

a practical resource
for Lutheran
church musicians

in tempo

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First Lutheran Church, Norfolk, VA, Ryan-Michael Blake, director

Paid choral singers in church choirs—what is your first response? an impossible wish? a percolating idea? an affront to volunteers? *In Tempo* asked in a recent e-newsletter for directors who have remunerated vocalists in their church music ministry to weigh in with their stories and wisdom gained through the benefits and challenges of choristers-for-hire. Four members responded from varying congregation sizes, backgrounds, and budgets, and here offer honest appraisal of the joys and pitfalls of paid singers. (See information about the directors and their settings on page 2.)

How long have you had paid singers? Rationale?

Michael Krentz: We have had our Choral Scholars for seven years, usually about 6 per year. We do not consider them to be “paid section leaders”; rather, we have them to fill out our sound and make it possible to continue to sing the music we have done (medium to advanced SATB).

David Schofield: St. Francis has had paid singers since long before my arrival. I’ve been music director for 17 years. We want to support our volunteer vocalists: section leaders are expected to provide musical guidance and vocal coaching within their section. They are not simply “ringers” but musical mentors.

Ryan-Michael Blake: Since at least 1930! First Lutheran Church in that era

desired a quartet of big, professional operatic voices to barrel through many of the old Victorian war horses (John Henry Maunder, John Stainer), *en vogue* at the time.

Tim Getz: The congregation has employed a staff singer—a baritone—for many years. In 2014, as our soprano section was experiencing some attrition, I found support and funding to add a soprano as well. Having a paid singer creates a dependable presence in each section every week. Volunteer singers do not have to feel guilty about being absent on occasion, and the director can plan with confidence that there will always be at least one strong singer on each part. Having a strong voice with good music-reading skills gives support and confidence to those who may learn more quickly and easily by ear.

From the editor

Linda Borecki



Jim Hild's article "Cultivating Connection" could serve as the title for nearly every contribution in this issue: connect-

ing with people of differing language and music sensibilities, connecting with "outside" singers paid to support choral song, connecting with singers-turned-ringers in socially distant music making, connecting with saints across time and space in hymns and poetry, connecting with God in silence, even connecting with our bodies as we lead music and ensembles. In this issue, may you find a connection with the authors and their offerings. And as we head into the new church year, this comes with a prayer for your ministry encouraging the ultimate connection, summed up by theologian Marva Dawn: "Every other religion gives you directions on how to find God, but Jesus takes you to Him."

Joy in the connecting.

in tempo

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Featured Interview: Mary Prange

Hymnal Abbreviations:

ELW: *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*

LSB: *Lutheran Service Book*

CW: *Christian Worship*

LBW: *Lutheran Book of Worship*

How are they typically paid?

Krentz: The Scholars are paid \$20/call, so \$40 if they attend both the rehearsal and Sunday service in a week.

Schofield: Fee per call. One call is 3 hours with a break. Until last year, the singers have been independent contractors and provided with W-9 tax forms. The new laws in California may alter this scenario.

Blake: Per call, whether rehearsal or service.

The Directors



Michael Krentz, Christ Lutheran Church, Allentown, PA

Christ Lutheran Church is a

downtown church in a mid-size city, with weekly attendance about 100. We have a Chancel Choir of 20-25 singers, a talented group that has become somewhat smaller over the years—we are all pretty much retired. There is also a smaller group of women, a handbell choir, and a Children's Chimes. Each group has its own director; I oversee them all, coordinate the planning, and fill in as needed. Our paid "Choral Scholars" are students mostly from Muhlenberg College, about five minutes away.



David Schofield, St. Francis Lutheran Church, San Francisco, CA

St. Francis is a small, vibrant congregation, with an active food program including a food bank and a breakfast for the many homeless on

Having a strong voice with good music-reading skills gives support and confidence to those who may learn more quickly and easily by ear.

Getz: Our singers are paid per call. They get a somewhat higher rate for "performances" (Sundays) than they do for "rehearsals" (Wednesdays).

How is compensation affected if they miss a rehearsal or a Sunday?

Krentz: The Scholars are only paid if they are there—a maximum of 14 weeks each semester. We have had quite a few Scholars who take part in the musical

our city's streets, a senior center, and an affiliated child-care center, and we offer concerts and special seasonal services of music. The Sunday service averages 45 in attendance. Our choir has 6-10 volunteer singers, depending on schedules, and 3-4 section leaders, depending on repertory.



Ryan-Michael Blake, First Lutheran Church, Norfolk, VA

Weekly worship attendance averages 215. The choir is an ensemble of 25-30, when everyone shows up. In addition to singers, we are rebuilding our handbell program and are also fortunate to have a small group of gifted instrumentalists.



Tim Getz, Grace Lutheran, Palo Alto, CA

Our weekly attendance is about 180 people, with about 15-20 in the choir. We also have a children's choir and a handbell choir.

theater programs at their school so they miss rehearsals and services in production weeks.

Schofield: If they miss the call, they forfeit the fee.

Blake: Rehearsals and services are paid at different rates, which are adjusted accordingly.

Getz: During normal times, they are not paid for a missed call. During the pandemic, they have been paid a flat amount per week for singing in our live-streamed worship, and absences have not been deducted.

Is there sick time? Vacation time?

Krentz: No.

Schofield: No, but the choir takes breaks, singing 38 Sundays each year, not 52.

Blake: Sick time is negotiated by circumstance, but usually substitutes (if available) are paid from the same funds. There is no paid vacation time.

Getz: They have summers off, as well as the first Sundays after Christmas and Easter.

Do they get paid more for Holy Week and extra services?

Krentz: Yes, \$20 for anything extra.

Schofield: Yes. Holy Week and Christmas Eve pay more—these services are more involved, with more music. We also have to pay competitively, or singers with several offers will go to other churches.

Blake: They are paid per service at a standing rate, sometimes singing double or triple services (e.g., Christmas Eve and Easter), so yes.

Getz: Extra services are paid as additional calls.

Are they paid extra for solo work?

Krentz: No. We have had some who are music education majors studying conducting; we have happily given them opportunities to hone their skills by conducting anthems. They are not paid extra for that.

Schofield: Not unless it's a substantial solo. We offered Vaughan Williams' "Five Mystical Songs" during Eastertide one year. The baritone soloist received a larger fee, reflective of the preparation necessary.

Blake: Usually not. However, if they are providing musical leadership while the choir is on summer break, yes.

Getz: No. Occasional solo work is considered part of the job.

Are contracts necessary?

Krentz: We do not have contracts. One of the Scholars (a "senior Scholar") is tasked with keeping track of the attendance and submitting the paperwork for monthly stipends.

Schofield: They can be helpful. I've done both contract and no contract with only a verbal and email agreement.

Blake: Formal contracts? No, and depending on the state, they may

not hold up in court. But having a job description and itemized expectations is essential. Regular performance reviews are always a good time to check in.

Getz: They have a job description that gets updated occasionally but no signed contract.

What about payroll taxes, worker's compensation, and so forth?

Krentz: None, since they are not employees.

Schofield: No, the section leaders are independent contractors.

Covenant Society

The Covenant Society honors individuals who have included the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians in their will or estate plans, as well as congregations that have included ALCM in their asset disbursement plans. Please consider joining those who support ALCM in this way:

Myrna Andersen
Arletta Anderson
Donald and Mary Armitage
Julie Bedard
Carol and Mark Churchill
†A. David Deery
*Grace Lutheran Church, Bellevue, WA
Julie and David Grindle
John D. Jahr
Linda and Robert E. Kempke
Pauline and John Kiltinen
Rev. John D. Morris
William A. Mowson
Gregory Peterson and Ann Sponberg Peterson
Mark W. Pinnick
Jim and Stephanie Rindelaub
Rev. Martin and Barbara Schaefer
Thomas and Kathleen Schmidt
David S. Thoresen

† Deceased * Disbanded

Blake: We consider the singers employees and withhold all applicable taxes on the W-2 form—unusual for churches in our area.

Getz: Our singers are paid as independent contractors, and taxes are not withheld. I believe they *ought* to be treated as employees, and I successfully negotiated this change for the quartet in my previous congregation.

Where might candidates be found?

Krentz: It took us several years to get this up and running smoothly. Now (at least pre-pandemic) the Scholars usually find or suggest people to take their places when they graduate. So recruitment has been easy. In fact, we have had to tell a singer that we didn't have a spot for them at the time, but maybe we would the following year.

Schofield: I find singers mostly by word of mouth from other singers, through professional choral groups, or by asking other choral conductors and voice teachers.

Blake: I prefer to utilize local music educators. Three of our singers teach high school chorus, three teach middle school chorus, and two teach elementary music.

Getz: I have advertised positions on local online job boards for singers in the past but have found the best results simply by asking other church musicians for leads. I'd caution against hiring students: they are likely to be unavailable during school breaks,

The choir ... is essential for the spiritual life of the congregation and its worship and praise of God. With this awareness, fostering the choir as something that deserves funding in the annual budget is an easy decision.

which of course generally line up with major Christian festivals.

How do you find diverse candidates beyond Western European backgrounds?

Krentz: We have not succeeded at this. We have, however, had a diversity of religious beliefs, including Lutherans, Jews, Roman Catholics, and others.

Schofield: I have never had difficulty finding diverse candidates. There are any number of Asian, Pacific Islander, Hispanic, and African American professionally trained singers in the area. My first priority is finding a singer with a voice that can blend, who can sightread reasonably, who has an affinity with the mission of our church, and who has the ability to interact well with the volunteers. Happily, we have had all of the above ethnicities represented as section leaders through the years.

Blake: Again, I find success in music teachers. Not only are they often more open-minded as genres go, they also have access to global percussion instruments through their school system, which a congregation may not be able to afford on their own.

Getz: I don't have a great answer for this one, other than determination and patience in the search.

What are some possibilities for funding the positions?

Krentz: We pay through our congregational budget. But it would certainly be possible to target some people to support the program.

Schofield: The best way to fund the positions is for the church to decide that the small prayer group, which is the choir, is essential for the spiritual life of the congregation and its worship and praise of God. With this awareness, fostering the choir as something that deserves funding in the annual budget is an easy decision. Dedicated giving is a great way to offset the budget line item. I've found this can be stimulated by offering a musical event as a kickoff, be it a concert or a karaoke cabaret. Our most successful event of this sort was "Hot Fugue Sundae," where we offered an All-Bach concert followed by an ice cream social.

Blake: Ideally, this should be part of the operating budget or "investment plan."

Getz: I recommend that funding for these positions be included in the regular annual budget of the congregation. If worship is the most important thing we do (it is!), then worship needs to be the congregation's highest priority in budgeting.

What kind of an approach is needed to retain volunteer singers when they find out others are being paid?

Krentz: This was our big concern going into our Choral Scholars program. We have some excellent singers in our choir, capable of singing solos. We were worried that the choir would feel “insulted,” that we did not think they were good enough anymore. So, while our Choral Scholars do serve as cantors (for the Psalm, Kyrie, and so on) and soloists within our anthems, all the other choir singers continue to do that as well, if they wish.

Schofield: Hopefully, that day of “finding out” will never come, because there was full transparency with choir, church council, staff, and congregation in making the decision to hire section leaders. It would be best to have discussions with the choir to see if they want to have trained singers among them whom they can use as a resource. Most volunteer vocalists—and the choir as a whole—in my experience want to be challenged to better their singing and musicianship.

Blake: Admittedly, this question bothers me, as it implies that the volunteer singers don’t already know that other singers are being paid. Have these conversations with your volunteers long before you start looking for singers.

Getz: I have found that the presence of staff singers is a draw for choir members, not a deterrent. People appreciate having a strong singer to lean

on to assist with part-learning. They enjoy receiving occasional tips on vocal technique from the “professionals.” As I mentioned before, people can take Sundays off without feeling like they’re letting the whole choir down. Most of all, they like being part of an ensemble that really sounds terrific!

Closing thoughts

Krentz: This program has succeeded beyond any of our expectations, from the perspective of the young singers, the existing choir members, and the congregations. The Scholars have brought a wonderful energy to our choir. Upon occasion, some have come to worship even when the choir was not singing! We’ve had parties for those who are graduating and leaving, and in general everyone feels like they are part of one group.

We have used college students and consider it not only a benefit to us but a possible way to grow singers who would think about joining a church choir in the future (not ours, of course). In other words, it both benefits us and is part of our outreach to young people.

If you do not have a college near you, this would work with high school students as well. And they would not leave town for Christmas vacation.

The unspoken message of “what’s wrong with our singing?” must be shored up with an assurance that there is absolutely nothing wrong with our singing. Then we can agree that no, we are not going to pay others to sing for us but have skilled vocalists singing with us, thus opening ourselves to new musical adventures, both together and personally, in praise of the One who gave us our voices.

Schofield: What is a church choir? Why even have one? Have you ever considered these questions? Several of my colleagues have only asked themselves this when the church council and the pastor decided to make changes in the style of worship. The answers are vital.

A choir is a group of folks who sing together. Generally, choirs meet regularly and often become a closely knit group. Blending individual voices together to create one organized sound is, by its very nature, binding. In fact, a Swedish medical study discovered that when people sing together, their heartbeats sync. Their hearts actually beat as one!¹

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR



The idea of a non-auditioned group of adults, with varying levels of musical training, who rehearse for just an hour one day a week, was unheard of for most of the history of the church. Amateurs can and should sing great church music, but they sometimes need support.

“We’re not going to pay others to sing for us.” Pastoral musicians must realize that there is some hurt in this sentiment. The unspoken message of “what’s wrong with our singing?” must be shored up with an assurance that there is absolutely nothing wrong with our singing. Then we can agree that no, we are not going to pay others to sing *for* us but have skilled vocalists singing *with* us, thus opening ourselves to new musical adventures, both together and personally, in praise of the One who gave us our voices.

Blake: It is not uncommon for someone to suggest, “Maybe we can find some students.” The thinking here is usually, “We can pay them less while they’re earning much-needed experience.” However, if they can handle the part as well as a professional, they deserve the full professional rate.

I would exercise caution about using college students. Keep in mind that they will likely be at home on Christmas Eve, and their spring break can occur during Holy Week. Beyond that, we were all young once, and we remember how Sunday was “the morning after the night before.” I have heard all the excuses for that last-minute call-out.

The benefits of music educators as section leaders at our church are that, in addition to leading sectionals and generally supporting the choir, the paid singers also lead warm-ups, contribute excellent ideas when trying to explain those abstract concepts about vocal placement, and lead workshops at the annual choir

retreat (recent workshops have included the Anatomy of Singing, the Alexander Technique, the International Phonetic Alphabet, Music Therapy). Some play instruments (bonus!), and some have even brought their student choirs or ensembles to sing for worship, which has led to a larger outreach of our music ministry to the schools in the neighborhood. If you would like to explore this concept further, I invite you to contact me at rmblake@flcnorfolk.com.

If you are having trouble selling the idea of paid singers to your congregation, make sure you are considering the full range of benefits that they can provide to your ministry, not just “performance.”

Getz: The very notion of an all-volunteer church choir is a relatively recent phenomenon. The ancient chants of the church were sung by clergy and cloistered monks who practiced and sang them daily. Much great choral music was written for singers who were highly trained in music, rehearsed daily, and were in many cases literally “singing for their supper.” The idea of a non-auditioned group of adults, with varying levels of musical training, who rehearse for just an hour one day a week, was unheard of for most of the history of the church. Amateurs can and should sing great church music, but they sometimes need support.

There are four qualities I look for in an excellent staff singer:

- **Dependability:** understands the choir schedule and attends all calls, with the allowance for occasional absences, also communicated in advance.
- **Outstanding sight-reading ability:** others are leaning on their voices as models.
- **Blendability:** having a voice that can blend well with the choir yet provide strong support to the section. This is head-and-shoulders more important than a great solo voice.
- **Most important of all:** possessing a pleasing personality with minimal ego, patience in singing with amateur singers, and willingness to follow the lead of the director!

The decision to employ staff singers is one that is unique to every congregation. I’ve personally found that their presence speeds learning, expands the possibilities for music selection, and improves the sound of the choir immeasurably—the vocal modeling and inspiration they provide makes the whole choir sing better. And a choir that sings well enables a congregation to sing well. It’s a win-win situation!

Note

1. Björn Vickhoff et al., “Music Structure Determines Heart Rate Variability of Singers,” *Frontiers of Psychology* 4, no. 334 (2013), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3705176/>.

In Memoriam

Marva J. Dawn

August 20, 1948–April 18, 2021

by Linda Borecki

marva Dawn was a theologian, author, teacher, musician—and sometimes a prophet. Like all prophetic voices, ancient and modern, hers called out in warning and promise: intense, inspired, sometimes contentious, and always anchored in joy and hope.

Dawn earned four master's degrees and a PhD in Christian ethics and Scripture from the University of Notre Dame. She wrote more than 20 books, many award-winning and translated into Korean, Chinese, French, and other languages. She lived in Vancouver, WA, and served as a teaching fellow at Regent College, Vancouver, BC. She and her husband, Myron Sandberg, traveled worldwide under the aegis of Christians Equipped for Ministry, as she taught and preached at seminaries, universities, and conferences, retiring in 2016.

Her book titles¹ summed up her personal journey, her passion for the Church as a community, and alarm for the technicization and material consumerism of our culture. A sampling:

- *I'm Lonely Lord—How Long?;*
- *Is it a Lost Cause? Having the Heart of God for the Church's Children;*
- *Being Well When We're Ill: Wholeness and Hope in Spite of Infirmary;*
- *Keeping the Sabbath Wholly: Ceasing, Resting, Embracing, Feasting;*
- *Truly the Community: Romans 12 and How to Be the Church;*

- *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down: A Theology of Worship for the Turn-of-the-Century Culture;*
- *A Royal "Waste" of Time: The Splendor of Worshiping God and Being Church for the World;*
- *Joy in Our Weakness: A Gift of Hope from the Book of Revelation;* and
- *Unfettered Hope: A Call to Faithful Living in an Affluent Society.*

Reaching Out without Dumbing Down, published in 1995 by Eerdmans Books, propelled her into the limelight and tumult of the late 20th-century worship wars. As a lifelong Lutheran and a classically trained musician, she agonized over and decried the praise and worship movement that in many churches displaced traditional liturgical worship.

But "praise and worship" and "liturgical" are too narrow terms: it was not merely a style of music nor the order of the service but the shift to individualism rather than community in worship, and music and lyrics emphasizing one's personal response rather than God's character and action that drove her piercing writings and teaching. She insisted on music and liturgy that could bear the weight of mystery, and worship that told God's story and promises.

A Royal "Waste" of Time was the sequel, as vibrant and encouraging as *Reaching Out* was cautionary. Both books received acclaim; both are invaluable for church musicians and pastors seeking rich, communal, sacramental worship.

I made acquaintance with Dawn through serendipitous crossings



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of paths beginning when I was a teenager, but I came to know her better in Ravenna, Italy, where I lived for a year, when she visited after meeting with the great French "Christian anarchist" and her mentor, Jacques Ellul. A favorite memory is when I took her on a tour of Ravenna's Byzantine mosaics and *she* became the guide. She explained the stories of doctrinal intrigues intimated in the art of baptistries and sanctuaries and then, with only one functioning eye, pointed out all the joy and Hope (with a capital "H," anchored in Christ) hidden in high-up images of creation, biblical scenes, and 6th-century church figures.

Dawn was strong in the midst of criticism toward her, weak in physical suffering from diabetes and complications, fierce in warning against the lukewarmness of spiritual complacency and self-indulgence in worship, gentle in reaching out to the discouraged and marginalized. Her many book royalties went to charity. She sometimes read the Bible in German or other languages, because English, Hebrew, and Greek were overfamiliar. Her favorite hymn was "I Am Jesus' Little Lamb." And her favorite color was pink, the color she very often wore. It stood for the color of the dawn, the color for *Gaudete* Sunday in Advent, and for her dear desire—it, too, capitalized: Joy.

Note

1. A list of Dawn's books can be found at http://www.marvadawn.org/marvas_books.



One Lord, One Faith, *Dos Idiomas*

by Zabdi Lopez and
Pam Bridgehouse

Pastor's Perspective

my name is Pastor Zabdi Lopez, and I have been serving as a pastor in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod for more than 15 years. I also have been serving churches as a musician for more than 35 years. I am serving today in a unique church. My LCMS Lutheran church has two branches. The first branch is a 54-year-old congregation that worships in English. The other branch is an 18-year-old Hispanic congregation that worships in Spanish. Together, we are Hope Lutheran Church, one church in two languages.

My challenge as a pastor and a musician is unique. First, being a pastor, I know that music touches our hearts during worship. I know choosing the right music is important during our corporate worship services. Not only the lyrics that I know as a Lutheran pastor must be Christ-centered, but also the style or rhythm are very important to me. I always try to think a lot about what hymns or worship songs to choose every

Sunday based on the themes for that Sunday. Yes, I would like to please my older Lutheran folks by having traditional Lutheran hymns from the hymnals. But I also like to use contemporary songs that are played on Christian radio to make a connection between our church people and the community they live in.

On the other hand, the Spanish-speaking church is always changing. We always have new members coming and going. This is because they are immigrants. They move geographically, trying to find a better place to work. My challenge is to find familiar rhythms from their different countries of origin, because not all of them are Mexicans, so I use genres like *ranchera*, *tropical*, and other rhythms for worship songs and hymns for our Sunday worship. I look for Spanish Christian music for them to connect not only to Jesus but to their culture.

Furthermore, all these immigrants have children who are American. These children were born here in America, and their mother tongue is English. Here

My challenge is to find familiar rhythms from their different countries of origin, because not all of them are Mexicans.

we have these children coming to Sunday worship with two cultures and two languages. My challenge is to find Christian contemporary songs that are translated by a known artist to sing at the church. I could easily translate any contemporary song I like, but I know that if I do my own translation, the wording will be different than what they will hear on YouTube or TikTok.

You can imagine this gets more complicated when we have our once-a-month combined worship service. We all worship together. What would you do? I have been doing this for five years. I have a system. I try to sing contemporary bilingual worship songs. Yes, I know I am not targeting either the heart of the first-generation Hispanics or the older Lutherans who like Lutheran hymns. We children of God are all involved in ministry. Any good ideas and questions are welcome to pastorzabdi@hotmail.com.

What is meaningful, expressive, and inspiring in one region may be hollow or even annoying in another region.

Musician's Perspective

blending people of different cultures into a congregational worship culture is a challenge. Hope Lutheran is a bi-cultural congregation with younger Spanish-speaking families and older, English-speaking members. We have separate English and Spanish services but try to worship bilingually on special occasions. Before the pandemic we celebrated bilingual Holy Communion on the first Sunday of the month. When we re-opened for in-person worship in 2020, all services were outdoors and bilingual from July into October.

Bilingual bulletins are formatted in Word using a two-column table for each element of the service, English in one column and Spanish in the other. As much as possible, the content is line for line the same in both languages. The PowerPoint slides are set up the same way. The

Absolution, Words of Institution, and Benediction are delivered in both languages. Other content is alternated between languages. People respond and sing in the language they prefer.

Pastor Lopez and his family lead the singing. They sing the first stanza in one language and the next stanza in the other language, alternating throughout the song, while congregants sing in their preferred language—a Pentecost experience.

There can be challenges singing the liturgy in both languages. A culture is expressed through its

One language may have a phrase that requires an anacrusis while the same phrase in the other language starts on the beat. Does the organist play the pick-up note or not?

language. Even within a nation there are variations in the language and practice that express regional differences. Finding a common ground even in a single language can be challenging. What is meaningful, expressive, and inspiring in one region may be hollow or even annoying in another region.

Musically, trying to sing the liturgy simultaneously in two languages can be a frustrating distraction. One language may have a phrase that requires an anacrusis while the same phrase in the other language starts on the beat. Does the organist play the pick-up note or not? If not, how will the people know to sing it? If so, will the non-anacrusis people come in early and stumble through the phrase?

For this reason, Hope's bilingual liturgy includes the Invocation, Confession and Absolution; readings and preaching; the creed and offering; prayers and petitions; and the Benediction all spoken. Such a framework provides the traditional structure without singing the elements of the formal liturgy that could cause confusion and distract from worship.

You will find different Spanish translations of hymns, depending on which hymnal you use. We search *Culto Cristiano*, *¡Cantad al Señor!*, *Libro de Liturgia y Cántico*,¹ and the internet. Translations are “dynamic,” giving the same general idea as the English. But complications arise. For example, the Spanish version of “Amazing Grace,” “Sublime gracia” (LSB 744), expresses the same basic



“Amazing Grace” literal translation of the Spanish:

Sublime grace of the Lord
That saved a sinner
I walked lost, He found me.
His light rescued me.

His grace taught me to conquer,
It dispersed my doubts.
What joy I feel in my being!
He changed my life.

Dangers, struggle, and affliction
I have had here.
His grace always sets me free.
I received comfort/consolation.

And when in Zion for thousands of years
Shining I will be like the sun,
I will sing always there
To Christ the Savior.

sentiment as the English, but the English has five verses, the Spanish only four (see above).

Singing translations differ from literal translations in that each language has its unique patterns of stressed/unstressed syllables, word order, idioms, and grammatical construction. A literal translation of an English-language hymn may make no sense at all in Spanish (or any other target language). A singing translation honors the content, rhyme scheme (if possible), and the pattern of stress/unstress that marries well with the melody. It makes sense without distorting the appropriate and normal flow and accent of the target language. Check internet translations to

see if they are literal or singing translations: note the number of syllables in each line, check the rhyme scheme, and sing it to see if it fits the rhythm and melody.

People engage more fully and deeply in worship that matches their culture. While it is true that worshippers assimilate into the style of worship practiced in their congregation, the worship style ought not make them feel so foreign that it drives them away. Blending cultures in worship can be a challenge. It is always an occasion for grace.



Zabdi Lopez was born in Mexico City. He earned Bachelor of Accounting and Master of Marketing

degrees before coming to the US in 2000 to study pastoral ministry. He received a Master of Theology and Culture through Concordia (St. Louis) Seminary (Cross-Cultural Ministry Center) at Concordia University, Irvine, and was ordained in 2004. He has planted bilingual churches in Los Angeles county and Northern California and now serves the bilingual church in Woodburn, OR. From 2014 to 2017 he served The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as a consultant for Hispanic ministries, including

While it is true that worshippers assimilate into the style of worship practiced in their congregation, the worship style ought not make them feel so foreign that it drives them away.

the 110 Hispanic church plants under Dr. Carlos Hernandez.



Pam Bridgehouse formerly created singing translations for Concordia

Publishing House’s bilingual Vacation Bible School curriculum, adapting music often composed in Argentina, with its distinct South American rhythms and syncopation, into singable English. She is currently office secretary/parish assistant serving with Pastor Lopez at Hope, Woodburn, OR, and musician at her home congregation, Grace Lutheran Church, Molalla, OR. You can find an example of the Hope bilingual bulletin at alcm.org. Contact her at bridgehousepam@aol.com.

Note

1. Culto Cristiano (New York: Publicaciones “El Escudo,” 1968, reissued 1978; sold through Concordia), *¡Cantad al Señor!* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1991), *Libro de Liturgia y Cántico* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998).



En Tus manos estoy/I Am Safe in Your Hands

dedicada al Pastor Miguel Luna y su familia Dedicated to Pr. Miguel Luna and his family
14 septiembre 2015

Pam Bridgehouse

Piano

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The score is divided into three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part consists of a right-hand melody and a left-hand bass line. The lyrics are written in Spanish and English. The first system covers measures 1-3, the second system covers measures 4-6, and the third system covers measures 7-9. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and chords.

En Tus ma - nos es - toy; se -
I am safe in Your hands. Wher -

4 G A D G A
gu - ro yo voy ba - jo Tu cui - da - do. Con - fian - do en Tu a mor no hay
e - ver I go You are watch - ing o'er me. I'm trust - ing in Your love; there is

7 D G D A D D7
cau - sa de te - mer. Es - toy se - gu - ro, guar - da - do por mi Señ - or. Tu gran a -
no - thing I will fear. My Lord, You keep me; I know I am in Your care. With Your great

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REPRODUCIBLE

ALCM *in tempo* 2021, No. 3

11

10 G A D G A

mor _____ me cu - bre. _____ Ha - ces Tu ro - stro re - splan - de - cer so - bre
love _____ You guard me. _____ You make Your face to shine down Your fa - vor on

13 D G A

mi. Me guar - das con a - mor, me con - ce - des Tu
me. You keep me in Your love And You give me Your

16 Bm G Em A

paz. No hay na - da mas que pue - do quer - er. _____
peace. There is no - thing more I want, or could need. _____

19

D G A

En Tus ma-nos es - toy. Se - gu - ro yo voy ba - jo Tu cui
I am safe in Your hands. Where - ev - er I go You are watch - ing

19

22

D G A D G

da - do. Con - fian do en Tu a - mor no hay cau - sa de te - mer. Es - toy se
o'er me. I'm trust - ing in Your love; there is no - thing I will fear. My Lord, You

22

25

D A 1. D 2.

gu - ro guar - da - do por mi Señ - or. Tu gran a - or.
keep me; I know I am in Your care. With Your great care.

25

Translation: I am in Your hands. I go safely under your care. Trusting in Your love there is no reason to be afraid. I am safe, cared for by my Lord. Your great love covers me. You make your face shine on me, you guard me with love, you give me Your peace. There is nothing more I could want.

Musician in Motion: *By Default or by Design?*

by Sandra Dager

*Body and soul, I am
marvelously made!*

—Psalm 139:14¹

the human body is a complex creation—a brilliantly engineered amalgamation of body, mind, and soul that functions as a seamless, well-organized whole. By divine design, musicians can perform a vast array of complex movements and meet the demands of musicmaking with ease and efficiency—when they move by design.

As young children, we moved as our Creator intended. Our head moved naturally, in a forward, upward direction. Our spine maintained its length, thus providing the structure and spaciousness required for the other body parts to do their jobs. Gradually, we moved less efficiently. As we imitated others and encountered the challenges of modern life, unhealthy habits and default postures invaded our somatic ecosystem like the weeds in Jesus' parable.² As Pedro de Alcantara notes, moving the “wrong” way feels “right” and moving the “right” or natural way feels “wrong.”³ Frederick Mathias Alexander, the developer of the educational process named after him, described this phenomenon as *faulty sensory awareness*.

Alexander was an Australian orator whose promising career was threatened by vocal difficulties. Frustrated by the inability of his physician to diagnose the cause of his chronic hoarseness, Alexander

As we imitated others and encountered the challenges of modern life, unhealthy habits and default postures invaded our somatic ecosystem like the weeds in Jesus' parable.

embarked upon a painstaking process of self-observation to find the solution to his problem. The physical and postural habits Alexander discovered about his own use of himself led to a series of ground-breaking insights. Over a period of years, Alexander refined and developed his technique, trained teachers, and taught his pupils how to improve the use of their “selves.” The implications of his technique have been far-reaching and have impacted disciplines as varied as medicine, music, psychology, education, child-rearing practices, and sports, as well as the performing arts.

The “faulty sensory awareness” Alexander observed involves a disturbance of our sixth or proprioceptive sense. Proprioception is the internal perception of where our bodies are in relation to space (environment). It plays a major role in all muscular activity, such as the position of body parts, coordination, the movement of body and limbs, postural adjustment, the ability to calculate the amount of tension required for a task, and self-regulation. The psychological dimension is part of the proprioceptive mix as well and influences such things as feelings, beliefs, conceptions of right and



wrong, our opinions of others, and our musicmaking.

I would still be living with faulty sensory awareness if my English singing teacher Josephine Veasey had not intervened in a voice lesson and exclaimed, “I can’t do anything with that jaw of yours! You need the Alexander Technique.” She knew her musical training had not included a deep understanding of the way the musculoskeletal system is designed to function and had not provided her with the knowledge and skill required to resolve problems like mine. I took her advice, improved my singing, and eventually became an Alexander Technique teacher.

Since *In Tempo* focuses on the pragmatic and the practical, I offer some practical suggestions from my perspective as an Alexander Technique teacher.

Take some Alexander Technique lessons from a certified teacher—ideally, in person, but virtually if that is not possible. Its holistic, educational approach will help you understand your own wholeness. This cannot be learned in a book. It must be experienced.⁴

Engage your whole body,

regardless of the size of the movement. For example, the head, neck, torso, and legs all determine how well you use your arms when playing the keyboard.

Maintain awareness of your entire environment—what is above, beside, behind, and before you. It increases resonance and reduces stage fright.

Watch your posture. When standing, place half of your weight on the balls of your feet. Putting more than half of your weight on the heels will cause you to lean backwards. This creates tension, restricts movement, hampers breathing, and hinders communication. The deep spinal muscles—not the “core”—are the muscles designed to keep you upright in gravity. When sitting, sit on your sitting bones rather than collapsing your spine and sitting on your tailbone. This is easier if you can sit near the edge rather than the back of the chair or bench. For organists—especially those who must play this ergonomically challenging instrument, use both their arms and legs, *and* simultaneously direct a choir—sitting presents unique challenges.

Holistic “quality” of movement vs. “compartmentalized” movement:

There is a difference between holistic “quality” of movement (using the whole body as a well-organized unit during movement) and “compartmentalized” movement (attempting to move one or more parts of the body in isolation from the rest). For example, telling singers to “drop the

jaw” or “sing from the diaphragm” focuses on one part and creates tension in other places. Instead, keep things simple. Focus on the whole person. Invite people to be aware of and to engage the entire environment. Encourage musicians to sit near the edges of their chairs. Putting a wedge or a slim book under the back legs of the chairs can be helpful. Ask singers to hold their music up instead of collapsing and looking down. When giving instructions, be friendly, encouraging, and positive—never negative. Muscles are like children: they respond best to positivity.

If you must touch people, please get some training to help you do this without creating additional tension. An Alexander Technique teacher could help you find effective ways to do this.

In his Aereopagus speech Paul stated, “In God we live and move and have our being.”⁵ The Alexander Technique is not a spiritual construct, but it can help worship leaders embody Paul’s words more profoundly and potently as they carry out their ministries.



AMY CARR

Sandra Dager is an ordained Lutheran pastor, musician, worship consultant, and leadership

coach who specializes in facilitating transformation through embodiment and education in church leaders and their faith communities. Her unique background as a pastor, musician, adjunct professor of liturgical leadership, certified Alexander Technique teacher, and certified energy pattern coach allows her to observe and



Good form

For organists—especially those who must play this ergonomically challenging instrument, use both their arms and legs, *and* simultaneously direct a choir—sitting presents unique challenges.

work with churches and worship leaders from multiple angles. She invites you to contact her at s.d.dager@gmail.com or visit her website at sandrager.com.

Notes

1. Eugene H. Peterson, *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002).
2. Matthew 13:24-30.
3. Pedro de Alcantara, *Indirect Procedures* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2013), 36. Alcantara is an Alexander Technique teacher.
4. For further information about the Alexander Technique or to find an Alexander Technique teacher in the United States, see the website for the American Society for the Alexander Technique (AmSAT): www.amsatonline.org. The Society of Teachers of the Alexander Technique in the United Kingdom (STAT) is an excellent resource: <https://alexandertechnique.co.uk/>.
5. Acts 17:28a (NRSV).

PHOTOS OF TIM GETZ, THE PIANIST, BY SANDRA DAGER.

A Soul Stilled and Quieted

by John Kreutzwieser

as the congregation gathered for the service, I chose my seat in the usual place.

There was a hum of voices echoing from the foyer, expressions of greeting and familiarity as people entered the building. The pastor entered the sanctuary, greeted the congregants, and began the opening liturgy.

“In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” the leader said, making the sign of the cross. “Let us draw near to the Lord and prepare our hearts to receive God’s gifts this day.”

Our response was framed in the words of 1 John: “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sin, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 7:8–9; ESV).

“And now let us pause in silence to reflect on our sinful state and God’s great mercy,” the pastor encouraged us. I set about to quiet my mind so I could focus on sin in my life, my need for God, and anticipate words of pardon and grace. However, after only a few seconds the pastor began reciting the prayer of confession. My concentration was broken. “What just happened?” I thought. “Were we not to have a time of silence?” I was not allowed the time needed. Why are we so rushed when it comes to silence in worship? I was invited to be silent and contemplate my relationship with God, but so little time was allowed for that to happen.

The Divine Service is a time to enter the eternal rhythm of God. The rhythm of sound and silence is all around us and within us. There is a rhythm in the way day vanishes into night and night into morning. There is a rhythm as the activity of spring and summer is silenced by the stillness of fall and winter. In our bodies, the rhythm of a heart rests after the sound of each beat, and the lungs relax between the exhale and the inhale.

There is a spiritual dimension to this rhythm. God commanded his people of the Old Testament to use the last day of every seven-day cycle as a time to participate in the divine rhythm. The key to understanding the Sabbath day is to recognize this rhythm and to experience the intent and purposes of the Creator. So when Christians gather on the first day of the week, we are intended to enter into something similar. Unfortunately we have been influenced by Western culture’s view of silence as mostly negative. Our church services are filled with so much sound we are not in harmony with the divine rhythm. If we would take seriously the rhythms of God, then in our worship we need times for the noise and the work to cease. Worship leaders need to plan times of silence within the liturgy.

Following are four simple ways of inserting meaningful silence into the church service so that God’s people can enter into the joy and experience of the eternal rhythm. I suggest a two-minute silence. This is based on the familiar two-minute silence

routinely observed in the UK Commonwealth countries on Remembrance Day, as we practice in Canada on November 11. I think this would work well in any context in the United States or anywhere.

Confession/ Absolution

Psalm 131:2 uses the Hebrew word *damam*. “But I have stilled and quieted my soul; like a weaned child with its mother.” This time of silence allows God access to the reality of us, His children. Content and trusting, we pause for meditation on our sin and anticipate the word of forgiveness and love from our gracious God.

KATHRYN BREWER





The rhythm of sound and silence is all around us and within us.
There is a rhythm in the way day vanishes into night and night into morning.

Scripture Readings

“Be silent, and I will teach you wisdom” (Job 33:33; NIV). The Hebrew word used is *charash*. We need to be silent to stop the constant noise around us and prepare to let God’s Word permeate our souls in order to receive faith and growth in Christian living. Announce prior to the reading that there will be a time of silence after the Scripture is proclaimed to meditate on the Word of God.

The Eucharist

The prophet Habakkuk writes, “But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him” (Hab. 2:20). The Hebrew word used this time is *hacah*. We should have a time of

silence in the presence of God who comes in the bread and wine. As the hymn proclaims, “Let all mortal flesh keep silence and with fear and trembling stand” (ELW 490; LSB 621; CW 361).

The Blessing

Psalm 46 states, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” The Hebrew word for “be silent/be still” is *aphah*. Silence is a time to review all that God has done in the Divine Service. This silence helps prepare for the final word of blessing as we go back into the noise of life.

Participation in the silence and sound rhythm will enable people to better experience the encounter with God’s means of grace in the Divine Service as God intended for His creation.



John Kreutz-wieser is a retired Lutheran Church—Canada pastor living in Moose Jaw,

SK. He graduated from Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary in St. Catharines, ON, in 1982 and received his doctorate from The Robert E. Webber Institute for Worship Studies in 2006. His doctoral thesis was titled, “Introducing and Integrating Silence into the Divine Service at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan.”

From Singing to Ringing

By Kate E. Ledington

a substantial change to our church and choir this last year was the lack of socializing that we typically experience from preparing and participating in worship music together.

Like most choirs, singers at my congregation felt it was responsible to discontinue choir rehearsals with the outbreak of COVID-19. As a director, I was willing to put choir on hold to help prevent the spread of the virus, and I could not entertain any alternative musical opportunities that would allow ensemble music to continue distanced or even outdoors.

Until ... Choir Chimes

A typical set of handbells may cost as much as \$30,000. Choir *chimes*, or handchimes, are bar-shaped percussion instruments, costing around \$1000–2000 per set. That was a great alternative for us, and an amount of funds we could raise with the support of the community. This meant the choir could still learn and play music together without singing, while staying socially distanced. We went from singing to ringing.

Choir chimes do not require the same intensive level of care and maintenance as typical handbells. They are much more durable, can be touched with a bare hand if necessary, and can be placed on a number of surfaces (even outdoor grass). This makes chimes more approachable for families, children, and people new to music or ringing.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

Upon reconvening services outdoors, many instruments we use needed to be amplified in order to be heard. Contrarily, the metallic ringing of choir chimes travels well outside. They could be played safely and distanced in that setting: we used two bells per person, with a music stand, six feet from one another. Also, members who could not stand for long could sit with a music stand at their height.

Music written for two octaves of handbells is easily accessible and often translatable for chimes. With just two chimes per person, music can be easily color-coded (red for right hand, blue for left), and a hymn variation with as few as five ringers can be learned in a single rehearsal. For beginners and people who learn by ear, well-known hymn tunes are ideal: ringers will quickly learn where their note fits in the melody. For techniques and tips, contact me at ChristTheVineKate@gmail.com.

Playing and learning worship music together can build the feeling of reward, and in a year of uncertainty, our members came on weeks they were available; group size changed with each piece. Using this approach, our beginning ensemble was able to rehearse and video record a 1–3 minute piece in one hour or less. If all ensemble members were available, we repeated the piece as a short prelude on Sunday morning—again with music stands socially distanced.

At some point distancing will subside, bringing the return of bell tables, shared music, closer teamwork, and multiple chimes per ringer. Implementing early music education techniques can then be reserved for beginners, families, and young ringers. Yet keeping a “come-all, anyone-can-ring” social group can help build bonds after a time of disconnectedness.

If you’re looking for a new way for your members to gather and participate in worship, choir chimes might be a great first step.

Quiz

Christmas Trivia

Some ideas:

Make fun or catchy group names as soon as you can! One congregation can have multiple groups with different names, all possessing their own camaraderie.

Grow organically. Some may move toward fundraising for handbells, while others benefit from a children's ensemble. Many first-time ringers may overcome previous trepidation and be open to joining the church choir. Some congregations are looking for a way to connect people who otherwise might never connect, and some of the more lonely congregation members might not feel as lonely.

No matter where a beginning ensemble takes you, making music approachable creates joy and momentum. Use that momentum!

Please use this reproducible music on pages 20–21 as you would like. Blessings on your journey!



Kate Ledington is a Pacific Northwest native. She grew up in Idaho and attended Concordia

University, Portland, and Portland State University (both in Oregon), receiving degrees in music and education. Her violin is handmade by her Idahoan grandfather and she plays it for worship every week. She currently teaches choir in the David Douglas school district and has performed and recorded with the Portland State Chamber Choir, played in Oregon's Mahler Festival, and studied opera with Dr. Mitra Sadeghpour in Piedmont, Italy.

1. December 25 is the date we celebrate Christmas because:
 - a. Jesus was born on that date.
 - b. Christians took over the pagan festival of Sol Invictus, the Sun God (celebrated on that date), in favor of Jesus, the Son of God and Light of the World.
 - c. It was close to the winter solstice, connected to rebirth and new life.
 - d. Your guess is as good as most anybody's.
2. "Carol" originally referred to:
 - a. any Christmas song, sacred or secular.
 - b. singing or dancing in a circle.
 - c. singing in a round or canon.
 - d. the medieval monastic scriptorium *carrels* (of which "carol" is a spelling corruption) where monks spontaneously broke into song as they copied manuscripts.
3. Why are many old Christmas hymns in triple meter?
 - a. In early Christianity the number three was associated with the Trinity, and the Christmas-Epiphany season emphasizes the three Persons of the Trinity.
 - b. Christmas hymns from ancient times often used the meter of "joy"; triple meter.
 - c. The medieval *tripudium* dances (in solemn triple time) were based on Christmas melodies in 3/4 time.
 - d. To test the agility of marchers in church processions to keep in step.
4. *Adeste fideles* refers to:
 - a. the name of the composer of "Joy to the World."
 - b. the Latin for "with brass accompaniment."
 - c. calling all the faithful to worship.
 - d. the motto from the Marines' Hymn, always sung at Christmastide.
5. True or False?

Father Christmas, aka St. Nicholas, aka Santa Claus, would show up at Christmas Day worship with gifts for children in his knapsack in 17th-century Protestant Germany.

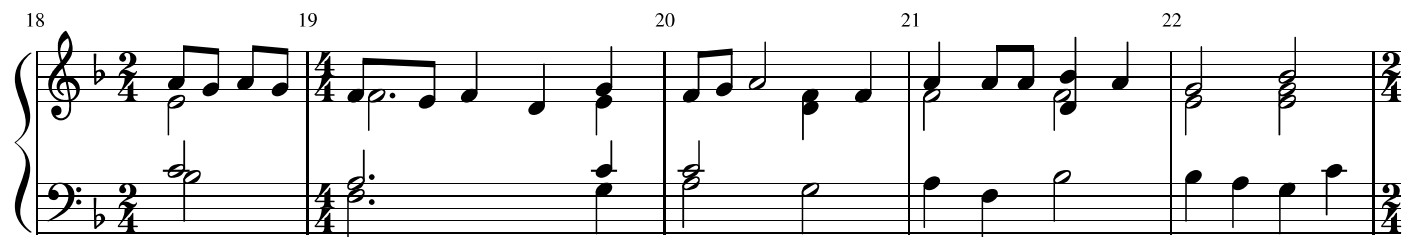
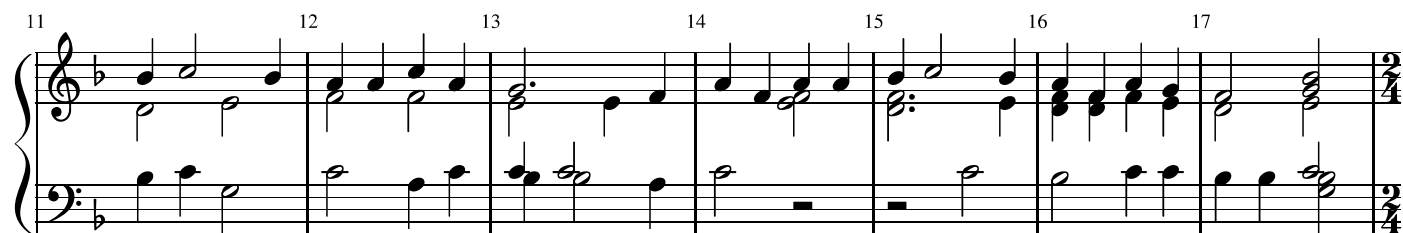
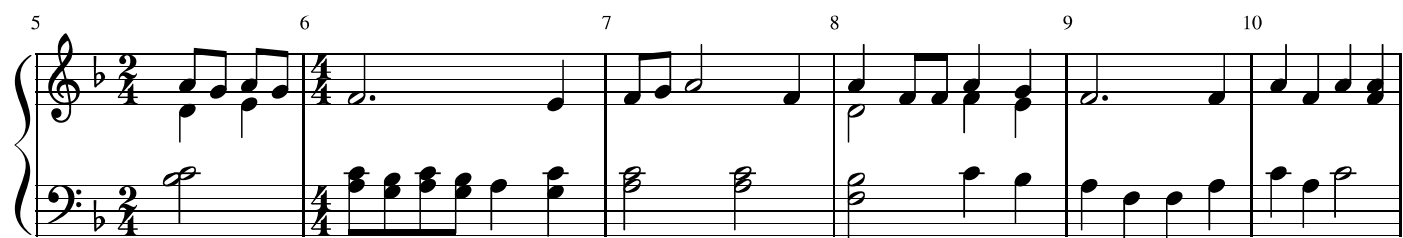
Answers on page 33.

There Is a Balm in Gilead

2 Octaves, 12 Handbells



Traditional African American Spiritual
Arr. K. Ledington
Adapted for CTV Chimes, Lent 2021



23 24 25 26 27 28

Measures 23-28 of a musical score. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measures 23-24 are in 3/4 time, and measures 25-28 are in 4/4 time. The score is written for piano with a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). Measure 23 features a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. Measures 24-28 show a variety of chordal textures and melodic fragments in both hands.

29 30 31 32 33

Measures 29-33 of a musical score. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measures 29-33 are in 4/4 time. The score is written for piano with a grand staff. Measures 29-33 feature a variety of chordal textures and melodic fragments in both hands, with some measures showing more complex harmonic structures.

34 35 36 37 38

Measures 34-38 of a musical score. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measures 34-38 are in 4/4 time. The score is written for piano with a grand staff. Measures 34-38 feature a variety of chordal textures and melodic fragments in both hands, with some measures showing more complex harmonic structures.

39 40 41 42

Measures 39-42 of a musical score. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measures 39-40 are in 4/4 time, and measures 41-42 are in 2/4 time. The score is written for piano with a grand staff. Measures 39-42 feature a variety of chordal textures and melodic fragments in both hands, with some measures showing more complex harmonic structures.

43 44 45 46 47 48 49

Measures 43-49 of a musical score. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). Measures 43-49 are in 4/4 time. The score is written for piano with a grand staff. Measures 43-49 feature a variety of chordal textures and melodic fragments in both hands, with some measures showing more complex harmonic structures. The piece concludes with a final chord in measure 49.

Advent Hymn Tour

by Walter E. Krueger

advent involves three tenses: Christ has come, He still comes, and He is coming again—the one “who is, and who was, and who is to come” (Rev. 1:8; NIV). Enjoy a brief walk-through of these themes with me as they are present in hymnody, rich in image and story.

“Savior of the Nations, Come”

VENI, REDEMPTOR GENTIUM /
NUN KOMM, DER HEIDEN HEILAND

(ELW263; LSB 332; CW2)

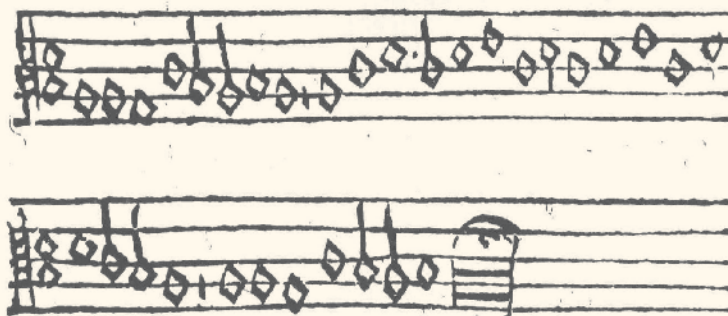
This early yet enduring hymn (over 1600 years old!) was authored by Saint Ambrose of Milan (340–97), often called the

Christ has come, He still comes, and He is coming again—the one “who is, and who was, and who is to come.”

father of Latin hymnody. The Council of Nicea, A.D. 325, dealt with the debate between Arius and Athanasius regarding the nature of Christ. Christ, confessed as true God and true man, is now enshrined in creeds and this hymn as “God of God, yet fully man” (LSB 332, st. 4).

Martin Luther (1483–1546), the “Ambrose of German hymnody” as scholar Philip Schaff calls him, would have known the hymn “Veni, redemptor gentium” from monastery days in Erfurt, through breviary and missal. Considering what was to be the song of the people, he might well have remembered this simple song and created a version of it for laypeople. The meter was changed and certain melismas of the Ambrosian chant were ironed out. It was first published in 1524 in both Wittenberg and Erfurt, as “Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland”—Lutherans’ first Advent hymn!

¶ Hymnus. Veni redemptor gentium.



¶ Nu kom der Heyden heyland/der yungfrawen
kynd erkannnd. Das sich wunnder alle welt/ Gott
solch gepurt yhm bestellt.
Nicht von Mans blut noch von fleisch/ allein vō
dem heyligen geist/ Ist Gottes wort worden eyn
mensch/ vnd bluet eyn frucht weibs fleisch.
Der yungfraw leib schwanger ward/ doch bleib
keuscheyt reyn bewald/ Leucht er fur mäch tugēd
schon/ Gott da war yn seynem thron.
Er gieng aus der kamer seyn/ dem kōnglichen saal
so reyn. Gott vō art vñ mensch eyn helli/ seyn weg
er zu lauffen eyllt.
Seyn laufft kam vom vatter her/ vnd keret wider
zum vater. fur hyn vndern zu der hell/ vnd wider
zu Gottes stuel.

¶ ii

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“Nu kom der Heyden Heyland”
by Martin Luther in the *Erfurt*
Enchiridion.

“Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying”

WACHET AUF, RUFT UNS DIE STIMME

(ELW 436; LSB 516; CW 206)

Not an Advent hymn? The biblical parable of the wise and foolish bridesmaids in Matthew 25:1–13 is all about waiting and preparing: young ladies in varying states of readiness anticipate the arrival of the Bridegroom. “Wake, Awake” does indeed have associations with Advent but is now considered a song for “End Times.”

“Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme” is a rarity in that both tune and text were written by the same person, Philipp Nicolai (1556–1608). It was published in his book *Frewden-Spiegel dess ewigen Lebens* (“joyful mirror of eternal life”; 1599). It deserves its nickname, “King of Chorales,” for its majestic simplicity and dignity.

Nicolai became priest at Unna in Westphalia in 1596, which was struck by a devastating plague in 1597. Thirteen hundred people died in a 6-month period. In July alone there were three hundred deaths and in August 170 more. Nicolai’s house overlooked the cemetery where he conducted up to 30 interments in a single day. What a great toll this must have taken on him, professionally and emotionally. He even described the stench from the graveyard and how he used incense and various herbs to purify the air.

It was during this time of great pain and suffering that Nicolai undertook to write *Frewden-Spiegel*, consisting of about 300 pages of

visions of life eternal—lessons for life in the face of death, all cross-referenced with Scripture. “Wake, Awake” first appeared there in an appendix.

First publication of “Wachet auf, ruft uns die Stimme” by Philipp Nicolai in Nicolai’s 1599 *Frewdenspiegel deß ewigen Lebens*.

412.

Ein anders von der Stim zu Mitternacht/vnd von den klugen Jungfrauen/die ihrem himmlischen Bräutigam bes gegenen/Matth. 25.

D. Philippus Nicolai.

Wachet auff / rufft uns die Stimme / Der Wächter sehr hoch
Mitternacht heist diese Stunde / Sie ruffen uns mit
hellem Munde / Wo seyd ihr klugen Jungfrauen? Wolauff/
der Bräutigam kompt / Stehe auff / die Lampen nim. t. Halleluia. Macht
euch bereit / Zu der Hochzeit. Ihr müßet ihm entgegen gehn.

I.

Wachet auff / rufft uns die Stimme /
Der Wächter sehr hoch auff der Zinnen /
Wach auff du Statt Jerusalem.
Mitternacht heist diese Stunde /
Sie ruffen uns mit hellem Munde /
Wo seyd ihr klugen Jungfrauen?
Wolauff / der Bräutigam kompt /
Stehe auff / die Lampen nimpt /
Halleluia.
Macht euch bereit / Zu der Hochzeit /
Ihr müßet ihm entgegen gehn.

II.

Zion hört die Wächter singen /

Das

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

The first printing of “Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending” to the tune HELMSLEY in Martin Madan’s *Collection of Psalm and Hymn Tunes sung at Lock Hospital*, 1763.

“Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending”

HELMSLEY / PICARDY

(ELW435; LSB 336; CW29)

This popular hymn by Charles Wesley (1707–1788) was first published in *Hymns of Intercession for All Mankind* (1758). It appeared under the category “Thy Kingdom Come,” but no tune was given.

Wesley, one of the great hymn writers, was a leader of the Methodist movement and is known for about 6,500 hymns.

The text is focused on Christ’s final coming, when all will see “the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven,’ with power and great glory” (Matthew 24:30; NRSV). Although designated for Advent, some hymnals place this hymn also in the category “End Times.”

However, it was a hymn waiting for a tune! Part of the reason for this may be the varying poetic meter. In the 1758 original it was 8.7.8.7.4.7. There are no tunes with this meter.

Lo! He comes with clouds
descending,
Once for favored sinners slain!
Thousand, thousand saints
attending,
Swell the triumph of his train:
Hallelujah,
God appears, on earth to reign!

The unusual fifth line, “Hallelujah,” if doubled, would make the

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meter 8.7.8.7.8.7, and thus the hymn tune PICARDY or SICILIAN MARINERS might be chosen. Alternatively, if that fifth line is tripled, then we do have a unique hymn choice: HELMSLEY 8.7.8.7.12.7. The tune HELMSLEY, commonly used for “Lo! He Comes,” is attributed to Thomas Olivers (1725–1799).

“People, Look East”

BESANÇON

(ELW248)

This lilting, mirthful song, titled “Carol of the Advent,” first appeared in *The Oxford Book of Carols* in 1928 (#133). Eleanor Farjeon (1881–1965) wrote this upon request from the editors.

**No matter which way pews
face geographically, people
“waiting in darkness” turn
metaphorically east for the
arrival of “new life.”**

Farjeon (who also wrote “Morning Has Broken”) was a musician, poet, and writer. She is known for her vivid imagination, well-exhibited in 80 prize-winning works, including books, plays, nursery rhymes, and singing games.

This carol’s rich imagery begins with “looking east.” No matter which way pews face geographically, people “waiting in darkness” turn metaphorically east for the arrival of “new life” (st. 4). Not dwelling on the darkness, we prepare for celebration, making home and hearth ready for “Love the Guest” (st. 1).

Even the bare earth is asked to nourish with all its strength the seed planted in winter, soon to become the Rose. Stars “keep the watch” for a new Star: “One more light the bowl [of heaven] shall brim”—one brighter than sun and moon together. Finally, angels shout out, “peak and valley humming with the word, the Lord is coming” (st. 4), a possible reference to Isaiah 40:4. Guest, Rose, and Star are all metaphorically “the Lord.” All are “on the way.”

The tune BESANÇON (the name of a city in eastern France) comes from an older carol, “Chantons, bargiés, Noué, Noué”

(“Shepherds, the chorus come and swell, sing Noel”). It is appropriately festive and jaunty for the joy either text expresses!



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Epiphany Devotion Jesus, Come!

by Lois Martin

the time has come to undecorate, to pack away the trappings of Christmas. Usually putting away the Christmas decorations is a sad time in our household. We love the Christmas season, the liturgies, the music, family and friends coming for special happy moments. But now, my thoughts turn to entering Epiphany season and the important lessons of this season.

We have celebrated Epiphany and look forward to this precious baby growing up, leaving the infancy narratives, and looking to see

again, as if for the first time, who he is, and what he is about. How is this child, now moving about as an adult in our Scripture lessons, our liturgy, manifested as the One, the Chosen One of God, the Promised One, Emmanuel? We look to the titles we invest in him, we look at his actions, his deeds, so we can know again, this is the One.

Epiphany season frequently gets glossed over in our churches and in our holy conversations, perhaps because Christmas exhausts us of our emotion, our time, our energy. And, depending on the

The Adoration of the Magi, 1890, by Edward Burne-Jones. Tapestry. Musée d'Orsay, Paris

I am not packing away the Jesus of Bethlehem, I am hearing him in the wedding party of Cana, enjoying life with his family and friends.

church calendar, Lent can be just around the corner, the turn of the page on the monthly planning calendar. We need a break before another demanding season of the church year begins.

I hear in my heart and head the strains of "Jesus, Come! For We Invite You" (ELW312). I am not packing away the Jesus of Bethlehem, I am hearing him in the

**This Jesus is someone
who knows me,
this Jesus is someone
who cares for me,
this Jesus is someone
who walks with me
throughout all of life.**

wedding party of Cana, enjoying life with his family and friends. I am seeing him bring the surprisingly good wine to a toast, I am looking at the surprise of the chief steward, and the subtle smile of his mother. This Jesus is moving among us, in our everyday events. This Jesus is someone who knows me, this Jesus is someone who cares for me, this Jesus is someone who walks with me throughout all of life and does not need to be packed away into boxes for next year. My spirit sings as I delight in this text and in the tune, UNION SEMINARY.

The invitation is to move beyond the helpless, yet powerful, baby in the crèche. The hymn becomes my prayer as it invites me into the epiphanies that occur in the readings for this season of the church year. The hymn speaks words of invitation, inviting Jesus into our lives, trusting him to enliven our expectations, our hopes, our delight in life, to look at new possibilities. "Jesus, come!" This season is not closing a relationship but beginning a different relationship with an adult Jesus, one who is able to know and understand us, one who is strong enough to bear our burdens, lift our hearts, enjoy a gathering with our friends and

Jesus, Come! For We Invite You

Jesus, come! for we invite you,
guest and master, friend and Lord;
now, as once at Cana's wedding,
speak, and let us hear your word:
lead us through our need or doubting,
hope be born and joy restored.

Jesus, come! transform our pleasures,
guide us into paths unknown;
bring your gifts, command your servants,
let us trust in you alone:
though your hand may work in secret,
all shall see what you have done.

Jesus, come! in new creation,
heav'n brought near in power divine;
give your unexpected glory
changing water into wine:
rouse the faith of your disciples—
come, our first and greatest Sign!

Jesus, come! surprise our dullness,
make us willing to receive
more than we can yet imagine,
all the best you have to give:
let us find your hidden riches,
taste your love, believe, and live!

(ELW312)

This season is not closing a relationship but beginning a different relationship with an adult Jesus, one who is able to know and understand us, one who is strong enough to bear our burdens.

his. This season and its Scripture and hymns help us to know for sure that the baby is the Messiah, the One in whom God has given us salvation.

The Epiphany season is book-ended with pronouncements by God at Jesus' baptism and at the Transfiguration: "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased" (Mark 1:11b; NRSV)

and "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him" (Mark 9:7b). What greater words of invitation might we have to enter this season as we transition from Christmas to the witness, the manifestation, the epiphany, of Jesus our Lord and Christ. Jesus, come.



Lois Martin is an ordained minister of the ELCA. She has served as organist, choir director, and

music director before becoming ordained to Word and Sacrament ministry. She is also a spiritual director and enjoys teaching and writing, particularly on Scripture. Her doctoral emphasis was spiritual care at Lutheran School of Theology, Philadelphia, PA, now part of United Lutheran Seminary.



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the organ

Rare Breed: Builders and Technicians

by Luke Tegtmeier

at a recent musicians' meeting, someone asked an interesting question: "What kind of person goes into organ building or being an organ technician? Organists? And is there a chance these skills and people might be lost?"

I feel that organ building is especially attractive to people who have a good mix of mechanical skills and artistic interests. I grew up on a farm in north central Ohio, where I spent much time learning about the mechanics of machines and buildings. But my artistic side was carefully developed with two degrees in church music.

While serving as a church musician, I found that I needed to develop some mechanical hobbies (gardening and woodworking) to balance my very artistic professional life. On the other hand, if I had become a mechanic or farmer, I probably would have developed an artistic hobby of some sort to balance my life. Eventually, I found out that the organ tuner for my church needed some assistance, and things progressed from there.

Many of my organ-builder colleagues have a similar interest in mixing the mechanical and the artistic. Some are more artistic, focusing on the visual design of casework or the tonal design of the pipework. Others are more

mechanical, focusing on rebuilding generations-old organs that need special attention to restore them to like-new condition. Interestingly, while some organ builders enjoy antique cars or firetrucks as a hobby, many of them share a deep interest in railroads, especially steam powered. In fact, each annual conference of the American Institute of Organ-building includes at least one visit to a local railroad museum! I suspect that, like the pipe organ, steam engines are both artistically beautiful and mechanically fascinating.

Organ builders, like organists, have concerns about the rising median age in their profession. For some time, aging organists have been concerned about finding a way to develop more young organists to take on their roles as retirements near. This has led to the development of events like the AGO's "Pedals, Pipes, and Pizza" and "Pipe Organ Encounter" programs.

Similarly, organ builders have recently begun to be concerned about developing the "next generation" of builders in the profession. In response to this concern, several parties have partnered together to establish the

Organ builders have recently begun to be concerned about developing the "next generation" of builders in the profession.

American Organ Academy (www.americanorganacademy.com). This new institution is designed to train the next generation of organists *and* organ-builders. In fact, as I write this article, we have just completed the AOA's first event: a two-day seminar teaching beginners how to tune a pipe organ. We had a great time, and I feel confident that the skills of organ building and maintenance are not going to be lost.



Luke Tegtmeier

holds degrees in church music from Valparaiso University (IN) and Luther

Seminary (MN). For 10 years he was a church musician in Minnesota. Currently he plays at various churches on Sundays while serving as service manager at Schantz Organ Company (OH). He welcomes your questions or comments at Luke@schantzorgan.com.

LUKE TEGTMEIER



Cultivating Connection



by Jim Hild

One of life's basic needs is connecting with other people. It is important for you, but it's also important for the people you serve in a substitute position. As you connect with parishes, schools, and other performance venues, whom should you seek out and with whom should you develop relationships?

You have probably connected with the local musician (good first step) or maybe the pastor. But how about the secretary, custodian, or council member? I remember playing at a church where it was the secretary who recommended me to the pastor as a substitute.

Recently, while practicing at a church, the custodian came into the sanctuary and asked if I needed more light. His English was halting and I guessed his native language was Spanish. So,

in my best community-education Spanish, I greeted him, introduced myself, and thanked him. His eyes lit up and he introduced himself as José. Did I need to connect with the custodian other than “yes, I need more light,” or “no, I don’t.”? Probably not, but in that brief conversation we made a meaningful connection. One of the first things I learned as a person in the church workforce: get to know the secretary and the custodian—and I might add now, even in a substitute position.

As you think about churches to contact, try to worship in these churches. Get a feel for their liturgy, their choices of hymns and other music. With this in mind you can honestly say you have a good idea of what they might need from a substitute or special performing musician. What questions should you ask after you have been hired to substitute? Here are a few:

Whom should you seek out and with whom should you develop relationships?

- What type of instrument do you have, organ (pipe or electronic) or piano (electronic or conventional)?
- If organ, can I use the pistons? Or a memory level? If it is an older instrument with no memory levels, be sure you return the pistons to their original settings.
- What liturgy do you use? What hymnal? Are elaborate introductions OK?
- Can I come and practice on a day before the service? (Connections with the secretary, custodian, and administrator are important here.)
- Is there anything in the service that is not clear or that is specific to that congregation? (i.e., singing the Doxology after the offering, a baptismal or other hymn that is not in the bulletin but is in the hearts and minds of the congregation.)
- *Always* ask with no hint of arrogance or superiority. (“Oh, you only have an *electronic* organ?”)

In many situations you will have to accompany a soloist, choir, or instrumentalist. How do you establish a meaningful connection with them? We have probably all accompanied a “spooky” soloist at a wedding or funeral: you are meeting with them minutes

before the service, and they really don't know the song. What do you do? Help them out as best you can, play the melody as they sing; adjust your accompaniment to fit their singing. Also, be gracious in saying, "I'm sorry, I don't transpose at sight" (if you don't). By being gracious, helpful, and loving you create a connection with this person.

Accompanying an instrumentalist has its unique challenges, too. Many brass and woodwind instruments are transposing (trumpets are pitched in Bb for example). Ask the soloist before if you have

the correct accompaniment and in the correct key signature. Again, asking in a thoughtful, loving way creates connection.

One little thing I learned traveling in Spanish-speaking countries is a proper greeting when meeting a person for the first time. This is especially true in a situation where you are conducting business (or subbing). Most of us are very task oriented: we don't want to waste their time (or ours) with small talk. We want to get down to business. In the Spanish-speaking world, it is customary to greet people, ask them their name, and

ask how they are doing today. This way you make a small connection before you get to the business at hand. I think this is a good practice for *any* country.

Enjoy making and nurturing your connections.



Jim Hild is the ALCM Region 3 president and a retired church musician living in

Wayzata, MN. He is a frequent substitute in Twin Cities-area churches and enjoys singing with the Minnesota Chorale.

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both sides now

What Do Lutheran Pastors Treasure in a Church Musician?

by Nancy Raabe

Both Sides Now is a resource for both clergy and cantors. The column explores the working relationship between the pastor and the musician in a Lutheran congregation. It offers suggestions, advice, and encouragement for all parties who are committed to the sacred vocation of leading worship in today's world.

See *In Tempo*, no. 2 (2021): 27-8, for Part I of this two-part series on Carl Schalk.

In the wake of the death of Carl Flentge Schalk (September 26, 1929–January 24, 2021), we continue to give thanks for his prophetic voice.

Carl Schalk was the consummate embodiment of the vocation that we all share. We remember him not just as a composer or as a church musician but as a vigorous—dare we say zealous—advocate for the church's song. This vocation describes Schalk's entire situation in life. It informed everything he did and said, from his loftiest writings to his never-ending supply of mischievous one-liners. Being an advocate for the song of the church was what he lived and breathed.

Schalk also lived out the truth that vocation is the location of cross and suffering, "the place in which the person of faith chooses sides in the ongoing combat between God and Satan."¹ Did Carl Schalk choose sides?

Absolutely!

In the previous issue, we considered Schalk's perspective on what church musicians treasure in a pastor. Drawing further on the same essay, we now ask: what do Lutheran pastors treasure in a church musician?²

"They treasure a church musician who understands that music in corporate worship is a vehicle for the common praise and prayer of the entire worshipping community." (94)

With worship as an activity of the gathered community, music serves "as a uniting force helping to bring together the various concerns of each individual and uniting them in the common prayer and praise of all" (94). Music can only unite "when it helps the Christian community focus attention where it belongs: on Christ and what he has done for us" (94). When it devolves into entertainment, "or when its focus is on lesser or peripheral concerns" (92), it can become a source of division. Thus, the pastor and the entire worshipping community cherish the musician who can bring people together as one in "*common* supplication, adoration, and thanksgiving" (95; *italics mine*).

What does this mean? That the impulse for the choice and presentation of music during the worship service must always be to thank and praise God in the context of the Lutheran

The choice ... of music during the worship service must always be to thank and praise God in the context of the Lutheran understanding of the day and season.

understanding of the day and season. This means we may not indulge in abstract music whose only purpose is to fill time and show off keyboard technique (as in a Chopin prelude or a Liszt etude) or in more contemporary classical music that plunges worshippers into the dilemma of having to decide stylistically whether they like it or not. This also means, for example, that an Ave Maria, lovely as it might be, is not appropriate for a Lutheran worship service during Advent, Christmas, or any other season.

"They treasure church musicians who understand that music in Lutheran worship finds its most comfortable home in the liturgy." (95)

Schalk points out that music best serves Lutheran worship when it falls "under the discipline of the liturgy" (21), in his inspired turn of phrase. "For Lutherans, music in worship—whether congregational song or the music of choir, pastor, organ, or other instruments—is liturgical song" (95). Lutheran pastors cherish the church musician who

understands that the highest use of music in worship serves the liturgy, “the living tradition of praise, proclamation, prayer, and mutual edification” (95). For organists, this entails focusing on playing hymns and liturgical music effectively, “thereby enabling the congregation to sing with confidence and enthusiasm” (95). For choir directors it means “giving primary attention to psalms, responses, Gospel motets, offertories, [and] music to enrich congregational singing” (95).

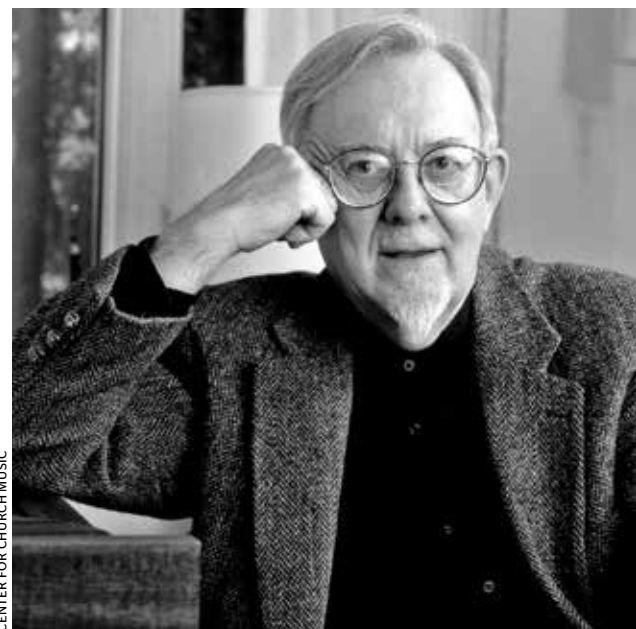
What does this mean? For keyboardists, that your practice time must include liturgical music. For choir directors, that the choir’s liturgical leadership allows the congregation to learn new settings more quickly and experience old ones in new ways. They will grow into their role as worship leaders, from which you may develop cantors and assisting ministers, and provide models for young people to do the same.

The choir’s liturgical leadership allows the congregation to learn new settings more quickly and experience old ones in new ways. They will grow into their role as worship leaders ... and provide models for young people to do the same.

“They treasure a church musician who understands that God is praised and the faithful are edified when the Word is proclaimed through texts which speak the Gospel clearly and distinctly, and through music which in its honesty, integrity, and craftsmanship reflects the same Gospel.” (95)

Schalk says that we neglect the living voice of the Gospel when we do not care enough about *what* is sung, or when we “forget that music is God’s gift to us to be used to the best of our ability in his praise and for his glory” (95). Worship requires the very best we can bring. The church musician must therefore help people learn to distinguish “between texts which speak the gospel with clarity and distinctness and those which blur its witness” (96), and also to discern the difference “between music which reflects the character of the Gospel in the honest integrity of its craftsmanship and music which is too ready to sacrifice those characteristics for other more immediate goals” (96).

What does this mean? That we can develop a simple litmus test for texts and music that serve the purposes of the Gospel. Does the text address, in some way, the resurrection of God in Jesus Christ? The redeeming gift of God’s son for a world otherwise lost in sin? The boundless compassion and infinite forgiveness that are ours in him? And does the poetry of the text lay before



CENTER FOR CHURCH MUSIC

Carl Schalk’s (1929-2021) thoughts on the pastor/musician relationship—shared in this article—is a “uniting force.”

The church musician must therefore help people learn to distinguish “between texts which speak the gospel with clarity and distinctness and those which blur its witness.”

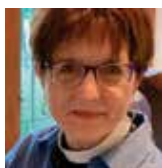
us new revelations, unique to each worshipper, of how this is so? Where music is concerned, does the shape of the tune and the integrity of the harmony lift the text into that mysterious realm where text and tune combine in a new creation in Christ? By the example of the music we choose, worshippers can become prolific in making these subtle distinctions.



“They treasure a church musician who understands that the church worships best with a living musical tradition.” (97)

This last phrase brings home the high responsibility to past, present, and future that church leaders must hold dear. “The worshipping congregation has a responsibility to all three because the faith we hold now is rooted in a past event and will come to fulfillment in the future. Singing the songs of faith which we share with the saints of the past is a vivid reminder of our unity with the church of past ages and emphasizes that fact in a way few other things can do” (97). And our songs are always being made new, as the best hymns of today will find their way into the traditions of tomorrow. “The church musician who cultivates the old and simultaneously nourishes the new is faithful to the vision of a living musical tradition in worship” (97).

What does this mean? Love the best of what has been handed down to us. Find new horizons of revelation as you revisit familiar hymns beloved by our worshipping bodies. Respect the deep connections that people have to those great old songs. They love them, so why shouldn’t you? At the same time, mine newer resources for texts that proclaim the Gospel in fresh ways and tunes that surprise. For it is in these “wonder full” surprises³ that we always hear God’s voice.



Nancy M. Raabe is pastor at Grace Lutheran Church in Hatfield, PA. Previously Nancy served

as music director at congregations in Wisconsin and Ohio, and she has written a three-volume set of *One-Minute Devotions for the Church Musician* (St. Louis: Morning-Star, 2010-11) based on readings for all three lectionary cycles.

Singing the songs of faith which we share with the saints of the past is a vivid reminder of our unity with the church of past ages and emphasizes that fact in a way few other things can do.

Notes

1. Mark Kolden, “Luther on Vocation,” *Word and World* 3 (no. 4): 384.
2. All quotations are from Schalk’s essay “The Pastor and the Church Musician: Thoughts on Aspects of a Common Ministry.” First published in *Church Music* 80 (1980), it was reprinted four years later by Concordia Publishing House in their Church Music Pamphlet series and again in 2015 by Lutheran University Press (now part of Fortress Press) in Schalk’s collection *Singing the Church’s Song: Essays and Occasional Writings on Church Music* (89-98).
3. Herbert Brokering (words) and Carl Schalk (music), “Thine the Amen” (ELW 826; LSB 680).

the worst and best of everything **R-E-S-P-E-C-T**

by Linda Keener

The young boy came to junior choir rehearsals faithfully. He even had a nice voice. But there was something about him—he just didn’t know how to “fit in.” To him, even bad attention was better than no attention at all. So he frequently behaved inappropriately, which then caused the other children to ignore him—or worse, make fun of him.

At that time, I had an assistant, a Choir Mother, who was a schoolteacher and should have known better. But one evening at rehearsal when this young boy (I’ll call him Billy) started to act up, this Choir Mother loudly berated him in front of the other children, humiliating him. Later that week I received a phone call from Billy’s mother saying he would not be returning to choir. And yes, the previous rehearsal’s humiliation was the cause.

After apologizing for the insensitivity of the Choir Mother, I asked if I could speak with Billy and she put him on the phone. I first acknowledged that the Choir Mother had acted inappropriately and should have taken him aside to speak with him privately. (One of the Choir Mother’s duties, after all, is to help keep order.) I also told him that I fully understood how that made him feel and did not blame him for not wanting to come back.

However, I also made him a promise. I said that if he would come back, and if this Choir Mother ever did something like that again, I would take *her* out of the

room and tell her what I thought of her insensitive behavior!

For a moment the silence was deafening. After all, he was just a kid. Would an adult authority figure actually take up for him when he misbehaved and was berated like that? I assured him that I would, and that I really wanted him in the choir. I also told him that he had a really nice voice, and that he would be missed in the choir as well.

He finally agreed and continued to come to rehearsals.

For the year-end “field trip,” I took the choir (with parental helpers) to a combination miniature golf and indoor arcade facility. When Billy ran out of tokens, he came and told me and just stood around with me, watching the others. I had personally bought a few extra tokens and decided to do something I don’t normally do: play favorites. I whispered to Billy that if he would not tell the others, I would let him have my extra tokens. His face lit up like a Christmas tree! He couldn’t believe an adult would be so nice to him, and maybe even *like* him, as he had had so many opposite experiences in his young life.

Let me tell you: this young boy became a friend for life. He has now graduated from college, and every year when he comes home for holidays, he makes it a point to come up to me after the worship service and give me a hug.

There will always be a Billy in children’s choirs. I don’t think I’m overstating when I say that how we treat them and show that we care

Children know when someone cares about them and values them. Let us never forget that respect goes both ways.

for them can make a difference in what kind of adult that child becomes. We are constantly learning more about autism and attention deficit disorder and hyperactivity, and other disorders—sometimes mild enough that they are never accurately diagnosed. Children and their families try to cope by saying, “oh, he’s just all boy!” or “she’s just a very active child!”

All of this is not to say we should ignore bad behavior or even reward it. And it does not say that it’s okay to play favorites with our singers! What it does say is that every person, large or small, deserves to be treated with caring and R-E-S-P-E-C-T, as Aretha Franklin sings. We may never know what makes a child act strange or unlovable, and the reasons are numerous, I’m sure. But even children know when someone cares about them and values them. Let us never forget that respect goes both ways. It’s like the old adage, “To have a friend, you must be one.” In my book, the same thing goes for R-E-S-P-E-C-T.



Linda D. Keener is music director and organist at Christ Lutheran Church (ELCA), Richmond,

VA. She has served in church music ministry since the age of 14 and has led children’s, chancel, and bell choirs at Christ Lutheran since 1992.

Lessons in Laughter

by Katherine Crosier

Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion.

I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward.

—Kurt Vonnegut

as an organist of more than fifty years, I have had my share of adventures playing countless church services, concerts, weddings, and funerals, affording many laughs as well as tears along the way. My colleague, the late John McCreary of St. Andrew's Cathedral, used to call me "Calamitous Kathy," in reference to my numerous misadventures.

My first real disaster happened at a concert when I was a college freshman. My practice on the auditorium instrument went well, but until I walked out on stage, I had no idea where the console was going to be placed. To my horror, the spotlight shone directly on the back of my head, casting a huge shadow on the music rack that prevented me from seeing the music. In those days, no one memorized music, so you can imagine the catastrophe that ensued. I slunk off stage afterwards, with my tail between my legs.

Other times were not quite so disastrous. One Sunday I misread the hymn number in the bulletin and the pastor stopped me after the introduction: "Kathy, what hymn are you playing?" Another

I'll never forget the time I mistakenly gave the wrong pitch for the pastor's intonation and had to transpose the Kyrie and all the subsequent responses into C# minor on the spot.

time I started to introduce the wrong hymn, during which my husband, the music director, came running up, hymnal in hand, opened to the correct number. I was able to launch right into the correct first verse after the wrong introduction. Luckily both hymns were in the same key! I'll never forget the time I mistakenly gave the wrong pitch for the pastor's intonation and had to transpose the Kyrie and all the subsequent responses into C# minor on the spot.

The Lutheran Church of Honolulu

Once I was in the middle of a choir concert that relied heavily upon a closed circuit TV system because the organ console was located to the side, behind the choir risers. All of a sudden the screen went blank, with the message: *Video connection lost*. Although I panicked because I could no longer see entrances or cutoffs, I kept playing. When I heard the choir stop singing, I threw my hands up as though I had touched a hot stove.

Or the time I played Camille Saint-Saëns's "Organ Symphony" with the Honolulu Symphony—the second movement ends with the organ alone, and Maestro Samuel Wong told me he would hold the chord for a long time. The problem is, he never gave me a cutoff, so I kept holding on interminably. Finally he dropped his hands, and I let go! In the second performance he promised





Katherine Crosier playing the Beckerath organ at Trinity Lutheran Church in Cleveland, OH.

He never gave me a cutoff, so I kept holding on interminably. Finally he dropped his hands, and I let go!

not to be so subtle and gave me a definite cutoff. But then he surprised me in the fourth movement when the organ enters on a very loud chord. During rehearsals he always gave a huge gesture for my entrance, but during the performance he merely crooked his index finger. I didn't know what he meant until he did it again, and I thought I'd better play the chord. He surprised everyone, including me.

Until last year owing to the pandemic, organists here were kept busy by couples from Japan coming to Hawaii to be married in Christian wedding ceremonies. In the span of eleven years, I played over 6000 weddings, seven days a week, with a typical busy day having ten ceremonies, every hour on the hour. One fateful day I actually played 16 ceremonies when I was called at 5:20 a.m. to cover for a sick organist. Luckily all the weddings were in churches within a four-mile radius, and

the other organist's weddings were scheduled on the half hour, while the rest of mine were on the hour. No sooner had one wedding finished and pictures been taken with the bridal party than I was on the road again to another church.

None of my stories, however, comes close to the experience my friend, John McCreary, had when President Ronald Reagan came to visit. Metal detectors were stationed at the Cathedral doors and the presence of the Secret Service put everyone on edge. During the sermon, John heard a rustling noise coming from the organ bench, then jumped backwards onto the pedals when he spied a large rat inside. To his dismay, some 32' stops were drawn, so his jump created a large noise, to which the Dean quipped, "The voice of God!"

All in a day's work!



Katherine Crosier retired in 2012 after 35 years as the organist of Lutheran Church of Honolulu

and 20 years as chapel organist at Iolani School. She writes about many of her musical adventures in a blog, "Yet Another Year of Insanity," www.insanityblog.online.

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Quiz

Spoiler Alert:

See the Quiz Qs on page 31 first!

Answers to Quiz

1.

A. maybe

B. maybe

C. maybe

D. Yes. There are copious writings by scholars and enthusiasts "proving" any of the above theories. As with many historical questions, there may be multiple reasons and narratives for why this tradition came to be.

2. B

3. B. (Three often connotes the Trinity, but Christmas/Epiphany emphasizes Christ's Incarnation, and the *tripudium* was not confined to Christmas nor triple meter!) Bach's music is a great example of vivacious joy expressed musically in triple meter, but the tradition is ancient. Examples: QUEM PASTORES, IN DULCI JUBILO, PUER NATUS IN BETHLEHEM, SUSSEX CAROL.

4. C

5. "The song is scarcely over before a sight 'exceedingly beloved to the children' appears in the center aisle. It is Old Father Christmas himself in his white beard, with pointed cap on his head and a large sack on his back, soon surrounded by 'angels' and children, who vie with one another for the good things that are to be given out. When the large sack is empty and Old Father Christmas has disappeared behind the sacristy door, then is sung as closing chorale *Puer natus in Bethlehem*."—a description of Christmas Matins celebrated by Paul Gerhardt in the Nicolai Kirche in Berlin in 1651, quoted in *A Handbook of Church Music*, ed. Carl Halter and Carl Schalk (St. Louis: Concordia, 1978), 67-8.

interview with a church musician

Mary Prange

Organist, choir director, school teacher emeritus, Atonement Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, WI;
director emeritus, The Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee

There are Bach aficionados and then there are *Prange* Bach aficionados. The extended Prange clan is known for after-hours Bach sing-alongs at worship conferences, in harmony, while enjoying a glass of beer. *And* singing *101 Chorales Harmonized by J.S. Bach* into the night at Lutheran Chorale post-concert parties after Mary had directed or sung a full program. *And* sight-reading and singing the chorales her older brothers brought home from college in family sing-alongs at home: Mary was 5 years old.

Mary Prange (PRANG-ee) served forty years as an organist, choir director, and Lutheran schoolteacher, and twenty-five years as director of the respected Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee. Her love of sharing the Gospel in song with school children, Chorale singers, and parish worshippers marks her calling and our conversation.

On learning and teaching Bach

bach always works! At the University of Minnesota I was taking organ lessons from Heinrich Fleischer and wanted to learn the *Fantasia and Fugue in G minor*. He said, “It’s too hard! But I’ll teach it to you, anyway.” And I learned it.

I think of myself as a teacher—schools, choirs. Don’t give up on teaching Bach, the classics. I taught Bach pieces with children’s choir at school. They loved it. They don’t know yet that they’re not supposed to like this. They don’t know that this is “hard.” The key is to be willing to teach it. If you are willing to teach it, they’ll learn it.

I can just see those 2nd graders on Easter Sunday singing “Christ Is Arisen” from the bottom of their hearts. My school kids sang Bach, stanzas of hymns, liturgical psalms. That’s rare now, isn’t it?



PEGGY HENNING

in and I could read music scores by second grade. Mother played piano and we all took piano lessons. In the ’50s we had Handel’s *Messiah* score and a *Messiah* record. My sister Ann and I would follow the score and sing along with the record. [Mary shakes her head.] What 8 and 11 year-olds do this!?

On studying with Heinrich Fleischer, organist, teacher, and editor of the classic organist’s prelude collection, *The Parish Organist*.

Fleischer was a perfectionist. You had to use the same finger on the same note every single time you played a piece. I spent a lot of time writing in fingerings. He was a *perfectionist*. He once remarked, “I remember *the* time I made a mistake on *this* note ...”

We had two half-hour lessons a week, Tuesday and Friday—and you better have learned something between those days! It was a lot of practice time and a lot of pressure, but he was a very kind man.

On her childhood and family

My father was a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod pastor 100 miles south of Chicago. I’m the youngest of six. I grew up going to concerts my brothers were



On a church music career as a woman in the Wisconsin Synod

Kurt Eggert, project director for our 1993 hymnal, *Christian Worship*, was at Atonement, as well as being director of the Lutheran Chorale. He'd known me since my first year of college. They had a vacancy at Atonement in 1974, and he wrote me a five-page single-spaced letter telling me why I should come to the church. He actually flew to Michigan where I was teaching to persuade me to come.

I had Kurt Eggert's support throughout my career. He was probably the biggest influence on my life. Eggert retired in 1993. At his last concert he directed one piece; I did the rest. So when he retired, I inherited his job with the Chorale and the worship planning at church. It was so natural. It was the hand of the Lord, and I think I paved a way for women musicians in the WELS.



On changes in church music ministry

I'm nervous about the future of hymnals. Now the whole order of worship is on a screen or in the bulletin, so we don't use hymnals. Our new WELS hymnal has three settings of the liturgy with the same texts but three music styles, including a contemporary setting. We have a few churches with praise bands. But I hope we don't lose sight of the classic hymns. What will our family sing around our bedside as we're dying? Hymns!

It's a difficult thing that we face. Our school is 95 percent African American. Trying to plan worship—we have not yet found a way to fill the gap between church and school. Most African American members at our church have been here since '74. At that time to attend school, children's parents had to go to confirmation and Bible class, and that generation stuck with us. How to make that connection now with African American children and parents we haven't yet figured out.

Advice for church musicians

Practice hymns and liturgy! If you don't have perfection in preservice music, who will notice? Your main job is to help the people sing better. Also, pass your favorite church music books on to young musicians—it will educate the next generation and people

Standing up there directing pieces like that, that is really moving for me.

won't wonder what to do with your library when you are gone.

On what has nourished and sustained her in challenges over the years

Hymns. I used "Jesus, Shepherd of the Sheep" (CW436) with the children every day. I just love that hymn. Simple but so profound. And solid friendships. I have so many friends—church, Chorale, college—they've sustained me.

Favorite Bach work?

Mass in B Minor. We did several pieces from it in the Chorale. We had the best singers from congregations—not professional singers, good singers.

A singular memory?

I worked with the WELS worship conferences (1996–2014). I've had quite a few moments directing where I think, "I can't believe I'm doing this!" I remember one conference when we had a festival chorus of 100 voices with full orchestra. One of the pieces I had the privilege of directing was the Sanctus from *Mass in B Minor*. Standing up there directing pieces like that, that is really moving for me. How did I get in a position where I could do this? It amazes me when I look back on my life.





in tempo

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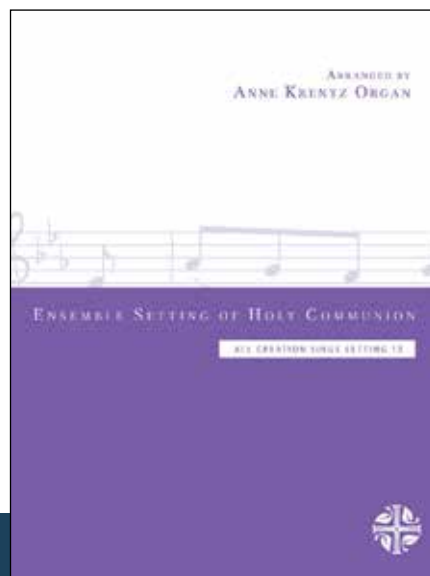
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