

# Hymnal Anniversary | EP52 Repost | Community of Christ Sings | Jan Kraybill

## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

hymns, hymnal, church, music, Christ, singing, theology, peace, story

## SPEAKERS

Jan Kraybill, Brittany Mangelson, Josh Mangelson

### **Josh Mangelson** 00:22

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### **Brittany Mangelson** 00:57

Hello, everyone. Welcome to another episode of the Project Zion Podcast. I'm your host, Brittany Mangelson. And today we have on someone who has actually been requested by listeners to get on, and I've wanted to interview her for a while as well. So, we have the one and only Jan Kraybill. Welcome, Jan.

### **Jan Kraybill** 01:15

Hello, everybody. Thank you.

### **Brittany Mangelson** 01:16

So, for those of you who do not know, Jan is the principal organist for Community of Christ. And I'm actually, um, calling her from Independence. She's in Independence in her office in the Temple right now. Um, and, so, Jan, you just said that you were, you just wrapped up playing what?

### **Jan Kraybill** 01:32

An organ demonstration recital. Um, as you know, we have two really magnificent type organs at the Temple and at the Auditorium. And I was playing one of our regular Sunday afternoon demonstration recitals that we do every single Sunday afternoon. So, I was in the Temple, um, did that at 2:30. And then there were some interested people afterward that wanted a close up view of the organs. So, I was getting to show them all of that. And, as always, when somebody new comes, uh, someone who's never been in the building before, it reminds me how really fortunate I am to work here and get to make music here. Um, it's such a beautiful place. And the organ is just absolutely wonderful. And, so, to see that through new eyes is one of the best parts of my job.

### **Brittany Mangelson** 02:21

Yeah, that's really awesome. And I, I don't think I knew that there were those kind of services happening every single Sunday. So, that's really cool. So, let's, let's just start from way back when and let's talk about your musical background. Well, I guess, first, really quick, we're going to be talking about the hymnal. Um, so, Community of Christ Sings, so, we have, um, a series of interviews that we're going to do with various people who were involved with, um, making the hymnal and, uh, we've got Jan on today, obviously, so. But before we get into that, let's talk about, um, some of your background with, with music. Um, when, how, how long has music been part of your life and to what degree and what extent, I guess.

**Jan Kraybill 03:05**

So, I would think I was probably one of those kids that heard music, even in utero. Um, I think probably music surrounded me before I was even born. My parents were huge music enthusiasts and musicians themselves. So, I think I kind of was, uh, born into it. Our family was very musical. I have two younger sisters, and my mom and my dad, and the five of us, um, would do things that musical families sometimes do. We had, you know, joint concerts together, sometimes. Um, I started in music when I was three. That's when, uh, mom and dad bought a piano, an upright piano for our home. And I remember when it came in the door and I remember just being fascinated by how beautiful the wood was. Um, it wasn't a black piano. It was, um, you know, natural wood. And I just thought it was so beautiful. And then my mom said, This is not a toy and, so, you don't play it until I show you the correct way to play it. And she's the one who gave me my first piano lessons. And then soon after that, they found me a piano teacher and I just took to it from the very beginning. I, I just loved the sound of it. And I loved the coordination of it. Like all kids, I hit a period where I didn't want to practice anymore because it started to getting really hard and, so, mom had to kind of guide me through that. Sometimes the guiding was gentle and sometimes it was more firm. Uh, but she got through that and now I'm really grateful to her that, um, she helped me to see that sticking with it was a really good thing to do and now I'm a full time professional musician and, and I love it. Um, phase two was a, an important part of our family. So, my mom and dad were very active in church leadership. Uh, we were members of a Presbyterian Church in a small town in western Kansas called Colby. It's a town of about 5000 people, so, really tiny, but, uh, faith was a big part of that community and of our family. So, I'm really grateful for being a part of all of that just as a normal part of our family life. I didn't question it. I, I just, music and faith were just intertwined and it's just something we did. So, that's how I got into it.

**Brittany Mangelson 05:33**

Awesome. And, so, as you grew up, and I guess matured in your musical abilities because I know, spoiler alert, you compose music, and we're gonna', we're gonna' get to that. Um, but I guess were you composing or, or starting to, um, be on the other end of, of that side of music? Um, when did that all come into play? Was that later on? Or? Or was that?

**Jan Kraybill 05:56**

Yeah, you know, I read a quote, once, uh, from, I believe, Pablo Picasso and he said that the best thing for any artist to do is to remain childlike. So, when I was a kid, I really liked to compose. And I hadn't learned yet to be cynical or even that self critical, I just played and wrote things down because I thought it was cool. And it made me feel good. Um, when I got to maybe high school, but certainly college age, I started being really self critical. And, so, I really don't have a, well, I only have one thing that's ever

been published, um, and that happens to be in this hymnal. Um, so it's something I want to get back to, but it's really hard after you've gone down that kind of cynical, self critical path to get back from it. And, so, for me, the difficulty is knowing when I'm done, so being critical enough of my creations to want to improve them, but not so critical that I just throw them in the trash and, and decide that they're not worth anybody hearing. So, it's an interesting thing. And I did struggle with that in the, in the hymn that did end up making it into the book, the one thing that I did compose.

**Brittany Mangelson 07:10**

That makes sense. Um, I truthfully don't know a whole lot about music, but I danced for 18 years of my life and I choreographed a lot. And, so, I do know that, kind of that creative struggle of, of being really self critical and being satisfied with something enough to kind of put it out there, uh, you know, to be judged or used or whatever. Uh, it's (Yeah.) definitely a delicate thing. Uh,

**Jan Kraybill 07:33**

Right, so there are things in this hymnal that I arranged and I'm happy to do that. So, for instance, uh, one of our goals for the book was not to have the majority of the book be just melody line. We wanted it to be four part. So, somebody had to do those arrangements. And it wasn't all me. I had a team of people, but part of it was me doing arrangements, uh, so, to make things, uh, four part, or to make the harmonies a bit different so they were easier to play or sing. And I have no problem doing that. But, um, I have a real problem with saying, Okay, my piece is worth that kind of time and effort and it's worth the time and effort that it takes for people to sing it and use it in congregations. So, I'm getting over that. I'm a recovering self critical person.

**Brittany Mangelson 08:21**

Well, we're grateful for that. ( . . . ) So, how did you find Community of Christ then? What's the story behind that?

**Jan Kraybill 08:31**

Well, when I was 14, um, the organist at our church, our Presbyterian Church, said, How would you like to learn how to play the organ? And I think secretly, she was trying to work herself into actually having a vacation every once in a while. And, so, I started taking organ lessons and found that I really enjoyed enhancing what I could do as a musician by being not only a pianist and a singer, and I was also a French horn player, but I liked to add organist to that list. And then I became a, a church organist. So, all through college and after college, I was, uh, playing organs in various denominations. When I moved to the Kansas City area, as an organist, the two organs at what was then RLDS headquarters were like meccas for organists a, worldwide. Um, these were organs that I had heard on the radio that I just couldn't believe I was in the same town as them. And, so, soon I became acquainted with John Obetz, who is my predecessor, was my predecessor as principal organist, and started taking lessons from him and eventually got to play these two magnificent instruments that I had only ever heard somebody else play. So, it was the instruments that drew me to Community of Christ. But I always say what kept me at Community of Christ was how I felt being in the midst of this organization, this community, this faith movement, their dedication to peace, their singing, their care for each other, uh, most of the time, their size. So, I love that a group of people as small as Community of Christ is, or a congregation, as small as Community of Christ congregations tend to be, I love that they don't use that as an excuse, most of

the time. They get out there and do in the world, things that I admire and they don't say we're too little to do that.

**Brittany Mangelson 10:39**

I really like that perspective. Um, thank you for that. So, one thing that, um, I actually just learned is that you're actually not a member of Community of Christ. Um, and I personally think that that's, it, it says a lot about, uh, Community of Christ and friends of the church. Um, so, so do you want to talk about that at all?

**Jan Kraybill 10:59**

Sure, yeah. It's not something I ever try to hide. Um, I, I don't trumpet the fact that I'm not a member, either. It's just a fact. And the whole reason behind it has to do with rebaptism. So, I, when I was baptized in the Presbyterian church, was baptized as an infant. And then I was confirmed as a 13 year old and that confirmation was a huge part of my faith, of the foundation of my faith. And, so, I have a hard time, it's a hurdle that I have of, uh, redoing any, any of that, especially the baptism part. So, Community of Christ has, has changed some of the policies and procedures and theology around rebaptism. And I've been very interested in the journey that Community of Christ has taken in that area and I have taken a personal journey in that area. But unfortunately, we've still got this one hurdle. And, so, the church has a hurdle with my baptism as an infant and I have a hurdle with their requirement of rebaptism for membership. And, honestly, what I always pray is that God will move in my heart or in the church's heart and that hurdle will be removed. But I've been working for the church now for 18 years. That hasn't happened yet. But I'm not closed to it happening. And I don't think the church is closed to it happening. In the meantime, I feel really comfortable being a part of this church as a friend of the church. Um, if I didn't feel comfortable, I wouldn't have stuck around for 18 years. Like I said, the organs got me here, but it's the way the church makes me feel that has kept me here. So, I don't feel like an outsider most of the time until we touch this topic. And then I just want to be open. And I'm, I'm grateful for the conversations that I've had around this, including this one. So, thanks for asking the question.

**Brittany Mangelson 13:08**

Yeah, and I think, um, I mean, just to let you know, I don't think that you're alone in this. I mean, I come from the LDS tradition and, uh, a lot of people in our congregation who have been attending for over a year, um, feel very similarly. And even though their baptism, you know, is considered okay, uh, because it, you know, happened at eight, um, (Uh huh.), they're still, I mean, there are several people who I know, scattered all around who are still just kind of, yeah, they, they see that is a hurdle and that, um, yeah, I mean, even with my own it was, it was something that I had to kind of face and we ended up being baptized and confirmed. Um, I think my husband would have been okay with just confirmation. Um, but it was something that I had to be okay with and that, it took some time. It wasn't something that, you know, I just kind of jumped into the font haphazardly. Um, (Yeah.) So, I mean, I appreciate that you're, um, journeying with that.

**Jan Kraybill 14:03**

You know, the, the journey is different for every person, as is the faith journey for every person. And, so, I just appreciate that we can be fellow travelers and, you know, allow that there are differences in faith movements and in individuals. It's all okay. And we all help each other through.

**Brittany Mangelson 14:21**

Exactly, yeah. And, and I think that it speaks a lot about our, you know, quote unquote, friends of the church and the church. I mean, I, I'm not worried about these permanent seekers, if you will, that are in our congregation. I'm not like, Okay, when are we going to dunk you? You know, it's not something that I, I don't stress about it, uh, because, to me, it's, it's the relationship that's important. And that's where the gospel's found. And, so, whether, you know, no matter what records, what your church records say, or, or where that lies it, it's not what's important at the end of the day. It's the relationship that you can have over multiple decades with a church that embraces values that you love and embraces you and, and so yeah, I think that's really, really amazing. Um, so let's talk about the hymnal. Um,

**Jan Kraybill 15:09**

Okay.

**Brittany Mangelson 15:10**

I came to Community of Christ after this came to Community of Christ. And it was still considered very new, though, and people were excited and, uh, people didn't know the hymnal very well. And I think that over the last couple of years, we've all gotten to know it a little bit better. Um, so, but I mean, it's, it's a massive book. And I can only imagine how much work it was to put it together. Um, so can you talk about that process a little bit? And I guess what I'm, what I also want to know is, why was there a need to update the hymn book? Well, yeah, basically, I just want to hear your reflections on it. I don't want to sway you or guide you too much because I just want you to, you're the expert.

**Jan Kraybill 15:53**

Well, I'm one of people who have experience. I don't know if I'd ever call myself an expert because the, the realm of church music is so wide. It's just amazing. And I learned so much by being part of the process of this book. And I'm very grateful for it. Um, the steering team for the hymnal was seven people and I was one of those seven. And so we all brought different areas of expertise. And part of the joy of it all was learning from the other people in that room. And then there were, I think, 900, more than 900, other people, volunteers mostly, that consulted on this book and that helped with various processes of it. So, it was by no means just a few individuals, um, just putting together a book. As you said, it's massive and it is the most international hymn book ever produced by Community of Christ or ever produced by anybody. And I'm really amazed by that still. Um, part of that comes again, from the size of Community of Christ. We are a small denomination worldwide. But despite that we are in, I think the count now is 58 countries in the world. It keeps shifting, um, and keeps rising and I lose count, so, I might be a little bit inaccurate on that exact number. But suffice it to say, we are a global church and we wanted this book to represent a global church. And, so, it could not all be in English and it couldn't all be, uh, four part hymns or hymns from the European tradition that pretty much dominated most hymnals and dominated Community of Christ hymnals from the very beginning. So, this book set out to be something different. And that's scary. And it's also wonderful that, that we had the kind of flexibility to try to make something different.

**Brittany Mangelson** 18:02

I'm was going to ask, how do you even start the process of compiling or collecting all of these hymns?

**Jan Kraybill** 18:09

So, what we did was we had different streams, we called them streams, that came into us. One was the four books that were used in most, certainly most Community of Christ churches in North America. There were the, the big hymnal, which, ironically, people still called the new hymnal, even though it was done in 1981. Um, it was, it was new to a lot of people and, and, um, never quite lost that title. So, I'll be interested to see when this hymnal is not called the new hymnal anymore. Um, so, we had that book, uh, that had 501 hymns in it. And then we had three supplements. One was called Sing for Peace. It was a supplement that was put together concentrating on peace and it was put together when the Temple was new in 1993 and the focus of the church with a temple dedicated to the pursuit of peace became a, a more peaceful focus and they needed hymns to reflect that. And then the next supplement was called Sing a New Song and that was a book that reflected the desire to have more contemporary musical expressions of faith, um, that might not have been found in the big book, the big new book. Um, and then the last one was called By Request and that was a compilation of hymns that just got requested a lot in our office in the Worship and Music Office. And so we decided to put together a book just so that we wouldn't have to do so many, uh, phone calls and faxes and stuff as people requested those songs. So, all four of those books, uh, were every, everything in, in all four of those books was eligible for moving forward into the hymnal. And then we had a book called Worship and Rejoice which was an ecumenical hymnal that was produced by our publishing partner called Hope Publishing. And then we had specific authors and composers that we contacted and we said, You have been producing hymns for X amount of years. We really like the stuff that you've produced. We've used it in worship. We would like for you to send us your favorite stuff of the things that you have produced, especially stuff that we might not be aware of that you've produced, maybe in the last few years. And then we had open submissions. So, anybody in the church or outside of the church could submit something that they'd seen or heard or sung or played and, or something that they had themselves composed and they could submit all of that. All of that came to the administrator of our process. Her name is Lauren Hall. And if you can interview her, uh, she is a fascinating, fascinating person. She stripped away all of the names, all of the identifying people from all of the submissions so that by the time we saw them in the hymnal steering team, we didn't know who had composed or written the text, um, of anything that came in. Now, of course, I know who wrote the Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning. So, there are some that it was obvious, but there are others that we have no idea. And we were trying to make this process as fair as possible. So, you know, for instance, if we saw a hymn that came in with a certain name on it, we might be more or less likely to consider that hymn. Whereas, if they all were anonymous, it was a more level playing field. And, so, we, for the longest time, didn't know we, the other six people besides Lauren, um, didn't know who had written or composed the things that we were considering. Um, I think, I might have this number wrong, too, but I think there were about 6,000 hymns that came in. (Wow.) So, the size of the book is big. But every time that I hear somebody say, Oh my gosh, 664 hymns, I think, Oh, if you had only seen the stacks of music that we actually considered for this book. Um, 664, to me, seems so small, compared to that stack. Um, it was truly daunting for a while to try to figure out, um, what could go in this book, and then it was painful. For instance, in the Christmas section, there are so many things that we knew we had to put in that we all wanted to put in. So, things like Silent Night and,

um, you know, I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day and Joy to the World, you know, those favorites that had to go in, but then there was so much new stuff that we would have loved to put in. And it was really hard to decide. Um, I still have a file of things that I use in hymn festivals of things that didn't make the book, not because they weren't good, but just because there was so much.

**Brittany Mangelson 23:01**

That's really fascinating. Um, I know that the hymn book that I, uh, had as an LDS person, it only has, I think, a little over 300 hymns. And, so, the first time I remember picking up this book, I thought, Oh, my goodness. How does anybody even know any of these hymns? But, uh, what I love about it is that there's such a mixture of old and new. Um, and then common hymns that you find, um, throughout Christianity as well. Um, so, it just, to me, is such a treasure. Um, I've, I know I've said this on the podcast before, but when I found Community of Christ, I was pretty, um, jaded on just opening up my scriptures and, uh, studying, um, that way. And, so, the hymnbook truly became scripture for me and I, I got my copy and I sat down over the course of a couple of weeks and I just read it cover to cover, um, just the lyrics. And, to me, it really, um, showed me who Community of Christ is. So, can we talk about that a little bit? Um, I guess, what is the importance of having hymns that, uh, represent our theology? Why is singing our theology important, do you think?

**Jan Kraybill 24:15**

So, there are all sorts of scientific studies that are coming out really recently that talk about when we sing together, we create community scientifically, so, like our breathing aligns and our heartbeats align. And if you add to that, that we're singing about things that really matter, then I think that's really, really powerful. So, we're creating a community that, that does, it has all those scientific things in common, but then we also have a theology in common. And then if you think about someone who's on the fringes of that community, either physically or theologically, whatever, and they can understand what you're about by what you're singing about, then it's that much more powerful. And then when you think about kids, you know, the first things I remember, of theology at all, are things that I sang because there's something about music combined with words that make the words memorable. And, so, then you're at school and something happens and this little snippet of a song with its accompanying theology comes into mind and it might change how you behave in that moment. So, for a little kid, if they remember that Jesus loves them because they sang it, or somebody sang it to them, then that is the highest purpose, I think, of worship music. And, as an adult, if we remember that our intent is to create a theological table that's big enough for everyone born, if that little melody helps us remember that theological goal, then what higher purpose could there be of creating music? So, I, I just think it's so very important. And you had asked previously, why, why create this book? We really did talk about that a lot. Is there a need in this day and age with, um, technology being so prevalent, is there a need for a book at all? Should we instead create some virtual hymnal, some online resource that people could pick and choose from and just print what they wanted and ignore the rest, and then we wouldn't have the limitation of a book. We could create a book that was 6,000 hymns big and not have to worry about the fact that nobody could lift it if it was a physical book. But we eventually decided that, for right now, we still needed the book to tell us who we are and to tell the world who we are. So, for instance, when visitors come into the Temple, and they see the book in the pews and if they get bored during a worship service, or while I'm playing an organ recital, and they start thumbing through the book and they see something that their

faith tradition sings., too, then they see that there's common ground. And that's often a great place to start.

**Brittany Mangelson 27:14**

Yeah, it is. And I know, um, with seeker ministry, there's a lot of hymns, um, that overlap between Mormonism and Community of Christ. And there's a lot of, um, common tunes as well. And, so, sometimes, we'll try to pull those, um, into our worship services or into our meetings to kind of bridge that gap, um, and find that, that connection. So, let's, if, if, if you're okay, let's start, uh, diving into the hymn book. (Sure.) I like that you brought up For Everyone Born, uh, so, maybe we can start there. Um, this (Sure.) is a hymn that is very meaningful and powerful to those of us in Salt Lake, uh, and I would say seeker ministry in general. Um, a lot of people, I know more than one person who has eventually joined the church basically because of this hymn. I mean, this hymn was, was their first interaction with Community of Christ, or, one of the first and they realized, if we're singing this song, then this church has something powerful.

**Jan Kraybill 28:16**

That's so amazing to hear. Because, of course, that's our goal, but, oh, there were so many times when I left the hymnal steering meeting room and I would just go to my office and just cry because I was so afraid we were getting it wrong, you know, and we all had such high hopes for the book. But it's so hard to tell if you're on the right track. And, so, now, you know, three years after the book was released, to hear that it's actually impacting people's lives, it just means so much to me. So, thank you. Thank you for sharing that.

**Brittany Mangelson 28:45**

Yeah. So we've been emailing back and forth just for some background. And so we have a few notes jotted down. Um, and it, it's interesting that you said, Did you know that this one, now that's so beloved, uh, almost didn't make it into the book? Um, so, can you talk about that a little bit because I think that, I don't know, what's the story behind, uh, this hymn and its journey into the hymnal?

**Jan Kraybill 29:09**

Sure. So, we had, uh, several bars or several hurdles that each hymnal had to cross successfully in order to be considered for inclusion in the book. And, like I said, we had lots of hymns to choose from. So, it wasn't, um, well, that no hymn was a given. Well, maybe the Spirit of God Like a Fire is Burning was a given. Maybe the old old path was a given. But For Everyone Born was not a given because it was new to everybody. It was a new text, a new tune. Uh, it was difficult in both those categories. And one of the hurdles we wanted to carefully consider was, is this singable and playable by a typical Community of Christ congregation. And this hymn was what we called on the bubble. It was at risk for not being in the book for both of those reasons. So, when people first sit down to sing this hymn, it's not the easiest thing to sing, it's not the most predictable thing to sing. And even after you know it pretty well, there's one spot in the refrain that, if you're not thinking about it, you're likely to sing at the wrong time. And we didn't want to have hymns, uh, very many of them in the book that would embarrass anybody by singing at the wrong time. So, that was one hurdle. The more significant hurdle, and the reason that this hymn had such a hard time making it through the process and went back and forth along the way, was the theology of it and specifically, it's, uh, stanza four. So, stanza four says, For just

and unjust, a place at the table, abuser, abused with need to forgive. And that was difficult for people to consider, especially people who have been in abusive situations. (Hmm.) And of course, we didn't want anyone from a background of abuse to feel that by singing about it, we were making light of it. That wasn't the intent of the hymn's author and it wasn't our intent. But sometimes your intent isn't something that you can explain to somebody. It's something that they assume by what you say or what you do. And, so, we, we just wanted to be really careful about that. So, in our team of seven, we said that we wanted it to be a majority of yes votes for every hymn in the book. And, so, for a team of seven, that meant that we didn't want the vote to be three to four. We wanted it to be at least two to five, ideally, seven to zero, seven positive, yes, let's put it in the book and zero negative. Uh, six to one was okay. Five to two was getting there. Three to four wasn't, wasn't acceptable. And this hymn kept getting a three to four vote. And the votes kept changing. My personal vote changed during the probably, hmm, a year and a half that we discussed this hymn, my vote changed. Um, we sent it out to pastors and others that are involved in printa, prison ministries, in, uh, safe houses for women and children who have, um, escaped from abusive situations. Uh, we sent it out to congregations to see what they thought. Uh, that stanza four kept coming back as a troublesome stanza. Finally, we sent it to the composer, or the author of the text, Shirley Erena Murray. She lives in New Zealand. Um, we said to her, We love this text. Could we eliminate stanza four? And she sent back a really lovely and passionate letter explaining the origin of the hymn. It has its origins in the rights of all people. So, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights talks about the right to shelter, the right to safety, the right to food, the right to a job, the right to freedom of speech, the right to freedom of worship, lots of other things. And she was trying to encapsulate in one hymn, this statement of human rights, what everybody should have. Everyone born on this planet should have these things. And she said, So if you take that stanza out, you're taking out some of the rights and the right and the need for forgiveness is a human right. So she said, No, it's, I'm sorry, if it keeps it, it out of the book, I'm, I'm sorry if it keeps this hymn out of the book, but it's a whole hymn. And she said, You know, everybody brings their own story to the reading of any hymn. And you might be interested to know that it's stanza three that has other people upset. That's one of my favorite stanzas. I couldn't believe it. It's, For young and for old, a place at the table, a voice to be heard, a part in a song, the hands of a child in hands that are wrinkled. And I think of singing hymns with my grandma, and I think of holding her hand. But Shirley Erena Murray said some people read pedophilia into that, (Oh, wow.) into those words. And, so, then my vote changed again. It's like, Well, I can't vote against stanza four if, if that makes me have to say stanza three is also a problem. So, um, it's, anyway, this whole process kept going back and forth. It went to the Presidency. They came back. They said, Well, we're not sure. Why don't you send it out for more review? Um, this hymn really was on the bubble. And then there was the, quote, problem of the music being hard. We looked at other tunes that this text has been set to. We really liked this one. We thought it was really powerful. Um, and finally we put it in the book, but we weren't sure if anybody was ever going to sing it. And now it's a heart song of Community of Christ. So, I guess I say all of that just to say, if you're struggling with a hymn in the book. If you're a pianist and you can't play some of the syncopations or if you're a theologian and you really don't think that you can sing something in the book or if you're a young seeker or if you're a, a very experienced Christian, there's probably something in the book that you struggle with. There is for me. But, for me, it's worth it, um, again, because we're talking about such important things and it's worth the struggle. And I'm so glad that this song has become so beloved to so many.

**Brittany Mangelson 35:42**

Yeah, I bet that's a relief, um, after struggling with it yourself and then wrestling with your team and everything. Um, I had no idea of any of that backstory, or even, truthfully, how long it, uh, took to create the hymnal. Um, and the idea that you were wrestling with the hymn for, did you say a year and a half? I mean, that's significant. That shows how intentional, um, this process and this hymnal is. So I really appreciate that.

**Jan Kraybill 36:09**

Well, thanks. And I think, um, a lot of credit goes to church leadership for investing the, the time and the, um, resources, the human resources and the financial resources into creating this book because they had to put other things on hold in order to produce this book. Um, and I, that's another reason I'm so grateful to know that it's doing good in the places where it's being used, uh, because that, to me, uh, it confirms their investments of those resources.

**Brittany Mangelson 36:41**

Definitely. So, let's talk about hymn 240, Light Dawns on a Weary World. Um, (Yeah.) I hear that that one has an interesting backstory and that you know it well. So, would you share it with us?

**Jan Kraybill 36:55**

Yeah, definitely. So, this one, the text was written by a lady named Mary Louise Bringle. She goes by Mel Bringle. And I know her because she and I are both members of a group called the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. And this is a group of people that love singing hymns. And a good amount of those people are also hymn authors and composers. And she's an amazing person that, my goodness, you should look up her bio because I could talk for the rest of our podcast about Mel Bringle. She's just amazing. The music is by a guy named Bill Rowan who is also a member of the Hymn Society. And in this case, this hymn kind of was created backwards compared to a lot of other hymns. Usually what happens is somebody writes a poem and then a composer sets it to music. But in this case, the music existed first. So, Bill had a collection of tunes that were called hymns without words. And he hoped that the tunes would, uh, inspire some authors to write texts. And Mel Bringle heard his tune. And that all happened right as the Hymn Society was having its annual conference and they go to a different place every summer to have this conference. If a Hymn Society Conference is ever near you, you need to go to because to sing with people that love singing enough to create an entire society about it, it's just amazing. When we have our opening hymn festival of Hymn Society, I'm always in tears because it's just so beautiful to sing with people who care so passionately about the music of the church. And this is ecumenically. There are Buddhists, there are Muslims, there are Christians of various stripes in Hymn Society, all sorts of, uh, fascinating people. Anyway, so Mel Bringle and Bill Rowan were both at this conference which happened to be in Independence, Missouri at Community of Christ Auditorium and Temple. And they were both in an address, a plenary address that was given by another hymn, um, uh giant in the hymn world, his name is Fred Khan. And he gave a plenary address called Peacemaking through Worship. And he talked about how peacemaking is an active thing and how our worship, the way we do it, could inspire and actually enact peace in our world. And Mel Bringle went back to her room in the Red Roof Inn in Independence and she had this tune on her mind. And she later on when she was writing about this him, she said thank God for the Gideons because there was a Bible in the bedside table and so she was looking through the Bible for things that were

waterbased. Uh, there's a certain part of the refrain of this hymn, the accompaniment has a set of 16th notes, very fast moving notes moving downward and it reminded her of flowing water. So, she found Isaiah, specifically the chapters in the 50s, like 55 through 58 or 60. And she found there the inspiration for this text after she had sat in the Temple and heard about peacemaking through worship. And she wrote this wonderful text. And then later on Bill Rowan named the tune Temple of Peace because the Temple was such an, uh, integral part of that whole process. So, Mel Bringle and Bill Rowan are not members of Community of Christ, but they were impacted by sitting in the Temple and hearing about peace in a place that's dedicated to the pursuit of peace and this hymn came about as a result. So, it's written by friends of the church, new friends of the church, and it's very impactful throughout the Christian community. Um, it's been published in lots of different hymnals. And I'm so proud to have it in ours. And I'm so grateful that it carries the name of the Temple with it in the tune title.

**Brittany Mangelson 36:55**

Yeah, thank you for that. I, I had no idea. And honestly, I don't think I'm overly familiar with this tune, uh, or the hymn in general. And, so, I now have one to study and get to know a little bit more because that was, that was quite an interesting story.

**Jan Kraybill 41:25**

Yeah. And I love how the, the enduring principles of Community of Christ which Mel probably touched on, she probably learned about when she was here, but it was mostly Isaiah, uh, that inspired this text. But, wow, I read Community of Christ into this text, too, so, Light Dawns on a Weary World when eyes begin to see all people's dignity, right. There's the worth of all persons. And, so, throughout this hymn, I just see the stamp of Community of Christ and, like I said, the, the title of the tune being Temple of Peace, there, there's the stamp of Community of Christ as well.

**Brittany Mangelson 42:03**

Ahh. That's beautiful, absolutely beautiful. I guess moving along, can we talk about Tenderly, Tenderly, Lead Thou Me On?

**Jan Kraybill 42:12**

Yes. (Hymn 256.) Yeah. So, every hymn, I always say every hymn is somebody's testimony. So, we have to sing it like it's somebody's testimony. So, this hymn, some people say, Oh, it's so boring, and it's so slow. Well, I hope after people know the story behind every hymn, but this one right now, that they won't sing it, uh, in any, any way other than a treasured way that you are carrying somebody's testimony. And in this case, it's the testimony of someone who has, has gone through so much challenge in his life. So the term was written by Joseph Smith III, so, people not of Community of Christ might not know that that's the oldest son of Joseph and Emma. And young Joseph was only 11 years old at the time of Joseph's, uh, death. And, and, so, my goodness, you know, I think about 11 years old, what, what he has experienced already in the fact that his father was murdered. And then the Reorganization happens and he was only 27. I think of myself, I'm 55 now. I couldn't handle it then and, and he's 27. And he becomes the leader of this, of this faith community. And he, he served it until his death. But he was also a, a person, a human, um, and, so, he had human trials and human tribulations. And one of those was the death of his first wife who died very young. And then uh, with his second wife, um, they had more children. Two of those died in infancy. Um, his son David died when he was only 15

years old. And particular to this hymn, his precious daughter, Bertha, died in a playground accident. It was just this freak accident when she was only six years old. And he, she was the apple of his eye. And I just think about, Wow, this father who's seen so much, even when he was a child, and now he has this tragedy to deal with on top of everything else. And he writes this beautiful, beautiful hymn, Tenderly, Tenderly Lead Thou Me On and it talks about that even when we can't sing, that God's still there. So, gosh, I'm close to tears tears talking about it, but when he says in this hymn close to his hand, I so tremblingly clung faint were the songs I so doubtingly sung, brokenly falling from faltering tongues. Wow, I get, I can hardly sing this tune. Um, I can hardly sing it when, when it's in worship. And as you can tell, I get very emotional when I talk about it just because I identify with this man who also happens to be the leader of a faith community that I adore. So, I think it's important that we think sometimes about doubt, and about how distant we feel from God sometimes. And I think that is a human condition that if you've been alive for any amount of time, you have experienced. And, so, when the leader of a faith movement can write something like this and encourage us to sing, even though we doubt, and even though we can hardly sing, I think that's really, really powerful.

**Brittany Mangelson 45:49**

Well, and I think that it shows, um, such a realness and such a vulnerability to faith. I, too, identify on a very real level with this, um, and knowing that it came from Joseph III, um, (Uh huh.) who was a leader in a very vulnerable time and a very confusing time, in a time filled with questions and contention and trying to unify and build an identity for the church, (Uh huh.) I think that that makes this even more powerful. So, thank you. And, trust me, there are definitely hymns that I can't sing either. Because I just cry.

**Jan Kraybill 46:27**

Yeah, it, it's interesting. You know, like I said, every hymn is somebody's testimony. So, as I learn more about the stories behind the hymns, there is no way I can just, just sing them. You know, there's no way I can just do the notes, just go through the motions. I can't, because somebody slaved over this. Somebody poured out his or her heart onto paper and now we have the privilege of singing it.

**Brittany Mangelson 46:52**

Yeah, I think that brings a whole new level of beauty and just realness to the hymns, um, that I love. I absolutely love it. So, let's, let's move back in the hymn book, forward in the hymn book, whatever on page 76. Hopefully, I'm not having you bounce around too much.

**Jan Kraybill 47:12**

Oh, that's all right.

**Brittany Mangelson 47:13**

But hymn number 96, um, Now in this Moment. I know that we had, um, Emily Rose on, uh, several months ago and she had mentioned this hymn and I guess that there was a lyric change, um, from maybe the version that she grew up with, um, and the version now, but yeah, I want to hear your thoughts and reflections about it.

**Jan Kraybill 47:34**

Yeah, so this hymn started actually with a lyric change. Um, so, the original was called Blessed Assurance. It was written by a lady named Fanny Crosby who was not of the Restoration Movement, but she was the most prolific hymn writer ever, um, in the English language, actually ever, ever. Um, she wrote thousands and thousands and thousands of hymns. And the interesting thing about her is she was blind. Um, she had an accident when, uh, she was only six weeks old and, so, for all of the life that she could remember, she couldn't see. And she was an amazing lady. She used to talk about how her blindness was a blessing, and how when she got to heaven, she looked forward to seeing for the very first time. And I actually have a quote from her that she wrote in the 1800s. And she says, The first face ever to gladden my sight will be when I get to heaven and behold the face of the one who died for me. I verily believe that God intended that I should live my days in physical darkness so that I might be better prepared to sing his praise and lead others from spiritual darkness into eternal light. With sight, I would have been too distracted to have written thousands of hymns. Isn't that cool? (Yeah.) So, Fanny Cosby, all right. So, she wrote this Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine. Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine. Okay. That's the verse. The refrain is, This is my story. This is my song, praising my Savior all day long. So it was a very personal hymn. Then you get to Dick and Barbara Howard and they, in a summer in the 70s, the 1970s, uh, were part of a team planning a reunion that, I understand, was going to happen at Graceland University. And it was a reunion of church appointees and their families. And the theme of the service they were planning was called Our Story. And they remembered this hymn, and they changed one word so it's not, This is my story. This was my song. It's, This is our story. This is our song, praising our Savior all day long. And then they wrote new verses that would better match what they perceive to be the current theology in the 1970s of this, um, faith movement. So, they talk about working toward peace and God creating all the time, creating in our life, talking about the past and the present and the future and we are all sustained through God as we walk this path together. So, their stanzas have all to do with that. And then the refrain, This is our story. This is our song, again, references past and future. And, so, they took Fanny's, um, text for that refrain from the past, but they changed one word and made it our future. And, so, I love this hymn because it is, um, it's old and new together. And then in the context of this particular hymnal, Community of Christ, it's also a reference to the past because this hymn did appear in the previous hymnal, Hymns of the Saints. So, we hoped that by, um, including familiar hymns and well loved hymns that we were building on the past and then creating a future by adding to those hymns some of the more recent things that had been composed and offered.

**Brittany Mangelson 51:06**

Wow, every story that you tell, I'm just in awe. I mean, I, I want to go through every single hymn.

**Jan Kraybill 51:13**

Well, every time I, every time I open to one that you and I have discussed then I saw on the opposite page, like, the opposite page of this one is number 97, For the Music of Creation, and, oh my gosh, I love that hymn. And, I mean, it happens every time I open the book. I see one that I intend to use and then I see the one across the page and I think, Oh, but the story to that one is so cool, too. And I don't know all the stories yet. I keep researching. It's one of the things I love to do is just to find out, so where was this person when they wrote that hymn? And how come they wrote it? And, and why does it say this? And, you know, it, it's just so much fun to, to figure it out. And I love sharing it with congregations and helping them to appreciate all of these testimonies that we get through these hymns.

**Brittany Mangelson 51:56**

Yeah, I mean, because in a way, you're really, uh, peering into someone's soul and into their, uh, into their heart and their innermost heart. Um, (Yeah.) I mean, I'm okay if you want to talk about 97, we, we can go there.

**Jan Kraybill 52:11**

Well, that's another one by Shirley Erena Murray, the author who wrote For Everyone Born. And it's set to an older tune by, um, C. Hubert Perry, who was a wonderful British composer. You know, one of the things that I should say is, we tried to give you, everybody who uses this hymnal, we tried to give everybody a little bit of a taste of the backstory just by location. So, on the bottom right hand side of every hymn is a, a country or countries. And those are the countries of origin of the author and then the composer. So, sometimes their the same country. So, like in number 96, it says, USA, um, everybody associated with that hymn from Fanny, Fanny Crosby to Dick and Barbara Howard, they were all born in the USA. But For The Music of Creation, Shirely Erena Murray is from New Zealand and C. Hubert Perry is from England. And, so, I think it's kind of cool to thumb through and look at that part of every page to see just how global our hymns are to begin with and even, um, hymns that we know and love, hardly any of them were written by people that are close to us geographically. Um, it's just amazing to see the countries pass by. And then the other thing I'd love to say about For the Music of Creation is just the text is so beautiful for a musician. So, all throughout it talks about the, all of the voices, um, trumpets and reeds and praising and dancing and all of the various, um, parts of creating praise to the glory of God, um, and this is just, we're just thankful for it all. So, I think it's appropriate that it's in the rejoicing section of the book.

**Brittany Mangelson 54:02**

Yeah, that, again, that's another one that I don't know if I'm overly familiar with. I'm, I'm making notes as we're talking so I can go plug them all into my computer.

**Jan Kraybill 54:14**

There's so many that we're not even gonna get to that. Oh my gosh, I just love them all. I don't know.

**Brittany Mangelson 54:19**

Well, maybe we'll have to have you on again. We'll have a whole series and just work

**Jan Kraybill 54:24**

Yeah, just work through the book. Okay, now we're on number 12.

**Brittany Mangelson 54:27**

I'll just call you.

**Jan Kraybill 54:28**

There we go. We'll just be kindred spirits? We'll just, you know, and we'll geek out over the hymnal and then see what you want to share via the podcast.

**Brittany Mangelson 54:38**

Totally. I, let's do it. Oh. Um, so let's move on to one that you should be super familiar with. Um, and that would be 558, Take the Path of the Disciple.

**Jan Kraybill 54:55**

Oh, yeah. This one was written, the text was written and the tune actually, by Randall Pratt who I happen to know he's here in Independence, although he's worked in London as well. He's an attorney by trade, but he's a very talented singer and songwriter and guitarist. Um, he doesn't have the gift of writing down music. Uh, everything that he does he, well, he calls it his scribbles. Um, he'll write down a text and then the scribbles tell him what to do with his voice and his guitar in order to bring this, this creation that he's just, um, created into worship. But if he wanted to share that into a hymnal, he needed to write it down. And, so, that's where I come in. I'm a really minor part of this whole thing. But I get to work with and all every once in a while to write down something that he has written. And this Take the Path of the Disciple was written by him at a point right after the church was going about, um, enacting the World Conference vote to change the name. So, that vote happened in 2000 and the name actually officially changed in April of 2001. And it was about in the middle of that period when Randall Pratt was getting ready for work one morning and he was reflecting on some discussions that he'd been having with people about deeper discipleship in this new, newly named anyway, newly named community called Community of Christ and what that would mean and how that could stand for peace and justice. And he found himself with a text and a tune running through his mind as he was getting ready for work. And, so, he went to his congregation. Uh, it's called Woods Chapel Congregation here in Independence. And he stopped by on the way to work so that he could kind of plunk out on the piano what he was hearing and do some scribbling as he would call it, and get it down on paper. And then he went to work. And then he kind of, he tends to put things on the back burner and think about him for a while, but he had this strong urgency. Um, I know about this, because he's written this testimony of writing this hymn. He had the strong urgency to finish it, and then to tell somebody about it. And I got to be the one that he told. So, usually, what he does is he sends an email and he always says, Hi ya', Jan. And, so, I got this email that said, Hi ya., Jan. I've just written this thing. Well, I happened to get that email when I was on my way to a committee meeting to plan a worship service in the Temple, when that name change was going to happen in April. So, we were planning it in October. And I got this email and he sent me his scribbles and it was perfect for that worship. And, so, then the hymn started taking a fast track into the resources that were produced by the church to help congregations to embrace the new name and to celebrate the new name. And, so, then this hymn ended up there. Um, and in the midst of all that, I got to work with Randall to write it down and to create a piano arrangement to go with it. And, uh, working with him is just such a blessing because it's a very creative process and you can watch his mind work and you can kind of bounce things off of each other. Uh, it's really fun.

**Brittany Mangelson 58:26**

Yeah, that sounds fascinating that, uh, it is such a process. And I guess for me, I mean, I don't, I don't know the first thing about writing music. And, so, this idea that one hymn can have, uh, bits and pieces of multiple people and multiple experiences and be something that doesn't necessarily come together in full right away. I mean, I like that he calls it his scribbles. (Um hum.) Um, that's, yeah, that's really fascinating.

**Jan Kraybill 58:52**

Yeah, I mean, I think every author and composer works differently. And for some, I guess, it's like a, they're just a scribe, and it, it arrives in their mind fully formed. I've always been kind of jealous of those people because that's not the way my creative process works and it seems to be, from what I know from Randall's, it's not the way that his generally works either, that it's more of an incubation period and during that time, you're talking to other people and saying, What do you think? And, um, so, I know for the hymn of mine that's in the book, uh, or the tune of mine that's in the book, it was definitely that way. It was months long process. And then it was another Hymn Society Conference where it really took its final shape.

**Brittany Mangelson 59:33**

Yeah, oh, I, I want to be able to have like a bird's eye view or we need like a documentary to follow, follow the people involved with a hymn, um, and have that all recorded. I'm really (Oh, that would be. . . ) interested in that

**Jan Kraybill 59:46**

Yeah, that would be very cool.

**Brittany Mangelson 59:47**

instead of just like an aftermath podcast about it.

**Jan Kraybill 59:51**

Uh huh. Yeah, exactly.

**Brittany Mangelson 59:52**

Oh. Um, so let's move into the hymn that, uh, you composed. So, it's 324. (Yep.) Let me flip to it really quick so I have the lyrics in front of me. We Need Each Other's Voice to Sing. And, um, the title of that is very intriguing to me. Um, but what, what can you talk about the process of helping create this hymn, um, from the music standpoint?

**Jan Kraybill 1:00:18**

All right. So, this, you know, I told you there were several streams into which people could put ideas for this hymnal and this text came through two of those streams. So, two different people said, We've got to have this text in our hymnal. And as soon as we on the steering team read it, we agreed. The only problem was we weren't really sold on the music that it was submitted with. Um, and nothing against that music, but remember, we were looking at, uh, things with very specific ideas in mind having to do with how difficult or easy is this to sing? How high or low does it go? Is it conducive to guitar playing? Is it conducive to organ playing? Is it conducive to piano playing? What level of pianist do you need? How well does the music deliver this text? How good of a vehicle is it for, uh, impact of this text? So, with all of those filters in mind, we just didn't feel that the tunes were, um, were what we needed for this book. Nothing against those tunes, it's just for our specific purposes, we didn't feel it was what was needed. And so the text was basically on its way out because without a tune, of course, you can't put a text in a hymnal. Um, so, I felt really bad about that. And, so, I went to Lauren, our Hymnal Project

Administrator, and I said, So, I've been messing around with this text and I've written a tune for it, but you and I are the only ones that can know that because it needs to be anonymous, of course, as all the other submissions were. So, it's rather a late submission on my part, but I was just trying to find a way to get this text that we all loved into the book. And, so, I wrote this tune and one ( . . . ), you know, I told you how perfectionist I am, one of the most difficult experiences of my life was sitting in that room while people discussed my tune not knowing that I had written it. (Oh, yeah.) And I couldn't say, I couldn't say that I had written it because I was so committed to this anonymous thing. And, so, I, you know, a, and sometimes I would say something, so it wouldn't look like I had nothing to say because they would have considered that to be suspicious. But I didn't want to say anything that was, you know, for or against this tune that I had written. It was like submitting my child to be, to be criticized. It was really difficult. Um, so anyway, they ended up saying, Yeah, we, we think we like this, uh, so, it was in the book. But in the book meant, oh, maybe one of 1,000. We still had a bunch more culling to do to get down to the about the 650 mark that we knew we needed to hit. So, in the meantime, I went to Hymn Society Conference and I went to a Tu, Tune Writers Workshop and I submitted this tune for discussion there. Again, a painful process because now you have a person leading a workshop and in front of your peers, this time, not anonymously, they're discussing the merits of the tune you've written. But the leader of the workshop was Sally Ann Morris. She goes by Sam. And she has turned out to be a really wonderful friend that I first met via Hymn Society. And she had such great things to offer to enhance the tune that I had written, and to encourage me, um, to keep writing and I will be forever grateful for that. So, this text, then, had a tune that the steering team felt that it could fly with and now it's in the book. And it's the one and only thing that I've ever, it's one of the only creative endeavor that I've ever had published. So, I'm grateful for that. Um, there's some symbolism that I put in the tune, uh, and if you choose to cut this from the podcast, that's fine. I just want you to know as a, as a musician, um, what I was thinking. Um, at the beginning, the very first note that we sing has no harmony with it. So, it's a unison note. And unison can be boring. So, I wanted people to know that, to illustrate we need each other's voice to sing, I wanted to start with just us all singing the same note and how boring that is. And then it grows from there, I hope illustrating how wonderful it is when we have multiple voices, multiple harmonies, uh, multiple sounds contributing to the songs that we need to sing to God and to each other. And then later on, on the second page, when we get back to God as the creator of all of our music, it's again a unison note because unison can also be perfect. And, so, actually, in, in music theory, it's called perfect unison. And God is perfect. And, so, the unison at the beginning as we, um, enact it as humans is boring, but as God enacts it is perfect. And then later on when we sing hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, praise the Lord, um, one of the people that saw this said, Those are too unpredictable. Those, those three hallelujahs should be more alike because people stumble over them. And I left it on purpose. I, I wanted, I wanted people to have to stumble over singing hallelujah sometimes because that, too, is a human experience.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:05:49**

I love that that's so intentional. Again, I mean, I, this idea that not only in the lyrics are we singing theology, but through the actual notes that we sing, um, there's a lot of theology found in that. So, thank you. Thank you for sharing that backstory behind that. Um,

**Jan Kraybill 1:06:05**

Yeah. The other thing I forgot to say is in the refrain, it says, We give our alleluias to the church's common chord. And on the word chord, I wrote a dissonance because the church's chord is never, is never common. So, um, so I made an uncommon chord when we're singing about common chord. It's just my little musical joke.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:06:27

I love it. And I love that it's the alto line because I am an alto, so

**Josh Mangelson** 1:06:33

Yes, woo hoo! I'm an alto, too. Yay! Altos unite.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:06:40

with our uncommon chord.

**Jan Kraybill** 1:06:42

That's right.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:06:45

Oh, thank you for that. Thank you for sharing your heart with us through, through music. That's beautiful. Absolutely beautiful. Um, (Thank you for listening.) Yeah, definitely. And we're not cutting that part out of the podcast, so (Oh, good.) Um, so let's move to, uh, Community of Christ Sings 344, Creator of the Intertwined. (Um hmm.) And this is one of the hymns, um, to give a little background on why it's significant to me is the tune of it, um, is a common, is one of those common ones that I mentioned that, uh, is also found in the LDS church. And from my experience, every time I have run into one of those hymns in this hymn book, the lyrics, I mean, my bias is going to show very clearly right now, but the lyrics in our hymnal, uh, far surpass, uh, the hymn that I grew up with that is kind of it's counter that uses the same tune. And, so, this, we sing this song a lot in Salt Lake, uh, because we're all very well familiar with the tune. Uh, but I want to hear the story behind the lyrics.

**Jan Kraybill** 1:07:50

Yeah, this is another hymn writer that I know. Her name is Jacque Jones. And again, I know her because of Hymn Society. She lives in Brooklyn, New York, and her husband, Norm, worked in the World Trade Center buildings. And, so, on 911, um, she was one of those people that didn't know what had happened to her loved one. And, so, this hymn comes out of that experience. And, so, I'm just going to read to you what she wrote, because I, I don't want to, I don't want to summarize it. I'll get it wrong. Um, but what she says about writing this hymn is, My husband, who I am very happy to say is alive today, was on the 74th floor of the South Tower when it was hit. Also, I live, work and worship in Brooklyn Heights, a neighborhood directly across the East River and downwind from the towers, to the south of the heights of the commercial neighborhoods, primarily made up of merchants from the Middle East. To make a long story short, the events of those days were a personal lesson in the interdependence of people and the importance of the varied communities in which we live. To put myself in context, I am a congregationalist. When I set about to write the hymn, I took many notes and had lots of ideas, but I was unable to find the starting point. By chance, I was in Lower Manhattan and visited St. Paul's chapel, a tiny church which has become associated with the recovery following the

attacks. Rescue crews ate and slept there for several months as the recovery was in progress. St. Paul's had issued a pamphlet that was a collection of prayers for peace from many faiths and I picked up a copy. It was this pamphlet, which it, with its many varied voices, all offering prayers for peace, that gave me a toehold into the hymn text. It made me see that this was a hymn that needed to speak to the creator of us all. I love that. And Jacque is such a, a wonderful poet for putting into words that we can sing, like you said, to this beloved tune, um, a reminder that we're all intertwined. And I love that, I think that my favorite, I think, I don't know, it's hard to pick a favorite line in all of the hymns, but one of my very favorites is the very final words that we sing in this hymn, your voice, meaning God's voice, speaks many languages, just one of them is mine. I just love that.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:10:22**

Yeah, thank you so much for sharing that story. That takes a hymn that we often sing in Salt Lake and, uh, brings it to a whole new level of meaning. (Uh huh.) So, thank you. And if my congregation doesn't listen to this podcast, I'm going to share that story with them.

**Jan Kraybill 1:10:38**

Well, good. I'm glad you do. I'm glad you will.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:10:41**

Oh. Wow. Wow. And I, I think that speaks to, um, the experiences that these hymns or just maybe music in general are birthed from, um, that they're, they're a reaction to an experience or like you said, a testimony, um, that they're really part of the person, so, we aren't just mindlessly singing these random words that ended up on a page, um, that there's a (Yeah.) real crazy, intense, beautiful, heartbreaking, you know, whatever you want to use to describe any particular hymn story (Yeah.) what we're singing.

**Jan Kraybill 1:11:17**

Yeah, every hymn is somebody's testimony. I, I truly, truly believe that. (. . . Powerful.) And, and different people can have different testimonies at different parts in their lives. And, so, the book, I hope, gives us all something to sing no matter, no matter what we're going through. So, you know, there's a section called lament, um, for those times when we just don't know what to, what to sing. There, there's another hymn, um, that also comes out of 911 called Peace, Salaam, Shalom. And, um, that's number 310, I think is it? (Yes, 310.) And that was written also because of 911, uh, by two ladies named Pat Humphries, and Sandy Opatow. And they together are a folk singing activist group called Emma's Revolution, which I think is cool. They have nothing, uh, no membership in Community of Christ or any of the Restoration, uh, movement, but they're called Emma's revolution. I, I love that. Um, and I, I'm sorry, I don't remember the Emma that they are actually referring to in that name. Um, it's an activist that they admire and I just can't remember her name or her story. But I just think that's cool that there's that, um, crossover of name, that particular name. (Definitely.) And, anyway, on 911, they were in the midst of moving from the New York area to the Washington, DC area. So, their old home and their new home were both struck on 911. And as soon as they could get back to, to New York City area, they were driving back there, and what they remember from that trip is all of these, like, bedsheets on overpasses spray painted with words that said nuke Bin Laden and we will, you will pay and there's no place you can go that you can hide. We will hunt you down. And they were really disturbed by all of

that. They understood it, but they were disturbed by it and they wanted to put a different voice into the con, conversation. And, so, they, um, started conceiving of this hymn that combines words for peace from the three major faith movements that were involved somehow in the 9, the events of 911. So peace in English and salaam in Arabic and shalom in Hebrew. And by the time they got to Manhattan and they were invited to be a part of the first kind of, uh, peace rally that was organized in New York City after 911, they had this song ready to go and they sang it as a part of that March. And everybody in that rally was invited to dress in white, because that was going to be the symbol of peace. And Pat and Sandy decided to write those three words on their white shirts. And, so, in black magic marker they wrote Peace, Salaam Shalom. And they said it was actually funny because they thought people would come up to them and say, Where'd you get that song? And people came up to them and said, Where'd you get that shirt? (Oh.) And, so, they, they did a small run of T-shirts and at the next rally, they handed them out. And, like, they handed out every shirt that they had printed. And then the next rally, it was every shirt they had printed. And they said at one of those rallies, a lady came up to them and said, What's the largest size you have? And they dove into their cardboard boxes of T-shirts and they pulled out a triple X large and they handed it to her and she put it on over her burqa and marched with them. I love that, too. That, that also moved me to tears. (Wow!) So, you know, just finding that common ground and sometimes when we sing it, we can find it more easily. So, I'm really, I mean, one of the best experiences of my life was when Sandy and Pat came to, uh, Community of Christ for two events. Um, one was World Conference of 2013 and then the next was the hymnal launch and Peace Colloquy of 2013. And they led us in their song, um, so that we could all join in singing for peace, you know, figuratively, with that lady in the burqa and with people who speak these three languages that we know one word of now. That's pretty cool.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:15:47**

Yeah, and I actually, um, got to meet them as well. They were at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Salt Lake (Oh, yeah. Uh huh.) last fall. And, um, I, you know, we have a pretty large presence of Community of Christ there. Um, Steve Veazey was there and a whole bunch of people. And they, uh, had kind of a little sing in thing, um, during one of the, it wasn't even, like, their own session, it was just kind of in this big common area, and, uh, they were singing and it was so amazing to see that it wasn't just our little group of people that knew the song that other people were singing. And it's an easy song to just join in and sing, but it was one of those really unifying moments. And I was able, I went to their booth, and I picked up a shirt, and I said I was from Community of Christ and they were so like, Oh, my gosh. We love you. We love your church. They were all, so excited, um, ( . . . ) and then we ended up going to, uh, uh, service at, at the evening and they ended up kind of giving a shout out to Community of Christ and specifically to Seth Bryant, um, who was the pastor of Salt Lake. Uh, and he had, he had told the story about how when he was a chaplain in the Marines, that that song was often sung by the Marines in these horrible, horrible conditions and that it really brought peace in real life war. Um, so (Oh, wow. I love that.) that was kind of fun to hear in front of, you know, hundreds and hundreds of people to have our little church be named. And your little pastor. (Yeah.) So,

**Jan Kraybill 1:17:23**

Yeah, exactly. Yeah. And that's what I mean, like, all of these stories, all of these hymns gather stories as they go along. So, I'm so glad you told me that Seth story, you know, because now that adds to my appreciation of this hymn in a whole different way. So it's very cool.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:17:39**

Well, and I think of my little girls, so, I have six year old twins, and, so, um, they've been with Community of Christ for the last, you know, almost two and a half, three years, and this was one of their first songs that they could sing. I mean, this was, uh, essentially their introduction to Community of Christ theology and they still sing it and they love the music video and I, uh, we're going to try to get Joey Williams on (Good.) an episode so he can talk about the creation of that music video. Um,

**Jan Kraybill 1:18:07**

Yeah, (but it's) that's amazing.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:18:09**

Yeah, and the music video is and my kids really enjoy it. And now my two year old, I mean, he sings a song too. So,

**Jan Kraybill 1:18:18**

Ah, that's wonderful.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:18:19**

It's become woven into our identity in a, in a really beautiful way.

**Jan Kraybill 1:18:23**

I love that. That's so cool.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:18:24**

I also would like to talk about The Old, Old Path if, if you ( . . . ) have anything to say about that. (Yeah.) We ended up, we sang that today in church and, uh, our presider wasn't aware that there was two different versions of the hymn (Uh huh. Yep.) and so she kind of switched, which one she wanted to sing. Uh, but it's, it's interesting that this hymn that is so instrumental to Community of Christ, um, (Yeah.) has been updated. And I don't know if maybe everyone, I don't know, I think that sometimes people have a, a strong sense of nostalgia towards hymns. And so I guess I just am curious on the story or why there was the updated, and, and I'm assuming it was pretty intentional to keep, uh, both versions into the addition of the new one and keeping in the old one. But basically, I want (Yeah.) to hear your thoughts on that.

**Jan Kraybill 1:19:13**

Yeah. So it was intentional to put them both in and we did know that, um, there would be con, some confusion, um, sometimes and what you just said about your congregation is one of the things that we hoped wouldn't happen that we knew probably would. ( . . So.) Yeah. Exactly. Um, so, 244, I believe is the old, I'm just flipping to it right now so I get this right. Um. I think 244 is the old and 245 is the new, right? Yeah, (Uh huh.) yeah. So, okay, so the old Old, Old Path, um, is a heart song for many people in Community of Christ. And, so, you know, I've heard stories about parents telling children who were going on trips like to college, If you get in trouble, just hum The Old, Old Path and somebody will help you. And the kid thinking, Oh, yeah, right, you know, and then they're in a crowded train station or

something and they don't know where to go and they're getting panicked and so they decide to do what their mom told him to do and they start humming The Old, Old Path and somebody comes up and says, Oh, so your RLDS, and it's, like, Oh my God this works. And I've heard so many stories like that. So, you know, this is a song that had to be in the book. The thing is, there are some younger people, um, or people that really enjoy contemporary Christian music, who think of this hymn as much less than what it is, uh, because of its music. And, so, they have no argument with the theology at all, but they just hate to sing the music. They think that it's funeral and that it's boring and that it's way too slow. And, and so they weren't singing it at all. So, if you have the choice of someone singing your beloved hymn in a way that you wouldn't appreciate if, you know, if they're thinking that it's boring, they're gonna sing it in a really boring way. Or if they had a different musical expression that spoke to them, but still retained the theology of the hymn that you love so much. You know, I think a lot of us would say, Okay, if that's the choice, I want them to sing the hymn somehow. And, so, Jeff Lindell, who is a contemporary Christian musician, wrote a new version of The Old, Old Path which retains the theology, but changes the language a little bit and especially changes the music a lot. What I love about teaching this one, though, is, um, lots of places where I go, congregations say to me, We don't have any musicians. And what they mean is, we don't have any keyboard players. And, so, I say to them, Okay, A. if anyone in your congregation is singing, then you have musicians. Every one of us is a musician. If you sing hymns at all, you are a musician. In fact, Thomas Troeger, the person who wrote We Need Each Other's Voice to Sing, wrote that text, um, he says that by virtue of being human, you are a woodwind and a drum because if you have a voice, if you have vocal cords that create sound singing or talking, then you are a woodwind. And if you have a heart that beats, you are a drum. So at the core, we are all created to be musicians. Okay, so that's A., that's point A. You do have musicians in your congregation. Now, if the problem is you don't have a keyboardist, I can teach anybody to play this version of There's the Old, Old Path, There's an Old, Old Path. I can teach them to play it within, like, five minutes because most kids know how to play the old song called Heart and Soul. Um, I wish I had a keyboard because I can't really sing it. But every kid who sits down at a piano plays something that goes ( . . . ). Does that sound familiar to you? (Yeah.) It's weird to sing it. I'm sitting here doing these motions with my hands because it's much better if you play it. Uh, but that is the very structure of this hymn and, so, you can play Heart and Soul under this hymn for most of it and you're playing for church. So, um, I'd love to show you that sometime when we're actually in person, but it actually works. So, I'm grateful to Jeff Lindell for writing this new version of There's an Old, Old Path so that kids and, um, other people more, more comfortable with contemporary musical expressions have a chance to sing this theology that Vida Smith first wrote down. You know, she actually wrote that during a daydream during church, (Really?) which I also think is cool, uh, because, again, it makes somebody human that we tend to put up on pedestals, so, especially people who have gone before us, who have left something lovely, like There's an Old, Old Path. Um, I love to realize that they are humans. So, her account of this, which you can find online, you can find in books everywhere, basically, she was bored in church. And, you know, she says things like, Yeah, somebody spoke, somebody prayed. And she was looking out on this lovely day and looking out at nature and thinking about, you know, It's really lovely that we have friends that walk this path together, you know, and, so, she's totally daydreaming during church and she comes up with this, you know, (That's absolutely amazing.) I think that's really cool.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:24:34

My daydreams are not that productive.

**Jan Kraybill** 1:24:36

Well, mine neither, but I think it's cool that hers were.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:24:40

Definitely. Wow. So, did she write any other hymns? Or was that just kind of like, Man, that was awesome. That was a really good (Well,) daydream.

**Jan Kraybill** 1:24:48

This is definitely the most well known of the hymns that she wrote. And, um, she did write others, but I, I would have to look in Hymns of the Saints to see if there are any of hers and I don't think there are any others of hers in Community of Christ Sings, but I could be wrong. Um, I could look in the index of authors and composers. Let's see, Smith, Smith, Smith, Vida. Yeah, this is the only one of hers that's in this current book. So, good for her for having a hit.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:25:20

Yeah, that makes me want to learn more about her. That's, that's pretty (Yeah.) awesome.

**Jan Kraybill** 1:25:25

Yeah, actually. And she was, you know, a Smith. So, she was related to the Smiths. I believe both Vita and Audencia were, um, granddaughters of, um, the founder of the church. I think.

**Brittany Mangelson** 1:25:36

Okay, yeah. When I, when I saw that she was a Smith, I, I wondered that. So, (Yeah.) interesting. Wow. So, as you mentioned, along with all of these English hymns, um, there's a lot of non-English hymns. Um, (Yep.) so, do you want, and I, I think you did list some, but do you want to, uh, lift specific ones up and, and, uh, talk about them?

**Jan Kraybill** 1:26:01

Yeah, maybe I should just talk briefly about them rather than the stories behind them, but just, um, mention them, and then this index that I think is, uh, really helpful. So, uh, first of all, the index. Um, it's located on, uh, page 822. So, the little small numbers and the little small printing at the back of every hymnal, but a lot of people don't read. In this case, I think these three pages 822, 823 and 824, um, are really important, especially for this book. So, like I said, this is the most international hymnal ever produced by anybody, any denomination, anywhere, at any point in time. So, that is a cutting edge thing to do and as, uh, the saying says, Sometimes the cutting edge is the bleeding edge. Um, so, we've taken a risk here to put a lot of other languages in the book. Um, I believe the language count is 29, 29 different languages in this book. And, again, it's because Community of Christ is small. So, for instance, if you look at Catholic hymnals, the Catholic Church is huge. And, so, they can afford to put out a book of hymns this size in English and a different one in Spanish and a different one in French and lots of other languages. Um, and I believe that the LDS church is similar in that way. There are books specifically in German, per se, or, and, and others, for example. Um, Community of Christ doesn't have the resources to do that. So, it's one book. But in that one book is our common ground then. And this index then tells you about the different languages. And on page 824, it says Core

Repertoire. And when I do workshops, I talk about this being our global homework. So, this is the list of about 100 hymns and songs that we, the hymnal steering team and the First Presidency, hope that the members of the church eventually will all know so that when we get together, we no longer look blankly at each other and say, like, Is there anything that we could all sing together? Um, really, before this hymnal, we could do that with The Spirit of God like a Fire is Burning. We could do that with There's an Old, Old Path. And we might be able to do that with Amazing Grace, but hardly anything else. So, now, in this book, we've got this list of just over 100 that some of them are very familiar to English speakers. So, um, so I'm just looking down the list. Amazing Grace is there. Crown Him with Many Crowns. Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow. Um, all of those are familiar to those of us who are English speakers and singers in Christian congregations, specifically Community of Christ congregations. And now, we can sing those in not only English, but also French and Spanish. Those are the three official languages of the church: English, French, and Spanish. But then, in addition to that, we can sing other things that are not in our language and not in those three official languages, but a completely different language. So, like one I'm looking at right now is number 84, Uyai Mose. Um, so, that, Uyai Mose, is the sum total, that hymn is the sum total of the words that I know in that particular language. It's a hymn from Zimbabwe and I can sing it now. Uyai mose, tia, tinamate Mwari. I can sing that with brothers and sisters that I might never meet that are half a world away, but I can sing in solidarity with them. Um, there's another one that's in the lament section that's called Senzeni Na and, basically, it's a lament from people who suffered through apartheid in South Africa. But senzeni na means, What did I do? What have I done? And, so, I think about, like, for instance, in Kansas City, um, in the news has just been a, a mother who was murdered and her 10 week old baby who was, um, taken. So, the, the human reaction to that is, What did I do to deserve that? And Senzeni Na basically is sung by people who have a different skin color than the dominant skin color and they're saying, What, what did I do? God, what, what did I do? Why, why is this happening to me? Alright, so we can sing that in solidarity with those people or maybe out of our own experience and it gives us a richer expression of our faith and of the comfort that God's presence can bring. So, anyway, this Core Repertoire, I think, is a homework list. So, the stuff that we know we should sing, uh, the stuff that we don't, we should learn. The hymnal project gave people recordings so that you could learn from the native singers and speakers of those languages. You could learn how to pronounce languages in the hymns so that, um, you can make some approximation with your own foibles. I mean, I don't sing Swahili well. But I just think it's, it's cool that we can try. So, I think that's one of the things I'm most proud of in the book is the international aspect of it. And I think I'm proud of it because it, um, honors something that I'm very grateful for in my own journey as a singing Christian.

### **Brittany Mangelson** 1:31:52

Well, and I think that it makes, uh, those moments where we do all come together that much more rich. I mean, I remember, um, during a moment in, at World Conference when, uh, Bunda Chibwe and Carla Long were up on the rostrum and they were e yo, yo, yo, yong together. (Exactly.) And, we, you know, mentioned that in the, in the hymn, uh, podcast that I just did with, with Megan and, and I said that, you know, that's my two year old's, by far, his favorite hymn and we've sung (Yes.) it at reunion a couple of times, and nothing will get his attention faster, and I've got it on my phone and when he's grumpy, I'll play it and, um, (Yes.) but it was, it was, it was such a good image to be up there, um, you know, singing these words. And, uh, I know that I have actually looked up those words and to see what they mean in English, but at, at the end of the day, it's, it's that communal experience, when you're sitting

there, well, you're not sitting there, you're standing there and you're dancing with, you know, the First Presidency and the Council of Twelve are all up there and you've got this (Yeah.) whole sea of people and everyone's in their native dress and they're so excited to hear, you know, a hymn that might be familiar with them and, uh, it happened multiple times at World Conference with multiple songs and, um, yeah, it just it makes everything that much more vibrant and alive and it really brings out that community aspect of our church.

**Jan Kraybill 1:33:17**

Yeah, exactly. (Thank you for that.) And it also makes, yeah, it also makes others welcome. So, I was in Tahiti once and, so, I don't speak very much, um, French and I don't speak any Tahitian. And, so, I was leading a workshop and somebody walked in who, um, I can't even remember the country that she was from, but she spoke a completely different language. And, so, she walked in because she heard the singing and so somebody passed me a note, thank goodness in English, up to the front and said, So do we have any songs in her language? And I looked in the back of the book at that index and I found a song in her language and we all sang in her language. And, you know, the look on her face. And I was just amazed that here I am, you know, in Tahiti, not singing in either of the other languages that I'm not familiar with, but singing this whole different language with Tahitians who are struggling along like I am to make this person feel welcome. So, it's part of the hospitality, um, that, that we talk a lot about, but we can actually live in our singing. Um, (That's an amazing story.) And then another thing that I love, the international aspect of it, is I have gained a new appreciation for how beautiful some languages are when you write them down. So, like, I'm looking at 663 now and it has, um, an English, um, an English translation, so we can sing it in English. It has a Chinese, um, phonetic, um, (. . .) translation, but it's a minute phonetic representation so that I could struggle through the Chinese as an English speaker, but then below that it has the Chinese symbols so that a native Chinese speaker could read his or her language in the way they're used to, not phonetically like I would need it. And then it has the same thing for Tamil. And I think Tamil is one of the most beautiful languages I've ever seen written down. It's so curly and, I don't know, I just think it's gorgeous. (It is. I'm looking at it right now.) Yeah, I love that that's in the book even though it doesn't mean anything to me, but just that God's, God's creation includes that language written like that. Well, that's cool. Makes me want to know those people. So, if their language is so, it's so flowery, then I mean, if their, if their printed language is so flowery on the page, then what do they dress like? And what do they act like? And what's their country like? So, I love that about this hymnal.

**Brittany Mangelson 1:35:39**

Beautiful. Absolutely beautiful. Thank you so much for sharing all of this. Um, and thank you for all of your work. And I do, we're going to try to make our way through, um, that core team that, (Um huh.), uh, helped create this book. And, so, (Good.) thank you for being the first one to launch us into discovering what is in Community of Christ Sings.

**Jan Kraybill 1:36:00**

Well, it's my pleasure and I look forward to listening to the podcast when you talk to the rest of them. Uh, we've now gone on to other responsibilities in the church and most of us are separated geographically and so I don't get to see those people that I used to spend like eight, nine, ten hours a

day with, um, and, so, I miss them a lot. Um, I miss their, well, their laughter and their tears and, you know, just our shared experience, so I can't wait to hear their voices on the podcast.

**Josh Mangelson** 1:36:47

The views expressed in this episode are of those speaking and do not necessarily reflect the official views of the Latter-day Seekers team or of Community of Christ. The music has been provided by Ben Howington. You can find his music at [Mormonguitar.com](http://Mormonguitar.com)