

# The American Center of CHURCH MUSIC

Volume 2, Number 2

October 1990

## New Hymnals

### Sing a New Song to the Lord — Are You Ready?

*THE PRESBYTERIAN HYMNAL: HYMNS, PSALMS, AND SPIRITUAL SONGS.* LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY: WESTMINSTER/JOHN KNOX PRESS, 1990. AVAILABLE THROUGH THE HYMN SOCIETY IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA, P.O. BOX 30854, TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY, FORT WORTH, TX 76129. \$12.95 (POSTAGE AND HANDLING, \$1.30.)

At the center of the church's music is the song of the people—the congregation's song—expressed, embodied and growing through their hymnal. In our fast-changing world, new hymnals have been appearing in many denominations to keep up with changing world views, the movement toward inclusiveness, our changing language and a wide diversity of musical styles.

Into this arena, *The Presbyterian Hymnal: Hymns, Psalms and Spiritual Songs* (TPH) made its debut in June of this year. It was introduced at the Church Music Institute at the University of Michigan by the Rev. Sharon Youngs, a member of the Hymnal Committee. Rev. Youngs gave background, shared the committee's guidelines and led the Institute participants through various hymns.

The guidelines used to compile the hymnal are similar to those followed by other hymnal committees and they provide a point of reference for an outsider's review of TPH which is a full-size resource for congregational song characterized by theological, literary and musical integrity. With 605 hymns and service settings, this is a substantial work in both size

and quality. As in the recent United Methodist and Episcopal hymnals, some hymns should be introduced by choirs or cantors, but all are within congregational range.

The hymnal reflects both the diversity of the Presbyterian Church, past and present, and provides a prophetic vision as well.

Service music and traditional hymns were retained from earlier hymnals and current Presbyterian hymn writers and composers are represented as well—Fred Anderson, Jane Parker Huber, Thomas Troeger, John Weaver, Hal Hopson. Because TPH was intended to reflect the Presbyterian heritage and serve as a book of practical theology, the section of Psalms holds central place. There are 100 settings—strophic as well as responsorial—of Psalms used in the 3-Year Common Lectionary.

Four main ethnic traditions are represented: Afro-American, Native American, Asian, and Hispanic for which phonetic pronunciations are provided. There also are several Korean translations for well-loved English hymns. It is important to note that here, as in *The United Methodist Hymnal*, the non-English language is most often placed first: this is not an afterthought, but a real attempt at inclusion. What a wealth of hymnody our various traditions have to share!

The hymnal committee's guidelines emphasized sensitivity to issues of age, race, gender and physical limitations; therefore, the language of the hymns had to be inclusive of all of God's people. In the traditional hymns, careful language changes that sing well were made when necessary. New hymns graciously include various ages and genders. This inclusiveness is extended to our images of God. The hymns are marked by a wider range of biblical images than previous Presbyterian hymnals. Thomas Troeger's hymns, for example, are very intentional in expanding our vision. Other hymns with wide ranges of expression include "Loving

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*"Presbyterians are on the threshold of worship renewal and strengthening their identity. The (Presbyterian) Hymnal will serve as a resource for deepening faith and challenging Christians."*

—The Reverend Sharon Youngs

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Spirit" (#323) by Shirley E. Murray. Remaining within its moderate stance, there are no feminine pronouns for God, only feminine images presented alongside the traditional masculine ones.

Checks and balances for deciding about texts were provided by the guidelines. These were based on historical context, the author's apparent intent, and the meaning of the hymn to the faithful people of God who have gone before and who will follow after.

As in other recent hymnals, the music is both singable and playable. Keys are often lowered for the singers. For children's hymns the accompaniments are simple and clear; they provide adequate support for lighter voices without obscuring them. On the whole, the accompaniments are quite accessible, with standard harmonies, easily read. (Hymns in D<sup>b</sup> frighten some accompanists, and there are several of these plus at least two awkward page turns which might have been avoided.) Many Afro-American hymns have been harmonized by committee chair Melva W. Costen, presenting a bit more Afro-American flavor without moving far from "expected" harmonies.

The organizing principle of the book is the Christian year, Psalms, topical (including God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the Church, the Sacraments and Ordinances), and Service Music. A complete set of indices is provided: authors, translators and sources; composers or arrangers, (both of these with birth and death dates when known); scriptural allusions; topical; metrical index of tunes; tune names; first lines or common titles.

Other points of interest include descants given for number of hymns and carols, rounds, instrumental parts for some hymns (guitar chords, handbells, flute); scripture references for many hymns, clean and easy-to-read printing.

In many ways, the Presbyterian and United Methodist hymnals are much alike: they share over 250 common hymns. Both draw on contemporary writers and composers in their denomination as well as tradition. Both have widely included multi-cultural hymns and language is inclusive of persons and serves to

expand our images of God. Both have mission sections which focus on mission here and now, and not just "over there." Each hymnal, however, clearly reflects its denominational stance. The *Methodist Hymnal*, for example, is organized according to John Wesley's "order of salvation" particularly in stages of grace, while *The Presbyterian Hymnal* is organized by the Christian Year, the Psalms, and topical subjects. United Methodists, in including services of Word and Table, Baptismal Covenant, Marriage, Death and Resurrection, Praise and Prayer, fulfill the hymnal's subtitle: "Book of United Methodist Worship." Moreover, a vast pluralism is emphasized by the United Methodists which goes beyond the parameters of *The Presbyterian Hymnal* to include the Gaithers, Amy Grant, André Crouch, Duke Ellington, Charles Ives, and more evangelical choruses.

Together both hymnals represent some of the best of our traditions and point to our future with challenging new hymns to learn. Both hymnals and denominations echo Rev. Youngs' belief that "Presbyterians are on the threshold of worship renewal and strengthening their identity. *The (Presbyterian) Hymnal* will serve as a resource for deepening faith and challenging Christians." May thus all of us seek to do in our work in church music.

—*Soli Deo Gloria!*

**Robin Knowles Wallace.** Director of Music at Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Redford, Michigan, and President of the Detroit Chapter of The Fellowship of United Methodists in Worship, Music and Other Arts.

How can we sing the praise of Him  
who is no longer He?  
With bated breath we wait to know  
the sex of Deity.

Our father is our Mother now,  
and Cousin, too, no doubt:  
must worship wait for hymnodists  
to get things sorted out?

—*F. Prater Gent, 1981*

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The  
American Center  
of CHURCH MUSIC

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Interested persons are invited to submit articles of interest to our readers. Call for further information: 313-663-8612

# Coming Events

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1990

## ■ Worship School 1990 - All About Hymns

Bethlehem United Church of Christ  
423 South Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor  
(ample free parking available)

For the second year the American Center of Church Music will sponsor a one-day Worship School for church musicians to gather fresh ideas and invigorate church music ministries. Here is your opportunity to meet and work with other musicians for a day and learn more about hymn-playing, hymn-singing, hymn-based organ repertoire. The feature of the day will be a Think-Tank on preparing and producing a Hymn Festival! Can you afford to miss this?

Saturday, November 3, 1990  
9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (No home football game!)  
Fee: \$10

Includes instructional materials, refreshments and beverages. Please bring a sack lunch.

*WORSHIP SCHOOL 1990—ALL ABOUT HYMNS IS SPONSORED BY THE CONSORTIUM OF EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY—DR. MARY IDA YOST; CONCORDIA COLLEGE—DR. DONALD WILLIAMS; THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN—DR. JAMES KIBBIE; THE ANN ARBOR CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN GUILD OF ORGANISTS—MARGARETE THOMSEN; AND THE AMERICAN CENTER OF CHURCH MUSIC—DR. MICHELE JOHNS.*

### Schedule for the day:

**9:00 a.m.** Registration in lobby directly off of parking lot. The lot can be reached from 4th Avenue. (note: the parking lot door will be the only accessible door)

**9:30 a.m.** Dr. Mary Ida Yost: "Learning and Playing New Hymns"

**10:00 a.m.** Dr. Donald Williams: "Hymn-Based Organ Repertoire"

**10:30 a.m.** Dr. Michele Johns: "Improvising Hymn Introductions"

(Each of these presentations will feature student organists from the respective schools)

**11:00 a.m.** Break

**11:15 a.m.** "Nuts and Bolts of Planning a Hymn Festival"

Open discussion led by Wendy Bloom, Nancy Klein, Donald Williams

The discussion will begin with a brief overview of the new Presbyterian Hymnal presented by Margarete Thomsen.

**12:30 p.m.** Lunch

**1:15 p.m.** Work in small groups to plan specific components of a hymn festival.

**2:00 p.m.** Let's see what we have here! Informal Festival of Hymns presented as a result of the day's research. This event is open to the public and will be held in the sanctuary of the church.

WEDNESDAYS AT 12:15 TO 12:45 P.M.

## ■ Advent Music Series

First Congregational Church, State and William Streets in Ann Arbor

Three noon-hour concerts on the Karl Wilhelm organ

December 5, 12 and 19  
Admission: free

Light lunch following each concert. Treat yourself to some good music of the season and then finish your Christmas shopping!

**December 5 - Michele Johns**, organ  
Music of Advent and Christmas

**December 12 - Gerald Walker**, tenor;  
**Richard Banks**, baritone

**December 19 - The Singations  
Childrens' Choir** of voices and bells.  
Our Lady of Good Counsel Church,  
Plymouth

Conductors: Michele Johns, Susan Lindquist, Kay Ray

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### REGISTRATION FORM

Please enclose a check for \$10 (payable to ACCM) as a non-refundable fee for the Worship School 1990.

#### RETURN TO:

The American Center of Church Music  
3339 Burbank Drive  
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

**(313) 662-8612**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State/ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Interested persons may also register at the door each week. Why not photocopy this registration form and pass it along to a friend?

- ▶ Advent Music Series  
 ▶ 1990 Worship School  
 ▶ Brian Wren in Ann Arbor  
 ▶ New Presbyterian Hymnal
- In this issue:

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## A Day with Brian Wren

Saturday, February 23, 1991, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints  
 1385 Green Road, Ann Arbor (ample free parking available)

Lectures, hymn-singing, small group discussions, worship. Enjoy the environment of one of Ann Arbor's most recent church buildings and the unusual 2-manual, 13-rank mechanical action organ by Michael Bigelow of Provo, Utah, built in 1983.

Brian Wren is an internationally acclaimed hymnwriter. Ordained in Britain's United Reformed Church, he is much in demand as a hymn-poet, practical theologian, and worship educator. He lives in Oxford, England, and visits North America frequently.

Brian Wren's hymn texts are widely published, including (in the USA) 14 entries in the United Methodist Hymnal (1989), 11 in the Presbyterian Hymnal (1990), and

contributions to Hymnal 1982 (Episcopal), Psalter Hymnal (Christian Reformed Church), Rejoice in the Lord (Reformed Church in America), Worship III (Roman Catholic), and the Lutheran Book of Worship.

A Day with Brian Wren will be our opportunity to study and become more informed about the issues which are generating new hymn texts. As a community of church musicians in the Ann Arbor area, we are fortunate to be able to hear and to work with Brian Wren and further understand our role in developing additional repertoire for our congregations: new texts for a new day and age of the 90's. Did you know that by 1995 it is thought that most churches in North America will have new hymnals? Currently there are more than two dozen hymnal committees at work to complete new hymnals.

Watch for more details!

*A DAY WITH BRIAN WREN* IS CO-SPONSORED BY THE AMERICAN CENTER OF CHURCH MUSIC, THE ANN ARBOR CHAPTER AGO, THE HYMN SOCIETY HURON VALLEY CHAPTER, AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LANSING.

