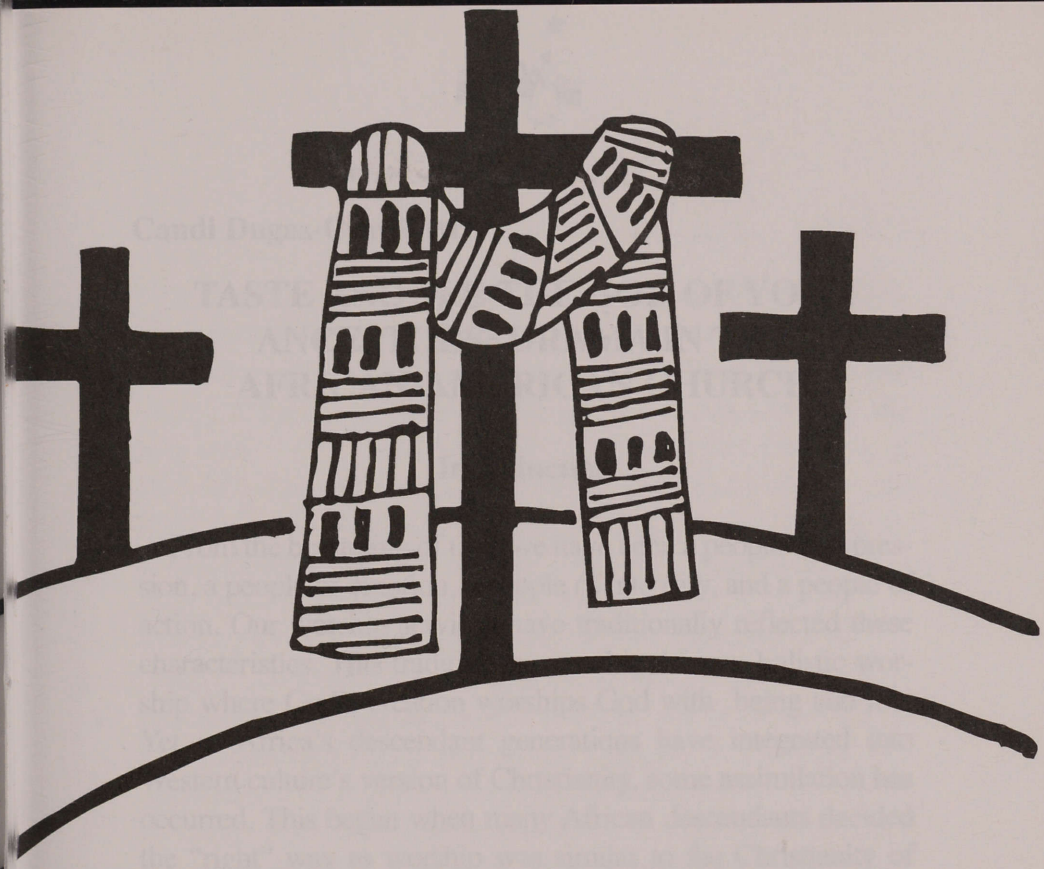
TABLE 5.2 (continued)

In Christ There Is No East or West	MCKEE	PRESB/ UMC/ AME
It's Me, It's Me, O, Lord	PENITENT	UMC
Kum ba Yah	DESMOND	UMC
Let Us Break Bread Together	LET US BREAK BREAD	PRESB/ UMC/ AME
Lord, I Want to Be a Christian	I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN	PRESB/ UMC/ AME
My Lord! What a Morning	BURLEIGH WHAT A MORNIN	UMC AME
Nobody Knows the Trouble I See	DUBOIS	UMC
O Mary, Don't You Weep	O MARY	UMC AME
O the Rocks and the Mountains	O THE ROCKS AND THE MOUNTAINS	AME
Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow	RISE UP SHEPHERD	AME
See Four and Twenty Elders	FOUR AND TWE NTY ELDERS	AME
Somebody's Knocking at Your door	SOMEBODY KNOCKING	PRESB
Steal Away to Jesus	STEAL AWAY	UMC/ AME
Sweet Jesus	SWEET JESUS	AME
Swing Low, Sweet Chariot	SWING LOW	UMC/ AME
There Is a Balm in Gilead	BALM IN GILEAD	PRESB/ UMC/ AME/ COGIC
This Little Light of Mine	LATTIMER	UMC
'Tis the Old Ship of Zion	YARMOUTH	UMC

TABLE 5.3 (continued)

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder	JACOB'S LADDER	UMC/ AME
We Are Walking in the Light	WALK IN THE LIGHT	AME
We Shall Overcome	MARTIN	UMC
Were You There?	WERE YOU THERE	PRESB/ UMC/ AME
When Israel Was in Egypt's Land	GO DOWN MOSES TUBMAN	PRESB/ UMC





"TO KNOW THE SPIRITUALS IS TO PLUNGE NAKEDLY INTO THE RIVER OF ANCIENT, ANCESTRAL ARCHETYPES. TO BE KNOWN BY THE SPIRITUALS IS TO ALLOW... THE SEED OF UNDERSTANDING TO IMPREGNATE THE SOUL."

STEPHEN E. LEE