

the chorister

RESOURCES FOR MUSIC MINISTRY

august | september 2014

volume 66 | issue 2



LET EVERYTHING THAT HAS BREATH PRAISE THE LORD!

PLUS:

ANTHEM FEATURE
"GO DOWN, MOSES"

TAKE FIVE! INSTRUMENTS
IN CHOIR

BRIDGING THE MUSICAL GAP
THROUGH CHILDREN'S CHOIRS



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From the Editor

Happy New Year!

But it's August, not January. Everyone in the field of education whether academic or religious, thinks of August as the time to gear up for a new year. Of course, that includes all aspects of music ministry: children's choirs, handbell teams, church orchestras, and more. Final decisions on fall music selections are made, choir rooms are reorganized and decorated, and promotional materials are delivered to all concerned. There may be a big kick-off event, or *Welcome Back* party. There is so much preparation involved, but do we as church musicians adequately prepare our hearts and minds for leading others?

In many churches those last few weekends before school starts are typically marked by low attendance at Sunday worship services. Everyone seems to try to squeeze in one last vacation trip, or a hurriedly planned trip to visit neglected relatives. The trip may begin something like this:

"Get in the car, we are leaving now!" *"Move over, you're in my seat!"*
"Stop arguing, we are on vacation...and we are going to have fun!" *"Don't make me stop this car!"*

And that is just what the adults have to say to each other. Can you say, "Someone *really* needs a vacation?" As I think of that scenario, I am reminded of similar scenes played out on stress-filled Sunday mornings when our children were still living at home.

"It's time to go! Now!" *"We are going to be late!"* *"Stop arguing! We are going to church...to worship!"*

That may be somewhat humorous, but less so when you consider that the two grownups in the car were both church musicians, and were responsible for leading others in worship.

One thing to remember is that all the activities of the week are going to take place one way or another. How we experience those events will be determined by our personal attitudes, our mindset. Perhaps we should literally schedule times during the week for spiritual, mental, and emotional breathing, and then make those times top priorities. Your breath control may include Bible study, prayer, silent meditation, reading inspirational materials—anything that puts you in a better place, and provides renewal and refreshment. So go ahead, get out your smart phone, tablet, or weekly agenda. Go to the calendar, and enter those events.

Happy New Year!
Keep singing the song!

-Susan



SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS!

I would love to have more photos of your groups to share in *The Chorister*! Please submit your high resolution photos to: seernisse@mailcg.org



*P.S. If you are looking for additional resources for teaching good vocal techniques, check out author Karen Bauer's article on page 34. Karen has a great new book called *The Essentials of Beautiful Singing: A Three Step Kinesthetic Approach*, published by Scarecrow Press. Another excellent new resource by Matthew Hoch is called *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer*, published by Rowman and Littlefield. Look for an article by Matthew in *The Chorister* sometime in 2015.*

From the Sacred Choral Editor

TOP 10 Things Children's Choir Directors Might Be Doing Right Now

10. Finding last year's choir folders, only to discover you forgot to file last year's music.
9. Posting this on your Facebook wall: Choir starts in three weeks!! #soexcited #cantwait
8. Answering 23 emails from parents regarding these questions:
 - a) When does choir begin?
 - b) Can my daughter come late because of soccer? and
 - c) My son really wants to sing in choir, but isn't sure he wants to do it if he's the only boy, so I was just checking to see how many other boys are singing this year. . . ?
7. Smelling your beautiful stacks of new music.
6. Realizing although you've picked your repertoire, you have no rehearsal plans.
(Check out pages 19-20 for great teaching ideas for CGA1368 Go Down, Moses.)
5. Convincing your colleagues that scheduling the children's choir to sing on the Sunday following Thanksgiving is just not a good idea.
4. Praying for your choir kids.
3. Posting this on your Facebook wall: Choir starts in three weeks?!?! #somuchtodo #needmorehoursintheday
2. Reviewing your budget, and instead of purchasing 30 sets of rhythm sticks for \$74.24, buying 100 pairs of disposable chopsticks for \$7.86. . .With free shipping! (Check out pages 28-31 for ideas on incorporating instruments into your rehearsals.)
1. Smiling. Because you really do have the best job in the entire world.

*Best wishes for a
fantastic choir year!*

-Katie



BOARD MEMBER REFLECTION: JOIN ME IN SUPPORTING CHORISTERS GUILD

BY MICHAEL JOTHEN



Since my earliest awareness of Choristers Guild, I have more and more come to value and appreciate the role and importance it plays in “sparking” one’s imagination. My initial perception was that of an organization whose membership, publications, writings, clinics, workshops, festivals, and staff served to enable accomplishing the practical, everyday responsibilities and expectations of a young part-time church musician, i.e. “What is available, new, appropriate, for . . . ? Why might this be appropriate? How can ?” Over the years, however, I have come to realize that inside these practical contributions lay the Guild’s true hidden strength: the ability and potential to “spark” one’s imagination in service to others. It does provide and hint at answers as to what, why and how. However,

in doing so through the open sharing, reflection and presentation of others, through presenting thoughts, suggestions and models, it hints at and “sparks” our imagination, our potential for moving beyond the obvious in planning, developing and implementing musical and worship experiences for others. As scientist Albert Einstein pointed out, “Logic can move you from point A to B. Imagination can move you anywhere.” Choristers Guild is an engine for imagination, an engine for energizing life, and an engine for “sparking” something to happen in worship that is not in the bulletin. “Sparking” imagination and the confidence to act on the part of others, is an overwhelming reason as to why I continue to support and engage in the totality of Choristers Guild.

*Board member, 1989-1996; 2013-present;
Board President, 1992-1994*

Church Music Search 2015

A Contest for Authors and Composers

**Sponsored by the Music Ministry of
Pullen Memorial Baptist Church
Raleigh, North Carolina, USA**

Musical Category:

SATB Choral Anthem suitable for Adult Choirs
with Keyboard Accompaniment (Organ or Piano)
Other optional instrumental parts may be included.

Theological Theme:

the meaning and celebration of Easter
from a theologically-liberal viewpoint

Award: \$1,500

***Entries Accepted Through: February 1, 2015
Find Submission Guidelines and Enter at:***

www.pullen.org/musicsearch

***a search dedicated to meaningful and artistic
church music for liberal congregations***

In Memoriam

HENRY MCDOWELL



The Atlanta Chapter of Choristers Guild lost a dear friend, an unwavering supporter, and a very gifted musical director when Henry McDowell passed away on April 14, 2014. Both Henry and his wife, Carolyn, were chapter members for many years, and both of them supported the chapter by volunteering and organizing chapter events. One cannot speak of Henry without including Carolyn. They were treasures for those of us who were “newbies” stepping up to direct children's choirs in the 1980s-1990s.

Carolyn's poetic tribute which served as the cover for Henry's Memorial Service program speaks eloquently of Henry's dedication to his church, his calling, his Lord.

*The Lord is my conductor, I shall not be mute.
He leads me into the deep beauty of sound
and surrounds me with pure melody.
He tunes my inner voice.
He guides me through intricate passages
and creates an all-surpassing harmony of spirit.
At times silence comes upon me like death –
I lose all centered pitch ... yet I will not fear,
for God is in that silence with me.
At other times I gorge myself
upon a mellifluous symphony of resonance,
oblivious to all those who understand not my calling.
God has anointed me with this gift of music
which floods my inmost being.
In faith I move forward to play out
the score prepared for me
until at last, I blend into oneness with the song and greet the Eternal Singer. (csm)*

Thanks to Michelle Wright of the Atlanta Chapter for providing this information.

RONALD A. NELSON

AN APPRECIATION

by Zebulon M. Highben



Like other church musicians and choral singers around the country, I first encountered Ronald A. “Ronnie” Nelson through his music. During my childhood and youth I had sung or heard many of Ronnie’s myriad choral works for adult and children’s voices. But like many Lutherans, it was Ronnie’s music for the liturgy that shaped me most profoundly. Holy Communion Setting 2 in *Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978) became and still remains a primary resource for churches throughout North America; like water running over stones, it has deeply etched hearts and minds. The melodies were accessible yet memorable and sturdy enough to bear repetition. The harmonies were interesting but never jarring. The rhythmic energy was variously majestic (“This is the feast”), meditative (“Lamb of God”), or sprightly (“Thank the Lord and sing his praise”) as the text dictated.

When I met Ronnie many years later, I learned that “water running over stones” was an apt metaphor for his music ministry. For thirty-seven years at Westwood Lutheran Church in suburban Minneapolis, Ronnie taught hundreds—probably thousands—of people how to sing the Christian faith. His Saturday morning choir school etched the Gospel story and the Church’s song into the hearts and minds of generations of children, and was a model for other choir schools and choir school curricula. Those who sang in his youth and adult choirs also learned the story and the song, and many can still sing from memory the great anthems and powerful texts ingrained in them all those years ago.

Ronnie was a patient and kind teacher, whether he was leading a directors’ clinic, teaching an organ lesson, coaching a young composer, or conducting an ensemble. He knew that teaching was a solemn responsibility, and leading worship equally so. In the words of his friend, the late Paul Manz: “Ron taught that worship did not just happen: it was studied and rehearsed so that when it came together it truly was an offering from the heart, spontaneous and alive. ...Music isn’t something to mumble through. It is the voice of the people offering their response to an ever-gracious God.” Yet—as any of his former choristers would tell you—every rehearsal, lesson, and worship service was permeated with genuine delight.

Ronnie also possessed a boundless capacity to take joy in the achievements of others. In his later years he received a host of honors—a Distinguished Alumni Award from St. Olaf College; the F. Melius Christiansen Award from ACDA of Minnesota; the Faithful Servant Award from the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, major grants and commissions from the American Composers Forum—and Ronnie was always humbly pleased (and sometimes surprised) to receive such recognition. Yet what pleased him even more was meeting other people who shared his vocation: singing, conducting, composing, teaching, and making music to the glory of God in service of the Church.



Ronald A. “Ronnie” Nelson (1927-2014) was a church musician, conductor, composer, and expert in children’s choirs and voices. He was a longtime member and leader in the Choristers Guild. His many compositions for the church are published by various publishers, including Choristers Guild.

Zebulon M. Highben is a church musician, conductor, and composer who studied composition with Ronnie Nelson. He teaches at Muskingum University, a Presbyterian college in New Concord, Ohio.



The New Girl



Use the pitch names of the treble clef staff to complete the following story.

went to church choir for the first time last week. She did not see one familiar . She wanted to go home and crawl into her . Maybe she could just call her , a driver, to come get her. Just then a nice girl invited her to sit next to her in a chair near the of the group. She said her name was .

The choir teacher gave everyone an instrument to play. There were drums, sticks, and shakers. The s were plastic and contained small s. The teacher held up cards displaying rhythm patterns to play on the instruments. played every pattern perfectly. The other children said she was a real music !

The choir sang some funny tongue twisters as a warm-up. This was a favorite:

big rs. Then they sang some great songs.

At the end of rehearsal everyone said the weekly Bible verse: kind to h other.

thought that was a really great idea. As she was leaving r said, " sure to come back next week. I will save you a seat!" could not wait to tell her

all about her great night at choir!

BRIDGING THE

Musical

GAP

A LITTLE CHILD SHALL LEAD THEM

BY DR. FRANCES T. SINCLAIR AND KIRSTEN ELLEFSON FOYLES

PICTURE THIS...

. . . John walks into the church with his smartphone blasting the latest hit by Sidewalk Prophets from his work-out playlist, Gabby enters the room quietly humming the melody of Bach's *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* that her high school choir just sang at State Choral Festival, and Ellie makes her entrance displaying sheet music for *O Holy Night* that she hopes to sing in the church's upcoming Christmas Pageant. They are all members of their church's youth choir, a group that celebrates an equally diverse and all-inclusive approach to music in worship, and it all started in their children's choir . . .

The church in the example neither endorses nor condemns any style of music in worship. In fact, both traditional and contemporary music are regularly presented in such a way that the lines are blurred between them. Thus, their commonalities become more evident than their differences. Rick Muchow, former music pastor of Rick Warren's Saddleback Church, states, "The Bible does not have an official soundtrack." He goes on to say, "We don't worship music, we worship God."ⁱ

PHILOSOPHY: EMBRACING THE DIFFERENCES

“I am convinced that we must concern ourselves with ideals and ideas far beyond the limits of our own convenience and comfort”

-Helen Kempⁱⁱ

Our children’s choirs are the ideal place to integrate this philosophy and bridge the gap that often exists between traditional and contemporary music. Elementary-aged children have not yet developed personal preferences or biases when it comes to

music in general and church music specifically. At this age, they simply love to sing and will enjoy most music their parents, teachers, choir directors, and other adult role models introduce.

Atlanta Chapter of Choristers Guild

Mid-Winter Workshop January 23-24, 2015

Peachtree Road UMC, Atlanta Georgia

Preschool Choirs



Mary Louise Wilson

Dr. Wilson, a sought-after clinician in the area of early childhood music, is frequently invited to speak at national and state music conferences and early childhood conventions.

Children’s Choirs



Michael Burkhardt

Internationally known for his innovative and inspiring hymn festivals and for his creative work with children, **Michael Burkhardt** is in frequent demand as a choral clinician, organ recitalist, and hymn festival leader.

Youth Choirs



Ken Berg

Ken Berg is currently serving as the first full-time Music Director and Resident Composer for the Birmingham Boys Choir. His music is published by many publishers including Choristers Guild, Hal Leonard and Alfred Music.

Adult Choirs



Terry Price

Terry Price has been Director of Music at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church since June of 1998. As a church musician, Terry has served as Director of Music at several prominent mainline churches including Lovers Lane United Methodist Church in Dallas, Peachtree Presbyterian Church in Atlanta

Registration and information: www.cgatlanta.org

In addition, by beginning this process with your children, it becomes an easy and logical progression to move this music through your graded choir program into middle school, high school, and adult choirs. This approach will result in a comprehensive curriculum that includes great hymns of the faith alongside contemporary Christian songs and anthems.

Finally, while children WILL love whatever music is presented and taught with authenticity, energy, and conviction, these contemporary songs do employ a

language and musical style that is consistent with other popular music of their culture.

This article will offer strategies and suggestions for incorporating contemporary Christian music into worship without changing or taking away from the existing musical vocabulary of your church. This all-inclusive approach can help unify, rather than divide, your congregation because blending a new musical style with the long-standing traditions of your church will have a multigenerational appeal. By broadening the scope, the worship experience is enhanced for all.

METHODOLOGY: BROADENING THE MUSICAL HORIZONS

“We must (also) do a better job of educating worship participants to value a wider variety of musical styles.”

-Marva Dawnⁱⁱⁱ

If this is a first excursion into the realm of contemporary Christian music with your children’s choir and/or church, there are several effective ways to begin. Initially, the easiest thing to do is to “contemporize” your presentation of traditional songs/hymns familiar to your congregation. At our church, we regularly sing the beloved hymn, *Amazing Grace*, at both our traditional and our contemporary worship services. At the traditional service, it is sung with organ accompaniment; at the contemporary service, with keyboard, guitar, bass, and sometimes conga drums. We “contemporize” it in several different ways. Sometimes we sing it with a gospel feel, changing some of the harmonic progressions and the style of the accompaniment. Sometimes we give it a gentle, meditative feel, filling in the chords with arpeggiations, employing plucked rather than strummed guitar, possibly brush strokes on snare drum. Sometimes we “blend” it by doing different verses in different styles

and dynamics, using our keyboard to sound like a church organ on one verse, incorporating the sound of strings on another, etc.

Another good blending technique is to combine traditional hymns with contemporary songs. Finding a common theme is a good place to start. Other areas of consideration are key, meter, and tempo relationships, although key relationships are easy to create with current notation software and online resources such as musicnotes.com. If your children sing mostly in unison, you may not need a published arrangement; all you need do is pick songs according to the above guidelines and use unison versions of each. This would also be true if using the paired songs for congregational singing. A list of traditional and contemporary song pairings that work well with children’s voices is provided.

TRADITIONAL / CONTEMPORARY SONG PAIRINGS

1. **Jesus Loves Me / Jesus Messiah (refrain only)**
2. **Take My Life and Let it Be / Lord, Be Glorified**
3. **Amazing Grace / Grace Greater Than Our Sin**
4. **Shout to the Lord / How Great Thou Art / How Great is Our God**
5. **O God Our Help / Everlasting God / Step by Step / Awesome God (refrain only)**
6. **Be Thou My Vision / Open Our Eyes, Lord / Come and Fill / Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**
7. **Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart / Lord Listen to Your Children Praying**
8. **Jesus Loves Me / God is so Good**
9. **Here I Am, Lord / This Little Light of Mine / Go Light Your World / We Are (the light of the world)**
10. **Love Divine, All Loves Excelling / Love Round / King of Kings / They'll Know We Are Christians**
11. **My Country, 'tis of Thee / Let There Be Peace on Earth**
12. **Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks / Jesus Remember Me**
13. **Spirit of the Living God / Sanctuary / Refiner's Fire**
14. **Holy Ground / We Are Singing / Shine, Jesus, Shine / Light the Fire**
15. **Holy, Holy, Holy / Holy is the Lord / Majesty / Glorify Your Name**
16. **Good Christian Men, Rejoice / Shout to the North / He is Exalted / Jesus, Name Above All Names**
17. **Blest Are They / Surely the Presence / Oh How He Loves You and Me / Thou Art Worthy**
18. **Come, Ye Thankful People, Come / Give Thanks**
19. **Blest Be the Tie / Bind Us Together**
20. **We Gather Together / Let All Things Now Living**

The next level is to introduce contemporary Christian songs as stand-alone anthems to your children's choir. Let us make a differentiation here. We are not talking about newly composed anthems of a contemporary style, rather we are referring exclusively to anthem arrangements of contemporary Christian songs written, performed, and recorded by current artists. A cursory glance at the catalogs of major sacred music publishers reveals a dearth of single octavo arrangements of mainstream contemporary Christian songs for children's voices, although there are a large number of published song collections and children's musicals which may contain contemporary song arrangements. There are, however, many published contemporary Christian songs arranged for solo voice with piano accompaniment. We have used some of these arrangements with our children's choir with success, although modifications are often required in terms of key, range, and rhythm. There is some outstanding material available, and more is being published every day for choirs of all ages. You

should not let these hindrances dissuade you from seeking and finding contemporary Christian songs that speak to you, could work well with your children, and could have a relevant place in your worship services.

Another category of contemporary music worth mentioning here is the vast array of world music that is being incorporated into the life of churches in America. Music of the Iona, Taize, and African communities is included in the newer hymnals of many Christian denominations, and anthem arrangements of these types of songs are included the world of mainstream publication. Many of them are ideal for children's voices, as they are sometimes based on a pentatonic scale, with limited ranges, short, repetitive phrases, and simple rhythms. This also makes them easy to introduce to your congregation. It is often in the technical and textual simplicity of these songs that the most heartfelt messages can be found.

PEDAGOGY: ADDRESSING THE TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

“The basic principles of vocal function . . . are isolation, development, and combination of chest and head registers to create a balanced mix.”

-*Jeanette LoVetri*^{iv}

It is not necessary to change your pedagogical approach to incorporate contemporary Christian music into your children’s choir repertoire. One of the most common and disappointing aspects of this style of music in worship is that often the vocal technique is compromised in the process. The danger with young voices is a nasal or strident tone, which often results from an overuse of chest register and which may lead to poor intonation (singing below the fundamental pitch). Consistent with the Royal School of Church Music Choir Trainer Guide, an approach that focuses on postural alignment, low intercostal breathing, and vocalizing from the head down is a solid foundation for any type of singing at this age. However, it may be desirable to incorporate some chest resonance in order to authentically and effectively present music of a more contemporary style. With care and education, this can be accomplished in a way that is healthy and not at all damaging to young voices.

Jeannette LoVetri, in her Cross-Choral Training with the Brooklyn Youth Chorus Academy, suggests that starting around age 6, children can begin to experience chest register by incorporating their speaking

voice on the lowest notes; register-based vocalization might begin around age 8 and continue/expand into middle and high school.^v In several of her publications and writings, she advocates for accomplishing this goal from both directions: extending head voice down and bringing chest voice up. While much of her research might best be applied to more mature voices, the overall concept can still be used with children. With K-2nd graders, simple exercises such as sirening with the voice, beginning at the top of the range and sliding down into their normal speaking voice/range, or “tracing” the sound up and down with their finger as they phonate on a *hum* or *oo*, are great ways to start making this connection between head and chest resonance. They don’t even have to make singing sounds to connect chest and head resonance; a high pitched *yoo hoo* can be alternated with a low pitched *mm-hm!* or the childhood chant, *nah nah nah nah nah nah!* A high to low-pitched hello, or a low to high-pitched *ah-hah!* can also be effective. (See fig. 1)^{vi} With elementary voices, care must be taken not to allow the children to push or force chest resonance, as it will be their natural instinct to do so. The goal at this age is to gently begin to incorporate a

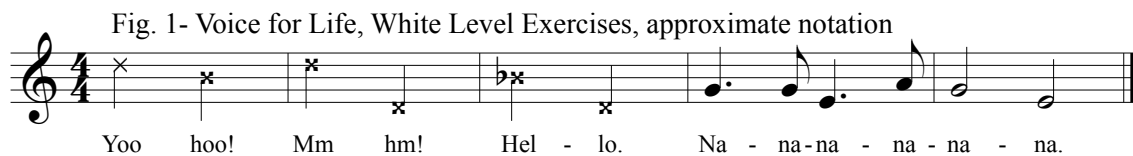


Fig. 2- Use of larger intervals to connect head and chest resonance



singing sound that has at least some chest resonance in it. 3rd-5th graders might begin to actually vocalize in both registers. It is easiest for children to begin shifting registers by non-stepwise motion. Larger intervals may be employed but will necessarily be limited by the constraints of their comfortable singing range (See fig. 2). Following these simple exercises,

children can move into more complex vocalises that combine larger intervals with stepwise progressions.

At Grade (Level) 2, the Royal Conservatory of Music utilizes the following exercises to demonstrate technical proficiency before movement into Grade 3 (see fig. 3):^{vii}

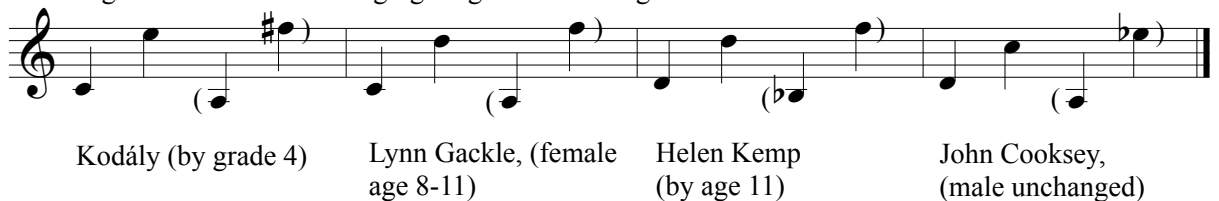
Fig. 3- Royal Conservatory Level 2 Exercises (with recommended vowels)



There are some challenges to keep in mind when you begin to work with your young voices on contemporary Christian music. First, because there is not yet a wealth of single octavo arrangements of this genre for children's voice, finding them in a suitable key is difficult; they tend to be too low in range, thereby encouraging the overuse of chest voice and the unhealthy type of vocal production previously described. According to most elementary vocal

pedagogues, the recommended range for unchanged male and female voices lies between D4 and D5, with that range extending as they approach adolescence. (See fig. 4). Consider transposing any contemporary Christian song you plan to use with your children's choir to a key that keeps the voices within these range parameters whenever possible via your notation software of choice or online resources.

Fig. 4- Recommended singing ranges for unchanged voices



Kodály (by grade 4) Lynn Gackle, (female age 8-11) Helen Kemp (by age 11) John Cooksey, (male unchanged)

(The first 2 pitches represent recommended/comfortable singing ranges for elementary voices. Pitches in parentheses represent the extremes of acceptable singing range.)

Another concern is that the more contemporary idioms are often too complex rhythmically for elementary voices to accurately articulate. Even hearing and imitating tricky rhythms, particularly syncopated patterns, can be difficult for children, so carefully examine the music from this perspective before choosing it for them. Some type of physical movement can help them internalize complicated rhythms and achieve better success. We often have our kids march as they sing so they can feel and execute a steady beat, against which the syncopated patterns are easier to place. We also use jumps and hops on rests or beats before a syncopated rhythmic pattern as another way to more successfully place the off-beat rhythms.

Finally, the melodies often contain intervallic leaps requiring a level of vocal flexibility that is difficult to achieve at this age. As with rhythm, physical movement can assist in their success with large vocal leaps, as well as using the recommended vocalises to make connections between their high and low range, but avoiding songs that require pervasive shifting between registers or extremes of their ranges is recommended. We help our children visualize difficult intervals by rehearsing on the outdoor steps to our sanctuary. We demonstrate which steps represent different intervals in their song and we then “leap” the steps while they sing. When the kids can visualize how wide the leap is, they are more successful vocalizing it. That connection can be strengthened by use of a large keyboard or staff image on the floor, where the kids can hop over a musical key or note just as they watched us hop on the steps to the sanctuary.

“Mind, Body, Spirit, Voice! It takes a whole person to sing and rejoice!”

~Helen Kemp^{viii}

Children’s choirs always add energy to a worship service, but when those children enjoy what they are doing, the energy is contagious. Use of drama, narration, dance or media can strengthen the children’s relationship to the music and the worship presentation. The introduction of contemporary Christian music (or any new music) allows them to create a first impression of that style. Below, we offer several creative activities which, when paired with a contemporary song, can enhance the experience for the children as well as the congregation.

1. MOVEMENT.

Many contemporary Christian songs have choruses that are easy to choreograph because the words are repetitive and the melodies are often less complex. The motions can help children learn the words

and also be a powerful expression in worship. We choreographed the words to *Shout to the Lord* for our children’s choir and also for a Vacation Bible School class we taught in Haiti. The lyrics are beautiful, but watching a roomful of children raise their hands as they sing “Nothing compares to the promise I have in You.” is truly inspiring. In addition, the Haitian children had different levels of English proficiency, but motions bridged that language gap and brought both cultures together in song. Movement can also include the use of props, sign language, body percussion, or liturgical dance to augment a piece of music and the children’s connection to it. Props and costumes can help tell the story of a song, create unique percussion sounds, and add imagery. Useful props can include white gloves, scarves, ribbons, balloons, letters/numbers on cards, glow sticks, etc.



2. NARRATIVE.

Many contemporary Christian anthem arrangements contain scriptural references utilizing a current linguistic vocabulary. Sometimes these anthems include narrations or dramas that quote the scriptures found in the lyrics and/or apply the lyrics to a story, which can be an effective ministry tool for both the choir and congregation. The narrations can be as simple as the children chanting the scripture passage before the song or during an instrumental interlude. The modernized language of the anthems paired with the narrative/drama helps the children make a connection between the lyrics to these anthems and the scripture passages upon which they are based.

3. INSTRUMENTS.

Contemporary Christian music often incorporates the use of instruments not standard to more traditional music such as keyboard, drums, bass and guitar. The children can complement a song with the use of other instruments such as Orff, chimes, handbells, rhythm sticks, finger cymbals, tambourines, triangles, etc. In addition to these familiar instruments, Boomwhackers®, tennis ball shakers, and smartphone apps can provide additional sound colors. We have also blended musical styles by having children play a traditional melody on chimes or glockenspiels as an accompaniment to the singing of a contemporary tune.

4. MEDIA/TECHNOLOGY.

Even if you worship in a space that does not contain a screen, the use of selective technology and media presentations can be a creative addition to your music. A temporary screen or wall can be used to show video clips, slide shows or other media presentations in worship. An effective visual presentation paired with your choir's vocal presentation can provide a meaningful worship experience for everyone present. We presented a video slide show of beautiful Easter images while our choir sang the popular worship song, *Revelation Song*. The choir was behind the screen so the congregation was able to hear the music, yet focus on the images in front of them. Many in our congregation expressed the positive spiritual and emotional response they had to this musical offering.

“Despite differences in style preferences among musicians, clergy and congregations, there is at least one truism: the music we choose and how it is performed must serve worship, not the other way around.”

~*Sue Ellen Page*^{ix}

Regardless of whether music is contemporary or traditional in nature, we must hold it to the following qualifications:

1. Is it consistent with essential tenets of the Christian faith?
2. Does it have intrinsic musical value?
3. Does it afford opportunities for pedagogical development?
4. Does it support the overall mission of your church?

The divide that often exists between contemporary and traditional music in our churches can be the function of expectation and history within the congregation. We have the chance through our children's choirs to bridge that divide, introduce a new range of repertoire to our children and congregations, and equip the next generation to appreciate and embrace all forms of music in worship.

SELECTED CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN ANTHEMS AND COLLECTIONS FOR CHILDREN

- *America's 25 Favorite Praise and Worship Choruses for Kids*, various arrangers. A collection of songs that includes some traditional and newer hymns, as well as older and more recent contemporary praise and worship songs.
- *Brentwood Kids Music Modern Worship Choir*, vols. 1-3, various arrangers. Brentwood-Benson. Collections for unison/2-pt. children's choir that include both contemporary Christian songs and traditional hymns, sometimes in pairs.
- *Cedarmont Worship for Kids*, Vol. 1-4, performance and split-trax CDs (no sheet music). Contemporary praise and worship songs arranged for children's voices and performed by the Cedarmont Kids.
- *Extreme! For Kids*, vols. 1-3, various arrangers, Brentwood-Benson. Collections of contemporary Christian praise and worship songs arranged for unison/2-part children's choir.
- *Forever Praise*, Joseph Martin, Harold Flammer 35007154. An original anthem, contemporary in style.
- *Great Big Praise for a Great Big God*, book 1 (pre-school- 3rd grade) and 2 (4th- and up), arr. Bible, Fettke, Lillenas 005562357—A collection that includes original compositions, contemporary Christian songs, familiar children's song such as This Old Man, and familiar childhood tunes set to sacred words, including B-I-N-G-O set to B-I-B-L-E.
- *Kids Praise! Kids Worship!* Arr. Cherry Garasi, Lifeway 9780834181212. A collection that combines traditional hymns and contemporary praise and worship songs into medleys for children's voices.

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- i Cathy Lynn Grossman, "Church Music Wars Battle for Souls with Song," Nov. 16, 2011, <https://usatoday30.usatoday.com/news/religion/story/2011-11-16/church-music-traditional-contemporary/51247368/1>.
- ii Sue Ellen Page, "Words of Wisdom from Helen," 2013.
- iii Marva J. Dawn, *Reaching Out Without Dumbing Down*, (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House), p. 177.
- iv Jeanette LoVetri, "The Basics of Somatic VoiceWork: The LoVetri Method," (Jan. 2014), <http://somaticvoicework.com/the-basics-of-somatic-voicework-the-lovetri-method/>.
- v Neal W. Woodruff, ed. "Contemporary Commercial Voice Pedagogy Applied to the Choral Ensemble: An Interview with Jeanette LoVetri," *Choral Journal* 52, no. 5 (2011): 50.
- vi Esther Jones and Leah Perona-Wright, "Voice for Life, White Level – Choir Trainer's Guide," (Dec. 2013), <http://www.rscm.com/education/vfl/whitelevel/downloads/index.php>, p. 8, 11.
- vii The Royal Conservatory of Music, "Voice Syllabus, 2012 Edition," (Dec. 2013), <https://examinations.rcmusic.ca/publications-0>, p. 23. The RCM groups children of different ages into grade, or levels, of musical and technical proficiency.
- viii Sue Ellen Page, "Words of Wisdom from Helen", 2013.
- ix Sue Ellen Page, *Hearts and Hands and Voices: Growing in Faith Through Choral Music*, H.T. FitzSimons Company, 1995, Page 111.
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Anthem Feature

FROM THE CHORISTERS GUILD CATALOG

GO DOWN, MOSES ARRANGED BY THOMAS KEESECKER

CGA1368 UNISON/two-part with piano

ANTHEM DESCRIPTION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

“Go Down, Moses” is one of the newest anthems from composer Thomas Keesecker. Selected as a 2014 JW Pepper Editor’s Choice anthem, this is an incredibly fun adaptation of the well-loved spiritual. The jazzy accompaniment, dramatic middle section, and powerful text will make this piece one of your choristers’ favorites!

Use this anthem at the beginning of the year to kick off your choir season, or program it in February to coincide with Black History Month and the themes your students will be studying in school. This piece will sound great as a unison anthem, but don’t be afraid to add the second part – consisting largely of echoes. You and your choristers will enjoy retelling this important Bible story through the dynamic music of “Go Down, Moses.”

TEACHING TIPS

Before introducing the anthem to your choir, share the story of Moses’ encounter with God at Horeb, and his subsequent visits with Pharaoh to deliver God’s message. Use an age-appropriate translation of the Bible (Exodus 3), or a reliable children’s story Bible. Children will be more actively engaged in singing the anthem as they recall the biblical account of Moses.

Introduce the anthem with steady beat movements. Play the demo recording, and allow children to move to the steady half note beat. Allow children to suggest movements that the Israelite slaves might have had to do as they worked. Assign one movement to each stanza. For example: move as if pulling a heavy rope – pull with both hands, alternating left and right; lift heavy blocks – bend and lift; or cut hay in a field – alternate cutting left and right with an imaginary sling blade. Children will be able to sing the gentle syncopation more easily once they have internalized the steady beat.

Use the echo, layered harmony parts as an introduction to part singing for your younger singers. This will be simple to teach since the Part II echo begins on the same pitch as the final note of Part I. Allow your more experienced singers to sing the cued harmony notes as an added challenge.

For added color and interest, you may want to add a few instruments. Allow children to take turns tapping tambourines, or playing finger cymbals on beats 2 and 4 of the first two stanzas. For added drama, add a firm tap to the last beat of the accompaniment.

CHORAL READING

Teach the dramatized choral reading to use as an anthem introduction for a worship service. Assign two strong readers from your choir to read the opening scriptures. Enlist an adult with a rich, baritone speaking voice to read the lines indicated as the VOICE OF GOD. Those lines should be read off-stage, and the reader is never seen. The part of Moses can be played by an older child, youth, or adult. Moses should be dressed in biblical attire as indicated in the script, and will need to memorize his lines.

The lines spoken by the choir are all done in a stage whisper, except for the final line. Review the lines each week while holding up cards to indicate different dynamic markings for each line – pianissimo, piano, forte, fortissimo. In the final weeks before the performance, speak the lines as indicated in the script. “Conduct” the lines for the choir so that they are spoken clearly and distinctly, in a unison voice. The choir can memorize the lines, or you can provide cue cards.

The Burning Bush

A CHORAL READING | SUSAN EERNISSE

SCRIPTURE READER ONE: Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led his flock beyond the wilderness, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. (*Exodus 3: 1 NRSV*)

SCRIPTURE READER TWO: There the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of a bush. He looked, and the bush was blazing, yet it was not consumed. (*Exodus 3: 2 NRSV*)

Moses enters, dressed in Old Testament robe and sandals, carrying a shepherd's crook.

MOSES: Look at that bush! It's burning, but the leaves and limbs are not even singed...

VOICE OF GOD: (*from off-stage*) Moses! Moses!

MOSES: Here I am.

VOICE OF GOD: Take off your shoes, Moses.

MOSES: (*looking around*) Lord?

CHOIR: (*whispering*) Take off your shoes, Moses.

VOICE OF GOD: You are standing on holy ground.

MOSES: Lord?

CHOIR: (*whispering*) Take off your shoes, Moses.

Moses quickly removes his sandals.

VOICE OF GOD: I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

CHOIR: (*whispering*) Don't be afraid, Moses.

VOICE OF GOD: I have seen the misery of my people who are in Egypt...I have heard their cry for help...I know their sufferings...I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians...to bring them out to a land flowing with milk and honey – the land of my promise to Abraham.

MOSES: (*nervously*) But Lord, why are you telling me?

VOICE OF GOD: I have chosen you, Moses. You must go down to Egypt.

CHOIR: (*whispering*) Go down, Moses.

MOSES: Are you sure you want me to go, Lord?

CHOIR: (*whispering*) Go down, Moses.

VOICE OF GOD: Yes, Moses. You will go tell Pharaoh that I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

CHOIR: (*whispering*) Go down, Moses.

MOSES: Are you sure you want me to go, Lord?

VOICE OF GOD: Yes, Moses. You will give this message to Pharaoh.

CHOIR: (*whispering*) Go down, Moses.

MOSES: What message is that, Lord?

VOICE OF GOD: Tell Pharaoh – LET MY PEOPLE GO!

CHOIR: (*Loudly*) LET MY PEOPLE GO!

Moses exits – Music begins "Go Down, Moses" | arr. Thomas Keesecker | CGA1368

Draw the Instruments

PLANNING AHEAD

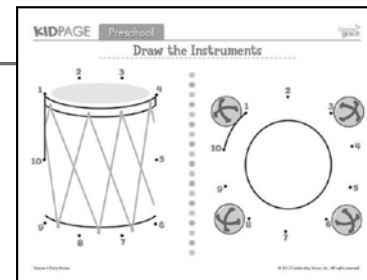
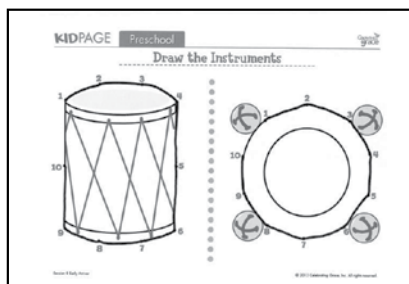
- Make a copy of Draw the Instruments KIDPage for each child.
- Gather a variety of crayons.
- Write the numerals 1-10 on index cards.

GUIDING CHILDREN

- Distribute one KIDPage and one crayon to each child.
- Ask children to guess what instruments might be pictured. (drum and bells)
- Have children count aloud from 1 to 10 with you.
- Show the number 1 index card, and ask children to touch that number on their KIDPage with a crayon.
- Show the number 2 index card, and ask children to draw a line from number 1 to number 2.
- Continue until all numbers are connected for each picture.
- Have children color the pictures, using a variety of crayons.

Draw the Instruments

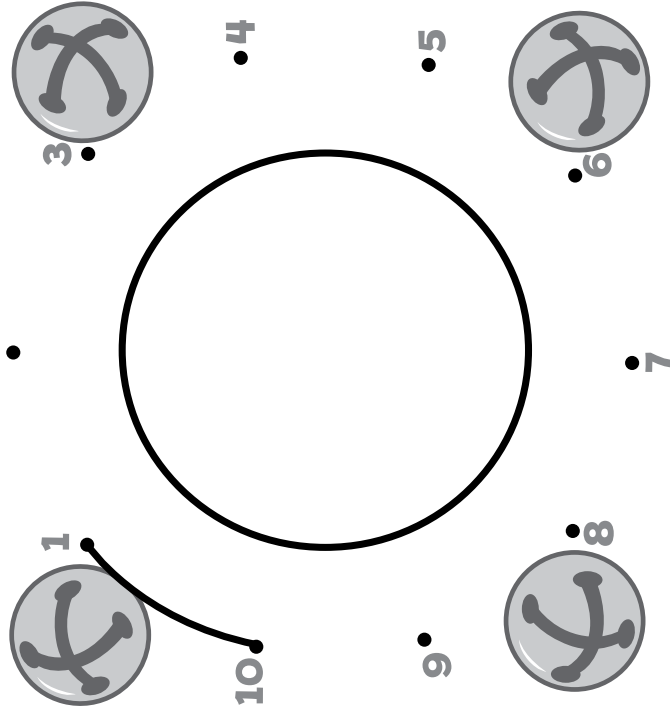
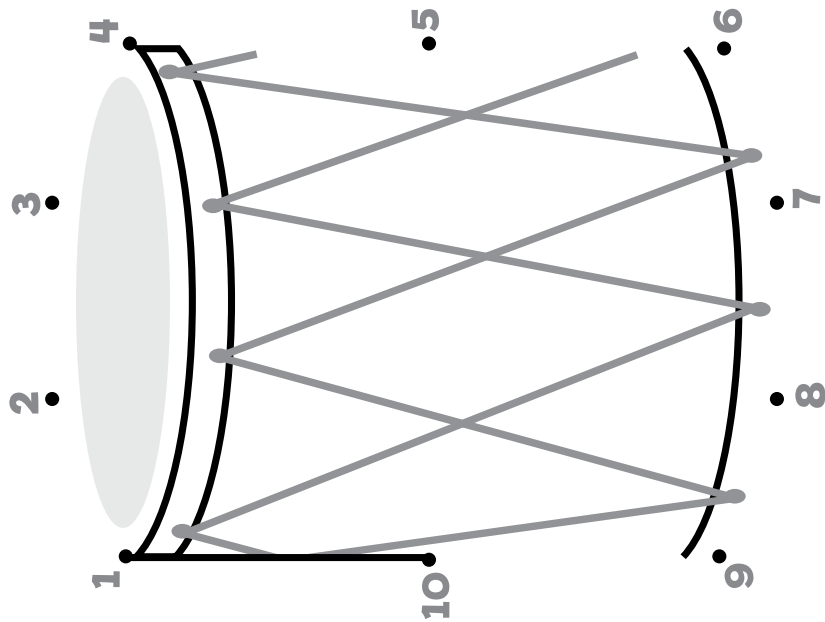
Answers:





KIDPAGE Preschool

Draw the Instruments





ACTIVITY G TEACHING STEPS

Make Instruments

SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY G

Make an Instrument is a craft activity that provides homemade instruments for the children to use in accompanying "For You" or any other song. The children who make the instruments each week should leave them at choir for use in future sessions.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- For drums:
 - Round, cardboard oatmeal boxes and lids or coffee cans
 - Construction paper
 - Glue sticks
 - Clear tape
 - Crayons and/or stickers (optional)
- For wrist bells:
 - Chenille stems, various colors (2 per child)
 - Medium to large jingle bells (4 to 6 per child)
- Scissors
- "For You" Score
- Resonator bells and drums (optional)
- MP3 or CD player and Demo (12) (optional)

PREPARATION

- Enlist extra adult helpers for this activity.
- Collect oatmeal boxes or coffee cans (suggest sending notes home early in the semester, asking parents to save them).
- Learn "For You" and be able to sing it unaccompanied, or plan to use a piano or extra CD and player.
- Make a drum and a wrist bell as samples.
- Cut construction paper, as needed, to fit oatmeal boxes or coffee cans.
- Place materials on tables, ready for use.

1. Display a sample drum and wrist bell.

- Allow children to choose the instrument they want to make first, or divide them into groups to make and switch.

2. Assist children in making their instruments, using extra adult helpers.

- Allow children making drums to decorate construction paper, using stickers or crayons, as desired.
 - Guide children to streak the back of the paper with glue sticks. Help them wrap the paper around the box or can and fasten the edge with a strip of clear tape.
 - Add glue to the inside edge of the lid and place on container. Tape in place, if needed.
- Give two chenille stems and 4 to 6 jingle bells to children making wrist bells.
 - Guide them to thread several jingle bells on one chenille stem, spacing the bells apart.
 - Assist children to take the second stem and wind it around the first to hold the bells in place.
 - Fit the wrist bell to the child's wrist so that it slides on and off easily; twist ends together to fasten.

Teaching Tips

Both instruments will be used in the song "For You." Wrist bells will also be used with "Bells Are Ringing."

Consider the joy the children receive playing instruments they have made! The activity is worth the extra effort. You may want to enlist the help of senior adults—perhaps grandparents—to come and help.

3. Those with bells, practice this rhythm:



- On the last note (whole note), you can shake jingle bells.

4. Those with drums, practice this rhythm:



5. Sing "For You," meas. 11-14, stanzas 1-2, as children play corresponding instruments.

- Sing the entire song, adding instruments as practiced in meas. 11-14. Everyone uses their voice to sing on stanza 3.

Enrichment

If resonator bells are available, children may take turns playing the "A" bells and real drums, as others play the craft instruments.

Option: Bell Mittens

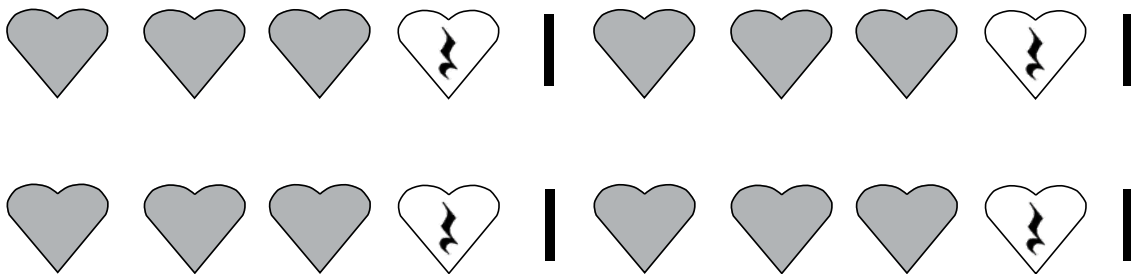
Purchase mittens (a pair per child), or make them from felt, cutting the basic pattern from one purchased or borrowed pair. Stitch outer edges of felt with thread or yarn (leaving wrist ends open for hands to slip in and out). Attach bells to mittens with thread or safety pins where fingertips would be. Play by tapping shoulders or clapping mittens together.

PRESCHOOL PAGES

CLASSROOM INSTRUMENTS COME IN 3 FORMS: body and vocal percussion, environmental instruments, and traditional melody and rhythm instruments. For teachers of preschoolers, these tools are invaluable! Here are some great tips for incorporating the use of instruments into your preschool music program.

ENJOY 3 WEEKS OF RHYTHM FUN

Week 1 - Copy the following visual onto a chart.



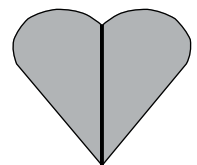
Point to the hearts and say, "Tap, tap, tap, sh!" for each measure. Have the preschoolers tap their palms for each heart, and un-tap for each silent heart. Repeat with other body and vocal percussion: clap, pat (legs), flap (elbows), and click (tongue). If desired, put index fingers to lips to indicate "sh!" on the silent beats.

Week 2 - Play the chart with classroom percussion instruments or environmental instruments.

Play the chart with drums, rhythm sticks, sand blocks or other instruments you may have available. If you do not have these resources, environmental instruments may be used. These can be as simple as tapping unsharpened pencils together, scraping paper plates together, and tapping empty plastic containers, kitchen pots, or cardboard oatmeal containers. Review the chart first with the sounds from last week. Then play the patterns by making instrument sounds on the gray hearts, and observing silent beats on the white hearts (rests).

Week 3 - Add a rhythmic challenge!

Speak the rhythm patterns on the chart by saying a one syllable animal sound (moo or quack) for each gray heart, and "sh!" for each rest. Then divide a few of the hearts with a vertical line as indicated here.



Speak the chart again, saying a two syllable animal sound for each divided heart (rib-bit or hee-haw). Repeat as needed, and then distribute rhythm instruments. Play the chart together – one sound for the gray hearts, two sounds for the divided hearts, and no sounds for the white hearts. You have now given children pre-reading experiences with silent beats, quarter notes, and eighth note pairs!

MAKE 3 TYPES OF INSTRUMENTS

Do you need instruments, but can't afford them? Then combine a craft activity with your music and make rhythm instruments.

Create Shakers:

- Plastic water bottles, plastic eggs, small cardboard boxes, and other empty containers may be partially filled with rice and securely sealed to use as shakers.
- Twist a sheet of newsprint through a cardboard tube, add some rice and salt, and seal at both ends to make a rainstick.
- Partially fill pairs of colored plastic eggs with a variety of items so that children can match the sounds. In one color of eggs use salt, rice, peppercorns, dried beans, 2 pennies. Prepare the second color of eggs the same way, allowing children to match the sounds. Glue the eggs with non-toxic safety glue as a precaution. This is an excellent listening tool for identifying "same and different" sounds.

Jingles:

- Punch holes around the edges of paper or plastic plates and attach jingle bells or small metal washers. Use thick yarn or heavy duty safety pins.
- Tie or sew jingle bells to the toes of children's heavy socks and let children wear them as *jingle paws*.
- Run a chenille stem in and out of the bottom of a plastic cup, catching a jingle bell on the inside. Twist the exposed ends to form a handle.

Drums:

- Oatmeal boxes – simply empty the contents and replace the lid, tapping with a wooden spoon or your hand. OR lay the oatmeal box on its side as a log drum and position a child on either side to tap patterns back and forth to one another.
- Use a metal coffee can with a plastic lid on one end and a metal end on the other to hear different sounds, OR use plastic coffee containers.
- Arrange various size (and clean) paint cans in a cluster to make a drum set.

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3 WAYS TO PLAY!

Besides playing instruments where indicated in a musical score, there are other ways to incorporate instruments into your songs and activities.

1 – Make a circle of carpet squares or colorful craft foam rectangles on the floor (a spot for every child). Place a non-pitched instrument on each square. Children stand in front of the square of their choice, a CD is started, and you guide them to tap to the steady beat of the song. Pause the recording after a few measures, place the instruments back on the squares and move one position to the right. Continue the recording and play the new instruments. Continue this as time allows, or until all instruments are played. This is an excellent way to “plant” a song in the minds of the children.

2 – Assign instruments to be played on key words in a song or story to create a dramatic effect.

3 – Play melodic or rhythmic *ostinati* (repeated patterns). OR Use play simple chord accompaniments. Seat children in chord groups on color coded mats – one color per chord. Each child can play one pitch of the chords, or all can play the root of the chord. Allow children to accompany this simple song by playing the chords or chord roots indicated.

Skip to My Lou

Traditional

(D chord = D, F#, and A; A chord = A, C#, and E)

As you take a final look at this week’s lesson plans, check to see if there is room for including instruments. The children will love them, and will benefit greatly from their use. Playing instruments may become your favorite activity!

NEED MORE PRESCHOOL INSTRUMENT IDEAS? See the *Growing in Grace* sample lessons on pages 21.



Nan Grantham holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Mississippi College, Clinton MS, in Music Education. Her career has included both public and private school teaching and private and class piano. She has served on church music staffs in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, retiring from Second Baptist Church in Houston. Her *Language of Music* series was published by Chorister’s Guild. Throughout her career Nan has written songs and curriculum for *Lifeway’s Children’s Music Series*, and was on the inaugural writing team for *Growing in Grace Children’s Music Curriculum* for which she is still a contributor. Nan continues to work with the Houston Children’s Chorus, and is an active volunteer at her church.

Take Five!



QUESTIONS REGARDING THE USE OF INSTRUMENTS IN CHILDREN'S CHOIRS

—BY CAROL JAMES—

As a children's choir director, you may have wondered about the value of incorporating percussion instruments into your rehearsal plans. Perhaps you see great value in the inclusion of instruments, but lack the confidence, resources, or training. Maybe you fear that adding instruments will create disorder and chaos! Here are some of the answers you seek, as provided by Percussionist/Children's Music Specialist, Carol James.

QUESTION THREE: WHAT ARE SOME ECONOMICAL AND COST EFFECTIVE WAYS TO BUILD A SUPPLY OF INSTRUMENTS?



Orff instruments are always a luxury, but worth the time and effort it may take to acquire them. I borrowed instruments from another church for my fine arts camp to allow my congregation the opportunity to see their benefits. The senior adult Sunday school classes were so taken by the instruments that they gave the funds needed to purchase our own!

- Start with rhythm sticks! They are easy to make. Sand and cut 0.5 inch wooden dowels into 12 inch lengths.
- Drywall buckets and one gallon mop buckets produce a wonderful sound. Strike with sticks or hands.
- Beg and Borrow! Over the years, I've combined *real* percussion instruments with Orff instruments, and other children's instruments such as bell sets and resonator bells. These combinations have enhanced, enriched, and expanded the ensemble sound, and have accommodated larger numbers of children. Contact band directors in your area. They may have old orchestra bells or drums they will lend or donate. For example, I am presently *babysitting* (borrowing) 67 hand drums that a band director in my area is not currently using!

QUESTION FOUR: WHAT ARE THE "MUST HAVES" THAT YOU SIMPLY CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT?

-RESONATOR BELLS: You can do so much with just one set! They can be used to play Orff parts in any key, handbell, or handchime parts. They can be played one per child, or even remain in the carrying case to be played as a complete bell set by an older child.

-DRYWALL BUCKETS AND RHYTHM STICKS: It is much easier to get a classroom set of these than to purchase expensive drums that are available commercially. They also stack nicely for storage.

-ORFF INSTRUMENTS: Start with alto xylophone, bass xylophone, and alto glockenspiel. This combination blends perfectly with the singing voices of children. The next Orff purchases might include additional alto and bass xylophones. For a *splurge*, start a collection of contra bass bars* (C, G, F then D and A). They will add an incredible richness to the ensemble sound, while being accessible to all ages, even preschoolers.



**If contra bass bars are not an option, consider having an adult play string bass or bass guitar to accompany your choir in worship services.*

QUESTION FIVE: WHAT IS A FAVORITE RHYTHM-BASED ACTIVITY ANYONE CAN DO?

Your children will love “Follow the Leader” (on steady beats and accents).

1. Choose a recording of a familiar instrumental piece with that has solid contrasting sections, and a strong steady beat. Make sure the music can be heard over the added instruments, or use a piano accompaniment.
2. Introduce the piece as a “Follow the Leader” steady beat movement activity, making sure to change movements as the musical mood or style changes, possibly outlining the form of the piece.
3. Distribute instruments that can provide a steady beat such as rhythm sticks, buckets, or even heavy-duty plastic plates played as hand drums.
4. Play “Follow the Leader” again, adding instruments, using a variety of instrument playing techniques as the music changes.
5. To further develop the activity, make a visual highlighting accent beats.

For Example: **1** 2 3 **4** **1** 2 **3** 4 (repeated) Play only on the bold print beats.

“Follow the Leader” can also be used to introduce a new choral anthem with either piano accompaniment or a sample recording.

Some music suggestions for “Follow the Leader”:

- (Jazz) “Linus and Lucy” by Vince Guaraldi
- (Classical) “Spring” by Vivaldi
- (Bluegrass) “Flying Tent” by Assembly (New England Dance Masters)
- (Ragtime) “Xylophone Rags” by George Hamilton
- Green (Basic Steady Beat) “Keep the Beat”

GROWING IN GRACE MUSIC CURRICULUM,
Preschool Year 2, Spring

For further information on using percussion in your choirs, you may contact Carol James at drummer-girl@charter.net.



Carol James Carol James is the Children's Choral Director at Central Baptist Church of Fountain City in Knoxville, TN. She has a Bachelor's degree in Music Education K-12, a Master's in Percussion Performance, and has completed Orff Level training. She has directed choirs and percussion ensembles for preschool age children through middle school for over 25 years. Carol is an active clinician in music camps and percussion workshops. She is also a curriculum writer for **Growing in Grace Children's Music Curriculum, Living in the Light.**

The **INSTITUTE CORNER**

Congratulations to the 2014 Choristers Guild Institute scholarship winners!

2014 CHORISTERS GUILD INSTITUTE SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



Elizabeth Eger
Taylors, SC



Mitchell Rorick
Fort Wayne, IN



Jean T. Ting
Valenzuela City, Philippines

The Choristers Guild Institute Scholarships are open to professionals or volunteers currently directing choirs and to gifted college students who demonstrate a commitment to serve in a church as a professional or volunteer director of young singers. Funding is provided by the Helen Kemp Endowment Fund and the Florence Maxwell Hendricks Memorial Fund. The 2014 scholarship funding was also provided through a generous gift from 2013 Institute registrants honoring Founding Institute Director Rebecca Thompson on the occasion of her retirement.

2014 CHORISTERS GUILD INSTITUTE CATHOLIC SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT



Mary Ella Wielgos
Liberty Township, OH

Funding provided by a generous gift from Catherine Stepanek.

CHORISTERS GUILD AND THE HYMN SOCIETY PARTNER IN AMBASSADORS PROGRAM



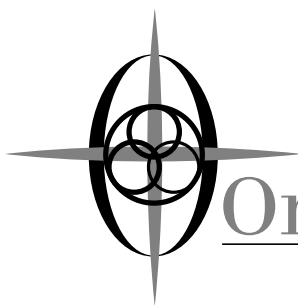
The Ambassadors Program is a new collaborative program between Choristers Guild and The Hymn Society of the United States and Canada. Both of these organizations believe that church music is a transformative activity that is central to people's spiritual lives. In order to continue getting the best and brightest musicians to enter the field of church music, we are sending young "ambassadors" to universities and colleges to do weekend workshops on church music. Students participate in topical workshops including *Children's Choirs 101*, *Worship Planning*, and Choristers Guild reading sessions.

The ambassadors are young professionals who have a few years of work experience in the church, as well as a high level of training in church music (usually Masters of Sacred Music or DMus). They have been active Choristers Guild and/or Hymn Society members, and know the value these organizations offer to people in our field. After the workshop is completed, participating students receive a free, 1-year membership to Choristers Guild and The Hymn Society to further prompt and encourage these talented young musicians to consider using their passion and talent for church music. The program is completely free to the University and the students.

Ambassadors Programs have been held at Wingate University (NC), Florida State University (FL), and Augustana College (IL). If you think your university, or one you are connected to, would be interested in hosting an Ambassadors Program, please contact Brian Hehn at bhehn@mailcg.org.

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— THE —
CHORAL DIRECTOR
— AS —
VOICE TEACHER
— A THREE STEP APPROACH —



BY DR. KAREN TILLOTSON BAUER

Choral directors wear many hats. They must inspire membership, choose appropriate repertoire, maintain unity in the ensemble, and communicate the emotion of the music and text. This is done with varying levels of vocal technique, from child to adult. It is a tall order, and the best results will be achieved only when vocal tone is effectively addressed. When a choral conductor stands in front of a group of singers, he must also wear the hat of de facto voice teacher whether or not extensive studies in voice pedagogy have preceded the conductorship.

Voice is the product of the body functioning as musical instrument.

It consists of a breathing mechanism, phonating apparatus, resonators and articulators. There is only one vocal instrument; it is the same for solo singers and choral singers alike. There may be slight modifications of how that instrument is used, but the basics are universal. Good tone is the single strongest indicator of a good vocal technique, something that not every chorister brings to the rehearsal. However, this can be successfully addressed with a choral ensemble through focused, time-efficient instruction. The fullness and flexibility of the choral tone can be significantly improved with a clear view of the *essential* elements of beautiful singing.

The concepts presented in this article are largely excerpted from my book, *The Essentials of Beautiful Singing: A Three Step Kinesthetic Approach*, published by Scarecrow Press in 2013. The book grew out of the need for a practical way of applying what good teachers over centuries have discovered about beautiful singing, and what voice science has explained in more recent years. With intentional simplicity of terminology, instruction is made accessible and effective in the voice studio, pedagogy classroom, or choral rehearsal room.

The terminology was encapsulated in a letter from a former student. She signed off with “Happy OOFing!” I had no idea what that meant so I wrote back asking for an explanation. She replied that what she remembered most from her lessons with me was “Open Body, Open Throat, Forward Articulation”—OOFing. That acronym became the shorthand version of the Three Step Kinesthetic Approach detailed in the book. It represents the essentials of good vocal technique, including the development of good vocal tone.

The short, descriptive terminology and directives of the three step approach is as useful in a choral rehearsal

as it is in a results-oriented voice studio. In fact, several years ago, I demonstrated the technical crossover between solo singers and choral singers for the Illinois Music Educators Association. I used the Three Step Approach, although it was not so named at that point! In that demonstration, I first worked with solo singers showing what the Open Body/Open Throat/Forward Articulation can accomplish, particularly with tone. Then I worked with a chamber group of singers in the same manner and using the same terminology. The *immediate* improvement in tone for both solo singers and choral singers was equally impressive and even a bit startling to the audience. Good vocal technique improves tone, but the reverse often works as well—improving tone improves the vocal technique!

Before detailing the OOFing mantra, I must mention posture.

Good posture is not just an ideal for the overall health and function of the body; it is a *prerequisite* of good singing.

Most singers, especially those beyond childhood, will need to be reminded to maintain exemplary posture. Good posture involves a tall spinal stretch that opposes gravity and pulls the upper torso away from the lower torso, thus allowing more space and freedom for breathing and for managing the breath. This is different than simply pulling the shoulders back; it is rather a responsibility of the body’s core resulting in a tall lifted head, level chin, and eyes that look straight ahead. If some rehearsing needs to be done while the singers are seated, they should sit on the front edge of the chair so that the spinal lift can be maintained.

STEP 1: OPEN BODY

OOFing begins with the Open Body created by a singer's inhalation. The diaphragm lowers, pulling air into the lungs. Although it does not lower as much as most people believe, its descent presses on internal organs below resulting in some lower abdominal bulging. So a little bulge is fine, but this is often overdone largely due to the common instruction to take a "low breath." While this is well intended and meant to discourage upper chest breathing with heaving shoulders, it can be misleading. The air needs to comfortably fill the lungs, which are housed in the rib cage *above* the waistline, not below it. The ribs must expand or the lungs can't open to fill with air. An easy way for singers to check rib expansion is to put their hands on the sides of their torso, a few inches above the waistline. At this level the expanding ribs will move the hands outward as the entire circumference of the body increases, including the back.

STEP 2: OPEN THROAT

The Open Throat also begins with the breath, but with the particular goal of enhancing the sound as it passes through the resonators, the throat, mouth, and sometimes nose. Tone is the result of vocal fold vibration that is initiated by breath flow, but the sound created there is virtually useless without the enhancement of resonance. A relaxed open throat, one of the major resonators of the voice, can be encouraged by a singer's "yawning breath"—not the full yawn but just the beginning of it. Suggesting such a breath with a dropped jaw not only encourages the relaxed opening of the throat, but a comfortably dropped larynx as well. This is important for providing richness, focus, and ring to the tone.

The continuing space and freedom of the Open Throat will only be maintained by continuing the efforts of expansion of the Open Body. If the body either collapses or squeezes, the throat will not be able to maintain its spatial potential for resonance. To demonstrate the integration of these two aspects of singing and the coordination needed, the singers might be asked to take a yawning breath that fills the lungs and throat with air. Then ask them to hold it for several seconds—*without squeezing the body or closing off the throat*—but simply by maintaining the outward stretch of the rib

A singer's breath, then, is not just important for filling the lungs with air, or singing phrases on one breath, but for encouraging space in the resonators.

These air-filled cavities possess natural acoustical properties that richly resonate the tone, a gift to the singer!

cage and downward thrust of the diaphragm. While in this state of the suspended breath, ask the singers to think about what they are feeling in the body. Although each singer might describe it slightly differently, *that feeling of expansive effort must continue during singing*. The muscles that create expansion of the rib cage are the *same muscles* that allow the singer to judiciously manage the breath flow needed for singing. *Maintaining the efforts of expansion while singing is one of the most significant factors in producing good vocal tone*. This is counterintuitive to the body's natural tendency to *relax* the expansion as part of the exhalation process. Simple relaxed exhalation while singing would result in breathy, unfocused tone. On the other hand, squeezing the body to hold back the air would result in strained, forced singing. In neither of these cases is the breath consciously managed for the benefit of the tone.

Keep in mind that good, erect posture continues to be necessary for the Open Body and Open Throat. Reminders may well be needed regularly.

While the Open Body and Open Throat are simple directives, they are powerful snapshots of essential elements of beautiful singing. Once the singers are taught the principles, these simple two-word phrases can bring the singers' focus back to posture, expansion of the upper torso, and the relaxed pre-yawning throat in a moment's time. It's an efficient and effective teaching tool.

STEP 3: FORWARD ARTICULATION

The third step of the three step approach is Forward Articulation. The articulators are the mouth, tongue, lips, jaw, and soft palate. Forward Articulation refers to articulators forming words as far forward and as loosely as possible so as not to impinge on the resonating space of the Open Throat. Singers need to keep that space consistently relaxed and open in order to maintain consistent tone.

Vowels are made only by the tongue, except for the "oh" and "oo" that require lip rounding as well. Very often singers involve the jaw or spread the mouth when those movements are completely extraneous. Spreading the mouth for the "ee", for instance, only creates tension that results in glaring stridency. The tongue should be loose and independent from the other articulators as well as from the Open Throat! Vowels are the primary carriers of tone, but consonants can also be gifts to a singer's vocal line, especially those that can carry pitch such as "m", "n", "l". Use them to help attain *legato*, the uninterrupted vocal line that all instruments strive to achieve.

The choice of vowels is important in accessing the upper range for both men and women. In a nutshell (brevity being necessary for this article), the "oo" and "o" help men access the correct register (head voice) for the upper range eliminating the commonly seen forward jut of the jaw that goes along with strain. Instead, the correct register allows the tones to be easy and richer.

The female needs the "aw" in order to freely resonate in her upper range. Both voices need to deeply drop the jaw for loud and/or high singing and increase the efforts of expansion as they ascend.

Some consonants can indeed hinder a beautiful vocal line, but singers have to live with them because they help carry the message of the text and can actually add drama. Consonants such as "g" (as in "go"), "k", "p", and "t" require closures/stoppages by one or more articulators. Such a consonant should be executed quickly but crisply, without extraneous tension while maintaining the Open Body. In this way, the interruption will only be momentary, and will not disturb the resonance preceding and following it. Singing with consistent resonance—consistent space—is as important to a true legato as singing smoothly. Exaggerated movements of the articulators do not make enunciation clearer; they only create extraneous tensions that negatively affect the tone.

The Open Body/Open Throat/Forward Articulation group forms the groundwork of beautiful singing—the basics as well as more highly refined skills for vocal registration, range development, legato, and even musicality. It is detailed more thoroughly in *The Essentials of Beautiful Singing: A Three Step Kinesthetic Approach*, which includes guided exercises. All exercises, however, are only as good as their integration with the three step group. The OOFing concepts can be taught in the choral rehearsal room and can result in immediate improvement in tone. It does not guarantee instant consistency; consistency comes with repetition. Singers who develop control of their bodies as musical instruments that mindfully breathe, resonate, and articulate, contribute to a more exciting choral sound. A good choral tone has its own expressive power, and the singers who are producing more vibrant tone are better equipped to take the conductor's lead in making music come off the page.



Dr. Karen Tillotson Bauer is Director of the Master of Music in Vocal Performance at North Park University, Chicago, Illinois. She has taught voice and vocal pedagogy for over 30 years, and has also directed the Chamber Singers and Opera Workshop. Her book has been positively reviewed and highly recommended in the *NATS Journal of Singing* and in *Choice Reviews for Academic Music Libraries*. She may be contacted at: kbauer@northpark.edu

Calendar of Events

CALIFORNIA

August 30, 2014

Director's Workshop | Beth Klemm
Location TBA
Carol Morris Cmorrispla@gmail.com

April 18, 2015

Children's Festival | Beth Klemm
Location TBA
Carol Morris Cmorrispla@gmail.com

GEORGIA

September 6, 2014

Choristers Guild Atlanta FALL Workshop
First Presbyterian Church
1328 Peachtree Street N.E. Atlanta, GA 30309
Meg Granum mgranum@firstpresatl.org

MISSOURI

September 20, 2014

Children's Choir Workshop | Christy Elsner
Presbyterian Church of Stanley
7709 W 151st Street, Overland Park, KS 66223
Suanne Comfort music@raytowncc.org

January 25, 2015

Youth Choir Festival | Bryan Taylor
Village Presbyterian Church
6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208
Suanne Comfort music@raytowncc.org

WISCONSIN

November 10, 2014

Let Your Light Shine | Karol Kimmell
St. John's Lutheran Church
20275 Davidson Road, Brookfield, WI 53045
Linda Schmidt linda@stmaryslutheran.org

See the back cover of *The Chorister* for some great *Choristers Guild* Webinars.

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Ellenelle Gilliam, Rock Island
Jens Hurty, Moline
Brian Jozwiolo, Rock Island
Justin Lebo, Rock Island
Anne Mitchell, Rock Island
Silvia Ramirez, Rock Island

Hillary Taylor, Dekalb

Lucy Wrenn, Rock Island

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TENNESSEE

Vicki Collinsworth, Tullahoma

TEXAS

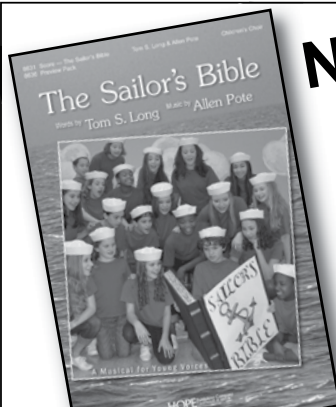
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Choir Devotionals

BY BETSY HENDERSON

Team: Carol, and Cherub Choirs of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Cherry Hill, NJ present Elijah! God's Faithful Prophet by Mark Patterson. Photo: submitted by Lisa K. Marcelli, Director of Music.



WEEK OF AUGUST 3

SCRIPTURE:

Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Matthew 14:16-18 NRSV (Extended reading, Matthew 14:13-21)

DEVOTIONAL:

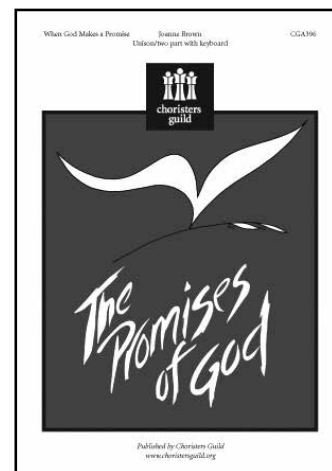
Several times each year, members of our church provide breakfast for those less fortunate, many who are homeless, waiting anxiously at a shelter. A volunteer team, including some children and teens, leave at 5:00 a. m. to deliver the meal which has been provided by caring church members. Those who participate agree that the blessing to them as givers is far greater than for the hungry who receive. Imagine the joy, relief and amazement felt that day as Jesus fed five thousand hungry followers from a basket containing five loaves of bread and two fish....with leftovers!

PRAYER:

Dear Father of all blessings, help us to take advantage of every opportunity to be of service to others in need. Thank you for your Word that shows the way to be gracious servants, and for those who feed our souls and bodies. Let our hands be your hands, filled with kindness and compassion as work is done in projects that promote well-being. Fill us with the desire to give in your precious name. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA396 | *When God Makes a Promise* | By Joanne Brown and Betty Wilson | Unison/two-part



Betsy Henderson is currently the Children's Music Coordinator at First United Methodist Church in Garland, Texas, and is the former Fine Arts Coordinator for Garland ISD. Betsy has served as elementary state chairman for both Texas Music Educators Association and Texas Choral Directors Association, receiving TCDA's Choral Excellence Award in 2006. She was on the authorship team for two international music textbook series, *Share the Music* and *Spotlight on Music* for Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Company as well as the sole author of teacher resources published by Hal Leonard Corporation. She is a co-author of *Praise Takes Flight* (CGBK68), a new resource book for children's choir directors, published by Choristers Guild.

WEEK OF AUGUST 10

SCRIPTURE:

Because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Romans 10:9-10 NRSV (Extended reading, Romans 10:5-15)

DEVOTIONAL:

As a Sunday school teacher, during a particular lesson, I was in the right place at the right time to help children understand the concept of the ‘three in one’ (God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit). There are many songs that symbolize the ‘three in one’ concept by repeating the first identical phrase three times, followed by a fourth phrase that is different. Take time to sing these examples to get the idea; “Kum-ba-ya”, “I Have Decided to Follow Jesus,” and “Rocka My Soul.” Give praise in your own way to worship the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

PRAYER:

Dear Giver of Life, We confess this day that Jesus is Lord, and we believe with our whole hearts that he was raised from the dead. Thank you for our salvation. Accept our words of praise to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who guide our ways in all situations. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA809 | *Make Your Life a Song to God* | By Jayne Southwick Cool | Unison/two-part



WEEK OF AUGUST 17

SCRIPTURE:

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us. Psalm 67:1 NRSV (Extended reading, Psalm 67)

DEVOTIONAL:

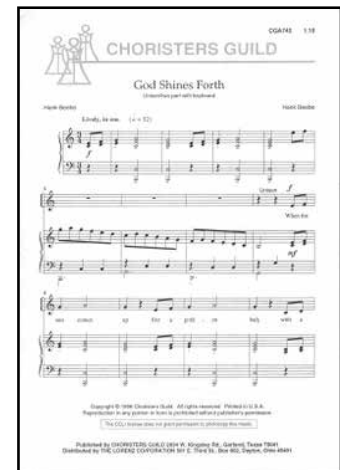
It is a comforting thought to know that God knows us, cares for us and shines his face on us. There may be days ahead when God’s attention is needed more than others. People need God’s grace in times of trouble, sorrow, pain and disappointment, as well as in times of joy. He is always there! There is a woman at church named Ann, whose husband lost his life recently, but to see her as a pillar of faith is an example each week of God’s face shining on her. Will you seek God’s face and accept his blessings on your life?

PRAYER:

Dear Father of Light, give us the courage to face life with strong faith and the assurance of your constant care. Let us feel the radiance of your face, and reflect that light to others. Help us to be examples of your love, so that when others see us, they also see you. Thank you for the people who have blessed our lives by showing us your face, and teaching us your ways. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA745 | *God Shines Forth* | By Hank Bebee | Unison



OPTIONAL *Psalm 67:3 Rhythm Chant* (Speak and clap; repeat as desired.)

Let the peop - ple praise you, O God. Let all the peo - ple praise you.

WEEK OF AUGUST 24

SCRIPTURE:

Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church. Matthew 16:17-18 NRSV (Extended reading, Matthew 16:13-20)

DEVOTIONAL:

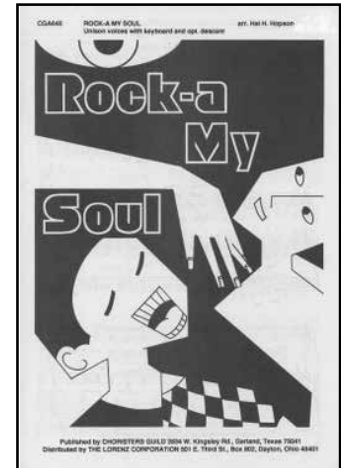
A young boy found his singing voice and a spiritual awakening through a simple song about this man, Peter, from the Bible. Collin wanted to sing “Fisherman Peter” every Sunday at church and sang it often at home. Soon he asked to sing it by himself with great confidence for the other children. An echo song with only these words, “*Fisherman Peter, by the sea, drop your nets now and follow me*”, helps us imagine Jesus walking by the shore, calling his disciples to him for the work ahead. Jesus is still calling for helpers today if we are listening. Have you found your signature song of praise like Collin?

PRAYER:

Dear Father, show us how to be a rock like Peter, trustworthy and faithful. Let us be your disciples in our daily lives, serving as examples to others. May we use our voices to sing your praise without being afraid of being heard. Thank you for planting a seed in our lives to be nurtured as we grow in stature and understanding. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA645 | *Rocka My Soul* |
By Hal Hopson | Unison



WEEK OF AUGUST 31

SCRIPTURE:

When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God on this mountain. Exodus 3:12 NRSV (Extended reading, Exodus 3:1-15)

DEVOTIONAL:

When God called Moses to be the deliverer who would set free his people in bondage, Moses felt inadequate to do God’s bidding. He was timid about speaking out and was afraid he wasn’t the right man for the job. He even asked God to send someone else, but God promised to give him the words to utter before Pharaoh. Aaron, Moses’ brother, was sent with Moses to support and assist him. Perhaps you think you are too shy to step outside your comfort zone when given the chance to speak to others about Jesus. However, you may be the very one called to be God’s messenger and given the right words to say.

PRAYER:

Dear God of Moses, thank you for Bible stories that take on new meaning in our lives today. Thank you for giving us courage and strength equal to any task you ask of us. Protect us from fears that take away the chance to be your witness. As with Moses, let us know that you keep your promises. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1368 | *Go Down, Moses* | Arr. by Thomas Keesecker | Unison/two-part

Teaching tips for this anthem may be found on page 19 in this issue of The Chorister.

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 7

SCRIPTURE:

Teach me, O Lord, the way of your statutes and I will observe it to the end. Give me understanding that I may keep your law and observe it with my whole heart. Psalm 119:33-34 NRSV (Extended reading, Psalm 119:33-40)

DEVOTIONAL:

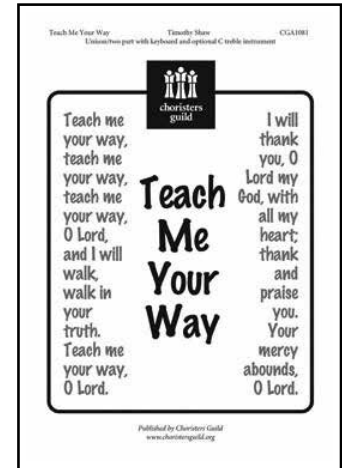
Do you have a favorite teacher? Teachers are an important part of life as you grow and learn. Consider your parents as your first teachers as you learned letters, numbers, colors, shapes, songs and prayers. Good teachers can make an impact that will stay with you for a lifetime. Look around! Not all your teachers are found in classrooms but in everyday situations, providing stepping stones into the future as needed. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old, he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6

PRAYER:

Dear Father, help us to learn from the teachers you put in our paths. In return, may we also teach others your ways by the example we live. Make us grateful for the messengers who are dedicated to serve as teachers in our churches and schools. Help us to show thanks to those who make a difference in our lives as we grow and discover who we are. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1081 | *Teach Me Your Way* |
By Timothy Shaw | Unison/two-part
with C treble instrument



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 14

SCRIPTURE:

Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times? Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times." Matthew 18:21-22 NRSV (Extended reading, Matthew 18:4-35)

DEVOTIONAL:

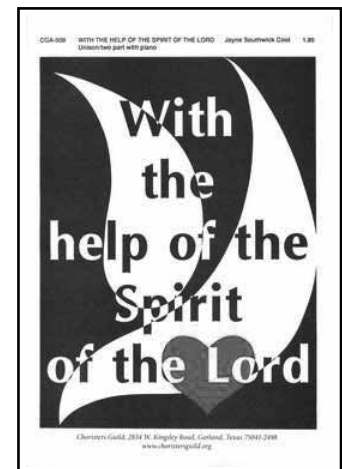
Were you surprised at the answer Jesus gave? One evening, during choir rehearsal, some harsh words were exchanged between two boys without being resolved before everyone went home. After I found out what happened, I prayed during the coming week for a peaceful solution with God's perfect timing. As we met before choir at the following rehearsal, the boys involved had taken care of needed apologies and forgiveness on their own without my intervention. God works in mysterious ways as we are the recipients of his love, care and forgiveness.

PRAYER:

Dear Father of mercy, teach us to be peacemakers as we learn to forgive others seventy-seven times if necessary. Thank you for people with the capacity to forgive and move forward. We let go of any grudges or hard feelings, and seek peace in our lives. Help us to love our neighbors as we love ourselves, and look for the good in all, forgiving as you forgive. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA508 | *With the Help of the Spirit of the Lord* |
By Jayne Southwick Cool |
Unison/two-part



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 21

SCRIPTURE:

O give thanks to the Lord, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. Psalm 105:1-2 NRSV (Extended reading, Psalm 105:1-6, 37-45) (Extended reading, Matthew 16:13-20)

DEVOTIONAL:

Seeing a choir of young children participating in the worship service, the congregation may not realize what courage it takes for some children to be in the spotlight. Not all children feel comfortable at first, seeing so many faces looking at them, even if those faces are smiling. Once during a performance, one very small chorister left her spot on the altar steps and wrapped her arms around the director's leg for comfort during the song! On the other hand, a boy scout once missed his week-end camping event so he could sing with his choir on Sunday. His reasoning was that he could go to camp at another time, but would never have the chance to sing that particular

song he loved in worship. Does God give you courage to sing your praise?

PRAYER:

Dear Father, thank you for giving us the courage to sing your praises with joy on our faces. May the message of our song reach its target in the hearts of those who need to hear it. Turn our weaknesses into strength as your messengers, and let us hear one another's song in each worship experience. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA392 | *Praise, Rejoice and Sing* |
By Allen Pote | Unison with
flute descants



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 28

SCRIPTURE:

So that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bend, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. Philippians 2:10 NRSV (Extended reading, Philippians 2:1-13)

DEVOTIONAL:

In a summer camp cabin, excited young boys were settling down for the night's sleep. Amidst the final horseplay and laughter, something happened that changed hearts that night. One boy quietly knelt by his bunk, and proceeded to pray with head bowed and hands folded, as was his custom at home. Noticing this, one-by-one the other boys followed his example and knelt to pray. Perhaps you are an example to others by what you do, without even knowing that someone might be watching. That possibility is worth the effort to do your best in all things and not become an obstacle in reaching

out. On your knees in prayer, you can best look up to find God.

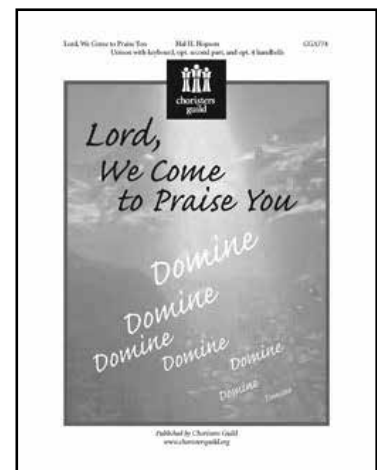
PRAYER:

(OPTIONAL – Invite children to kneel in prayer with you.)

Dear Father Almighty, as we kneel to pray, please clear our thoughts to worship and praise you. Use us as examples of lives lived for you. Thank you for making us aware of your blessings, both great and small, as we set our minds on you. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA774 | *Lord, We Come to Praise You* |
By Hal Hopson | Unison/two-part
with handbells





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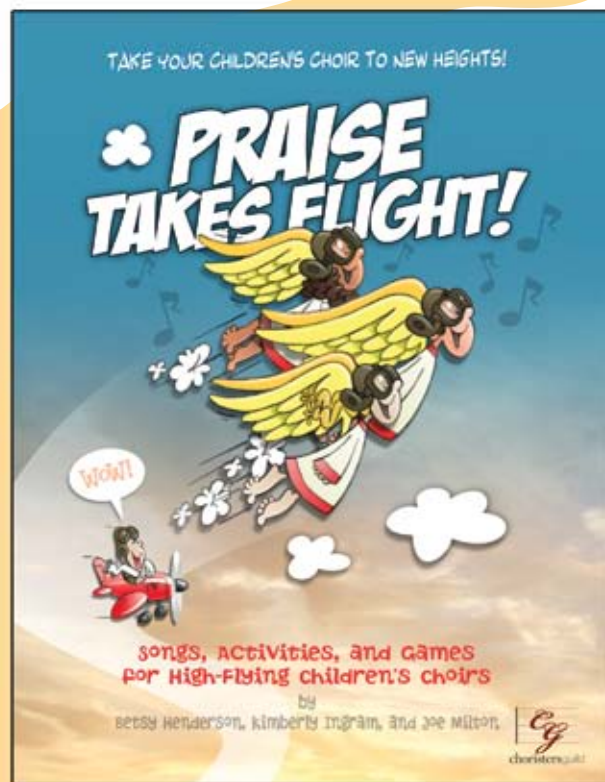
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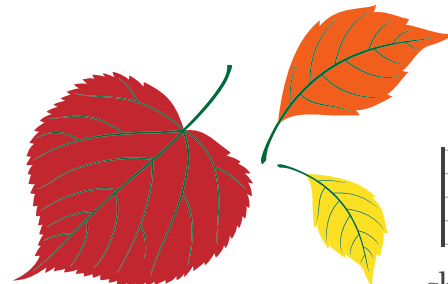
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the chorister

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Volume 66 | Issue 3



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From the Editor

It's October. You are knee-deep in the fall season. All of a sudden you realize that Advent begins in 2 months! Where did summer go? Weren't you just cooling your toes in the Gulf waters last week?

Circles. We live our lives in a series of circles. It may be a source of boredom to some people, but to this ever so slightly OCD person, the repetition and predictability are things of beauty—old friends in a land of uncertainty. I love the church year – how it begins with the hope and anticipation of Advent, and then walks through the life of Jesus leading us right back to the beginning again. I never tire of reading the Bible through every year. Why? There is great comfort in tradition, and joy in reliving the familiar.

I recently attended a family reunion of my Freeman cousins. It was the first such event we had ever held. Along with the excitement of seeing relatives not seen since high school was a certain amount of trepidation. What if I don't "know" anyone? What if no one remembers me? From the time I stepped into that circle of Freeman-ness, I was warmly welcomed, and felt a strange familiarity. What I had expected was uncomfortable, polite conversation. What I got was the warmth of shared roots and family traditions. I think that is a bit like church should be. People should be warmly welcomed like old friends, even on their very first visit.

I guess my point here is that though church musicians seem to be walking a virtual treadmill of tradition and repetition, forward progress is taking place. Perhaps a spiral is a better image than a circle. It grows from the inside out, much the way ministry does. I see you taking the familiar, and spicing it up with fresh ideas. I see you mingling valued traditions with forward thinking, progressive ideas. I see you enthusiastically starting each church year, and sharing that enthusiasm so that it becomes a contagion for your congregants. Never underestimate the power of your positive attitude. You are blessing others in innumerable ways.

In this issue of *The Chorister* are some familiar features, and some new ones, too. Be sure to check out each one. Share the ideas with your ministry team. We are all in this together—just like old friends.

Keep singing the song!

-Susan



SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS!

I would love to have more photos of your groups to share in *The Chorister*! Please submit your high resolution photos to: seernisse@mailcg.org



From the Sacred Choral Editor

Welcome to the full swing of Fall! You're back in the rehearsal rhythm, and chances are you're already looking ahead to December's special worship services, extra events, perhaps a concert. How in the world do we accomplish everything and still reach Christmas with energy to spare?

DOUBLE CHECK YOUR REPERTOIRE. By now you know your choir's capabilities and their limitations. Is the music challenging yet achievable? Are your choristers learning a piece with both musical and theological layers? If you selected your music during the summer, now is a good time to adjust your plans based on your choir's progress so far.

BE PREPARED FOR REHEARSALS. The clock seems to move faster as Christmas nears, but be diligent in your rehearsal preparation. Grab a calendar and work backwards. Where should your choir be by the first of November? By Thanksgiving break? Set rehearsal milestones for each piece of repertoire and you'll avoid the last-minute crunch.

TALK TO THOSE WHO ARE PLANNING AND LEADING WORSHIP ALONGSIDE YOU. Early conversations about Advent and Christmas worship music will ensure that the bell choir, organist, and children's choir aren't preparing arrangements of the same Christmas hymn.

EXPLORE ALL YOUR MUSICAL OPTIONS. Composers intentionally write options into their pieces, so take advantage of all your possibilities. Running out of time to teach Part II of a U/2 anthem? Refocus and strive for a wonderful unison sound on Part I alone. Is your choir struggling to memorize all the verses of a hymn arrangement? Bring in the congregation and designate a verse for everyone to sing together.

CHECK OUT THIS ISSUE'S TIPS AND REHEARSAL GUIDES. Many of you are using the brand new Advent/Christmas musical just released by Choristers Guild, *Room for Christmas*. A fantastic production from composer Mark Burrows, this musical addresses the issues of busyness and priorities during the Christmas rush. Mark offers practical tips and advice for preparing *Room for Christmas* on pages 8-14. If Kris Crunk's new anthem, "Christmas Light," is on your repertoire list, you'll find creative rehearsal ideas and teaching guides on pages 15-16.

*Abundant Advent blessings
to you and yours!*

-Katie



From the Executive Director

DO YOU DIRECT SCHOOL CHOIR, TOO? READ THIS AND SHARE WITH ALL DIRECTORS!



MARY LYNN LIGHTFOOT

Welcome Mary Lynn Lightfoot to Choristers Guild! Mary Lynn joined the Choristers Guild staff on June 1 to begin development of a new choral line called *Sing!: Distinctive Choral Music for Classroom, Concert, and Festival*. *Sing!* will provide music especially for elementary, middle and high school choirs. Mary Lynn's expertise in school music is truly the perfect fit for our expanding vision of how Choristers Guild can fulfill its mission, extending its positive influence beyond children's choirs in the church and into public school choral programs. Mary Lynn is known for high quality music both as a composer and an editor, and is committed to helping teachers develop positive character in young people through the choral experience. The *Sing!* line of distinctive choral music for classroom, concert and festival will be available in the spring of 2015 for use during the 2015-2016 school year. Please spread the word to your friends and colleagues to be watching for *Sing!* edited by Mary Lynn Lightfoot. For more information on *Sing!* and to be placed on a special *Sing!* information update mailing list visit www.choristersguild.org/sing.

MEET NEW CHORISTERS GUILD OFFICE STAFF



LIANN HARRIS

When you place an order know the system providing your Choristers Guild music is being operated by new Distribution and Office Manager, Liann Harris. Liann is a recent graduate of Austin College in Sherman, TX where she majored in English. While in school she worked for the Institutional Affairs office as well as in Austin College's tutoring center. She also was a Photo Editor for the Austin College Observer and a Staff Writer for Star Local Media. After graduation she interned at Brown Books Publishing Group. At Carrollton Creekview High School she received the perfect attendance award for not missing a day of school from kindergarten through 12th grade. Her music background includes school orchestra where she played in the cello section.



ADRIENNE SIMMONS

Accounting at Choristers Guild is now being handled by new Controller, Adrienne Simmons, CPA. Adrienne has served as the Director of Finance at Communities In Schools Dallas Region, Inc. and the Finance Manager at the Plano Chamber of Commerce. Her wealth of experience and knowledge will be especially beneficial as Choristers Guild implements a new integrated website and operating system. Adrienne resides in Wylie, TX with her husband, Jeremy, and their three children.



KENT JIN AND WALTER CHEN

Kent Jin and Walter Chen are serving as interns from the University of Texas at Dallas. Kent, from China, is finishing a Master of Science in Supply Chain Management degree. He is providing our primary order fulfillment and shipping services. Walter, from Taiwan, recently finished a Master of Science in Finance degree. He is processing all accounts receivable.

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ROOM FOR CHRISTMAS

TIPS AND RESOURCES FOR THE CHRISTMAS MUSICAL

BY MARK BURROWS



Perhaps you have selected the new Choristers Guild Christmas musical, **Room for Christmas**, for your choir's fall production. Composer Mark Burrows offers some great tips specifically related to that musical. If you have another musical in mind, you can adapt some of Mark's ideas to fit your project. In either case, here are some excellent ideas for planning and implementing a successful and meaningful experience for you and your children's choir.

To say December is a packed month for church musicians is putting it mildly. Expectations are high. Everyone from our “regular” members to people we haven’t seen since Easter show up. And they don’t simply want to be a part of worship. They want to be *moved*. They want to be *wowed*! All of us in ministry, from the senior pastor to the children’s pastor, can feel that pressure to “make Christmas” perfect for everyone. Parents and grandparents feel that pressure too – the pressure to buy the perfect gift, decorate the perfect tree, prepare the perfect meal. Everyone will be disappointed otherwise. Right?

Trying to make everything perfect is one of the central themes in *Room for Christmas*. The opening lines of the first song set the tone:

*There isn't any time for laughter,
There isn't any time for cheer.
There's traffic at the mall,
The worst I can recall.
This is the most frenetic time of year.
We're running out of room for Christmas...*

Somewhere along the way many of us went from “I can’t wait for Christmas to get here,” to “I can’t wait for Christmas to be over so things can go back to normal.” How sad is *that*?

What if we stopped trying to *make* Christmas and instead accepted that Christmas is a gift from a loving Creator? Here are some ideas for how to make *Room for Christmas* an enjoyable, meaningful experience for your choir (and you), rather than just “one more thing” in an already-busy season.

A FEW WORDS ON...UM...WORDS

When selecting a musical, for me one of the real deal-breakers is if the songs are too wordy. No matter how catchy the tunes are, if the lyrics are too involved and plot-laden, I’m out.

But even if the lyrics are lean, the kids will typically learn the tunes way before the texts. Here are a few things you can do to make the memorization process as ouch-less as possible.

SOLOISTS ON THE VERSES, CHOIR ON THE REFRAINS.

Take the opening song—*Running out of Room*, for example. The whole song can be sung by the entire group. OR...you can have any number of soloists sing the verses. The pick-up to measure 7 indicates (OPTIONAL SOLOIST). But you can even divide that into Solo 1 (measures 7-10) and Solo 2 (measures 11-14). The pick-up to measure 59-measure 67 could offer more solo opportunities.

Other solo opportunities:

What Do We Do with Christmas?

Measure 5-Measure 13, beat 2
Measure 25-Measure 33, beat 2
Measure 43-Measure 58

There Was Love

Measure 8, beat 3-Measure 24, beat 2
Measure 45, beat 3-Measure 61, beat 2

In the Bleak Midwinter

Measures 7-22 (Up to four soloists,
one every four measures)
Measures 25, beat 4-41 (similar)

Brand New Feeling

Measure 5-Measure 12, beat 3
Measure 23-Measure 30, beat 3

Utilizing soloists in a few of these places keeps you from having to worry about every singer memorizing every word of every song. It also allows you to feature more individuals if the choir is large enough. Another possibility is to have small groups sing some of the optional solo passages. This will add variety to the musical while making it much easier on you (and less stressful on the kids).

LET'S PLAY A GAME!

Suppose you have a song where the children know the notes, but the words aren't quite memorized. If you keep drilling the song, they are likely to become impatient and may even begin to dislike the song. How do you give them the repetitions they need without it feeling repetitive?

- Find a simple hand puppet that you like.
- Have the children sing a portion of the song once for the puppet.
- Allow the puppet to sing the song for the children, singing an incorrect word at some point early in the song.
- Ask the children to listen carefully and raise their hands when they hear the puppet sing an incorrect word.
- The children will patiently teach the puppet the correct word.
- Continue the song, and have the puppet sing again, and get a little further in the song before making a mistake.
- Little by little you make it through the whole song (or verse).
- When the puppet finally makes it all the way through without mistakes, invite the children to sing once with the puppet. They will invariably sing every word correctly.

Through the process of teaching the puppet, the children have heard the lyrics over and over, but not in a top-down sort of way. You've taken what could be a dreary, repetitive process and turned it into a game!

LET'S PLAY A GAME 2.0.

Have the children open their scores to the first page of a particular song.

Sit at the piano.

Say:

"I am going to play the melody for our song. Listen very carefully and follow along in your scores. I will stop on a note. Raise your hand if you can tell me the word in the song on which I stopped."

Play a few notes before stopping. There will be many instant volunteers.

Invite a volunteer to identify the word where you stopped.

Continue this process, making it further into the song each time.

There are several benefits to this game.

1. It gives the kids a chance to think through the words multiple times without it feeling repetitious.
2. It gives you a chance to reinforce the correct pitches and rhythms without "spoon feeding" the choir.
3. It gives all of you a chance to rest your voices a little.
4. It's fun!



MICROPHONES—AN ALL-OR-NOTHING AFFAIR

If your church is lucky enough to be able to provide a microphone for every part in the musical - good for you. (I'm not the least bit jealous.) The rest of us have some work to do. Maybe we have two or three microphones, but with 13 or more roles, who gets *miked* up and who doesn't?

My philosophy is that you either amplify everyone or no one. Once an audience/congregation gets used to amplification, anything less just sounds muffled. Lines get lost. After all the energy that goes into directing a musical, the last thing I want to do right afterwards is have to explain to an upset mom why no one could hear her child.

A few suggestions:

1. If you have a sound engineer, either volunteer or staff, do yourself a favor and meet with this person weeks before the performance. Look at the musical together and develop a sound plan. Don't wait until the Saturday dress rehearsal when a third of your singers are in a soccer tournament, those who are

there won't stop playing with their new costumes, and "no one can find the wireless."

2. If you don't have enough lavalier/headset mikes for everyone, consider a few well-placed choral/ambient mikes. This puts all the performers on a level playing field volume-wise. It also helps you avoid having to facilitate a lot of trading of microphones. Inevitably, trades either don't happen in time, or someone accidentally hits the mute button.

3. Use a few handheld wireless microphones which can be passed around for the different lines. Is this optimal for staging? No. But it beats having an entire scene of dialogue be completely inaudible.

Of course, the easiest thing would be to have no artificial amplification at all. That means everyone has to say their lines louder, slower, and with the clearest diction possible. I'm constantly having to tell my little thespians, "Remember, you know how all these lines go. Our audience does not."

DOUBLE-CASTING

I know that for some churches having two full casts won't be a realistic option. But if it's even a remote possibility, I highly recommend it. **Here's why:**

1. It takes some of the pressure off the kids. December isn't just a busy month. It's a time of colds, sore throats, and fevers that come out of nowhere. A child who gets sick can rest and recuperate, knowing that they aren't "letting down" the choir by not being there.

2. It takes pressure off of you. Kids are busy year-round. If you single-cast the show, it's entirely possible that the only time the entire cast will run through the musical is during the actual performance. Double-casting gives you a greater chance of having a full cast from one week to the next so that rehearsals can have some continuity.

3. Having two casts pretty much compels you to do two performances. Isn't it kind of a shame all the work we put into something like a children's musical, only to have it over in 25 minutes? If your church holds multiple Sunday services, consider having the musical be part of worship with each cast performing for one of the services. If your church only holds one service, have one cast perform during worship. Then take the show "on the road" to a local retirement center, nursing home, VA hospital. They will absolutely love seeing and hearing the kids. And since the musical is so short, afterwards you could have a Christmas carol sing-along with the residents. The children will actually become music ministers in the process!

DEVOTIONALS

Sometimes we are so focused on learning the songs and the dialog, we forget that the children are more than just actors in a performance. The musical is a learning experience for the children, as well as an opportunity to share a spiritual message with their friends and family. Here are some devotionals and activities to use each week in rehearsal to help you provide a spiritual focus.

THE WISE MEN

Teach the children to say “Merry Christmas” in many different languages.

- English – *Merry Christmas*
- Spanish – *Feliz Navidad*
- French – *Joyeux Noel*
- Hawaiian – *Mele Kalikimaka*
- Swahili – *Krismasi Njema*

Allow children to share Christmas greetings in other languages they may have learned. Have the children stand and quickly go wish five others Merry Christmas in any language they choose.

Share the following:

We don’t know how many wise men there were. We don’t know exactly when they arrived. We don’t know if they rode camels or elephants or horses. What we do know is that wise men came “from the east” bearing gifts for the child. Jesus didn’t just come for a small group of special people in a specific place. He came for the whole world.

Invite the children to sing with you the final verse of *In the Bleak Midwinter*.

- What can I give him, poor as I am?*
- If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.*
- If I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;*
- Yet what I can I give him; give my heart.*

THE INNKEEPER

The Gospel of Luke never actually mentions an innkeeper. But tradition has established this figure as a regular part of Christmas pageants. In *Room for Christmas* our Innkeeper gives voice to the feelings of so many children – “I would have made room for Mary and Joseph...and Baby Jesus.”

Distribute index cards and pencils.

Share the following:

Making room for Jesus includes making more time and space in our lives for the things that *really* matter. Think of one special way that you can make more room for something that matters this Christmas season. Write it down on your card, starting with the words “I will...”

Examples:

- I will play video games less, and visit with my family more.
- I will invite a friend over to play.
- I will help my parents with some of the chores.
- I will pray for others.
- I will volunteer at my church.
- I will give my dog extra scratching behind the ears.

Option: Collect all the cards and create a Room for Jesus Litany. Read one of the cards and have all the children respond with – *We make room for you, Lord Jesus*. Continue with the remaining cards.

WHAT DO WE DO WITH CHRISTMAS?

- Give each child a piece of paper, a pencil, and access to an assortment of crayons.
- Challenge each child to recreate a Nativity scene in a different setting.

For example:

What would the birth story look like set in the Old West? In our hometown? In the future?

If time allows, have each child show and tell about their work.

- Display the completed scenes, Gallery style, in a prominent location.

SCRIPTURE SCRAMBLE

- Write a different line from the musical on one set of colored index cards.
- Write a corresponding passage of scripture on another set of index cards of a contrasting color. (See lines and corresponding scriptures on p. 14.)
- Give seven children the Musical Lines cards, and give seven different children the Scripture cards.
- Direct all fourteen children to walk around the room, reading aloud what is on their cards.
- Their task is to try and find their “card partner” – a Musical Line card that pairs well with a Scripture card.
- When they have all found their card partners, have them stand together, show their cards, and briefly explain why they should be partners (how do they go together well).

Note: Try to facilitate thoughtful pairings so the children don’t simply go stand next to their buddies. That said, children have a way of finding truths. Some lines may pair with a number of Bible verses.

Option: Make multiple copies of the set of Scripture cards to send home with the children. Challenge the children to memorize the scriptures with their families. Provide some fun incentive to encourage memorization.

See **Musical Lines Cards and Scripture Cards** following this article on page 14.

IF I WERE

Here is a fun devotional activity that helps children understand one of the ways we can honor Jesus – bringing out the best of who we are.

- In the song *In the Bleak Midwinter*, one of the lines is:
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.

Utilize this line as the form – If I were a _____, I would bring a _____.

You can write this on a chalkboard/dry erase board, or simply do it verbally.

- Invite one child to supply an occupation.
- Have another child suggest what that person could bring, based on the occupation.

Examples:

If I were a baker, I would bring a cake.

If I were a carpenter, I would bring a table and chairs.

If I were a composer, I would bring a symphony.

If I were an artist, I would bring a painting.

- Allow each child a chance to offer an occupation, and what someone would bring.
- Follow up by asking each child what they would bring this Christmas, *just as they are*. (We don’t need an occupation to define who we are – a good thing for all of us to remember!)



Mark Burrows is a writer, composer, and clinician whose works are published by many major houses. Several works, such as his **Gettin’ Down with Mama Goose Series**, **The Body Electric**, and **Outside the Lines** top many best-seller lists.

Known to little listeners as “Mister Mark” he tours the nation performing concerts for children and families. His three children’s albums have won a total of nine national awards. His songs, including the highly-requested **Bruce Weiner**, **Zoo Dentist**, can be heard on Sirius XM Radio. One song, **Amazon Rock**, was recorded by Nick Records for a *Dora the Explorer* album.

Mark is currently the Director of Children’s Ministries at First United Methodist Church–Fort Worth, Texas, where he leads the weekly Children’s Message, as well as a monthly worship service for children and families called Children First. Two collections of his children’s messages, **Wow Time** and **Moments of Wonder**, are published by Abingdon Press. His first children’s picture book, **Little Things Aren’t Little...When You’re Little**, was released by Pelican Publishing in Fall 2013.

Mark received his undergraduate degree in music education from Southern Methodist University, and his graduate degree in conducting from Texas Christian University. He lives in Fort Worth with his wife, Nina, and their two daughters, Emma and Grace.

We're busy buying stuff. Will it ever be enough?	Matthew 6:20a - Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.
How do we tell an old, old story?	Deuteronomy 6:6-7 - Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home.
Watch us sparkle, watch us shine.	Matthew 5:16 - Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.
Before you and I, or the stars in the sky, there was light, there was life, there was love.	John 1:4 - In him was life, and the life was the light of all people.
I'm making room in my heart for joy.	Philippians 4:4 - Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!
In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed.	Luke 2:7b - She laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.
Tell every neighbor, every friend.	Mark 16:15 - Go into all the world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation.

Anthem Feature

FROM THE CHORISTERS GUILD CATALOG

CHRISTMAS LIGHT

By Kris Crunk | CGA1372 Two-part (any voices) with piano

ANTHEM DESCRIPTION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

“Christmas Light” is a memorable new composition from Kris Crunk. Versatile in its voicing, this anthem can be used with any combination of two-part voices. Children will love singing the piece, but it can also be an exciting repertoire choice for youth choirs or adult mixed choirs. The driving piano accompaniment is a perfect counterpart to the rhythmic melody, and a familiar Christmas hymn grounds the piece's middle section.

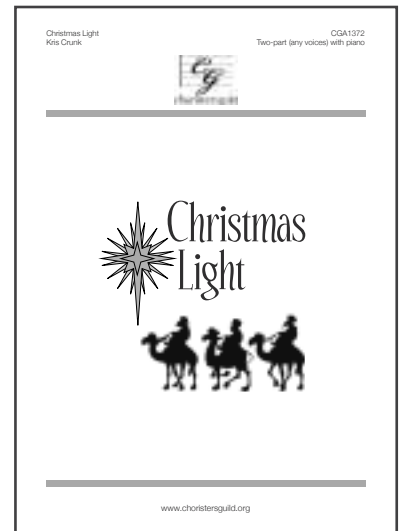
Use this energetic anthem for your Christmas worship services or concerts. The thematic focus on the star of Bethlehem and the incorporation of “We Three Kings of Orient Are” make this piece a great addition to your Epiphany celebration in January. Looking for an anthem to use with combined choirs while portions of your choral groups are away? “Christmas Light” will be a wonderful choice for your intergenerational choir.

TEACHING TIPS

Use some of the ideas suggested for the Anthem Activity Sheet to introduce the anthem. Moving to the dotted eighth note beat would be another fun introduction. Children could suggest movements that mimic a camel ride. Play the recording and move to the music. Look for children’s recognition of a familiar chorus (*We Three Kings*) at measure 72.

The song text provides a great connection to the role of the wise men in the Christmas story. Share the birth narrative from Luke 2, and the visit of the wise men in Matthew 2. Lead children to discover (or rediscover) that the wise men came after the birth. Great time to tell about Epiphany! Discuss together ways to follow the wise men this Christmas. Ideas might include: focusing on the birth of Jesus rather than commercial celebrations; giving gifts to honor the birth of Jesus; or doing acts of ministry that point people to Jesus.

Teach the two parts to your experienced children’s choirs, or consider doubling the voices with adults and



youth to make this a multi-generational anthem. Even your younger singers can participate, and experience the harmonies created by the two parts.

ANTHEM ACTIVITY SHEET

Two of the recurring rhythm patterns from the anthem are highlighted in this activity. Here are some possible uses of the activity sheet.

- Make one photocopy of the sheet, covering several portions of the music notation with strips of white paper. Make copies of the new sheet. Your singers can then decode the actual notation using the “camel key” as a guide. Distribute copies of the original sheet, and allow them to verify their findings. *This provides a great opportunity to discuss the practice of “beamed” notes.*
- Allow singers to go on a scavenger hunt in their printed music to locate all the song texts that match the two rhythm patterns on the sheet. Share the findings as a group.
- Lead singers to find patterns in their printed music that are similar, but not exactly the same. Use this as a teachable moment to discuss same, different, and similar.
- Distribute copies of the sheet. Echo speak the two rhythm patterns using a different rhythmic syllable for each pattern. Divide into two groups and assign each group a pattern to speak as an ostinato. Speak (or sing) the text of the song as the two groups accompany you with the spoken patterns.
- Transfer the two rhythm patterns to body percussion. Use alternating left and right leg pats for Pattern One, and tap two fingers on opposite palm for Pattern Two. Speak or sing the song text with the body percussion accompaniment. If preferred, assign two different percussion instruments to each of the patterns.
- Play the recording of the opening section while playing the patterns with body percussion or rhythm instruments.

Anthem Activity Page
CGA1372 | *Christmas Light* | Kris Crunk



Pattern One:



Pattern Two:





ACTIVITY H TEACHING STEPS

Rhythm Bingo

SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Rhythm Bingo allows children to create Bingo cards using rhythm patterns they are learning, and to identify the patterns when they hear them played.

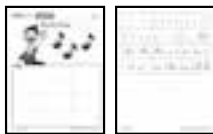
MATERIALS NEEDED

- Rhythm Bingo KIDPage
- Child-safe scissors
- Glue sticks
- Pencils or crayons
- Small items to use for Bingo cover-ups (plastic discs, small individual candies, pennies, etc.)
- Hand drum (optional)

PREPARATION

- Print a copy of Rhythm Bingo KIDPage for each child.
- Collect items to be used for Bingo cover-ups, and place in plastic storage bags – 1 per child.

Rhythm Bingo



1. Read the rhythms together.

- NOTE: many of the rhythm patterns are from the song, “Be Not Afraid!”
- Distribute Rhythm Bingo KIDPages.
- Echo speak and clap the rhythm patterns in rhythm syllables:



2. Create Bingo cards.

- Distribute pencils or crayons, and instruct children to write FREE SPACE in one of the twelve boxes on their Bingo grid.
- Distribute scissors.
- Assist children with cutting the rhythm patterns along the dotted cut lines.
- Give each child a glue stick, and allow them to glue the rhythm patterns in the boxes on the Bingo grid in any order they desire. NOTE: There will be one rhythm pattern left over because of the FREE SPACE.
- Collect paper scraps, scissors, and pencils.

3. Play Bingo.

Teaching Tip

Keep track of the rhythms with a blank grid and cut apart rhythm strips that are not glued to a KIDPage.

- Distribute Bingo cover-up items.
- Clap and/or speak one of the twelve rhythms from the KIDPage. (Option: You may wish to play the patterns on a hand drum.)

- Have children echo speak or clap the pattern.
- Allow children to cover the rhythm on their individual cards.
- Tell the children that when they get four items in a vertical row, or three items in a horizontal row they are to say, "Bingo!"
- Verify that each child has covered the correct rhythm.
- Continue with additional rhythms until someone else calls, "Bingo!"
- Reward the winner with a small prize (if desired), and begin a new game as time permits.

EXTENSIONS

- Collect and laminate the Bingo cards after all children have completed this activity.
- Use the Rhythm Bingo game as an early-arriver activity, or as a fun, special treat activity.
- Make multiple photocopies of one completed card, and use as a rhythm review sheet in large group rehearsal, speaking or clapping rhythms, and having children echo and identify on their sheets. Before copying the sheet, number the boxes so that children can locate specific items more easily.



KIDPAGE

Younger



Rhythm Bingo



Activity H

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ACTIVITY M TEACHING STEPS

SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

What's Your Favorite Day? allows children an opportunity to draw pictures that relate to a scripture verse. They will also work together to create a speech chant.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- What's Your Favorite Day? KIDPage
- Bible marked at Psalm 118:24
- Pencils, crayons, or markers
- Note Values Visual (Activity A)
- Unpitched percussion instruments: small drums, tambourines, maracas, etc.

PREPARATION

- Print and display Note Values Visual.
- Make a copy of What's Your Favorite Day? KIDPage for each child.

What's Your Favorite Day? KIDPage



Notes Values Visual



What's Your Favorite Day?

1. Talk about favorite days.

- Read Psalm 118:24.
- Lead children to realize that no matter what day it is, we should rejoice and be glad because God makes every day special.
- Ask children about their favorite days and why they are extra special. Examples might include: certain days of the week or holidays, birthdays, vacation days, family days, lazy days, snow days, rainy days, sunny days, etc.

2. Draw a picture of a favorite day.

- Distribute What's Your Favorite Day? KIDPages.
- Lead each child to select a favorite day, and create a picture to illustrate the day.
- Allow time for children to complete the drawings.
- Guide and assist children, as needed, with labeling the name of the day below the picture.
- Assist children with writing the rhythm for the name of their favorite day above the picture. Refer to the Note Values Visual, if needed.

Snow	day	Christ - mas	Day	Birth	- day
Sun - ny	day	Val - en - fine's	Day		

3. Put the days together, and make a chant.

- Collect all the pictures, and have children put them together in the order they choose to complete a speech chant. Use the following chant as a guide.

$\frac{4}{4}$

This is the day the Lord has made. Snow day, Christ-mas Day,
 birth-day, sun - ny day. I will re-joice in each new day!

- Repeat the chant as needed to include all the pictures of favorite days.
- Allow children to rearrange the pictures until they are satisfied with the chant.
- Speak the chant together.

- Add percussion instruments to accompany the chant. Each instrument should play the rhythm of one the days, repeating the rhythm throughout the chant. For example: drums play the rhythm of snow day; tambourines play rhythm of Christmas Day; maracas play Valentine's Day; etc.

Teaching Tips

- Keep the pictures to display and repeat the chant as an energizer or boredom buster.
- Use the chant on special choir days or to celebrate the birthdays of the children.



KIDPAGE Younger

What's Your Favorite Day?

44

DAY

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Activity M

PRESCHOOL PAGES

PRESCHOOLERS MOVE!

Oh yes! For teachers, this is great news! Through movement we help them use their voices, their bodies, their personalities, and their minds—all while learning spiritual truths and using musical skills and concepts—and sometimes, just to “get the wiggles out!”

- Movement makes learning fun, encourages creativity, and offers ways for children to work together.
- Movement paired with singing increases the fun factor, and plants texts in their memory...children are actively involved in the music making.
- Movement supplies the kinesthetic link to learning (connecting brain messages to muscles).
- Movement helps individual children to achieve success and self-confidence, and provides opportunities to interact with others in new and different ways!

We will make our movement purposeful—going about it in a different way. Here are 2 dozen movement activities. Use one per week. With a few repeats, that will carry you through most of your preschool choir year!

#1 COPY ME!

Perform simple, steady beat movements (*walking in place, tiptoeing in place, clapping hands, tapping shoulders, etc.*). Perform one movement until all are copying you, then switch to another. Challenge them to be the first to see and do the new movement. Benefits: steady beat/focusing eyes on teacher/following non-verbal directions

#2 THIS HAND! THAT HAND!

Perform 8 steady beat movements with one hand, then switch to the other hand for 8 beats (*tapping on shoulders, thighs, ankles, knees, head, or even table tapping*).

Benefits: steady beat/focus eyes on teacher/using both sides of the body

#3 PLAY STICKS!

Distribute pairs of rhythm sticks, plastic spoons, paper plates, or any tapping instruments and tap steady beats as in #2. Add a recording of a 2/4 or 4/4 song you are learning, or a classic, as “March” from *Nutcracker*, or Haydn’s “Surprise Symphony.”

Benefits: steady beat/added fun of instruments/planting a melody in their minds/hearing the classics.

#4 FROM HERE TO THERE

Attach 2 masking tape lines to the floor on opposite sides of the room. Have children stand on one line, and tell them how to move to the other line: hop, skate, tiptoe, march, etc.

Benefits: experiencing different movements/following directions.

#5 FROM BOTTOM TO TOP (and back)

Stand and wiggle each body part when named: “My toes want to wiggle.” When all are moving together, go to the next body part “My heels want to wiggle.” Keep going: “My knees...fingers...hands...elbows...shoulders... nose... head, etc.” Give a big all-over shake, then start back down: “My head’s too tired to wiggle,” etc., ending with “I’m too tired to wiggle.”

Benefits: moving different body parts/thinking ahead

#6 LONDON BRIDGE

Two children form a human bridge, joining hands in the air. Sing *London Bridge Is Falling Down* as the other children walk under it. When “my fair lady” is sung, the bridge collapses and catches a child. That child chooses to be “an orange” or “an apple” (*names chosen for the two sides of the bridge*) and links on to the waist of that bridge child. This continues until all children are on one side or the other.

Benefits: directed movements/singing game

#7 A FINGERPLAY

Here is a turtle with his house on his back. (*one palm over closed fist*)
 He flipped right over when he stepped in a crack. (*flip hands over*)
 He wiggled his feet ‘til he turned back over. (*wiggle exposed fingers and flip back over*)
 He looked for food as he crawled through the clover. (*extend one finger from fist, as if looking around*)
 He ate and he ate ‘til he finally said, (*pull finger back inside closed fist*)
 “I’ll pull my head back in now, and go to bed.” (*closed fist and palm in lap*)

Benefits: focusing attention/calm movements/small muscle dexterity/interpreting a story

#8 USE A FAVORITE SONG IN A NEW WAY

Here are new words to the opening phrase of *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star*.

“Hello, friends. I’d like to see who will clap their hands with me.”

(*clap hands 8 steady beats*)

“Hello, friends, I’d like to see who will take a walk with me”

(*walk in a circle for 8 beats*)

Continue with other movements: “...who will shake a leg...,” “...click their tongues...,” “...jump around...” etc.

Benefits: familiar song with new words and movements/variety of movements/steady beat

#9 SETS OF 8

Draw imaginary box around each child and ask them to stay inside their box and perform 8 giant foot stomps, followed immediately by 8 marching steps, 8 walking steps, 8 tiptoes, all counting aloud.

OPTION: If space allows, make a masking tape checkerboard on the floor for the boxes, OR scatter carpet squares around the room. Do the movements together, and then move to new boxes and repeat.

Benefits: instant activity with no props/loud to quiet progression

#10 ANOTHER SET OF 8'S

Lead children to clap 8 beats with you. Fold back thumbs and perform 8 4-finger claps. Fold down the little finger and repeat with 3-finger claps, then 2-finger claps, and finally 1-finger taps. Pair children as partners facing one another. With each child using both hands, perform 8 hand claps. Tuck in thumbs and perform 8 4-finger claps. Repeat with 3-, then 2-, and finally 1-finger taps. Shake hands and move to original position.

Benefits: instant activity with no props/loud to quiet progression/interaction with others

#11 THE OLD GRAY CAT

Sing and dramatize *The Old Gray Cat*. Half the children pretend to be the cats and half the mice, as they act out the song...the cats are sleepy and the mice wait for them to go to sleep. Then the mice begin to creep out and nibble on the cheese. The cats begin to stir and stretch and see the mice. Then of course they chase the mice back home and into their hole and the cats go back and curl up again on their side of the room.

OPTION: Do this activity with other traditional folk songs. A quick internet search will provide many options.

Benefits: dramatizing a story/listening/creating movements

The *Old Gray Cat* is included on the **Growing in Grace Children's Music Curriculum**, Preschool Fall Year One CD, and is available through Choristers Guild.

#12 SMOOTH MOVES

Draw imaginary rainbows in the room, reaching both arms low on one side and drawing a big half circle up and back down to the other side, while counting to 8. Be sure to pace the movements for the full 8 beats. Using just one arm, pretend to spread paint on a wall to the ceiling and back down. Repeat with the other arm.

Benefits: stretching/pacing the movements for a specified number of beats

Let's stop here now, and consider a few more important points:

- Whenever any movement is done using one side of the body, repeat it on the other side of the body.
- Non-locomotor rhythms (*anchored in place such as twisting, bending, swinging*) develop timing and balance. Have a "fixed" place for non-locomotor movement on a carpet square or a "sit-upon" rectangle of craft foam.
- Locomotor rhythms (*marching, jumping, hopping*) develop space awareness and coordination. Tell children to move as if they are in a plastic bubble and must not bump another person's bubble.
- "Free" movement helps develop listening and thinking skills. It improves awareness of personal space and increases self-confidence. Shy children may even suggest a movement as they see others doing so.
- Children who are resistant to moving may be encouraged to move props such as streamers, scarves, or puppets.

#13 A SONG WITH MOTIONS

Sing *Two Little Blackbirds* placing one hand on a shoulder as “Jack” and the other hand on the other shoulder as “Jill.” Pause after each “fly away” to flutter each bird up in the air. Pause at each “come back” to flutter them back to shoulders.

Benefits: dramatizing song/combining vocal exploration with movements

TWO LITTLE BLACKBIRDS

Traditional Children's Fingerplay Song

♩ = 100

Two lit-tle black birds sit-ting on a hill. One named Jack. One named Jill.

5 Fly a-way Jack. (Jack flies away) Fly a-way Jill. (Jill flies away)

9 Come back Jack. (Jack returns) Come back Jill. (Jill returns) Two lit-tle black birds

14 sit-ting on a hill. One named Jack. One named Jill.

#14 UP AND DOWN THE BODY

Sit in chairs and ask children to do as you do. Start at toes and move up body: 8 toe taps, 8 foot taps, 8 knee knocks, 8 elbow flaps, 8 shoulder wiggles, 8 head nods, and back down. Allow a child to choose a different number of times (2, 6, or 10), and repeat.

Benefits: steady beat/following nonverbal directions

#15 ADD INSTRUMENTS

Follow #14 actions, but this time tap those body parts with paper towel tubes, or swim noodles cut into short lengths.

Benefits: steady beat/instrument fun

#16 THE MUFFIN MAN

Sing *Do You Know the Muffin Man*. Form 2 lines on opposite sides of the room. Children on one side sing “Do you know the muffin man...who lives on Drury Lane?” The other side sings “Yes, we know the muffin man...” as a leader walks behind line 2 and taps children on the shoulder to the steady beat. At the end of the song, the child being tapped runs to the other side. This continues until all are on the same side of the room. If you have a large group, you can sing “Do you know 2 muffin men...3 muffin men...”etc. to end the game more quickly.

Benefits: singing game with actions/fun of being “chosen”

The Muffin Man

Traditional Children's Song

$\text{♩} = 92$

Do you know the muf - fin man, the muf - fin man, the muf - fin man?
 Yes, I know the muf - fin man, the muf - fin man, the muf - fin man.

5
 Do you know the muf - fin man who lives on Dru - ry Lane?
 Yes, I know the muf - fin man who lives on Dru - ry Lane.

#17 MOVE WITH ABA SONG

Select a song with 3 sections—the first one perhaps crisp and steady—the middle one smooth and flowing—and the last one a repeat of the first part. For Part A, use a locomotor movement such as marching in place. Switch to a non-locomotor movement, swaying from side to side for Part B, and then return to the march as the A section repeats. Guide the children to discover these changes. You can use this as a way to introduce a new song to the children.

Benefits: listening skills/variety of movements/following nonverbal directions

#18 MOVE WITH A PARACHUTE/TABLECLOTH

Choose a song with a 6/8 time signature such as *Oh, How I Love Jesus*. Seat the children on the floor around a round plastic table cloth (*parachute, if you have one, but the tablecloth is less expensive*). Extend arms forward and raise them up and down to the dotted quarter note beat as children move with you. When children can perform movements together, pick up the edge of the cloth and float it up and down as you sing.

Benefits: legato movements/moving with a prop/moving together

#19 THOSE 8'S AGAIN!

Sit in a circle, facing inward, and walk your hands toward the center 8 steps, then back 8 steps (*for younger preschoolers, begin with 4*). When all are secure with this, stand and let their feet do what their hands did—8 steps in and 8 steps back. For older preschoolers, the next step will be to turn and walk a circle to the right 8 steps and then back 8 steps. Add some instrumental music. The Palestinian folk song, *Shalom Chaverim*, lends itself beautifully to this set of movements. Children may also move scarves up and down as they walk.

Benefits: sequenced patterns/phrasing/experiencing duple meter

#20 MOVE TO THE CLASSICS

Select familiar classics such as *William Tell Overture*, *Trepak* and others from *Nutcracker Suite*, *Hall of the Mountain King*, *Flight of the Bumblebee*, *The Syncopated Clock*—allow children to move freely to these with or without props.

Benefits: exposure to the classics/free movement/creative expression

#21 MORE CLASSICS!

Display cut-out pictures of animals, insects, planes, cars, trains, or anything that moves. You can find these in used magazines or old coloring books. Play classical selections from #20, and allow children to select one of the pictures as their mode of movement. Stop the music, have them select a new picture, and continue.

Benefits: exposure to the classics/choosing suggested movements/interpretive movements

#22 ANOTHER FINGERPLAY

A little worm crawled up a tree (*pointer finger of one hand crawls up other arm*)

Stopped on a branch so he could see (*stop in palm, stretch finger to look*)

He said “I think I’ll take a nap” (*pointer finger still*)

And round and round began to wrap (*whirl finger around*)

A warm cocoon to keep it safe (*rock finger and then...*)

While resting in this special place. (*finger becomes still*)

But we would see a great surprise (*excited eyes*)

When right before our very eyes

That warm cocoon was just a shell (*focus eyes back on cocoon*)

What happened next, I have to tell! (*fingers open*)

I saw a butterfly with wings! (*crawl out and link thumbs of both hands*)

So pretty! God’s amazing things! (*spread fingers to fly*)

Please come this way so I can see...(fly up and down...)

Oh look! It’s here, and on my knee! (*and light on knees*)

NOTE: If remembering the text is a challenge, have another adult read the story, as you model the motions.

Benefits: focus attention/dramatization of story/following nonverbal directions

#23 SING A SONG WITH ACTION MOVEMENTS

Teach your favorite action song with movements: *I’m a Little Teapot*, *The Eensy Weensy Spider*, or the Pizza Hut® Song. Talk through the movements first before adding the words of the song.*

Benefits: dramatizing a song with appropriate movements

#24 MOVEMENT MAGIC!

Play a repeat game. Give the children a “secret signal” to look or listen for during the session. You could set the alarm on your phone to sound at a certain time, or you could have a picture of your pet to show at a random point. When the signal is given, everyone stops whatever they are doing and repeats that day’s selected movement activity. Practice that activity once at the beginning of your session so that children will know exactly what to do when the “secret signal” occurs.

NOTE: You determine the need to stop and “re-group.” If children are restless, give the signal!

Benefits: providing redirection/listening/repetition of a familiar type of movement activity

CODA: And this—perhaps—is the greatest thing about music and movement—it can, and should, be “slipped” in at any time in a session with the children.

Well, my arms will no longer wiggle—my hands will no longer wiggle—my fingers will no longer wiggle... BUT—I think I will have recovered before the next issue! See you then!

**Foundations in Elementary Education Music* by Elizabeth Carlton is a great source for more movement ideas at all grade levels. If you are interested in getting your own copy of this book (which is now out of print), contact Libby at Libbycarlton@carolina.rr.com.



Nan Grantham holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Mississippi College, Clinton MS, in Music Education. Her career has included both public and private school teaching and private and class piano. She has served on church music staffs in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, retiring from Second Baptist Church in Houston. Her *Language of Music* series was published by Chorister’s Guild. Throughout her career Nan has written songs and curriculum for Lifeway’s Children’s Music Series, and was on the inaugural writing team for *Growing in Grace Children’s Music Curriculum* for which she is still a contributor. Nan continues to work with the Houston Children’s Chorus, and is an active volunteer at her church.



Worship Symposium 2015

January 29-31, 2015

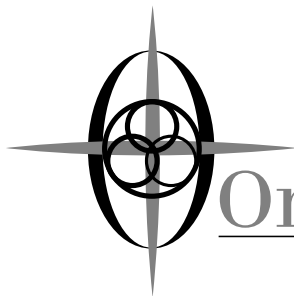
The annual Calvin Symposium on Worship, at Calvin College and Seminary, Grand Rapids, Michigan, is a three-day conference which brings together a wide audience of pastors, worship leaders and planners, artists, musicians, scholars, students and other interested worshipers. People come from around the world for a time of fellowship, worship, and learning, seeking to deepen and integrate all aspects of worship, develop their gifts, encourage each other and renew their commitment to the full ministry of the church.



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2014 Ruth Krehbiel Jacobs Memorial Scholarship Recipients

Established in memory of Ruth Krehbiel Jacobs, founder of Choristers Guild, the scholarship fund provides financial aid to full-time students preparing for church music ministry. Scholarships are given each year on the basis of academic merit and interest in church music, especially children's and youth choirs.



JAMES (TODD) ARNOLD

Todd Arnold is the music minister at First Baptist Church, Cookeville, TN. He is currently pursuing a Master of Music in Church Music at Belmont University in Nashville where he is studying conducting with Dr. Jeffery L. Ames. He received a Bachelor of Music from Tennessee Technological University in piano performance and music education where he studied under Dr. Catherine Godes. Prior to serving at First Baptist, Todd directed choirs at White County High School in Sparta, TN, and served as the interim music specialist at Capshaw Elementary School in Cookeville.



PAUL GEORGESON

Paul Georgeson is currently studying at Trinity Lutheran College, Everett, Washington. He is pursuing a Bachelor of Arts in Music with an emphasis on Music and Worship Arts. He anticipates graduation in May 2015. Past experiences include time spent at Central Washington University in the Vocal Performance program and attending Lutheran Summer Music 3 times as a student and twice as an intern. Teachers include Dr. Stephen Marshall-Ward and Dr. Norma Aamodt-Nelson. Paul aspires to be a choral director in the Lutheran church working with both youth and adult choirs, as well as to teach at the collegiate level.



BRADLEY HARRIS

Bradley Harris is pursuing graduate studies in church music and divinity at Samford University. He currently serves as pianist and music intern at Christ the King Anglican Church in Birmingham, AL. He received his undergraduate degree in music theory and composition from Samford. Bradley lives in Hoover, AL, with his wife Laura.



BEN HENSLEY

Ben Anderson Hensley is a student of sacred music at Perkins School of Theology. He currently serves Oak Lawn United Methodist Church as Minister of Music and Worship in the Oak Lawn neighborhood of Dallas, TX. Ben is passionate about music ministry to all age levels, and believes in the transformative power of music in the lives of children. Ben is also a member of the Order of St. Luke, a monastic order in diaspora devoted to liturgical and sacramental scholarship and renewal in the church. He is incredibly excited, thankful, and humbled to receive this gift from Choristers Guild.



VIVIAN LAWRENCE

Vivian Lawrence, a native of Delhi, India, is presently studying music at Eastern University, Pennsylvania. During the summer of 2014, he acquired an internship with Grammy Award winning Producer, Glenn Barrett at Morning Star Studios. He is currently the Director of Contemporary Music at St. James Church, Philadelphia. Vivian has recently been accepted to undertake a domestic program study at the Contemporary Music Center, Nashville, where he will be specializing in the technical areas of music production. In the future, he would like to further his education and pursue post-graduate study in Music Technology/Production.



KARISSA LYSTRUP

Karissa Lystrup is a senior at Concordia University Irvine, studying Organ Performance and Church Music. She teaches private music lessons in Southern California and serves as Organist and Choir Director at St. Paul's Lutheran Church of Irvine. She has performed on organ across the United States and Germany. Karissa is planning to apply for Master's in Choral Conducting programs this fall. She is also a member of CINQUE, a chamber music group based in Southern California.



SARAH MOAK

Sarah Moak is from Bogue Chitto, Mississippi. She is a senior at Lee University, Cleveland, Tennessee, where she is pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree in Church Music with an emphasis in piano, and a minor in Deaf Studies. In addition to her college studies, she is also a music intern at a local church working with their children choirs, handbell choirs, and many other areas of the music ministry. Upon graduation, Andrea hopes to pursue developing a church music ministry as a community outreach program. She also plans to invest in the lives of others through teaching piano lessons from a home studio. She is very grateful to Choristers Guild for providing this scholarship to aid in the completion of her education in the field of church music.



TAYLOR VANCIL

Taylor Vancil is attending Southern Methodist University in the Fall to pursue the Master of Sacred Music degree from Perkins School of Theology in Dallas, TX. He has served as the Interim Director of Youth and Children's Education at First Baptist Church of Monroe, North Carolina for the past 2 years and taught elementary music in public schools of North Carolina for the past 3 years. Taylor holds a Bachelor's degree in Choral Music Education from Wingate University where he also studied classical guitar with James Hunter. He is a native of North Carolina where both of his parents, Doug and Terri Vancil serve as music ministers at First Baptist Church of Greensboro, NC. Taylor is married to Sarah Vancil, who teaches choral music at Ruth Cherry Intermediate School in Dallas.

The **INSTITUTE CORNER**

The Choristers Guild Institute of Summer 2014 was another successful week of building and renewing relationships with church musicians in shared learning experiences. The Institute is a great way to revitalize your skills and rejuvenate for ministry. Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity next summer: **July 26 – August 1, 2015, Wingate University, Wingate, NC.**





OPPOSITE PAGE (left to right, top to bottom): 1) Year II, plus alumni 2) Amanda teaching Year I Pedagogy 3) Danny in class 4) Jean leading morning worship 5) Year I drumming 6) Registration 7) Year I drumming

THIS PAGE (left to right, top to bottom): 8) Opening worship 9) Procession of light 10) Kenney teaching choral methods 11) Brian Hehn & Collyn Hawn 12) Todd Arant & Andrea Baxter 13) Michael Hawn leading Celtic worship 14) Mark Patterson's Thursday workshop

Calendar of Events

FLORIDA

March 7, 2015

Twenty-Fourth Annual Festival
College Park Baptist Church
1914 Edgewater Drive, Orlando, FL 32804
Bonnie Litteral bblitteral@aol.com

INDIANA

February 28 – March 1, 2015

The Mennonite Children's Choir Festival | Janeal Krehbiel
Sauder Hall, Goshen College
Goshen, Indiana
Sharon Basinger Lehman basingerlehman@yahoo.com

MISSOURI

January 25, 2015

Youth Choir Festival | Bryan Taylor
Village Presbyterian Church
6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208
Suanne Comfort music@raytowncc.org

TEXAS

January 16-17, 2015

Dallas Church Music Workshop
Lovers Lane United Methodist Church
9200 Inwood Road
Dallas, TX 75220
Jason Chavarria president@dallaschaptercgm.org

WASHINGTON

April 18, 2015

God Does Wonders | Rebekah Gilmore
Des Moines United Methodist Church
22225 Ninth Avenue South
Des Moines, WA 98198
Arletta Anderson ajp724@comcast.net

NATIONAL OFFICE

October 16, 2014

Choristers Guild Webinar | Madeline Bridges
Let the Children Sing! Utilizing Purposeful Vocal
Exploration Activities in Children's Choirs
Register online at <http://www.choristersguild.org/webinars>

November 13, 2014

Choristers Guild Webinar | Brian Hehn
Percussion in Worship: Why, How, and When?
Register online at <http://www.choristersguild.org/webinars>

DID YOU KNOW...

As a Choristers Guild member, you can list your church's event on this Calendar of Events page? Email your listing to Susan at seernisse@mailcg.org three months prior to your event. Listings are admitted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

TO LIST YOUR CHAPTER EVENT

Send your listing to membership@mailcg.org with complete information. Include dates, location, clinicians, and contact information. For additional advertising, contact advertising@mailcg.org.

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SATB Choral Anthem suitable for Adult Choirs
with Keyboard Accompaniment (Organ or Piano)
Other optional instrumental parts may be included.

Theological Theme:

the meaning and celebration of Easter
from a theologically-liberal viewpoint

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Find Submission Guidelines and Enter at:

www.pullen.org/musicsearch

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church music for liberal congregations***

New Members

JUNE 1, 2014 THROUGH JULY 31, 2014

ALABAMA

Bradley Harris, Birmingham
Dee Pace, Fairhope
Katie Parks, Tuscaloosa
Michael Wutzke, Montgomery

CALIFORNIA

Gail Beall, Carlsbad
Karissa Lystrup, Irvine
Carol Mills, Apple Valley
Wendy Walsh, Studio City
Donna Young, Moorpark

COLORADO

Raymond Ortiz, Denver

CONNECTICUT

Sarah Mellas, Hartford

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Stephanie Mencimer

FLORIDA

Jason Hobratschk, Vero Beach
Cindy Mitze, Dade City
Martha Montgomery, Laurel Hill

GEORGIA

Randy Brittain, Athens
Rhonda Bryant, Acworth

ILLINOIS

Jennifer Petkus, Chicago

INDIANA

Christopher Ebert, Valparaiso

KANSAS

Kathryn Michot, Wichita

MARYLAND

Cindy Carlton, Annapolis

MASSACHUSETTS

Markeise Russell, Boston

MICHIGAN

Sherri Brown, Waterford
Rebeca Lazarean, Belleville
Peter Paselk, Warren

MINNESOTA

Moya Mathews, Minneapolis
John Moir, Eden Prairie
Jeffrey Patry, Minneapolis
Sheila Shusterich, Duluth

NEW JERSEY

Donna Garzinsky, Summit

NEW YORK

Linda Moore, Rochester

NORTH CAROLINA

Ann Goldfinch, Raleigh
Karrie Rushing, Greenville
Teresa Queen, Advance

PENNSYLVANIA

Harold Redline, Northampton
Vivian Lawrence, Wayne

SOUTH CAROLINA

Andrew Felber, Ladson

SOUTH DAKOTA

Deborah Passick, Sioux Falls

TENNESSEE

Terry Miller, Charlotte
Sarah Moak, Cleveland
Cynthia Thompson, White Pine

TEXAS

Bodie Gilbert, Katy
Craig Harmann, Houston
Ben Hensley, Dallas
Debbie Johnson, Plano
Francis Vancil, Dallas
Ellen Yost, Dallas

VIRGINIA

Kathryn Crutchfield, Covington
Frederick Horn, Ashland

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Paul Georgeson, Everett

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Choir Devotionals

BY JENNIFER JINDRICH

*Cumberland Presbyterian Church,
Germantown, TN. Combined Choirs
presenting Christmas Folk Songs.
Photo from Linda E. Warren, Director of
Choirs and Organist/Pianist.*



WEEK OF OCTOBER 5

SCRIPTURE:

And God spoke all these words: You shall have no other gods before me.
Exodus 20:1 NIV (Extended reading Exodus 20:1-4,7-9,12-20)

DEVOTIONAL:

Do you have rules at home? What about at school? It seems like there are rules for everything! There are even rules for singing: stand/sit tall, hands by your side, project your voice. Everyone has rules they have to follow—even grownups! Rules help us stay safe. Rules help us make choices that are good for us and others. Sometimes rules even help us do something better, like singing! When Moses and the Israelites came out of Egypt, from slavery into freedom, God gave Moses the Ten Commandments and told him to share them with his people. They tried to follow God's rules, but they didn't always obey God. Thankfully God is forgiving! When we

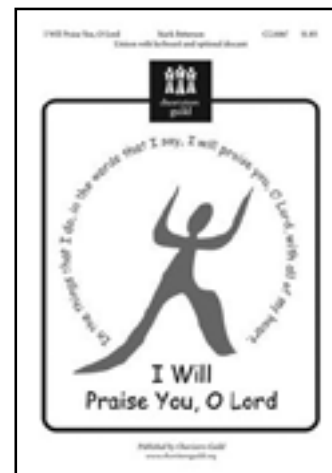
follow God's rules, not only does it keep us safe, but it also helps us to grow as Christians. When we obey God, we grow closer to Him.

PRAYER:

Forgiving God, Thank you for giving us the Ten Commandments. Please help us to obey you and guide us to make good choices. Thank you for your grace and forgiveness when we don't follow you. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA867 | *I Will Praise You, O Lord* |
By Mark Patterson | Unison with
keyboard and optional descant



Jennifer Jindrich is the Children's Minister at First Baptist Church of Carrollton, Georgia, where she has served for the past 10 years. She is a graduate of the University of West Georgia with a degree in early childhood education. Jennifer and her husband Chuck have two children: Ethan, age 11, and Jenna, age 9.

WEEK OF OCTOBER 12

SCRIPTURE:

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!
Philippians 4:4 NIV (Extended reading Philippians 4:1-9)

DEVOTIONAL:

Rejoice! Just saying that word makes me smile. It's not a word that we use often outside of church, but it means to feel or show great joy. When we rejoice, it is contagious. Think of a time when you have been around someone who is really happy—it makes you happy, too. When God sees or hears us rejoicing in Him, it is sure to bring Him great joy. This verse always makes me think about the time Paul and Silas were put in prison. Despite the fact that they had been beaten and thrown in prison for something that was not against the law, they were sitting in jail praying and singing praises to God. They were rejoicing in the fact that God loves us

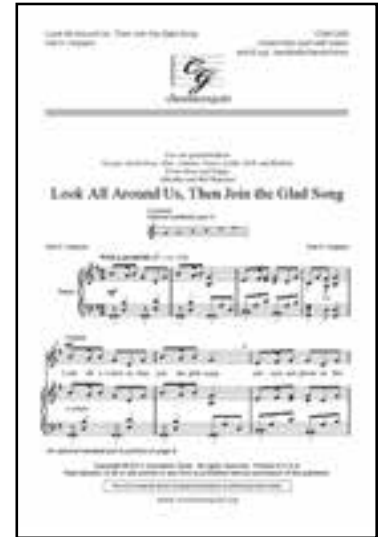
and is always with us no matter what! Rejoicing in the Lord, no matter what our circumstances, is a wonderful way to honor our God.

PRAYER:

God, we rejoice in the knowledge that your Holy Spirit is with us always and that your steadfast love surrounds us no matter what our circumstances. Help our joy to overflow so that it is contagious, spreading your love to others. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1240 | *Look All Around Us, Then Join the Glad Song* | By Hal H. Hopson | Unison/two-part with piano and 6 opt. handbells/handchimes



WEEK OF OCTOBER 19

SCRIPTURE:

We always thank God for all of you and continually mention you in our prayers.
1 Thessalonians 1:2 NIV (Extended reading 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10)

DEVOTIONAL:

Paul, Silas, and Timothy sent this letter to their friends in Thessalonica. The friends were new Christians who had been through many struggles and stood firm in their faith. Paul's words were encouraging to those new Christians and gave them hope. They knew that Paul was thankful for their friendship, he prayed for them, and that he continually asked God to give them strength. Think of all your friends. How thankful are we to have friends who love us and encourage us? Remember to thank God daily for the friends in your lives. Pray that God will provide for their

needs, and use you as a source of Christian encouragement for them. Prayer is a powerful thing!

PRAYER:

Lord, Thank you for blessing our lives with friends. We ask that you use us to be a source of strength and Christian encouragement for them. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1026 | *Loving Friend of Everyone* | By Larry E. Schultz and Jann Aldredge-Clanton | Unison/two-part with piano



WEEK OF OCTOBER 26

SCRIPTURE:

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Matthew 22:37-39 NIV (Extended reading Matthew 22:34-46)

DEVOTIONAL:

We recently moved to a new neighborhood. Although we were excited to have a new house and new neighbors, our children were very nervous. During the first week in the new house, many new neighbors came by to introduce themselves, to bring food, or to bring flowers from their gardens. Children stopped by to see if our children wanted to play. These acts of kindness made us feel loved as new neighbors. As we think of who our neighbors are, we usually think of the people in the houses near us. Jesus said that we should love everyone as

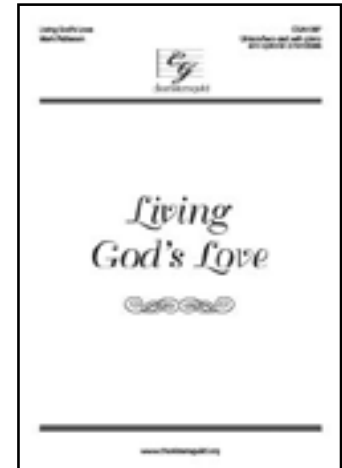
our neighbors. His most important commandments were about LOVE—love God, and love others. We show our love to God by loving our neighbors.

PRAYER:

Jesus, you were a living example of how to love others. Help us to follow your example. Help us to show your love in what we say and how we treat our neighbors. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1367 | *Living God's Love* |
By Mark Patterson | Unison/two-part
and optional 3 handbells



WEEK OF NOVEMBER 2

SCRIPTURE:

The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted. Matthew 23:11-12 NIV (Extended reading Matthew 23:1-12)

DEVOTIONAL:

Open Hands United Christian Ministry is run by the churches in our town. They serve people by providing food, clothing, soap, shampoo, and other needs. They give hugs, listening ears, prayer, and most importantly—love. They work to serve others as Jesus taught. Jesus showed us how to be a servant many times in the Bible. One example took place just before His crucifixion. The disciples were gathered around the supper table. Jesus got up, gathered water and towels, and washed everyone's feet. This was a job usually done by the lowest of servants. Yet Jesus, our Lord and Savior, did this humble

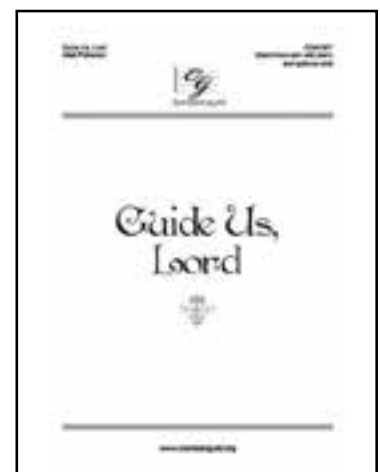
act. It was a gesture to teach his disciples about service to others. If Jesus, the very Son of God, could do such a lowly act of service, surely we can find ways to serve others, too.

PRAYER:

God of all people, thank you for sending us Jesus. Help us to follow His example of serving others and showing them love and compassion. Be with people who are in need, and use us to provide them with what they need. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1357 | *Guide Us, Lord* | By Mark Patterson | Unison/two-part with piano and optional viola



WEEK OF NOVEMBER 9

SCRIPTURE:

And the people said to Joshua, "We will serve the Lord our God and obey him."
Joshua 24:24 NIV (Extended reading Joshua 24: 1-3a, 14-25)

DEVOTIONAL:

During Vacation Bible School, we have lots of children in our church. Some of them are members of our church, some of them are visiting with friends, and some of them are at church for the first time ever. One of the children who came to VBS this year has some special needs. He is very smart but has a hard time pronouncing his words and talking to people. One morning during Bible study this child was trying to tell about the story. It was very hard to understand what he was trying to say. Some of the children started to make fun of him. Right then, one of the boys in the class stood up and told the others to stop being mean. He said we should be kind, like Jesus. Have you ever been in a situation where you had

to take a stand for what was right? In today's scripture, the Israelites had a choice to make. They had to decide if they would worship the Lord or the gods the Egyptians worshiped. Joshua made them take a stand for what they truly believed. The Israelites made the choice to serve and obey the Lord.

PRAYER:

Lord, give us the courage to stand up for what is right and for what we believe. Help our actions prove to others that you are our one true God. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA354 | *Go Now to Love and Serve the Lord* | By Delores M. Hruby
| Unison Benediction with flute, keyboard, and signing



WEEK OF NOVEMBER 16

SCRIPTURE:

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. 1
Thessalonians 5:11 NIV (Extended reading 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11)

DEVOTIONAL:

A few years ago I decided to run a 5K. I had never run before, and 3 miles seemed like a really, really long way for me. It seemed as impossible as running across our entire state! I started training by walking most of the 3 miles. Every day I would run a little more and walk a little less. There were many times that I wanted to give up. During those times my husband, who was running with me, would give me words of encouragement. He would say things like "you can do this" or "you're doing great, keep going." Those words of encouragement were the reason I kept going. When race day came and I completed my first 5K, I was so

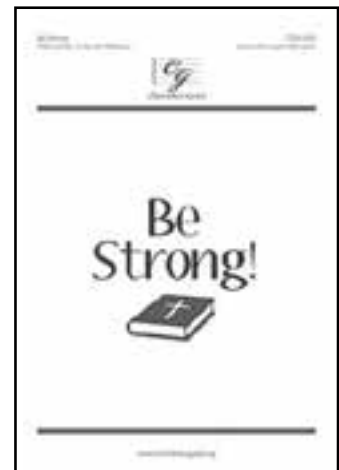
thankful to my husband for all of his encouragement. Kind, encouraging words are so meaningful. Even a simple smile can brighten someone's day! Encouraging others is just one of the many ways we can share the love of Christ with others.

PRAYER:

Jesus, help us to be encouragers to others. Thank you for the people who have encouraged us in our lives, and helped us to continue on the right path. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1325 | *Be Strong!* | By Trilby Jordan & Sandy Wilkinson | Unison/ two-part with piano



WEEK OF NOVEMBER 23

SCRIPTURE:

Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. Psalm 100: 4-5 NIV (Extended reading Psalm 100)

DEVOTIONAL:

At this time of year, we think about all the things for which we can give thanks. God is so good! Once you start counting all your blessings, it is hard not to praise God's wonderful name. Ms. Nancy is a lady at church who is a wonderful example of someone who gives thanks to the Lord at all times, not just at Thanksgiving. Ms. Nancy has been through some hard times in her life. She has battled cancer several times, and her husband has been through some medical difficulties as well. If you met Ms. Nancy, you would never have any idea about all that she has been through. She greets you with a "Hey honey!" and in every conversation she says "Isn't God so

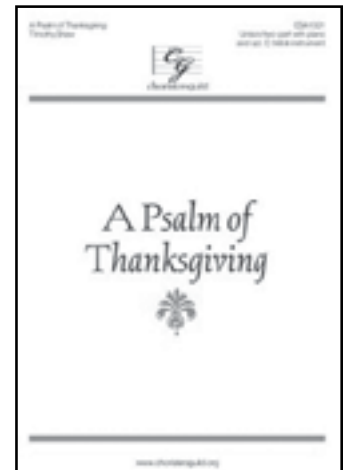
good?" at least once. We should all be a little bit more like Ms. Nancy. Every day we should have a thankful heart for the many ways that God blesses us.

PRAYER:

Eternal God, thank you for the many blessings you bestow upon us daily. They are too numerous to count! Thank you for this day, and help us to glorify you in all that we do. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1321 | *A Psalm of Thanksgiving*
| By Timothy Shaw | Unison/two-part with piano and opt. C treble instrument



Take Your Children's Choir to New Heights

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By Betsy Henderson, Kimberly Ingram, and Joe Milton

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september 26

Mark Miller

Sacred Songs and Social Justice - Reigniting a Spiritual Passion for Justice Through Music

november 13

Brian Hehn

Percussion in Worship: Why, How, and When?



october 16

Madeline Bridges

Let the Children Sing! - Utilizing Purposeful Vocal Exploration Activities in Children's Choirs



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RESOURCES FOR MUSIC MINISTRY

December 2014 | January 2015

Volume 66 | Issue 4



MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM CHORISTERS GUILD

PLUS:

THE 2014 HELEN KEMP LECTURE
BY DR. MARK PATTERSON

ANTHEM FEATURE
"ASK, SEEK, KNOCK"

WINTER WONDERLAND
THEME NIGHT



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From the Editor

Fast away the old year passes! Oh, goodness, “Fa la la la la?” Really?

It's time for the list making to commence. Christmas gift lists, Christmas card lists, Christmas “to do” lists...the list goes on. I must confess that I am a chronic list maker. That being said, one might think that I am an organized person who never forgets anything. Sadly that is not the case. I make the list, lose the list, re-write the list, forget the list, discover the original list, realize the list is incomplete, trash the list, and start all over. I could blame it all on the busy Christmas season, and every church musician would totally understand. However, Christmas only comes once a year and the list making fiasco is non-seasonal!

My point is that some things are so important they must not be omitted. This time of year we especially want to do something nice for the volunteers who make our ministries flow so smoothly. Even the smallest gesture affirms the dedication and value of the committed volunteer. And of course, I have a list of favorite gift suggestions to honor the work of these special people.

- Gift card to a favorite breakfast/coffee shop. We did this a few years ago, and one very busy mom was so excited to think she could go have breakfast alone after dropping the kids off at school. It was the gift of peace!
- Personal, handwritten notes attached to a favorite treat or beverage.
- Christmas card with a photo of their Children's Choir, and a note of appreciation. (This is also a great treat to mail to the choir kids! They hardly ever get mail.)
- A mug with the volunteer's initial on it. Purchase the stick-on initials at craft stores, and tuck in a coffee k-cup or envelope of hot chocolate mix. Other favorites include water bottles for rehearsals or workouts, and travel mugs for busy volunteers.
- Decorative reusable shopping bags. Include a gift card to a favorite discount store. I have a zebra stripe bag that was given to me over a year ago. It is great for carrying all kinds of children's choir paraphernalia.

Even if you only have time for a quick phone call, text, or a private word of thanks in the church hallway, your effort will be appreciated. The best volunteers do it for the love of the children they serve. Their servant hearts may not need the affirmation, but we need to give it. Go ahead—put it on your list. I dare you!

I hope and pray that all your Advent/Christmas/Epiphany services will go smoothly and will bring glory to the One we all serve!

Keep singing the song!

-Susan



SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS!

I would love to have more photos of your groups to share in *The Chorister*! Please submit your high resolution photos to: seernisse@mailcg.org



From the Sacred Choral Editor

Before I began work as a Choristers Guild editor, I was a full-time church musician in the Minneapolis area. I was called the worship *curator*—a term I loved, because the word curator means “one who cares for.” My role was caring for the worship life of the congregation through sung, spoken, and silent word (music, liturgy, and visual arts).

One of the most enjoyable parts of my work was selecting music for worship. Each week offered a new challenge, and it was much more than simply offering the best music or the newest music. It was about inspiring the people’s song by connecting the worship dots. How does the prelude introduce the worship theme? How does the gathering hymn serve to bring individuals together as a corporate body? How does the post-sermon music invite the people to proclaim the gospel with their own voice?

Let’s face it, though—sometimes the dots we need to connect become a giant blur. Or an impossible maze. We can stare at a scripture verse or worship theme for hours, or over a period of days, yet end up with zero musical inspiration. Our library of music seems overwhelming and we have no clue where to start. Have you been there?

I’d venture to say all of us have been there. And the Choristers Guild family is here to help!

- Connect with Choristers Guild on Facebook. Need a repertoire suggestion or a rehearsal idea? Throw out a question on the CG Facebook wall and let your fellow CGers chime in with ideas.
- Try out the new and improved Search function on choristersguild.org. Now you can search by choral series, voicing, occasion, instrumentation, and more.
- Have you checked out our Lectionary Planners? CG anthems and handbell pieces are matched up with current Revised Common Lectionary and USCCB Lectionary readings, and this free resource is available on our website.
- Email me. Let me know your programming dilemma, and I’ll suggest some CG anthems that might be a good fit.
- Keep *The Chorister* handy. When you’re lacking inspiration, page through the issues and you might discover a new gem you’d missed the first time. Check out this issue’s anthem review (page 16) to learn more about our Rote to Note series for your youngest singers as we unpack CGA1398 Ask, Seek, Knock.

There are great resources out there, to be sure. But most importantly—whatever tools you use to connect the dots where you are, we can trust the fact that God is present in our work. During times of musical inspiration and musical fatigue, God’s Spirit is at work. God is in the midst of our planning and will show up in ways we couldn’t have planned better ourselves. Amen and amen!

*Abundant Advent blessings
to you and yours!*

-Katie



From the Executive Director

HANDBELL LEADER MILESTONES:



SINCERE THANKS TO SARA POWELL who completed her service as a Choristers Guild national Board of Directors member on November 8. Sara represented the handbell music area, and was always a positive advocate for handbell programming. As a gifted writer and communicator, her inspirational morning devotions will especially be missed during face to face meetings. Sara makes her home in Hartwell, GA, where in addition to being a lifelong singer, ringer, and director, she writes free-lance meditations available at www.lifyourheart.com.



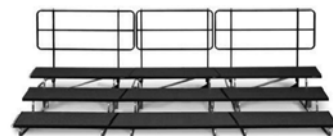
ON OCTOBER 1ST KATHY LOWRIE CELEBRATED HER 25TH ANNIVERSARY as a Choristers Guild staff member. In 1989, Kathy left her position on the Choristers Guild national Board of Directors as President Elect and her full time editorial position at Augsburg Fortress in Minneapolis, MN to join our staff as the full time choral editor. With her unique gift for handbell music, she naturally added handbell publications to the catalog offerings. By 2000

Choristers Guild added an additional choral editor, and Kathy focused her efforts on developing the handbell catalog. In addition to overseeing the production of all of Choristers Guild's handbell music and recordings, Kathy continues to design the covers for all the choral anthems. She also designs teaching resource pages when they are included in choral anthems. It is Kathy's pleasant voice which greets you with an automated message when you call Choristers Guild. At the November 7 Board/Staff dinner, Kathy was presented with a plaque with the inscription:

In appreciation for dedicated service as the founding editor of Choristers Guild's "Greatest Handbell Catalog in the World."

Presented to Kathy Lowrie on the occasion of her 25th Anniversary, 1989–2014.

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HELEN KEMP LECTURE
AT THE
CHORISTERS GUILD INSTITUTE
JULY 25, 2014
BY DR. MARK PATTERSON



HOW DO WE DESCRIBE THIS BUSINESS THAT WE'RE IN?

How often have you had to answer the question at a party or on an airplane, "So, what do you do?" "Um, I'm a children's choir director." "Oh," comes the reply on the other end, followed by a long, dull silence. "Must be fun...I didn't know they paid people to do that."

How many of you have a job description? I mean actual words printed out on paper that list all the things you do as a children's choir director in the church? If you do have one, does it cover the 'real' stuff you do from week to week or is it just some lofty sounding verbiage taken from the church mission statement? It's almost impossible to list all we do because this job, whether paid or volunteer, is so varied, so multi-sensory, so changing, so....hard to describe!

For just a few moments, let's look through the eyes of someone who might have to write your job description—a member of your personnel committee perhaps. Let's call her Maxine. Maxine is a highly successful business person, a well-meaning committee leader and a respected member of the congregation who has absolutely no clue about what happens in a children's choir rehearsal.

She's decided to visit your choir room on a Wednesday afternoon in order to come up with a real job description to take back to her committee. Now Maxine has never been in a choir rehearsal, has no idea how these things work, so she just figures she'll be an objective observer—whatever she sees you do, she'll write down for the committee. Heaven forbid you should ever decide to leave and they have to train someone else to do this job!

Maxine arrives early, but you've already been there for an hour pulling instruments together, stuffing music in folders and getting stickers ready for the attendance chart. She says hello and sits down in the back thinking she has some time to catch her breath and chat a little before the actual work gets started.

No time to chit-chat for you, however. You are in high gear getting the room reset for rehearsal before that over-eager mother arrives, wanting to be sure her daughter is going to get the angel solo in this year's Christmas pageant. You have to unstack 20 chairs in 4 minutes, arrange them in three rows and roll a two thousand pound piano across the room. Done! Just as the first child walks in the room...

Maxine, remembering her charge to be an objective observer and just write what she sees, begins her list.

JOB DESCRIPTION, ITEM NUMBER 1: *FURNITURE MOVER*

The children are trickling in now. You give them hugs and high fives and get a group started over at the instrument table. Just a few minutes after you've taught the first two children how to play a lovely four-note pattern on the xylophone, *the shoving begins*. Two boys, one pair of mallets...need I say more? You quickly swoop in, quote the first two chapters of Corinthians, and move the boys to the back of the line. Maxine picks up her pen and writes:

JOB DESCRIPTION, ITEM NUMBER 2: *REFEREE*

The choir's all here now. Time for the singing to begin and the magic really starts. You begin singing "sol-mi-sol" and the choir echoes back. While the echo singing continues, you put the instruments away and kids move to their choir chairs. Now, Maxine is really lost at this moment because no one said "go to your seats" and yet they just did and how could anyone possibly put away two xylophones while singing "sol-la-sol-fa mi" but you just did and Maxine searches for something to write down to describe what she just saw.



JOB DESCRIPTION, ITEM NUMBER 3:

RINGMASTER; TRAFFIC COP; CHILD WHISPERER!

Rehearsal continues. You teach a new hymn and talk about the importance of the scripture that the anthem is based on. You demonstrate how to put the “K” on Christ, and the “dih” on Lord and show the group how to count the tricky rhythms in the piece. You get everybody moving around the room while singing in three part harmony and somehow manage to also spend a few minutes encouraging that shy little boy on the third row whose family just joined the church last week.

Maxine is scribbling furiously:

*Teacher; Singer; Speech and Diction Coach;
Ac-comp-ny-er, Ac-comp-nee-ist,...oh, geez – Piano
Player! Choreographer; Therapist; Spiritual Leader;
and Crowd Control Expert.*

Now, we should confess to the guests in the room that none of us are really trained in all of these things, we just figure out how to do them, mostly for our own survival. I mean, where was the class in college on “Making musical props from things in the dollar bin at

Wal-Mart?” Or “How to manage your children’s choir program on a budget of \$12/year?” And not even at the highly-esteemed Choristers Guild Institute do they offer a class on one of the most important topics of our entire profession: “Dealing with vomit in the choral rehearsal.”

Oh, the things they didn’t tell you about this job! In all of my training and graduate level classes, I must have missed the seminar on “Removing bees and other flying insects from the room while large groups of children are present,” but boy did I need it one day while teaching a general music class full of thirty 6th graders.

We were sitting there, quietly listening to Mozart’s symphony number 40, the children all writing so diligently in their listening journals. And suddenly, the child with every allergy on the planet yells out “There’s a bee in the room and I’m allergic to bee stings!” You can imagine the chaos that ensued. Screaming, yelling, everyone out of their seats and racing from one corner of the room to the other to dodge this one little misguided bee.

Finally the bee lands on the window by my desk and I realize that this is my moment. Holding my spiral-bound teacher’s edition, I know I have one chance to swiftly and definitively end this madness and regain control of the learning environment. So, I swing that teacher’s edition with focus and force, swatting the bee, *and* shattering the window into a million pieces! Glass flies everywhere! More screaming and yelling and running and chaos and finally, a slightly scared silence falls over the room. And then the allergy kid speaks up once more, “Mr. Patterson, you’re going to be in trouble for breaking that window.”

But, we digress. Back to Maxine and your job description. Rehearsal ends and she looks at her list to present to the committee. It’s not at all what she thought it would be. So busy, so messy, so many different things going on here...and not much of it is fitting with the neat, corporate-style job description she was hoping to put down on paper.

As she gathers her things and prepares to leave, she takes one last look across the room and there you are at the piano, working with a child who stayed behind. It's the kid from the third row, the one who seemed to be struggling to sing the right notes on most of the songs during rehearsal. You sing something and he sings it back, but not quite right. You play a few notes on the piano and he tries again, and back and forth you go. Before long the boy has a Frisbee in his hand and the two of you are singing and throwing that Frisbee, and finally Maxine gets it—you're helping him find his singing voice: A singing voice that couldn't be heard just ten minutes ago when rehearsal was going, but there it is. All that beautiful sound was sitting on the third row and no one ever knew it was there...until now.

And at that moment Maxine realizes the word that she's been looking for the whole time: *Potential—Human Potential*. That's what you've been developing here all along. You knew that uncertain little boy had a singing voice and you chipped away at the barriers until he discovered it. You knew that the choir could make the words of the anthem more understandable and so you gave them the tools to do it.

You see, the business we're really in is the human potential business. Helping a struggling singer find his voice, helping a choir tune a chord or articulate an important text, encouraging a soloist who's about to sing for the very first time. Developing a child's potential is what we do.

God created each one of us with immense potential—musical, spiritual, social, intellectual. Your job and my job is to find that potential, dig it out, polish it, encourage it, grow it. And, week by week, it begins to blossom. We all have successes and setbacks, triumphs and failures, and the progress looks different in every single singer, but through music, we see and hear results. Music is this great, wide window where we get to see human potential develop.

Our children's choirs are some of the most important nurturing grounds for the next generation of adults. They'll be doctors and teachers, firefighters and preachers, lawyers and salesmen and soldiers and they'll know how to sing! They'll know what it's like to dig deep, work hard and make something beautiful together. They'll know how to worship together and praise their creator using that most precious gift of song. And they'll know what it's like to discover their own potential because of *you*.

May God bless you and keep you with love and strength and grace. Remember that God is in the human potential business too—and *you* are in *His* choir.



Dr. Mark Patterson is a nationally acclaimed composer, conductor and teacher. He is the Director of Music at Salisbury Presbyterian Church in Midlothian, Virginia, where he leads a comprehensive music program for adults, youth and children. Mark received his PhD in Fine Arts-Music Education with an emphasis in Choral Conducting from Texas Tech University, and Master of Music, and Bachelor of Arts degrees from the University of Texas at Austin.

He is frequently invited to conduct honor choirs and choral festivals across the United States, and is often asked to lead workshops for choral directors. Dr. Patterson's compositions comprise a rich variety of styles for the sanctuary and the concert hall. Currently he has over 300 choral works in print as well as a solo piano collection, various musicals and choral compilations, and several volumes of vocal solos.

Christmas Is Coming

Paul R. Otte

Traditional Round

1.
Christ - mas is com - ing! The Lord is at the door

2.
Bring ing peace for - ev - er - more. It's

time to get rea - dy. Make room with - in your heart So

you and Christ will ne - ver part.

Chords for optional Orff Accompaniment:

C F G C

Copyright © 2004 Paul R. Otte. Used by permission.

Teaching Tips:

Use this Christmas song from Paul Otte as a fun song, or choral warm-up.

Teach the unison melody, and then sing it as a round.

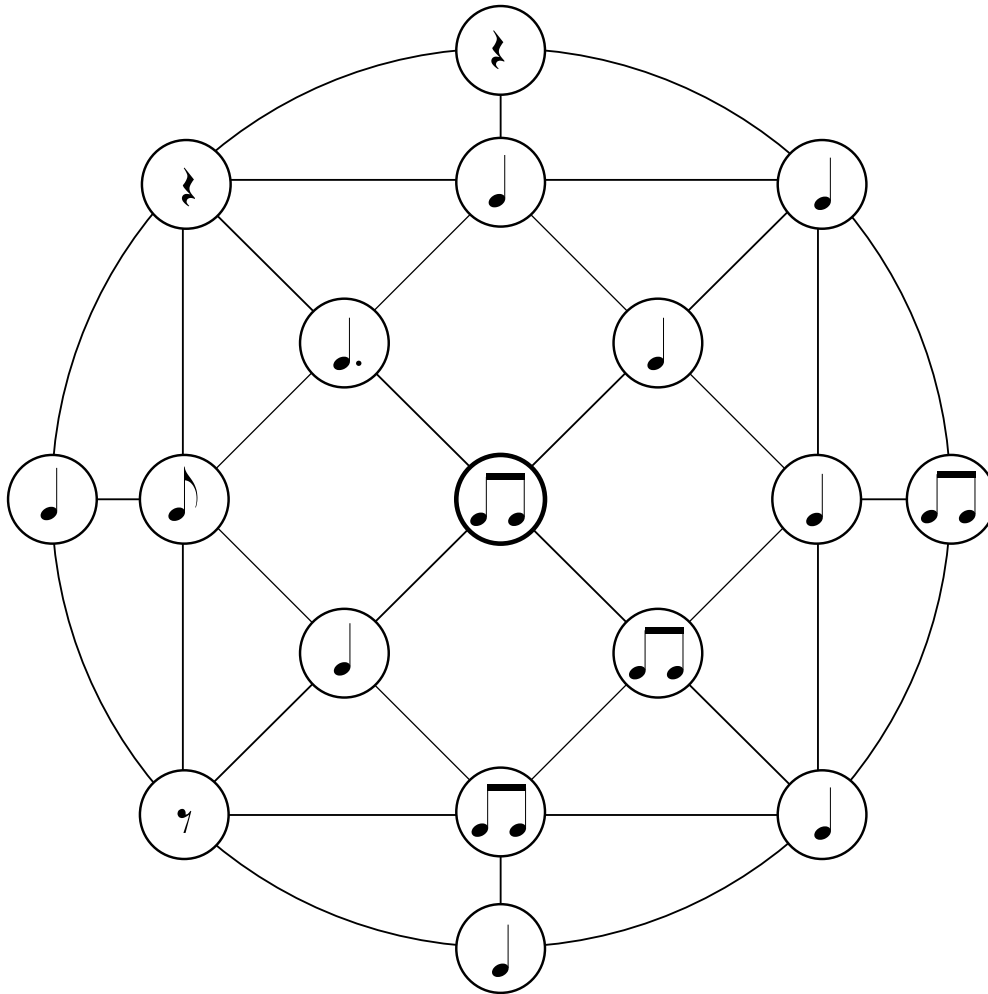
Assist the children with creating Orff instrument parts using pitches from the chords above.

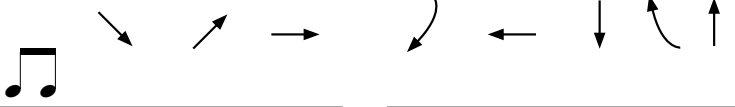
OR

Play a chord accompaniment using handchimes, bells, Boomwhackers®, or a combination of melodic instruments.

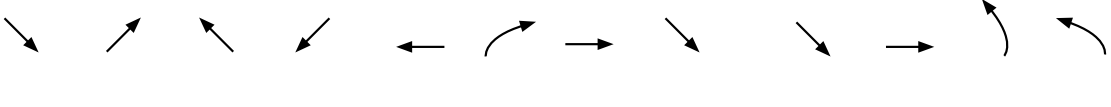
Psalm 98 Rhythm Wheel

Move from music symbol to music symbol around the wheel according to the arrows above the words to discover the rhythm of the Psalm 98:4 chant. Begin at the center.





 Make a joy-ful noise to the Lord all the earth; break



 forth in-to joy - ous song, and sing praise un-to God.



NEED A BREAK? TAKE A BREAK!

BY PAMELA VANDEWALKER

Whether it's clothing, hair, décor, or arrangements of hymns, it's fun to update. Staying out of a rut reminds me of Ecclesiastes 3:1: "There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven." (NASB) God created seasons in nature as well as life to provide renewal, and to continually draw us to Him.

For many years our preschool and younger choirs have taken a break from the routine of weekly curriculum based rehearsals several times throughout the choir year using a tool called *Theme Nights*. These nights have been used in various ways including: Saturday morning fellowship times, regularly scheduled rehearsal nights in the fall and spring, *Welcome Back to Choir* night, and three-day preschool music camps. Mark Wilke introduced me to theme nights years ago, and other ideas have been added by others along the way. Here is a great theme for after the holidays, or anytime your children and leaders need a mid-winter break. Enjoy the ideas, and add your own special touch. It might be your season to update!

WINTER WONDERLAND NIGHT

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Rhythm Snowflakes:

Draw simple rhythms on snowflake cutouts and place them in an ice bucket. Children take turns removing snowflakes from the bucket. The teacher then claps each rhythm and the children echo. Make longer rhythm patterns by placing several snowflakes in a row.

High/ Low Snow Balls:

Give each child a hand-full of cotton balls. As the pianist plays a note, the children raise their cotton balls high or low as indicated. After this activity, allow the children to have a snowball “fight”! Blow a whistle to begin. Stop the “fight” by blowing the whistle again. Provide beach buckets and shovels for a fun cleanup time.

Snow Song:

Give each child two handfuls of cotton balls. Have them tip toe around the room and drop their snow as you invite the children to sing with you.



Same/Different Mittens:

Cut blue and red mittens out of construction paper and place the mittens in a basket. Have each child draw out two mittens without looking. Upon examination of the mittens, if the mittens are not the same color, the children should play two different notes on a xylophone or glockenspiel. If the mittens are the same, they should play the same note twice on the instrument.

High/ Low Snowman:

Draw a simple sketch of a snowman on a piece of poster board omitting the nose. Give each child a piece of orange construction paper cut in the shape of a carrot. Play high and low notes on the piano or a melodic instrument. Have the child place the nose/carrot high or low on the snowman as the pitch indicates.

*Polar Bear Steady Beat Story:

Echo speak the following story while patting the steady quarter note beat.

I was sitting by the fire
One cold and snowy day, ♪
I heard a knocking at my door,
Could friends be here to play? ♪

I jumped up from my easy chair,
ran quickly to the door, ♪
And much to my delight I saw
Not just one friend, but four! ♪

They said, you'd better hurry, ♪
Grab your coat and run. ♪
We need to show you something; ♪
We think it's really fun. ♪

I grabbed my wooly mittens,
shoved each foot into a boot. ♪
I hurried through the kitchen, ♪
and out the door did scoot. ♪

My friends were standing all around
laughter filled the air. ♪
And right there in my driveway
was a giant polar bear! ♪

At first I could not say a word
My eyes were huge with fear. ♪
I then began to wonder, ♪
What's he doing here?

My friends seemed not to fear at all.
Of this I was suspicious. ♪
The polar bear stood very still,
seemed calm—not even vicious. ♪

And then I realized that bear
was just a mound of snow ♪
Created by my funny friends
To give my heart a go! Whoa!

Sleigh Ride:

Give each child two jingle bells on a pipe cleaner that has been twisted around to make a full circle. Have them hold this with one hand and pretend to hold the reins of the sleigh with the other hand. Play *Sleigh Ride* by Leroy Anderson as the children keep the steady beat with their bells. Send the bells home with the children.

Snow Picture:

Out of shaving cream, or white chalk, make designs on black construction paper.

MOVEMENT ACTIVITY

Ice Skating:

Roll white paper plates into cones and staple. Children slide their feet inside and “ice skate” to pre-recorded music of *Skater's Waltz* by Waldteufel or other winter-themed music.

FINGER PLAY ACTIVITY

Winter's All Around:

Use hand motions as you lead this finger play: *(Go faster each time you repeat).*

There's frost upon my window,	<i>(Cool wave)</i>
It's winter all around.	<i>(Hugs and shiver)</i>
Icicles hanging from my roof,	<i>(Hands over head w/ fingers pointed down)</i>
With snow upon the ground.	<i>(Fingers flutter down like snow falling)</i>

READING ACTIVITY

Read **Polar Bear, Polar Bear** (Henry Holt and Company, New York). Read in rhythm, and have children echo each page.


CLOSING ACTIVITY

Bible Story/Prayer Time:

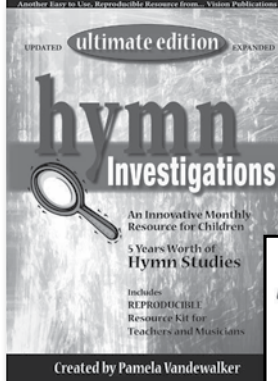

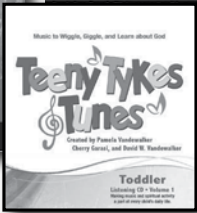
Talk with the children about snow. Tell them that each snowflake is special; no two are exactly alike. Explain that God made each person special, too; no two are exactly alike. Read Psalm 139:14 "I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." (NASB) Say a closing prayer, thanking God for making everyone so special. Give each child a snowflake with the scripture printed on it to take home.

If you enjoyed this article, look for more Theme Night ideas in the next issue of *The Chorister*.

*Polar Bear Steady Beat Story by Susan Eernisse ©2014. All rights reserved. Used by permission.



Pamela Vandewalker presents creative, relevant, innovative, and easy-to-use reproducible resources for teachers, church musicians, and volunteers.

visionpublications.net



Pamela Vandewalker earned Magna Cum Laude undergraduate and graduate degrees from Houston Baptist University and the University of Missouri-Kansas City, respectively. She has served at churches in Missouri and Texas and is presently a full-time Minister of Worship Programming and Creativity serving a congregation of over 8,000 active worshippers. As a senior programming director for six worship services, Pamela guides and creates worship opportunities from traditional worship to seeker oriented, media-driven contemporary worship, and also coordinates the children's music program with 900 children participating. She is the author of more than forty books and children's musicals and has served with a variety of publishing houses as a creative arts, devotional, and curriculum writer for worship, drama, and the music genres for over 30 years. Her newest projects include: *God Made Me Special – (Word Music)*, and *Teeny Tykes & Tunes – a preschool music curriculum (Vision Publications)*. Pamela and her husband, David, make their home in Marietta, Georgia.

Anthem Feature

FROM THE CHORISTERS GUILD CATALOG

ASK, SEEK, KNOCK

By Nancy Raabe | CGA1398 | Unison with piano

ANTHEM DESCRIPTION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR USE

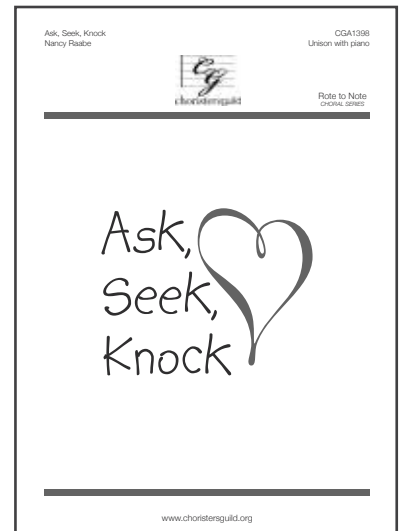
Ask, Seek, Knock is a delightful new addition to the **Rote to Note** series. The **Rote to Note** series highlights pieces that are particularly useful in teaching young children basic music principles—note values, dynamics, melodic movement on the staff. In each anthem of the series the vocal staff incorporates larger print to make the singer's line easily identifiable for early readers. This anthem is ideal to use mid-year when your choristers are ready to transition from rote learning to beginning note-reading.

Based on Jesus' familiar text from two Gospels, this anthem's catchy melody is easily learned and quick to become a favorite of your youngest singers. This song is perfect to use around Valentine's Day, as the children sing: "For this is how people know that you are my disciples: by the way you show God's love!" You might consider programming this piece during the Epiphany season, where lectionary scriptures explore the path of discipleship in the kingdom of God.

TEACHING TIPS

This anthem is a great tool to introduce two very important scriptures to your children (Matthew 7:7-8, and John 13:34-35). Allow time for children to locate both passages in the Bible, and compare to the song text. Print the scriptures on index cards to send home with the children as a challenge to memorize them with their families. Use the Reproducible Page as a memory aid for the song text and the Matthew passage.

The change in volume level on the repeated opening section is an excellent way to introduce the concepts of dynamics and expression. Have children search the printed music for other dynamic markings. Incorporate all



the markings from the very first rehearsal so that children are in the habit of singing expressively as indicated by the composer.

Be sure to accent the three very important verbs: ask, seek, and knock. Add simple sign language each time the three words are repeated. Use a site such as American Sign Language Browser, Michigan State University to see videos of the signs: <http://aslbrowser.commtechlab.msu.edu/browser.htm>. Children will love shouting the text as written in the closing section of the song. Be sure to include the closing handclaps to add interest for a strong ending.

Because this is a simple melody without intricate rhythms, it is a great tool for highlighting musical concepts you have been teaching. There are note values from eighths to whole notes. The melody has plenty of stepwise motion with some simple skips and no accidentals. Do scavenger hunts in the music for specific items: whole notes, half notes, eighth rests, ties, etc. Search for a different symbol each week.

PLAY A GAME OF ASK, SEEK, KNOCK.

- Play the rhythm of a pattern from the song on a drum.
- **ASK** the children to **SEEK** the pattern on a certain page in their music.
- When all have found the correct pattern, **KNOCK** the rhythm of the pattern using woodblocks, rhythm sticks, or handdrums.
- Select other patterns and repeat as time permits.

3 Important Verbs

Write the missing words to match each statement given.

Write the number of each statement (1, 2, or 3) on the blank provided, as it appears in the song and in Matthew 7:7-8. Read the 3 complete statements in the correct order. Try to memorize the entire verse with a friend or family member.

_
_

&

You will find.

_
_

&

The door shall be
opened for you.

_
_

&

It shall be given.

ANSWERS: #1 Ask, #2 Seek, #3 Knock



ACTIVITY TEACHING STEPS

SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

Sing to God Canon provides an opportunity for children to learn selected verses from Psalm 68 by chanting and playing drums in canon.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Sing to God Canon Visual
- Hand drums
- Bible marked at Psalm 68:3-4

PREPARATION

- Print and prepare the visual.
- Rehearse the body percussion before the rehearsal.

Sing to God Canon Visual



Sing to God Canon

1. Teach the text.

- Display the Sing to God Canon Visual. Ask the children to listen as you chant the text. Have them pat the steady half-note beat while you chant. (Explain that the red syllables—*sing, God, prais-, name, lift, song, rides, clouds*, etc.—occur on the half-note beat.)
- Have the children join you as all chant and pat the steady half-note beat.
- Chant in 2-part canon: Have the children begin chanting and patting the steady half-note beat; you begin chanting when they get to *meas. 2 (praises to His name)*. You should end 1 *meas.* after they end.

Teaching Tip

Explain that a canon is like a round—2 or more voices or groups sing the same melody but start at different times.

- Ask a volunteer to read Psalm 68:3-4 so the children will know where the text of the chant originated.

2. Teach body percussion.

- Establish a steady half-note beat by tapping a drum with your fingertips. Have the children pat only the red syllables.
- Have the children chant all of the text while softly clapping the rhythm of the words.
- Demonstrate, line by line, how to put the two ideas together: Pat when speaking the red (bold) syllables, and clap on all the other syllables.

4/4

Sing to **God!** Sing **prais-** es to His **name!**
 Pat clap Pat clap Pat

Lift up a **song** to Him who **rides** up - on the **clouds.** Let the
 Pat clap clap Pat clap clap Pat clap clap Pat clap clap

right-eous be **glad,** be **ju-** bi - lant with **joy!** Come
 Pat clap clap Pat clap Pat clap clap Pat clap

cel- e - brate and **sing** to **God.**
 Pat clap clap Pat clap Pat

- Echo the pat-clap body percussion while speaking the text for each line.
- Perform the entire chant with text and body percussion. Then divide into 2 groups, and perform in 2-part canon.

3. Transfer to drums.

- Demonstrate playing the rhythm on a hand drum. Play half-note beats (pats) with a downstroke (cup the hand and hit the drum straight down) and all other syllables (claps) using a brush stroke (brush fingers across drum).
- Distribute drums to children. If you do not have enough drums for every child, divide children into partners so they can take turns.
- Have children practice the two kinds of strokes first by echoing 4-beat patterns with you. Begin slowly, using these patterns:

The first example shows a 4/4 time signature with four quarter notes. The first and third notes are labeled "Pat Down", and the second and fourth notes are labeled "clap brush".

The second example shows a 4/4 time signature with four quarter notes. The first and third notes are labeled "Pat Down", and the second and fourth notes are labeled "clap brush".

The third example shows a 4/4 time signature with four quarter notes. The first and third notes are labeled "Pat Down", and the second and fourth notes are labeled "clap brush".

- Echo play each phrase of the canon slowly.
- Perform the entire chant, first speaking the text aloud as they play, then playing without speaking but internalizing the text. Increase the speed as children become more confident.
- Perform in 2-part canon, first speaking and playing and then playing drums only.

4. Decide on a final form.

- Have the children decide on the final form for the canon. Let them choose from the following, or create their own version.
 - Chant the text.
 - Chant the text in canon.
 - Play body percussion (with or without text).
 - Play body percussion in canon (with or without text).
 - Play hand drums (with or without text).
 - Play hand drums in canon (with or without text).
- Perform several versions.

Teaching Tip

Establish ground rules for playing instruments. The first time a child plays without permission, have the child put the instrument away. Have the children place their instruments in a resting position when they are not playing.

Lord's Prayer Worship Reading

READER 1: Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

READER 2: Our Father in heaven, Your name is set apart and holy.

READER 1: Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

READER 2: Make all things right in the world. Do what is best in earth,
just like you do in heaven.

READER 1: Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.

READER 2: Give us everything we need for today, and forgive us for doing
wrong, as we forgive those who have wronged us.

READER 1: And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

READER 2: When sin crosses our path, or evil comes our way, rescue us!

READER 1: For Thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever.

READER 2: You alone can do all this, because You are a powerful Ruler,
and our glorious, eternal God.

READER 1: Amen.

READER 2: So be it!

"The Lord's Prayer"

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Lord's Prayer Worship Reading

PLANNING AHEAD

- Make a copy of Lord's Prayer Worship Reading KIDPage for each child.
- Gather pencils or markers.

GUIDING CHILDREN

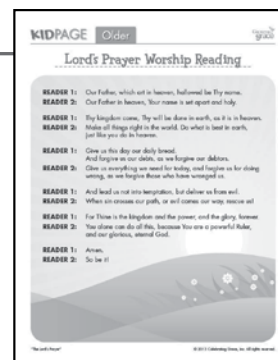
- Distribute KIDPages and pencils.
- Determine which of the speaking parts assignment options work best for your group.
 - Assign 2 readers; 1 reads the traditional text; the other reads the paraphrase.
 - Assign 2 readers to each of the 6 groupings.
 - Divide the group or choir into Group 1 and Group 2, assigning the traditional text to Group 1 and the paraphrase to Group 2.
- Review the text line by line.
- Guide children to underline words that might need special emphasis.
- Rehearse transitions from line to line to keep a good flow of speech.
- Rehearse the entire reading.

TEACHING OPTIONS

- Consider these options for using the Worship Reading:
 - as a small-group activity
 - as a large-group activity
 - in a worship service

WORSHIP OPTIONS

- Assign the Reader 1 parts to the choir and the Reader 2 parts to your congregation.
- Assign the Reader 1 parts to a child and the Reader 2 parts to an adult.



PRESCHOOL PAGES

THE PRESCHOOL CHOIR YEAR MARCHES ON!

We are well into the year with our preschoolers, and we are getting to know their unique personalities. We have them up and moving, singing all kinds of songs, playing instruments, and experiencing music in a variety of ways. As they interact with each other, they are growing more confident in their musical abilities, and learning to work together as a team. Try some of these ideas to enhance your time together.

READ SOUND STORIES

This sound story will appeal to most children. It is a story; it employs their listening ears; it requires decisions regarding high and low and choice of instruments; and it gives opportunities to experiment with their voices in a non-threatening manner.

Before reading the story, practice the sounds with the preschoolers.

You will need a few instruments.

Stepbells and a mallet – C, D, E, F, G, A (one, two, three, four, five, six)

A gong, cymbal, or metal lid

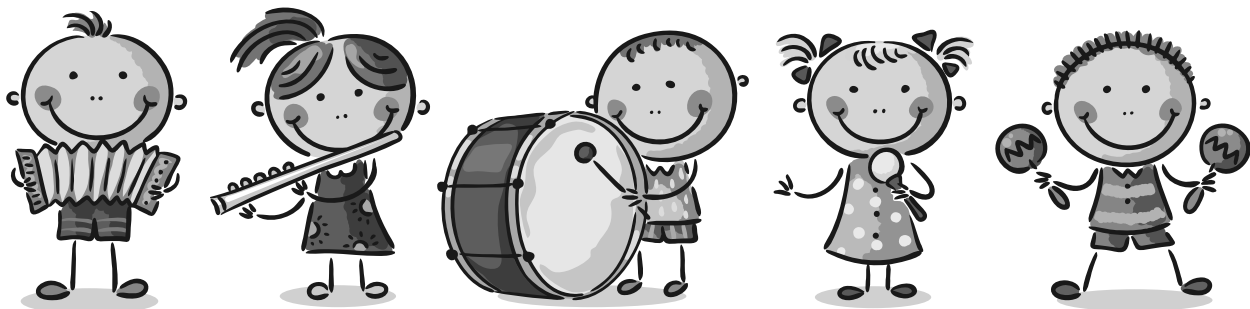
Sandblocks

Woodblock and mallet

Other sounds will be made with their voices: *meow* and *cuckoo*.

The emboldened words indicate auditory clues for the assigned sound.

You can assign instruments to some children, but all the children will make the vocal sounds. Read the story slowly incorporating the sounds as indicated. Rotate the instruments to different children and repeat the story as needed. Preschoolers love to repeat favorite activities and songs.



THE LITTLE SCARED-Y KITTEN

Once upon a time there was a little kitten who was scared of almost everything. She wanted to climb a tree, but did not know how to do it. She saw a ladder against the tree and carefully **climbed up 3 rungs**. (*sing 1, 2, 3 with stepbells*) But then she lost her balance and **fell to the ground** (*"boing" on gong or metal lid*).

The kitten cried. (*"Me-ooowww"*) She looked at the ladder again. She really wanted to get up to that tree house because she thought Mommie cat was up there. She carefully climbed up **4 rungs on the ladder**. (*sing 1, 2, 3, 4 with stepbells*) Again she lost her balance and **cried** (*"Me-ooooowwwww"*) all the way down. She landed on the **ground**. (*"boing"*)

"Maybe I need to sharpen my claws," she thought. So she **scratched** them on the base of the tree. (*scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch on sandblocks*) A bunny **hopped over to watch**. (*hop, hop, hop, hop, hop on woodblock*) A cuckoo **called from high up in the tree**. (*sing "cuckoo, cuckoo, yes-you, yes-you"*) She was feeling much more brave, so she **scratched** her claws again. (*scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch*) She looked up at the tree. Just 2 more rungs to go!

From the tree house, way up high **she heard** a voice. (*"Me-ooowww" in a high pitched voice*). Mommie cat was up there! She **scratched** her claws again (*scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch, scratch*), and began to climb. **Let's help her get there:** (*sing 1, 2, 3, 4 with stepbells*). Mommie cat **called** (*"Me-ooooowwwww"*). She reached down and pulled the kitten **up** (*sing 5, 6 slowly with step-bells*). They both landed **ker-plop** (*tap wood block*) right in the middle of the tree house floor!

"What a brave little kitten you are!" Mommie cat said. "You're not so scared-y after all!" And they snuggled together and purred until they fell **asleep**. (*"me-ooowww's" repeating and growing softer until they stop*). The End.

So-o-o-o, what else can we do to make choir fun—to give them a reason to want to come back and see what other experiences they might have. Let's look at a few . . .

ORCHESTRATE NURSERY RHYMES AND BIBLE STORIES

Looking for more “sound” stories? Try orchestrating nursery rhymes. “Jack and Jill” has plenty of action. Incorporate rainsticks, stepbells to show up and down, and vocal sounds like “ouch!” “Hickory, Dickory, Dock” is another action filled rhyme. Use a triangle or finger cymbals to chime the hour. You can repeat the rhyme several times, and chime the hour at two o'clock, three o'clock, etc. on each successive repetition. Use a tick-tock tone block to keep a steady beat. Pause after “mouse ran up the clock” and play an ascending pattern on the step bells. After “the mouse ran down,” pause and play a descending pattern. The Bible is rich with stories that can be orchestrated with sound, too. Why not act out stories from the life of Jesus with added sound effects? What a great way to make the Bible come alive!

PLAY SINGING GAMES

We have mentioned singing games before that may well be dropping into oblivion unless we teach them to the children. Some examples are “London Bridge Is Falling Down,” “I’m a Little Teapot,” “The Muffin Man,” “Hot Cross Buns,” and “The Farmer in the Dale.” You can find many versions of these favorites on the internet—just slip one into each rehearsal. Here is a fun traditional singing game that includes plenty of action. Seat the children on the floor in a circle. Assign one child to be the squirrel. The squirrel walks around the circle as everyone echo sings the song in two measure phrases. At the end of the song, the squirrel taps the closest person in the circle, and the

Let Us Chase the Squirrel

Let us chase the squirrel up the hickory, down the hickory.

Let us chase the squirrel up the hickory tree.

Singing games can be included as children gather for music time, as an activity to break up large group time, or as a final activity while children are waiting or their parents to arrive.

THE PRESCHOOL REHEARSAL

First of all—never forget that welcoming greeting to each child (*and parent*), and giving the assurance that you have been waiting “just for them!” Involve them in an early-arriver activity immediately! Play some name games even after you know all the names. Preschoolers love to hear their names in a rhythm chant or song.

Change your rehearsal sequence frequently. If presenting the same songs, think “how can I do this a little differently this week?” Keep copies of your weekly lesson plans so you can assess the balance of variety and repetition—both are essential. Session plans in purchased curriculums will help if you are new to the weekly planning process.

SPECIAL DAYS*

Consider adding variety and enthusiasm to your weekly rehearsals by programming special themes. You can create your own plans, or purchase books on various themes from your local teacher/parent store. Why not feature a different color each week for a month or two? For example, announce that the following rehearsal will be a “Yellow Day.” Everyone will wear yellow (*have a supply of yellow ribbons or wrist bands in case someone forgets*). Sing songs about yellow things—the sun, the moon, the flowers, the yellow in the rainbow, school buses, etc. If food is acceptable, serve banana slices or cheese. Plan at least 4 of these days (*red, green, blue, purple*), announcing the coming week’s color, and building excitement (*be sure to keep parents informed*).

Do the same thing with locations. Announce the next rehearsal will be a “beach day”—with songs about water and shells and fish and skies. You might even get different moms to agree to spearhead individual days. You might be amazed at the decorations they will use. And...you can have a “ranch” day, a “zoo” day, a “winter” day, a “city” day. Again, announce each coming day’s location and make it special.

CREATE A BANK OF SECURITY SONGS

You will want to use some “security” songs—songs that are sung each week to establish a “home” feeling—as the welcome song, or the prayer time song. You may want to plan a time in each rehearsal to let a child suggest a favorite song to sing. Draw a child’s name from a container of craft sticks containing every child’s name so that every preschooler is eventually selected. Place used sticks in a separate jar until all children have been chosen. Use favorite songs as rewards for excellent group behavior.

Begin to accumulate songs that are particularly successful. Put copies of these songs in a notebook, in a folder, on index cards attached to a ring clip, or on a clipboard. They should be readily available when something disrupts the schedule. These are also helpful for planning theme nights and for substitute plans when you have to be out unexpectedly. (Also see **HIP POCKET CARDS** below.)

RECOGNIZE AND REWARD INDIVIDUALS AND THE WHOLE GROUP

Recognize the children—outside choir time. Call them when they are absent. Imagine the importance of a phone call “for me.” When you meet a child in the hallway, or in the grocery store, talk to the child, and not just the parent. Get down on their level and speak to them eye to eye. Send postcards or handwritten notes to absentees, on birthdays, or other special occasions like getting a new pet, or losing the first tooth. Preschoolers will LOVE getting their own mail.

Encourage good singing habits by acknowledging “super singers.” Encourage your helpers to move behind the children as they sing. When they observe a child standing tall and focused on singing, they should lightly touch that child on the shoulder, meaning that child is a “super singer.” Continue to sing until all have been selected. It’s amazing how most every child will work for that special distinction!

Recognize birthdays or special days. Some people recognized all “March” birthdays at the same time. How much more special when a child is recognized during his or her birthday week. Believe it or not, I still remember getting a cupcake from my teacher when I was five—and that wasn’t yesterday, by any means! The cupcakes or cookies should be packaged and sent home, so that Mom can determine when they are to be eaten. Be especially aware of any food allergies, or other food related concerns. Coupons for treats at local businesses are also a good option.

CREATE HIP POCKET CARDS

With each rehearsal, have “hip pocket” songs/rhymes/movement games—something extra that you know you can switch to when things just aren’t working, or attention is being lost. A fingerplay (see *last issue*) or movement to a recording can bring distracted preschoolers back to focus. Then you can pick up where you left off. Write these things on index cards and place one card with each week’s rehearsal plans.

MAKE UP A SONG ON THE SPOT

If all else fails...here’s a tune everyone knows...just make it your own for the day, substituting questions that seem to fit the weather, date, mood of the children, or almost any topic you can imagine.



Who is wear - ing blue - jeans? (I am wear ing blue - jeans.)
 Who is wear - ing flip - flops? (I am wear ing flip - flops.)
 Who has a kit - ty cat? (I have a kit - ty cat.)

DON'T FORGET TO PRAY

One last thing...pray for each child and for their families. Use the name sticks to work your way through the entire group—then start over. Somehow, those relationships just seem to get sweeter as you are especially equipped to share God’s love. Be genuine in your love and concern for the interests of every child in your group. You will reap great dividends—and so will the children you serve!

In the next issue . . . now that we have them singing, how can we share those songs? I look forward to meeting you on these pages each time!

*For tips on a creating a fun winter theme night for preschoolers and early elementary age children, see the article “Need a Break? Take a Break” on page 12 of this issue.



Nan Grantham holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Mississippi College, Clinton MS, in Music Education. Her career has included both public and private school teaching and private and class piano. She has served on church music staffs in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, retiring from Second Baptist Church in Houston. Her *Language of Music* series was published by Chorister’s Guild. Throughout her career Nan has written songs and curriculum for *Lifeway’s Children’s Music Series*, and was on the inaugural writing team for *Growing in Grace Children’s Music Curriculum* for which she is still a contributor. Nan continues to work with the *Houston Children’s Chorus*, and is an active volunteer at her church.

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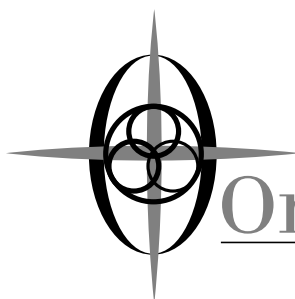
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The **INSTITUTE CORNER**

**First hand testimonials tell it like it is! Read what participants
in the 2014 Choristers Guild Institute have to say.**

YEAR I

This was an awesome educational and spiritual week—so glad I chose to attend. All the faculty were superb and approachable.

Thank you for an extremely informative week—I know this has already made a huge impact on the upcoming choir year.

Thank you for outstanding presenters and for providing this extraordinary way to learn and grow surrounded by lovely people with the same ideals and love for children's choirs.

In terms of the effect that CGI had, well: MY GOODNESS. It is remarkable. The kids can tell the difference, and their attentiveness is the evidence of that. They are inspired; we are inspired. The time we spent at CGI and the monetary investment made by our church was clearly worth it. (This church sent three directors together!)

YEAR II

Excellent directions and ideas in Pedagogy.

I loved the voice class addition. It was amazing to me how many things that we tell our choirs to do, yet we forget when we are the ones singing.

I came back on fire with ideas and so empowered with tools that I can use to make my choir rehearsals so much better.

YEAR III

My time at CGI has transformed the way I direct children's and youth choirs. I know of no other program that explores pedagogy, choral methods, conducting, voice, and worship in such a practical and insightful way. The faculty is top-notch and knowledgeable in each of their areas, yet they care about making each student better teachers and leaders in their ministry settings. Thank you!

The Institute is rich and superb.

Each year I have been able to build and expand on what I have learned at CGI in previous years.

Spiritual formation is what sets music ministry apart from other educational music endeavors. CGI is committed to excellence in music while acknowledging there is much more than music at play.

Thank you for three incredible years.

Next summer's CHORISTERS GUILD INSTITUTE dates:

July 26–August 1, 2015

Wingate University, Wingate, NC

Calendar of Events

FLORIDA

March 7, 2015

Twenty-Fourth Annual Festival
College Park Baptist Church
1914 Edgewater Drive, Orlando, FL 32804
Bonnie Litteral bblitteral@aol.com

GEORGIA

January 23–24, 2015

Mid-Winter Workshop | Terry Price, Ken Berg,
Michael Burkhardt, Mary Louise Wilson
Peachtree Road United Methodist Church
3180 Peachtree Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30305
www.cgatlanta.org

February 7, 2015

Youth Choir Festival | Mark Miller
First Baptist Church Gainesville
751 Green Street NW, Gainesville, GA 30501
Betsy Homer betsy@roswellpres.org

INDIANA

February 28–March 1, 2015

The Mennonite Children's Choir Festival
Janeal Krehbiel
Sauder Hall, Goshen College
1700 S Main St, Goshen, IN 46526
Sharon Basinger Lehman basingerlehman@yahoo.com

MISSOURI

January 25, 2015

Youth Choir Festival | Bryan Taylor
Village Presbyterian Church
6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208
Suanne Comfort music@raytowncc.org

NORTH CAROLINA

February 28, 2015

Sing for Joy! Children's Choir Festival
Ann Doyle, Clinician
Apex United Methodist Church
100 S. Hughes Street, Apex, NC 27502
Patti Cook pccok@fumc-cary.org

DID YOU KNOW...

As a Choristers Guild member, you can list your church's event on this Calendar of Events page? Email your listing to Susan at seernisse@mailcg.org three months prior to your event. Listings are admitted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

TO LIST YOUR CHAPTER EVENT

Send your listing to membership@mailcg.org with complete information. Include dates, location, clinicians, and contact information. For additional advertising, contact advertising@mailcg.org.

TEXAS

January 16–17, 2015

Dallas Church Music Workshop
Lovers Lane United Methodist Church
9200 Inwood Road, Dallas, TX 75220
Jason Chavarria president@dallaschaptercg.com

March 1, 2015

Children's and Youth Choral Festival
Stephanie Poyner, Linda Harley, Carey Cannon
Holy Covenant United Methodist Church
22111 Morton Ranch Road, Katy, TX 77449
webmaster@houstoncg.org

WASHINGTON

April 18, 2015

God Does Wonders | Rebekah Gilmore
Des Moines United Methodist Church
22225 Ninth Avenue South
Des Moines, WA 98198
Arletta Anderson ajp724@comcast.net

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Children's Choir Devotionals

BY SUSAN EERNISSE



Photo Credit:
Children's Choirs of First
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WEEK OF NOVEMBER 30

SCRIPTURE:

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Isaiah 64:8 NRSV

DEVOTIONAL:

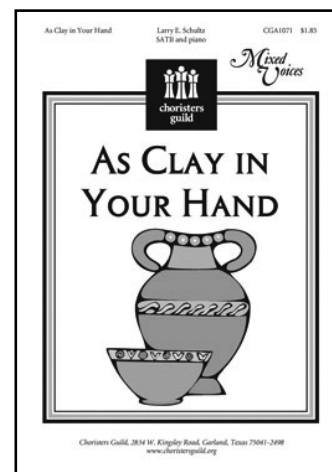
Have you ever made anything from a simple lump of clay? It is so amazing to see a skilled potter take some muddy gray clay, mold it, shape it, fire it, paint it, and transform it into a beautiful work of art. God, like a potter, wants to mold us into something special, too. When we willingly allow God to work in our hearts and lives, we become the art of God's hands. Every talent and gift we have can be used by God to show others God's love and glory. We are so much more than just a lump of clay—we are designed by God!

PRAYER:

Dear God, You are the potter; we are your clay. Thank you for shaping our lives for use in your plan each day. We want to become the work of your hand just like the potter sculpts the clay. Please shape us, mold us, teach us, and guide us. Thank you for your loving care. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1071 | *As Clay in Your Hand* |
By Larry E. Schultz | SATB with piano



WEEK OF DECEMBER 7

SCRIPTURE:

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isaiah 40:3 NRSV (Extended Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11)

DEVOTIONAL:

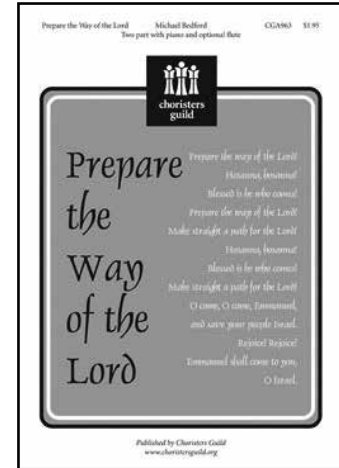
Road work can be such a nuisance! You just want to get to school, or church, or the store. Yet, there are holes in the road, and construction crews with heavy equipment digging even more holes. *IF* you are patient, and wait long enough, however, the road will be smoother and wider, making travel so much easier. Advent is a time of smoothing out our hearts to prepare for the coming of Jesus. As we wait for His coming, we can clear our hearts of things that distract us, and focus on the great gift of God's Son.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Please forgive us when we are impatient. Help us to prepare our hearts for celebrating the coming of Your Son. May we focus on the hope, peace, joy, and love of this Advent season. Guide us to center our attention on things that really matter. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA963 | *Prepare the Way of the Lord* | By Michael Bedford | Two-part with piano and optional flute



WEEK OF DECEMBER 14 ADVENT

SCRIPTURE:

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. . .he himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. John 1:6-8 NRSV(Extended Reading: John 1:6-8, 19-28)

DEVOTIONAL:

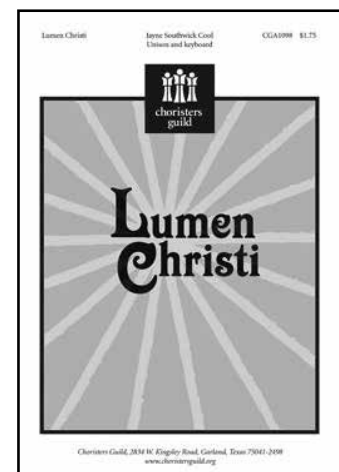
John was a very important child, but he was not the promised Messiah. His job was to tell people about the coming of Jesus, God's Son. Jesus was coming as God's light into the world. John wasn't the light, but he directed people to THE light – Jesus! We can do the work of John today. Many people do not know about Jesus. We can help direct them to THE light by sharing the story of Jesus. What are some ways you can share the light of Jesus as a group, individually, or with your families?

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for sending Jesus as light into our dark world. We need that light just as much today as when Jesus first came to Bethlehem as a baby. Show us how to share the light of Jesus with others every day. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1098 | *Lumen Christi* | By Jayne Southwick Cool | Unison with keyboard



WEEK OF DECEMBER 21

SCRIPTURE:

For nothing will be impossible for God. Luke 1:37 NRSV (Extended Reading: Luke 1:26-38)

DEVOTIONAL:

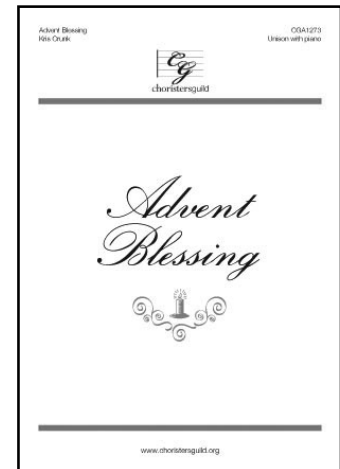
God came to earth as a tiny baby. Is that even possible? This verse says, "Absolutely!" Our great and mighty God chose to come and live among us as a human—beginning just the way we did, as a helpless baby. It is hard to imagine God as a baby, hard to understand all the "hows" and "whys". That is why we keep celebrating the birth of Jesus. We never want to forget God's incredible act of love for us. If you have doubts about God's ability to help you through a certain situation, remember Luke 1:37.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for the most precious gift of your Son, Jesus. Help us to grow in our trust of you. Help us to truly believe that nothing is impossible with you. Thank you for loving us so much. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1273 | *Advent Blessing* | By Kris Crunk | Unison with piano



WEEK OF DECEMBER 28

SCRIPTURE:

Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace...for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel. Luke 2:29-32 NRSV (Extended Reading: Luke 2:22-40)

DEVOTIONAL:

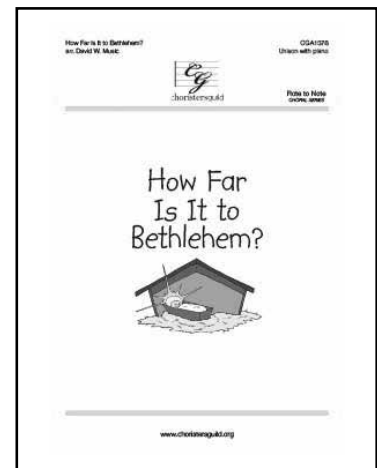
Old Simeon was nearly blind. He had been waiting for God's promised Messiah his entire life. He was a very old man, and probably wondered if Messiah really would come in his lifetime. Then the day came when Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to the Temple for the first time. Simeon knew right away that Jesus was a very special baby—a gift straight from God. Simeon praised God for allowing him to meet Messiah, God's gift of love. His heart was filled with joy and peace. We should celebrate the birth of Jesus with the same kind of joy. God's only Son came to be the Savior of the world!

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for faithful people like Simeon, who never stop trusting in your promises. Help us to learn from them, so that we can be more trusting, too. Thank you for the wonderful gift of your promised Son. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1378 | *How Far Is It to Bethlehem?* | Arranged by David W. Music | Unison with piano



WEEK OF JANUARY 4

SCRIPTURE:

On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Matthew 2:11 NRSV (Extended Reading: Matthew 2:1-12)

DEVOTIONAL:

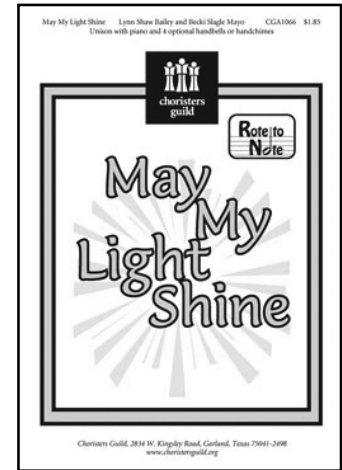
It had been some time since Jesus was born. He could have been a toddler by the time the wise men found him. The wise men traveled a very long way just to meet this new king, and worship him. We may not have expensive gifts like those wise men, but we can still offer gifts as we worship Jesus. God is pleased with every gift that is offered in love, no matter how great or small. What are some gifts you can offer?

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for every gift that you have given us. We offer gifts to you as we praise and worship, as we share with others in need, as we shine your light in this world. Help us as we seek ways to give to others. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1066 | *May My Light Shine* |
By Lynn Shaw Bailey & Becki Slagle Mayo | Unison with piano and 4 handbells or handchimes



WEEK OF JANUARY 11

SCRIPTURE:

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." Mark 1:11 NRSV (Extended Reading: Mark 1:4-11)

DEVOTIONAL:

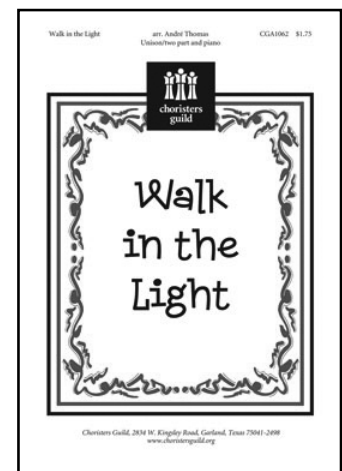
A voice from heaven—can you imagine that? God spoke out loud with one of the greatest announcements of all time: "Jesus is my beloved Son, and I am very pleased with him." Don't you wonder what the people thought? If God spoke aloud to you right now, what do you think He might say to you? Imagine having a real life conversation with God. Would you want everyone to hear it, or would you prefer a private talk? We need to live each day so that God could say to each one of us, "You are my child, and with you I am well pleased."

PRAYER:

Dear God, We know that sometimes our thoughts and actions are not pleasing to you. Please show us when we are wrong, and remind us to follow the example that Jesus lived as He obeyed your commandments to love you and love others. Thank you for being our loving Father. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1062 | *Walk in the Light* |
By Andre Thomas | Unison/two-part with piano



WEEK OF JANUARY 18

SCRIPTURE:

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." John 1:43 NRSV (Extended Reading: John 1:43-51)

DEVOTIONAL:

As Jesus began his ministry, he began to gather a group of disciples. He didn't go into great detail about what they would be doing. He simply said, "Follow me." Something about Jesus led Philip to trust him. Philip knew right away that Jesus was the promised Messiah written about in the Old Testament books of prophecy. Philip chose to be a follower of Jesus. That was an act of faith. When we follow Jesus, we are placing our faith in him, and that is a great decision!

PRAYER:

Dear God, sometimes we are not sure of people, but we know we can always trust you. Thank you for being faithful, loving, and totally trustworthy. Help us to grow in our trust as we follow you each day of our lives. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1094 | *Listening for the Call* |
By Allen Pote | Unison/two-part with piano and optional Bb trumpet



WEEK OF JANUARY 25

SCRIPTURE:

And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. Mark 1:17-18 NRSV (Extended Reading: Mark 1:14-20)

DEVOTIONAL:

Do you like to go fishing? Simon and Andrew were professional fishermen. They worked long hours in all kinds of weather to catch fish to sell in the market so that they could take care of their families' needs. Then Jesus came along, and invited them to go fish for people. Though this might have been confusing to them, they left their boats and followed Jesus. The love Jesus had for people was such a strong example to his followers that they began to love others, too. They wanted everyone to know about God's love, and the gift of God's son. They were willing to leave their homes and families to follow Jesus.

PRAYER:

Dear God, we want to be your followers just like Simon, Andrew, Philip, and the others, but sometimes we put our own needs and wishes ahead of others. Help us to be more loving and caring. Thank you for the example of Jesus—to love everyone. Teach us to follow you where you need us to go. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA893 | *Where You Need Me I Will Go* |
By Mark Patterson | Unison/two-part with piano



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February | March 2015

Volume 66 | Issue 5



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From the Editor

Traditions: Time-worn? Or time-honored?

How does a tradition become, um, well, traditional? Are traditions relevant in today's worship? And, can worthwhile traditions be made fresh and applicable to a new generation?

It seems like many church musicians and pastors are asking those kinds of questions. Week after week, in churches around the world, worship services are conducted in a multitude of formats and traditions. Even churches claiming a very contemporary approach to worship ultimately resort to the utilization of repeated elements.

My husband and I recently visited a church celebrating its 11th anniversary. We were part of the original group of founding members. You are probably wondering, "Does a church of only 11 years even have traditions?" The answer is, "Absolutely!" While I found great comfort in seeing that some of those familiar elements had been retained, I also was even more encouraged by alterations and additions that had enhanced the worship order, adding even greater meaning. The worship seemed as fresh as it had all those years ago when we first gathered in a borrowed building with little more than some second hand hymnals and a donated spinet.



Choristers Guild staff and board members at Fall 2014 Meeting.

Choristers Guild is itself a tradition. Ask nearly any veteran church musician or music educator, and they will tell you how Choristers Guild has touched their work and ministry. One of the reasons that CG has remained relevant through the years is because of forward thinking leadership constantly seeking fresh ways to meet the needs of its members. Isn't it great to be a part of this great team, this great tradition?

Keep singing the song!

-Susan



SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS!

I would love to have more photos of your groups to share in *The Chorister!* Please submit your high resolution photos to: seernisse@mailcg.org



From the Sacred Choral Editor

In addition to her busy editing schedule, Katie Houts has been very busy with the newest arrival to the Choristers Guild editing team.



Congratulations, Katie! Welcome to Choristers Guild, Archer!

Archer says to be sure and check out the Anthem Lesson Plan for Mark Burrows' new anthem, *Make a Joyful Noise* on page 13.

From the Executive Director

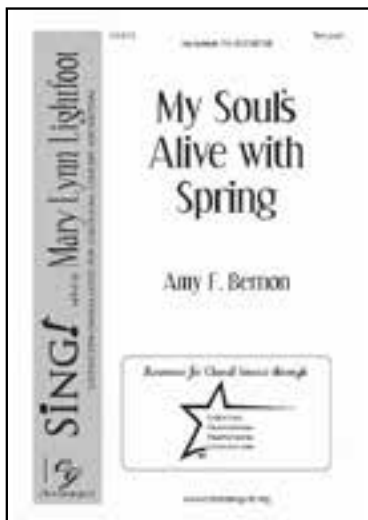


Choristers Guild is pleased to announce the launch of **Sing!** Distinctive Music for Classroom, Concert & Festival. We are delighted to have Editor, Mary Lynn Lightfoot leading the way on this exciting new offering from Choristers Guild for the educational (school) choral market.

Select **Sing!** octavos will feature a unique Learning Resource Page designed to aid teachers in aligning the use of **Sing!** pieces with the new 2014 National Core Arts Standards, which will be replacing the 1994 Core Standards in the coming years. Learning Resource Pages will provide teachers with "focus questions" and suggested activities to help students explore the artistic processes of Creating, Exploring, Performing, and Responding to choral music.

Help us spread the word! Tell your friends to look for **Sing!** this Spring at ACDA and Texas MEA. You'll be seeing our **Sing!** ad in your favorite publications this Spring as well. Octavos from the **Sing!** collection will be available beginning this Spring as you make plans for Summer and Fall concerts and festivals.

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My Soul's Alive with Spring

1. Musicians IMAGINE. Words, sounds, pictures, nature, people, events, these and many other life experiences can be the idea for a work.

A. In this work, the **composer** presents her own text and music.

B. What characteristics of spring might have provided an idea for the text? The music?

EXTEND: Did the idea for the text, music, or both emerge at the same time? Explain your response.

EXTEND: Which ideas have been written to reflect other seasons. What characteristics might influence developing a text, music, or both for a work about summer? Winter? Fall?

2. Musicians PLAN & MAKE. Expertise, context, and interest influence decisions about organizing and developing an idea into a work.

A. Which individual, genre, or ensemble idea about each season is most interesting to you as a performer, as a member of a choral ensemble, or as an audience member?

B. Which ideas about each season are most interesting to you as a composer?

EXTEND: Use an original or ensemble idea about a season to create poetry, story, or music. Which of these will **best** present your idea about a season?

3. Musicians PRESENT. Expression, interpretation, and technical accuracy are displayed appropriately for an audience and context.

EXTEND: How do you understand how a composer developed a work from an idea. Perform the work and some of the ideas that have been developed in PLAN & MAKE above.

4. Musicians are influenced by PERSONAL EXPERIENCES. Creativity, performing, and responding to a work is influenced by a person's experiences, interests, ideas and knowledge.

A. "Seasons" can mean many things. What other meanings might inspire composers?

B. Compare and contrast how composers might use music to express different meanings for the word "seasons."

EXTEND: Which meaning of "season" would you choose to explain as THE idea for a work?

KEY VOCABULARY
Composer, Instrument, Art form

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BY TERRY D. TAYLOR

"Music and Song" Puzzle

Use the code to fill in the the blanks, and discover the text of the rythm chant, based on Psalm 92:2. The code uses shapes and dots. The shape of the lines identifies the location of the two letters. Use the first letter in the shape unless a dot is present, then use the second letter.

AB	CD	EF
GH	IJ	KL
MN	OP	QR



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COOK UP SOME FUN!

BY PAMELA VANDEWALKER

As dedicated musical educators and choir directors, we seek to whip up delicious, nutritious, and well-presented music experiences for preschool and younger children's choirs. We carefully gather ingredients for a musical recipe that includes: steady beat, rhythm, pitch/melody and expression blended with the utensils of singing, moving, instrument playing and listening. With all cooking experiences, it's vital to spice up our basic recipes. And theme nights allow for a well-blended choir year. The **Down on the Farm** and **Valentines** theme nights allow you to teach all of the critical fundamentals of choir but with a little zingy twist of topical fun!

DOWN ON THE FARM NIGHT

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Clarence the Cow Step Bell Song

Sing this song using step bells to visually and aurally reinforce the up and down scale melody. Begin on middle C and sing up the scale. Repeat several times, allowing volunteers to play the upward/downward bell pattern as everyone sings.

	He'll come over.	C	C	You
	Call him up and	B	B	bring
	Wears a clover,	A	A	the
	Round his neck he	G	G	cook-
	Horns, Oh wow!	F	F	ies
	Black and white with	E	E	he'll
	Happy cow,	D	D	bring
	Clarence is a	C	C	milk. Moooooo!

Goin' on a Picnic

Give each child a picture of a food item. Sing the song and substitute food items found in the pictures until each child has participated.

The musical notation is written on two staves in 4/4 time. The first staff shows the Teacher's part, which is a simple melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lyrics are: "Go-in' on a pic-nic, who wants to go?" followed by a rest. The second staff shows the Children's part, which is a simple melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lyrics are: "I do! I do! What shall we bring?" followed by a rest. The third staff shows three children's parts, each with a simple melody of quarter notes: G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The lyrics are: "I'll bring some ap-ples.", "I'll bring some car-rots.", and "I'll bring some milk." followed by a rest.

High/Low Ant Hill

Draw and cut out a simple anthill and a black dot for each child. (The dots represent ants). Play high and low pitches on a melodic instrument instructing the children to place their ants high on the anthill when a high pitch is heard, or low on the anthill when a low pitch is heard.



High/Low Cornstalk

Make a picture of cornstalk and draw a crow; then cut out the crow. Play high and low pitches on a melodic instrument instructing the children to place the crow high on the cornstalk when a high pitch is heard, or low on the cornstalk when a low pitch is heard.

Pin the Nose on the Scarecrow

Make a scarecrow face without a nose. Blindfold a selected child; next, play a high or low pitch. That child should move the nose (up or down) based on the pitch played to place the nose in the correct position on the face.

Scrambled Eggs

Cut 8-10 eggs made out of construction paper. Next draw various notes and musical symbols (quarter, half, whole, etc.) on both halves of the eggs. Cut the egg so that one of the notes is on each piece. Scramble the egg parts and play concentration.

Musical Barrel Races

Divide the children into two teams. Label four barrels (or large paint buckets from hardware store) with instrument family names (strings, percussion, woodwinds, and brass). Give each child a picture of an instrument. The children race to see who can put all of their team's instruments into the correct barrel.

CD ACTIVITIES*

- 1) "Did You Feed My Cow?"; [Smorgasbord](#), Elephant Records, Toronto, Canada. Make up actions to match the song. Excellent for creativity and movement.
- 2) "Peanut Butter"; [Smorgasbord](#), Elephant Records, Toronto, Canada. Listen and do the actions to the song..
- 3) "Mickey Mouse March"; [Simplified Lummi Stick Activities](#), Kimbo Educational. Use fresh carrots for sticks. Eat afterward!
- 4) "Water the Waltzing Worm"; [Walter the Waltzing Worm](#), Hap Palmer. Give each child a piece of yarn about 8 inches long. Move the strings as "Walter" moves on the recording.

*Substitute other recordings you may have available, and perform similar actions.

SINGING ACTIVITIES

- 1) "Old McDonald" Sing the song with traditional lyrics. Allow children to categorize the animals mentioned into those with loud sounds and those with soft sounds.
- 2) "B-I-N-G-O" Omit a letter from the end of the dog's name on each repetition of the song.
- 3) "Six Little Ducks" March in a circle around the room to the steady beat.

BOOK ACTIVITIES

Read books aloud – allow children to add motions and/or sound effects for added interest.

- 1) *Eency, Weency Spider* | Modern Promotions/Publisher a division on Unisystem, Inc.
- 2) *Pop-Up Farm Book* | W.J. Fantasy, Inc.

SCRIPTURES TO SHARE

Genesis 1:24-25 Remind the children that God made everything!



VALENTINE NIGHT



TREATS AND PRIZES

Conversation hearts and heart stickers



GENERAL ACTIVITIES

Heart Beats

Pass a heart shaped beanbag around the circle to a steady beat of a selected song.



Conversational Rhythms

Glue conversation hearts on wooden popsicle sticks and create rhythm patterns with the sticks. (Use the words on the hearts, or speak the colors of the hearts to create the rhythm patterns.) Play the patterns created on rhythm sticks or drums.

Heart Melodies

Draw a small staff, and duplicate on cardstock for each child. Ask children to use candy conversation hearts to display melodic direction on the staff. (upward, downward, same; older children can show steps and skips in each direction.)

Heart Posters

Make a poster board with three large hearts on it. Draw a quarter note on one heart, and put the number one underneath it. Draw a half note on the second heart, and put the number two underneath it. Draw a whole note on the final valentine, and place the number four underneath it. Allow children to take turns tossing a clothespin on the poster board to score points according to the valentine note value on which they land.

Circle Valentines

Place a heart on the floor in the middle of the room. Circle the room while singing "Jesus Loves Me" and walking to the steady beat. After a time, stop the music; the child who is standing closest to the heart gets a sticker or candy.

Valentine Count

Fill a bowl with heart shaped candies or cereals mixed with other cereal shapes. As you remove each heart, have a volunteer suggest a loving deed they could do for someone. Place all the hearts in a row, and clap as steady beat as you count them.

Heart Watcher

Provide cut out hearts for each child, and encourage them to write a Scripture verse on their heart. Glue the heart to the eraser end of a pencil. Encourage the children to give this gift to a friend to stick in a potted plant.

Heart Pat

Gently pat hearts with hands to the steady beat of a selected song. Alternate patting left hand to right hand.

EKG

Use a broad tip marker to draw an EKG line on continuous feed computer paper, or roll of chart paper. Gather heart stickers or heart cutouts for each student. Play various high and low pitches on a melodic instrument. Ask the children to place heart stickers high or low on the EKG as the melody moves up or down.

CRAFTS

Yummy Cookies

Decorate plain heart shaped sugar cookies.



Heart Pockets

Cut two six-inch hearts for each child from felt or construction paper. Punch holes around the sides of the heart, spaced about an inch apart. Cut a 10" piece of yarn and knot one end. Tie tape around the other end of the yarn creating a needle. Assist children as they "sew" the hearts together. Give the children two strips of paper. Ask them to write or draw on the papers ways they can show God they love. Place the paper strips in the heart pockets.

Valentine Share

Provide craft materials to make valentines to share with special friends, family members, or teachers.

LOVE SONGS

"O How I Love Jesus"

"Jesus Loves Me"

"Jesus Loves the Little Children"

"I've got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy, Down in My Heart"

"Love Somebody, Yes I Do"

"Hokey Pokey" with these words:

*You put your heart in | You put your heart out
You put your heart in and you shake it all about
You give your heart to Jesus | And He'll turn your
life around | That's what it's all about.*

SCRIPTURES TO SHARE

Psalms 139:22-24

Psalms 51:10

Proverbs 17:22



The cover of the "Teeny Tykes and Tunes" music program. At the top left is the Vision Publications logo. To the right, it says "Another resource by PAMELA VANDEWALKER". Below that, it states "Teeny Tykes and Tunes is a faith-based music program for infants and toddlers". The title "Teeny Tykes and Tunes" is written in a large, stylized font with musical notes. Below the title is a list of activities: "Fun Songs", "Bible Stories", "Instrument Songs", "Bounces", "Fingerplays", "Movement", "Take Home Pages", and "and more!". To the right of this list is a small image of the program's cover. At the bottom, the website "teenytykesandtunes.com" is displayed.



Pamela Vandewalker earned Magna Cum Laude undergraduate and graduate degrees from Houston Baptist University and the University of Missouri-Kansas City, respectively. She has served at churches in Missouri and Texas and is presently a full-time Minister of Worship Programming and Creativity serving a congregation of over 8,000 active worshippers. As a senior programming director for six worship services, Pamela guides and creates worship opportunities from traditional worship to seeker oriented, media-driven contemporary worship, and also coordinates the children's music program with 900 children participating. She is the author of more than forty books and children's musicals and has served with a variety of publishing houses as a creative arts, devotional, and curriculum writer for worship, drama, and the music genres for over 30 years. Her newest projects include: *God Made Me Special - (Word Music)*, and *Teeny Tykes & Tunes - a preschool music curriculum (Vision Publications)*. Pamela and her husband, David, make their home in Marietta, Georgia.

Anthem Feature

FROM THE CHORISTERS GUILD CATALOG

Make a Joyful Noise by Mark Burrows

ANTHEM DESCRIPTION

CGA1397 *Make a Joyful Noise* is the latest and greatest from favorite Choristers Guild composer, Mark Burrows. End your choir season on a high note with this celebratory setting of Psalm 100. The piece begins with a stately introduction before transitioning into an energetic **A** section. Choristers will have lots of fun learning and singing the syncopated rhythms. The lyrical **B** section incorporates beautiful text-painting—a perfect opportunity to talk about images used by the psalmist to teach us about God and God's people. The A section returns to bring the piece to a joyful close.

Looking for just the right piece for a choral festival? This piece would be a great addition to a concert program. Also consider:

- using this as your end-of-the-year choir anthem during the Easter season,
- bringing together your adult choir women and children's choir for an intergenerational choir experience,
- adding this piece to your summer choir camp curriculum,
- programming the anthem for next fall and introduce parts of the piece this April/May,
- OR combining your graded children's choirs on this piece allowing older choirs to go solo during the middle section.

TEACHING TIPS

If part singing is new to your singers, utilize youth or adult volunteers in rehearsals to assist with the 2 vocal lines. Gradually remove the older voices as the children grow in confidence. Your singers will have a great sense of accomplishment in singing the two parts. Though the trumpet line is not

necessary, children will love singing with the added instrumentation.

What better time to introduce your children to instrument family groups than while preparing this anthem with a beautiful trumpet enhancement! You can feature the trumpet by having your soloist come a week or two in advance. You can allot time during the rehearsal for the trumpeter to tell about his/her instrument, and demonstrate its unique features. To expand the study, feature a different instrument family each week with special guest artists providing the demonstrations.

Week One – Woodwind Family

Week Two – String Family

Week Three – Brass Family

Week Four – Percussion Family

Enlist a child to read Psalm 100. Lead the children to discover that the text of the anthem comes from that Psalm. Compare and contrast the concept of noise in the Psalm with our modern day perception. Use the Anthem Feature Reproducible to further aid the discussion. The children will then create a version of another Psalm using contemporary instrument names. Combine the children's responses to create a choral reading. Assign readers or reader groups to each line, and use as an anthem introduction.

Make a Joyful Noise
Mark Burrows

CGA1397
Unison/Two-part with piano
and optional trumpet

For Levi Berger celebrating 20 years of music ministry
Hawthorne United Methodist Church, Hawthorne, Missouri

Make a Joyful Noise

Psalm 100 Mark Burrows

Majestically (♩ = 108)

C Trumpet

Part I
Make: a joy-ful noise, make a

Part II
Part II solo
Make: a joy-ful noise, make a

Piano

*A B♭ trumpet part is printed on pages 15-16.

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Make a Joyful Noise!

Have you ever been told by your parents or teachers to stop being noisy? Psalm 100 tells us to make a joyful noise. That is a different kind of noise—a noise that is pleasing and honoring to God.

What are some ways to make joyful sounds of worship?
Need some ideas? Gather a few friends and read Psalm 150.
Read it again, and replace the bold print words with modern instruments that can also make joyful sounds.

PSALM 150

Praise the Lord!

Praise God in his sanctuary;

praise him in his mighty firmament!

Praise him for his mighty deeds;

praise him according to his surpassing greatness!

Praise him with **trumpet** sound; _____

praise him with **lute** and **harp**! _____ & _____

Praise him with **tambourine** and dance; _____

praise him with **strings** and **pipe**! _____ & _____

Praise him with **clanging cymbals**; _____

praise him with loud **clashing cymbals**! _____

Let everything that breathes praise the Lord!

Praise the Lord!

Joyful, Joyful!

LEADING CHILDREN TO LEAD
OTHERS IN WORSHIP

BY AMY COOPER

PHOTOS BY JIM BRADFORD AND TUCKER ROJAS



Children Sing Their Theology in Choir

When I was young, I loved to swing. While swinging, I would also sing. My mother said, "The higher you'd swing, the louder you'd sing." Because I loved to sing, I naturally progressed to singing in school chorus, All State choirs, and church choirs. Church choir was unique. It was the only choir where I was "singing my theology." Spirituals were sung in school and community choirs, but my church choir was solely responsible for instilling God's love and word, into my heart, soul, and mind. I believe this still holds true today, and is one of the primary distinctions of a church children's choir.

Children Serve as Worship Leaders Rather Than Performers

Children's choirs in the church are unique, because through our music in worship, we serve as musical leaders for the congregation, not "performers." At Belmont United Methodist in Nashville, we have four age level choirs. From children age three through 6th grade, our choir teachers are educating our children, parents, and congregation. Teachers spend many hours picking out music that is theologically based and of sound doctrine. Very often the words the children's choirs are singing are directly from the Scriptures. Recently, my 3rd-6th grade choir learned Michael Bedford's



The Lord Is My Light. In doing so, they memorized verses from Psalm 139, and imparted God's word to the congregation through song. Meaningful words, such as, "You (God) know my every thought. You are acquainted with the secrets of heart," from Hal Hopson's *O Lord, You Know Me Completely* will remain with the children long after they have graduated from choir, and will bring comfort in times of stress.

The Hymnal is a Treasured Guide for Children

We also believe that music leaders in worship need to feel comfortable with the hymnal as a treasured guide with words and music that have endured. Children as young as three years old can musically respond to the call, "Come, Christians, join to sing!" with the response, "Alleluia, amen." Preschoolers enjoy incorporating American Sign Language to the verses of the spiritual, *Kum Ba Yah*, such as "someone's singing, someone's praying, or someone's crying." Children of any age find it fulfilling to accompany a hymn tune such as *Be Thou My Vision* on the xylophone when the appropriate bars are removed, leaving a pentatonic scale, and any notes that are played fit beautifully. Our older elementary age children appreciate the challenge of a hymn search when they are asked if they can find the following elements of a hymn: the title, who wrote the words or music, and the tune name. Looking at a hymn's metrics can be interesting, especially when the children are allowed to sing a familiar hymn, such as *Amazing Grace* to the tune of *Joy to the World* because of their similar metrics. Recently, our oldest choir was able to compare and contrast *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* in our hymnal with a modern version written by Vicki Hancock Wright. Fortunately, Vicki was able to visit the choir, discuss her methods of composing, and answer their questions! Composer Night can be a wonderful experience for the children!*

Children Serve as Conduits for God's Word to the Congregation – Not as Individuals, but as a Group

At the beginning of the year, one of our 4s and 5s choir teacher, Jennifer Bagwell, divides her choir into two groups, and asks them to sing two different songs at the same time, like *Old McDonald* and the *ABCs*. Afterwards, they talk about how they couldn't understand any of the words, because they weren't singing the same message. That, in turn, leads to talking about what choirs do, and how when a choir sings the same song together, the congregation can understand the words and the importance of the song's message. The children are also reminded that the focus of their song is on God, and not on them. That is a very new concept to that particular age group!

One of our 1st and 2nd grade choir teachers, Katie Pattullo, enlightens her choir on the importance of wearing choir robes. She helps the children



understand that we wear robes so that we look and sound like one body, and no one sticks out as an individual singer. Just as in baptism we have put on Christ, so we put on our choir robes.

The Congregation Responds Appropriately

By the time children grow into the 3rd-6th grade choir, they are comfortable with leading in worship, approximately once a month. We follow the liturgical calendar, matching our anthems with the message that will be spoken that morning. The children are familiar with singing the baptism and communion responses, or a Kyrie as prayer. Our parents and congregation are encouraged to give a heartfelt, "Amen!" following the close of the anthem, to offer praise to God for the musical gift that we have offered. Our director of music, Gayle Sullivan, emphasizes that when our children's choirs sing, they make music an offering towards something bigger than themselves. This challenging and worthy goal propels us forward! As the words of Henry Van Dyke in the beloved hymn, *Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee*, remind, "Ever singing, march we onward, victors in the midst of strife, joyful music leads us sunward, in the triumph song of life."

*CGC50 | **Can't Wait to Sing** by Vicki Hancock Wright and Jeff Reeves. Order at www.choristersguild.org or call 800-CHORISTER (246-7478)



Amy Cooper directs the Chapel Choir (24 energetic third through sixth graders) and oversees 3 other graded children's choirs as Director of Children's Music Ministries at Belmont United Methodist Church in Nashville, Tennessee. Amy, a native of Memphis, Tennessee, received her BA from Belmont University and currently serves as the President the Middle Tennessee Chapter of the Choristers Guild. She has been involved in children's music since she was three years old and is a life long singer. She lives with her husband Bill, and her two children in Nashville, Tennessee.

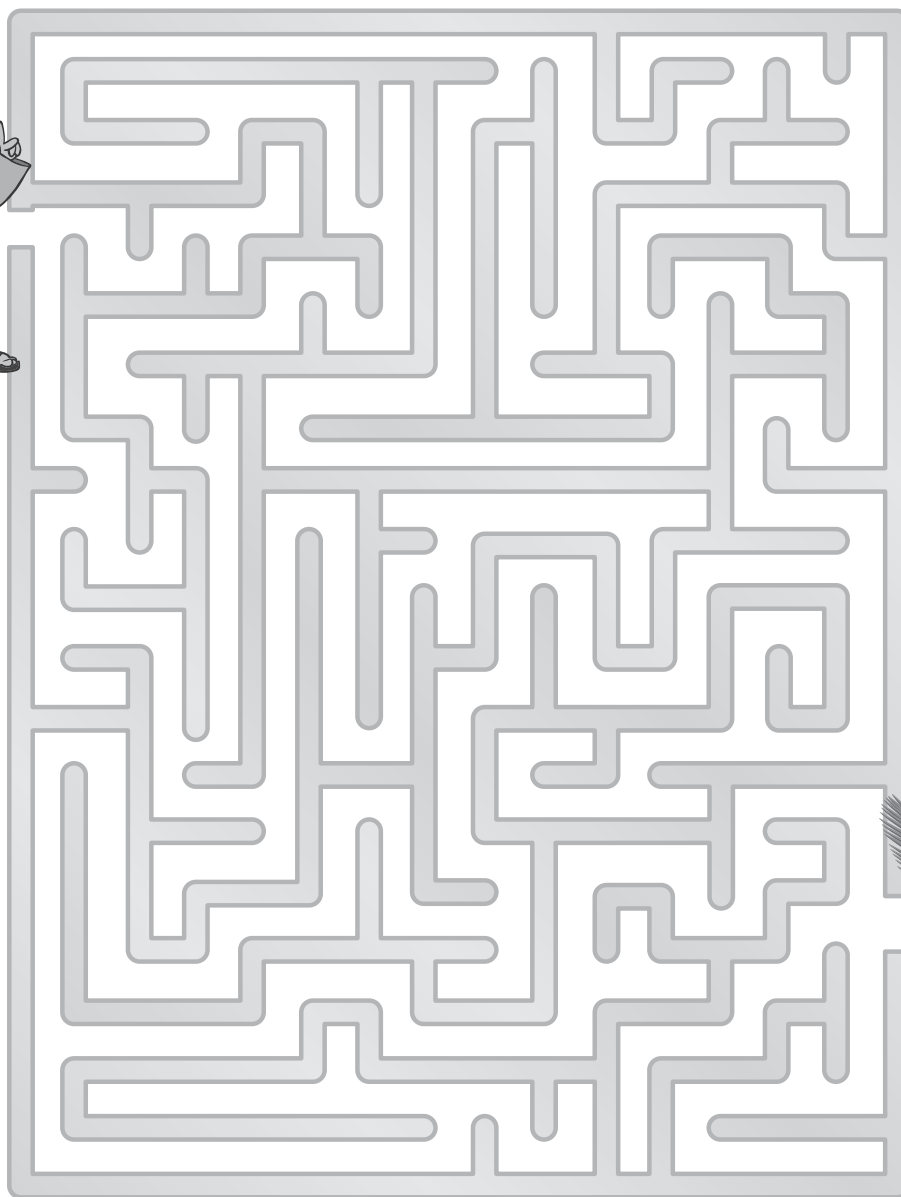
KIDPAGE

Younger



Hosanna Maze

"Hosanna" means "save us." This special word is often used for Palm Sunday worship. "Son of David" is another name for Jesus. Help the worshipper get through the maze to the palm branch.



"Hosanna!"

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Order *Growing in Grace Children's Music Curriculum* at www.choristersguild.org or Call 800-CHORISTER (246-7478)

Hosanna Maze

PLANNING AHEAD

- Make a copy of the Hosanna Maze KIDPage for each child.
- Provide a pencil or marker for each child.
- Gather 11-by-17-inch paper or chart paper for the second Teaching Option.
- Review the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem from Matthew 21.

GUIDING CHILDREN

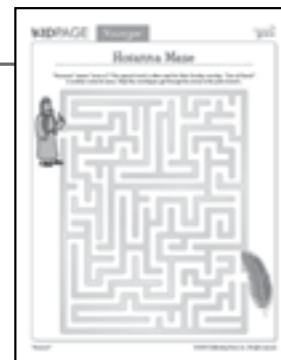
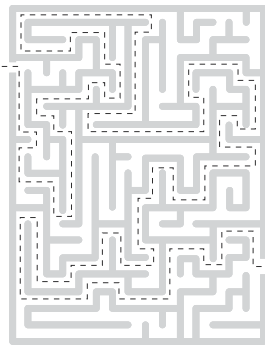
- Review the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem by playing a game. Ask the children to sit in a circle. You begin the story and ask each child to add one sentence until the story is complete.
- Distribute KIDPages and pencils.
- Ask a child to read the information at the top of the KIDPage. Challenge children to remember other names for Jesus (Savior, Messiah, Christ, Lord, etc.).
- Allow time for the children to complete the maze.

TEACHING OPTIONS

- Listen for teachable moments to apply and discuss the significance of this story.
- Guide the children to make "banners" using the names of Jesus. Use 11-by-17-inch paper or chart paper. Have children design and decorate the banners with markers. Display the banners.

Hosanna Maze

Answers:





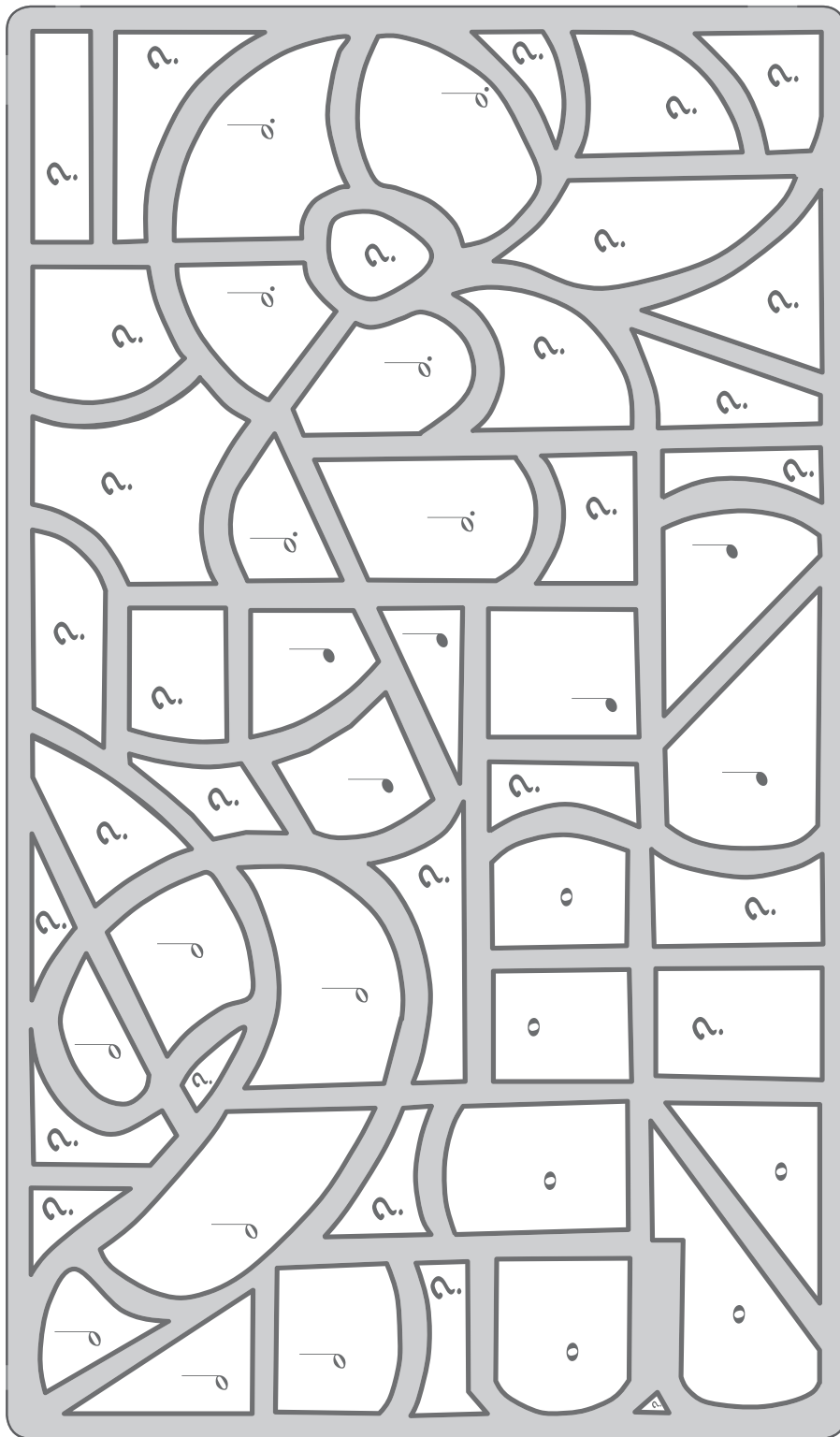
Younger

KIDPAGE

Beat Mosaic

Color the files according to the Key to reveal how many beats each note receives.

- ♩ = red
- ♪ = blue
- ♪ = purple
- ♫ = green
- = your choice



"Easter Alleluias"

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Beat Mosaic KIDPage

PLANNING AHEAD

- Make a copy of Beat Mosaic KIDPage for each child.
- Gather an assortment of crayons or markers, including red, blue, purple, and green.
- Gather Beat Note Cards Visual from Activity O (optional).

GUIDING CHILDREN

- Distribute Beat Mosaic KIDPages.
- Read the instructions at the top of the page together.
- Allow time for children to color the tiles to reveal numbers that tell how many beats each note receives.
 - quarter note = 1 beat
 - half note = 2 beats
 - dotted half note = 3 beats
 - whole note = 4 beats

TEACHING OPTION

- Let children use Beat Note Cards to create three- or four-beat rhythms.

Beat Mosaic

Answers:



INCREASING YOUR CHOIR'S HYMNAL IQ

BY SARAH HAWBECKER



Fifteen years ago, children in my choir (2nd-6th grade) knew a large number of hymns simply because they attended weekly worship services. Now they know very few, unless I spend time teaching hymns in choir rehearsal. In our current culture, many families consider themselves regular worshipers if they attend once a month. Some families only attend church when the choir is scheduled to sing. Even a few years ago, we could count on children knowing a few Christmas carols, but that is no longer a given.

ASK YOURSELF THESE QUESTIONS:

- How many hymns do your choristers know?
- Are they able to look up hymn numbers? Find sections of the hymnal easily? Use an index?
- How quickly could they learn an unfamiliar hymn? How strong are their music reading and listening skills?
- How often do you take time to teach hymns?
- Do you believe that it is important for children to learn hymns?

The longer I teach music, the more I believe in the importance of teaching hymns to children, and teaching musical skills through hymns. This article will address some myths regarding hymns and children's choirs, and provide practical tips on using hymns in every rehearsal.



MYTH #1: IT'S THE CHOIR'S JOB TO SING THE ANTHEM. THE HYMNS ARE NOT IMPORTANT.

One of my main goals as a children's choir leader is to enable the children to become lifelong *full* participants in worship. It saddens me to see people in worship who don't sing the hymns or even open the hymnal. On the other hand, nothing



gives me greater joy than seeing former choristers participating in worship, singing, and volunteering as acolytes or lectors. They are not all going to grow up to be adult choir members, but I certainly hope that they all continue to be active worshipers!

In our Lutheran understanding of worship, the primary voice is that of the congregation. I daresay that other denominations would also agree that the song of the congregation is central to worship. The choir's role is to reinforce and to support the voice of the assembly. Therefore, it is important for the choir to be "on the job" for the entire service. The anthem is one part of their role. I teach the children all of the liturgical elements. We rehearse the hymns, the spoken responses, and when to sit, stand and kneel. The children sometimes end up knowing more about the service than their parents! It is important to continually educate the adults about the choir's role, as well.

MYTH #2: I DON'T HAVE TIME TO TEACH HYMNS, WITH ALL THE ANTHEMS WE HAVE TO PREPARE, THE CHRISTMAS MUSICAL, ETC.

I agree that it is difficult to do it all. There will always be pressure to work toward the next performance, and with limited time, one must always prioritize.

Stop and consider your mission and goals, and then re-prioritize your rehearsal agenda. Make sure you have an agenda; without a plan, you won't achieve your goals. In order to be most efficient, I plan my rehearsals down to the minute, and I schedule at least five minutes of "hymnal time" at each rehearsal. Here's a sample plan for a 5:00-5:45 pm rehearsal:

5:00	<i>Warm-ups</i>
5:05	<i>Anthem #1</i>
5:12	<i>Anthem #2</i>
5:20	<i>Christmas musical</i>
5:30	<i>Hymnal games</i>
5:40	<i>Devotions and sung benediction</i>

Breathing exercises, sirens, round
Review: work on memorizing measures 6-32
Review the refrain and introduce the descant
Introduce song #3, teach with echo
Review song #2; work on octave leap in m. 19
See below

If it is possible to expand a 30 minute rehearsal to 45 minutes, or 45 minutes to 60, then do it! You can also save time occasionally by using a hymn fragment as a warm-up. For example, use the refrain of *Angels We Have Heard on High* as a vocal warm-up. It's great for range, flexibility, and breath

control, especially when you challenge them to sing "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*" on one breath. When singing a hymn, always strive for beautiful tone, accurate rhythm and good diction. You'll notice the carry over in your choral anthems.

MYTH #3: CHILDREN DON'T LIKE TRADITIONAL HYMNS; THEY WANT TO SING "FUN" MUSIC.

Change their definition of "fun!" Children, as well as adults, don't like what they don't know. Once one of my third grade boys told his mother that church was more fun when he was in the choir, because he had more to do. Yes, indeed! Worship is much more fun when you can participate because you have rehearsed the responses and know the hymns. Here are some games using the hymnal:

- **Speedy Hymn Finder:** Call out a hymn number and see who can find it first. This is a useful skill, and actually needs to be practiced. It's no fun in worship when you miss out on the first stanza of a hymn or get lost because you couldn't find the hymn in time. Simply holding a hymnal and reading page numbers is a new skill for young children. Practice every week, and by the time a child is ten years old, she'll be faster than you. In our denomination's hymnal, there are page numbers at the beginning of the book, which are separate from hymn numbers. We mix up finding page numbers and hymn numbers, and the older children like to assist the newer choristers.

- **Index Challenge:** For older children, teach them how to use the hymnal's indexes, starting with First Lines and Titles. Make it into a game: Can you find the hymn number for *Silent Night*? What are the two hymns listed that can be sung to the tune AZMON? Who can tell me which hymn in our hymnal was written by George Frideric Handel? Make it age appropriate.
- **Where Did I Stop?** On the piano, play the melody while choristers read the hymn and follow along silently. Stop suddenly (as you would with the game musical chairs), and have them tell you the word or syllable on which you stopped. Continue playing from that syllable and then stop again a few beats later. Keep going like this through the hymn. You can even do this through multiple stanzas. I have found this to be very beneficial in teaching a new hymn. It improves listening skills and reinforces reading skills. At first, they are just focusing on following the words, but as they grow older, you will find that they are simultaneously reading notes and rhythms along with the text.
- **Hymn Switcheroo:** To teach that a hymn tunes and texts can be interchangeable, use the metrical index to find two hymns with the same meter and then sing each to the other's tune. For instance, sing *Amazing Grace* to the tune AZMON, and sing *Oh, For a Thousand Tongues to Sing* to NEW BRITAIN. Explain that the meter of the poetry is different than the time signature of the music. Try singing the words to *All Glory, Laud, and Honor* to the tune of *O Sacred Head, now Wounded* and see how the words fit but the moods don't match. The children will think it's really cool, and they'll want to find more hymns with matching meters.
- **Who's Who?** For every hymn you ask them to look up, ask who the author is and who the composer is. Explain where to find this information on the page, and that the author is the person who wrote the words (text), and the composer is the person who wrote the music. This will also provide numerous opportunities to talk about folk tunes, spirituals, plainsong, arrangers, and translators, even different time periods of history. Children are always amazed when they discover that they are singing a hymn that has been around for literally hundreds of years!
- **Note Search:** To reinforce note identification, ask questions like these: In stanza 1, how many half notes will you sing? How many quarter notes? How many dotted quarter notes are there? Is that a half note or a whole note on the word "peace?" (Note: this is less confusing for children when done with hymns that display only the melody line rather than four part harmony.)
- **Which One is Different?** Hymn tunes like HOLY MANNA or FOREST GREEN provide excellent examples for this. You can have the students listen, or look at the notes (or both). Tell them that there are four phrases, and ask which are alike and which are different.

These are fun activities (even more fun if you call them games) that don't take a lot of time, get the singers more comfortable using the hymnal, and are effective teaching tools.

MYTH #4: THE HYMNS WE SING ON SUNDAY MORNINGS ARE JUST TOO HARD FOR CHILDREN TO SING.

There is nothing in the hymnal that they cannot learn, if you take the time to teach them. Don't children memorize the Lord's Prayer and other Bible verses before they understand the theological content?

Let the hymns become part of their memory bank and vocabulary, and you can teach age-appropriate concepts along the way.

Children will learn many things faster than adults. They learn foreign languages more easily and memorize quickly. If your hymnal includes some stanzas in other languages, teach the children (or find someone who

speaks that language) to teach a stanza or a refrain in the original language. Children like to be challenged and will take pride in their hard work.

Hymns are poetry, and poetic texts can be difficult, especially older texts and translations. There will be new and difficult vocabulary words. Talk about what the text means. Is this a statement of praise or a prayer? Is this hymn telling a story? Who is

speaking, and to whom? If it is based on a scripture passage, discuss that.

If you take the time to use the hymnal at every single rehearsal, you will discover that it is worth it. You may even find that it takes less effort than you first thought. What could be more important than helping to develop children's faith and teaching them skills that they can use throughout their lives?



Sarah Hawbecker is Organist and Director of Children's Music at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta, where she has served since 1996. She is also a project consultant for Orgues Létourneau Limitée of St-Hyacinthe, Québec. She has performed and presented workshops for conventions of the American Guild of Organists and the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, and has published articles in their respective journals. She currently serves on the Board of ALCM. Ms. Hawbecker earned degrees from the Eastman School of Music and St. Olaf College.

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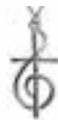
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 Email _____
 Phone _____

BILLING ADDRESS

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 Church/School _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State ____ ZIP _____
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DATE ORDERED _____ DATE NEEDED _____

INDICATE PREFERRED SHIPPING METHOD:

___ UPS Ground ___ 3 Day ___ 2 Day ___ Next Day ___ USPS (not trackable)

Please keep in mind that custom award orders (stones added to pins) require a minimum of 6 weeks to process. See the order process below. Please add an additional week if existing guards need to be removed and reattached for custom orders.

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all prices are per stone

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- Contact Choristers Guild at 800-246-7478 or service@mailcg.org and request jewelry order envelopes (1 per pin). These are available at no charge from our office.
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 - Nature of the custom additions desired, for example: "Add 1 Pearl (PE) and Gold-plated Bell Guard (BE)", "Add 2 Rubies (2 RU) at the top middle", or "Attach Silver-plated Note Guard (NOS)".
 - Name of the Chorister
 - Church Name (include City and State)
 - Director Name
- Wrap all the pin envelopes in bubble wrap or padded mailer. Enclose order form and mail to Choristers Guild.
- Feel free to give us a call at 800-246-7478 if you have any questions! We are happy to help you through the process.

Do not send payment with your order. We will invoice you or charge your credit card if preferred. Shipping and handling charges will appear on invoice.

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PRESCHOOL PAGES

As you open these pages, perhaps you are barely into a brand new year. This calls for new materials—new ideas—new possibilities. Let's think in three categories . . .

LET'S DO IT! | LET'S REVIEW IT! | LET'S SING IT!

How about a sharing opportunity that will connect Christmas with the new year? Christmas has passed. The children have sung about the Baby Jesus. Why not maximize the thought that Jesus grew from a baby to be a little boy just like them?

LET'S DO IT! Have a Bible Picnic!

Invite parents to come to a Bible Days Picnic at rehearsal time. Publicize this several weeks ahead.

- Encourage everyone to come in robes or Biblical dress, but also provide pieces of fabric or a supply of robes and towels that parents and children can slip on upon arrival.
- Sit on the floor in family groups. Provide foods such as grapes, cheeses, breads, raisins, olives, etc.
- Play games that children might have played in Bible days (wooden blocks, husk dolls, counting games with stones).
- Two or three times during the picnic, group the children to sing for their parents. Choose songs that the children like—those they know without pressure to learn all new songs. Use instruments that might have been available in those times.
- Make family group photos. Print these and place in inexpensive frames as a year-end gift for each preschooler.

Make this a relaxed time of *teaching by doing* as you talk about the boy Jesus. Use Luke 2:39-52 as a guide. Encourage families to memorize verse 40 together.





LET'S REVIEW IT! What are we teaching?

Ask yourself: What things can I implement into my teaching that will help the preschoolers learn about music—not labeling those things, but giving the children ways to experience them weekly? Preschoolers should experience each of the elements of music in this check list. In you doing these things, you are providing them with developmentally appropriate experiences.

Rhythm

- steady beat/strong and weak beats/long and short sounds/sound and silence

Sample Activity:

Play environmental or non-pitched rhythm instruments to accompany an instrumental recording. Guide children to follow your steady beat. By using the instrumental track of a song they are learning, they will have opportunities to hear the melody without the distraction of words.

Pitch and Melody

- notes are same or different/notes move up or down or stay the same notes are high or low/notes have patterns

Sample Activity:

Play high notes or low notes on a keyboard as children select things that are high or low from assorted pictures (*birds in air, clouds, sun, grass, flowers, worms, etc.*) and place them high on a shelf or low on the floor.

Expression

- melodies are fast and slow/melodies are loud or soft/melodies can be happy or sad.

It's such a simple thing, but so important from that first preschool song to the most advanced adult anthem—to explain the text! Perhaps many texts explain themselves as "God Loves Me" and "Sing Praise to God." Others need a connection. When singing about a caterpillar, talk about this amazing tiny creature that God made, or the colors in the wings of a beautiful butterfly or a rainbow.

Sample Activity:

Display picture cards by pairs: something that moves fast (*rabbit or jet plane*) and something that moves slow (*turtle or dirt mover*); something that makes loud sounds (*whistle or trumpet*) and something that makes quiet sounds (*kitten or bird*). Select recordings that demonstrate each pair. Using one pair of cards, switch back and forth between pictures as the mood of the music changes. Copy the cards and let the children make the changes with you.

Form

– groups of notes can be same or different.

Sample Activity:

Identify phrases by demonstrating the length of a phrase. For example: while singing "Jesus loves me this I know," pull a length of rope from one hand and continue to stretch it until the phrase ends. Start a new pull for the second phrase, "For the Bible tells me so." Do the same for the third and fourth phrase. Explain that everyone can get a breath when each phrase ends. You may also call attention to the fact that phrases 1 and 3 are the same, while the others are different. Repeat the process, but allow volunteers to pull the rope through your hands.

Harmony

– melodies may be sung alone, or sung with instruments.

Sample Activity:

This one is simple. Sing a song without any accompaniment. Repeat it with autoharp, guitar chords, or an accompaniment CD. Perhaps one teacher can sing a melody and then repeat it, as another teacher sings harmony. Simply introduce children to that word and tell them this is what happens when notes sound together.

Any music reading goals? Are you kidding?

– for preschoolers, that is simply learning what those notes on a page mean.

Sample Activity:

Display pictures of animals with one syllable in their names: cat, pig, bird, cow, etc. (*easily found in simple coloring books or internet clip art*). Display these in sets of 4 as children speak and clap the animal names, following your steady beat. Ask them to hide their eyes as you change something. Substitute a 2 syllable picture card (*pony, mon-key, etc.*) for one of the cards. Ask children to open their eyes and identify the new animal. Speak and clap the pattern again, fitting the 2 syllable word into the steady beat. Occasionally turn a card over to display a blank card and whisper "rest." In addition to steady beat, you are now teaching iconic rhythm. Your preschoolers are beginning to read music!

How did you do on the check list? As a reward, let's move to our final category.



LET'S SING IT! A new song!

Here's a new song to prepare for Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents' Day, or when any of the caregivers come to visit! Use it anytime to help each child know he or she is special!

Special

Nan Grantham

My fam'-ly is so spe-cial, as spe-cial as can be. I know my fam'-ly loves me. They
 7 take good care of me. My fam'-ly gives me all I need; show love in ev'-ry way.____
 13 Thank You, God, for fam-lies; a gift from you each day.____ Do you know what my fam'-ly says?
 19 What they say to me? My fam' - ly says I'm spe-cial, spe - cial as can be!_____

Nan Grantham©2015 All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Change the word family to specific family members (mommy, daddy, etc.) when using the song for a special occasion.

Continue collecting favorite songs for an "end-of-year" presentation. We will look at how to put them together specifically for your audience and in a non-threatening way for both children and teachers. Also, we will look at one more check list—checking to see if we have developed good singing habits. See you in the April/May issue!



Nan Grantham holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Mississippi College, Clinton MS, in Music Education. Her career has included both public and private school teaching and private and class piano. She has served on church music staffs in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, retiring from Second Baptist Church in Houston. Her *Language of Music* series was published by Chorister's Guild. Throughout her career Nan has written songs and curriculum for Lifeway's Children's Music Series, and was on the inaugural writing team for *Growing in Grace* Children's Music Curriculum for which she is still a contributor. Nan continues to work with the Houston Children's Chorus, and is an active volunteer at her church.

The **INSTITUTE CORNER**

The Choristers Guild Institute | July 26 - August 1, 2015 | Wingate University, Wingate, NC

The CG Institute is a three-stage (one week for three summers) certification program for choral directors of children's and youth choirs (Grades K-8) in churches and church schools. Our program is based on the belief that children are artistic, creative, musical and worshipful beings. We recognize that children's church choir directors have a unique calling to lead children toward more meaningful and effective participation in worship through music.

CORE CLASSES

Each day CG Institute participants attend Elective and Special Topic classes in addition to the following CORE classes: Choral Methods, Voice Modeling Class, Conducting, and Pedagogy (Teaching Skills).

CHORAL METHODS

Sample material covered over 3 years

- Score study/marketing the score
- Analyzing music for teaching
- Making a schedule for learning an anthem
- The Emerging Voice of adolescent males
- Our role as conductor / voice teachers
- Mechanics of the voice
- Activating the body for singing
- Voice building in the rehearsal
- Rehearsal techniques
- Teaching musical concepts
- Rehearsal schedule template
- Singer placement: physical & vocal
- Range consideration
- Ideas for vocal engaging: breath, tension, singing flat/sharp, placement
- Motivating adolescents
- Rehearsal sequencing and resources
- Rehearsal goals
- Working with or without the piano
- Learning styles of singers
- Expressive singing
- Choosing repertoire

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Mark Patterson 2015



Kenney Potter 2012-14



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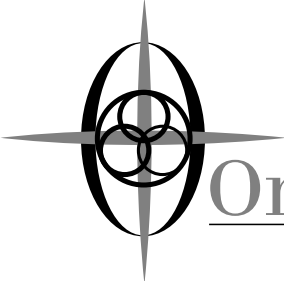
Nadia Bolz-Weber, Worship Preacher and Plenary Speaker
Mark Miller, Worship Leader and Plenary Speaker
Constance Cherry, Plenary Speaker
Michael Hawn, Worship Preacher and Plenary Speaker
John Holbert, Morning Worship and Bible Study Leader
Michael Keller and the Circle City Ringers, Handbell Pre-Event

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Calendar of Events

FLORIDA

March 7, 2015

Twenty-Fourth Annual Festival
College Park Baptist Church
1914 Edgewater Drive, Orlando, FL 32804
Contact: Bonnie Litteral bblitteral@aol.com

GEORGIA

January 23-24, 2015

Mid-Winter Workshop
Peachtree Road United Methodist Church
3180 Peachtree Road NE
Atlanta, GA 30305
Clinicians: Terry Price, Ken Berg, Michael Burkhardt,
Mary Louise Wilson
Register: www.cgatlanta.org

February 7, 2015

Youth Choir Festival
First Baptist Gainesville
751 Green Street NW
Gainesville, GA 30501
Clinician: Mark Miller
Contact: Betsy Homer betsy@roswellpres.org

July 12-17, 2015

Mabel Boyter Choir Camp for grades 3-8
Reinhardt University
7300 Reinhardt College Circle
Waleska, GA 30183
Contact: Betsy Homer betsy@roswellpres.org

INDIANA

February 28-March 1, 2015

The Mennonite Children's Choir Festival
Sauder Hall, Goshen College
1700 S Main St
Goshen, IN 46526
Clinician: Janeal Krehbiel
Contact: Sharon Basinger Lehman
basingerlehman@yahoo.com

MISSOURI

January 25, 2015

Youth Choir Festival
Village Presbyterian Church
6641 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66208
Clinician: Bryan Taylor
Contact: Suanne Comfort music@raytowncc.org

DID YOU KNOW...

As a Choristers Guild member, you can list your church's event on this Calendar of Events page? Email your listing to Susan at seernisse@mailcg.org three months prior to your event. Listings are admitted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

TO LIST YOUR CHAPTER EVENT

Send your listing to membership@mailcg.org with complete information. Include dates, location, clinicians, and contact information. For additional advertising, contact advertising@mailcg.org.

NORTH CAROLINA

February 28, 2015

Sing for Joy! Children's Choir Festival
Apex United Methodist Church
100 S. Hughes Street, Apex, NC 27502
Clinician: Ann Doyle
Contact: Patti Cook pccok@fumc-cary.org

TEXAS

January 16-17, 2015

Dallas Church Music Workshop
Lovers Lane United Methodist Church
9200 Inwood Road
Dallas, TX 75220
Clinicians: Robert Edwin, Tom Trenney, Janeal Krehbiel, Ellen Cavendish Phillips, Henry Leck, Kimberly Bracken Long, Jason Krug, Derrick Brookins, Pamela Ott
Contact: Jason Chavarria
president@dallaschaptercg.com

March 1, 2015

Children's and Youth Choral Festival
Holy Covenant United Methodist Church
22111 Morton Ranch Road
Katy, Texas 77449
Clinicians: Stephanie Poyner, Linda Harley, Carey Cannon
Contact: webmaster@houstoncg.org

WASHINGTON

April 18, 2015

God Does Wonders
Des Moines United Methodist Church
22225 Ninth Avenue South
Des Moines, WA 98198
Clinician: Rebekah Gilmore

New Members

OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2015

ARIZONA

Daniel Schwartz, Tempe

CALIFORNIA

Cynthia Anderson, Long Beach
Jerilyn "Cookie" Clayton, Gardena
Deborah Pasarow, Buena Park
Lydia Valdez, Carmichael

COLORADO

Mandy Todd, Colorado Springs

FLORIDA

Mireya Medina, Key Biscayne

GEORGIA

Greta Glenn, Ellenwood
Suzanne Shull, Atlanta

INDIANA

Jean Reed, Warsaw

LOUISIANA

M. Ellene Owens,
Pineville

MARYLAND

Dr. Norman Endlich,
Ijamsville

MICHIGAN

Corrie Spurlin,
Milford

MINNESOTA

Angela Anderson,
St. Louis Park
Sarah Schmiede,
New Ulm

NEW YORK

Gail Shepherd,
Buffalo

NORTH CAROLINA

Beverly Alt,
Summerfield

OHIO

Ruth Goodson, Sharon Center
Alison MacDonald, Strongsville
Mary Schwarz, Columbus

PENNSYLVANIA

Michael Burrows, State College

TENNESSEE

Janene Brackbill, Simpsonville
Sandy Neal Smith, Johnson City

TEXAS

Kathleen Atteberry, Ft. Worth
Linda Fletcher, Rowlett
Jessica Guest, Houston
Lauren Markham,
North Richland Hills

VIRGINIA

Claire Dubas, Harrisonburg
Renatha Saunders, Alexandria

WASHINGTON

Rochelle LaGrone, Kent
Lynn Rupp, Silverdale

WISCONSIN

Bethel Schmiede, Madison

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Kay Linkletter, Charlottetown, PE



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Children's Choir Devotionals

BY BETSY HENDERSON



Photo Credit:
Chapel Choir, Belmont United
Methodist Church, Nashville, TN.
Amy Cooper, Director.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 1

SCRIPTURE:

And the child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him. *Luke 2:40 NKJV (Extended reading, Luke 2: 22-40)*

DEVOTIONAL:

In a school music class of young children, the teacher was helping the students get excited about learning a song with a clown theme. They were asked to *pretend* they were putting on large, floppy shoes, funny hats, baggy clothes, and big, red noses. When they were ready, one child asked if they could stay *all dressed up* to show their classroom teacher at the end of music class. Such is the innocence of a child ready to grow strong, filled with wisdom and grace as Jesus was. This scripture from Luke is the only reference to the life of Jesus between his birth and becoming an adult. It tells us all we seek to know, however. Jesus fulfilled all the promise in His

childhood to withstand what was to come in his life. He was going about his Father's business. Are we?

PRAYER:

Dear Father of all children, Thank you for knowing us as your own, no matter our names or ages. Thank you for teaching us lessons about life through the gift of insight along the way. Help us be mindful of and grateful for those who teach us. May we know the joy of growing and becoming fully who we are as your children. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1221: *Come To Me* by Margaret Tucker, unison/two-part



Betsy Henderson is currently the Children's Music Coordinator at First United Methodist Church in Garland, Texas, and is the former Fine Arts Coordinator for Garland ISD. Betsy has served as elementary state chairman for both Texas Music Educators Association and Texas Choral Directors Association, receiving TCDA's Choral Excellence Award in 2006. She was on the authorship team for two international music textbook series, *Share the Music* and *Spotlight on Music* for Macmillan/McGraw-Hill Company as well as the sole author of teacher resources published by Hal Leonard Corporation. She is a co-author of *Praise Takes Flight*, a new resource book for children's choir directors, published by Choristers Guild.

WEEK OF FEBRUARY 8

SCRIPTURE:

Now in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place, and there He prayed. *Mark 1:35 NKJV (Extended reading Mark 1: 29-39)*

DEVOTIONAL:

Our church children's choir rehearsals always include prayer time. Perhaps we close with a prayer circle as several members express joys and concerns. On other days, there might just be time for a closing prayer given by an adult or child who feels comfortable about praying aloud. At early rehearsals in a new choir year, some children step from their comfort zones to pray in front of others. The other extreme would be our Libby, who prays easily and sincerely each time. Hearing her confident voice makes it obvious that prayer is indeed her lifeline. When her mother was told about Libby's beautiful prayers, she

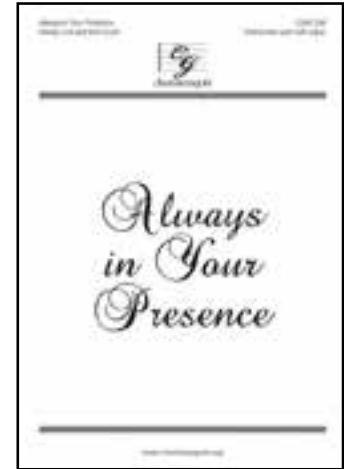
laughingly asked if it took thirty minutes for her to cover everything she felt in her heart! Not quite!

PRAYER:

Dear Father of all who pray, Inspire us to seek you frequently, about big things and small things. Remind us of answered prayers in our lives so that your presence is very real to us. Teach us the power of constant prayer, helping us feel you near and listening. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1298: *Always in Your Presence* by Randy Cox and Kris Crunk, unison with piano



WEEK OF FEBRUARY 15 | WEEK OF ASH WEDNESDAY

SCRIPTURE:

Sing praises to the Lord, you saints of His, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name. *Psalms 30:4 NKJV (Extended reading Psalm 30)*

DEVOTIONAL:

For a special occasion, a children's choir prepared a performance piece involving a circle activity. At designated places in the music, each child turned to a partner (person on one side), then back to a corner (person on the other side) for rhythmic interaction. All the rehearsals went like clockwork, but on the night of the performance, one child didn't show up to perform! "Uh oh!" you might be thinking, and you would be right. Someone's partner or corner was missing in action. Perfection was lost, but instead of mass confusion, all the children turned to the congregation and

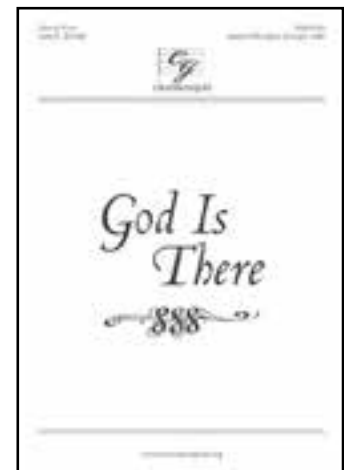
sang their hearts out, as if planned. God received glory and honor that night in an unexpected way. Have you noticed that God always has a back-up plan?

PRAYER:

Dear Father of those who must be absent, Help us remember to thank you for our many blessings often each day. Let our souls rejoice and sing praises at your goodness. May your glory fill the earth, the skies, and our hearts. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1323: *God is There* by Larry Schultz, unison, piano with violin



WEEK OF FEBRUARY 22

SCRIPTURE:

I set My rainbow in the cloud and it shall be for you the sign of the covenant between Me and the earth...the waters shall never again flood to destroy all flesh. *Genesis 9:13, 15 NKJV (Extended reading Genesis (9): 8-17)*

DEVOTIONAL:

Definition—A *covenant* is a solemn, formal and binding agreement; a promise between two parties. What a wonder it is that we can still see the evidence of God's covenant with his people by looking skyward after a big rainstorm. A rainbow is a reminder that God cared for people long ago, and still keeps his promise to us today as stated in the Bible. Lauren had a line in our spring musical that we were always anxious to hear. "I LOVE rainbows!" she said, "Do you think rainbows can be a sign from God to encourage us?" She delivered that message so well that she was totally believed

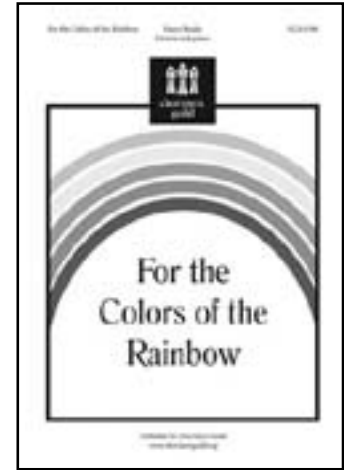
each time. Perhaps you are ready to make a covenant with God. Read and study God's Word to get started.

PRAYER:

Dear Father—Keeper of Promises, Help us know you better as a covenant keeper. May we marvel and rejoice in the sign that comes to us as a reminder of your faithful care. Thanks for choosing our favorite colors for this special gift on display. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA 1198: *For the Colors of the Rainbow* by Nancy Raabe, unison with piano



WEEK OF MARCH 1

SCRIPTURE:

All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord and all the families of the nations shall worship before You. *Psalms 22:27 NKJV (Extended reading Psalm 22: 23-31)*

DEVOTIONAL:

We are all members of many *families*: home; school; church; choir; team; and more! Have you ever been through the experience of being the *new kid*? Our church choir, consisting of children who have known each other for several years, stepped up to the plate this year in an unplanned way. Two brand new boys appeared at the door, ready to join our group. With no chance to prepare the choir members to welcome the newcomers, they could easily have been shunned as outsiders. Instead these new members were made to feel at home from the very start. After several weeks, you could no longer tell who the newcomers were

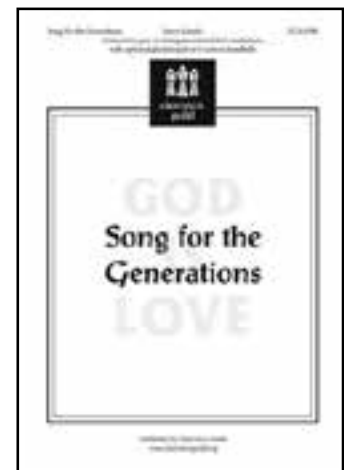
because of smiles all around and new friendships taking shape. We serve God together as one happy family!

PRAYER:

Dear Father of Newcomers, Thank you for the marvelous gift of family. Help us remember that all children belong to you, being chosen by you. Let us honor the love and closeness of those closest to us, making us all one family in your name. Teach us to always be on the welcoming committee. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1208: *Song for the Generations* by Larry Schultz, unison/two-part or intergenerational choir with optional glockenspiel and handbells



WEEK OF MARCH 8

SCRIPTURE:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work. *Exodus 20:8-10 NKJV (Extended reading Exodus 20: 1-17)*

DEVOTIONAL:

Growing up in my small home town, it seemed that everyone went to Sunday school and church. All the stores were closed on Sundays in order to keep the Sabbath Day sacred. No one even did yard work. Later, as a mom with children of my own, we found that families still went to church, but many others did not. Today the numbers of children who regularly attend worship is dwindling. It is becoming more and more difficult to plan special church activities and events on Sundays because children are involved in sports and other activities. What

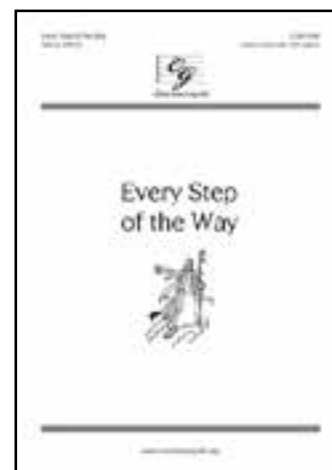
kinds of activities do you have on Sunday mornings in your town? What are some things you can do to honor the Sabbath Day as God planned?

PRAYER:

Dear Father, Thank you for giving us a place in a caring, faithful church family. Remind us to be present each week so we don't miss important lessons, and help us to cherish the blessings we receive. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1246: *Every Step of the Way* by Nancy Gifford, unison/two part



WEEK OF MARCH 15

SCRIPTURE:

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10 NKJV (Extended reading Ephesians 2: 1-10)

DEVOTIONAL:

Christians are examples of God's workmanship, but that comes with a BIG responsibility. Sometimes people look at a child who *acts out* and say, "That child is a piece of work," which usually is not a good thing. Dylan has been an example of God's workmanship since she was quite young. She is always present, on time, prepared, pleasant and kind. She willingly volunteers when a need arises, and regularly wears a smile. She is an example for others as she strives to do her best to learn and follow God's plan. All the talent and grace God gave her is being

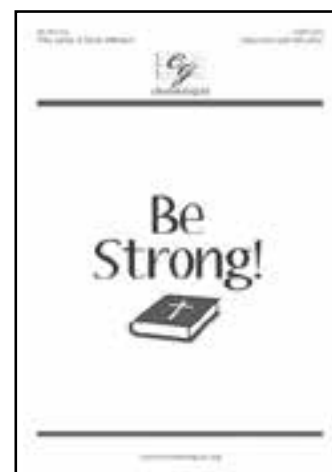
used to the fullest. One look at Dylan and without a doubt, you see God's workmanship. Look in a mirror and what do you see?

PRAYER:

Dear Father, Thank you for knowing and understanding us as our Creator. May our lights shine before others as examples of your workmanship. Help us grow in spirit and strength, displaying your handiwork. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1325, *Be Strong* by Sandy Wilkerson, unison/two part



WEEK OF MARCH 22

SCRIPTURE:

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Psalm 51:10 NKJV (Extended reading Psalm 51)

DEVOTIONAL:

Bennett began attending *big church* when he was just a toddler. His reverence was obvious when other children his age were in the nursery during the worship hour. He could recite the "Lord's Prayer" at age three, and soon even learned the Apostle's Creed. Recently our congregation divided into groups to take a prayer walk in the neighborhood around the church. Bennett, now a first grader, was in my group. I watched him stop to pray along the way. He would stand still, close his eyes, and put his hand on a fence, wall, or sign long enough to whisper his

own sincere words. Others in the group knew that God was listening to Bennett and heard his prayers—not just that day, but every day. God listens to your prayers, too.

PRAYER:

Dear Father of Clean Hearts, Let us always be ready to give you our hearts and our prayers. Keep our minds open to hear what you have to say and to receive your blessings. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA879: "Create in Me a Clean Heart" by Jeff Reeves, unison/two part



WEEK OF MARCH 29 (PALM SUNDAY)

SCRIPTURE:

The next day a great multitude that had come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went out to meet Him, and cried out, "Hosanna, Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. The King of Israel!" *John 12:12-13 NKJV (Extended reading John 12: 12-16)*

DEVOTIONAL:

Every year the children in our church are reminded of the two special words to remember on Palm Sunday, *Hosanna!* and on Easter, *Alleluia!* After those special celebrations last year, very young children were asked to remember the word they chanted on Palm Sunday. Craig's excited reply was, "Pajamas!" Perhaps a similar sounding word was what he remembered, but he could tell the whole story of Jesus riding triumphantly into the city on a donkey. *Hosanna* is the Hebrew word for "save us we pray," not a word children use often. Imagine what it would have been like to

stand with the people who were anxious to see Jesus approaching. Would you have joined the parade to welcome him as the King of Kings? *Hosanna!*

PRAYER:

Dear Lord, Thank you for your life-giving power, and for making yourself known in a simple, humble way. We welcome you into our hearts as Redeemer, King of Kings! Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1394: "Hosanna" Sing to Our Great King! by Trevor Manor, unison/two-part with piano and optional handbells



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Volume 66 | Issue 6



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From the Editor

*"Easter People, Raise Your Voices!"**

Spring is a time for new beginnings, and yet in the world of church children's choirs, it is a time of endings or completions. If we aren't careful, we may resort to just "getting it done". That is no way for Easter people to live. The last night of choir should be just as invigorating as the first! There should be just as much preparation and energy put into ending the choir year as was put into the annual fall kickoff.

That final night will often be your last opportunity to have an influence in the lives of precious children as they age out of your group. With our very transient society, we can't assume that we will have another chance next fall. Life happens all year long and children are caught up in the changes, sometimes with very little notice to teachers and choir directors. Keeping that in mind may help us to bring our best game to choir every week—the first night, the last night, and every night in between. Yep! Even the night you have laryngitis...the night you left all your notes and plans on the kitchen table as you raced out the door for church...the night every child in your choir apparently consumed way too much sugar!

In this Easter season of new life and new beginnings, let us be aware of every opportunity to celebrate the Resurrection life and live as Easter People.

Keep singing the song!

-Susan



SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS!

I would love to have more photos of your groups to share in *The Chorister!* Please submit your high resolution photos to: seernisse@mailcg.org



P.S. As you make plans for your spring programs, consider items in this issue:

- Preschool Pages* (page 27) – Nan Grantham has some excellent tips for preschool programs
- Anthem Feature* (page 16) – Dan Edwards has a great arrangement of Hevenu Shalom Aleichem that could serve as a memorable benediction for your younger and older children's choirs.
- Vocal Technique for Church Choirs, Part One* (page 10) – Matthew Hoch offers his expertise for improving rehearsal techniques in choirs of all ages.

*Hymn text of William M. James.

From the Sacred Choral Editor

Like many of you, our family saw *Into the Woods* a few months ago during Christmas break. Our kids have always loved musicals and now they're getting old enough to identify with certain characters. Our five-year-old is fiercely asserting her independence and learning about good and bad choices, so it was no surprise she loved Little Red Riding Hood. Our seven-year-old son immediately identified with Jack. A growing sense of adventure, the comfort of his home and family, and even the attachment to a seemingly unlovable object—yes, these characteristics describe Ben to a tee.

Ben was singing Jack's song, "Giants in the Sky," as we left the movie theater. Because there is so much text—and it moves so fast!—we found a video with the text so he could practice. It took him just a few days to learn the song. It sings about the thrill of adventure—climbing the beanstalk, coming face-to-face with giants—as well as rediscovering the home you love and the people who love you. We hear Ben singing "Giants in the Sky" almost every day. The song is such a positive soundtrack for our son's life that we often listen to it on the way to school. Ben has never jumped out of the car with a bigger smile.

I'm reminded of the many songs that have stuck with my church choristers, the songs they come into choir singing (even months after, right?) and ask to sing for years to come. I keep the director's copy of these pieces in a special file. Each piece is covered with Post-Its noting the date and the choristers. What fun it is to look through the file and remember those experiences! **Here's my short list:**

CGA1222 This Is the Day (Mark Burrows)
CGA1091 Do Unto Others (Vicki Hancock Wright)
CGA 1184 Use Your Gifts (Lynn Shaw Bailey and Becki Slagle Mayo)
CGA1212 Antiphonal Alleluia (James Brighton)
CGA1135 Bethlehem Night (Terry Taylor)
"The Fruit of the Vine" from CGC54 *Can't Wait to Sing! 2* (Mark Patterson)
"Choices" from CGC56 *Again, I Say Rejoice!* (Mark Burrows)

As the choir year comes to a close in the coming weeks, what songs are your choristers singing as they leave the church doors? No doubt you've chosen the songs that will leave smiles on their faces and melodies in their hearts.

*A blessed Easter
season to all of you!*

-Katie



From the Executive Director

Please note in this issue the list of wonderful people who contributed generously to the Choristers Guild mission in 2014. We are so grateful for these partners who make the work of Choristers Guild possible! Also note on the bottom right of page 2 the list of those who have included Choristers Guild in their will or other planned giving. What a joy it is to have Helen Kemp, who is among those listed on page 2, and now 97 years young on March 31, providing a special message regarding planned giving in this issue:



Dear Guilders,

"You don't have to do big things, but the little things you are doing in your little corner of influence must be done with great conviction, great wisdom, great beauty and great love". This is a direct quote from our founder Ruth Jacob's Notebook. After Ruth's untimely death in 1960, her husband Leslie Jacobs sent me a box of treasures, unfinished projects, unpublished articles and of singular value, her Notebook. For 10 years Ruth and I had been traveling the same path, discovering the challenges, the joys and the possibilities of children's choirs in churches. My first articles were written for Ruth's early publication

called The Letters, which were typed, mimeographed and sent from her kitchen office in Santa Barbara, CA. John and I and our three very young children joined her in one of the first Choristers Guild summer seminars in Appleton, WI. Ruth's passionate philosophy of the value of children's choirs in churches and the great need for training volunteer and professional directors, was the beginning of what is now the superb Choristers Guild Institute. This growth has happened because Jim Rindelaub and his gifted and dedicated team have created a way to bring our beloved Guild into the 21st century, in ways that our founder could have only dreamed.

Because I see the wonderful ways in which the original intent of Choristers Guild is being upheld and propelled through good times and hard times, I have remembered the Guild in my Will. I hope you will consider doing the same. "You don't have to do big things"...but each planned gift given with conviction, wisdom, beauty and love, will assure that the worthy mission of Choristers Guild will continue to make our world a better place.

Alleluia! Helen Kemp

Huge thanks to Helen for the inspiration she provides and for choosing to support Choristers Guild into perpetuity! Helen has inspired so many of us in children's choir ministry. One of those is new to our National Board of Directors. Please welcome Stephanie McIlwain Miller whose Choristers Guild days began when she earned her award pin in the St. Cecelia Girls' Choir at the First United Methodist Church in South Charleston, West Virginia and has led to her graduation from the Choristers Guild Institute last summer. She currently serves as the Director of Young People's Music Ministries at Lake Washington United Methodist Church in Kirkland, WA. Thanks to Stephanie for sharing her passion for the Choristers Guild mission:



The mission of Choristers Guild is to enable leaders to nurture the spiritual and musical growth of children and youth. I have been asked to share with you why I believe in this mission enough to share my time and talent as a national board member and Chorister Guild Institute alumna and my treasure to the extent that my husband's and my donation to Choristers Guild in 2015 will be second only to that which we give our church. This wasn't always the case. I have always believed that young people's music ministry is important. However, in recent years I have witnessed firsthand the profound difference that combining the message of God's all-encompassing love with music can make in people's lives. Parents thanked me because church choir is one of the few "normal" activities that does not exclude their special needs child. A former choir member shared that one night when he was seriously considering that there might not be a reason to go on living, the shuffle play on his i-Pod landed on a song he had learned in youth choir that reminded him that he was not alone. My aged mother, for days very confused and frightened in the hospital following emergency surgery, consistently became more lucid and calm when I sang hymns to her. And years later, following her sudden death, I was overwhelmed with sadness, but found that I could face the first days without her by singing, "God is here today; as certain as the air I breathe, as certain as the morning sun that rises, as certain when I sing you'll hear my song." How can I not give my time, talent, and treasure to an organization that facilitates blessings like these—especially now that I know that membership fees and product sales alone are not enough for Choristers Guild to continue to grow in service? It is an honor and a privilege for me to be able to support and serve. If you also believe that what we do as directors of choirs for children and youth is life-changing for those young people, I hope you will join me in giving a gift that is significant to you to the organization whose mission is to enable us in our music ministry.

"Dios está aquí (God Is Here Today)" from *Halle, Halle: We Sing the World Round*. Words from Mexico, tr. C. Michael Hawn, 1998. Music from Mexico, arr. C. Michael Hawn and Arturo González, 1999. Translation and arrangement © 1999 Choristers Guild.

CHORISTERS GUILD YEAR END FINANCIAL RESULTS

Thanks so much to Stephanie for so generously giving her time, talent and treasure! Gifts like this make it a pleasure to share with you the positive Choristers Guild audited financial results for 2013. Your support through memberships, music purchases, webinar and education event registrations, advertisement purchases and contributions led to an excellent 2013. This is so important in helping the organization recoup reserves which were needed during the recession. I am pleased that initial unaudited results indicate the organization will also be in the black for 2014. 2015 is a planned red year as we work to develop the new school choral series. As sales grow in coming years we believe this series will be an important part of Choristers Guild's longer term financial foundation. Thanks for your important part in creating this firm foundation for the future of Choristers Guild!

2013 AUDITED RESULTS

Sales Revenues	\$ 943,647
Membership Dues	177,796
Conferences	44,612
Advertising	23,380
Other Revenues	57,204
Contributions & Fundraising	51,155
Investment Income	16,902
Investment Gains & Losses	34,629
Total	1,349,325
Publishing Costs	681,649
Membership Costs	188,295
Education Costs	76,163
General & Admin Costs	339,631
Total	1,285,738
Change in net assets	63,587

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(Those in bold received a match through participation in the DonorBridge North Texas Giving Day.)

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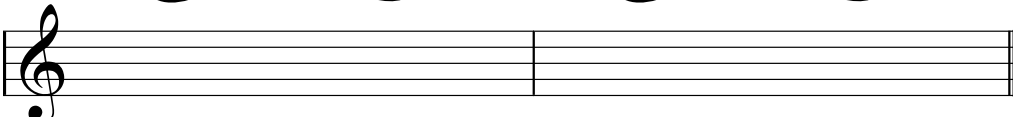
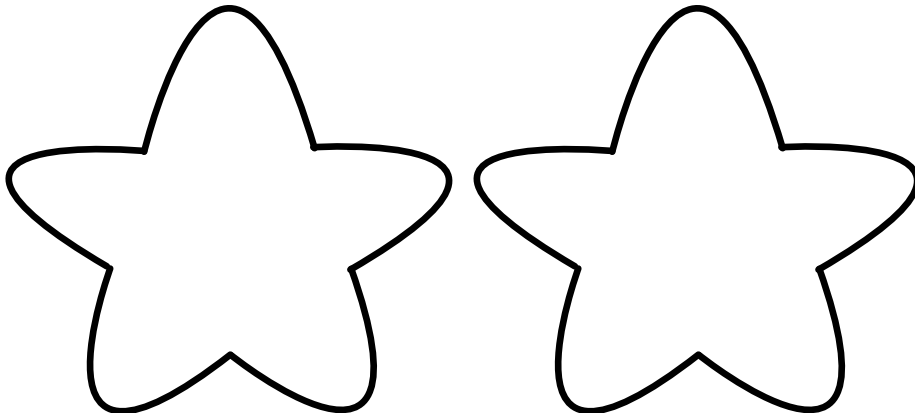
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Vocal Technique for Church Choirs:

ACHIEVING MAXIMUM POTENTIAL FROM
YOUR VOLUNTEERS, PART ONE



BY MATTHEW HOCH, DMA

PHOTO CREDIT: CUMBERLAND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH,
GERMANTOWN, TN, LINDA WARREN, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

The job of a church musician is multifaceted and complicated. The choirmaster or minister of music is simultaneously a musical leader, repertoire planner, literature and style expert, vocal technician, teacher of musicianship, and (often times) a pianist or organist. This list does not include a host of other logistical duties, such as attending meetings, taking attendance, making rosters and seating charts, bookkeeping, routine organization and communication, and the list goes on! In churches, the choir director assumes a profoundly important additional role: he or she is also a pastoral leader in the community and the liaison between his or her ministry, the clergy, lay leadership, and the congregation. How is anyone to be fully prepared for such a formidable list of responsibilities?

This article addresses the technical and musical challenges one typically encounters as a church choir director. It is primarily geared toward choirmasters who work with groups comprised of all volunteers or mostly volunteers. This type of ensemble probably describes the principal ensemble of a majority of church music programs in the United States. Due to the length of this discussion, I have divided the article into two serialized parts. The focus of Part One is upon strategies to improve your choir's vocal technique,

musicianship, and segues into a discussion of part assignments and seating formations.

Every church music position is different, and no one set of ideas will result in solutions to every unique challenge a choirmaster faces. Nevertheless, I have found the following concepts to be helpful in my positions as an Episcopal choirmaster who has worked with volunteer ensembles in several program-sized parishes.

Vocal Technique in the Choral Rehearsal

My background is that of a singer and vocal pedagogue. My DMA is in vocal performance, and I have spent the past ten years as a full-time voice teacher in higher education. This background and *day job* directly informs my work as a choral director and church musician. One could argue that all choral directors are voice teachers, and this description is profoundly true when one works with volunteers, many of whom have never had any kind of formal voice training.

The choir warm-up that opens most rehearsals is an obvious place for a weekly technical *check in*. Every successful choir warms up, even professional ones. In some circles, a rumor persists that it is somehow more professional to forego the use of warm-ups, instead trusting the singers to arrive *ready to sing*. As someone who has sung with some of the best professional choirs in the country, I can assure you that this is an urban myth. The best professional choirs do indeed warm up on a regular basis. This time of focus at the beginning of rehearsal goes beyond the physical warm up

of the voice; it also gives singers an opportunity to focus, listen, engage their minds, match vowels, and achieve balance across the sections of the ensemble. Choirs literally find their sound during the warm-up before proceeding to the repertoire itself (and applying it there).

Almost thirty years ago, the eminent vocal pedagogue Richard Miller (1926–2009) released his seminal book entitled *The Structure of Singing* (Schirmer, 1986). While there have been some

significant advances in scientific research on the singing voice since its publication, this “Burgundy Bible” (as it is affectionately known among vocal pedagogues) introduced a logical approach to vocal pedagogy that is still affirmed by the majority of American voice teachers.

Perhaps most useful is Miller’s breakdown of the various elements of vocal technique. **The first five chapters of *The Structure of Singing* systematically address the following topics:**

- (1) *Onset and Release (Establishing Muscle Equilibrium)*
- (2) *Breath Management (Support)*
- (3) *Agility/Flexibility*
- (4) *Resonance*
- (5) *Vowel Balancing and Differentiation*

Although Miller’s taxonomy is geared toward the training of classical soloists, it also provides the choral director with a recipe for the basic technical elements that comprise an effective (and technique-building) vocal warm-up. Most choral educators and voice teachers would agree that the basic fundamentals of vocal technique apply to singing in general, regardless of whether one is primarily as soloist or chorister. **In my choral warm-ups, I essentially retain Miller’s breakdown elements with a slight reordering and reorganization:**

- (1) *Posture*
- (2) *Breath Management (Support)*
- (3) *Onset and Release (Establishing Muscle Equilibrium)*
- (4) *Agility/Flexibility*
- (5) *Vowel Balancing and Differentiation*
- (6) *Resonance (Specific Choral Exercises)*

In my taxonomy, I extract **Posture** as its own category. While Miller certainly advocates good posture in singing, he discusses it under the category of **Breath Management**. With volunteer singers, I feel that **Posture** should be set apart

and placed first (at the beginning of the warm-up). Beginning with stretching and a reminder of erect, “noble” posture then paves the way for breath management exercises.

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The rest of Miller's order is retained with the exception of **Resonance**, which I station as the final part of the warm-up. Solo resonance—which strives for “formant tuning” or the operatic “ring”—is less of a priority for the chorister, who is more or less striving to make his or her voice conform to others, thus becoming seamless part of the choral fabric. My “choral resonance” exercises are more about blending (both within a section and across the ensemble), chord balancing, and achieving overtones than about making individual voices project in a soloistic way.

The specific vocalises the choral director uses during vocal warm-ups are less important than making sure the various areas of vocal technique listed above are covered. A topic should never be omitted. For example, always do at least one agility exercise, and always make sure that all vowels are practiced during any given warm-up. My warm-ups are essentially variations on Vaccai, Concone, and Miller, but there are many other equally solid exercises one can use. Feel free to invent your own as well! One vocalise should lead to the next in a progressive and logical way. Years ago, a teacher

of mine outlined the following, simple strategy: “Low before high, soft before loud, fast before slow.” The only thing I might add is “middle voice before low,” but simple enough—these are good ideas.

While the group warm-up is important, only so much can be accomplished in a short amount of time. Also, group warm-ups do not allow the director to work with individual voices. Choir directors should form relationships with local voice teachers who can offer one-on-one lessons to motivated choir members. Just having a small percentage of one's choir enrolled in voice lessons can make a huge difference in the ensemble's sound.

Are there any differences between being a solo singer and a chorister? Yes, of course. Appropriate use of vibrato in comes to mind, as well as resonance strategies and articulation (including use of legato in the *bel canto* sense). Essentially, however, soloists and choristers benefit from the same vocal training. “One technique—different styles” is a good motto for singers to adopt. Everyone can benefit from good posture, breath management, onset and release, agility, vowel balancing, and resonance.

Developing Musicianship and Sight Reading Skills

Many churches require their singers to audition for the choir, even for volunteer positions. This is a good practice to establish. In my particular church positions, I have never rejected anyone from membership, but auditions have served as a kind of “vocal interview,” allowing me the opportunity to get to know individual voices on a more intimate level. Auditions should consist of vocalizations that assess the singer's range, color, and flexibility, and musicianship can also be gauged through sight singing exercises. Directors should develop a simple audition rubric and take notes on these skills. He or she should also “take notes” on each

singer, commenting descriptively on the unique qualities in a particular voice or the challenges that the individual singer might have. All of this is helpful information to have on hand when assigning parts and seating the choir.

If a singer struggles with musicianship or basic sight reading skills, it may be helpful to encourage them to study some basic music theory or keyboard via a local piano teacher or university student. Like voice lessons, even a small percentage of choristers pursuing such opportunities can really boost the skill level of the group as a whole. There are also

myriad apps and websites designed to teach basic musicianship. These days, singers can even learn their key signatures or do ear training exercises on their smartphones!

The choirmaster can also reinforce basic musicianship during rehearsal on a regular basis by giving his or her choristers routine opportunities to sight read. When introducing a new anthem, it is good practice to read through the entire piece from beginning to end without stopping—no matter how many notes are missed! While in some ways counterintuitive, encouraging volunteers to keep going—even through a train wreck—actually

increases their confidence in the long run. I do not honor requests to play someone's part until I have given the choir an opportunity to attempt the passage at least two or three times on their own. Encouraging singers to struggle with the score—singing up when the notes go up and down when the notes go down, pointing out that a certain syllable comes on the "and" of beat two, etc.—builds a better and more musically literate ensemble. Insisting that they mark their scores is also key. The pencil jar on the piano should always be full. Yes, it's annoying that the pencils always *walk away*, but stop by the store on your way to church and keep it full anyway—it will be worth the effort!

Part Assignments and Formations

Sometimes, volunteers have strong ideas regarding where they should sit and what part they should sing. If they have been singing in choirs a long time—perhaps even the *same* choir for decades—it has even become part of their identity. These individuals may act defensively or be skeptical about making a change. A new choirmaster's efforts improve the ensemble by revisiting part assignments or choir formation may be met with some resistance, particularly if his or her predecessor did not take control of these logistics. Nevertheless, the decision to what parts individuals sing and where they sit rests squarely with the director. It is one of his or her duties, just like picking and planning the repertoire; few choristers would argue that they should have input on these matters.

As mentioned above, individual voices can be assessed during choir auditions. Choirmasters who are new to a position should take the time to get to know individual voices either before or after rehearsals, or even during small group sectional work. Every effort should be made to familiarize oneself with each and every singer's voice as soon as possible. Many times, a singer is indeed singing

the correct part, but sometimes they are not, and these individuals should always accept the diagnosis of the director. For example, an alto may have a beautiful, undiscovered high range that she never knew she had because no one took the time to work with her on her head voice. Or perhaps an older singer used to indeed be a soprano or tenor, but now should begin singing a lower part later in life. Or perhaps that soprano is not a soprano at all, but no one ever worked with her to build her musicianship and confidence when singing the non-melodic alto part. If handled professionally, most singers are willing to make adjustments for the greater good of the ensemble's sound.

Occasionally, one encounters male altos or female tenors in his ensemble. Personally, I welcome male altos (as long as they sing well) because I happen to love the sound for the repertoire I conduct, which is mostly Anglican choral music. The English choral tradition is historically an all-male one, with countertenors singing alto in falsetto while boy trebles with unchanged voices execute the soprano line. In other words, there is precedent: examples of this phenomenon can be easily found in the

professional choral world. The practice of females singing tenor, on the other hand, should be abolished for several reasons. First, it is impossible for women (who are technically mezzos or contraltos, not tenors) to adequately sing the tenor line without resorting to a growly, unwelcome sound in the bottom of their chest voices. This approach is not in a reasonable tessitura for most women and is of questionable vocal health. It also tends to negatively affect choral blend across the ensemble. Finally, the “belty” sound that results is also reminiscent of barbershop music and completely out-of-style in most sacred choral genres. I do not permit this practice in any of my ensembles. If a woman has incorrectly identified herself as a tenor, it may be helpful to point out to her that the practice of females singing tenor does not exist in the professional choral world. Unlike the ubiquity of professional countertenors, one will not find female tenors on the rosters of any of the world’s best professional choral ensembles. This is almost always a convincing argument.

Once parts are assigned, the director should design a seating chart that distributes the strongest voices throughout a section, allowing less secure singers to

always have the support of a strong singer in his or her immediate vicinity. Regarding the arrangements of sections, there are many approaches, and each choirmaster will likely have his or her own preferences. In my church, I personally like to place the men in the middle of the loft with sopranos on my left and altos on my right, but every situation—and space—is different.

I also have a strong preference for seating my sections together rather than in a “mixed” formation. My pedagogical approach, like Robert Shaw’s, emphasizes a striving to sound like “one voice” within a section. I personally find this ideal to be nearly impossible to achieve if a section is scattered throughout the ensemble. It is also worth noting that “mixed” formations are primarily a pedagogical tool used with undergraduates in university settings; this practice is almost never implemented in professional choirs. Remaining in sections tends to result in better blend, intonation, and control of the vibrato, resulting in a more professional and nuanced choral sound. It is certainly the best choice in most volunteer church choir settings.

*Look for Part Two of Matthew’s article in an upcoming issue of *The Chorister* as he addresses diction and style, and poses some philosophical questions to consider as you work with your ensemble. Be sure to check out Matthew’s brand new book, *Welcome to Church Music and The Hymnal 1982* from Morehouse/Church Publishing. You can contact Matthew at mrh0032@auburn.edu.*



Matthew Hoch is Choirmaster and Minister of Music at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Auburn, Alabama, as well as Assistant Professor of Voice at Auburn University. Prior to these positions, he served as Choirmaster and Director of Music at St Peter’s Episcopal Church in Rome, Georgia, as well as Assistant Professor of Voice and Coordinator of Vocal Studies at Shorter College. From 2003–2005, Dr. Hoch held the position of baritone soloist and section leader at Trinity Church on Copley Square in Boston. He is the author of two books: *A Dictionary for the Modern Singer* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2014) and *Welcome to Church Music and The Hymnal 1982* (Morehouse/Church Publishing, 2015). His articles have appeared in the *Journal of Singing*, *Opera Journal*, and *Journal of the Association of Anglican Musicians*.

Dr. Hoch holds the BM (summa cum laude) from Ithaca College with a triple major in vocal performance, music education, and music theory; the MM from The Hartt School with a double major in vocal performance and music history; and the DMA from the New England Conservatory in vocal performance and literature. He has pursued advanced training in voice science and vocal pedagogy with Scott McCoy, Ingo Titze, and Johann Sundberg. Dr. Hoch lives in Auburn, Alabama, with his wife, Theresa, and three children: Hannah, Sofie, and Zachary.

Anthem Feature

FROM THE CHORISTERS GUILD CATALOG

Hevenu Shalom Aleichem arranged by Dan R. Edwards

ANTHEM DESCRIPTION

True to the style of Dan Edwards, CGA1402 *Hevenu Shalom Aleichem* (May Peace Be upon You) is packed with energy! This new addition to our *We Sing the World Round* Choral Series highlights a traditional Israeli phrase, which roughly translates - *May the God of peace bless and keep you*.

Don't shy away from the Hebrew text; it's repetitive and only three words long. Incorporate creative ways to teach the phrase to your choristers. Once you've mastered the short text, you can teach your choristers how to shape phrases through dynamics. Add the additional instrumentation to make this piece a joyful, fun benediction for singers and listeners alike.

Looking for ways to use this piece in worship? Here are just a few:

- Use this piece on your Mission Sunday or when you are commissioning a service team (international, regional, or even local).
- Sing this for the Benediction on Pentecost Sunday, a day we celebrate the diversity that makes the global Church beautiful.
- Not so sure about using the Hebrew text? Use the alternative English to serve as a Benediction for any worship service.
- In place of the spoken reading for the following scriptures: Numbers 6:24-26; 2 Peter 1:2; Psalm 29 (specifically verse 11), sing *Hevenu Shalom Aleichem*.
- Bless your Senior Graduates with the singing of this piece!

TEACHING TIPS

Highlight the Text

Print multiple copies of the reproducible word cards (page 17). Display the phrase in key areas that your choristers frequent to promote interest a few weeks before introducing the song. Consider putting one word of the

phrase each week. When you introduce the anthem, children will light up when they discover that the words they are singing have been displayed around the church for several weeks.

Give impromptu rewards each week for correct pronunciation of the text, and for recalling the translation. Use popsicle sticks with names on them to make sure each child has at least one opportunity to earn a treat.

Wrap your rehearsal space in a blessing. Print the word cards on colorful paper. Provide scissors and removable painter's tape. Allow early arrivers to create sentence strips with the word cards. Post the colorful phase multiple times in one continuous circle around the room.

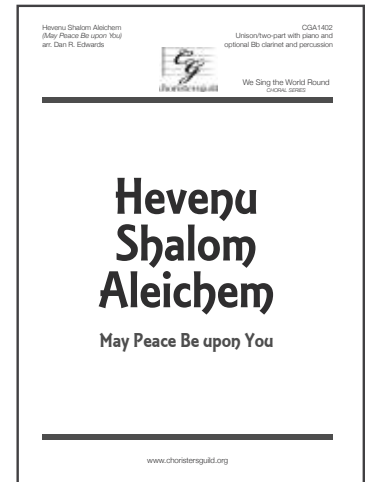
Add Color and Interest

Experiment with various dynamic changes. Allow older children to suggest alternate dynamic markings, and try different combinations. Singing the song multiple times with their suggestions will add interest and avoid any monotony of the repeated text. Adding the clarinet and percussion parts will provide additional color, and will greatly enhance the performance for both singers and listeners.

Focus on Phrasing

Consider adding scarves or streamers, and gently move the props for the length of each phrase. Children may enjoy adding simple dance steps and arm motions typical in this style. The movements could be learned in a circle, or in rows with alternate rows moving in opposite directions. Use the opportunity to allow the children to suggest movements.

Your choristers will enjoy the simplicity of this song. Be sure to teach the Hebrew text even if you decide to sing in English. Children will love saying the Hebrew blessing to friends and family.



Hevenu

Shalom

Aleicheim

RESPONDING TO THE CALL



STARTING A
CHOIR FOR
CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL
NEEDS

BY KATHERINE LUNDEEN

PHOTO CREDIT: RISE AND SHINE CHOIR,
CLAIREMONT LUTHERAN CHURCH, SAN
DIEGO, CA, KATY LUNDEEN, DIRECTOR.



A VOICE IN THE NIGHT

"You need to start a choir for special needs kids!" Not again, I sighed, rolling over and trying to go back to sleep. The little Voice in my head had been nagging me for months, but now it was waking me up at night. During the day, I was so busy that I was mostly able to block the nagging at my conscience. But at night, all bets were off. I thought I had reasoned with the Voice, and we had both decided it wasn't a good idea. OK, let's go through this one more time. I have NO training or experience in special education. I already have three other choirs and a full-time day job. I have not been able to find anyone else in the country who has a choir for special needs kids at their church, and there must be a reason for that! Everyone I have talked to so far has been discouraging. Some of the public school choir directors have one or two kids in their regular choirs, but a whole choir just for special needs? "Impossible!" they say; or, "Nice idea; let me know how it goes."

It's not like I haven't done any research, I have even searched the internet for books on the subject. They don't exist; there is nothing geared toward choral activities for these kids. Music therapy, yes, but they have completely different goals and approaches, and are not necessarily focused on singing. And I



have no time. Just when am I supposed to do it? I am already at church Monday nights for adult choir, all evening Thursdays for the children's and youth choirs, plus Sundays. I just can't add another day to the schedule, I'm supposed to be very part-time! There, I thought, we have put that one to bed once and for all. I turned over on my stomach, punched my pillow and went back to sleep with a clear conscience. The clock read 3:00am.

Something woke me up out of a sound sleep. The clock said 4:00am. "You need to start a choir for..." The Voice started up again "OK, OK. I give up! I'll do it...somehow." Sheesh. Nag, nag, nag. I could feel God smirking. Sunday morning, I talked to Pastor Jon, and explained to him about the new choir that (God) was proposing. He thought it was a wonderful idea, and told me he would run it by the church council, which, coincidentally, was meeting the following Tuesday evening. Of course, there are no coincidences where God is concerned, and this seems like a good time in my narrative to explain how it is that I became the Children's and Youth Choir Director at Clairemont Lutheran Church in San Diego.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

Two years previously, I had just been through the political wringer at my former church, where I had led a large and thriving children's music program for a decade. And everyone who has been in church music ministry for any length of time knows that church politics can make the court of Henry VIII seem like child's play. To make a long and traumatic story short, the church hired a new Director of Music, who summarily fired the entire music staff. I was forced to pack up my huge storeroom of music, supplies, and costumes and leave without saying goodbye to my kids, my friends in adult choir, or my church family of over 15 years. Needless to say, I was devastated. That night, the little Voice woke me up. "You need to let your colleagues know that you are available first thing tomorrow morning." But I'm NOT available, I argued. I am not even sure I have the heart or the energy to do this again. "Just TELL them!" OK, OK, just let me sleep.

I think hearing voices is bad enough, but arguing with them—and losing those arguments is surely a symptom of psychosis of some sort. Nonetheless, the next morning I e-mailed a few of my director friends around town to mention that I might be looking for another position. Almost immediately, I received a response from Steven Gray saying he might have a proposal for me, and he would contact me later that day. Long story short, I was in the pastor's office just a few days later interviewing for the position, and they hired me on the spot to start a new choral program. What I didn't know until months later were the "coincidental" (not!) circumstances of how I ended up in that interview in the first place. At the moment that I e-mailed him, he was in attendance at his weekly church staff meeting. Part of the discussion that day was how much they would like to start a dynamic choral program for their kids. Dr. Gray received my message on his phone in the middle of the meeting. He immediately announced, "I think I may have a solution for us!"



Over the next two years, we started a choir for teenagers, a choir for elementary-age kids, and a preschool cherub choir. So far, everything was moving along smoothly. Now God was asking me to sail into uncharted waters. "But what kind of curriculum can I use? Many of these kids will not be able to read very well, if at all. They certainly won't be able to read music." The nocturnal arguments resumed. "Teach them to read music." But how???" "Modify the curriculum you use for the Cherub Choir. Just make it a little more dignified...don't do "All the Little Ducklings." If you believe they can learn to sing and read music, they will believe it, too."

The council meeting with the new choir idea on the agenda was on Tuesday. Pastor Jon contacted me on Wednesday to tell me that they thought it was a wonderful idea; exactly in line with the mission of the church, and something unique that was really needed. They thought I should start in January, only two months away! I actually started to get excited about the idea, and the Voice wasn't disturbing my sleep anymore! I did some more research, and lo and behold, I stumbled across a church choir for special needs teens and adults at Woodlands United Methodist Church in Woodlands, Texas. The director, Chris Robbins, was incredibly encouraging, and he had many good suggestions. His choir was only three years old, and he already had fourteen singers and growing! He assured me that it was the best thing he ever did, and that I wouldn't regret it for a moment. And he was right, I have not!

GETTING STARTED

I only knew a couple of families with special needs kids. Two children had participated in our annual Choristers Guild Summer Music Camp, so that's where I started. One of the parents was particularly interested, and had many suggestions. "Kids with Down Syndrome are natural hams," she told me, "They would love it if you did a play or musical with them." I was planning to do Joe Cox and Judy Lindh's *Welcome Back Billy Best* for the spring musical. Could I somehow incorporate the special needs kids into the show? I thought I could.

After polling the parents and looking at my schedule, we decided that 12:30 on Sundays would be the best time to start. It was not so late that I wouldn't get home at a reasonable time on Sundays, but late enough that people who attended other churches could probably make it. After carefully planning the rehearsal, and including several alternate activities in case some didn't work, all that was left to do was pray.

We had seven children attend the first rehearsal, and the "Rise & Shine" choir was born! We are now in our third semester, and we have settled into a



group of six dedicated and wonderful kids ranging in age from 12 to 22; three with Down Syndrome and three on the autism spectrum. Last November they sang with all the other choirs for the Thanksgiving Sunday service, and they performed with great enthusiasm in the Christmas musical in December: Mark Burrow's *Room For Christmas*. We were also invited to sing for the San Diego Down Syndrome Association's annual Christmas party. The kids, along with their parents, sang carols and played tone chimes using the "Ring-along" series from Cantabile Press.

TIPS AND TECHNIQUES

While I am not by any means an expert, I would like to share some things that I have learned:

- Encouraging parents to attend and actively participate in class is very helpful. If needed, they can simplify and translate instructions and help you to interpret their children's answers to questions. Some children can be hard to understand at first until you get used to their unique expressions and pronunciations.
- Don't assume that because a child doesn't look involved in class they are not absorbing the material. At unexpected moments they will surprise you with what they have learned!
- Some children have physical issues with muscle tone and joints that makes it uncomfortable for them to do things like sit on the floor, move quickly, or walk up steps. Provide chairs for class, and during performance position them near a railing or post that they can hold onto if they have balance issues.

- Activities that involve fine motor skills can be hard for some; use a variety of activities to teach the same concept so everyone can be successful. For example, although some kids are able to use a lap board and marker for dictation, others may need a large floor staff, which can be accomplished with masking tape on the floor.
- A listening tube or telephone are helpful for pitch matching; as well as a tuning fork and a microphone with an echo function.
- Some children are in the habit of vocalizing while inhaling, and they are not really aware of which way the air is traveling. Some helpful exercises are blowing out candles, blowing bubbles, pinwheels, blowing out with a scarf over their head to "visualize" the air, and making Santa sounds ("ho ho!")
- For those who are not very verbal, and/or sing very little, instruments are a great way for them to express themselves. Some kids have a remarkable sense of rhythm. Make use of percussion instruments, bells, tonechimes, Orff instruments if you have them, or even just rhythm sticks. A drum circle will be a big hit!
- Puppets are very useful. But use them in a silly, humorous way rather than the way you would use them with a preschooler, if that makes any sense. Some kids who appear to be nonverbal will make a puppet sing or talk.
- Never be condescending with your speech or tone of voice. Use normal vocabulary, and explain words and terms as necessary. Although they may require more repetition for concepts to stick, they know in a second when you are talking down to them, and they will shut down.
- Challenge them; don't dumb down the material, just take it a step at a time and review a lot in many different ways. Be creative, take risks! If an activity doesn't work, go on to something else.
- Above all, enjoy the kids and love them! Pray for them and their families. Their lives aren't easy, but in many ways they are blessed more than most people. You will never have so many hugs and smiles!

I would love to hear from you if you are hearing God's little voice in the night and you would like some encouragement or advice. If I can do it, you can too, with God's help!

Katherine Lundeen is President of the San Diego Choristers Guild Chapter, and is the Children's and Youth Choral Director at Clairemont Lutheran Church in San Diego. Critically acclaimed for her expressive and dramatic singing, mezzo-soprano Katherine Lundeen is a frequent concert artist throughout Southern California. Katherine has won top prizes in many prestigious vocal competitions, including the Virginia Hawk Auditions, the New York Metropolitan Opera Regional Auditions in Los Angeles, and the New York Oratorio Society International Competition.



Passionate about music education, particularly church choral music, Katherine and Robin Segarra revived the San Diego Chapter of the Choristers Guild in 2004. Since then, the chapter has hosted numerous large events including the annual spring choir festival, which attracts more than 200 children and youth, and has brought in nationally and internationally-recognized guest conductors such as Henry Leck, C. Michael Hawn, and Anton Armstrong.

Katherine is a member of AGMA, The Choristers Guild, YouthCue, the Royal School of Church Music (RSCM), the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians, and the American Choral Directors' Association. If you have questions about beginning a choir for children with special needs, you may contact Katherine at KLundeen24@hotmail.com.

ACTIVITY L TEACHING STEPS



“The Happiest Day”

SMALL-GROUP ACTIVITY

“The Happiest Day” gives children the opportunity to share the Good News that Jesus is alive by creating a card and giving it to someone special.

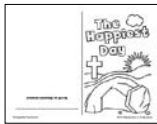
MATERIALS NEEDED

- “The Happiest Day” Activity Page
- Crayons or markers
- MP3 or CD Demo 9
- MP3 or CD Player
- Easter stickers (optional)

PREPARATION

- Print a copy of the Activity Page for each child.
- Fold to make edges meet.

“The Happiest Day” Activity Page



1. Discuss Easter with the children.

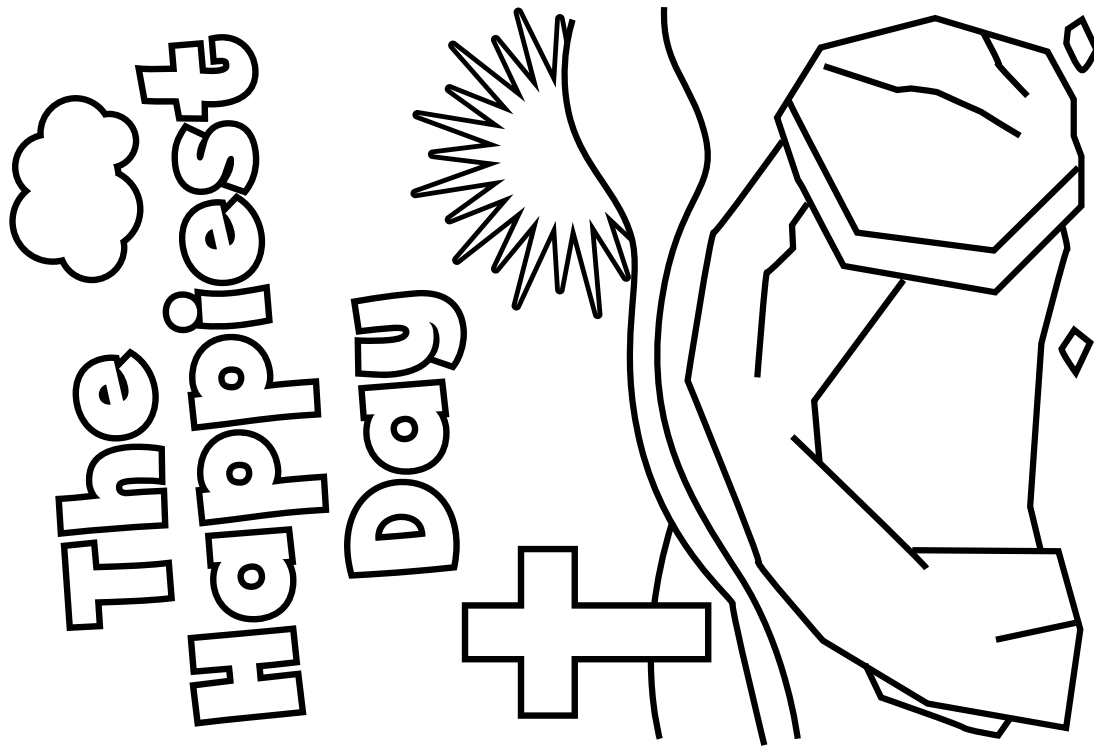
- Distribute “The Happiest Day” Activity Pages to the children.
- Guide children to notice the empty tomb, and tell them that Easter is the happiest day because Jesus is alive.

2. Color the card.

- Have children color the front of the card, then decorate the inside by drawing an Easter picture or putting stickers on the inside.
- Play Demo 9 quietly as the children color.
- Guide children to write their names on the back of the card as they finish. Younger preschoolers may need help writing their names.

3. Share the Good News.

- Have children take the cards home to give to someone special as they share the Good News of Easter.

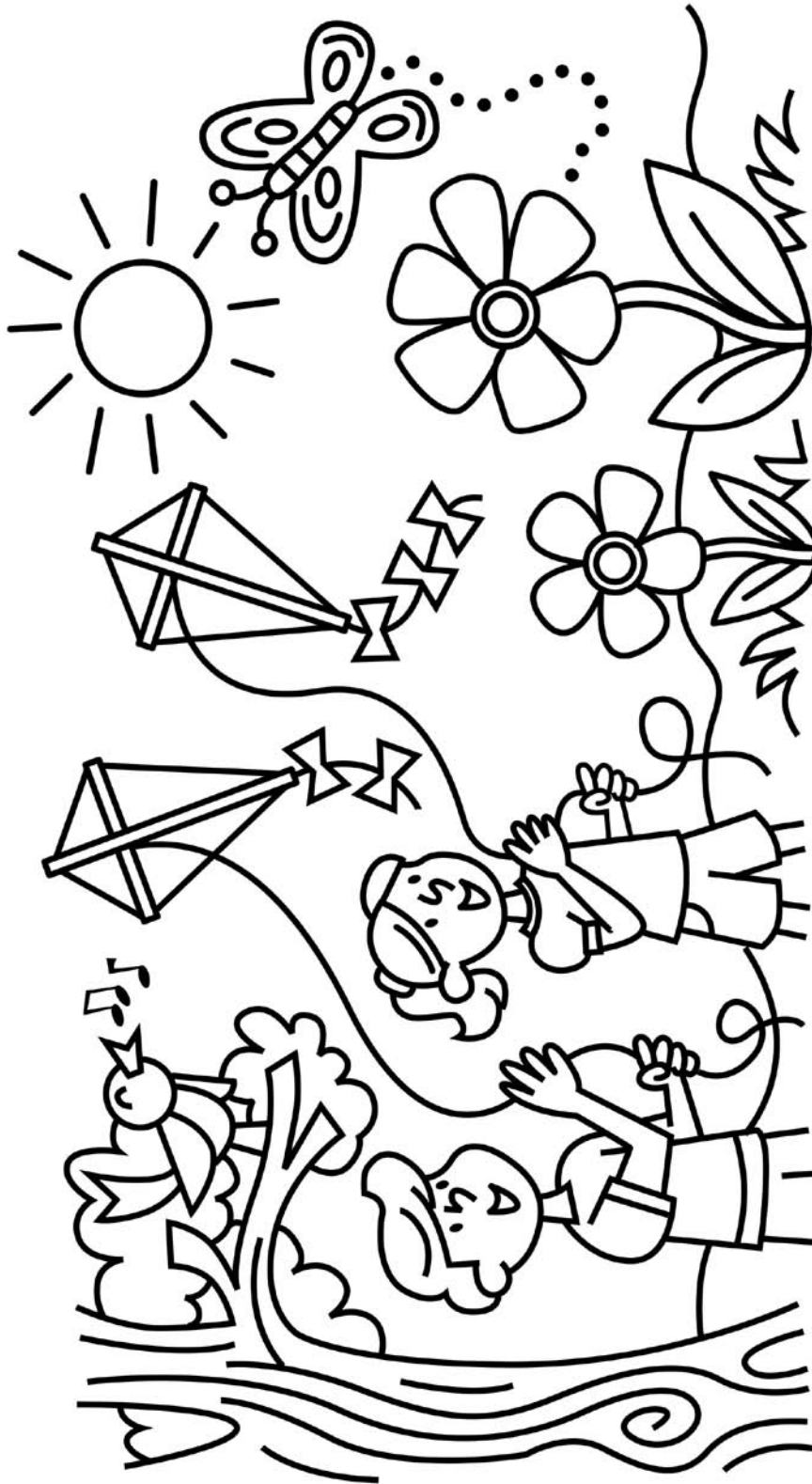


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created especially for you by

"The Happiest Day" Activity Page (Activity 1)

"It's Springtime"



"Everything God made was very good." Genesis 1:31

"It's Springtime"

PLANNING AHEAD

- Print a copy of "It's Springtime" KIDPage for each child.
- Gather crayons.
- Provide MP3 or CD Demo 7.
- Provide MP3 or CD Player.

GUIDING CHILDREN

- Distribute KIDPages to children.
- Play Demo 7, and have children point to the birds, the flowers, and the children playing as they hear them mentioned in the song.
- Read the Bible verse: "Everything God made was very good." Genesis 1:31. Have the children say it with you.
- Distribute crayons, and have children color the KIDpage.
- Play Demo 7 quietly as the children work.



PRESCHOOL PAGES

In the last issue we looked at elements of music that we plant like seeds in our teaching plans to begin a foundation for musical learning. In this issue we will consider a list of singing goals for preschoolers that we will plant in their singing habits. We will also look at possibilities for presenting songs in age-appropriate, non-threatening performance settings.

At any given time, preschoolers' singing may digress into a shouting contest. At other times, you may hear one of those little voices down the hall singing a choir song—the same child who didn't open his mouth in rehearsal! That's a happy feeling!

To help them become better singers, consider these things:

POSTURE

If rehearsal time is more than 30 minutes, provide child-size chairs for the children. For shorter periods, preschoolers may sit on carpet squares or fun-foam rectangle *sit-upons*.

Demonstrate the difference in a relaxed seated position and an attentive singing position. Encourage them to sit tall, while keeping feet flat on the floor. A bendable rubber toy figure, or floppy puppet will aid their understanding, and provide focus.

When standing, as mentioned in previous articles, ask helpers to walk behind the children and gently tap those with good posture on the shoulder, designating them as "super singers." Most every child will strive to achieve this designation!

BREATHING

Praise their counting skills, then demonstrate singing, "1,2,3,4,5," with one breath on a single pitch. Ask them to echo. Stretch it to 6, then 7, then 8, etc., calling attention to how they must fill up their insides with more air to sing longer.

Use a tape measure to measure the phrases of a familiar song. Stretch the tape as they sing to reveal the number of inches. Do the same for each subsequent phrase (should be approximately the same). Challenge children by linking 2 phrases together and measure the longer, combined phrase. Make a teachable moment by explaining this is the reason for phrases—to give the song singable sections that make sense together.

Attach streamers to the ends of an umbrella's ribs. Hold the umbrella and slowly turn as the children hold the ends of the streamers. Walk in one direction until a phrase ends, then pause and walk in the opposite direction.



MOUTH

Demonstrate a nice round mouth. Draw eyes and mouth on a soft, well-used tennis ball. Cut a slit for the mouth to be squeezed as they are singing—closed, no sound—opened wide, nice round sound.

Give them images of things they know, as an alligator's mouth—putting wrists together, then opening and closing palms, or holding elbows together, then stretching arms wide apart and closing them again.

Mouth the words, but do not sing with the children. Learn to listen to their voices. When echo singing is required, avoid singing the echo so that you can listen.

Reminder: Select songs for the normal preschool range of middle C up to A, six steps higher.

EYES

Teach the children that your eyes and their eyes must stay in contact as they sing. Be responsible for these things:

- Know your music, so that you can maintain that eye contact.
- Hold your hands up to show them when to start singing, explaining that your hands are taking a breath before singing the first word.
- Hold your hands up to show when to stop singing, using a quick pinch of fingers and thumb or a quick inverted "C".
- Move your hands to the shape of the melody throughout the song.

SETTING

Take the children to any performance area a week or so before a planned event, allowing time to place them and allowing time for them to look at their surroundings.

Place adult helpers among the children (*they may feel a bit awkward even when seated, but parents are not going to look at them—and they are close, should an emergency occur*).

Sing the songs with the exact accompaniment that will be used, as change of location often leads to a different sound.

ABOUT THOSE PERFORMANCE OPTIONS

I recently visited a former church and was talking with one of my choir parents. She proudly showed me a picture of her beautiful teenage daughter and said, "Do you remember that shy child who would not sing in the Christmas program?" Indeed I did, and indeed this child has grown into a lovely, self-assured young lady with apparently no battle scars from a scary experience! Does it mean that every child will face such a frightening experience? Should we not plan performances? Or should we charge ahead in the performance mode? Preschool choir leaders often face these questions.

Two points of view

1. We don't want to put preschoolers into performances requiring long periods of being still or lots of drill and rehearsal causing undue pressure and anxiety on the children or the adults involved.
2. Parents want to see their preschoolers perform—they need to know we are doing more than baby-sitting—the church needs to be aware of the many musical experiences offered, and of the value in maintaining a preschool music program.

Six Opportunities for Non-threatening Performances

1. A combined program involving all choirs

- This could be a group of songs from a semester's curriculum materials. The preschool choir sings one or two songs at the beginning and then joins the other choirs for the theme song at the end of the program.

Consider these things . . . Do you seat them after they sing? Where? How do you get them back up?

(1) Ask the parents of the preschoolers to stand (*they are quite proud to do so*) and let the children go and sit with them until time to call them back to the stage (*musical interludes can be used during this time—perhaps to introduce the upcoming song*).

OR

(2) Workers lead children out of the performance area and bring them back in for the concluding number.

- If choreography is to be used, consider placing each young child between older children (*side by side by side*). They will be able to copy movements and be more likely to participate. Preschoolers can also learn simplified movements and stand in front of the older children.

2. Presentation for Parents (in the preschool choir room)

- This can be specific songs for specific seasons or holidays such as Valentine's Day or Mother's/ Father's Day.
- Be certain to inform parents ahead of time using printed invitations, email, text messages, or the method most effective for your setting.



3. Hymn Presentation

Search out hymns from which you can teach portions or “fragments” to serve as an introduction to the hymns. Here are some examples:

- “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God” – Teach the first 4 measures. It covers an octave, but moves by steps. That big word “bulwark” is teachable and can be fun for preschoolers.
- “Come, Thou Almighty King” – Echo sing the first phrase. Talk about inviting Jesus, the King, to come into our hearts—to come to the choir room—to be with our families. In the midst of conversation, repeat that phrase several times.
- “O Worship the King” – Echo sing the first phrase, then stop and ask for one way to show our worship and praise. Repeat this until the children know the phrase.
- “How Firm a Foundation” – This hymn tune can be played as children pretend to hammer a strong foundation to the steady (half note) beat.
- “All Creatures of Our God and King” – Sing the first phrase and the last “alleluia” then name a creature that God made. Repeat same many times as children think of all the wonders of God.
- “Glorious Is Thy Name” – The last phrase of this hymn is a preschool phrase, “Glorious is Thy Name, O Lord!” In fact, they could take turns playing it on the step bells, using C, D, E, F, E, D, C.

Certainly these are not preschool texts or rhythms or range, but they are portions of treasured hymns that may stick in the child’s memory and cause him or her to say, “That’s my song!” when hearing the hymn in church. Invite your Minister of Music or Worship Leader to lead a special preschool hymn-sing. Invite parents or grandparents to attend and sing along. Instead of placing the preschoolers on the stage, ask dads or moms to stand and hold their preschoolers in their arms as they sing each hymn with the congregation. Put together special preschool hymnals as a memento for each family.

4. How about a "Sing-Out?"

Take preschoolers to a nursing home or assisted living facility if one is close by and transportation, time, etc., is suitable. Sing favorite songs and watch the smiles of residents and children!

5. Write your own program.

You can do it! I don't mean a Hollywood script. Just something like this...

"Once upon a time, in a town called _____, there was a church called _____. In this church there was a choir. Preschoolers sang in this choir and they met each _____ at _____ o'clock to sing and play instruments and learn about Jesus. One of their songs was _____. It goes like this (sing song). And so on....."

You can also have preschoolers recite scripture verses they have memorized between their songs. This is a great way to link the songs and scripture, plus it adds meaning to the performance for the singers and the listeners.

6. Always a Winner!

A few songs in the foyer (on steps or risers) or on front steps of the church before and/or after worship services works really well (especially at Easter or Christmas). This is a great way to increase the attendance of families at worship services.

By this time, I hope your mind is whirling with "preschool-friendly" ideas. The most important thing that we want preschoolers to realize is that music is a gift for sharing. ALWAYS present it that way!

Thank you for staying with me through this series. May I say in closing, that after years as a volunteer, then part-time paid, then full-time paid, then back to part-time paid, then back to a volunteer, "Why do I still do it?" I *continue* to be thrilled and blessed. When your heart is truly in it, you truly *cannot* give more than you get back. May that be your experience, too!

For an additional preschool performance option, check out Nan's preschool program, "Good Little Sam" in *The Chorister* April/May 2000.



Nan Grantham holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Mississippi College, Clinton MS, in Music Education. Her career has included both public and private school teaching and private and class piano. She has served on church music staffs in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, retiring from Second Baptist Church in Houston. Her *Language of Music* series was published by Chorister's Guild. Throughout her career Nan has written songs and curriculum for *Lifeway's Children's Music Series*, and was on the inaugural writing team for *Growing in Grace Children's Music Curriculum* for which she is still a contributor. Nan continues to work with the Houston Children's Chorus, and is an active volunteer at her church.

The **INSTITUTE CORNER**

July 26 - August 1, 2015

Don't wait! Join us *now* at the Choristers Guild Institute!

WHAT IS THE CHORISTERS GUILD INSTITUTE?

The CG Institute is a three-stage (one week for three summers) certification program for choral directors of children's and youth choirs (Grades K-8) in churches and church schools. Our program is based on the belief that children are artistic, creative, musical and worshipful beings. We recognize that children's church choir directors have a unique calling to lead children toward more meaningful and effective participation in worship through music.

WHY ATTEND THE INSTITUTE?

- get re-charged and inspired
- hone your conducting skills
- gather new teaching ideas
- fine-tune rehearsal techniques
- discover new repertoire
- refine your vocal production for effective modeling
- build relationships with other directors of children
- reinforce organizational skills for planning
- enjoy a week full of learning and fun!
- return: alumni invited at reduced rate

WHAT SETS THE INSTITUTE APART?

Three year, complete and continuous training program
Children's *church* choir emphasis with worship at the center
Mentor Groups: smaller groups led by faculty members— instant support group!
Daily worship, planned and led by participants
Emphasis on choir program development and personal musicianship
A chance to return with questions, ideas, success stories
An alumni group that continues to care, share, and participate

MORE INFO?

Go to: www.choristersguild.org - EVENTS
- INSTITUTE, watch the CGI free WEBINAR online and visit and LIKE our Facebook page: *Choristers Guild Institute at Wingate University.*

WHO LEADS THE INSTITUTE?

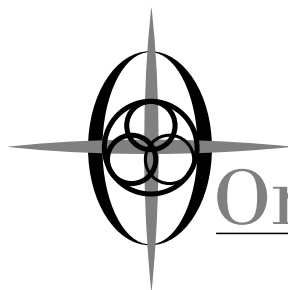
The 2015 faculty: Mark Patterson, Andrea Baxter, Heather Potter, Kenney Potter, Brian Hehn, Karol Kimmell, Chris Nemecek, and Amanda Smith. We are delighted to present our 2015 Helen Kemp Lecturer—Michael Bedford, organist, director, and composer of anthems for children, youth, and adults. Our leaders have a variety of musical and teaching experiences to share and are committed to equipping you with the essentials for building and leading a vibrant children's church choir or church school program. The faculty are involved in the entire week, available for conversation at meals and before and after classes.

WHERE & WHEN IS THE INSTITUTE?

Location: Wingate University, Wingate, NC near Charlotte, NC. We begin Sunday afternoon, July 26th. REGISTRATION is 1:30-4:30 pm; first meeting at 4:30 pm. Our closing banquet is Friday evening 6:00-9:00 pm. Friends and family are invited to join us for this celebratory event. Saturday, August 1st, is for travel (no classes). Housing is in university apartments: private room and bathroom with shared living space for two - meals at the campus dining hall. Travel: Charlotte-Douglas Airport, share a cab or rental car to Wingate (40 minute drive). Free parking.

Log On and take the tour!

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Calendar of Events

GEORGIA

July 12-17, 2015

Mabel Boyter Choir Camp for grades 3-8
Reinhardt University
7300 Reinhardt College Circle
Waleska, GA 30183
Contact: Betsy Homer betsy@roswellpres.org

WASHINGTON

April 18, 2015

God Does Wonders
Des Moines United Methodist Church
22225 Ninth Avenue South
Des Moines, WA 98198
Clinician: Rebekah Gilmore
Contact: Arletta Anderson ajp724@comcast.net

DID YOU KNOW...

As a Choristers Guild member, you can list your church's event on this Calendar of Events page? Email your listing to Susan at seernisse@mailcg.org three months prior to your event. Listings are admitted on a first-come, first-serve basis.

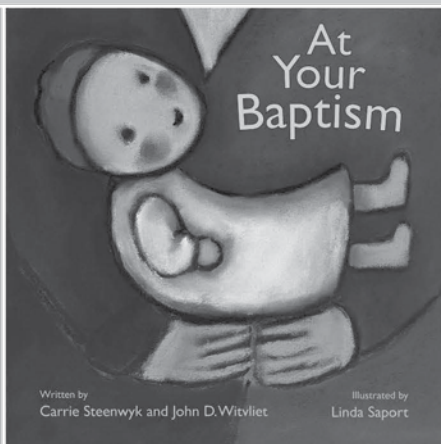
TO LIST YOUR CHAPTER EVENT

Send your listing to membership@mailcg.org with complete information. Include dates, location, clinicians, and contact information. For additional advertising, contact advertising@mailcg.org.

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Use of simple, clear text adapted from the French Reformed Church liturgy and paired with **vibrant illustrations and straightforward explanations** on every page.

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New Members

DECEMBER 2014 AND JANUARY 2015

ALABAMA

Alabaster First United Methodist Church, Alabaster
Bayshore Christian School, Fairhope
Jennifer Canfield, Auburn
Samford University, Birmingham

ARKANSAS

Ouachita Baptist University, Arkadelphia
Trinity United Methodist Church, Little Rock

CALIFORNIA

Azusa Pacific University, Azusa

FLORIDA

Melanie Lynch, Jupiter
Palm Beach Atlantic University Library, West Palm Beach
Pensacola Christian College, Pensacola

GEORGIA

Athens First United Methodist Church, Athens
Larisa Dukes, Marietta
First Presbyterian Church, Dalton
Georgia Girl Choir, Atlanta
Inman Park United Methodist Church, Atlanta
Dara Pickren-Davis, St. Marys

IDAHO

Hillview United Methodist Church, Boise

ILLINOIS

Patti Mangis, Western Springs
St. Anthony of Padua Church, Effingham

INDIANA

Aldersgate United Methodist Church, Evansville

IOWA

St. Paul Lutheran Church, Davenport
Marcia Thie, Fort Madison

KENTUCKY

Lynda Harris, Louisville
Zach Marshall, Lexington
Emily Smith, Louisville
Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville

MARYLAND

Daniel Breidenbaugh, Fallston
Fiona Wilcox, Glenwood

MINNESOTA

Central Lutheran Church, Minneapolis
Christiania Lutheran Church, Lakeville

NEVADA

Concordia University, Seward

NEW MEXICO

First United Methodist Church, Clovis

NORTH CAROLINA

Clifford Badgley, Raleigh
Joanna Cartwright, Raleigh
Christ Lutheran Church, Charlotte
Grace Episcopal Church, Asheville
St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Raleigh
University of Mount Olive, Mt. Olive

OHIO

Carolyn Wallace, New Philadelphia

OKLAHOMA

First Presbyterian Church, Durant
Daphne Fix, Norman

PENNSYLVANIA

Liz Allen, North Wales

SOUTH CAROLINA

First Presbyterian Church, Myrtle Beach
Lana Stephens, Pawleys Island
Thomas Tiehel, Bluffton

TENNESSEE

Carolyn Bailey, Johnson City

TEXAS

Dolly Davenport, Houston
Epiphany of The Lord Church, Katy
Grace Avenue United Methodist Church, Frisco
Kim Jungjin, College Station
Bill Roberts, Frisco
Leanne Seabright, Irving
Shelbie Simmons, San Antonio
Sharon Stahrfisher, Fort Worth
Joseph Stobaugh, Frisco
Trinity Presbyterian Church, McKinney

VIRGINIA

First United Methodist Church, Martinsville
Front Royal Presbyterian Church, Front Royal
Bettykarol Wilson, New Market

WASHINGTON

Megan Jeffrey, Edmonds
Whittaker Harpel-McGaw, Bothell

AUSTRALIA

Jessie Tan, Hawthorn East VIC

CANADA

Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. Johns NL

SINGAPORE

Singapore Bible College

Children's Choir Devotionals

BY KEITH PATE



*Photo Credit:
Rise and Shine Choir, Clairemont
Lutheran Church, San Diego, CA,
Katy Lundeen, Director.*

WEEK OF APRIL 5 EASTER

SCRIPTURE:

"Don't be alarmed," he said. "You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go; tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.'" *Mark 16:6-7 NIV (Extended reading, Mark 16:1-8, John 20:1-18).*

DEVOTIONAL:

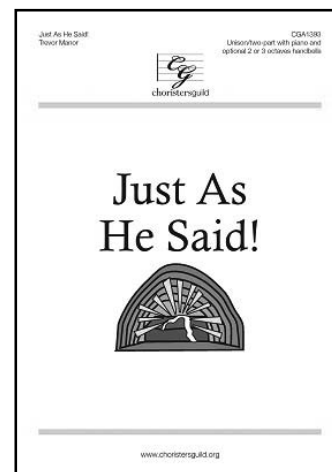
Who or what can you trust? Sometimes people tell us things, but fail to keep their promises. Can you remember a time when someone told you they would do something, but didn't follow through? How did you feel? You probably felt like you couldn't trust that person. There is one you can always trust to keep his promises—JESUS. He told his disciples that after three days he would rise from the dead...and he did! How wonderful that we can always trust Jesus to keep his promises!

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for always delivering on your promises! In our world people often let us down, but it is wonderful to know that we can trust the truth of your Word. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1393 | *Just As He Said!* | By Trevor Manor | Unison/two-part with piano & optional 2 or 3 octave handbells



Keith Pate came to be Minister of Music at EASTERN HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH in Montgomery, Alabama in January of 2005. Formerly he was Minister of Music of Anastasia Baptist Church, St. Augustine, Florida for 12 years. Keith holds a Bachelor of Music Degree from Samford University, Birmingham, Alabama (1984) and a Masters of Church Music Degree from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary (1989). Keith has a great love for working with children. He has directed younger and older children's choirs for over twenty years. He has been a curriculum writer for Lifeway Christian Resources and Growing in Grace as well as a workshop leader throughout the southeast. He has led conferences at Ridgecrest & Glorieta Music Weeks and state training events in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina and Oklahoma.

WEEK OF APRIL 12

SCRIPTURE:

How wonderful it is, how pleasant, when brothers live together in harmony!

Psalms 133:1 NLT (Extended reading, Acts 4:32-35)

DEVOTIONAL:

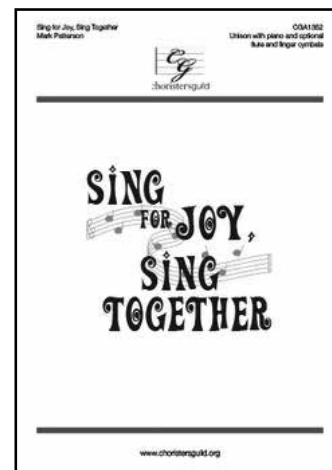
What is harmony? When notes are played together to form a pleasing sound, musical harmony is created. Play a C major chord on the piano (C-E-G). Now play the following notes (all at once) C, D, E, F, G. Which sounds more pleasing to your ear? Most would select the C major chord. When music is put together in harmony it sounds beautiful and pleasing to the ear. The same is true in our relationships with others. When we work with others in harmony it is pleasing and pleasant to God's ears!

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for the gift of music and the joy it brings. Help us to have loving attitudes toward each other and work as a team in choir to produce beautiful music together. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1352 | *Sing for Joy, Sing Together* | By Mark Patterson | Unison with piano & optional flute & finger cymbals



WEEK OF APRIL 19

SCRIPTURE:

Don't sin by letting your anger gain control over you. Think about it overnight and remain silent. *Psalms 4:4 NLT (Extended reading, Psalm 4)*

DEVOTIONAL:

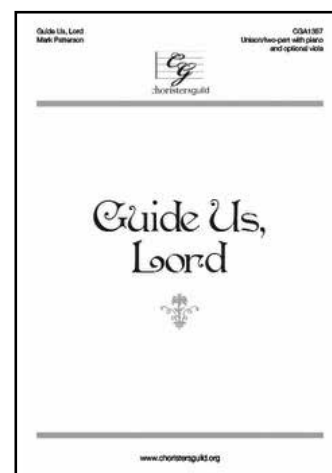
Words and actions can be hurtful especially when we act without thinking. When we are angry we often say or do things we regret later. God's Word tells us to keep our anger from gaining control over us. It also says we should wait before we speak. Read Psalm 4:4 again. When we are upset we should wait to respond later. We can pray and reflect on the situation, and avoid a lot of hurt feelings. Next time you are upset, don't publicly share your feelings, but pray first and see what God leads you to do.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Please forgive us when we speak or act in a way that displeases you. When we are upset, teach us to come to you in prayer first. Guide us every day to have attitudes guided by your Word. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1357 | *Guide Us, Lord* | By Mark Patterson | Unison/two-part with piano and optional viola



WEEK OF APRIL 26

SCRIPTURE:

No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. *1 John 4:12 NIV (Extended reading 1 John 4:7-21 and Psalm 23)*

DEVOTIONAL:

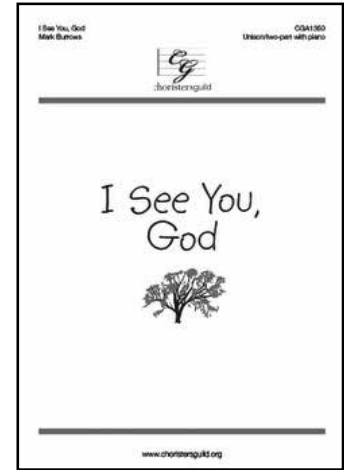
God showed his love for us when he sent his son Jesus into the world so that we could have eternal life. How can we see God? We can't see God with our eyes, but we can see God's character by reading God's Word. We can see God in Creation. We can also see God through the lives of others who are faithful followers of Jesus Christ. By being a follower of Christ we can make this world a better place, and point others to see and know Jesus, too.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for revealing yourself in so many ways—for the beauty of Creation that reminds us of who you are. Thank you for the gift of salvation made possible through your Son, Jesus Christ. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1350 | *I See You, God* |
By Mark Burrows | Unison/
two-part with piano



WEEK OF MAY 3

SCRIPTURE:

Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. "Do you understand what you are reading?" Philip asked. "How can I," he said, "unless someone explains it to me?" So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. *Acts 8:31-31 NIV (Extended reading: Acts 8:26-40).*

DEVOTIONAL:

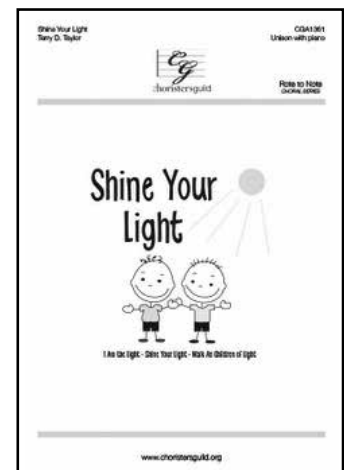
Sometimes we need a guide or a teacher, someone to help us understand something. Philip encountered someone who was reading Scripture, but did not understand what he was reading. Philip began to explain the Scripture to him and the Ethiopian man began to understand. As a result he chose to follow Jesus. Philip understood what it meant to "shine his light" (be a witness) for Jesus.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Help us to be willing guides to those who need to learn about you. Help us to share your love by how we live and what we say so that others may come to know you, too. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1361 | *Shine Your Light* |
By Terry Taylor | Unison with piano



WEEK OF MAY 10

SCRIPTURE:

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth, burst into jubilant song with music.

Psalms 98:4 (Extended reading: Psalm 98:1-9)

DEVOTIONAL:

"Exultate, Jubilate!" are the Latin words meaning "glad shout." There are many verses in the book of Psalms telling us to joyfully praise God through music. God has given us so many things for which to be thankful. Make a list of some of the things in Psalm 98 for which we can sing praise. Now list at least three things for which you are personally thankful. Post this list where you can see it every day, and thank God daily for these blessings.

PRAYER:

Dear God, We praise you in our music and thank you for the wonderful blessings you have given. We know that all good things come from you. Thank you for giving us music as a means to express our praise. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1383 | *Exultate, Jubilate!* | By Helen Kemp | Combined SATB and unison choirs with piano

WEEK OF MAY 17

SCRIPTURE:

Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand around with sinners, or join in with scoffers. But they delight in doing everything the Lord wants. *Psalms 1:1-2 NLT (Extended reading: Psalm 1: 1-6).*

DEVOTIONAL:

What does *truth* really mean? Many people twist the truth to meet their own desires. Truth in their eyes is flexible and easily bent to fit their own selfish desires. God's truth is different. It does not change. God's truth is absolute. When all else around is uncertain there is one thing we can rely on—God and God's truth will never change. God loves us the same yesterday, today and forever. As God's followers, we can "delight" (find pleasure) in the truth of God's Word.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for your Word in which we learn about your truth. Help us to trust you and follow your truth each day. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA1324 | *A Mighty Fortress* | By Martin Luther, Arr. Ken Berg | Unison with piano

WEEK OF MAY 24

SCRIPTURE:

How many are your works, O Lord! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures. *Psalm 104:24 (Extended Reading Psalm 104:24-34)*

DEVOTIONAL:

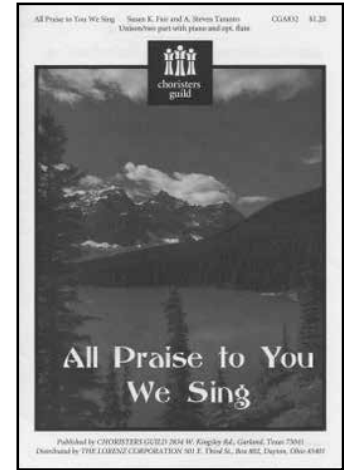
Provide a pencil and paper for each child. Display a tray with 10 or more small items from nature. Allow 10 seconds of silence for children to carefully observe the items. Cover the tray and allow children to quickly list the items they saw. Read *Psalm 104:24* together. Allow children to add other works from Creation to their lists.

PRAYER:

Creator of the Universe, We thank you for the beauty of your Creation. We acknowledge that all these wonderful things were part of your design. We praise you for these gifts. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA832 | *All Praise to You We Sing* | By Susan K. Fair, A. Steven Taranto | Unison and two-part with piano and optional flute



WEEK OF MAY 31

SCRIPTURE:

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. *John 3:16 (Extended Reading John 3: 1-17)*

DEVOTIONAL:

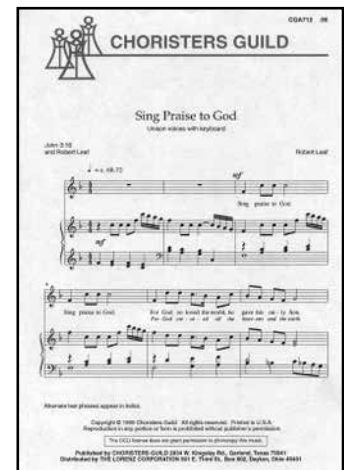
Do you know a song about Jesus love? (*Sing "Jesus Loves Me" together.*) Jesus came into the world with the sole mission to die in order to provide eternal life for everyone who would put their trust in Him. What an amazing truth! We can have eternal life if we trust and believe in Jesus, and truly follow Him.

PRAYER:

Dear God, Thank you for Jesus and your tremendous love for us. Help us to love others as you have loved us. Amen.

COORDINATING ANTHEM:

CGA712 | *Sing Praise to God* | By Robert Leaf | Unison voices with keyboard





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