

# Why We Sing

*Music, Word, and Liturgy in Early Christianity*

ESSAYS IN HONOUR OF ANDERS EKENBERG'S  
75TH BIRTHDAY

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# Introduction: Early Christian Liturgical Traditions

*Sven-Erik Brodd and James A. Kelhoffer*

*Why We Sing: Music, Word, and Liturgy in Early Christianity* offers new insights into an array of early Christian liturgical sources, as well as the methodological and historiographical bases for interpreting those sources. This introduction has three sections: (1) a discussion of recent trends and developments in liturgical studies, (2) an overview of each chapter, and (3) a synopsis of the life and work of Anders Ekenberg, to whom this collection of essays is dedicated.<sup>1</sup>

## 1 Liturgical Studies in Multidimensional Perspective

This collection of highly specialised studies looks at early liturgical developments from multiple angles and through the use of diverse source materials. Such an undertaking is neither planned nor written in a vacuum.<sup>2</sup> Since research on liturgical sources is conducted within specific milieux, and since the results in one way or another are open for reception in ecclesial life, it is pertinent to bring up some of the factors that interplay with the study of liturgical history.

### 1.1 *Tradition, Reform, and (Liturgical) Innovation*

These studies are, of course, produced in an era that is markedly different from the one(s) examined. In theological studies, some sort of normativity is often-times ascribed to the early church. Scholarship has thus tended to serve two main purposes: to provide a historically accurate understanding of late ancient theology and practices, and thereby to give impulse to contemporary theologi-

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- 1 The majority of the papers in this volume were presented at an online colloquium in honour of professor Anders Ekenberg at the Newman Institute, Uppsala, October 21–22, 2021. For generous contributions to this colloquium we thank the Newman Institute and Segelbergsska stiftelsen för liturgivetenskaplig forskning [The Segelberg foundation for scholarship on liturgy].
  - 2 See, e.g., Paul Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998).