

THE ROLE OF GOSPEL MUSIC IN WORSHIP AT GBI DESA BARU PANCUR BATU SUB-DISTRICT DELI SERDANG REGENCY

NovitaRomauli Saragih¹⁾, Selamat Karo-Karo²⁾, PardameanHotmauli Malau³⁾
Padriadi Wiharjokusumo⁴⁾, Dameria Girsang⁵⁾, Pangihutan Siringoringo⁶⁾

^{1,2,3}UniversitasDarmaAgung

^{4,5}Akademi PariwisataadanPerhotelanDarmaAgung

⁶STT LintasBudayaBatam

Email :

novitaromauli12@gmail.com; [selamatkaro@gmail.com](mailto:salamatkaro@gmail.com); pardamean.damai@gmail.com;
knb.ministry76@gmail.com
mberhul@gmail.com; pringo010667@gmail.com

Abstract

The lack of understanding of God's people towards the role of gospel music in worship at GBI Desa Baru, Pancur Batu District, Deli Serdang Regency, becomes an important issue and the reason why the lecturers of Darma Agung University and Tourism & Hotel Academy of DarmaAgung carry out the service at the church. The purpose of the community service is to explore the role of gospel music in worship and equip the congregation to implement it in worship life both in church and outside the church. Community education and Focus Group Discussion (FGD) are the methods in this community service activity. The results of community service increase the congregation's understanding of the role of gospel music in worship.

Keywords: *gospel music, worship, church.*

INTRODUCTION

Music is a medium of communication that can cross almost anything, such as geographic, ideological, or racial barriers. Music has a unique ability to touch the soul and move the heart. His book is entitled "Mobilizing the Army of God." Joyner said that music is a language of the spirit. Those who know this language will use it effectively.¹ Joyner goes so far as to believe that music is a powerful weapon in the battle for the human heart. "Anointed music will be one of the greatest weapons of the church in the battle of the last days," he said.²

Like any other work of art, music is enchanting. A good arrangement or composition can evoke a spectacular burst of emotion. Congregants who worship by

singing songs can laugh and cry or do both simultaneously. By perceiving the lyrics and verse of each song sung like that, the congregation can dance and clap their hands in harmony with the songs or sit transfixed while immersing their whole being (soaking) in the sound, lyrics, and accompaniment of the song.³ Warren proudly states that music is an integral part of human life.⁴

When we refer to the biblical background of music, it is evident from the references recorded in the Old Testament (OT) that the role of music was very significant in Hebrew culture. Traditionally, Jubal, the father of all those who "played the harp and the pipe" (Gen.

¹ R. Joyner, *Mobilizing the Army of God*. (Port Harcourt. Life Outreach Inc., 1994), 88.

²Ibid.

³ J. Idam, *Project Fame and the Oldies*. (Lagos: Sunday Sun, September 6. 2009), 23.

⁴ Rick Warren, R. *The Purpose Driven Church*. (Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 23

4:21), was the inventor of music. The close relationship between pastoral and musical art reveals that Jabal and Jubal are brothers. Jabal was the father of those who lived in tents and raised livestock (Gen. 4:20).

In subsequent developments, music was ordained for service in the temple of God. However, music was also used in secular life. Paker and Tenney confirmed that music was a substantial part of everyday life. The music was always featured at parties, weddings, and funerals as well. People, moreover, utilized music to mobilize soldiers to the battlefield to attack the enemy.⁵ The Bible records that the Hebrews developed musical instruments such as the shofar and the trumpet (Ex. 32:17-18; Judg. 7:18-20).

In historical records, evangelism and music are the best partners, and the use of music to preach the gospel is a fundamental understanding of their function, purpose, and role. In 1873, evangelists such as Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey formed the earliest evangelistic teams of preachers and musicians; Moody was in charge of preaching the gospel, and Sankey sang the gospel songs. Therefore, it affirms that music is one of the primary carriers of ideas, beliefs, doctrines, and religions. It is strongly believed that music functions and acts as a carrier of religious teaching and has always been the language of faith.⁶

Onwochei said that it is a fact that many people know that we often have difficulty expressing our sincere feelings about religion. Music, on the other hand, can the ability to communicate through its meaning and power. In such

circumstances, music is a crucial medium of religious expression.⁷

From the explanation above, we opine that gospel music plays a significant role in worship; 1) as a means to praise and worship God; 2) as a means for fellowship; 3) as a means for nurture; and 4) as a means for education. These four roles have not been implemented optimally in GBI Desa Baru, Pancur Batu Sub-district, Deli Serdang Regency. Thus, as a community service team from Darma Agung University and the Darma Agung Tourism and Hotel Academy. We share knowledge to help solve problems faced by GBI Desa Baru concerning the role of gospel music in worship.

IMPLEMENTATION METHOD

The community service team used two methods, namely: 1) the community education method and 2) the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) method. The community education method was to provide the congregation with an understanding of the role of gospel music in worship. The FGD method was used to discuss the problems that are currently happening and find solutions to be implemented in the church. It involved the entire congregation of the GBI Desa Baru church, consisting of pastors, workers, and musicians, totaling thirty (30) people, and took place on Wednesday, December 8, 2021. The implementation of this community service consisted of two groups. The first group began from 09.30 AM–12.00 PM. The second group started from 1.00 -3.30 PM by following the 5M health protocol.

⁵ J. Packer, and Tenney, M.C.(Eds). *Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible*. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1980), 495-496.

⁶Onwochei, P.I.C. "Commercialization of Religion in Nigeria: A Case Study of Christian Music" In Yahya, M.T. (Ed.) *Issues in the Practice of Religion in Nigeria*. (Ilorin: Decency Printers and Stationeries Ltd. 2006), 427.

⁷Id., 426

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Gospel Music in Worship at GBI DesaBaru, PancurBatu Sub-district, Deli Serdang Regency

The community service team used the theory initiated by Rouget entitled "Music and Trance": a theory of relations between music and possession. However, the team remained open to using other music theories related to the themes discussed below.⁸

- as a means of praising and worshiping God;
- as a means of socialization;
- as a method of nurturing;
- as a means of education.

1. As a means to praise and worship God

One of the roles of gospel music is to praise and worship God. Rouget said: "Music is a gift given by God to human beings. Therefore, the children of God should use it to praise and worship Him."⁹



Figure 1: The congregation was registering to participate in community service.

In her presentation before God's people in the church, Pastor Novita R. Saragih said that the role of gospel music in worship relates to the growth of the congregation's faith, one of them is to praise and worship Him. When people dedicate it to God, He prefers to hear a song that comes from the bottom of His people's hearts. She further said: "what happens when His people begin to praise and worship God with all their heart, with all their soul, with all their strength (Mark 12:30), and accompanied by gospel music? God is present in every worship."

When we refer to the book of Psalm 103:20, it says, "Bless the Lord, you His

⁸Novita R.Saragihand P. Wiharjokusumo. *MusikGerejawi: Dinamika, Sejarah, FungsidanPeran*. (Bandung: CV MediaSains Indonesia,2022), 20.

⁹Gilbert Rouget. *Music and Trance: a theory of relations between music and possession*.(University of Chicago Press, 1985).

angels, who excel in strength, who do His word heeding the voice of His word.” Then we go back to reading Psalm 148:2 and say, “Praise Him, all His angels, praise Him, all His hosts!”

From the observations made as the worship season was taking place in the church. Ps. Novita R. Saragih played the keyboard with simple songs consisting of three (3) chords and sang them with sincerity. It had a positive impact in bringing congregation members into the presence of God and feeling the joy of peace which is one of the findings in this community service.

Ps. Padriadi Wiharjokusumo was also a team member during the Focus Group Discussion (FGD). He explained that it was crucial to understanding that the music played in the service emphasizes the dynamics of an aspect of music. The loudness and softness of the music will significantly affect the atmosphere of the service.

The second findings of the community service were how gospel music in praise and worship in the church could influence the body and the soul, achieving a manifestation (spirit possession, trance) as experienced by a congregant when praising and worshipping God. She experienced deliverance from the dark power that had possessed her life for a long time. Rouget said that music has a causal relationship with the type of manifestation. This situation is because of the hard drum beat, the fast music tempo, and the repeated melody. According to him, manifestations occur in 2 types.

First, in church service, the possessed person will perform abnormal movements like tigers, snakes, monkeys, and other animals. The person is not controlled by the Holy Spirit but by the power of darkness. Satan can not resist gospel music anointed by the Holy Spirit. They scream and desire to get out of the body of the possessed person. In the case of a congregant in the church, she experienced the first type of manifestation.

Second, a person who experiences a manifestation in service will show signs of regularity characterized by a vibrating tongue (glossolalia), issuing words or speech that sound rhythmic (speaking in tongues), shaking hands, and the body falling to the floor. Occasionally, the person chanting the name of Jesus, hallelujah, and so on indicates control by God the Holy Spirit. Ps. Saragih confirmed that a person controlled by God the Holy Spirit is experiencing the manifestation of the Spirit with an outward appearance.

2. As a means of fellowship

Fellowship is the foundation of God's nature and purpose. Furthermore, God will not exist solely for Himself, nor will He live only in Him. He exists in His unique form because He is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit all at once. He is not in solitude but fellowship. Fellowship, which in Hebrew is called *koinonia* and in English is called fellowship.



Figure 2: God's congregation was listening to a lecture from a community service team.

Latini in her book, *The Church and the Crisis of Community: A Practical Theology of Small-Group Ministry*. She says there are five interrelated relationships that build fellowship. According to her, this multidimensional fellowship is mediated by the Holy Spirit.¹⁰

- Trinity Fellowship. The Trinity is three unique individuals in relationship with one another.
- The fellowship of the incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, was fully human and divine.
- Christ's and the church's fellowship. Through the ministry of Jesus, God created a fellowship between God and man.
- Church members' fellowship. Through Christ, Christians are joined to one another and to the whole communion of saints.
- Fellowship between the church and the rest of the world. The church exists to serve the world, which, as human beings, is connected to God.

It is in stark contrast to the life of modern society, which has a lifestyle of individualism and aloofness. Fellowship is about relationships. Meanwhile, each individual has a unique spiritual journey. Paradoxically, the personal journey of faith is never undertaken alone. Whether we realize it or not, we are always traveling with God. Latini says, "We do not live exclusively, but we live with God. God is always there. We are also always traveling with other people. We walk our way through life in a community."¹¹

¹⁰ T. Latini. *The Church and the Crisis of Community: A Practical Theology of Small-Group Ministry*. (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2011), 25.

¹¹Id., 26

It relates to the fellowship between Christ and the church (God is always present) and the communion between church members. As the world's citizens and community of the church. We live our faith in the world, which demonstrates the fellowship between the church and the world.



Figure 3: The Community Service Team had a fellowship with the local congregation.

The fellowship of the Trinity and the fellowship of Jesus incarnate are more objective affirmations of Christian belief or faith. We humans can acknowledge these relationships but cannot modify or engage them in the same way as in the three fellowship relationships that directly involve us.

Gospel music through the church musicians group at GBI DesaBaru provides an opportunity to serve one another in the church. They meet regularly and help each other in leading the services. Apart from its liturgical implications, the gospel music program at GBI DesaBaru also affects the spirituality of its members. Significantly, groups of musicians are, by nature, relationship-based, making them ideal for fellowship development. In his book *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*, Small emphasizes the importance of fellowship among musicians in the church.¹²

¹²C.Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 13.

3. As a means of nurturing

Wiharjokusumo emphasizes that gospel music is powerful when it is dedicated to God. One of the roles of gospel music is to nurture and strengthen the congregants' faith. As Luther said, Satan knows there is power in every act of praise and worship raised through gospel music, so the devil tries to deceive us into not offering gospel music to God.

Meanwhile, Calvin said, gospel music is truly a delightful and delicious fruit of the spirit, one of the roles in nurturing the congregants' faith. From the answers of informants and researchers' observations at GBI DesaBaru. Gospel music also acts as a means to convey advice, encouragement, comfort, and others.

In his presentation, Ps. PangihutanSiringoringo supports the scholar's view above that the role of gospel music is to foster congregation members, especially young people, in GBI DesaBaru. They face the challenges of life in their studies. They gather together and come from various backgrounds. That's why the church needs a tool to make it easier for everyone to focus on the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. As a means of education

As the authoritative source of Christian doctrine and practice, the Bible provides a clearer picture of the role of gospel music as a means of education.

In his presentation, Ps. SelamatKaro-Karo said gospel music is considered an act of giving the whole being of the believer a tribute to the gift of Christ. One of the purposes of human creation was to worship God (Rev 14:7). It is made possible through gospel music. Furthermore, Ps Karo-Karosaid, "The role of gospel music in worship and its theological significance has ruled the minds of many people for centuries."

In the view of the community service team, gospel music is one of the highest arts, and the quality of gospel music not only gives us pleasure but also improves our minds and develops our faith. Gospel music as a means of education can bring God's congregation into the presence of God to enjoy His goodness.

Luther, a leader of the Protestant Reformed Church, said that a good church is a singing church. It has musical elements in terms of developing spiritual life, resources, organization, the mentality of expertise, integrity, and exemplary behavior of the faithful. In this way, gospel music becomes the theological background for educating the people to behave well. Hopefully, it will also apply at GBI Desa Baru.



Figure 4: Having a group picture with the congregation at the end of a community service program

CONCLUSION

From the elaboration above, it can be concluded that gospel music plays a significant role in addressing the previously mentioned issues, namely: (1) as a means of praise and worship; (2) as a means of a community; (3) as a means of nurturing; and (4) as a means of education. The community service team's presentation boosted the congregation's understanding of gospel music's function in worship. It is expected to be implemented in worship life at GBI DesaBaruPancurBatu Sub-district, Deli Serdang Regency.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The community service team expressed their gratitude to Ps. Dr. P. Siringoringo, S.Th., M.Th., the shepherd of GBI DesaBaruPancurBatuSub-district, Deli Serdang Regency, and all parties who supported this program successfully.

REFERENCES

Idam, J. *Project Fame and the Oldies*. Lagos: Sunday Sun, September 6. 2009.
 Latini, T. *The Church and the Crisis of Community: A Practical Theology of Small-Group Ministry*. William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2011.

Joyner, R. *Mobilizing the Army of God*. Port Harcourt. Life Outreach Inc., 1994.
 Onwochei, P.I.C. "Commercialization of Religion in Nigeria: A Case Study of Christian Music" In Yahya, M.T. (Ed.) *Issues in the Practice of Religion in Nigeria*. Ilorin: Decency Printers and Stationeries Ltd. 2006.
 Packer, J and Tenney, M.C.(Eds). *Illustrated Manners and Customs of the Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1980.
 Rouget.G. *Music and Trance: a theory of relations between music and possession*. University of Chicago Press, 1985.
 Saragih, Novita R. and Wiharjokusumo,P. *MusikGerejawi: Dinamika, Sejarah, FungsidanPeran*. Bandung: CV Media Sains Indonesia, 2022.
 Warren, R. *The Purpose Driven Church*.Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995.
 Wiharjokusumo,
 P.*RahasiaSuksesMembangun Mental MelaluiKecerdasan Spiritual Dan EmosionalDalamMeraihKeberhasilanBerdasarkan 5 PrinsipKemenangan Dan HukumKasih*. CV. Media Sains Indonesia. Bandung, 2021
 ——— *Model Pendampingan Pastoral di Gereja Bethel Indonesia Avia Se-Sumatera Utara*. Academia.edu. Accessed on January 1, 2022.