

How We Seek God Together: Exploring Worship Style ^[1]

Product Type:

[Book](#) ^[2]

Citation:

Clark, Linda J., Joanne Swenson, and Mark Stamm. How We Seek God Together: Exploring Worship Style. [Bethesda, MD:] The Alban Institute, 2001.

Abstract:

How We Seek God Together profiles three Methodist congregations in and around the Boston area to explore their unique worship styles which, according to authors Linda Clark, Joanne Swenson and Mark Stamm, display these churches' inner, communal life and communicate their faith in the nature of God and the religious community. The churches studied are Community United Methodist Church (Byfield, Massachusetts), Carter Memorial United Methodist Church (Needham, Massachusetts), and Columbus Avenue African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (Boston). The book, along with a professionally-produced videotape by the same name, is designed to serve as an "evocative starting point" for churches and their leaders to use in probing their own worship styles and what those styles mean for their faith. <p> The book features chapters on each congregation, written by Swenson (on the rural Community UMC), Stamm (on the suburban Carter Memorial UMC), and Clark (on the urban Columbus Avenue AME Zion Church). Though sharing the same denominational tradition (Wesleyan/Methodist) and general evangelical convictions, these churches each display different worship practices or "signature symbols" which distinguish their religious lives from that of others and interpret their understanding of God and of God's presence in their midst. Far from being superficial, a congregation's style represents "the face of its soul, a vital expression of its character" that shapes and is shaped by its piety or its faith, life and witness. <p> An Introduction to the Worship, Music and Religious Identity Project and a first chapter on style and piety precede the three essays on the congregations, which are followed by a chapter suggesting how other churches can explore their own style and piety. A list of questions or "Aids to Discussion" conclude each chapter. Four appendices, including recently-published musical resources, a select bibliography of congregational and worship resources, the project's research design, and the questionnaire researchers used to gather information, round out the book.

Authors:

[Joanne Swenson](#) ^[3]

[Linda J. Clark](#) ^[4]

[Mark Stamm](#) ^[5]

Related Project:

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