

In this issue of In Tempo:

**Reformation 2017: It's
Still All About Jesus!** 1

**Reformation 500 at
WELS** 3

**Freed and Renewed in
Christ** 4

**The Church Musician
as Persuader** 5

**Deep Calls to Deep:
Using Simple Refrains
In Lenten Worship** 9

**A Lutheran "Stations
of the Cross"** 10

Composing Canons 12

**Working Together: From
"Band" to "Team"** 21

Reformation 2017: It's Still All about Jesus!

By Jon Vieker

In many and various ways, churches, governments, and other institutions around the world have been planning for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017. Germany, for instance, has been preparing since 2008 with a "Luther Decade" of annual themes coordinated with a greatly enhanced tourism industry. At the epicenter, the little town of Wittenberg and its historic sites have been spruced up and restored, anticipating no less than 10,000 visitors a day during the climactic year of 2017.

For Lutherans, the anniversary is particularly meaningful as it marks half a millennium since Martin Luther nailed his Ninety-Five Theses on the Castle Church door, encountered the New Testament gospel of free grace, and witnessed subsequent reforms in both doctrine and life throughout the Western Church. And yet, Luther's encounter

For Luther, the real-time preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the principal spiritual means of reforming the hearts and minds of hearers, and thereby the church.

with the gospel was ultimately Christological at its core: the confession and answer of Peter, the disciples, and every believer since to the age-old question, "Who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15).

This Christological lens informs the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod's Reformation 2017 theme: "It's *Still* All about Jesus!" The theme and logo locate the central teaching of Holy Scripture in Christ and his saving work for humankind—that is, "the promise of the forgiveness of sins and justification on account of Christ." (Apology to the Augsburg Confession, Article IV; *The Book of Concord*, ed. Kolb/Wengert, p. 126.)

Lucas Cranach the Elder, Portrait of Martin Luther, Veste Coburg, 1529.



In General

To publicize and distribute the Reformation 2017 theme and materials, the LCMS (with financial support and partnership with its Lutheran Church Extension Fund, Concordia Publishing House, and Thrivent Financial) has established a dedicated web site at *LutheranReformation.org*. A number of resources are already posted there, with many more to come later this summer. For example, check out its “Faces of the Reformation” section, where one can download free and informative Bible studies, handouts, and bulletin inserts for such Reformation personae as Martin Luther, Katharina von Bora, Leo X, Philip Melancthon, and many others. Be sure to check back from time to time as additional “faces” are added, and don’t hesitate to explore and interact with some of the other unique features at *LutheranReformation.org*, a “one-stop shop” for all things Reformation 2017.



REFORMATION 2017 It's *Still* All About Jesus

For Luther, the real-time preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ was the principal spiritual means of reforming the hearts and minds of hearers, and thereby the church. In order to “up the game” of such Gospel preaching among its preachers today, the LCMS has launched its “Preach the Word” initiative. Under the direction of Randall Golter, this project has brought together a team of seminary homiletics and parish practitioners who are developing a dozen or so topical, online modules for triad groups of preachers to work through together and improve their craft of preaching. Utilizing video instruction, written components, and interactive peer-review, the first three modules will become available in January 2017.

With funding from Thrivent Financial, a major, two-hour television documentary titled, “Reformation: An Idea that Changed the World,” will debut in the fall of 2017 on PBS. Along with the ELCA, WELS, and four other Lutheran church bodies in the U.S., the LCMS has provided input and assistance to the film’s

producers, Boettcher/Trinklein Productions, as they have painstakingly worked to assemble a team of Luther scholars to interview and provide consultation and oversight at every stage. A trailer and additional information on this wonderful project is available at *LutheranReformation.org* and elsewhere.

In Word and Song

The Reformation’s reshaping of the church’s worship life—in both word and song—was an enormous endeavor. Along with a modest revision of the Latin

Mass, Luther introduced the singing of hymns in the vernacular with the introduction of a modest contribution of some two dozen hymns in 1523–24. Tens of thousands more would flow from the pens of hymn writers and musicians during the centuries to follow.

As the joyful recipients of a living and growing heritage of Lutheran hymnody, the LCMS recently sponsored a hymn text competition. The competition generated more than 230 entries. All hymn entries were blind judged by a panel of judges according to the following criteria:

- theological strength (i.e., grounded in Scripture and Christological in focus);
- technical poetical soundness;
- freshness of imagery;
- structural strength (i.e., flow of thought within and between stanzas);
- aptness for liturgical use and congregational singing; and
- centered on themes of the Lutheran Reformation

in tempo

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Reformation 500 at WELS

Want to know exactly how many days, hours, minutes and seconds remain until the moment of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation? Northwestern Publishing House and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has that and more available for you at www.nph.net/reformation500.

Visit the web site and explore the variety of Reformation 500 materials available from NPH, including music and worship resources on the hymns of Martin Luther; other Reformation-era chorales and Reformation-themed music; new publications as well as classic books about Luther's life, teachings, and the legacy of the Lutheran church; recordings of the great music of the Lutheran heritage; devotionals; Bible studies for congregational use; Reformation 500 gifts and apparel; and more. And don't miss the distinctive downloadable Reformation 500 logo at <https://wels.net/reformation500/resources/>, available free of charge in a variety of colors.

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(e.g., the proclamation of Christ and His saving work, the primacy of Scripture, justification by grace alone, salvation through faith alone, etc.).

The winner of this competition was Dr. Wilfred L. Karsten for his hymn, "Though All Our Life Is Like a Scroll." ALCM member Dr. Jeffrey Blersch of Concordia University Nebraska was commissioned to compose a sturdy tune to go with it. Both are available at lutheranreformation.org/resources/worship/though-all-our-life-is-like-a-scroll.

To assist congregations in commemorating a yearlong celebration of the Reformation anniversary, the LCMS is developing, in partnership with Concordia Publishing House, a plethora of service music and worship resources for four celebratory cornerstone festivals:

Commemoration of Martin Luther (Birth)—was observed on Sunday, November 13, 2016

Commemoration of Martin Luther (Death)—was observed on Sunday, February 19, 2017

Presentation of the Augsburg Confession—Sunday, June 25, 2017

Reformation Day—observed October 29, 2017

Various authors and composers of sermons, service planning materials, service music, hymn texts, and hymn tunes include: Jacob B. Weber, Jonathan Kohrs, James Marriott, Matthew Machemer, Kelly Klages, David W. Rogner, Stephen P. Starke, Stephen R. Johnson, Amanda Husberg, Lawrence R. Rast, Jr., James A. Baneck, Gregory P. Seltz, Matthew C. Harrison, Gregory J. Wismar, Larry A. Peters, Jeff Alexander, Matthew

Clark, and others. A number of ALCM members are contributors.

The celebration of Reformation 2017 will be a grand opportunity for Lutherans around the world to bear witness to the Savior they confess—"before God and all the world" (*Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration*, Article VII; Kolb/Wengert, p. 598)—the One who is "the way, the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Or in the words of Fred Pratt Green:

So has the Church,
in liturgy and song,
In faith and love,
through centuries of wrong,
Borne witness to the truth
in ev'ry tongue:
Alleluia!

—"When in Our Music God is Glorified,"
LSB 796, ELW 850/851 ■

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**Freed and Renewed in God's Grace:
Commemorating 500 years of The Reformation**

Weaving Lutheran music and arts into your congregational activities

By John Weit

With the Reformation anniversary year underway, Lutheran congregations and synods across the U.S. and the world are planning and hosting activities that demonstrate the importance of this historic milestone: that God's grace in Jesus is given freely to all. These unique, deep, and meaningful custom-created opportunities lift up Martin Luther's message that to trust God's mercy with a living, daring confidence allows one the freedom to give of oneself generously, loving all of life's undertakings in everyone they meet.

That is the central theme behind the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) anniversary theme: "Freed and Renewed in Christ: 500 Years of God's Grace in Action."

As Lutheran musicians, we know this is an exciting time to weave the Reformation into the music and arts within and throughout congregational worship as well as into everyday activities that support the Reformation anniversary. Resources in many forms provide tools to create and collaborate with your congregational partners to bring the message alive.

Getting Started

The newly relaunched elca500.org website hosts a wide variety of

**Freed
& RENEWED
in Christ
500 YEARS OF GOD'S
GRACE IN ACTION**

resources to understand, plan, and communicate all aspects of the Reformation. Among these, there are a few good starting points.

The "With New Voices" tab offers the tools to support ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton's invitation to hear the catechism from new voices, perhaps from those not heard earlier in one's faith experience. Included is an extensive guide that highlights opportunities to use music with the catechism study.

The *Reformation 500 Sourcebook* (Resources/Worship/Books) published by Augsburg Fortress contains materials needed for all aspects of the celebration, with a particular focus on music (page

113). This section makes connections to Martin Luther's small catechism and encourages brief studies of selected hymns appropriate for any age. Suggested hymns for the anniversary year appear beginning on page 43. Information on adapting "The Church's Journey in Art and Song" from the 2015 joint ELCA Worship Jubilee/ALCM biennial conference can be found in the printed resource and in the included CD-ROM.

Although only a foundation for a Reformation worship, catechism study, or a joint ecumenical service, the resources available in both the website and sourcebook partner well together.

continued on Page 5

Throughout the Year

During the course of the year, you can help sustain your congregation's energy for the Reformation anniversary through the use of music and other resources that connect to the Reformation and its history.

Consider using the ecumenical document *Declaration on the Way* as part of ecumenical and interreligious gatherings, where it is most appropriate. With the important relationship being forged and healed between many Lutherans around the world and the Roman Catholic church, the Common Prayer Liturgy offers a reflection point for common witness and commitment.

Music from throughout the ages also provides a great perspective, bringing 500 years of the Reformation to the present, particularly when connected with spoken and written word. This includes incorporating the commemorative hymn "God Alone Be Praised," created in honor of ALCM's 30th anniversary year and the Reformation anniversary.

Your gifts as a Lutheran music and worship team member can create a lasting impression that lifts up the Reformation among the hearts of parishioners in your congregation. And for those outside your church, it offers the gift of the Holy Spirit working through the living, daring confidence of God's grace. ■

John Weit is Program Director, Music, Office of the Presiding Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



The Church Musician as Persuader

By Barry L. Bobb

One of the great blessings we enjoy as church musicians is that we have the opportunity to hear Holy Scriptures read in public probably as often as anyone does. It's fascinating to me that, even after all these years and even with the familiarity of the lessons, there still are times when a word or a turn of phrase catches my ear.

That happened recently when I heard Acts 18:4: "Every Sabbath he [St. Paul] reasoned in the synagogues, trying to persuade Jews and Greeks." It was that verb "persuade" that got my attention—not "sharing," "proclaiming," or "witnessing," but "persuading." In our culture of safe zones and trigger warnings, it almost sounds aggressive. Actually the Greek verb *peitho* appears several times in Acts and it always means "trying to change the heart of someone" (not merely the mind). It implies a systematic, convincing argument and the use of rhetorical devices. It suggests further that the viewpoint being expressed

might be a "hard sell." Corinth was a very diverse and pluralistic society, a very difficult place for Paul to sow the seeds of the gospel, to persuade.

A couple of questions come to mind.

Did Paul know rhetoric—the formal art of discourse?

Rhetoric had its beginnings in 5th-century BC Greece; Aristotle developed it considerably as a discipline. Certainly the Romans of Paul's day (and he was a Roman citizen) were trained in rhetoric. From the apostle's other writings we surely know he had a drive for organizing Christian teaching. One contemporary Christian writer has envisioned meeting Peter and Paul in heaven. Peter has a fishing pole and invites you to go out on a lake in his boat; Paul, on the other hand, has a PowerPoint presentation he wants to show you.

Art: Raphael Sanzio, "Plato walks with Aristotle," central figures (detail) in *The School of Athens*, Apostolic Palace, Vatican City, 1509-11.

And as church musicians we naturally wonder: if Paul were trained in rhetoric, did he consider song to be one of his tools?

For us, Paul is definitely our “go to” guy in the New Testament. We know the passages by heart:

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God” (Colossians 3:16).

“Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19).

“About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25).

We know what happened to their jailer the next morning: he was baptized along with his entire family.

It’s probably safe to say that Paul was not only an apostle but also a persuader, a rhetorician for the gospel. It’s also safe to conclude that he knew something of music’s power in that witnessing.



It’s also safe to conclude that [Paul] knew something of music’s power in that witnessing.

Public Conversation

One of the reasons that verb in Acts 18:4 caught my ear was that “persuade” has also been showing up in the public conversation about worship and church music. One instance was in the May 2015 issue of the journal *Reformed Worship*, where Zac

Hicks pleads for a more emotionally persuasive liturgy. He uses Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Cranmer’s work on the *Book of Common Prayer* as his source material. Hicks notes the influence of Luther and Melancthon on Cranmer and their synthesis of Augustinian thought with humanism and Erasmus, and how he also came to see justification by faith alone as the root of all change in people. (Hicks fails to mention that Cranmer’s second wife was a very important Lutheran—the niece of Andreas Osiander—nor does he muse about what influence pillow talk might have had.)

But the influence of rhetoric on Cranmer is unmistakable in his own revision of the Mass. He utilizes flowery, sensory language, emotionally charged words, and couplets and triplets, carefully using a succession of words to chip away at the human heart, such as “meet, right, and salutary,” “we have erred and strayed,” “pass our time in rest and quietness,” and “we acknowledge and bewail ... sins and wickedness ... by thought, word and deed ... provoking thy wrath and indignation.” For Cranmer, persuasive liturgy was about saying the right words, at the right time, in just the right way.

Another instance came this summer when I was reading Chris Ahlman’s essay, “The Church Musician and the World,” in the Festschrift *Charles Ore: An American Original*.¹ He talks about the church musician as prophet, herald, and persuader. For him this is not a theoretical or historical question; it’s real life. The culture of Leipzig today is like most of Europe: fewer than 12 percent of people identify as Christians. It’s not all

that different from first-century Corinth. As Ahlman says, being a church musician is not about “showing up to play.” Rather it is a “call to arms.”



Being a church musician is not about “showing up to play.” Rather it is a “call to arms.”

Church Music and Rhetoric

The connection between the art of rhetoric and the art of church music has been well developed over the ages. In the early church, when Arius wanted to spread his heresy as far as possible, he wrote a hymn called “Thalia.” We still have a copy today.² It powerfully lays out Arius’ teaching about Jesus—not co-equal with the Father, not co-eternal, not with an equal glory. But the songs of the followers of Athanasius proved stronger. We still sing many of those, especially the ones by St. Ambrose, such as “Savior of the Nations, Come.”

Interestingly, in the Middle Ages both congregational song and rhetoric faded from favor. But in the Reformation era both made a significant comeback. In the last 20 years or so, much study has been focused on the use of rhetoric by both Martin Luther and Philip Melancthon. For Luther much attention has been focused on his sermons.³ As for music as a rhetorical tool, however, few of us need to be reminded of Luther’s promoting of congregational song for the purpose of teaching and persuading. And it was effective: The Jesuits in the

Counter-Reformation complained that “Luther damned more people with his hymns than all his sermons and books combined.”

But more study has been done on rhetoric and Melanchthon. Knowing how Melanchthon carefully set up the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, how he used the outline steps—*exordium*, *narratio*, *propositio*, *confirmatio*, and *peroratio*—doesn’t change our understanding of the Lutheran Confessions themselves, but it does shed much light on how he constructed his argument against the Roman Catholic authorities.

More important are Melanchthon’s later education reforms. In the Latin schools, where virtually all church musicians were trained, the art of rhetoric was taught alongside the art of music. At this time rhetoric was moving from the mathematically based *quadrivium* of arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy to the linguistic *trivium* of grammar, logic, rhetoric. (We use the same flow in Christian education today: Bible stories are grammar→Christian doctrine is logic→ being able to explain and defend the faith is rhetoric.) And the return of congregational song brought interest in how to best convey the word persuasively in song.

All Lutheran church musicians were schooled in rhetoric and began applying it to music for the next 200 years, all the way into the Baroque era, seeing a full flowering in the compositions of Johann Gottfried Walther and others.

Dietrich Bartel, a Mennonite teaching at the University of Manitoba, lays this out in great



The return of congregational song brought interest in how to best convey the word persuasively in song.

detail in his book *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music*.⁴

The use of fauxbourdon, diminution, silence, quick harsh dissonances, ground bass, and all those ornaments we struggled to learn in college were there not to bring attention to the performer but rather to convey the texts more meaningfully, more persuasively. This linking of church music and rhetoric has continued into our own era. Erik Routley, the great British hymnologist and thinker about church music, once mused about what happens when theologians *do not* try to engage music and the arts.



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What might our “new theologians” have achieved in our generation if they had had an artist among them! What may the best of them yet achieve if they can interest a musician in what they are trying to say? It is hardly too much to say that if it won’t sing, it isn’t good theology.⁵

Preaching through the Hymn of the Day

Many of us know the name of Fr. Michael Joncas, who wrote “On Eagles’ Wings” and many other important hymns. What you might not know is that he studied liturgy at Notre Dame (IN) and in Rome; he currently teaches at the University of St. Thomas, in St. Paul, MN; at Notre Dame, and at St. John’s, Collegeville (MN). In the preface to his recent collection of his new hymns⁶—Fr. Joncas lays out a startling proposal, namely, that the Roman Catholic church develop a hymn of the day for every Sunday and solemnity in the lectionary cycle. In paragraph three of his preface he notes that Edward W. Klammer provides his basic definition of the hymn of the day. In the following paragraph he quotes Carl Schalk in explaining the purpose of the hymn of the day. In the concluding pages of the preface he shows how a hymn of the day practice would be consistent with the principles of the *Constitution on Sacred Liturgy*. But more poignant were Fr. Joncas’ comments about his collection at the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians national gathering in Atlanta in the summer of 2015. In his workshop he explained his rationale for this series of hymns based on the lectionary in more fervent terms. He said, “The truth is that the state of preaching in Roman Catholic churches in America has gotten so bad, that the hymn of the day may be our only remaining hope.”

Like first-century Corinth, like the times of the Arian controversy, like the era of the Reformation, like ... well, most of human history, we live in a



Martin Marty noted that the biggest problem that the church is now facing is not atheism or antagonism from the government, it's "indifference."⁷

difficult culture in which to plant the seed of the gospel. Even as keen and seasoned an observer as Martin Marty noted in a recent issue of the *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* that the biggest problem that the church is now facing is not atheism or antagonism from the government, it's "indifference."⁷

What on earth is the Church to do?

A Bond Between Preachers and Musicians

The answer is probably *not*, as Sally Morgenthaler said already 10 years ago, to "shrink Christian worship down to three sermon points and four songs in the key of perpetually happy."⁸ The answer is to do as the church has always done:

- rely on the word of God and its unique power; and
- rely on the Holy Spirit and all the tools with which the Spirit equips us.

One of those tools and a part of the answer to our challenges, at least, lies in the roots of our Lutheran heritage. Martin Luther not only rediscovered the gospel, but he also—alone among the reformers—identified music as a gift from God, rather than a human invention. He went so far as to describe congregational song in rhetorical terms as a *predicatio sonora*—"a resounding sermon." In so doing Luther forged a strong, enduring bond between Lutheran preachers and Lutheran church musicians.

The task of both is the essence of rhetoric: to find just the right word, placed at just the right time in the liturgy, expressed in just the right way. To be sure, it is the Holy Spirit who "calls, gathers, and enlightens." As Paul Manz used to say, after enchanting us with the possibilities of improvisation, "The music will woo them, but the Word will win them."

Only the Holy Spirit creates faith and brings a real change of heart, not by guilt and the threat of punishment, not by the promise of reward, not even by the art of persuasion, but by the word of the gospel—the divine truth of justification by grace alone through faith alone in Christ Jesus.

In an episode of the TV show "The Big Bang Theory," Sheldon, the theoretical physicist, desperately wants Howard, the engineer, to show Stephen Hawking his paper. Howard uses this to extract from Sheldon numerous onerous tasks. The last one is simple: "Pay me a compliment. Tell me that I'm good at what I do." Sheldon replies, "Of course, you're good at what you; in fact you're great at what you do. It's just that what you do isn't worth doing."

Perhaps you too occasionally have doubts about life as a church musician. You may wonder, is this really worth doing? If so, remember that all you do as



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instruments of Christ's Spirit—studying, practicing, rehearsing, listening, teaching, learning praying, and recruiting—is an awesome and wonderful work, a holy calling from God. *And it has never been more important than it is right now.* The church is blessed to have you in the classroom, in the balcony, on the organ bench, or wherever, as a persuader of the gospel. ■

Barry L. Bobb is director of sanctuary music at Cornerstone Lutheran Church in Carmel, IN, and also serves as director of the Center for Church Music at Lectures in Church Music at Concordia University Chicago in October 2016.



Remember that all you do as instruments of Christ's Spirit is an awesome and wonderful work, a holy calling from God. And it has never been more important than it is right now.

1 Ed. by Irene Beethe (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2016), 157ff.

2 Daniel Liderbach, *Christ in the Early Christian Hymns* (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), 39-40.

3 Neil R. Leroux, *Luther's Rhetoric: Strategies and Style from the Invocavit Sermons* (St. Louis: Concordia Academic Press, 2002).

4 *Musica Poetica: Musical-Rhetorical Figures in German Baroque Music* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997).

5 Erik Routley, *Music Leadership in the Church* (Carol Stream, IL: Agape, 1984), 112.

6 Michael Joncas, *Within Our Hearts Be Born: The Michael Joncas Hymnary for Advent and Christmas* (Portland, OR: OCP, 2013). A second volume, *We Contemplate the Mystery: Lent and Triduum* (also OCP), appeared in 2015.

7 James M. Childs, Jr., "A Conversation with Martin Marty about His New Book," *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* 16, no. 7 (July/August 2016), www.elca.org/JLE/Articles/1174.

8 Sally Morgenthaler, "A Foreword," in Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship: Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations* (El Cajon, CA: EmergentYS, 2004), vi.

Deep Calls to Deep

Using Simple Refrains in Lenten Worship

By Liv Larson Andrews

O God, we call
O God, we call
from deep inside we yearn
from deep inside we yearn
from deep inside we yearn
for you.

for the first time, our small church tried offering a worship service on the evening of the winter solstice. As recommended by *Sundays and Seasons* (Augsburg Fortress), we themed the night around Blue Christmas, striving to make a meaningful space for everything that was not quiet or calm or mild in our community during the Christmas season. The sanctuary was dimly lit by handheld candles and a few wall sconces. People sat in pews in small groups or by themselves. We sang evening hymns and read from the prophet Isaiah. Then we turned to a more fluid time of prayer and singing. The song above, “O God We Call,” from *Singing Our Prayer*,¹ began this open time. It was then that I noticed the sound of weeping.

The people who gathered for that Blue Christmas service needed songs with words that spoke to their grief, “we yearn for you.” They also needed to sing them through many times so that the words could give way to meditation. Especially when we plan worship that intends to address the experience of discord, which so many suffer at Christmastime, simple may be best. A thoughtful, repeated refrain can be surprisingly

effective at naming that place of conflicting feelings. When grief is raw, the singing can lead to tears.

Of course, emotion and feelings can’t be a rubric for planning worship, as in “this’ll make ‘em sob!” What we seek in using these simple refrains is not manipulation but worship that makes a warm, open space for feelings that are hard to move through. Repetition can assist us in this task. There is an old joke about the obnoxious repetition of some praise songs: “Jesus Jesus Jesus Jesus Jesus, copyright 1999.” Unlike those vapid choruses, songs written for prayerful repetitive singing can sound like a drone or a hum, forming a steady ground of song. With thought and care, repeated songs can help a community welcome in deeper prayers, be they groans or praises.

By now, the tree has come down and the nativity is stored away for next year. The blue, gold, and white paraments are folded and stored; we are ironing the purple. As days lengthen, we turn our attention to worship for the Lent/Easter cycle. I suggest we include these simple, shorter songs in our worship plans plan for Lent. Lent is a season set aside for faithful reflection and baptismal renewal (not six weeks of sadness). As we bury the Alleluia, we can welcome short songs into worship for the purpose of deepening our baptismal identity. Imagine if the people who gather for worship in your context learned a song like ELW

221 and got it way down in their marrow, singing it while standing in the grocery store:

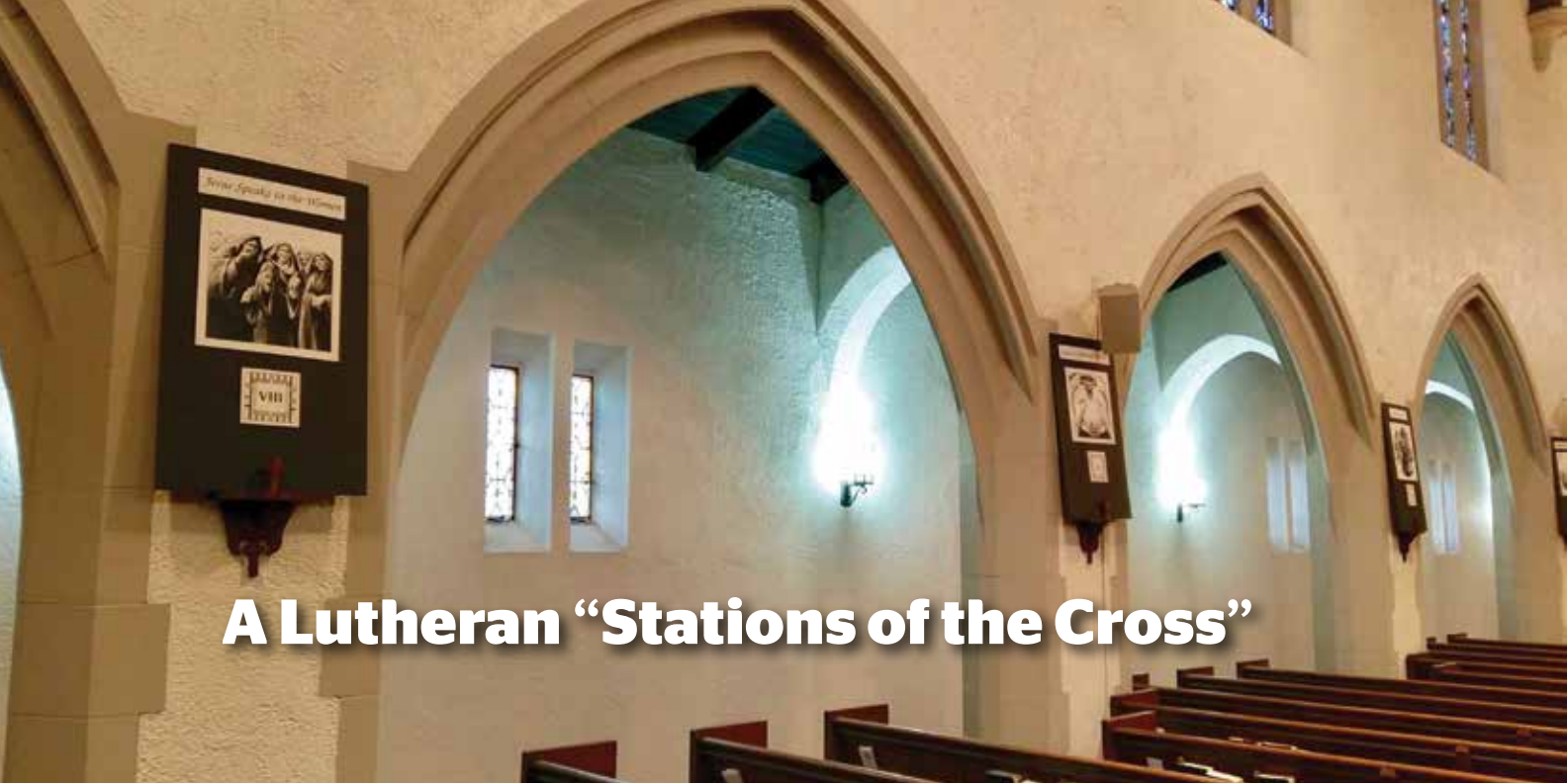
Blessed be God
who forgives all our sins,
who heals all our ills,
who crowns us with mercy and
love.

A song such as this merits repeating. I would love to get good news like this stuck in my head for six weeks! So rather than capping these short songs at two or three rounds, I suggest we risk a more unscripted use. Let us let the need of the singing community guide how many times we sing through a given song.

The reason I will plan to offer a Blue Christmas worship service again next year is not that I hope people cry in church. I hope, and through the Holy Spirit I trust, that the promises of baptism will come to the people who gather. This past December, that baptismal promise took the form of love that could hold deep grief. Who knows what we will need God to give us this coming Lent, but we do know that God will meet us in our need. Short, prayerful songs can help us stay connected to the love of God, a love that never ceases to resound throughout creation. Whether toned in Advent blue, Christmas gold or Lenten purple, let us seek to create worship that offers this abiding message of good news. ■

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¹ Comp. and ed. by Tom Witt (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2010).



A Lutheran “Stations of the Cross”

By Mark W. Pinnick

*Stations of the Cross:
can we really do that?*

When I was a young boy, I remember going to a relative’s Roman Catholic church and walking around looking at the scenes of Christ’s crucifixion on the walls. I turned to my mother and asked why we didn’t have those pictures on the walls at our church. She replied that we are Lutheran and we don’t do those Catholic things. But I told her that I thought they were cool and a neat thing to have on the walls. It was that first speck of curiosity that made me pursue this concept further while I was the director of music and liturgy at Bethel Lutheran Church in Grove City, Ohio.

Several years ago I ran across an article on the Stations of Cross that made me remember my childhood memory of being in that Catholic church. I asked myself, “Why can’t Lutherans do the Stations of the Cross and make it part of our Lenten piety?” I approached my pastor

The Stations of the Cross is a local reconstruction of the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem at your church.

and suggested we do Stations that upcoming Lent. After some hesitation and much discussion, he gave me the go-ahead to research it and present the background and service idea to the worship and music committee for approval.

I set to work looking into the practice and spirituality behind Stations. Basically, it is locally reconstructing the Via Dolorosa in Jerusalem at your church. You can go to Christian Resource Institute (<http://www.crivoice.org/stations.html>) to get a basic history of the stations of the cross, and there is a service that you can use or modify. I based my approach on the Episcopal “Way of the Cross” and modified the wording for the Lutheran church.

My first idea about the structure of the service was to model it after the Episcopal/Catholic service with readings and a

procession from station to station. Being fortunate enough to have a Catholic museum nearby, I contacted them and asked if they had a set of stations that we could borrow for a day. They informed me that they had many in storage that were donated by closing parishes and would be happy to loan them to us. I went over to the museum and was able to pick out a set that was artistic but small and easy enough to transport and set up in the church. Since our sanctuary had moveable seating, I set the stations up on easels around the room, clearing a space in front of each station and allowing for about 10–15 people to stand in front of each station, with room for clergy, crucifier, and two torch bearers to stand.

Our service was held at noon on Good Friday. We began with a greeting, prayer, and dialogue. We sang a hymn, then processed with singing to each station. This was followed by a Scripture reading, a reflection about the reading, and some mediation time. Then we processed to the next station until we had gone

through all 14 stations. We closed with a prayer and another hymn. We then invited people to spend as much time as they would like for meditation.

We had a good attendance of about 40 people for our first Stations of the Cross. People really liked the added service for Holy Week and appreciated the journey in a different format. I had asked for feedback from those who attended and the most frequent complaint was not having enough time at each station. This gave me a new idea for the following year.

With the feedback from the first year of doing Stations, I decided to totally change the format for the second year. Instead of having a formal service with a procession, I thought a self-guided Stations might have more spiritual impact.

I set up the stations around the church with seating for about 10 people in front of each. Some incense burned in a brassier and a CD of monks chanting Gregorian chant played softly in the background. In the narthex, people picked up a bulletin,

which explained what they were about to do. It also contained some prayers and meditation hints for making the experience deeper.

We had the church open from noon to 3 p.m. People would come in and start with prayer and meditation, then move from station to station at their leisure. Each station had a sheet with a description of that station, a Scripture reading, and a meditation and prayer to read. This was followed by an invitation to spend as much time as needed at each station before moving to the next. After going through all the stations, they were then asked to sit in the nave of the church with a follow-up sheet of paper, which contained a concluding prayer.

The feedback and response to this format was very positive. People appreciated that they could move at their own pace and have the time to reflect on each station. So, with this response, we decided to follow this format in the future.

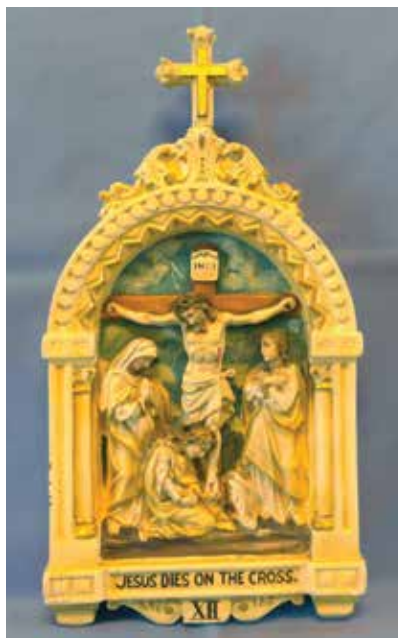
As Paul Hoffman notes in *Stations of the Cross: Photographs and Meditations* (Wipf & Stock, 2011), the typical number of stations in Roman Catholic practice is 14, mandated by Pope Clement XII in 1731. However, Hoffman continues, “Protestant congregations tend toward ten stations, all of which have Biblical references in the Gospels, with the exception of Station Three, Jesus Falls, which relies on Psalm 118 to bring scriptural legitimacy to it” (Hoffman, xii). Other resources for planning the Stations of the Cross may be found at www.holytrinitychicago.org/worship/stations and www.liturgybytlw.com/Lent/Stations.html.

I am now at a different church, and I was very happy to see that my “new” church had tried in the past to do the Stations of the Cross, but hadn’t now for some time. I suggested that we start that practice up again. The pastor was more than happy to oblige. However, it is done a bit differently at this location. At this setting, it is a modified public service, not a self-guided reflection.

Because we do not have movable seating, we follow a more structured service. We place the stations around the church [see photo on page 10], but instead of moving to each station the congregation remains in their pews. We then project each station onto a large screen for all to see. The altar party, however, moves to each station. This format works quite well.

I feel that this Lenten observance has truly blessed and deepened the personal piety of many in the congregations that I have served. This observance, once thought of as only Roman Catholic, may now be thought of as a catholic observance and open to all for the deepening of one’s piety during the season of Lent. ■

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Composing Canons

By Chad Fothergill

In addition to multistanza chorales, hymns, and spirituals, the church's treasury of song is filled with shorter, repetitive pieces useful for processions, worship outside the sanctuary space, or circumstances that warrant a simpler approach to style, length, and flexible instrumentation. We know many of these song types from the Taizé and Iona traditions, as well as from other exemplary collections, such as *Music Sourcebook: All Saints through Transfiguration*,¹ *Music Sourcebook for Lent and the Three Days*,² and *Hear Our Prayer: Sung Responses for Chorus and Assembly*.³

At times, though, it can be hard to find the shorter song or response that offers just the right fit for the unique combination

of gifts in your context. In these situations, you might consider composing a canon. After all, there's only one melody for singers to learn; but staggered entrances in two, three, or four parts provide texture, variety, and harmonic interest. (Maybe some singers in your assembly will even be inspired to think about joining the choir!) In addition, "homegrown" canons also allow you to adapt them over time, perhaps adding an instrumental part, percussion, or adjusting the key signature to suit changes in your choir's balance.

The steps and examples that follow trace two approaches to canonic writing, melodic and harmonic. A composer's toolkit certainly contains other methods including specialized techniques such as inversion,

Think about musical gestures that match the flow and inflection of the words.

augmentation, and diminution. But for now, we'll be guided by the helpful adage, "simpler is better!"

Text

First you will need a text—something short and memorable, perhaps with clear rhyme scheme that invites balanced musical phrases. Start small. Let's take a familiar refrain, "let my prayer rise up as incense" from Psalm 141, a text that could be used at evening prayer, an evening meeting, or other devotional gathering where a longer hymn may be impractical.

Music: The Melodic Approach

Begin by speaking or singing your text aloud; try some ideas and improvise without writing anything down. Think about musical gestures that match the flow and inflection of the words. For example, when I speak "let my prayer rise up as incense" over and over, I find that the word "up" seems to be the peak. It's also the place where I make a physical gesture as if conducting the text. Maybe your phrasing will emphasize "prayer" or "rise" instead. Consider: how might that spoken gesture translate into a musical one?



PHOTO BY JOHN SANTORO

Once you're ready to start writing, begin with just a few notes in one part, then copy that idea into the second part. For example:

Example 1

Musical notation for Example 1. The top staff contains the notes G4, A4, B4 with the lyrics "Let my prayer". The bottom staff contains the notes G3, A3, B3 with the lyrics "Let my prayer".

Now, set the next little bit of text in counterpoint with the lower line, like so:

Example 2

Musical notation for Example 2. The top staff contains the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4 with the lyrics "Let my prayer rise up as". The bottom staff contains the notes G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3 with the lyrics "Let my prayer rise up as".

Bear in mind that you may have to repeat these steps with a few different options until you find one that works best. Not all of us are Mozart and can get it right on the first try! (And to be honest, Mozart didn't always get it right the first time, either.) Once you're satisfied with both the individual lines and resultant harmonies, continue on:

Example 3

Musical notation for Example 3. The top staff contains the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4 with the lyrics "Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.". The bottom staff contains the notes G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3 with the lyrics "Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.". The final notes in both staves are tied together with a slur.

Now that we have a basic idea, we should probably apply some standard notational practices by adding a time signature, key signature, and bar lines:

Example 4

Musical notation for Example 4. The top staff is in 2/4 time and B-flat major, containing the notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4, F4 with the lyrics "Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.". The bottom staff is in 2/4 time and B-flat major, containing the notes G3, A3, B3, C4, B3, A3, G3, F3 with the lyrics "Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.". The final notes in both staves are tied together with a slur.

Voilà! Now we have a two-part canon! Of course the process is easier said than done, but hopefully these steps offer useful guideposts for experimenting with your own ideas. Once you have a two-part canon, you can also try repeating the pattern in another voice (without surprising or jarring dissonances) to see if you have a three-part canon:

Example 5

Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.

Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.

Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.

As it turns out, this one works okay as it becomes an alternation between G minor and D minor. In order to make your new three-part canon more assembly friendly, remove the extra staves and mark the different entrances with either letters or numbers. Canons in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (for example, see ELW 171, 211, 236, and 565) use numbers. Here, I've opted for letters in order to distinguish entries from measure numbers:

Example 6

Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.

You may also find that your canon works well over a drone that “grounds” or “centers” the pitch; this sustained note could be played by a string instrument, organ pedals, or with the “singing bell” technique. If your canon is to be used as a psalm refrain, perhaps it can be “bookended” by bell tones (and further contrasted with slow, soft, random ringing during the verses).

Example 7

Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.

Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.

Let my prayer rise up as in - cense.

The musical score for Example 7 consists of three vocal staves and piano accompaniment. The vocal staves are in 2/4 time and G major. The lyrics are "Let my prayer rise up as in - cense." The piano accompaniment is in the same key and time signature, with the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing a simple bass line.

Save your files (if working on the computer) and make necessary revisions if and when you discover that something didn't quite work as planned, or if the assembly needs a little help finding that B-flat on the word "up"! Lastly, you might consider teaching your canon as a paperless song à la Music That Makes Community. In addition to ELW and collections from the Taizé and Iona traditions, more canonic examples and teaching strategies can be found in "paperless" resources such as *Music By Heart: Paperless Songs for Evening Worship*.⁴

Music: The Harmonic Approach

Another way to approach composing canons is to start with an underlying harmonic progression. This is how many of the Taizé canons are constructed. For example, take a look at ELW 236, a Taizé setting that uses the incipit of the Latin Magnificat, or "magnificat anima mea Dominum." While this looks like an eight-measure melody, each two-measure segment (marked by a double bar line) actually unfolds over the same basic chord progression:

Example 8

G (I) C (IV) D (V)⁷ G (I)

The musical score for Example 8 shows a harmonic progression in G major. The progression is G (I) - C (IV) - D (V)⁷ - G (I). The chords are shown in the bass clef, with the notes G, C, D, and G respectively. The treble clef shows a simple melody line.

When you add the text in order, you get four short melodies over the same chord progression:

Example 9

1 Ma - gni - fi - cat. Ma - gni - fi - cat.

2 Ma - gni - fi - cat a - ni - ma me - a Do - mi - num.

3 Ma - gni - fi - cat. Ma - gni - fi - cat.

4 Ma - gni - fi - cat a - ni - ma me - a!

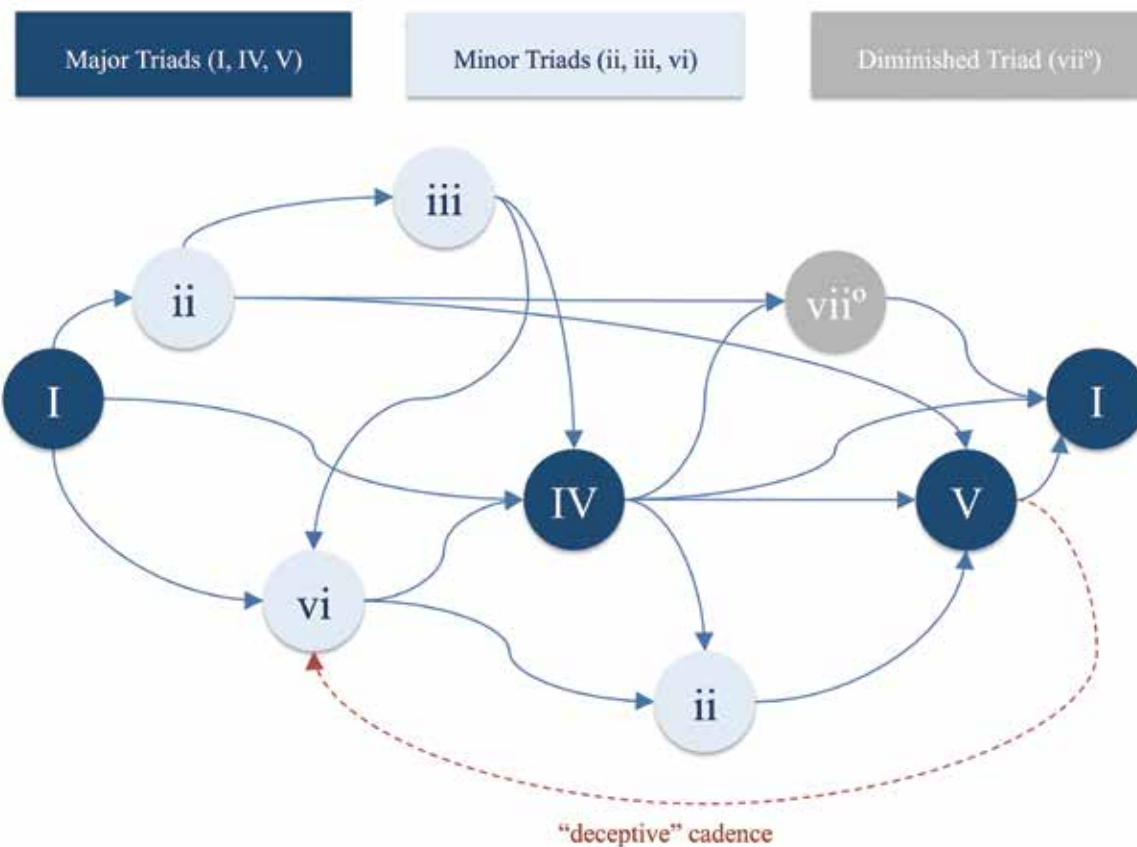
G (I) C (IV) D (V)⁷ G (I)

Notice how the melody is aligned with the chord changes: all the notes in the harmony are there in various parts of the melody when the chord shifts. In order to write a good harmonic progression, you'll want to start with your bookends, or the first and last chords. Do you want your canon to be "closed," as in this example, where we begin and end on the tonic chord (the triad based on scale degree 1)? Or, do you want your canon to be "open" and end on the dominant (the triad based on scale degree 5), the chord that most strongly leads back to tonic? Some canons use shorter progressions and four melodic phrases above this progression. Others use longer harmonic progressions and maybe only two phrases, such as "You Are Holy" (ELW 525).

Developing a harmonic map is not an easy task, as one must balance several guidelines that shape our sense of musical logic. Many of these considerations undergird familiar hymns, songs, and liturgies, though it's easy to lose track of them as they've probably been forgotten since taking music theory. As a general rule of thumb, the root movement of common-practice tonality will descend by skips outlining the intervals of thirds and fifths and, conversely, ascend by step (the interval of a second) or by a leap at the interval of a fourth.

Using these rules, here's an actual "map" of pathways for your harmony to go, based on the root position triads of any scale where scale degrees 1, 4, and 5 form major triads; scale degrees 2, 3, and 6 form minor triads; and scale degree 7 (the leading tone) forms a diminished triad:

Figure 1



Let's take a progression of several chords, though one that's more complex than the Taizé Magnificat (I—IV—V—I), just to show how far one can go on this path. Let's have a progression that ends after four chord changes at the dominant (V), an "open" ending that needs a "close" on the tonic (I):

Example 10

A♭ (I) D♭ (IV) B♭ (ii) E♭ (V) C (iii) F (vi) D♭ (IV) E♭ (V) A♭ (I)

Remember, too, that the triads and their qualities in the chart above (Figure 1) can be "colored" with added tones such as seconds and sevenths. For example, several seventh scale degrees can be added to the progression of Example 10 in order to yield Example 11:

Example 11

A^b (I) D^b (IV)^{M7} B^b (ii)⁷ E^b (V)⁷ C (iii)⁷ F (vi)⁷ D^b (IV) E^b (V)⁷ A^b (I)

Now let's add two phrases of text above this progression, an adaptation of the hymn "God Extends an Invitation" (ELW 486), that could be sung for smaller gatherings or if your assembly practices gathering around one table for the entire distribution (for instance, during the summer months when attendance may be less reliable than Sundays during the school year). Adding text yields:

Example 12

A^b (I) D^b (IV)^{M7} B^b (ii)⁷ E^b (V)⁷ C (iii)⁷ F (vi)⁷ D^b (IV) E^b (V)⁷ A^b (I)

Text (ELW 486): Miria T. Kolling; transl. Gerhard M. Cartford, adapt.
Transl. © 1998 Augsburg Fortress.

Next, add some instrumental parts:

Example 13

God ex-tends an in - vi - ta - tion to the ta - ble of cre - a - tion;
here is wine, here is bread, here the feast of life is spread.

A^b (I) D^b (IV)^{M7} b^b (ii)⁷ E^b (V)⁷ c (iii)⁷ f (vi)⁷ D^b (IV) E^b (V)⁷ A^b (I)

Text (ELW 486): Miria T. Kolling; transl. Gerhard M. Cartford, adapt.
Transl. © 1998 Augsburg Fortress.

Finally, as before, make a congregational version:

Example 14

A

God ex-tends an in - vi - ta - tion to the ta - ble of cre - a - tion;

B

here is wine, here is bread, here the feast of life is spread.

Text (ELW 486): Miria T. Kolling; transl. Gerhard M. Cartford, adapt.
Transl. © 1998 Augsburg Fortress.

As before, save your files and revisit them if something doesn't seem to be working well, or if the choir and assembly are naturally inclined to breathe in a place you didn't expect, or perhaps elongate or shorten one of your note values. And, as always, give credit where credit is due: be sure to always include proper copyrights, acknowledgments, and permissions. ■

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- 1 Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2013.
- 2 Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2010.
- 3 Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2027.
- 4 New York: Church Publishing, 2008.



PHOTO BY JOHN SANTORO

Working Together: From “Band” to “Team”

By *Omaldo Perez*

“There are two kinds of music.
Good music, and the other kind.”

—Edward Kennedy “Duke”
Ellington

This short aphorism may strike you as an odd and rather vague place to begin an essay on the particular challenges of “worshipping while with band,” but it comes to my mind every time I think about this subject. I share it at the outset of this article because, for many years now, I have perceived both discomfort and ambivalence around the language we use to describe worship and the music modeled after popular styles of the later 20th century, particularly the soft rock and pop styles of the 1980s and ’90s.

The many labels used to describe this modality of worship reflect this anxiety: we all have come across the “Informal,” the “Casual,” the “Come as you are,” the “Contemporary,” or even the—I am not joking—“Loud” worship. These labels are all too one-dimensional and maybe

even misleading in that they speak to superficial aspects of worship and do not describe any fundamental quality in our corporate relationship with God as an assembly. Ellington’s phrase “Good music and the other kind” might not be a very helpful taxonomic scheme when it comes to cataloging our churches’ libraries, but conceptually it offers the possibility of liberation from the formulaic music-making commonly found under the rubric “Contemporary Christian” music.

As the boundaries between local and global music continue to shrink and we church musicians are expected to be knowledgeable about and even fluent in an ever-increasing number of musical dialects, it can be refreshing and even freeing to think in terms of these antithetical categories of good and not-good. Not being bound by commercial paradigms while in pursuit of musical excellence can be most rewarding. However, I am aware that Ellington’s dichotomy is not free of problems either: who

it is through our interactions that we have a chance to model and instill our beliefs most succinctly.

becomes the arbiter conferring this official imprimatur of “goodness”? This large umbrella of a category seems to place the weight of artistic and moral judgment on the individual, heightening the relativistic and subjective dimensions of our sensitive task.

Fortunately, this is not like the notorious 1964 U.S. Supreme Court definition, “I know it when I see it.”¹ I would contend that we musicians are uniquely suited to the task of evaluating the finer points of performance practice, stylistic and theological propriety, and contextuality. After many years of evaluative and comparative listening, we are equipped (and blessed) with some useful resources to aid us in making objective critical assessments in musical matters. Most of us already do this type of evaluative “parsing

out” without much ado when we hear popular or classical music, be it Sting or Stravinsky. So the responsibility and the privilege of this “good music” business falls on us because we are the best qualified to distinguish the proverbial chaff from the wheat.

The first stop in the journey of discernment is to understand that there is no difference between our means and our ends. If our goal is to create music of high quality, our sojourn must begin and end with people. Music may be the most ephemeral of the arts, but just as proper posture is the best way to increase the chances of supported singing taking place, “good music” is most likely to happen when we foster trust and openness. I have encountered that first context for our task in the human arena—the people who sing and play.

Over the years I have noticed that it is during rehearsals when the team and I really get to know each other. As ministers of music, we must not forget that it is through our interactions that we have a chance to model and instill our beliefs most succinctly. To achieve this end, I tend to visualize the band’s practice time as a laboratory where we collectively explore possibilities within the music. I try to incorporate into the mix as many of the gifts and creative suggestions as I can. Vulnerability is essential, but so is an atmosphere of applied skill and craftsmanship: there is a lot of “can we try this and see what happens?”

It is a bit of a trial-and-error approach in a process not too dissimilar to cooking. A lot of ideas may not work, and this is to be expected. When I am open to suggestions, not only



does the music-making become stronger and the experience richer but, more importantly, my openness validates the voices of the individuals in the group and it strengthens the bonds within the ensemble.

Individuals under our care, who come to us without an agenda other than to ply their gifts in the context of worship and a desire to grow as musicians, are a gift and a great resource to any congregation. So I take this seriously: where there is openness and vulnerability, voices are heard—and when it comes to learning, all of us are to grow together. If we succeed in creating such an atmosphere in our band’s practice time, our people will sense intuitively that “the team” is larger than “the band.” When we all live our roles from a ministerial perspective, everyone benefits. In short, anyone who makes music in our programs is an assisting minister, the drummer as much as the acolyte, the usher, or the lector. We must always educate our people to keep an attitude of servant leadership in mind.

Complementing this view, Wayne L. Wold, in his book *Preaching to the Choir: The Care*

Anyone who makes music in our programs is an assisting minister, the drummer as much as the acolyte, the usher, or the lector.



and Nurture of the Church Choir (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003), presents us with the model for how we, as ministers of music, must frame our call. Apply the pastoral care model to every aspect of our practice. Promote an environment where every musician and volunteer cares for one another. Juvenal’s dictum comes to mind: *mens sana in corpore sano*, “a healthy mind in a healthy body.” If we were to transpose this principle to our sphere, it would read like this: good music happens in the healthy assembled body of Christ, the people. If we pay attention to the interactions between the individuals as well as to their relationship to the music, we will be successful in reframing any (and, one hopes, all) detrimental performative dispositions in our ministries, freeing us to focus not on ourselves but on inviting others to join in song. However, for us to be effective stewards of our resources, we will need to do some preparatory work. We must set about collecting lots of data.

As it turns out, “know thyself” is not just the advice dispensed in mythic times by the ancient



Good music is the outcome of deep dialogue, unanimity of intention, preparation, of being fully present, and of a deep desire to share that which we love.

Oracle at Delphi but also a very practical matter of ministry anytime and anywhere. There are three concentric circles to this age-old epistemic command:

- the first innermost circle is your own;
- the second, your team (band, group, or ensemble);
- and the third is your congregation.

How flexible are you and how malleable are they? Be aware of the edges in your aesthetic parameters, personal and corporate. In other words, know what biases you are working with and against, and take note of them, in writing if necessary; assess strengths and weaknesses; discover likes and dislikes; identify areas of growth.

Before going into a new call, I have made it my professional habit to request all sorts of repertoire lists that include hymns, choral, band repertoire, and the like. Going over the lists carefully can be a lot of work, but it is

well worth the effort. By studying the repertoire of prospective ensembles, I have been able to grasp the challenges involved in ministry. If we are to adopt this practice in a systematic manner, sifting through the documents will help us paint a clearer picture as to where our people are in their faith and their musical journeys—and of where we stand in relation to them. We will be looking for windows into their technical proficiency and their hearts. We have to wear many hats to achieve this. In addition to musician and pastor, we have to don the headgear of sociologist, anthropologist, and ethnomusicologist!

We can never underestimate the power of lists. Lists have the wonderful virtue of casting their helpful shadows both backward and forward in time. In forward mode, we size up. In backward mode, we can better keep track of our musical excursions. One can look at a list and retrospectively take stock of which songs need to be kept in repertoire, which ones need a break, and which ones, for whatever reason, need to be cycled out. Careful recordkeeping can be exceedingly helpful when seeking supportive suggestions or constructive criticism from fellow staff members, worship and music committees, or trusted colleagues.

As mentioned before, close examination of these documents will give us invaluable insights. Through a bit of detective work, we can better understand the piety of the ensembles and the history of the congregation (and vice versa!). However, the most useful outcome of this process will be the creation of a “safe” list. A safe list is where we keep

track of the core of the repertoire, the music we can sing and play well at a moment’s notice and without any hesitation. With “safe zones” firmly established, one is free to push the boundaries with confidence. Why would we want to do this? Because by establishing safe music lists we learn how to provide both comfort and challenge to our people. But I must introduce a note of caution, half in jest and half seriously. If we are to embrace this prophetic charge as musicians (and I hope we all do), let’s not forget that it is in one’s best interest to discover our people’s comfort-to-challenge ratio as soon as possible. I have learned this proportion may be one of the indispensable variables shaping the success of our vocation as church musicians.

These suggestions concerning “good music” remind me of the way theory relates to practice. Theory is the effort to reconstruct that which worked or went well in the clash of living and doing. Theory happens as an afterthought. Theory takes place when we try to get closer to that which we love. To me, good music is the outcome of deep dialogue, unanimity of intention, preparation, of being fully present, and of a deep desire to share that which we love. All these dimensions move and stretch us beyond fidelity to the score, beyond creativity, beyond skill in execution, and beyond categories. Happy musicking! ■

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¹ *Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 378 U.S. 184 (1964).



Jan van Eyck, *Choir of Angels from the Ghent Altarpiece in St. Bavo, Ghent, Belgium, 1432.*

Summer Solos for Year A, 2017

By Susan Palo Cherwien

Over these many years, I have often been asked to sing for liturgies during the summer when choirs are on hiatus, or a certain cantor I know will call and say, “Hermione Gingold is singing in three weeks. Any suggestions on what I can have her sing?” Church musicians work diligently during the year to weave together cohesive liturgies tied in with the readings for each Sunday, and there is no reason to let that

diligence slide during the summer months. Sure, some Sundays are just hard to pull together, difficult to find occasional music for, but overall there are wonderful choices available, especially with some advance planning and cleverness.

Back in 2002 I put together a few suggestions for the “Resource” pages in the former ALCM newsletter *Grace Notes*, suggestions for lectionary-based repertoire for soloists over the summer months, and I will try to offer a fuller range of suggestions this time. First, though, I want

to point you in the direction of several good resources to find your own solo material. First, take the plunge and pay (\$22) for the subscription to the International Music Score Library Project (IMSLP: <http://imslp.org/>). They have downloaded much of the now-public-domain volumes of *Das Chorwerk*, *Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst*, *Denkmäler der Tonkunst in Österreich*, and other historical sets, as well as original manuscripts and publications such as oratorios. You’ll need your score-reading and clef-reading skills for some of these. You can search on both IMSLP and Choral Public Domain Library (CPDL: www0.cpd.org/wiki/index.php/Main_Page) by instrumentation and genre as well as by composer or title.

Then, I want to remind you that many pieces by Schütz and Schein and others in that era were flexible in their instrumentation, so a piece for choir could be done with one soloist taking the primary lines and the keyboard filling in the rest. Instant solo repertoire! You can use the same technique with many choral works. Check through your children’s choir library also. At least one of the pieces I included in *To God Will I Sing* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001) was originally published as a children’s choir composition.

Georg Philipp Telemann wrote a cantata using solo voice, one instrument, and basso continuo for every Sunday of the church year in a collection called *Harmonischer Gottesdienst*. Both Carus

and Bärenreiter publish volumes of these cantatas, with all parts included. (Listen to a few of these gems performed by Bergen Barokk at <https://toccataclassics.com/product/telemann-harmonischer-gottes-dienst-4/>.)

Another method for producing a solo work when none exists is to take an appropriate chorale prelude or hymn composition for organ or keyboard and give the soloist the melody whenever it enters.

For this coming summer, there is a wonderful opportunity if you have access to a talented and trained bass-baritone. In addition to one of the *Elijah* arias (“It is enough,” on August 13), two selections from Carlisle Floyd’s work *Pilgrimage* (Boosey and Hawkes) are appropriate on the 3rd Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 7. “Save me, O God”) and on the 8th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 12, “For I am persuaded”). (To hear the great bass-baritone Norman Treigle sing “For I am persuaded,” go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=2U8AiM8hiQI.) Also, if you have a talented and trained soprano at hand, July 9, the 5th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 9), includes the Scripture references for both “Rejoice Greatly” (first reading) and “Come unto him” (gospel reading) from Handel’s *Messiah*.

The solo suggestions that follow are based on the selected (complementary) lectionary (*lectio selectiva*) readings, not the semi-continuous (*lectio continua*). (My apologies to those who use different first readings and psalms after Pentecost. Any suggestions for second reading- and gospel-related solos will still be appropriate for your liturgies.)

For Sundays that seem to elude pairing well with solos, you could always go with a solo aria movement from a Mass setting, or, if a communion liturgy, any “Agnus Dei” movement or “Ave verum corpus” or “O Salutaris hostia,” for example, during communion. (But do resist the temptation to schedule a less-than-fine piece of music just because it fits one of the readings.)

“Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable ... dwell on these things” (Philippians 4:8).

Solo Suggestions, Year of Matthew, Summer 2017

Some Abbreviations:

I - related to or quoting the first reading

Ps - related to or quoting the assigned psalm

II - related to or quoting the second reading

G - related to or quoting the Gospel reading

Gen - general connection

E(asy), M(edium), D(ifficult) - difficulty level

(The various oft-repeated numbered sources are noted at the end of the suggestions list.)

Sunday of the Holy Trinity, June 11, 2017

I Gen 1:1-2:4a

Ps 8

II 2 Cor 13:11-13

G Matt 28:16-20

Ludwig v. Beethoven, “The Heavens Sing Praises,” in *Sing Forth God’s Praise* (AugsburgF) (I) M

Howard Hanson, Psalm 8, *Four Psalms* (baritone) (Carl Fischer) (Ps) MD

Henry Purcell, “What Is Man?” *Harmonia Sacra* (bass) (International) (Ps, Gen) D

K. Lee Scott, *Jesus My All* (Source #1) (G) M

K. Lee Scott, “Trinitarian Blessings,” in *Sing Forth God’s Praise* (AugsburgF) (Gen) E

J.S. Bach, “Quoniam tu solus sanctus,” *Mass in B Minor* (bass) (Gen) D

Edward Elgar, “Sanctis fortis,” *Dream of Gerontius* (tenor) (Gen) D

Jean Langlais, “Credo,” *Missa simplicitate* (Gen) E

Lodovico Viadana, “Credo,” *Missa dominicalis* (Verlag Friedrich Pustet Regensburg) (Gen) E

2nd Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 6), June 18, 2017

I Ex 19:2-8a

Ps 100

II Rom 5:1-8

G Matt 9:35-10:8 (9-23)

Michael Head, *Make a Joyful Noise* (high voice) (Roberton) (Ps) D

Ned Rorem, *A Psalm of Praise* (AMP) (Ps) M

Heinrich Schütz, “Jubilare deo omnis terra,” *Symphoniae Sacrae* 6 (bass+) (IMSLP) (Ps) D

Georg Philipp Telemann, *Jauchzet dem Herren alle Welt* (bass + tr) (Carus) (Ps) D

Georg Philipp Telemann, *Make Me Pure, O Sacred Spirit* (Source #4) (Gen) MD

3rd Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 7), June 25, 2017

I Jer 20:7-13
Ps 69:8-11 (12-17)
II Rom 6:1b-11
G Matt 10:24-39

Eugene Butler, *Save Me, O God* (Source #5) (Ps) M

Carlisle Floyd, "Save Me, O God," *Pilgrimage* (bass) (Boosey and Hawkes) (Ps) M

Lee Dengler, "I Cried Unto the Lord," *Songs of David* (AugsburgF) (similar to Ps) M

Ned Rorem, Psalm 142, *Cycle of Holy Songs* (Southern) (similar to Ps) D

David Diamond, "Let Nothing Disturb Thee" (AMP) (Gen) M

4th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 8), July 2, 2017

I Jer 28:5-9
Ps 89:1-4, 15-18
II *Rom 6:12-23
G Matt 10:40-42

G.F. Handel, "Blessed Is the People, O Lord," *Chandos Anthems* #4 (CPDL) (Ps) MD

Felix Mendelssohn, *I Will Sing of Thy Great Mercies* (Source #2) (Ps) M

Robert Powell, *I Will Sing of the Mercies of the Lord* (Source #5) (Ps) MD

Georg Philipp Telemann, "Ich bin getauft in Christi Tode" (med, fl) (Bärenreiter) (II) M

Susan Palo Cherwien is a freelance writer and musician who has composed numerous hymn texts that appear in denominational hymnals in the United States, Canada, and Europe. She served on the ELCA Language Consultation, whose work set language guidelines.



Luca della Robbia, detail from *Cantoria*, Museo Opera del Duomo, Florence, Italy, 1431-1438.

5th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 9), July 9, 2017

I Zech 9:9-12
Ps 145:8-15
II Rom 7:15-25a
G Matt 11:16-19, 25-30

G.F. Handel, "Rejoice Greatly," *Messiah* (I) D

Antonin Dvorak, "I Will Sing New Songs of Gladness," Op. 99, No. 5 (high) (IMSLP) (Ps) E

Richard Hillert, "I Will Praise Your Name Forever" (GIA) (Ps) E

Heinrich Schütz, "Der Herr ist groß," *Kleine geistliche Konzerte* (2 high voices) (Carus) (Ps) M

Frank LaForge, "Come unto Me" (Carl Fischer) (G) M

G.F. Handel, "Come unto Him," *Messiah* (G) MD

Heinrich Schütz, "Venite ad me," *Symphoniae Sacrae* (tenor, 2 vlns) (CPDL) (G) M

Franz Schubert, *A Song of Trust* (Source #2) (G) E

Weckmann, Matthias, "Kommt her zu mir alle" (bass, str, bc) (IMSLP) (G) M

6th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 10), July 16, 2017

I Is 55:10-13
Ps 65:(1-8), 9-14
II Rom 8:1-11
G Matt 13:1-9, 18-23

J.S. Bach, "Du Herr, du krönst," Cantata 187 (alto) (Ps) MD

Maurice Greene, *Thou Visitest the Earth* (tenor) (CPDL) (Ps) M

J.S. Bach, "Mein Seelenschatz ist Gottes Wort," Cantata 18 (soprano) (I, G) D

David Cherwien, *O Healing River* (Source #4) (Gen/I,Ps,G) E

Robert Buckley Farlee, *We Are a Garden* (Source #4) (Gen) E

7th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 11), July 23, 2017

I Is 44:6-8
Ps 86:11-17
II Rom 8:12-2
G Matt 13:24-30, 36-43

Felix Mendelssohn, "Then Shall the Righteous Shine Forth," *Elijah* (Source #3) (G) M

Felix Mendelssohn, *For the Lord Will Lead* (Source #4) (similar to Ps) M

Benjamin Britten, "For the Flowers," *Rejoice in the Lord* (tenor) (Gen) MD

8th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 12), July 30, 2017

I **1 Kings 3:5-12**
Ps **119:129-136**
II **Rom 8:26-39**
G **Matt 13:31-33, 44-52**

G.F. Handel, "What Though I Trace," *Solomon* (alto) (Gen/I) MD

G.F. Handel, "If God Be for Us," *Messiah* (soprano) (II) D

Carlisle Floyd, "For I Am Persuaded," *Pilgrimage* (bass-bar) (Boosey and Hawkes) (II) M

Daniel Pinkham, "Who Shall Separate Us?" *Letters from St. Paul* (high voice) (ECSchirmer) (II) D

Paul Bouman, *O God of Mercy* (Source #4) (Gen/II) M

Alec Hovhanness, "As the Wings of Doves," *Three Odes of Solomon* (CF Peters) (Gen/II) E

K. Lee Scott, *So Art Thou to Me* (Source #1) (Gen/G) E

9th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 13), August 6, 2017

I **Is 55:1-5**
Ps **145:8, 9, 15-22**
II ***Rom 9:1-5**
G **Matt 14:22-33**

J.F. Peter, *I Will Make an Everlasting Covenant* (Boosey and Hawkes) (I) M

Robert Buckley Farlee, *We Are a Garden* (Source #4) (Gen) E

Ralph Vaughan Williams, "Love Bade Me Welcome," *Five Mystical Songs* (Galaxy) (Gen) M

10th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 14), August 13, 2017

I **1 Kings 19:9-18**
Ps **85: 8-13**
II **Rom 10:5-15**
G **Matt 14:22-33**

Felix Mendelssohn, "It Is Enough," *Elijah* (bass-bar) (I) MD

G. F. Handel, "How Beautiful Are the Feet," *Messiah* (soprano) (II) M

David Cherwien, *Give Me Jesus* (Source #4) (Gen/G) E

11th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 15), August 20, 2017

I **Is 56:1, 6-8**
Ps **67**
II **Rom 11:12a, 29-32**
G **Matt 15:10-20 (21-28)**

Lee Dengler, "Sing unto the Lord," *Songs of David* (AugsburgF) (Gen) MD

Felix Mendelssohn, "O Rest in the Lord," *Elijah* (alto) (Gen) M

Camille Saint-Saëns, "Patiently Have I Waited," *Christmas Oratorio* (Source #2) (med, orig. alto) (Gen) M

12th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 16), August 27, 2017

I **Is 51:1-6**
Ps **138**
II **Rom 12:1-8**
G **Matt 16:13-20**

Arthur Honegger, *Psaume 138, Trois Psaumes* (high) (Salabert) (Ps) M

Camille Saint-Saens, "Domine, ego credidi," *Christmas Oratorio* (tenor, could be sop) (IMSLP) (G) M

Gabriel Fauré, *Tu es Petrus* (bar. w/out choir) (CPDL) (G) M

Anton Bruckner, *Jesus, Redeemer* (CF Peters) (Gen/G) M

13th Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 17), September 3, 2017

I **Jer 15:15-21**
Ps **26:1-8**
II ***Rom 12:9-21**
G **Matt 16:21-28**

Hugo Distler, "My Dear Brethren [People]," *Three Sacred Concertos* (CPH) (II) D

Orlando di Lasso, *Qui vult venire* (tenor, bass unacc) (CPDL) (G) M

J.S. Bach, "I Follow Thee Gladly," *St. John Passion* (soprano) (Gen/G) D

J.S. Bach, "Jesus Calling Then the Twelve," Cantata 22 (bass) (G) D

J.S. Bach, "My Savior, Take Thou Me," Cantata 22 (alto) (Gen/G) D

Siegfried Karg-Elert, "Come Follow Me," *Wedding Blessings* (CPH) (G) M

Numbered Sources:

1. K. Lee Scott, ed., *Rejoice Now My Spirit* (AugsburgF).
2. K. Lee Scott, ed., *Sing a Song of Joy* (AugsburgF).
3. *Funerals* (AugsburgF).
4. Susan Palo Cherwien, ed., *To God Will I Sing* (AugsburgF).
5. *The Solo Psalmist* (Sacred Music Press). ■



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