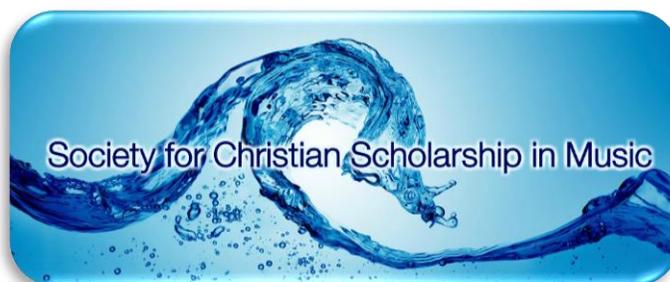


# SCSM

## NEWSLETTER



### From the President Andrew Shenton

Since the annual meeting of the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music at Boston University in February 2017, the SCSM executive committee has been busy working on several projects.

Incoming President M. Jennifer Bloxam and I are editing the SCSM's first book, which we are delighted to announce will be published by Lexington Books in spring 2017 (for more details, see page 8).

The SCSM continues our support of the work of graduate students by providing a prize for the best student paper read at the annual meeting each year and devoting a panel session focused on topics of import to emerging scholars at each annual meeting. We have also recently established a scholarship fund to support student travel to the annual meeting, which will be available to students once it has been funded to a higher level.

Other initiatives in the pipeline include developments to our website and social media presence, researching tax-exempt status for the Society, the possibility of a future conference in England, and initiatives to increase our membership.

I am grateful for the work of the SCSM Executive Committee, whose members work hard to develop the Society and to promote the work we do.

Elections are an important way for the Society to strengthen and grow through strong leadership, so I strongly encourage you to vote in the upcoming elections. And I would like to take this opportunity to thank the nominating committee, under the leadership of Siegwart Reichwald, for their work in presenting an impressive slate of candidates this year.

Finally, plans are well underway for the next conference which will be at Scripps College in California. We hope you will be able to join us for what promises to be a wonderful meeting! Please see the next page for more details.



*Andrew Shenton is Associate Professor of Music and Houghton Scholar of Sacred Music at Boston University.*

### Issue No. 7, Fall 2016

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## Annual Meeting, 2017: Scripps College, Claremont, CA

The next annual meeting of the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music will be held February 9-11, 2017, at Scripps College, Claremont, CA.

The program committee for 2017, chaired by Effie Papanikolaou, is completing its work, following the October 1 deadline for proposals. In addition to the paper sessions growing out of this process, the meeting will feature several special events.



*Craig Russell*

We are pleased to announce the Keynote Speaker for the meeting will be [Dr. Craig H. Russell](#), who will speak on a topic that relates intimately to the location of Scripps College in southern California: “Friar Juan Bautista Sancho—Tracing the Origins of California’s First Composer and the Early Mission Style.”

The conference will include a recital by [Anne Harley](#) (soprano) and [Andrew Shenton](#) (organ) at United Church of Christ in Claremont, CA, which houses a wonderful instrument by [Glatter-Götz](#); and a student panel, hosted by our student representative, Megan Francisco.

Full details will be posted to the [website](#) once they are available. We encourage you to book early and join us for what promises to be a memorable conference.



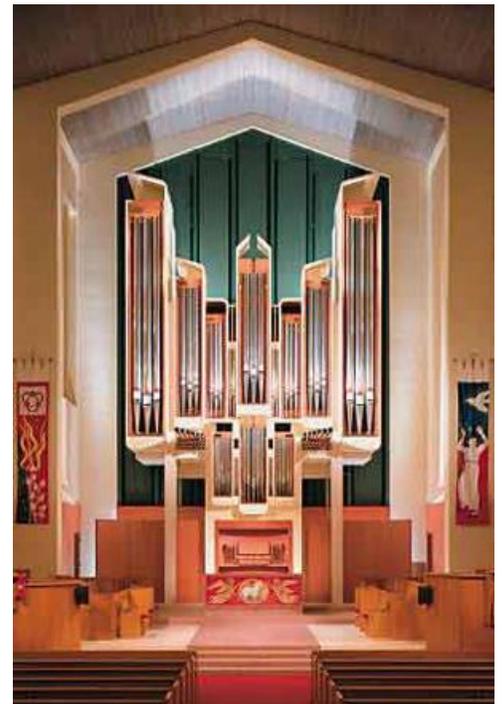
*Megan Francisco*



*Anne Harley*



*Andrew Shenton*



*Claremont United Church of Christ*

## Graduate Student Profiles



### Chad Fothergill

*Ph.D. in Musicology, Temple University, second year*

**Research Interests:** My research interests are centered around Lutheran church music of the late Renaissance and Baroque—especially the literary, pedagogical, and extra-musical activities of Lutheran cantors throughout the period.

**Experiences with SCSM:** The February 2016 meeting in Boston was my first time attending and presenting at the annual SCSM gathering. As the sole member of my graduate cohort researching a religious topic, I found it both instructive and affirming to spend time with students and faculty who also negotiate the rewards and challenges situated at the intersections of faith, music, congregational life, academic endeavors, and everything in between. I regret not being able to join you this winter in Claremont, but look forward to 2018 and beyond!



### Nathan Myrick

*Ph.D. in Church Music, Baylor University, second year*

**Research interests:** My research focuses on the intersection of music and theology in the congregational environment using ethnography and critical theory as primary methodologies. My dissertation research focuses on the construction of an asystematic care ethics of congregational song.

**Experiences with SCSM:** I presented a paper for the annual meeting at Boston University, 2016, and had a fabulous time interacting with peers and senior scholars from the various disciplines represented at SCSM.



### Marcell Steuernagel

*Ph.D. in Church Music, Baylor University, second year*

**Research interests:** I am a composer (that is my minor in the doctoral program, as well). I am interested in the use of contemporary compositional techniques in music composed for liturgy and worship contexts. I am interested in what the use of these compositional techniques does in this setting. What changes, for instance, when I decide to use spectral music instead of twelve-tone music in a prelude? I am also investigating the musical byproducts of the negotiation of power differentials in worship. In binaries such as familiar/unfamiliar, contemporary/traditional, North/South, and others like it, the performance of music in the context of worship represents an important stage on which these conflicts are negotiated. I

have been examining the musical artifacts that result from these tensions, how the conversations shape them, and how they influence and modify the conversations. Finally, my dissertation will probably focus on the application of Performance Theory to congregational song. Triangulating ethnomusicology, performance studies, and congregational song studies, I propose to contribute to the growing methodological resources available for the study of congregational song.

**Experiences with SCSM:** I presented at the SCSM annual meeting in Boston in February, 2016. It was a great experience. It was particularly refreshing to be in an environment where excellence in scholarship and Christian identity intersect so fruitfully. I found it to be a safe environment, and the people I met, and the conversations I had, encouraged me to continue research and academic work as a calling.

## Behind the Musical Text: Faith Seeking Understanding through Music

Maeve Louise Heaney

“Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart. Try to love the questions themselves, like locked rooms and like books written in a foreign language.”

Rainer Maria Rilke, *Letters to a Young Poet*

The Society for Christian Scholarship in Music exists to explore the intersections of Christian faith and musical scholarship, and to aim for excellence in that quest. It seems to me that for the advancement of knowledge in any area, questions are as important as answers, but in an interdisciplinary one such as this, they are essential. Our unsolved questions lead the way through the diversity of methodologies within which each discipline works and help “break the ground” in interdisciplinary research.

Jeremy Begbie, in the [fall 2013 issue of this newsletter](#), invited us to hold to the “faith specific” nature of those questions and explorations, not because faith closes us to others, but because only in owning who we are, what we know and *how* we know it, can we possibly come to respect, grasp, and be enriched by anything else. Life is particular and universal all at once: one does not cancel the other out. In fact, if we can access or know the universal at all, it is through the particular, the concrete, the here and now of our human living. From there we can find the traces that unite us to other human experiences.

So in that light, the ongoing and visceral question in relation to music and theology that I bring to this issue of the *SCSM Newsletter* is around the experience of composing Christian music, or the Christian experience of composing music (which perhaps describes better my underlying query), and its relevance to theology. The question is twofold:

1. Does our experience of, and faith in, an incarnated Christ and his ongoing presence in the world (which Paul calls the body of Christ, Johannine literature calls the vine and branches, and all Christians accept, in one form or another, as truth) affect or come through in the writing and performing of a piece of music, and, if so, how?
2. And, taking it a step further into the theological realm, is there anything about the way we make music that could open spaces of understanding in different ways that could enrich the theological endeavor?

Both questions are born of experience. The first asks about the sacramentality of the sung word. A few years ago, I wrote a song on the need we have to break through barriers that deafen us to God’s voice to experience God’s presence. It was a song born of my own felt distance from God. When we recorded it, I chose to get a friend to sing it: her voice was more powerful than mine and more fitting for the style of the song. On hearing the song, one of my closest colleagues in this whole music and theology endeavor said something that has stayed with me: “It is good, but you have not taught her to pray when she sings.” The fact is that she was right. But how could she tell? I know not. I just know that she knew. And that you *could*, in fact, tell the difference. Who we are and what we are living comes through in our music, at least to some extent.

The second question is the constant, underlying one I have about what being a musician who writes, performs, and records music born of faith, and prayer, has to offer academic theology, the age-old and ever-changing endeavor of “faith seeking understanding.” Does faith seeking an understanding of itself *through* music (alongside or before words) add something that the words proclaimed in our prayers and creeds, or the concepts written in our books, do not or cannot? This may seem like the umbrella question covering nearly every aspect of theology’s intersection with musical meaning, but, from where I am standing, it is focused specifically, and hermeneutically, on the “behind the text” of music-making *as experienced and understood* by those who make music, and this as an intrinsic aspect of their quest to make sense of faith. Jean-Jacques Nattiez’s wider hermeneutical framework as applied to music expands the three dimensions of meaning-making of literary interpretation to six approaches, in the attempt to include music’s ineffability via an exploration of its effect on those who listen, as well as the life and experience of its composer and/or performers. My question focuses on that dimension Nattiez calls “external poetics”: what does the life and thought of the composer tell us about the music we are analyzing? Some would say nothing, at least in terms of its theological comprehension, that it is free to “mean” whatever the listener makes of it. But can we really separate in such a radical way our human and spiritual experience from what it creates?

The proposal is to investigate our experience of music-making as a *locus theologicus* for revelation: how does God reveal Godself to us *through the process of making music*? Moving from experience through reflection to understanding is not new to theological method as a whole: what is perhaps newer is paying attention to music-making as a part of this process. To do so contravenes the implicit academic rule of not writing about one's own "poetry," but I can see no way to avoid it if we are to seek and explore the issue to the end!

My own composing—and perhaps this is cheating—involves music and words, but what I find interesting is that, as the years have gone by, the process has shifted: initially I wrote from words to music; now I tend to start with music, and seek the words that echo, or express, or fit with the music that has emerged. I think this is because I am gradually learning to trust and listen more to music as an access point to experience—beneath the surface and before the words—rather than ensuring music's meaning with a text that both inspires and controls it. The result is both surprising and reassuring at the same time. Is there a theological way of grasping what is at work?

Perhaps in Trinitarian key. Canadian theologian Bernard Lonergan—drawing on Augustine's notion of the two missions of the Trinity, that of the Word and that of the Spirit—speaks of the double mission of the Son and the Spirit. He refers to them as the Inner Word and the Outer Word of revelation: the inner word is the Holy Spirit, poured out *universally* into our hearts (Romans 5:5); the outer word is Jesus Christ in his *historical* mission. Lonergan suggests, however, that while historically we place the mission of the Spirit after that of the Son, our experience of God's presence and revelation in practice works the other way around: the Spirit poured out into the heart opens and prepares us for the Word, proclaimed and witnessed, that clarifies and defines it. Without the Spirit, "the Word enters unto his own, but his own receive him not." Similarly, "without the visible mission of the Word, the gift of the Spirit is a being-in-love without a proper object; it remains simply an orientation to mystery that awaits its interpretation" (Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit," in *A Third Collection* [Paulist Press, New York, 1985], 23-34).

Seeking to understand how music works in the experience of lived faith experience is a fascinating intuition. Could the music that emerges from a place of prayer express or reveal something of the Spirit's movement in the heart, which the words explain, interpret, and consolidate? Or, conversely, is the shared ecclesial meaning of the words of song carried to the heart by the silent, kenotic Spirit through the music that sings

them? And if that is the case, how could we explore it? Steve Guthrie's reflection on "The God of In-Between Spaces" (*SCSM Newsletter 6, spring 2016*) brings to mind John V. Taylor's notion of the Holy Spirit as the *Go-Between God*: the personal presence of God in all the I-Thou, annunciation-type encounters that interrupt us with a sense of God's addressing us. George Steiner, in his ground-breaking book *Real Presences*, also offers the image of the Annunciation as a metaphor of how art interrupts and invades us, never leaving us the same as we were before the encounter. Could music be an in-between space that somehow "carries" the meaning of our revelatory texts into the hearts and minds of those making and/or listening to music, albeit in different ways?

To conclude, let me come back to where I started: our unsolved questions are secret-holders to new worlds, and it is the world of creative music-making that I believe has something to offer our shared scholarship. What happens within and between us when we make music? Is it similar or different to when we write words, and how? Could we write more about writing? The invitation is to explore, with the patience and love that unlock God's promises, how we experience the link between music-making, spirituality, and thought. It may surprise us.

#### Suggestions for further reading

- Heaney, Maeve Louise. *Music as Theology: What Music Has to Say about the Word*. Princeton Theological Monograph Series 184. Eugene, OR, 2012.
- Heaney, Maeve Louise. "Music and Theological Method: A Lonerganian Approach." *Theological Studies* 77 (2016): 678-703.
- Lonergan, Bernard J. F. "Art" in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan. Vol. 10: Topics in Education*, 208-32. Toronto, 1993.
- Lonergan, Bernard J. F. "Mission and the Spirit" in *A Third Collection*, 23-34. New York, 1985.
- Nattiez, Jean-Jacques, *Music and Discourse: Toward a Semiology of Music*. Princeton, 1990.
- Taylor, John V. *The Go-between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission*. London, 1972.



Dr. Maeve Louise Heaney is a consecrated missionary of the *Verbum Dei Community* and lecturer in theology at Australian Catholic University, based in Brisbane.

## Resources on the Arts in Christian Perspective: *Creator Spirit*

Mark Peters

In fall 2015, I faced the exciting, and daunting, task of teaching Aesthetics for the first time. I was joined in the course by an outstanding group of art and design, music, philosophy, and theology students who brought a willingness to engage our topic collaboratively and creatively. In addition to the positive and diverse perspectives of my students, I attribute much of the course's success to our starting point, Steven R. Guthrie's *Creator Spirit: The Holy Spirit and the Art of Being Human* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), a book which propelled us into meaningful questions and conversations relating to the arts in theological perspective.

*Creator Spirit* reflects Guthrie's deep understanding of, and love for, theology and the arts. Guthrie explores the work of the Holy Spirit as a humanizing work and the arts as a fundamental expression of what it means to be human. *Creator Spirit* proved highly beneficial for my students and me as we sought common cross-disciplinary language with which to engage the arts in Christian perspective. I highly recommend it as text to read with students, or individually, to consider rich interrelationships among theology and the arts.

Guthrie provides an orientation to *Creator Spirit* in Chapter 1, beginning with the common conception of a close association between spirituality and the arts. He explores the nature of this association in historical and present contexts, probing what it has meant for various theologians, philosophers, and artists. Guthrie particularly probes Romanticism's association of spirituality with what is unknown and unspeakable, a locating of "art and spirituality in the domain of mystery—that which cannot be fully explored, understood, or known—and ineffability—that which exceeds verbal, rational, or conceptual articulation" (7). Guthrie instead defines spirituality through a connection with the person and work of the third person of the Trinity, God the Holy Spirit. Drawing upon the tradition of early church theologians such as Athanasius, Gregory of Nazianzus, and Basil the Great, Guthrie approaches spirituality not as something unknowable, but rather from the perspective of the Holy Spirit's work of communication, enlightenment, and revelation. The Holy Spirit both reveals knowledge and enables humans to communicate in response to that knowledge.

Guthrie further follows Athanasius, Gregory, and Basil in highlighting the ultimate response to the revelatory work of the Holy Spirit: worship. These early theologians

stressed both "that the pursuit of knowledge springs from the experience of worship" and "that this pursuit of knowledge finds its consummation in worship" (15). Guthrie sums up this perspective, in contrast to Romantic notions of art's ineffability, stating: "It is here, in fact—in worship, in adoration—that we find a far richer resemblance between art and spirituality; not in ineffability understood simplistically as 'not knowing,' but in a movement that arises from love, is carried along in worship, and finds fulfillment in participation" (16). Guthrie then presents his understanding of art as "a communicative act that aims at the collaborative activity of mutual love" (19).

Framed by this introductory chapter, Guthrie proceeds to explore these ideas in relation to a wide array of artistic examples in the book's three main sections. Guthrie opens Part 1, The Making of a Human, with a chapter probing John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme* as counterexample to the expressionist philosophy of art expounded by Leo Tolstoy in *What Is Art?* Guthrie sets Coltrane's yearning, embodied, and personal voice against expressionism's sense of a spirituality that seeks to transcend humanity. He argues (within the context of the incarnation of Jesus Christ) that the Holy Spirit's work is to form us fully into our humanity so that we might inhabit our humanness more and more deeply. Guthrie states: "In order to convey 'spirituality' Coltrane has employed musical devices that intensify our sense of his humanity, devices that encourage the impression of intimacy, of encountering the performer's voice" (34).

Guthrie continues this theme of enfleshment in Chapter 3, "Remaking Human Bodies," arguing against a theology that considers body and spirit opposing elements. Guthrie highlights Plato's *Symposium* as presenting a perspective on beauty that points away from—beyond—the physical world to a disembodied "spiritual" reality. Guthrie points us instead to the examples of Wassily Kandinsky's abstract paintings and Arnold Schoenberg's atonal music as deeply embodied, sensual experiences of art grounded in physical reality: Kandinsky and Schoenberg require us to deeply look and see, listen and hear. Guthrie concludes: "If the work of the Spirit is to bring life, vitality, and wholeness to bodies, then it is much easier to explain our intuition that there is something spiritual about the arts. In music, painting, and other arts, our senses are engaged and enlarged, our physical experience both refined and broadened. We attend carefully to both the world and to our own physical experience of it. . . . We

become, in a very real sense, more fully embodied, more fully incarnate" (69-70).

Part I of *Creator Spirit* concludes with a chapter focused on congregational singing in Christian worship, building on the idea that our embodied humanity is "bound up with communities and relationships, with traditions and social practices" (72) and that the perfecting work of the Holy Spirit will "inevitably have a social dimension" (73). Guthrie argues that the restoring, re-creating work of the Holy Spirit applies not only to our individual selves, but also to "the restoration of human community" (75). He explores this idea in relation to Christian congregational song by way of Ephesians 5:19-21, in which the filling of the Holy Spirit results in four specific actions: speaking to one another in songs, hymns, and spiritual songs; singing and making music in your hearts; giving thanks to the Lord; and submitting to one another (79). Guthrie explains that in corporate singing the church both announces and enacts "the new community the Spirit has created in Christ" (80). And Guthrie further grounds this idea in a rich theology of the Trinity, the mutual love, submission, communion, and "eternal offering of one to another of Father, Son, and Spirit" (84).

Growing out of this rich theological framework, Guthrie moves to specifically address the role of artists in Part 2, *The Spirit's Making and Ours*. After exploring in Chapter 5 the de-personalized views of artistic inspiration so common in Western culture, Guthrie counters in Chapter 6 with a biblical perspective on artistic inspiration as empowered by the Holy Spirit. He particularly focuses on the characteristics of the Spirit-filled artists who led the making of the tabernacle (Exodus 35:30-36:2).

Part 2 culminates in Chapter 7, "Finding Our Voices: The Spirit of Freedom," in which Guthrie presents one key work of the Holy Spirit as the enabling of human expression. The chapter expounds a Christian theological framework for artistic inspiration that Guthrie summarizes thus: "In the act of creating, . . . the artist hears both the voice of creation and the voice of culture. As the artist hears and responds to these voices, she may be said to be (in a qualified but important sense) 'inspired'—that is, breathed into by God's Spirit. Nevertheless, even in these moments of inspiration the artist's individuality is not lost; her own voice is not drowned out. . . . All of this reflects a creation brought into being and governed by the God of gift and the Spirit of freedom" (141).

Throughout *Creator Spirit*, Guthrie highlights the restorative work of the Holy Spirit: the Spirit restores sight and speech and freedom. Guthrie begins Part 3, A

World Remade, by presenting another work of the Holy Spirit, the restoration of our vocation. Guthrie identifies this restored human vocation as a discernment that is both responsive and creative: "As human beings we have the high calling of, first of all, *seeing the world truly* and, secondly, *speaking of and for the world—faithfully, creatively, and redemptively*" (153).

Guthrie frames this discussion around Anne Tyler's *Saint Maybe*, exploring first the theme of responsive discernment, or "discerning the Spirit in all things" (156), then creative discernment, "discerning all things in the Spirit" (167). Guthrie argues that the artist both names truths about the world and, in so doing, communicates that the world does not have to be this way. Through this concept of "redemptive renaming" (171), he invites us to consider ways that the arts can reimagine the world in light of God's redemptive plan.

In the book's final two chapters, Guthrie takes on huge conversations in the realms of art and aesthetics by addressing beauty. In opposition to commonly held conceptions of beauty in Western culture, Guthrie argues for a consideration of beauty in eschatological perspective that anticipates God's restoration of all things in the new creation. At the heart of Guthrie's final two chapters is the concept of "crucified beauty" (192-95), an understanding of beauty in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Key here is the Gospel account that Jesus's resurrection body still bore the scars of crucifixion: "he showed them his hands and his side" (John 20:20). Guthrie explains: "The marks of human history, indeed of human sinfulness, depravity, and injustice, are indelibly inscribed upon the flesh of the resurrected Lord, carried into the life of the new creation by the Spirit and transfigured" (195).

It is only in this context that we are invited to consider how we as Christians might think of beauty in the arts in light of a long Christian tradition that recognizes that "to hope for the kingdom of God in its fullness is to hope for beauty" (197). Steven Guthrie has provided us—as artists and theologians, and, fundamentally, as humans—with a rich resource to help us embrace and live into that hope.



Mark Peters is professor of music at Trinity Christian College, Palos Heights, IL.

## SCSM News

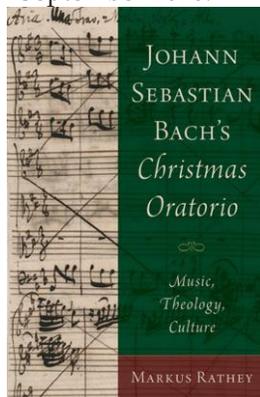
**M. Jennifer Bloxam and Andrew Shenton** are co-editing the first publication from the SCSM. Entitled *Exploring Christian Song*, the essay collection is devoted to exploring the richness of Christian musical traditions from ancient chant to contemporary African-American Gospel music, reflecting the distinctive critical perspectives of the Society. The collection draws on selected keynotes from the past fifteen years, along with a core of essays by notable senior scholars associated with the Society and three outstanding essays by junior scholars who have won the prize for best graduate student paper at our annual meeting in recent years. The essays in this collection are ecumenical, reflecting the worldwide diversity of Christian traditions. They range from explorations of Catholic sacred music in the Renaissance through German Lutheran song in the 18th century to close analyses of specific works by Arvo Pärt and Zoltán Kodály. Two powerful strands of contemporary American sacred song—African-American Gospel and evangelical “praise and worship” music—further diversify the scope of the volume. These eight essays are enclosed by three essays that aim, in different ways, to illuminate global ecumenical connections among Christian song communities. The volume will be published in spring 2017 by Lexington Books.

**Aaron James** received the Ph.D. in musicology in May 2016 at the Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester. His dissertation, “Transforming the Motet: Sigmund Salminger and the Adaptation and Reuse of Franco-

Flemish Polyphony in Reformation Augsburg,” was completed under the direction of Honey Meconi. He currently serves as an adjunct instructor of music history at the College Music Department of the University of Rochester.



**Markus Rathey's** monograph *Johann Sebastian Bach's Christmas Oratorio: Music, Theology, Culture* was released by Oxford University Press in September 2016.



**Timothy Steele** contributed a booklet on music as part of *The Faithful Learning Series*, ed. Jay D. Green ([P&R Publishing](#)).

The **Center for Christian Music Studies** at Baylor University is sponsoring the colloquium “Church Music and the Reformation,” September 28-29, 2017. The call for papers is available on the [CCMS website](#).

**SCSM**  
Society for Christian Scholarship in Music

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For membership and other information, please visit the SCSM website, [scsmusic.org](http://scsmusic.org)

Please submit newsletter ideas and inquiries to Mark Peters [mark.peters@trnty.edu](mailto:mark.peters@trnty.edu)