

Music Resources Group: The Rolling Resource

Basic Information

Contact Name and Details	Claire Herbert, Head of CCEA, herbertc@methodistchurch.org.uk
Status of Paper	Final
Action Required	Decision
Draft Resolution	Council recommends to Conference that the launch date of the Rolling Resource be brought forward to 2011 to bring this in line with the publication of the Methodist Hymn Collection.
Alternative Options to Consider	N/A

Summary of Content

Subject and Aims	Details of proposals for the development and preparation of a rolling resource, as authorised by Conference.
Main Points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background • Purpose of the Rolling Resource • Structure of a Rolling Resource • The Rolling Resource Working Group • Costs of the Rolling Resource • Timing of the Rolling Resource
Background Context and Relevant Documents (with function)	<p>Methodist Council September 2009, <i>Singing the Faith – reconfiguring the Music Resources Group (MC/09/81)</i> The Council approved work carried out to reconfigure the MRG to make it fit for purpose for the next phase of work, as delegated by Conference.</p> <p>Conference 2009, <i>Singing the Faith – The Music Resources Group report</i> Conference authorised the MRG in consultation with Methodist Council and the Faith and Order Committee to prepare a rolling resource of commended and/or contemporary material and directed the group to bring proposals to Council for an appropriate timetable for this.</p>
Consultations	The Music Resources Group

Summary of Impact

Faith and Order	Faith and Order will be consulted in work to determine how criteria for included material will be applied.
Financial	Potential costs of the proposals have been estimated as in the region of £16,000, in the first year. Further details are outlined in the paper.
Personnel	A part-time paid editorial position could be created for the Rolling Resource.
Legal	The rolling resource will need to be produced within the context of copyright legislation.
Wider Connexional	Discussed within the context of the hymn collection at Conference.
External (e.g. ecumenical)	Discussed within the context of the hymn collection at Conference.
Risk	Discussed within the context of the hymn collection at Conference. In addition, to be a credible collection for the 21st Century, electronic resources need to be offered.

Music Resources Group: The Rolling Resource

Background

1. Methodist Conference 2007 agreed to the production of a set of commended material in “a ‘rolling resource’ whereby a selection of considered hymns/songs is made available electronically and is added to each year”¹, in addition to an authorised core hymn collection.
2. At Conference 2009 the Music Resources Group, on the advice of Methodist Publishing House, suggested that the publication of the rolling resource should be delayed until 2012 (a year after the anticipated launch of the new hymn collection) for commercial reasons. Conference agreed and approved further work in this area:

“The Conference authorises the Music Resources Group, in consultation with the Methodist Council and the Faith and Order Committee, to prepare a rolling resource of commended material and/or regularly updated online resources of topical and contemporary material that have been submitted or commissioned for them; and directs the group to bring proposals to the Methodist Council for an appropriate timetable for this in the light of the above resolutions.”²

3. There was no specific guidance from Conference as to the form of the resource nor how it should be developed once it has been launched, other than indicating it could be electronically available online. However it agreed that the rolling resource would be supplementary to the core hymn collection. Its purpose is “to provide a means of supplementing the core collection with contemporary hymns and songs, some of which may be of a more ephemeral nature.”³
4. This report discusses a range of suggestions for the purpose and content of a rolling resource and its ongoing management and development, as well as clarifying the necessary governance arrangements. The purpose of this is to provide a framework of ideas in the context of which an appropriate working group can be established, rather than to determine the full shape of the resource prior to a group being in place.
5. Indeed, detailed issues relating to the content, format and marketing of the rolling resource will be considered and agreed by a Rolling Resource Working Group, in conjunction with and accountable to Conference, via the Music Resources Group. The Rolling Resource Working Group may also have an ongoing management role in relation to the rolling resource.

Discussion

Purpose of the Rolling Resource

6. Due to its ‘rolling’ nature, the resource could be an internet based tool that may not only enable access to new hymns and songs but could support individuals and churches in using musical resources creatively. As highlighted above, this was potentially in the mind of Conference when the rolling resource was endorsed.

¹ 48. *Singing the Faith: Resources for Worship*, Methodist Conference 2007

² 35. *Singing the Faith – The Music Resources Group Report*, Methodist Conference 2009

³ Ibid

7. In fact, support for such an approach was also shown in the responses to the Methodist Recorder Survey on the new hymn collection. Comments included: *“In a digital age, any hymn book will be a fossil the moment it is published. Are there plans to provide any kind of ‘rolling update’ in electronic form, or some list of newer songs that are deemed to be consistent with Methodist theology? Perhaps a website could do that?”*
8. The rolling resource could be developed on a phased basis and would provide an opportunity to:
 - a. Make new music resources available from a distinctly Methodist perspective ;
 - b. Develop a creative forum for discussion of using music in worship;
 - c. Enable and encourage engagement, both devotionally and theologically, with different musical resources;
 - d. Encourage the use of new music, hymns and worship songs.

Existing internet based resources

9. Worship leaders, local preachers and ministers are turning more and more to the internet as a source of ideas and inspiration for using contemporary music in worship. This often is because of:
 - a. The increased availability of technology in worship.
 - b. Ease of accessing and searching the internet
 - c. The range of choices offered from internet based sources
 - d. The availability of new and up to date material from around the world.

Hymn Publishers’ Electronic Resources

10. The internet based and electronic resource model is one already implemented by a number of hymn publishers. Harper Collins, Kingsway and Jubilate are the main hymn/song book publishers that offer extensive web-based resources to support their printed publications. However, they each take a different approach to their web presence.

Harper Collins

11. In January 2008, Harper Collins became the first publisher in the UK to make a full hymn book available on the internet⁴. Theirs is the only site that focuses specifically on the hymn book it publishes. The sheet music, lyrics and backing tracks for over 2,000 songs from its hymnbooks ‘Mission Praise’, ‘Junior Praise’ and ‘Carol Praise’ are available online to subscribers to this service who can download virtually all the songs (midi files), words and sheet music for an annual subscription. Subscription fees currently stand at £60 per year for individuals or £80 per year for groups.

Kingsway

⁴ <http://www.missionpraise.com>

12. Kingsway is predominantly a music publisher but publishes other resources including its printed songbook 'Songs of Fellowship'. Its website⁵ is largely an online shop for albums and songs which, although it does not offer a specific microsite for 'Songs of Fellowship', does provide a range of prices and free resources to support users of this songbook. Users can download for free a short sample of songs featured in the book and can also purchase individual mp3 files, sheet music and guitar chords, priced around £1.50 per song.

Jubilate

13. The Jubilate Group (a group of musicians and authors who both publish hymn books and administer the copyright of more than 70 composers and writers) offers a website⁶ that offers access to the words and music of more than 2000 of its tunes. It is aimed at church musicians, worship planners and leaders who can download tunes and words as well as liturgy when they subscribe to this service. These users can also access and assess a regular supply of new songs. Subscription fees currently stand at £12 for 1 year, £20 for 2 years or £30 for 3 years of access. It also offers a 24 hour subscription for £4.

Existing Electronic Resources with links to the Methodist Church

Twelvebaskets

14. The Twelvebaskets website⁷, an independent limited company operated by Methodist Minister Rev. Wayne Grewcock, provides visual, musical and other resources that can be shared and purchased to help facilitate creative and multimedia worship. Twelvebaskets charges an annual fee of £35 for unlimited access to, and downloads of, all images and literature based resources on its website. The price of individual music downloads varies, but the average price is £1.50 per track (as an MP3 file). Some set up funding for this initiative was provided by a Connexional grant.

The Methodist Church Music Society

15. The Methodist Church Music Society (MCMS) was formed in 1935 to support musicians and the use of music around the Connexion. Its aim is to "*encourage and develop the use of all forms of music in worship throughout the Methodist Church.*" As well as providing advice on how churches can produce their own song books and on the copyright of hymns on their website⁸, they also offer for purchase training resources and instrumental parts for tunes in the Hymns and Psalms collection which are available for a small fee (50p, plus 50p post and packaging).

ArtServe

16. MCMS also recently formed ArtServe, a registered charity whose work supports the use of all creative arts in music. Their work is not limited to musical resources as it also covers performance and visual arts and aims to support all creative arts, it will gradually assume into its structure the

⁵ <http://www.kingswaysongs.com>

⁶ <http://www.jubilate.co.uk>

⁷ <http://www.twelvebaskets.co.uk>

⁸ <http://www.methodistmusic.org>

work currently undertaken by the MCMS. ArtServe is also currently recruiting for a team of experienced, enthusiastic and passionate volunteers to focus on its musical work.

17. The music section of the ArtServe website⁹ is still in its early stages but includes plans to offer advice on writing and composing hymns and songs, introducing instruments to worship and starting (or indeed stopping) a band. It also aims to carry stories about, and interviews with, well-known composers and to publish new hymns submitted for this purpose by members and users. A large part of their website is also dedicated to a community section which allows registered users and members of ArtServe to view events details and classified adverts as well as to share stories, ideas and experiences.

The Methodist Church Website

18. Two parts of The Methodist Church website are also currently dedicated to music.
19. The first, found in the Prayer and Worship section of the website, is led by the Music Resource Group and is dedicated to new hymns and songs¹⁰. These pages are regularly updated with topical hymns grouped together by theme. Resources published here can be used freely by local churches as long as the author's name and holder of copyright are fully acknowledged. Users are also encouraged to submit their own songs for possible inclusion in this resource. In addition, these pages contain information on the process involved in the formulation of the new hymn collection.
20. The second area can be found in the creative arts section of the website¹¹. These pages offer resources such as sheet music downloads arranged by Michael Davies (one of two Connexional Music Advisors) and a section on practical ideas for using music in worship which is currently being developed alongside links to and reviews of other external resources.
21. The development of an additional resource is clearly being proposed in the context of these existing initiatives, particularly those already affiliated to the Methodist Church. We must avoid duplication of time, expertise, content and resources in order to secure greatest added-value and distinctiveness of a new resource.

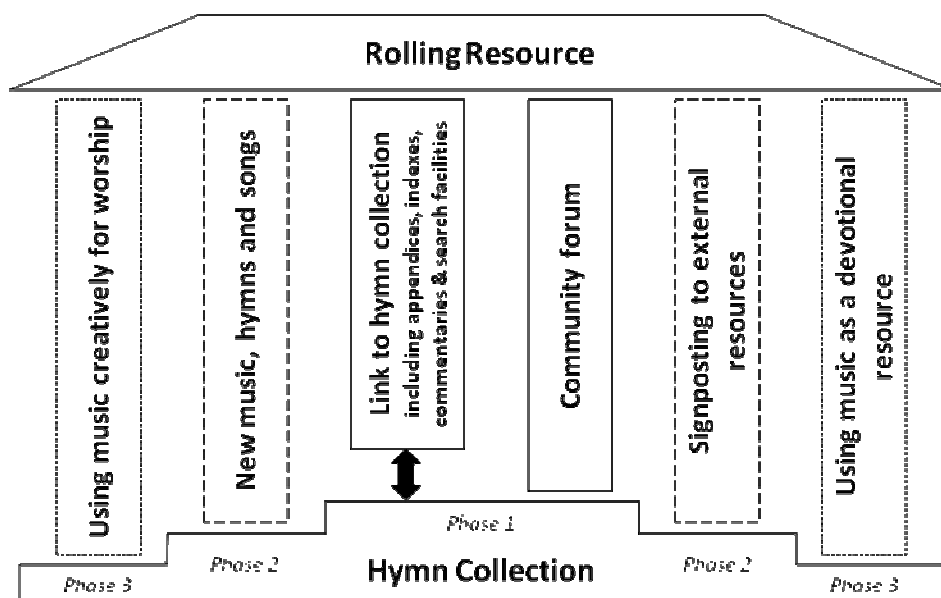
Structure of a Rolling Resource

22. In this context, and seeking to identify distinctiveness and added-value, the rolling resource could be built around six key pillars of activity building on the core hymn collection. A possible structure, developed and implemented via a phased approach, could be as follows:

⁹ <http://www.artserve.org.uk/>

¹⁰ <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentogod.content&cmid=1699>

¹¹ <http://www.methodist.org.uk/index.cfm?fuseaction=opentogod.content&cmid=985>



Phase 1: Associated core hymn collection products

23. The rolling resource could have a particularly pivotal role to play as the new collection is launched providing additional web-based resources that will make this a truly credible 21st century collection. Although access to either the hymn book and/or the rolling resource would not be mutually dependent, the rolling resource could be used to offer a range of free extra resources and products related to the core hymn collection. This could include appendices, indexes and electronic search facilities that will not be available as an integral part of the printed core collection.

Community forum

24. The rolling resource could be used to harness the energy and creative spirit of those passionate about music within Methodism. A community forum could act as a space for users to share ideas and encouragements.

Phase 2: New music, hymns and songs

25. A truly 'rolling' resource could be updated regularly with new hymns, songs and other material as and when these are available – clearly reflecting one of the key purposes of this resource identified by Conference. The success of sharing new music via the rolling resource would depend on the demand amongst hymn writers for a web-based location for sharing their work and the feasibility in the context of copyright legislation.

Signposting to external resources

26. As well as offering a selection of new hymns and songs, the rolling resource could also act as a gateway and sign post to other web-based resources to facilitate creative worship.

Phase 3: Using music creatively for worship

Using music as a devotional resource

27. The rolling resource could provide access to suggestions and advice from experts and enthusiasts for using music creatively in worship. Articles and interviews could also be added to offer ideas for using music and lyrics as devotional resources for individuals and small groups.

Rolling Resource Working Group

28. At the September 2009 meeting of the Methodist Council it was agreed to establish a rolling resource working group to develop, deliver and manage the resource, under the auspices of the Music Resources Group.
29. This working group could comprise up to 5 members, drawn from the Connexional Team and the wider Methodist Connexion, with appropriate experience including in:
 - Developing and using music resources for worship
 - Marketing
 - Interactive web site development
 - Working with social/electronic media
 - A user-focused outlook
 - An appreciation of new and traditional forms of worship
 - Budget management
30. An independent chairperson will be recruited through an open competitive process with strong skills in marketing, resource management, and using creative resources in worship. A formal process is currently underway to advertise for, interview and appoint a suitable candidate to this voluntary post.
31. Once appointed, the Chair and members of the Connexional Team and Music Resources Group will work together to identify other members of this group with appropriate experience and skills and a wider network (see below).

Rolling Resource Network

32. Establishing a Rolling Resource Network in addition to the working group would enable ad hoc access to a wider pool of individuals to offer relevant experience and expertise from across the Connexion and the World Church in new and creative music resources. Although they would not be part of the working group and would not have a decision-making role, they could provide expertise and advice on an ad hoc basis.

Costs of the Rolling Resource

33. Whilst this paper only aims to provide some suggested shape to the rolling resource initiative it does not attempt to resolve specific issues relating to the content, format or marketing of this product. It will be for the working group to determine this, together with:
 - Defining the purpose and content of the resource
 - Defining the 'rolling' nature of the resource

- Determining the criteria for including material, and, following consultation with the Faith and Order Committee, how this will be applied.
 - Establishing a marketing plan
 - Budget management
 - Identifying, recruiting and managing a wider-Network¹²
34. Potential costs of the proposals outlined have been estimated as in the region of up to £16,000, in the first year. This would include a part-time paid Editor. It would also encompass, working group costs, provision for both content and technical development and includes the cost of uploading videos, audio files, copyrights and the commissioning of original contributions to the resource, as well as the ongoing support it will require in its first 12 months. There would continue to be on-going maintenance and development costs each year.

Timing of the Rolling Resource

35. In the context of the range of worship and hymn products available there could be some benefit from connecting the two products to enable mutually beneficial marketing and engagement.
36. The web-based rolling resource could be a strong acknowledgement that the new hymn collection for the Methodist Church is one for the 21st century. The rolling resource offers the opportunity to provide added value to purchasers of the core hymn collection. This could be generated through additional material being provided via the rolling resource, such as hymn and song suggestions for worship leaders as well as providing new or additional contemporary songs on a regular basis.
37. Developed in this way the rolling resource could also enable us to acknowledge that there are different users of the core collection with different needs and preferences. It will also help to align the core collection closely with specific needs. For example, it could provide devotional resources for small house groups using the hymn book. In addition, there may be some supplementary information to the core collection that we will not be able to include in the printed hymn books due to cost constraints. This may include tools that will help users to obtain the greatest benefit from the core collection, such as the full list of indexes. The rolling resource would provide a place where these resources can be stored and used by those with internet access, to help them enjoy the full potential of the core collection.
38. By providing these extra features, the rolling resource will be a means by which the core collection could be used to its best and fullest advantage.
39. To realise the full benefits of this, the rolling resource could be launched a year earlier than planned, in 2011 in conjunction with the core hymn collection.

Recommendation

40. Council is invited to recommend to Conference that the launch date of the Rolling Resource be brought forward to 2011 to bring this in line with the publication of the Methodist Hymn Collection.

¹² A number of individuals had already been approached and agreed to become part of this network before the full structure of the Rolling Resource Working Group was finalised. It is hoped that they will continue to be part of this wider pool of people and offer their advice and expertise as part of this network.