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# Songs for a Gospel People: A Supplement to the Hymn Book (1971)

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sentences". Generally he is closer to the former, except for the last entry which is usually of a "let us" variety urging some response to the text.

It is in fact those last entries to his series of "moves" which get to be annoying because they are invariably of a hortatory nature. A "let us..." functions exactly like a "must" or an "ought" or a "should", and thus each set of moves ends up in "law" language. Such language does not create faith nor obedience; it vitiates gospel and promise. Ignore these last entries.

Biddle encourages users of the workbook to read Buttrick and other homileticians. I would second that. I suspect that without an understanding of how "moves" are designed and of the "logic" which links them into a coherent sequence, Biddle's series of "Homiletical Moves" will become not only so many "points" (which are anathema to Buttrick), but will encourage a dull rehearsal of the text with an hortatory moral tacked on at the end.

Nevertheless, users will certainly benefit from the exegetical commentary and other format features, and gain significant help from Biddle's brief overview of the lectionaries, his thoughts about becoming more creative in preaching, his introduction to the liturgical seasons, and his bibliography of preaching and worship resources.

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## Songs For A Gospel People

Edited by R. Gerald Hobbs

Winfield, British Columbia: Wood Lake Books, 1987

A new thoroughly singable collection of hymns old and new has been compiled to reflect the diversity and heritage of the Christian church in today's world. Published under the auspices of the United Church of Canada, as a supplement to their *Hymnal* (1930) and *The Hymn Book* (1971), the hymnody attempts to bear

the mark of today's church. It is ecumenical, drawing from all members of the family of God throughout the world. It is pluralist, recognizing that in the church we are a mixed community, and that our words and musical styles need to reflect that diversity. It is biblical and rooted in our church's story, because being faithful in the great issues of justice and peace in our world means drawing nourishment from our past. It is inclusive, imaging and nurturing the wholeness of the body of Christ (foreword).

A public request for new Canadian hymns by the editorial committee presented them with the incredible task of sorting through 3,000 submissions. Only 12 of these are included in the book, but with selections from

Fred Kaan, Jim Strathdee, Jim Manley and Ron Klusmeier, plus songs from differing faith backgrounds, an excellent offering of current hymnody is presented.

The Biblical Index, besides being of great assistance in worship preparation, reflects the faithfilled attention given to an authentic reflection of our Christian legacy. The texts of the hymns give particular attention to the current concerns for more extensive imagery for God, and for responses that are genuine in today's church. Heritage hymns such as "All people that on Earth Do Dwell" and "O For a Thousand Tongues" have gained a sensitive renewal.

The tunes are generally rendered in four-part harmony, with an easy melody line and the words between the staves. The musical needs of the small choirs and the limited resources of many small churches have been addressed. Family tunes and new words for old songs along with the generous inclusion of "old" favourites such as "Amazing Grace" and "How Great Thou Art", create a medium for enthusiastic singing.

There will be many reactions to the song book. Organists will miss a metrical index and a listing of sources. I anticipated more new hymns, but having reflected on the new renditions of many old hymns, I appreciate this resource and am grateful for its being published. It can be used extensively as an agent for integrating our worship, for allowing people of all persuasions to have a voice; the traditional and the liberated, the conservative and the feminist. I pray that it will be compassionately received and people will be drawn to the potential newness it presents.

Enid R. Powell  
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## **Counseling and the Search for Meaning**

Paul R. Welter  
Waco, Texas: Word Books

I approached this volume with considerable anticipation. Questions of meaning are often present when a person seeks out a pastor or counselor. Society, including psychologists and psychiatrists, offers a variety of answers to questions of meaning: wealth, security, power, self-actualization, becoming more effectively and comfortably focused on meeting our own needs, and so forth. The Christian church also has a set of visions concerning meaning. Those visions often stand in some conflict with societal visions.

The pastor or other Christian counselor has the opportunity to play a special role in helping troubled persons work through issues of meaning. Indeed, pastors can talk about the Gospel and its implications for