

Introducing *The Artistic Theologian*

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The Artistic Theologian is designed to provide a place for publication, research, discussion, and resources for those engaged in worship and artistic ministry. We hope it will create points of connection between worship leaders, pastors, church music scholars, theologians, and students preparing for ministry. The journal and its allied resources support the point of view that a church musician should be an artist and a theologian, and it addresses the need to increase dialogue between pastors and church musicians. The peer-reviewed articles will examine in detail crucial topics. The book reviews will heighten awareness of recent publications in the field. The online posts are intended to encourage interaction and discussion of current issues. The professors' corner on the website features syllabi from church music classes from various institutions. The peer-reviewed articles and selected book reviews will be published annually each fall, discussions will be posted each week, and the website will be continually updated with supplemental research and resources between journal editions.

This first edition of *The Artistic Theologian* consists of four peer-reviewed articles and several book reviews. The subject matter of the four articles reflect the variety the reader will find in each edition. Topics for this edition include worship leadership preparation, aesthetics, congregational song, and culture.

Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary, uses a series of propositions to discuss the role of the pastor in the worship life of a local congregation. He asserts that poetry and music are integral parts of worship and require understanding and preparation on the part of the pastor. A companion article will be featured in the second edition of the journal titled, "Why Church Musicians Should be Learned in Theology and Pastoral Care."

T. David Gordon, Professor of Religion and Greek at Grove City College, frames a discussion of the biblical foundation of aesthetics with the creation account in Genesis. He asserts that just as God is the foundation of justice and truth, so too is he the foundation for beauty. Readers will appreciate his insights as in his books, *Why Johnny Can't Sing Hymns: How Pop Culture Rewrote the Hymnal* and *Why Johnny Can't Preach: The Media Have Shaped the Messengers*.

Jonathan Blackmon, Associate Professor of Church Music and Worship Arts at Missouri Baptist University, writes a timely congregational song article about Scripture, Shekinah, and sacred song. He asserts that God's Word and God's Presence should directly shape the song of God's people. Concluding the article, Blackmon analyzes

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three hymns. Church music scholars, worship leaders, and students will be able to use his analysis technique as a model for evaluating hymns.

Scott Aniol, Instructor of Church Music at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and author of *Worship in Song: A Biblical Approach to Music and Worship*, seeks to define culture from a New Testament perspective. Aniol compares popular anthropological and evangelical definitions of culture to New Testament Scripture, and he asserts that behavior or the way of life most closely resembles a Biblical definition of culture. This study has numerous implications and applications for ministry and worship.

I invite you to submit an article for our next edition. The selected articles will form the flow and direction of each edition rather than a pre-designed theme. Specific format and submission information are listed on the journal's web site. The entire issue can be downloaded as a PDF file, or each article can be downloaded and used as needed. The journal is designed and numbered for ease of academic citation. Please join us, make a significant contribution to worship and artistic ministry, and engage in the tasks God has given to every believer.