



Adam A. Perez

Assistant Professor of Worship Studies
Belmont University, Nashville TN
Curriculum Vitae
Spring 2025

Th.D. — Duke University Divinity School, 2021

Primary area: liturgical studies

Secondary area: theology and the arts

Dissertation Title: “‘All Hail King Jesus’: The *International Worship Symposium* and the Making of Praise and Worship History, 1977–1989”

Dissertation Advisor: Lester Ruth, Research Professor of Christian Worship

M.A. — religion and music, Yale Divinity School and the Yale Institute of Sacred Music, 2016

B.A. — music education, Trinity Christian College, 2013

PUBLICATIONS

Articles and Essays

2023. “‘Do it Again’: Chart-Topping Worship Songs and the Churches Behind Them.” *Liturgy* 38.4 (Fall 2023), 31–40. Co-author with Shannan Baker.
2022. “Between the Ordo and the Frontier: The Struggle to Define an American Lutheran Worship Identity for the Twenty-First Century.” *Liturgy* 37.3 (Fall 2022), 46–55. Co-author with Victoria Larson.
2022. “‘It’s Your Breath in Our Lungs’: Sean Feucht’s Praise and Worship Music Protests and the Theological Problem of Pandemic Response” *Religions* 13.1 (Special Issue on Worship and the Covid-19 Pandemic, with the North American Academy of Liturgy), 47. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13010047>
2019. “Beyond the Guitar: The Keyboard as a Lens into the History of Contemporary Praise and Worship.” *The Hymn* 70.2 (Spring 2019): 18–26. Awarded the 2018 Emerging Scholar Prize from The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada.

Book Chapters

- (forthcoming, in process) “Charismatic Forms of Christianity” in *The Cambridge History of Christian Sacred Music from 1500 to the Present*, eds Stephen Crist and Markus Rathey, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press. (expected FA 2026)
- (forthcoming, accepted) co-author with Hilary Donaldson, “Christian Music beyond the Church: Ecumenical, Worshipping, and Academic Communities” in *The Oxford Handbook on Music and Christian Theology*, Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. (expected FA 2025)
- (forthcoming, in press) “Praise and Worship Theology” in *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Liturgical Theology*, eds Khalia Williams and Porter C. Taylor (expected April 2025).
2020. “Enthroned Upon Praise: The Early History and Theology of Integrity’s Hosanna! Music.” In *Essays on the History of Contemporary Praise and Worship*, edited by Lester Ruth. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2020.

Editorial Work

2025. Co-editor. *Religions* Journal Special Issue: “Contemporary Worship Music and Intergenerational Formation,” co-edited with Steven R. Guthrie. https://www.mdpi.com/journal/religions/special_issues/KL4KCFSX46
(in process, 2026) Co-editor. *How Worship Became Music: A Sourcebook* (Dallas, TX: Bridwell Library Press), co-edited with Jonathan Ottaway and Lester Ruth.

Book Reviews

2024. *God Gave Rock & Roll To You: A History of Contemporary Christian Music* by Leah Payne (Oxford University Press, 2023). In *Reformed Journal*, Oct. 24. <https://reformedjournal.com/god-gave-rock-and-roll-to-you-a-history-of-contemporary-christian-music/>
2024. *God Rock, Inc.* by Andrew Mall. In *Journal for the Society of American Music* 18.1 (February 26, 2024). <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1752196323000482>
2020. *Singing the Congregation: How Contemporary Worship Music Forms Evangelical Community*, by Monique Ingalls. In *Christian Scholar's Review* 49.4 (Summer 2020): 426–429.
2019. *A Peculiar Orthodoxy: Reflections on Theology and the Arts*, by Jeremy Begbie. “Art as Concrete Theology,” *Reformed Journal*, 34.2 (Spring 2019): 18–19.
2018. *Contemporary Worship Music and Everyday Musical Lives*, by Mark Porter. In *Global Forum on Arts and Christian Faith* 6 (2018).
2017. *All Things New*, by Benjamin L. Gladd and Matthew S. Harmon. In *Christian Scholar's Review* 47 (2017): 65–70. Reviewed by Adam Perez and Glenn Stallsmith.
2016. *The Worship Pastor*, by Zack Hicks. *Worshipleader.com*, October 11, 2016.
2013. *Liberal Arts for the Christian Life*, edited by Jeffry C. Davis and Philip G. Ryken. In *Christian Scholar's Review* 43: 75–81.

Other Publications

- 2023–present. Contributing researcher, writer, and editor at *Worship Leader Research Project*, including primary authorship of “Since 2017, 100% of Top 25 Worship Songs Have Been Singles... So What?” (June 6, 2023), “The Worship Industry is Younger than You Think,” (September 5, 2023), and “Raising the (Invisible) Hand: How Brands and Social Proof Shape Our Sunday Setlists” (October 6, 2023). See www.worshipleaderresearch.com.
2023. “Towards A Reformed Perspective on Contemporary Praise and Worship Music,” *Reformed Journal*, August 28, 2023, co-authored with Luke Litz. <https://reformedjournal.com/towards-a-reformed-perspective-on-contemporary-praise-and-worship-music/>
2020. “Just What is an Order of Worship?” and “Rethinking the Planning Process” in *Flow: The Ancient Way to Do Contemporary Worship*, ed. by Lester Ruth. Nashville: Abingdon, 2020.
2020. “Together for a Meal: An Interactive and Intergenerational Worship Service for Home and Small Gatherings.” With Katrina Olson. *Reformed Worship* 138 (December, 2020): 46–48.
2019. “Call it Worship.” Co-authored with Angie Hong. *Reformed Worship* 133 (September, 2019).
2019. “What Calendar Do You Follow?” Contributor. *Reformed Worship* 131 (March, 2019).
2020. “There’s a Theology Driving Sean Feucht’s Worship Protests – and it’s a popular one.” *Religion News Service*, Oct. 23, 2020. <https://religionnews.com/2020/10/23/theres-a-theology-driving-sean-feuchts->

[worship-music-protests-and-its-a-popular-one/](https://www.congregational-song.org/blog/worship-music-protests-and-its-a-popular-one/)

2018–present. *Various Blog Entries for The Center for Congregational Song*,
www.congregational-song.org/blog.

GRANTS and FELLOWSHIPS

2023–2028	<i>In Every Generation</i> (Belmont University), Lilly Endowment Inc. (\$1,249,147)
2023–2025	co-grant writer, Contemporary Praise and Worship Theology Reader, Calvin Institute for Christian Worship (\$25,000)
2022–2023	Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Planning Grant Lilly Endowment, Inc. (\$49,683)
2022–2023	Contemporary Worship Song Usage, Sourcing, and Perception Project, Calvin Institute for Christian Worship (\$19,996)
2021–2022	<i>Conversations on Contemporary Worship</i> Podcast, Calvin Institute for Christian Worship (\$18,000), with Lester Ruth
2020–2021	Dissertation Fellowship, Hispanic Theological Initiative (\$25,000)
2019–2021	Graduate Fellow, Duke Divinity Hispanic House of Studies
2018–2019	Graduate Fellow, The Kenan Institute for Ethics, Duke University

AWARDS and HONORS

2019	Emerging Scholar, Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts
2018	Emerging Scholar Prize, The Hymn Society
2016	Director's Prize, Yale Institute of Sacred Music
2015	Susan G. Porter Prize, Yale Divinity School
2014	William E. Downes Prize, Yale Divinity School
2012	Lincoln Laureate, Lincoln Academy, State of Illinois

CONFERENCE ACTIVITY

Papers

- 2024. "Congregational Music Beyond the Church," *The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada*, Atlanta, GA, July 15–17. Co-presented with Hilary Donaldson.
- 2024. "Considering the Contemporary Worship Music Industry as Industry" *The Society for Christian Scholarship in Music*, Wheaton College, Chicago, IL, March 7–9, 2024.
- 2024. "'How Old is the Worship Music Industry?': Recursive Processes in Church Affiliation and Industry Apparatus," *The North American Academy of Liturgy*, Seattle, WA, Jan 2–5.
- 2023. "'Corner[stone]'-ing the Market: How Worship Leaders Navigate Chart-topping Songs and their Brand Affiliations," *The Christian Congregational Music Conference*, Ripon College, Cuddesdon, UK, August 1–4.
- 2023. "'Way Maker': Methods for Contemporary Praise and Worship Studies in Ruth and Lim's *A History*," Annual Meeting of the *Society for Christian Scholarship in Music*, Duke University, Durham, NC, March 1–4.
- 2023. "'Do it Again': Chart-Topping Worship Songs and the Industry Behind Them," Annual Meeting of the *Society for Christian Scholarship in Music*, Duke University, Durham, NC, March 1–4, 2023.
- 2022. "What is 'Contemporary Praise and Worship'?": Lexical Challenges in Defining an Emerging Area of Study," Annual Meeting of the *Society for Christian*

- Scholarship in Music*, Mercer University, Macon, GA, March 3–5, 2022.
2022. “Defining the Field of Contemporary Praise and Worship: Scope, Methods, and Key Texts,” *North American Academy of Liturgy*, Kansas City, MO, January 2–5.
2021. “‘Adoradores’: Theological Anthropology and Marcos Witt’s Inculturation of Praise and Worship Theology in Latin America,” *The Christian Congregational Music Conference*, July 26 – August 6, 2021.
2021. “Marcos Witt’s ‘Trono de Alabanza’: An Initial Exploration into the Musical and Theological History of Latin American Praise and Worship,” Annual Meeting of the *Society for Christian Scholarship in Music* (online), February 25–27, 2021.
2021. “Sean Feucht’s Worship Protests and the Peculiar Problem of Pandemic for Praise and Worship,” *North American Academy of Liturgy* Emerging Scholars Symposium “Pandemic Liturgy and Issues of Inequality”, January 6–7, 2021.
2020. “Struggling into the Kin(g)dom: Two Vision of Everyday Latin American Liberation.” *Duke Graduate Conference in Theology*, March 20–21. (postponed)
2020. “Worship Conferences in the 1980s: A Family Tree.” *The North American Academy of Liturgy*, Atlanta, GA Jan. 2–4, 2020.
2019. “Enthroned Upon Praise: Eschatology and Contemporary Praise and Worship Music.” *DITA10 Emerging Scholars Forum*, Duke Initiatives in Theology and the Arts, Durham, NC, September 5–8.
2019. “Contemporary Praise and Worship Leader Training: Implicit and Explicit Curriculum in 1980s Worship Conference Guidebooks.” *The Christian Congregational Music Conference*, Ripon, UK, July 30–August 2.
2019. “Enthroned Upon Praise: Biblical Translation and Aural Imagination in the History of Contemporary Praise and Worship Music.” London School of Theology, *Sounds of Heaven and Earth*, London, UK, July 29.
2018. “Beyond the Guitar: The Keyboard as a Lens into the History of Contemporary Praise and Worship.” *The Emerging Scholar’s Forum* at the Annual Meeting of the Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada, St. Louis, MO, July 15–19.
2017. “‘Divine, Human, or Devilish?’ Revisited: Lutheran Liturgists and the Problem of the History of Contemporary Worship.” 5th Annual Duke Graduate Conference in Theology, *On the Use and Abuse of History for Theology*, Duke Divinity School, Durham, NC, Sept. 29–30.
2017. “Music and the Boundaries of Ecumenism: Contemporary Worship Music in N.A. Mainline Protestant Hymnals 1985–2013.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music, Scripps College, Claremont CA, Feb 9–11.
2014. “Time and Eternity in Johannes Brahms’ *Ein deutsches Requiem*.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music, Trinity Christian College, Feb. 20–22.

Other Conference Activity

2024. Panel organizer, “The Industrial Landscapes of Contemporary Worship Music” *Society for Christian Scholarship in Music*, Wheaton College, March 5–7, 2024.
2024. Panelist, “The World of Publishing,” panel for graduate student concerns at the Annual Meeting of the *Society for Christian Scholarship in Music*, Wheaton College, March 5–7, 2024.
2024. “Public-Facing Scholarship: Widening the Impact of our Study and Practice,” *National Worship Educators Roundtable*, Samford University Center for Worship and the Arts(Birmingham, AL), February 21–23, 2024.
2023. Panelist, “Between Ephemerality and Stability: Timbre in Christian Congregational Music,” *The Christian Congregational Music Conference*, Ripon College, Cuddesdon, Oxfordshire, UK, August 1–4.

- 2023. Panel Organizer, Book Launch and Panel Discussion, *A History of Contemporary Praise and Worship* (Lester Ruth and Lim Swee Hong, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2021). Annual Meeting of the *Society for Christian Scholarship in Music*, Duke University, March 1–4, 2023.
- 2021. Discussion Leader, “Hymns and Liturgy Creation,” The Christian Congregational Music Conference, July 26 – August 6, 2021 (online).
- 2020. Conference Co-Organizer, *6th Annual Duke Graduate Conference in Theology*, “Engaging Liberation and Reconciliation through Latin America.” Duke University Divinity School, March 20–21. (cancelled due to COVID-19)
- 2019. Panel Organizer, “Learning to Lead: Historical Perspectives on Music Leadership for the Congregation.” *Christian Congregational Music Conference*, Ripon, UK, July 30–August 2.
- 2018. Session Chair, “Modern Worship Music” Annual Meeting of the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, Feb 8–10.
- 2021. Event Organizer, Lecture by Tony Alonso, “Incarnating Latinx Theology in Song” and moderated discussion “Meeting our Moment,” with Tony Alonso, Cecilia Gonzalez-Andrieu, and Jeremy Begbie, March 24, 2021.
- 2020. Discussion Moderator, Worship and the Megachurch: Australasia and Beyond Digital Conference, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK, Oct 14–17.
- 2015. *Panelist*, “Calling and Discernment: Navigating the (Academic) Job Market.” Annual Meeting of the Society for Christian Scholarship in Music, Emory University, Feb. 12–14.

INVITED TALKS and KEYNOTES

- 2024. “Contemporary Praise and Worship in Today’s Church.” Four lectures for the Reutlingen School of Theology (Reutlingen, Germany), July 1-4, 2024.
- 2024. “What Worship Leaders Should Know about the Worship Music Industry,” Baptist Church Music Conference, Nashville, TN. April 23, 2024.
- 2024. “Worship Leaders and the Worship Music Industry,” Symposium on Worship, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship at Calvin University, Grand Rapids, MI. February 7–9.
- 2023. “‘More Than A Song’: The History, Theology, and Practice of Contemporary Praise and Worship”, *Orton H. Wiley Lectures in Theology* (four-lecture series), Point Loma Nazarene University (San Diego, CA), March 27–29, 2023.
- 2022. “The World Sings: Praise and Worship,” Webinar series of *The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada*. Feb. 14, 2022.
- 2021. Methodist School of Music (Singapore), *Flow Worship Symposium*, plenary “Explaining Flow: Definition, Importance, Impact.” June 23, 2021.
- 2021. Immigration and Racialized Policing Cohort plenary lecture, “Praise and Worship: Three Opportunities and Challenges for Justice,” (with Rev. Dr. James Forbes and Rev. Dr. Luke Powery). A collaboration between the DDS Hispanic House of Studies, Office of Black Church Studies, and Sojourners, May 13, 2021.
- 2020. “Transcultural Worship?” *Worship and Culture in Dialogue*, Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church (Southville, MI), August 20–21, (postponed due to COVID-19).
- 2017. “Music, Worship, and Culture: The Nairobi Statement” and “What Congregational Song *Does* in Worship.” Tennessee Tech University (Cookeville, TN), Nov 10.
- 2017. “Locating ‘Theology’ in Congregational Song.” The Hymn Society’s Center for Congregational Song Hymn Festival, Cookeville United Methodist Church (Cookeville, TN), Nov. 11.

GUEST LECTURES

2024. “Methods for Studying Worship Leaders.” *Congregational Song Doctoral Seminar*, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary (Fort Worth, TX), March 26, 2024.
2023. “Song Lists and the Contemporary Worship Music Industry.” *Music in the Worshipping Church* class, Westmont College (Santa Barbara, CA), September 5.

OTHER SERVICE

Peer Reviewer

Yale Journal of Music and Religion
Practical Theology
Religions

OTHER TEACHING EXPERIENCE

As Professor of Record

Belmont University

- “Worship History for Worship Renewal” (FA ’23)
 “The Practice of Worship” (SP ’23, SP ’24)
 “First Year Seminar, Ways of Knowing: Gathering and Belong” (FA ’22, ’23, ’24)
 “Questions that Matter: Worship and White Christian Nationalism” (FA ’22, SP ’23, SP ’24)

Duke Divinity School

- “Interpreting Contemporary Worship Music: Interdisciplinary Perspectives” (SU ’24).
 “Introduction to Christian Worship,” hybrid online/onsite (SU ’19, SU ’20, SU ’21).
 “Advanced Worship Seminar,” Course of Study Program (SP ’19, FA ’21).
 “*Liturgy and Sacraments*,” Duke Divinity School and IEMES Course of Study, Ahuachapán, El Salvador (December, ’18).

Western Theological Seminary

- “Worship in the Urban Context,” hybrid online/onsite (SP ’19).

Teaching Assistant Experience

- “Crossing Sectors, Building Thriving Communities,” Duke Divinity School (L. Gregory Jones and Josh Yates, FA ’20).
 “Advanced Worship Seminar,” Duke Divinity Course of Study (Marcia McFee, SU ’20).
 “Planning Contemporary Worship,” Duke Divinity School (Lester Ruth, SP ’19).
 “Introduction to Christian Worship,” Duke Divinity School (Lester Ruth, FA ’17, SP ’18, FA ’18).
 “Introduction to Christian Worship,” Calvin Theological Seminary (John Witvliet, FA ’16, FA ’17; Noel Snyder, FA ’18).

WORSHIP LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Staff Positions

- 2021–2022. *Music and Arts Consultant*, Goodson Chapel, Duke Divinity School.
 2021. *Summer Worship Coordinator*, Goodson Chapel, Duke Divinity School.

2019. *Interim Worship Director*, Goodson Chapel, Duke Divinity School.
 2019, 2018. *Worship Director*, Duke Center for Reconciliation Summer Institute.
 2017. *Interim Minister of Music*, All Saints United Methodist Church (Morrisville, NC).
 2014–2015. *Student Chapel Minister*, Marquand Chapel at Yale Divinity School.
 2011–2013. *Outcry Leader* (campus worship ministry), Trinity Christian College.

Recent Music and Worship Activities (*selected*)

2020. *Worship Leader/Planner*, Summer Field Ed Orientation (Duke Divinity School).
 2016–2022. *Miscellaneous*, Goodson Chapel (Duke Divinity School).
 2016–2020. *Tenor/Soloist*, Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church (Durham, NC).
 2019. *Worship Leader/Planner*, Christ UMC (Chapel Hill, NC).
 2019. *Guitar/Worship Leader*, Holy Trinity Anglican Church (Chapel Hill, NC).
 2019. *Worship Leader/Organizer*, DITA10 Conference (Duke Divinity School).
 2019. *Tenor soloist*, DITA10 Conference Concert (Duke Divinity School).
 2019. *Tenor/Soloist*, All Saints Anglican Church (Durham, NC).
 2018. *Choir Director*, Summer Course of Study Choir (Duke Divinity School).
 2017. *Worship Leader*, Contemporary Worship Music Symposium (Duke Divinity).
 2016. *Tenor/Soloist*, Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church (Durham, NC).

OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2024–2025. Local area host and program committee member, *Society for Christian Scholarship in Music* at Belmont University, March 13–15, 2025.
 2023. Co-organizer of the Contemporary Praise and Worship Reading Group (online).
 2022–present. *Researcher, Worship Leader Research* (worshipleaderresearch.com).
 2023. *Consultant*, CCLI vetting project for the *Christian Reformed Church in N.A.*
 2021–present. *Producer and Host, The Worship Nerds: Conversations on Contemporary Worship* (podcast) <https://anchor.fm/contemporary-worship>.
 2021–2024. *Member, Triangle Worship Group, LLC* (worship consultation).
 2017–2019. *Founder and Convener, The Contemporary Praise and Worship Research Colloquium* (hybrid online and onsite, The Summit Church, Durham, NC).
 2019. *Co-Organizer, Multicultural Worship Leader Consultation*, Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids, MI, Dec 2–4.
 2019. *Consultant*, Porter's Gate Worship Project, Nashville, TN, Jan 10–12.
 2015. *Consultant*, Protestant Spanish-English Bilingual Hymnal Project, Calvin Institute for Christian Worship and GIA Publications.

INSTITUTIONAL SERVICE

2024. Theology and the Arts Lecture Series Planning Committee
 2023–2024. STCM Curriculum Revision Committee
 2023–present. Assistant Director of the *In Every Generation* grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc.
 2024. WellCore Event Planner (Financial): “Making it as a Woman in Worship Music” with guests Latifah Alattas and Taylor Leonhardt
 2023 (SP). Internship supervisor for media studies program (*The Worship Nerds* podcast project).
 2023 (FA). Search Committee Member, professor of Christology search.
 2023–present. Faculty advisor to the *Student Connections Committee* of the School of Theology and Christian Ministry.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

2024–present. *Co-editor-in-chief*. *The Journal of Praise & Worship*
 2024–2026. *Member-at-large*, The Society for Christian Scholarship in Music
 2024–2027. *Member-at-large*, The Liturgical Conference
 2020–2023. *Member-at-large*, Executive Committee, The Hymn Society in the U.S. and
 Canada.
 2022. *Chair*, Song Search Committee, *The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada*.
 2018–present. *Endorsed Worship Coach*, Christian Reformed Church in N.A.
 2017–2022. *Webmaster*, The Society for Christian Scholarship in Music.

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

The North American Academy of Liturgy
 Society for Christian Scholarship in Music
 The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada