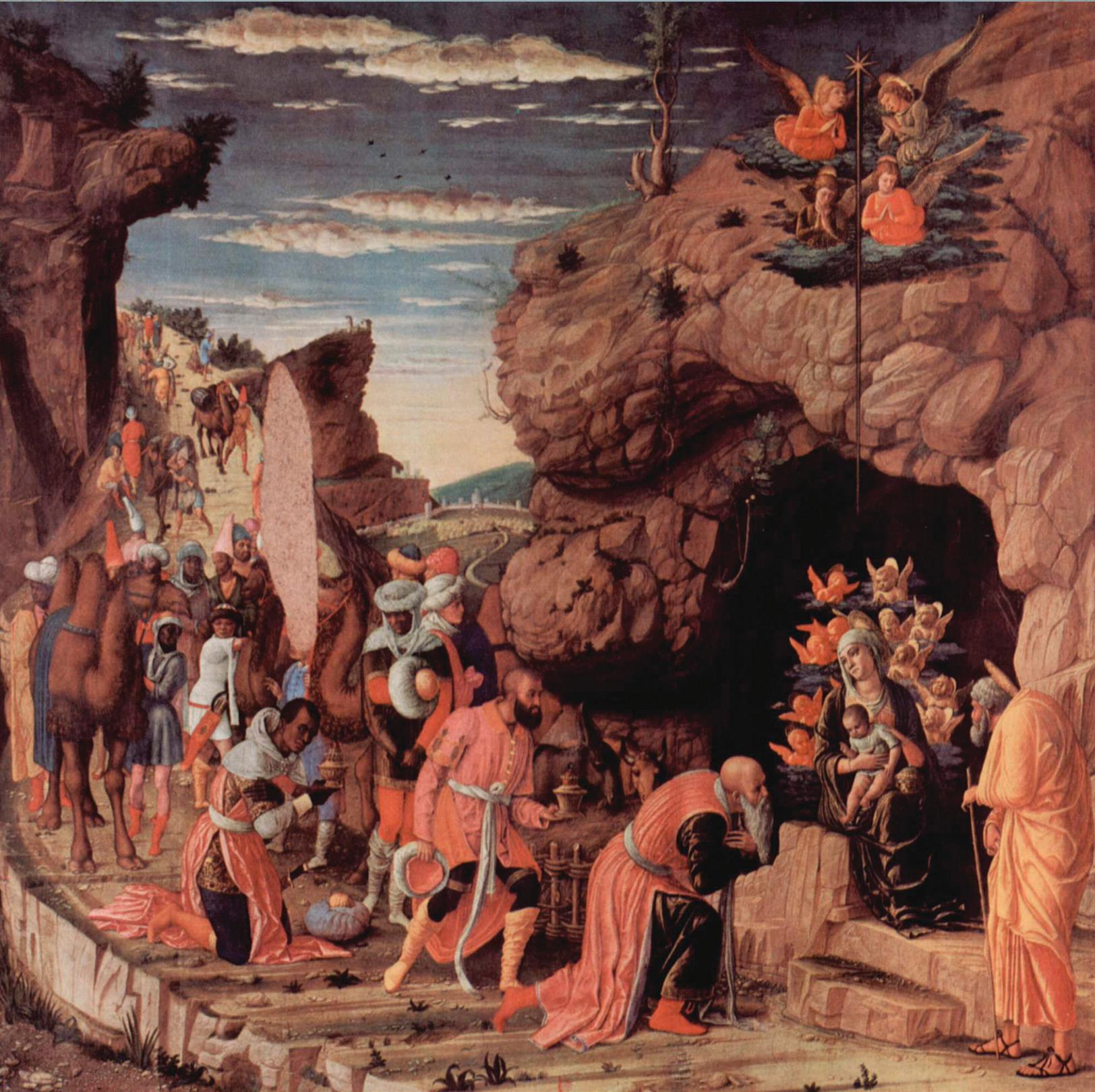


CROSSACCENT



Rejoicing in the **Incarnation**



CROSSACCENT

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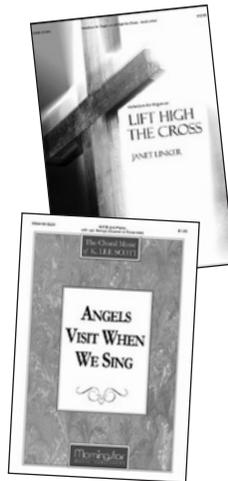
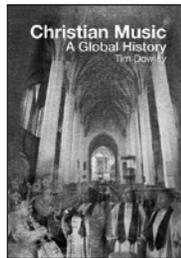
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Looking Forward to Worship at the **ALCM Biennial Conference**

WHENEVER LUTHERAN MUSICIANS and pastors gather for a conference, some engaging worship is sure to be at the center of what participants expect and is perhaps even the central reason for which they come. The gathering for song, prayer, proclamation, and eucharist brings the goodness and grace of God into the gathering and binds the participants together as the body of Christ.

The worship team for this biennial conference has been planning since early 2012. The twice-daily services for the conference promise to nurture the assembly in word and sacrament. For this conference, the worship plans have revolved around the opportunity to worship in the grand, unique space of the Chapel of the Resurrection at Valparaiso University.

Sunday evening's opening eucharist will be hosted by Pr. Jim Wetzstein, one of the two pastors on staff at the chapel. The service will feature organist Martin Jean; the National Lutheran Choir, directed by David Cherwien; and a brass choir of Lutheran Summer Music alumni, all leading the assembly song and enriching the service with additional music.

The morning and evening prayer services provide opportunities for experiencing the diversity of the church at prayer. Monday morning's service focuses on quiet simplicity: sparse words and prayers and short songs without keyboard accompaniment. By contrast, Tuesday morning prayer, to be held at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Valparaiso, follows the classic morning prayer liturgy with the Paschal Blessing. The assembly will

be visually and ritually enriched with the use of the new immersion baptismal font at Immanuel. The Immanuel Children's Choir and the Youth Bell Choir from St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Archbold, OH, will support the assembly song. Wednesday's morning prayer service will center around the word and prayers and anointing for healing. Tuesday's evening prayer service will feature The Bach

**“God Is Here: Worship
in a Wireless World”**
June 30–July 3, 2013
Valparaiso, IN

Institute Choir singing Cantata 94, *Was Frag Ich nach der Welt*.

Bishop Wayne Miller of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America will preside at the closing eucharist on Wednesday afternoon. Pr. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni, co-pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Fort Collins, CO, will preach. Pr. Aelabouni has blogged for the *Huffington Post* and has written for a variety of other publications. In addition, a musical team from St. Peters Lutheran Church in New York City will collaborate at this closing service: Thomas Schmidt is the organist at St. Peter's and Ike Sturm is the musical director for their renowned jazz ministry. The worship team is excited about this organ and jazz quintet, as it promises an expansive worship experience.

The entire conference promises to nurture, challenge, and refresh each participant. The richness of the multiple opportunities for worship will prove to be an integral component of the conference experience.

Jim Honig
Senior Pastor, Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church
Glen Ellyn, IL



Jennifer Ollikainen

The Rev. Dr. Jennifer Phelps Ollikainen
Editor, *CrossAccent*

GOD IS HERE! In our worship, God in Jesus Christ is revealed in word and sacrament, embodied in our actions and gestures, and living in community and song. Enlivened by the Holy Spirit, we encounter the incarnate Christ in our church's worship.

In this issue of *CrossAccent*, we explore this incarnate God in worship. Although the center of the incarnation resides in the cycle of the church year spanning Christmas, Epiphany, and the time between Epiphany and Lent, Christ's incarnation is not limited by the season of the church year.

In his address from the June 2012 Region 1 Gathering of ALCM, Timothy Wengert reminds us that the whole Christ-event, the whole church year, in fact all of creation depends on the reality of the incarnation. Centered in Luther's exploration of the joy and incredulity of the incarnation of Christ, Wengert bids us join the age-old song of the angels through the songs of the church through the years.

Reflecting on Christmas, Epiphany, and the time thereafter, Deborah Geweke explores how we experience the incarnation of God in our worship practice. We sway with the music we know so well, are bound to the promise of life with water dripping from our faces, and hunger for the touch of blessing. And in all, we encounter the body of Christ.

In the Chorus section, Jennifer Baker-Trinity offers a reflection about the role of the church musician. Originally a blog post, her writing offers a starting point for conversation

about how we understand the vocation of church musician within the congregations we serve. She points to a ministry of presence

Enlivened by the Holy Spirit, we encounter the incarnate Christ in our church's worship.

within the congregation, embodying grace with the gifts we've been given. Chorus is a section of this publication for your voice, too. I invite you to email your responses, reflections, and comments to me at crossaccent@alcm.org.

And don't forget to look at Postlude for a preview of worship at the biennial gathering of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians coming soon in June 2013. As Jim Honig describes it, the gatherings for worship at this gathering will embody the incarnate God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.

God is here! Thanks be to God!

Musings on Baseball, Church Music, and Appliance Repair

Jack of All Trades?

by Jennifer Baker-Trinity

SPRING TRAINING IS UNDERWAY and this baseball fan is so looking forward to opening day. During a recent conversation while washing dishes, my spouse and I made an interesting connection between baseball and church music. Hmm . . . where could this be going?

A church musician is often asked to be a jack-of-all-trades: play the organ, direct choirs, plan worship, manage a music budget, recruit instrumentalists, and more. If you're curious about what is asked for these days in a full-time church musician, check out the job descriptions for full-time positions on the ALCM website (www.alcm.org). After reading a couple of these, I wondered if Jesus would qualify. Indeed, I think congregations are seeking a savior of sorts, because so many believe (and rightly so) that quality music is key to vital congregations. But what they are looking for is one person to bring the skills of a whole team. Which brings me back to baseball.

Very rarely do you have a baseball player who excels in everything, at least at the professional level. Teams shell out millions of dollars for a good pitcher, for a home-run hitter, for a superb shortstop. They will spend what is necessary to get the right total package. Churches, on the other hand, often want a musician to do be a dynamic people person, an excellent keyboardist, and a skilled choir director, but often offer only meager pay. Yet even those churches that have many part-time positions miss out on having one person to oversee them, to be the manager with the vision for the entire music ministry. In most places, the manager and the team are one and the same.

The reasons churches need or want one person to do so much are varied. To be clear here, I value churches that understand

the benefit of having one musician who is responsible for the leadership of the people's song, that is, to be the cantor. And this works well in various settings. Yet in other settings, one person is simply asked to be responsible for too much; the musician's health and the congregation's health may be what bears the brunt of such high expectations. Congregations are not financially able or, perhaps, willing, to support multiple church musicians. So they ask one person to do it all. (Pastors, too, burn out from similar expectations.) At the other end of the spectrum, employing even one paid musician is a stretch in some faith communities. Many congregations that are not able to afford a full-time pastor come up with other solutions, such as multipoint parishes and the utilization of more lay leaders. Have we considered how a cantor could serve multipoint parishes? Which brings me to the next unlikely partner in these thoughts, the small-appliance repairman.

Today Bill came to replace a faulty valve on our fridge. He has been a small appliance repairman for decades. He is also a preacher in a Christian tradition that rarely has full-time pastors. Being bi-vocational has always been the standard practice. After Bill fixed our fridge (taking a risk on a new model he wasn't too sure about), he started talking about family and faith. He talked about the many homes he has been in while fixing appliances and about the conversations he's had with grieving spouses. He's fixed things for three generations in many instances, seeing what goes on in the homes of parents, children, and their children's children. He talked about the need for families to be with their children, to be home after school for them, to give them just a few minutes of their time. He sees too little of this when he's in people's homes.

Bill is not a specialist. He's not spending his days becoming the most coveted, up-to-date repairman in town. This was obvious when he looked at the back of our fridge. It said "blowing agent: cyclopentane." He had never seen it and seemed a little confused, so I did what we young folks have been trained to do: I Googled it. Once I read the description to him from Wikipedia, he understood and went about his work. He was successful, and the loud screech our water filter made every time water flowed into the valve was finally silenced. (As a mom of three, any extra moment of silence is most welcome!)

By some standards, Bill may not be the most highly rated repairman. But he is also a pastor, and I've always gotten the sense that he views his small appliance business and his ministry as intrinsically linked, his work being a way to minister and his ministry benefiting from what he encounters everyday in his business. What I valued most was his presence. He knows who he is and what he can do. And he does so with a care for the people whose homes he's been entrusted to care for.

Church musicians can be like Bill, knowing what they need to, interacting with people and honing their craft. The request on job descriptions for church musicians to work well with people could be viewed as getting people to do stuff, even as asking them to manipulate others. We sometimes believe it is this "getting people busy" that makes one successful. Instead, churches need to seek out a church musician who is present with the people, accompanying them, nurturing the gift of music for their life of faith. Ultimately such a musician cares for the health of the congregation's song. As Bill has served generations in his work, church musicians tend to the music across the generations, being faithful to the gospel in music from many eras. Quality music can be a sign of health in a congregation, but not at the expense of a musician who is trying (as it were) to bat, pitch, and catch at the same time, often without a seventh-inning stretch.

Jennifer Baker-Trinity lives in Middleburg, PA, and is organist and choir director at Beaver Lutheran Church, Beaver Springs, PA. This reflection was initially published on her blog, www.giftsabounding.blogspot.com, and revised for *CrossAccent* publication.



Editor's Note: CHORUS seeks to give voice to the membership of ALCM. If you have a reflection about the vocation of church musicians, submit your reflection to editor@crossaccent.org to be considered for publication in future issues of *CrossAccent*.



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Rejoicing with the Angels: Martin Luther on the **Incarnation**

by Timothy J. Wengert

This essay reflects on Martin Luther's insights into the incarnation of Christ, the Word become flesh. Its initial impetus came from Prof. Michael Krentz's request to me to connect the incarnation with angelic singing in the context of the conference's theme of examining the time after Epiphany and before Lent. After further reflection, however, it became clear to me that a broader approach to Luther's insights into the incarnation might help. So first we will examine other times in the church year when we celebrate the incarnation. Then we will look at the special nature of the Sundays after the Epiphany of Our Lord and before Ash Wednesday. In light of this, we will also look especially at who Jesus Christ is and what effect his incarnation has on us, marveling with Luther at the foolishness of it all. Then we will be ready to join the angels' praise and draw our congregations into that celebration.

NOTE: This presentation was originally given as an address at the ALCM Region I June 2012 conference.—Ed.



Natività by Giotto, c.1311, www.wikipaintings.org



Angels Worshipping (detail) by Benozzo Gozzoli, 1459, www.wikipaintings.org

The Incarnation at Christmas

It used to be that almost all Lutherans knew Luther’s Christmas hymn, “From Heaven Above” (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship* [ELW] 268, *Lutheran Service Book* 358, *Lutheran Book of Worship* 51, *Christian Worship* 38). Tucked in the middle of its 15 verses are these:

O Lord, you have created all!
 How did you come to be so small,
 to sweetly sleep in manger-bed
 where lowing cattle lately fed?

Were earth a thousand times as fair
 and set with gold and jewels rare,
 still such a cradle would not do
 to rock a prince so great as you.
 (ELW 268, stanzas 9–10).

What a great way to begin to understand Luther’s remarkable understanding of Christ’s incarnation.

The “in-between” time from the Feast of the Epiphany on January 6 to Ash Wednesday,

anywhere between February 4 and March 9 (unlike the other, great in-between time from Pentecost Sunday to the first Sunday in Advent), is illumined by the star of Bethlehem on the one side and by the cross and resurrection of Christ on the other. Even though they are Sundays *after* the Epiphany—so that we really should put the manger scenes away by January 7—they are still somehow tied to light, from the light of the magi’s star to Jesus’ shining clothes in the Transfiguration. Indeed, we could really call this time the season of the Incarnation in Action.

To be sure, each Sunday Christians gather to celebrate Christ’s resurrection—even during Lent, let alone during the Sundays after the Epiphany—and, of course, the Three Days from Maundy Thursday to Easter Sunday are, or at least should be, a *really, really* big deal for Christians. And, without a doubt, whatever we read, sing, preach, pray, or teach, let it be that Jesus died and rose again *for you*. After all, we meet the crucified and risen Savior in

the Supper. But let's not forget Christmas, the Epiphany, and those wonderful in-between Sundays, because none of those other things—Resurrection, Lent, the Three Days, Crucifixion, Good Friday, Easter—makes sense without this simple fact (in the words of J.B. Phillips, British theologian and author of one of the best paraphrases of the New Testament in recent times): “This little sphere on which we live and move and have our being is, in fact, a Visited Planet. The Creator of the vast Universe, about Whose Nature we could at the most make intelligent guesses, slipped quietly into the stream of human life in the only way in which that could be possible—by becoming a human being.”¹ And that's what we celebrate during those in-between Sundays after January 6: the incarnation, God in flesh made manifest.

Other Celebrations of the Incarnation

Now there are other times that we celebrate the incarnation besides Christmas. We dare not forget that. In Martin Luther's day, before the Reformation, there came to be more and more Marian feasts, worshiping Mary because Jesus was seen to be unapproachable. In addition to the old reliables of the Annunciation (March 25) and the Visitation (May 31), there was the assumption of Mary



Angel of the Annunciation by Guido Reni (1575–1642).
www.wikipaintings.org

into heaven (August 15) and the birth of Mary (September 8), to say nothing of the conception of Mary (December 8) and the purification of Mary (February 2)—and those are just the tip of the iceberg. The Lutheran Reformation was not interested in getting rid of those Marian festivals mentioned in the Bible, but after slowly getting rid of the days for which there was no biblical support, they transformed the ones that remained. Here's the way Martin Luther talked at table about the Feast of the Annunciation on March 25, 1533 (the feast was celebrated that day).²

When preaching on this day one should stick to the story, so that we may celebrate the incarnation of Christ, rejoice that we were made his brothers [and sisters], and be glad that he who fills heaven and earth is in the womb of the maiden. . . . [He then goes on to criticize alternatives that take away our joy.] Bernard filled a whole sermon with praise of the Virgin Mary and in so doing forgot to mention what happened: so highly did he . . . esteem Mary. But Christians put the questions [about how the incarnation took place] aside and occupy themselves with the effects. The incarnation, therefore, should be held high. Mary can't be sufficiently praised as a creature, true, but that the Creator comes to us and becomes our ransom—this is the reason for our rejoicing. I don't think the story can be told more simply than it was by Luke. Nobody could have invented the word “sent.”³

Luther reminds us that we have times throughout the entire church year, including March 25 (during the heart of Lent) and May 31 (for the Visitation)—to say nothing of June 24 for the birth of John the Baptist—when we can break out the Christmas carols and celebrate the incarnation: God in the flesh made manifest! Yes, fine, Mary was a wonderful, blessed creature. Luther doesn't want us to forget that. But the center and heart and core of these festivals is the story, as Luke tells it: “You will bear a son . . . He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High . . . and of his kingdom there will be no end” (Luke 1:31-33; NRSV).

The Center of Our In-Between Sundays

Distractions

But let's get back to these in-between Sundays. The point is the incarnation: God in the flesh! But we get so easily distracted from this point. Perhaps we choose hymns because they sound nice; or we preach sermons because they get us praise; or we use anthems and preludes and postludes to put on a performance. What's going on here? Again, Luther at table comes to our rescue. He knew what it was like to get distracted. So in the summer of 1532 he said this:

Under the papacy I was exposed to every error. The reason is that I had no faith. Faith is, as it were, the center of the circle. If anybody strays from the center, it is impossible for them to have the circle around them, and they end up stumbling. The center is Christ.⁴

What's the center of your assembly? It's not you, and it's not me, despite our temptation to be the center! No, Luther reminds us, we are not the center.

And then Luther says two things that may sound contradictory at first: "Faith is the center," and then "The center is Christ." Well, which is it? Here's where so many American Christians go wrong, because they imagine that faith is a work we do—a commitment we make—and so they turn worship into an opportunity to get people to commit. But this is not what faith is. As Luther said in his explanation to the third article of the Creed (Small Catechism): "I believe that I cannot . . . believe, but instead the Holy Spirit has called me." Or as St. Paul puts it, "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3). Faith is not a work we do, a decision we make, a commitment that shows how good and faithful we are; and when we make it that, we turn everything on its head and we end up trusting ourselves, not God. No, to say faith is the center is to say Christ is the center because, to fill in the above quote from Luther's Small Catechism (emphasis added): "I believe that I cannot by my own understanding or effort believe *in Jesus Christ my Lord or come to him*, but the Holy Spirit calls me through the gospel"—that is, the Holy Spirit makes us believers, makes us right with God, makes us holy. And because in the church the Holy Spirit gathers us, we come to the center, who is Jesus

Christ. This means that discovering how faith is *not* a work, and discovering that to say "faith is the center" is the same as saying "Christ is the center," has profound impact on how we worship and even how we organize our worship space.

Herman Hassinger was a member of my wife's congregation in Moorestown, NJ. He was an architect who in the 1970s and 80s helped build many Lutheran churches up and down the East Coast. At the 60th anniversary of St. Matthew Lutheran Church in Moorestown, Mr. Hassinger travelled from his retirement home in Connecticut to help us celebrate. I got to meet him before dinner. Hearing that I was a professor of theology and was married to the pastor, he thought he'd give me a test—which I promptly failed. "Do you know why I designed all of my churches the way I did, with the altar in the center and the people on three sides with the choir on the fourth side?" I hadn't a clue. He smiled triumphantly. "Because the campfire is the basic human gathering. And in church we gather around the fire." Yes, we do, Herman! We gather around the light, around the altar, receiving the body and blood of the incarnate savior of the world. We gather, even when we meet in long, narrow buildings of the 19th century or in Henry Melchior Muhlenberg's old church at Trappe, PA—or rather the Holy Spirit gathers us around the center, which is Christ, faith in Christ. We dare not get distracted from that.

Who Is Jesus Christ?

If Christ is the center, who is he? Before we get to Mary's rejoicing and the angels' singing, we must return to the basics. That is, we have to recite the Creed as if we meant it! And this recitation has three sides: getting the facts straight, getting the effects straight and getting the foolishness straight.

The Facts

Let's start with the facts. What makes us Christian is the Creed! There are a lot of folks out there who, in the name of Christianity, proclaim that the heart of the Christian faith is what Christians do. Of course, some types of this approach are obvious: the radio preacher who goes on and on about his favorite immorality, until you think he

gets more pleasure out of describing it than sinners get out of doing it; or the TV evangelist who makes wealth and success the central Christian message. And these next views of Christianity hit much closer to home. When we make hunger appeals and peace-and-justice issues the mark of true Christianity—instead of realizing that they should be (and are!) a mark of our humanity! Or when we confuse paying off a debt to Thrivent with a sign of Christian commitment! Or when we gravitate toward hymns or anthems or sermons that tell people how they should act! These make Jesus into another law-giver, not a savior. Listen to how Philip Melancthon, Martin Luther’s right-hand man, put it in the Augsburg Confession, the central Lutheran confession of faith: “Now all who think that they can accomplish reconciliation with God by works and can earn grace despise Christ and seek their own way to God contrary to the Gospel.”⁵

What makes us Christians is Christ, the incarnate savior of the world. What makes us Christians is the Creed, confessing the Triune God. Listen to Luther’s profound words in the Large Catechism.

These three articles of the Creed, therefore, separate and distinguish us Christians from all other people on earth. All who are outside this Christian people, whether heathen, Turks, Jews, or false Christians and hypocrites—even though they believe in and worship only the one, true God—nevertheless do not know what God’s attitude is toward them. They cannot be confident of his love and blessing. . . . for they do not have the LORD Christ, and, besides, they are not illuminated and blessed by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. From this you see that the Creed is a very different teaching than the Ten Commandments. For the latter teach us what we ought to do, but the Creed tells us what God does for us and gives to us. The Ten Commandments, moreover, are written in the hearts of all people, but no human wisdom is able to comprehend the Creed; it must be taught by the Holy Spirit alone. Therefore the Ten Commandments do not succeed in

making us Christians, . . . but the Creed brings pure grace and makes us righteous and acceptable to God.⁶

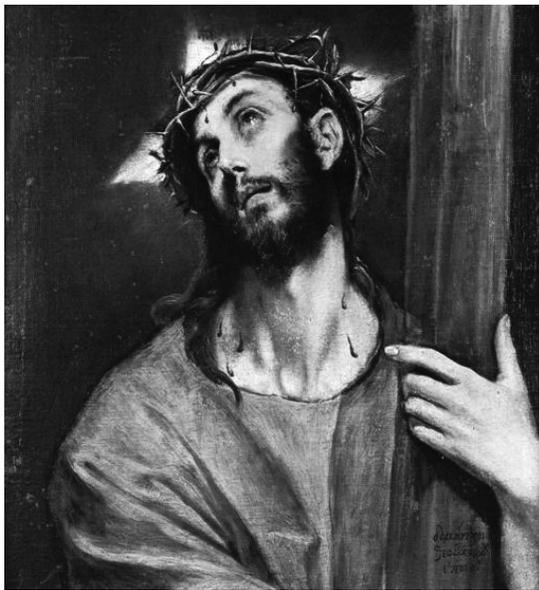
It has become *de rigueur* in some circles to omit the Creed from Sunday worship. Yet the Creed makes us Christian, leads us to confess the God who creates all things, redeems the world, and makes us holy: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That is, it leads us to God’s grace. The Creeds were written over against other views of Christ. There were some who denied that Christ came in the flesh, was really incarnate, because the true God could never get mixed up with material things. Our baptismal creed, which we inherited from the 3rd-century Roman Christians, insisted (over against the Gnostics, as they were called): God created heaven *and earth*; that Jesus was *born* of a woman; that he truly suffered, was crucified, died, and was buried; and that we believe in the resurrection of the flesh—of the body. Many Christians today still want to try to escape the flesh for a more spiritual kind of life. No! the creed shouts to “new agers” of every age: the Word became flesh!

Now, at this point I am tempted to haul out one of a hundred great quotes from Luther on this subject, but you need to know that his students, too, insisted on God in the flesh. One of them, Joachim Mörlin, mentioned in a sermon delivered five years after Luther died that there was little about the Trinity in the Bible. His archenemy in the same city attacked him for saying this. Here’s what he said in response on Christmas morning 1551, preaching on John 1:14.

And to this extent I confess now just as I also confessed then, that I did not only preach that we do not *know* what God is *in God’s essence*—let alone try to discuss and talk about it . . .—but I said even more. The Scripture also talks very little about who God is in God’s very self, namely, God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Instead, it talks for the most part about what God is for us: namely God is merciful, who lets our misery abate and moves us gently, who suffers with us and takes upon himself such misery. Thus, I defend myself from raving speculators as from the devil . . . [and] flee to the Bible, which shows our dear God wearing

baby shoes and draws God out of that heavenly essence (within which God can never be understood in this life) to be among us, in that God speaks, has eyes, ears, hands, feet, which God actually does not have. Not, I say, in God's divine essence, as God is in God's very self from all eternity, but instead as God came into the world and walked among us. Oh my! Look at how John makes himself happy and is filled with joy about this and says, "We have also seen the glory of the only begotten Son." Where is that, dear John, where is that? "He is lying in a manger, has hands and feet, body and soul," that is, "The Word became flesh."⁷

The Apostles' Creed confesses God in the flesh, and so does the Nicene Creed but with a different set of heresies in mind, for it was aimed at the Arians, those who had no trouble saying Jesus Christ was human but couldn't



Christ Carrying the Cross by El Greco, c.1595.
www.wikipaintings.org

quite get their minds around his divinity. No, they said, "There was when he was not." He could not be the Logos, second person of the Trinity, "true God from true God . . . of one being with the Father." And do not imagine that Arians have disappeared from the face of the earth. Indeed, Jehovah's Witnesses are only one of a slew of the Arians' direct descendants.

Later, people fell off yet another side of the

ship when they decided that Jesus could not be completely human, but had his divinity for a soul instead of a normal soul. To that, Christians countered: "What he has not assumed he has not saved." [Don't know where this is from. Need ref, I think?] And the second person of the Trinity became a true human being in all respects save sin. And, of course, he then took sin and death and evil upon himself on the cross. As far as Luther was concerned, all of these old heresies in new dress were just the work of the devil. During Easter 1532, as he sat at table, he said,

I don't know of anything about our Lord Christ that the devil has not attacked. That's why he has to start all over again from the beginning. Sabellius was the first; he said that Christ is God and that there is only one person in the Godhead, not three. Afterward the Arians distinguished among the persons but declared that the Son was not God from eternity but was only called God. . . . Later the Photinians appeared and said that Christ indeed had a real body but lacked a soul. Thus the devil assailed Christ from stem to stern. There was nothing left to attack, and so the devil has to start all over again from the beginning.⁸

The Effects

But if all we get straight are the facts, then we might as well stay home on Sunday and read *The New York Times* on Kindle. The point of saying that Jesus Christ is true God and true human being is not to preserve some secret knowledge about God or to win points with God by getting the right answer. Then justification by faith alone becomes justification by right answer alone. Already in some of Luther's comments above we have learned that it is not just who Christ is but what Christ has done—that is, his effect—that makes a difference. That's why, when talking about the Annunciation, Luther mentioned its effect.

To understand the effect of the incarnation, we have Luther's explanation of the second article of the Creed in the Small Catechism to help us. "I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father in eternity, and also a true human being, born of the Virgin Mary,

is my Lord.” There is the effect. Jesus did not come to earth for a visit: Jesus came to be our Lord. But to appreciate fully what Luther is saying, we have to know something about the particular metaphor that he is using here. In Luther’s day, there were “lords” (German: *Herren*) all over the place. There was the *Pfarrherr*, or pastor; there was the *Hausherr*, or master; there was the *Grundherr*, or lord of the manor; and the *Landesherr*, or territorial prince. The relation between subject and lord was far more complicated than we might imagine, with responsibilities on both sides. The most important responsibility for the lord of the manor or prince: when one of his subjects got kidnapped, it was his duty to pay the ransom and get the poor person back. And *that* is why Jesus is Lord to Luther. “He has redeemed me, [bought me back] a lost and condemned person”—we could say a kidnap victim, and, indeed, in the Large Catechism Luther writes, “Before [Christ] I had no lord or king, but was captive under the power of the devil . . . condemned to death and ensnared in sin and blindness.”⁹ In his explanation to the second article of the Creed (Small Catechism), he writes, “Purchased and won me from sin, death and the power of the devil [those kidnappers], not with gold or silver but with his holy and precious blood and innocent suffering and death. All this he did so that I might belong to him, live under him in his kingdom and serve him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness.” That is, Jesus comes to us to be our lord, our redeemer, our savior. Perhaps this is why *ELW* expanded many prayer conclusions from the traditional “through Jesus Christ our Lord” to “through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord,” just so people can know that to confess Jesus is Lord is to confess him as savior.

Salvation, then, is the effect—the result—of God in flesh made manifest. But don’t imagine that there is only one way to say this or sing this or confess this. This is what makes

worship planning such a joy! In the hymnbook used in my congregation, *ELW*, we have at least 736 ways to say this (other hymnals give other options). The amazing variety of expressing praise to Christ is simply astonishing. What a great age to live in, when we have such resources at our fingertips!

Luther used the metaphor of lordship to describe Christ, and he also used that of friendship. Listen to this comment at table, delivered after January 8, 1532, and before March 23, that is, most likely in the in-between times after the Epiphany.

The principal lesson of theology is that Christ can be known. Here we can learn from each other—the teacher from the students and the students from the teacher. Christ is far more pleasant than we are. If I can be good to a friend, how much more will Christ be good to us! When Satan leads me to the law I am condemned, but when I receive the promise, then I am free. In 2 Peter 3:18 we read, “Grow in the knowledge of Christ.” This isn’t knowledge of the law or logic or another branch of human wisdom but of Christ—the most just and most merciful, in whom alone we dwell.¹⁰

Another voice from the 16th century, Elizabeth von Meseritz, was a young noblewoman whose impoverished family sent

Ein Lobsanft von Christo

Erlede uns durch deyn gute-erweck vns durch deyn gnadt. Den alten menschen krencke- das der new leben mag. Wolhe auff dyer erden-den sijn vnd all begerden-vnd danken han zu dir.

Das Lied S. Johannes Hus gebessert.

Der Christ der eyngig Gottes son-vaters yn ewig keyt- aus seyn herzen entsprossen- gleich wie ges schayden sicut. Er ist d' morgen sterne- seyn glenke strecke er set ne- fur andern sterne klar. fur vns ein mensch geboze- yn leyre teil der zeit- Der mutter vnuerlore- yhr tugstewlich keuscheit. Den tod- fur vns zu brache- de hymel auffgeschloß seyn- das leben wider bracht. Laß vns yn deiner liebe- vnd kennnis nemē zu- Das wir am glauben bleibe- vnd dienen yn geist so. Das wir hie mugen schmecken- deyn süßicheit yn herzen- vnd dursten set nach dir. Du Schepffer aller dinge- du vetterliche kraft. Regirst von end zu ende- krefftig aus eigen macht Das hertz vns zu dir vnde- vnd her ab vnser sijn ne- das sye nicht vnn von dir.

Jesus Christas vnser heylant- der von vns den rozn Gottes wand- durch das bitter leyden seyn- halff er aus der helle peyn. Das wir nimmer des vergessen- gab er vns seyn leib zu essen- verborgen yn brott so klein- vnd zu trincken seyn blut yn weyn. Wer sich zum tisch wil machen- der hab woll

“Lord Christ, the Only Son of God,” Lutheran hymn by Elisabeth Cruciger. Printed in the *Erfurt Enchiridion*, 1524. www.wikipedia.org

her to a monastery at a very young age. Early in the Reformation she escaped and came to Wittenberg. Luther quickly found her a husband, Caspar Cruciger, Sr., who was one of Luther's favorite students and later became a theology professor at the University of Wittenberg. A hymn she wrote was published in the very first Protestant hymnbook of 1523, alongside those of Luther and other men. Although some folk love to talk about Hildegard of Bingen and Juliana of Norwich as female hymn writers, the facts are that their work only came into hymnals much later. Elizabeth Cruciger's hymn is the very first by a woman in any printed hymnal ever. One has to go back to Miriam, Deborah, and Mary before finding other hymns directly ascribed to women. Her hymn made it into modern Lutheran hymnbooks, but in a really poor 19th-century translation by someone who could not believe what she wrote. It is a hymn for the incarnation, confessing Christ as true God in the first stanza and true human being in the second and then showing, in stanzas 3–5 the effects of that very incarnation.

Christ comes from God forever, the
 Father's only Son;
 from God's heart, ceasing never, as
 prophets long have sung:
 "He is the Star of Morning,
 whose beams afar are soaring
 above all other lights."

Now, at the end of ages, Christ comes a
 human born.
 The poor receive God's wages: sin's
 judgment from us torn.
 Now death for us is broken,
 and heaven's portals open;
 life blossoms forth again. (my own translation)
 Sin's judgment torn away; death broken;
 heaven open; life blossoms again! That is the
 effect of the incarnation of the only Son of God.
 As the ancient Christians put it: God became a
 human being so that we human beings might
 become divine. That is, we become God's
 adopted sons and daughters.

The Foolishness

As we consider the incarnation, we need to meditate not just on the facts or the effects but also on the foolishness of it all. Christians

have forever been trying to make sense of this remarkable, unbelievable, and, yes, even unreasonable fact for 2,000 years. How can God do this? One hundred percent human and one hundred percent divine! Doesn't that add up to two hundred percent? How can God become a human being and die and be raised? If Jesus is God, who exactly is he praying to? If Jesus is one person with two natures, how can God die on the cross? When it comes to questions like these, Lutherans really can be glad that they are Lutheran! Martin Luther developed early on something often called the theology of the cross. Now, the theology of the cross is *not* a theory about why Jesus died. That would be a theology *about* the cross. The theology of the cross is the revelation of God in the last place we would reasonably look. Or, as Luther put it, the *revelatio Dei sub contrario specie*—the revelation of God under the appearance of the opposite.

The theology of the cross relieves us from making the incarnation into a puzzle for our minds to figure out. Luther never missed an opportunity to point this out to his students. In 1544 one of his students, Georg Major, was in front of the whole faculty and student body defending his doctoral theses on the incarnation in order to become a professor of theology in Wittenberg. Luther was presiding and, as was the custom, when one's student got into trouble, the professor had to rescue him. Well, poor Georg was not the brightest bulb on the Christmas tree and got hopelessly lost trying to defend the logic of Jesus being true God and true human being. We have the protocols from the event! So Luther had to jump in. What did he say? "The Holy Spirit [as the Bible's author] uses a different logic." "The Holy Spirit has a different grammar." When Paul talked in 1 Corinthians 1 about the foolishness that we preach, he really meant it.

Another time, at table in late spring 1540, Luther took off after reason and praised how incomprehensible and foolish our faith is.

Ach, what does reason understand?
 It cannot comprehend . . . how a
 cherry grows from a blossom. . . . The
 world is full of everyday miracles, but
 . . . because they occur so often, these
 things are deemed of little value. . . .
 Who can understand anything about

these [natural] things by means of reason? To be sure, enlightened reason can to some extent understand the Ten Commandments . . . but articles of faith, like the Trinity and the incarnation of Christ—these don't match with reason. Let's say that the king of France and a stone are the same thing, or this table knife and I are identical—these statements don't match with reason. It's the same thing with the statement that God is a human being. We try to puzzle this out. I can reflect on it but can't understand it. Paul understood a good part of it, although he didn't comprehend all of it by any means. Yet he said with authority, "In Christ are hidden all treasures of wisdom and knowledge" [Col. 2:3]. For in this Christ all things, every creature, the whole Godhead are known. Here are united the greatest fortitude and the greatest weakness, life and death, righteousness and sin, the grace and the wrath of God. Ach, this is a stupendous teaching, but few care very much about it.¹⁰

But Luther does not only share this with his students. We already have a reference to his amazement at the word "sent" in the Annunciation story, in the phrase, "The angel Gabriel was sent by God to Mary." But in this excerpt from a Christmas sermon you can read the same thing.

Let us, then, meditate upon the Nativity just as we see it happening in our own babies. I would not have you contemplate the deity of Christ, the majesty of Christ, but rather his flesh. Look upon the Baby Jesus. Divinity may terrify human beings. Inexpressible majesty will crush them. That is why Christ took on our humanity, save for sin, that he should not terrify us but rather that with love and favor he should console and confirm. Look at Christ, lying in the lap of his young mother. . . . Look at the Child, knowing nothing and yet all that is belongs to him, so that your conscience should not fear but take comfort in him. Doubt nothing. Watch him springing in the lap of the maiden.

Laugh with him. Look upon this Lord of Peace and your spirit will be at peace. See how God invites you in many ways? He places before you a baby with whom you may take refuge. You cannot fear him, for nothing is more appealing to human beings than a baby. Are you frightened? Come to him, lying in the lap of the fairest and sweetest maid. You will see how great is the divine goodness, which seeks above all else that you should not despair. Trust him! Trust him! Here is the Child in whom there is salvation. To me there is no greater consolation given to humankind than this: that Christ became a human being, a child, a baby, playing in the lap and at the breasts of his most gracious mother. Who is there whom this sight would not comfort? Now is overcome the power of sin, death, hell, conscience, and guilt, if you come to this gurgling Baby and believe that he is come, not to judge, but to save.¹¹

No wonder that a Lutheran poet of the 17th century, in a poem on the seven last words of Christ, wrote these remarkable words when he got to "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me": "Es riß sich Gott von Gott" (God rips God's very self apart).¹² Reason wants to explain it all away. Faith simply confesses the remarkable, foolish truth, which was just what Joachim Mörlin was trying to say in his sermon quoted above. In another, lesser-known Lutheran confessional document, the Formula of Concord, several students of Luther and Melancthon wrote these words in 1576.

The union between the divine and human natures in the person of Christ is a much different, higher, indescribable communion. Because of this union and communion God is a human being and a human being is God. . . . Because of this personal union, without which this kind of true communion of the natures is unthinkable and impossible, not only the bare human nature (which possesses the characteristics of suffering and dying) suffered for the sins of the entire world, but the Son of God himself suffered (according to the assumed

human nature) and, according to our simple Christian creed, truly died—although the divine nature can neither suffer nor die.¹³

Given the facts, the effects, and the foolishness, where best do we learn the incarnation? From Scripture, yes, but Martin Luther reminds us of another, surprising place to learn of it: from our own experience when our faith is under attack. At table on the Feast of Pentecost, 1540, Luther again talks about the counter-rational aspects of the Christian faith.

When people consult reason, they cannot agree with our articles of faith. The Turk[ish sultan] holds his people to their duty more by religion than by arms, for they believe that God is the almighty Creator of heaven and earth, that Christ is a prophet and that by civil uprightness they can merit heaven. However, I have learned—not only through the Scriptures but also from severe struggles and assaults—that Christ is God and has put on flesh. . . . Thus, now I do not simply believe but I know through experience that these teachings are true. In the worst assaults nothing can help us but faith that God's Son has put on flesh, is "bone of our bone," sits at the Father's right hand and prays for us. There is no mightier comfort. . . . What will preserve us in such perils except prayer to Christ? If someone were to claim that Master Philip [Melanchthon] or I or others will preserve us, they would be lying. God does it because of Christ, about whom the apostles preach today. "The one you hanged seven weeks ago still lives." . . . Accordingly, we will abide by these articles, even against reason, for they have stood up and will stand.¹⁴

You know one of the best examples of how experience teaches faith in this foolish, weak incarnate God? It comes from Susan Briehl, who wrote this at the death of her best friend, Paul Nelson, who was the driving spirit behind the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Listen to this remarkable witness to the theology of the cross.

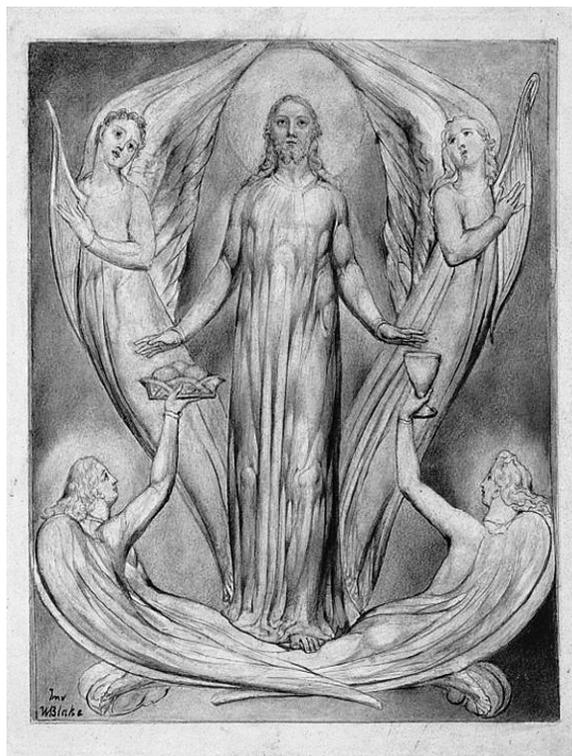
Holy God, holy and glorious,
glory most sublime,

you come as one among us into
human time,
and we behold your glory.

Holy God, holy and powerful,
power without peer,
you bend to us in weakness; emptied, you
draw near,
and we behold your power.

Holy God, holy and beautiful,
beauty unsurpassed,
you are despised, rejected; scorned, you
hold us fast,
and we behold your beauty.
Holy God, holy and only wise,
wisdom of great price,
you choose the way of folly: God
the crucified,
and we behold your wisdom.

Holy God, holy and living one,
life that never ends,
you show your love by dying, dying for
your friends,
and we behold you living. (ELW 637)



"Angels Ministering to Christ," by William Blake, 1820.
www.wikipaintings.org

Rejoicing in the Incarnation

As mentioned above, the impetus for this essay came from Michael Krentz, seminary musician at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, when he mentioned that somewhere Luther talked about the angels singing the incarnation. So, armed with the critical edition of Luther's works online—all 100 volumes in German and Latin—I set out searching to make my dear colleague happy. First I came across a sermon on Matthew from 1537 in which Luther wrote, "The dear angels are so righteous that they are heartily pleased with everything that God does, fall at God's feet and worship him who became a human being. And they rejoice from the very depths of their hearts, as their song at Christmas demonstrates, 'Glory to God in the highest.'"¹⁶ For Luther, the angels are not just letting the shepherds in on a secret, announcing the good news, but they are so righteous and so pleased with God's actions, that they just have to worship him with their songs: "Glory to God in the highest!"

But there are two other citations. Luther was at table on Christmas Day 1537 and 1538. And in comments on those two days, Luther offers a key to celebrating the incarnation and why so often in the quotes already used he talks about rejoicing. First, he considers the angels' message.

On Christmas, Dr. Martin Luther said many things about this remarkable festival, which offers godly people the greatest pleasure and consolation, for the dear angels themselves preach and accompany their preaching with their singing. "Those are true witnesses to the Messiah, who declare, 'Rejoice, be glad! Here you have the real Prince and a child of heaven and earth!' They sing the best song of all: 'Glory to God' (that concerns religion and faith), peace on earth (namely, in our day-to-day life), good will (that we feel right and are well pleased)."¹⁵

They sing the best song of all, and because of those 4th-century Greeks and 5th-century (or so) Latin-speaking Christians who included the story in our Eucharistic celebration as the *Gloria in excelsis*, we get to sing the angels' song every week in our Eucharist. Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people

on earth! And we sing it for the same reason the angels did, because in this service, at the Lord's Table, we will receive the body and blood of this same incarnate, crucified, and risen Savior and Lord. Indeed, there is no difference between our experience and that of the shepherds. We encounter in the bread and wine the same savior they saw in the manger. And the angels' proclamation is on our lips, not just with the "Glory to God," but also with the "Holy, holy, holy!" In Wittenberg the elevation of the bread and wine took place during the Sanctus, just to remind folks that the God to whom Christians sing with the angels at Christmas and in Isaiah's temple and with the crowds on Palm Sunday—it is that God who comes to us here in the bread and wine. No wonder Luther loved to use Simeon's song to close the liturgy, where we sing along with the one who held the baby Jesus in his hands, "Lord, now let your servant depart in peace, my eyes have seen your salvation." Or, in the *Agnus Dei*, we point with John the Baptist, "Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." Every word of our liturgy cries incarnation, witnesses incarnation, and distributes the incarnate savior with the bread and wine. There, again, the Holy Spirit draws us to the center so we may encounter and receive Christ for the strengthening of our faith.

On the evening of Christmas Day 1538 Luther also was recorded by one of his admiring students, Anton Lauterbach.

This evening he was very joyful. His conversation, his singing, and his thoughts were about the incarnation of Christ, our Savior. Amid his sighs he said, "Ah what wretched people we are! To think that we are so cold and slothful in our attitude toward this great joy which, after all, happened for us, this great blessing which is far, far superior to all other works of creation! And yet how hard it is for us to believe, though the good news was preached and sung for us by angels, who are heavenly theologians and have rejoiced in our behalf! Their song is the most glorious. It contains the whole Christian faith. For the *Gloria in excelsis* is supreme worship. They wish us to worship, and

they bring it to us in Christ. . . . [After talking about how, since the Fall, we no longer appreciate the true beauty of God's creation, Luther concludes:] For this reason the angels here recall fallen humanity to faith and love, that is, to glory toward God and peace on earth.¹⁶

The angels rejoice on our behalf and by their singing catch us up in the rejoicing as well—despite our sin and grief and all the things that weigh us down. This means that, every time we sing the Gloria in excelsis we are participating with the angels in proclaiming and rejoicing in the most remarkable event the world has ever known: God in flesh made manifest. This means that our Sundays after the Epiphany and before Lent can be filled with praise for the incarnation in Action, joining the angels, and Mary, and the shepherds in praise.

Luther said much the same in his Christmas sermons.

[This innumerable multitude of angels] were “praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest.” See what God did in heaven about this birth, which the world despised and did not even see and know. The joy was so great that the angels could not stay in heaven but had to break out and tell human beings on earth. The angels proclaimed to the shepherds “good news of great joy.” This is a mighty comfort to us. What the world despised the angels honored. They would have had a much bigger celebration if God had allowed them, but he wished to teach us through his Son to despise the pomp of the world. All the angels in heaven, without exception, sang, “Glory to God in the highest!” What a shame that all people do not preach this word despite the fact that all the angels in heaven play it on organs and pipes in eternity! The angels had no bigger congregation than a few shepherds in a field. They were filled with too great joy for words. And yet, we who hear this message . . . never feel one spark of joy. . . . All people should dance and leap and burn for joy! But we act as though it were a frigid, historical fact . . . as if someone were merely relating that the sultan has a crown of gold.

[And then they sang] “And on earth peace. . . .” The Kingdom of Christ is a proclamation of peace and grace, as the angels sang that he should be the Savior of the whole world to free his people and save them from their sins. That he has done and still is doing. He is not the sort of lord who fights with the sword and has to do with civil government. Rather he rules with the gracious preaching of peace. For that reason he is called Jesus, meaning a Savior who helps his people to turn and be saved. We have often explained and again explain, how to understand the Kingdom of our Lord; how to distinguish the spiritual and temporal realms; that this Lord Christ does not build castles, towns and villages like an emperor, king, or elector of Saxony, or even like me in my own household, but he saves his people from their sins. This is a fair, dear, and precious assurance to troubled and tormented consciences laden with sins, that to them and to us all a Child is born who will rule and vindicate, who will help, and not destroy, murder, strangle, or kill. These are not human words. This preaching is from heaven and, God be praised, it is communicated also to us, for it is just the same to hear and read this preaching as to receive it from an angel. The shepherds did not see the angels. They only saw a great light and heard the word of an angel, just as one can hear it now or read it in a book.¹⁷

That's what these Sundays are all about. They are illumined by the light of the star and the glory of the angels, and they proclaim the incarnation. But more than that! Our experience of this proclamation by angels and that of the shepherds is no different! They heard and believed; we hear and believe. God's Incarnate Word is proclaimed at the festivals of Christmas and Epiphany and throughout the Sundays after the Epiphany, and we hear the voices of the angels, in the readings and sermon, in the prayers and at the table. And we rejoice with them and spread that good news to others in our singing and proclaiming and praying, as surely as the angels did that first Christmas.

Consider the celebrations during this in-between time. First, consider the festivals: The Confession of Peter on January 18 (“You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God” [Mt. 16:16]—sounds like the incarnation to me); the Conversion of Paul a week later (“I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting” [Acts 8:5]); and the Presentation of Our Lord on February 2 (“Lord, now let your servant depart in peace,” says Simeon, because he’s seen and held it all). And then the Sundays after Epiphany: Baptism of Our Lord (where the whole Trinity shows up in all three gospel lessons—“You are my Son”); changing water into wine (the reading in Year C, where we hear that in Cana he revealed his glory, John 2:1-11); the beginning of Jesus’ ministry (where, in Year C again, we hear, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me” [Luke 4 18]); and even when we read parts of the Sermon on the Mount in year A (4th–8th Sundays after Epiphany), don’t forget the point: he did not speak like the scribes and Pharisees but “with authority”—the authority of the only Son, full of grace and truth, or, as Matthew puts it, as Immanuel, God with us! Finally, these Sundays close with a bang, with the Transfiguration, a foretaste of the Resurrected Lord, and with the voice from the cloud, the same voice as at the baptism with one important addition: “This is my Son . . . listen to him.” Luther preached on this text countless times but always—always—focused on those very words: “Listen to him!”

There are many siren voices in the world, all eager to derail our faith, bidding us to listen to them: voices of security or fame or self-sufficiency or . . . fill in the blank. But God comes to us in these in-between Sundays and says, “Listen to him!” Listen to Jesus, God in the flesh, crucified and risen for us.

But then think of the songs we get to sing! One could, of course, use a few Christmas hymns that celebrate the incarnation. But the point is that we rejoice in this remarkable act of God.¹⁸ Susan Cherwien gets into the spirit of the time when she invites us with these words,

Come, beloved of the Maker,
come, behold the Firstborn One;
see revealed creation’s splendor
crowned in glory like the sun.

See the Morning star now beckon
to those bound to doubt and night;

“Follow me,” Christ calls in welcome,
“come from darkness into light.”
(ELW 306, st. 1–2)

And Delores Dufner, that wonderful
Benedictine nun, sings,

Light shines in darkness till the full creation;
Christ’s body, groaning, suffers tribulation,
longs for God’s justice, global transformation,
prays for the light. Amen! (ELW 307, st. 3)

And then there’s Philip Nicolai, author of
the very first German chorales. He, too, wrote
in anguish. A pastor when the plague hit his
town, he buried hundreds in a single summer
and wrote for the survivors a beautiful, grace-
filled tract to comfort them. At the end he
included two poems. Like Susan Briehl, he
knew how to rejoice in God in the midst of
sorrow and how to point his dear flock to the
comfort of the incarnate Christ.

O Morning Star, how fair and bright!
You shine with God’s own truth and light,
aglow with grace and mercy!
Of Jacob’s line, King David’s son,
our Lord and Savior, you have won
our hearts to serve you only!
Lowly, holy!
Great and glorious, all victorious,
rich in blessing!
Rule and might o’er all possessing.
(ELW 308, st. 1)

But, for those who know grief and need
comfort, consider the fifth verse:

Oh, let the harps break forth in sound!
Our joy be all with music crowned,
our voices gaily blending!
For Christ goes with us all the way—
today, tomorrow, ev’ry day!
His love is never ending!
Sing out! Ring out!
Jubilant! Exaltation!
Tell the story!
Praise to Christ, who reigns in glory!
(ELW 308, st. 5)

One can just hear the angels.

Then there is the final line of each verse of
“Songs of Thankfulness and Praise” (ELW 310):
“God in flesh made manifest”! There is also the
English priest, Christopher Idle, who writes:

Jesus, come! Surprise our dullness,
make us willing to receive
more than we can yet imagine,

all the best you have to give:
let us find your hidden riches,
taste your love, believe and live!
(ELW 312, st. 4)

Even Ruth Duck gets into the act for this time.

Arise, your light has come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing,
God's pow'r will make us strong.
(ELW 314, st. 4)

For Transfiguration, along with all the usual suspects, listen to Brian Wren's invitation to join the angels:

Jesus on the mountain peak
stands alone in glory blazing:
let us, if we dare to speak,
join the saints and angels praising.
Alleluia, alleluia!
This is God's beloved Son!
Law and prophets sing before him,
first and last and only One.
All creation shall adore him!
Alleluia, alleluia!
(ELW 317, st. 1, 4)

And just to remind us what it's all about, John Mason Neale, that creative 19th-century translator, renders an 11th-century Latin hymn:

Alleluia, song of gladness,
voice of joy that cannot die;
alleluia is the anthem
ever dear to choirs on high;
in the house of God abiding
thus they sing eternally.
(ELW 318, st. 1)

When we worship, we worship the incarnate Lord, and we join with all of the angels in this in-between time and sing their song, rejoicing with them in our savior. Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth!

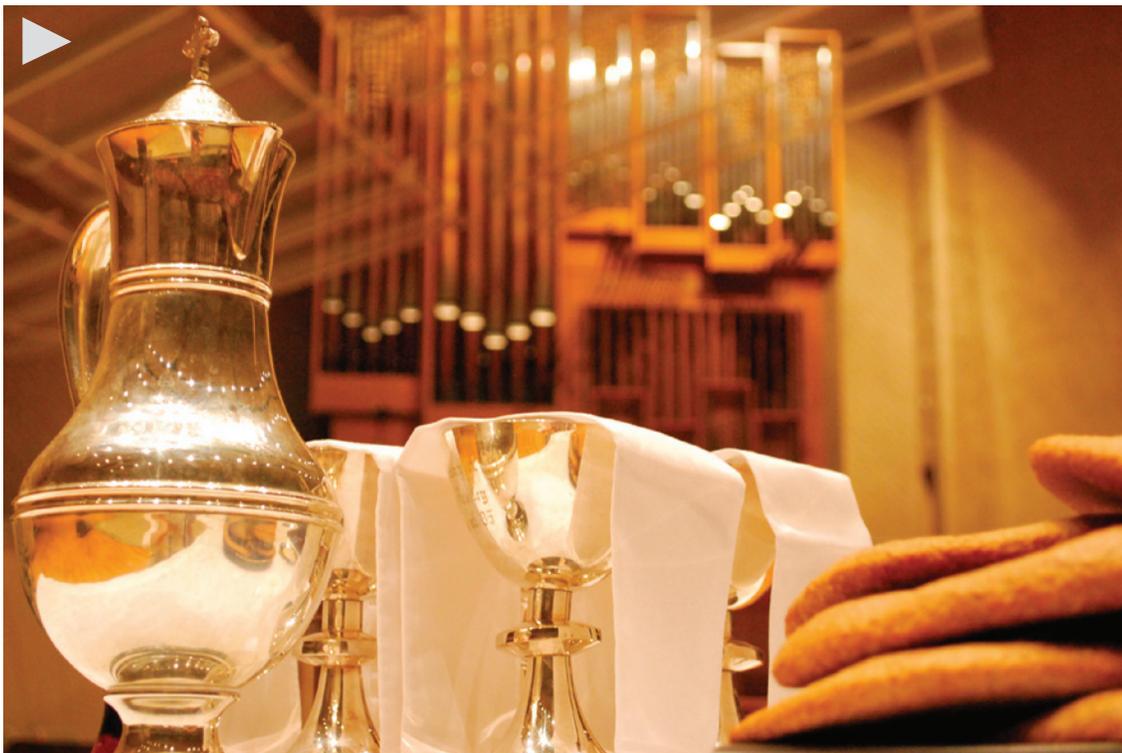
Timothy J. Wengert is the Ministerium of Pennsylvania Professor of the History of Christianity at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. A parish pastor for over seven years, he joined the Philadelphia faculty in 1989. He is best known as co-editor, with Robert Kolb, of the 2000 English edition of *The Book of Concord*, as



translator of the Small Catechism (widely used in the ELCA) and as a Reformation scholar, working on Martin Luther, Philip Melanchthon, and the Lutheran Confessions. In 2000 the city of Bretten, Philip Melanchthon's birthplace, awarded the Melanchthon Prize to him, the only American ever to receive that honor.

Notes

- 1 "Explanation," J.B. Phillips, *New Testament Christianity* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1956).
- 2 The Table Talk or *Tischreden* of Luther began in the 1530s when students who either had rooms at the Luthers' house (it was, after all, a monastery) or were invited to supper took notes at the dinner table on what the great doctor had to say about a grand variety of topics. It was 16th-century Twitter. First published in 1566, the notes continue to be a great source for some of Luther's best sayings, especially after he'd had a stein or two of the good beer brewed by his wife Katie.
- 3 Martin Luther, *Table Talk*, ed. by Theodore G. Tappert and Helmut T. Lehmann, vol. 54 of *Luther's Works* [LW] American edition (St. Louis: Concordia and Philadelphia: Fortress, 1967), 84–85 (no. 494, with corrections).
- 4 LW 54: 45–46 (no. 327).
- 5 The Augsburg Confession [German], trans. Eric Gritsch, art. XX, par. 10, in *The Book of Concord* [BC], ed. Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2000), 54.
- 6 The Large Catechism, trans. James Schaaf, Creed [LC, Creed], par. 66–68, in BC, 440.
- 7 Joachim Mörlin, *Historia Welcher gestalt sich die Osiandrische schwermerey im lande zu Preussen erhaben, vnd wie dieselbige verbandelt ist, mit allen actis beschrieben* ([Magdeburg: Lotter], 1554), R 3v – R 4r.
- 8 LW 54: 35–36 (no. 269).
- 9 LC, Creed, 27, in BC, 434.
- 10 LW 54: 377–78 (no. 5015).
- 11 Roland Bainton, ed., *Martin Luther's Christmas Book* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1948), 39–40.
- 12 Johannes Klaj, cited in Johann Anselm Steiger, "Zorn und Gericht in der poetischen Meditation der Passion Jesu Christi – insbesondere bei Johannes Klaj und Andreas Gryphius," in *Orthodoxie und Poesie*, ed. Udo Sträter (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2004), 92.
- 13 The Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord, trans. Robert Kolb, VIII.19–20, in BC, 619.
- 14 LW 54: 370–71 (no. 4915).
- 15 LW 54: 248–49 (no. 3654b, revised).
- 16 LW 54: 326–27 (no. 4201).
- 17 Bainton, *Martin Luther's Christmas Book*, 45–46.
- 18 The following hymns are in various hymnals, but here references are made only to *ELW*.



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SWAYIN', SPRINKLIN', AND SWAPPIN': Worship Is Always *Embodied Worship*

by Deborah Geweke

ANGELS PROCLAIMED HIM “a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord” (Luke 2:11; NRSV). Shepherds knew him as “a child . . . lying in a manger” (Luke 2:16). Magi knew him as “king of the Jews” (Matthew 2:2). Mary and Joseph knew him as their son.

“But who do you say that I am?” (Luke 9:20).

As I write, the church stands at the close of the Christmas cycle, a cycle that includes the Advent season of preparation in which prophets proclaimed our Lord’s coming, Epiphany, a celebration of manifestation in which the wise recognized his arrival, and the season after. It is during the cycle’s waning time in particular (Time after Epiphany) that we who have been celebrating Jesus’ birth for several millennia are ourselves drawn into the nativity story. Like bookends, Baptism of Our Lord (celebrated

on the first Sunday after the Epiphany) and Transfiguration of Our Lord (on the last Sunday before Lent) call *us* to recognize and proclaim Christ’s incarnation in *our* response to the question Jesus asked his disciples: “who do you say that I am?”¹

By asking this question, however, we—like the disciples—“do not in any way claim to *explain* the mystery of God’s communication with humankind” in a manner that is reduced to a purely intellectual process.² None of the angels nor shepherds nor magi recognized the presence of their God in this child by means of intellectual endeavor. Rather, their understanding was grounded in the experience of being drawn to and loving this child, this Christ, this God.

“Who do you say that I am?” Similarly—and

as contemporary participants in the story,—meet and know and love this Lord not by virtue of collecting facts and information *about* him but, like the disciples, by encountering Christ. By engaging God who is revealed to us in flesh. By meeting Messiah. By joining Jesus. This is the experience of living and loving our Lord in a way that is tangible and corporeal. Every bit as real as our God enfleshed in a swaddled child, or as actual as God encountered in the transfigured Christ, is our *embodied* worship of God incarnate in Jesus the Messiah.

In what follows, it is my intention to explore our encounter with the Christ present in worship—particularly as our Lord is embodied in song, ritual, and gesture—which likewise is bodily experienced in us who gather. Toward this end, several notable experiences within the recent liturgical celebration of Baptism of Our Lord will serve the claim that worship is always embodied worship, whereby we come to know God in Christ Jesus in and as relationship.

Swayin'

It is only a short distance from birth to baptism in the church year. Led by both star and desire we accompany Christ Jesus from manger to font, from feed trough to fountain of life. In history, the journey from one moment to another took our Lord perhaps three decades. We travel to his baptism in a matter of weeks between Christmas and Baptism of Our Lord. No matter how the journey proceeds, elements of both figurative and spiritual *movement* frequently fill liturgical image and language. Yet those elements that characterize the journey include one that often goes unnoticed. Movement as a *physical* experience of loving Jesus and a tangible encounter with Christ is often overlooked within the journey of faith. On the day of Baptism of Our Lord this dynamic was revealed to me in rather dramatic, if not slightly embarrassing, fashion.

To the strains of ST. PATRICK'S BREASTPLATE, the gathered community rose and turned in place to accompany the procession to the font.

I bind this day to me forever,
by pow'r of faith, Christ's incarnation,
his baptism in the Jordan River,
his cross of death for my salvation,
his bursting from the spiced tomb,

his riding up the heavenly way,
his coming at the day of doom,
I bind unto myself today.³

Except, not *really*. Certainly, a “binding” such as this is figurative or spiritual at best, unless an event occurs to change our perception.

This tune has long been one of particular depth of feeling to me and evidently likewise was to the Irish woman beside me, and the swaying by which we unconsciously accompanied our impassioned singing became asynchronous. Hips hit and hymnals flew. Though in itself not a moment of particularly deep meaning, that moment's sheer physicality nonetheless struck me, an awareness that only intensified through the liturgy.

Being “bound” to Christ and his Paschal Mystery requires that the real presence of Christ in worship is actually experienced by worship and embodied within the liturgy.

In words attributed to St. Patrick, we are claimed to be bound to the birth and baptism, death and resurrection, ascension and return of our Lord. It is something of an odd claim, particularly if one considers being bound to Christ and the paschal mystery of his life, death, resurrection, and return in a way that is other than figurative or spiritual. To “be bound” conjures images of imprisonment, captivity, and oppression. Yet to limit our binding to Christ to the figurative and the spiritual is to miss not only the hymnic claim but the biblical profession and Lutheran confession that, in worship, Christ is *really* present.⁴ To our Lord, and by these means, we are bound. *Really*. For inasmuch as Christ is really present in the events of his life in which God is *actually* incarnate and embodied, so too the worshipping faithful gather to celebrate our Lord's birth, baptism, crucifixion, resurrection, ascension, and return. These are the very substance of our Christian faith, a “religion” in which “binding” to Christ and all that Christ accomplishes is real, absolute, and even physical. This is, moreover, the nature of being bound. As its very etymology suggests, “religion” is the incarnation of two Latin components: *re*, meaning “together” or

“again,” and *ligare*, meaning “to tie,” as in our common usage of the words ligature, ligament, and so forth. Thus by pure etymology we reach the concept of “tying together.”⁵ Being “bound” to Christ and his Paschal Mystery requires that the real presence of Christ in worship is actually experienced by worship and embodied within the liturgy. For the community gathered around word and sacrament, this must take place within the context of our own physicality, as it is only as physical beings that we live and move. It is, moreover, this embodied-ness that is both the effect and promise of our Lord.

The Father gives us himself by giving us his only Son, so that we may become sons and daughters, and by pouring out the Spirit to bind us to the Son. The Spirit gives us himself by bringing us to Christ through his witness and life-giving power, so that we may praise the Father in, with, and through the Son.

We are claimed by Christ as sons and daughters. By the outpouring of the Spirit we are bound to Christ Jesus, to his promises, and to each other. The effect of this binding is community.

The Son gives us himself, and in doing so draws near through the witness and power of the Spirit and allows us to share his relationship to the Father.⁶

We are claimed by Christ as sons and daughters. By the outpouring of the Spirit we are bound to Christ Jesus, to his promises, and to each other. The effect of this binding is community. It is relationship. And in relationship is identity, our Lord’s and our very own. For however imperfect we are in one another’s presence—despite hips hitting, hymnals flying, words contended, or actions contested—relationship is real, and our Lord is truly present and embodied within us.

Sprinklin’

Blessed are you, O God of grace. From age to age you made water a sign of your presence among us...Through

this water remind us of our baptism. Shower us with your Spirit, that your forgiveness, grace, and love may be renewed in our lives.⁷

And then it hit me, literally. As tangible as the asperged water both on my forehead and rolling down my cheek was the awareness that “liturgy changes us because we not only think thoughts about God but also live and move and have our being in God. The movement of our bodies is an irreducible, irreplaceable way of knowing.”⁸ We exist as corporeal. The physical is as much a part of our “being” as is the mental, emotional or spiritual. This reality is no less true as we worship. Sometimes this reality is lost, as if bodily presence somehow interferes with what is often perceived as the deeper and more direct inner knowledge of God, that is, the “spiritual.”

Yet to say that we “live and move and have our being in God” is to recognize that we do so as embodied believers who are bound in relationship to the One who calls and gathers us together in Holy Baptism.

I bind unto myself the name,
the strong name of the Trinity
by invocation of the same,
the Three in One and One in Three,
of whom all nature has creation,
eternal Father, Spirit, Word.
Praise to the Lord of my salvation;
salvation is of Christ the Lord!⁹

Baptism draws us into relationship. It identifies us. As both the waters of the font and the Spirit are poured out upon us, we are born. *Really. Actually.* We are drawn together and bound to live ever after in and with the unity of the Three in One and One in Three. *Relationally.* This is the effect of the One to whom we are tied as brothers and sisters. It is, moreover, the promise that even as the very real and abiding presence of our Lord is embodied within the sacrament, so too do we remain embodied within the hope of *our* bodily resurrection from death.

This is the nature of our relationship with God in Christ Jesus by the Holy Spirit—a relationship that promises to be complete in every way, a resurrected presence to which we are bound for all eternity. Yet even as we await the fullness of this relationship, even as

we anticipate an eternal binding that never loosens due to the frailty of our broken human relationships, we continue to encounter a measure of this life here and now even as we hope for its perfection to come. This we do as only we are able, as physical and embodied beings who live and move in and through our Lord and God.

Our heads are lowered in a gesture of receiving; water is poured out upon us; and—even as Jesus is bound to the cross—the Spirit of baptism binds us to the Christ of salvation. Our hands are outstretched as a sign of desire; bread is given and body is received; and even as God is embodied in Jesus, so too Jesus becomes embodied in us. His presence is real, his love is binding, and as God’s Sacrament of grace our Lord calls us into being:

The fact that Christian identity cannot be separated from the sacraments . . . means that faith cannot be lived in any other way, including what is most spiritual in it, than *in the mediation of the body*, the body of a society, of a desire, of a tradition, of a history, of an institution, and so on. What is most spiritual always takes place in the most corporeal.¹⁰

These tangible means of encountering Christ engage a “knowledge” of God that is neither capricious nor theoretical, but real, relational, and intimate—as real as the mountain under the feet of the disciples at the Transfiguration, as real as the dazzling transfigured Christ. For the faithful, knowledge that is real in its experience of and encounter with the living God is enfleshed as communion and embodied in relationship. It is relationship that answers the not-so-rhetorical question of Christ, “Who do you say that I am?” Our Love, our Lord, our Life.

Swappin’

Too young to understand, three-year-old Brynn nevertheless *knew* the significance of baptism: after being bound to Christ in baptism, our Lord becomes bound to us. Having gathered around the font on Baptism of Our Lord, the assembly then gathered around the altar. Table by table we approached, with outstretched hands. Upon reception of the body and blood, some gestured an affirmation in the sign of the cross, others responded in confession, “my

Lord and my God.” Brynn just kept swapping places among her family. Not yet having received her first communion, Brynn always joyfully comes to the altar for blessing with the rest of her family of five. On that day, however, she moved with a measure of expectancy and a sense of certainty. The first of the family to kneel at the rail, a well-practiced Brynn folded her hands, bowed her head, and received both the hands and words of blessing. She then quietly rose from the rail, scooted down the line to the middle of her family, and swapped places with her older sister. Folding her hands

These tangible means of encountering Christ engage a “knowledge” of God that is neither capricious nor theoretical, but real, relational, and intimate—as real as the mountain under the feet of the disciples at the Transfiguration, as real as the dazzling transfigured Christ.

and bowing her head, Brynn received a second blessing. A third and final blessing was offered to Brynn after she slid into the last spot at the rail beside her father. Thrice blessed.

While I cannot presume to know the motivation behind her determined desire for blessing, on this day in particular Brynn witnessed to me the impact of embodied worship. Her repeated movements—ritual gestures—of approaching the rail, folding her hands, bowing her head, and receiving in touch and words a blessing all communicates the ineffable significance of embodiment.

Such is the sacramental significance of our Lord taking bread, blessing and breaking it, and declaring his presence, “This is my body.” In this way the sacraments become not the “somehow static prolongations of the incarnation as such but as the major expression in our own history, of the embodiment (historical/eschatological) of the risen One in the world through the Spirit, embodiment whose ‘fundamental sacrament’ is the church visibly born at Pentecost.”¹¹ Though our gathering and worship continue to celebrate the “God in flesh made manifest”

(ELW 310) at the incarnation of our Lord, this embodied presence of God continues within the body of Christ now gathered in order to go forth.

I bind unto myself today
The pow'r of God to hold and lead,
His eye to watch, his might to stay,
His ear to hearken to my need,
The wisdom of my God to teach,
His hand to guide, his shield to ward.
The Word of God to give me speech,
His heav'nly host to be my guard.¹²

Such is the significance of the service of our Lord's body, gathered into one so that we, having been blessed and distributed, might embody our Lord's love in relationship, even as the power of God enables us to do so by holding, leading, watching, guiding, and guarding. This, then, is the prayer at the altar: that we might become what we have received. As "the work of the people," the liturgy is far more than a mere once-a-week gathering, as essential as this is for a community established by and for love. As the work of the people, the liturgy moves out from altar and font and into what Orthodox Christianity calls the "liturgy after the liturgy," that is, the work of the people in the world.

This is the significance of blessing:
And when they do all this as part of their love of God and their sharing in Christ's redemptive work, then indeed they are sharing also in the Church's work of benediction; they are fulfilling the injunction of the *Ite, missa est*; their work is praise and worship, and for that very reason is filled with power for the renewal of the face of the earth.¹³

In this way, those who have received blessing become blessing. Those who have received Christ become Christ. Those who have been loved become love. Those who know Christ reveal Christ. And we who receive the question answer it in our actions:

Who do you say that I am? My Lord and my God—to whom I am bound and in whom I live and move and have my being.

Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me,

Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth for friend or stranger.¹⁴

This, then, is who we know and proclaim our Lord Jesus the Messiah to be.



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Notes

- 1 The Gospel lessons for Baptism of Our Lord and Transfiguration of Our Lord address Jesus' identity, the question itself being asked by Jesus of his disciples within the context of the larger Transfiguration pericope, just prior to the transfiguration proper (cf. Luke 9:18-20).
- 2 Louis-Marie Chauvet, *The Sacraments: The Word of God at the Mercy of the Body* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2001), x (emphasis mine).
- 3 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2006), hymn 450, stanza 2.
- 4 Cf. biblical images of God's presence in worship: Psalm 100 reflects Temple worship in which the devout enter the "gates" to "worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing"; 2 Chronicles 4 considers the accoutrements of Temple worship, among which was the "bread of Presence" that was to sit before the Holy of Holies within the temple to proclaim God's nearness to Israel; 1 Corinthians 11 includes both the Pauline account of the Last Supper and is reflective of eucharistic practice within the primitive church, Paul here admonishing those who abuse the sacrament by treating it as if Christ were not really present (i.e., drunkenness, injustice, and so forth); Colossians 3 claims that the "word of Christ dwell[s] in you richly" particularly by means of "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." See also Augsburg Confession, Articles V, VII, and X, for confessional discussion regarding the presence of Christ in and as the church, especially when gathered around word and sacrament.
- 5 Phyllis A. Tickle, *Re-Discovering the Spirit: Spirituality in America* (New York: Crossroad, 1995), 114.
- 6 David Yeago, "The Promise of God and the Desires of Our Hearts: Prolegomena to a Lutheran Retrieval of Classic Spiritual Theology," *Lutheran Forum*, 30, no. 2 (1996):25.

- 7 "Affirmation of Baptism: Public Profession of Faith," in *Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Holy Baptism and Related Rites, Renewing Worship 3* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2002), 58.
- 8 Scott Walters, "Bodies at Worship: Formed by Liturgy," *Christian Century* (Sept. 22, 2009):13.
- 9 ELW 450, stanza 5.
- 10 Chauvet, Sacraments, xii.
- 11 Chauvet, Sacraments, 160.
- 12 Inter-Lutheran Commission on Worship, *Lutheran Book of Worship* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House and Philadelphia: Board of Publication, 1978), hymn 188, stanza 4.
- 13 Gerald Vann, "The Gestures of Worship," *Worship*, 27, no. 11 (October 1952):509.
- 14 ELW 450, stanza 4.



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God's Melody of Truth

by Scott E. Schul

“**PILATE ASKED JESUS**, ‘So you are a king?’ Jesus answered, ‘You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice.’ Pilate asked him, ‘What is truth?’” (John 18:37-38a; NRSV)

The Elusiveness of Truth

What is truth? Pilate’s question continues to haunt us in this era of subjectivity and hyper-individuality. Society offers us a dizzying array of choices, all characterized at some level as “truth,” and urges us to use them to construct our self-identity, beliefs, ethics, and attitudes. But if *everything* is to be classified as “truth,” then *nothing* is or can be false. Our Christian faith informs us that truth is Jesus Christ, but too often our voice is a solitary one crying in the wilderness.

As a Lutheran parish pastor and father, I am constantly looking for ways to equip children to discern the truth of God in Christ set apart from the many counterfeit gods that seek to deceive us, to claim our allegiance, and ultimately to enslave us. And so as part of a recent children’s sermon, I used music and two musical instruments to help children learn to discern the gospel.

If It Looks Like a Duck . . .

As I gathered the children within the chancel, I approached them with a soprano ukulele. It is not an instrument we normally see in worship, so their attention was immediately captured. We commonly speak of the “power of music,” but my first moments with the children reminded me too of the power of an *instrument*. A musical instrument, even when unplayed, carries within it the potential of transformational art and creativity and the promise of something new, exciting, and fulfilling. In an era when it seems like more people than ever are *listening* to music

but fewer are actually *making* music, the excited reaction of the children to the mere sight of an instrument filled me with hope that I might be in the presence with a new generation of budding music makers.

I strummed a few chords on the uke while feigning ignorance as to what it was. I then asked the children to identify the instrument’s essential characteristics and then to name it. After some discussion, which included the suggestion that the instrument was a “uke-a-loo-hoo,” the children decided that it was in fact a ukulele, and that its essential characteristics were that it: (a) was a musical instrument; (b) was constructed of wood; and (c) had four strings. Those three characteristics formed the initial parameters of our understanding about that instrument as I transitioned to the second part of the presentation.

. . . Then It Might Be Something Quite Different!

After thanking the children for helping me identify the ukulele, I placed it to the side and asked them if they would help me identify another instrument. I received an enthusiastic yes! so I ventured to the left-rear of the chancel, behind the organ, where I had hidden my very large acoustic upright bass. The bass’s appearance surprised both the congregation (which responded with a collective, audible gasp) and the children (one of whom was surprised enough that he spontaneously shouted, “Holy crap!”). Bass in hand, I rejoined the children at the center of the chancel, plucked a few notes, and then rotated the instrument so they could see its front and back. Just as I had done with the ukulele, I then asked the children to identify the bass’s essential characteristics and to name it.

It did not take them very long to decide that it (a) was a musical instrument; (b) was constructed of wood; and (c) had four strings.

This opened the door to the key question: because this second instrument shared the same essential characteristics of the ukulele, was this instrument in fact a ukulele?

My question provoked a bit of cognitive dissonance within the children. A few of the younger ones were willing to conclude that the bass was in fact a ukulele. Eventually, however, the group decided that it was too big to be a ukulele and after further guided discussion decided that it was in fact an upright bass.

This brief exercise illustrated how elusive “truth” can be. The world often promises to give us what we want and to make us feel good. It might even succeed at this for a while. But just as a ukulele is not the same as a bass, the world does not offer everlasting and hope-giving love. The love of Jesus Christ, however, is steadfast, faithful and dependable. Jesus promised in the waters of baptism that he would never abandon us. Paul wrote, “For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:38-39) Consequently, it is vitally important that we be able to distinguish between the ultimately disappointing promises of the world and the everlasting promises of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But how?

Hearing and Experiencing the Melody of Truth

I used musical terms to tell the children about how we experience the love of God in Jesus Christ in worship, which enables us to recognize God in our everyday lives. In worship, God fills us with God’s melody so that we can hear and experience that song in all of the places and faces we encounter throughout life. Learning about God’s grace and promises in church helps us discern between what is “truth” and what is not. We won’t mistake a bass for a ukulele.

Our children’s sermon time was coming to an end and I wanted to conclude with a prayer, but I wanted one that was experiential and sensory-based. I asked the children to stand and to gather around the bass with one hand on the bass’s body so that they could feel the vibration of the strings as I plucked them. I began playing a very simple, rhythmic bass riff.*



I then invited the children to close their eyes in prayer, still with their hands on the bass.

I prayed that God would bless us to hear God’s Melody of Truth here in church, and that God would stir us to seek and discern that melody wherever we travelled beyond the walls of our congregation. Between each prayer petition, I sang a brief refrain of “Lord, hear our prayer” on the first four notes of this refrain:



I then continued my petitions using my original bass riff.

Throughout the prayer the children stood in quiet participation. Near the end, one child began percussively tapping his hand on the bass in rhythm with the melody. It was an example of how God’s Melody of Truth can gracefully infuse us, move us, and work through us just as music does.

In this children’s time, the combination of prayer, melody, rhythm, and the tactile feel of the notes resonating through the bass offered the children a way to understand God’s ever-present promise that infuses our everyday lives. As we prayed a final Amen, I silently thanked God for speaking to the children through my old upright bass in a manner greater than I could ever do with words.

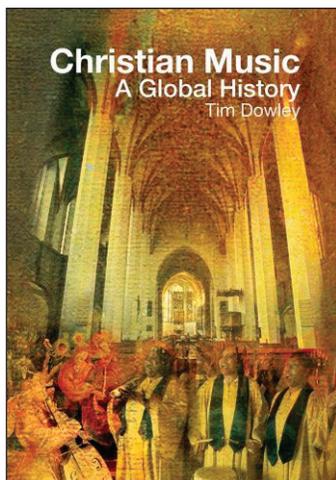


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Note

* Many thanks to Larry J. Long for supplying the musical notation.



Tim Dowley [and contributors].

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\$35.00, hardcover.

HERE IT IS! A COFFEE-TABLE BOOK for those who wanted to relax with a good read about the broad sweep of music history among Christians. (What qualifies as “Christian music” is a question Tim Dowley raises in his introduction and intriguingly leaves open.) This survey will also fit nicely in church libraries. The reader’s eye feasts on illustrations gorgeously presented on almost every page of this glossy book. No vast fields of black and white interrupt a vivid story of religious music in all its conceivable forms and categories. Some readers also will recognize a familial resemblance to Andrew Wilson-Dickson’s *The Story of Christian Music* (Fortress, 1996 and 2003). Both titles originated with Lion Publishing, Oxford, England.

Dowley delivers a series of short chapters covering everything from the New Testament era (including an extensive review of early Jewish music) through chant, early polyphony, the Reformation, Anglican tradition, and modern times in all their diversity. He scans the sacred masterworks of Bach, Handel, the Viennese masters, Vaughn Williams and his British successors, and 20th-century masters—including Stravinsky, Bernstein, Penderecki, Tavener, and more. The diversity and reforms of sacred music in the 20th century range from Black Gospel to Vatican II and Contemporary Christian Music. We also discover the vast diversity of Christian music, including music from those churches with colonial backgrounds and those which

have made more recent attempts to foster indigenous, culturally appropriate music. The global perspective is a welcome step beyond older views of Christian music.

Eighteen supplementary essays include gems like the appreciation of Hildegard of Bingen or Pablo Sosa’s brief but masterful summary of Christian music in Latin America. The linking of essays with chapters, however, can be a puzzle. The chapter on jazz, folk, and country styles is supplemented by essays on Christian music in Asia and the Pacific Islands without any apparent connection.

While enjoying this pleasant book, however, exercise caution. Every writer knows the near impossibility of getting everything right, but *Christian Music* stumbles too often. Sadly, the chapter on the Lutheran Reformation is one of the most troubled. History supports neither the idea that Luther “transmuted” INNSBRUCK, ICH MUSS DICH LASSEN nor that he adapted the melody for Elizabeth Cruciger’s hymn (HERR CHRIST, DER EINIG GOTTS SOHN). Although included in a section on Luther’s chorales, ALLEIN GOTT IN DER HÖH, is neither by Luther nor a new creation: it recasts a chant melody for the Gloria. There is also an annoying lack of distinction between hymn melody and text names, so that the reader cannot always tell which is being discussed. In addition, it is inaccurate to trace standard four-part hymn harmonizations back to Luther’s hymnals (p. 214). Moreover, *matitinus* (p. 52) corrects to *matutinus*, and the conversion

experiences of Charles and John Wesley are jumbled (p. 117).

Beyond outright errors, the book suffers from omissions, anachronisms, or dislocated information that leave the reader with wrong impressions. Thus the essay on the organ barely mentions Bach as an organ composer, while the extensive discussion of Bach's music (in ch. 11) makes no mention of his organ compositions. By this omission the uninitiated reader never learns the importance and liturgical function of these supremely important works. Again, the subsection on the 17th-century English Restoration reaches awkwardly forward to 19th-century reformers (Samuel Wesley, John Stainer) and the liturgical work of the Oxford Movement (but with no mention of J.M. Neale or John Keble). These things do not fit together, leaving a false impression of what the Restoration was all about. Equally puzzling, B.F. White figures prominently in the shape-note tradition but without comparable mention of the also-prominent William Walker and *Southern Harmony*. Walker emerges only later as a precursor to the folk revival of the 20th century (p. 242), which is an uneasy relationship.

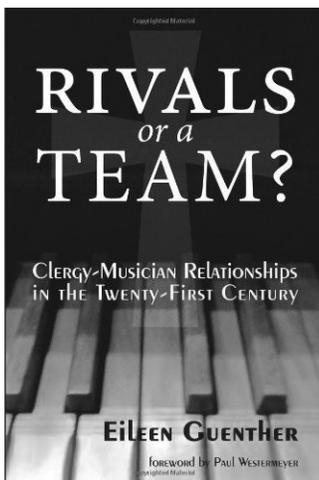
Technical terminology is sometimes left unexplained (e.g., minims and crotchets as definitions of longs or breves [p. 67]) or wrongly defined. Thus, a "parody mass" is not simply based on a pre-existing melody (p. 70), but is usually a work based on another composition. One is misled about the church music of Vaughan Williams when only major concert works are discussed, while the anthems and hymn settings for worship are largely ignored. Documentation is rather sparse in spite of a number of endnotes. Indeed, some whole chapters (e.g., 9, 10, and 11) are larded with endnotes almost exclusively devoted to explanatory comments, but without sources or references.

These observations generate a hopeful plea to publishers. While recognizing the tectonic shifts in publishing today, one still hopes that publishers will maintain unflagging commitment to the highest editorial standards. Too often, however, one stumbles over misinformation and even mistakes in basic terminology.

Dowley forthrightly acknowledges "gaps in my knowledge" and unavoidable "omissions in this book," disclaimers both appropriate and common among writers surveying huge bodies of information. Because of the difficulties facing all projects like this survey, authors, publishers, and scholars need to partner with each other to offer readers trustworthy products. For now at least, as we enter the post-Gutenberg information age, the publisher remains clearly central in assembling this partnership. This book was developed by Lion Publishing and issued under the Fortress imprint in the US, so Lion Publishing would be our first hope for careful editing. But the question remains: would not Fortress want to exercise its own editorial review—at least to maintain its own editorial reputation—prior to accepting the project and putting its name on the title page?

Dowley's survey can be perused with considerable pleasure and profit by a casually interested reader, but it is not reliable enough to be used as a survey text or reference. For a deeper study of church music, try Fortress's other offering: Paul Westermeyer's *Te Deum: The Church and Music*, whose subtitle reliably describes itself as a Textbook, a Reference, a History, an Essay. Thanks to Fortress for giving us good choices in a field (church music) that has generally suffered from inattention.

Victor E. Gebauer
Professor emeritus, Concordia University
Saint Paul, MN



Eileen Guenther.

Rivals or a Team? Clergy–Musician Relationships in the Twenty-First Century.

St. Louis: MorningStar Music, 2012.

xiv, 179 pp.

ISBN-13: 978-0-944529-54-6.

\$18.95, paperback.

EILEEN GUENTHER HAS GIVEN US a wonderful and highly informative book on the topic of clergy-musician relationships. Her background in church music, her teaching experience (associate professor of church music at Wesley Theological Seminary and professorial lecturer in music at The George Washington University), and her professional service as three-term (and current) national president of the American Guild of Organists show forth in every aspect of the book.

Guenther addresses the topic head-on in the first chapter, “Why Conflict Happens,” which includes “confessions” from both pastors and church musicians. The confessions from musicians are insightful: they describe and expose some of our idiosyncrasies as musicians, discuss why we do the things we sometimes do, and show why we are often our own worst enemy. Clergy confessions also expose some traits that can contribute to conflict. There are some “aha” moments from both sides in these confessions and indeed, throughout the book. Guenther never criticizes or bashes either clergy or musician, but thoughtfully explores the differences and possible conflicts between the two. This short chapter is helpful and is an eye-opener into the reasons behind potential conflicts.

Guenther does not let the conflict dominate the theme of relationships. The succeeding chapters develop strategies for dealing with conflict and outline what is vital to good

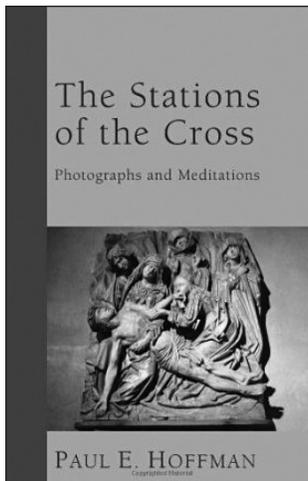
relationship-building, namely, trust and respect for each other and each other’s discipline. Chapters titled “Shared Visions,” “Servant-Leaders,” and “Qualities of Musicians and Effective Clergy” build on the concept of becoming a team and not rivals.

The final chapters deal with the reasons musicians leave positions, how they know when to leave and how to do the leaving, and looking to the future in one’s ministry. There is much here that is useful material that many a musician will find helpful and comforting when the time comes to leave a position, especially one that was beloved.

I have been involved in numerous workshops on this subject as participant, presenter, and panelist. I wish this book had been available as a reference. I highly recommend this book as a resource for all clergy and musicians to read and discuss together. It is an engaging read and easily lends itself to discussion. As Eileen Guenther herself says, the pastor and the musician are “the most significant staff relationship in a church and one of the most critical components in any church’s realization of its mission and ministry.” [page [xiii \(Introduction\)](#)]

Linda Kempke

*Retired Associate in Ministry, Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
Brooklyn, OH*



Paul E. Hoffman.
The Stations of the Cross: Photographs and Meditations.

Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011.
 xiii, 50 pp.
 ISBN: 978-1-6109-7119-5.
 \$9.00, paperback.

PAUL HOFFMAN is lead pastor of Phinney Ridge Lutheran Church in Seattle. *The Stations of the Cross* is his first book from Wipf & Stock; a second, *Faith Forming Faith: Bringing New Christians to Baptism and Beyond* was released under their Cascade Books imprint in 2012. Hoffman’s broader purpose is to offer us new avenues for the deepening of our devotional life, primarily during Lent but in other seasons of the church as well.

Developed during the 16th and 17th centuries in the Roman Catholic tradition, the Stations of the Cross incorporates a series of artistic impressions, usually positioned around the nave, of what Jesus’ journey to the cross on the day of his passion might have been like. Several of the 14 traditional stations have no basis in Scripture. In recent years alternate sets have been proposed, all but one of which have Scriptural attestation. The 10 stations on which Hoffman focuses come out of this latter stream.

The book’s format is to present the reading from Scripture associated with each station. This is accompanied by one or two representative photographs of artistic depictions found in various churches in Western Europe taken by the author on a recent trip. These are each followed by a “mini-sermon” based on the station in question.

Hoffman writes in his introduction that “The visits to these churches—primarily in France and England—had a profound impact on me as I contemplated the millions of Christians

who, over the years and across the globe, had retraced Jesus’ steps en route to his death and final, victorious resurrection.” He adds that he has celebrated the Stations of the Cross at noon on Good Friday for more than a quarter-century.

Hoffman’s deep affection for this devotional practice radiates throughout this slim volume. However, the book’s success is tempered by two shortcomings.

One concerns the small black and white photos, many of which are indistinct and difficult to grasp in this presentation. In person these artworks doubtless have great power to move the human spirit. As shown here, however, they contribute little. A contemporary charcoal and pastel rendering of Station Five from a church in Burgundy, for example, is all but indecipherable. Hoffman makes a point of mentioning the gold-leaf halos in a Westminster Cathedral relief by British sculptor Eric Gill (who is credited with two of the ten stations), but these halos must be left to the imagination. Several pages of photos do not represent stations of the cross at all but show only church exteriors or other interior decorations. Few photos have captions; consequently one must scour Hoffman’s text to figure out what most of them are and sometimes even in which European city the church in question is located.

Equally problematic is the casual theology of Hoffman’s sermonettes for each station. Instead of being invited into Jesus’ suffering, we receive comfortable lessons in areas most

readers are probably already familiar with: we should love others, we should be grateful for all God has done for us. And in the mini-sermon for Station Ten we are told merely that “to care for one another [as Joseph of Arimathea cared for Jesus’ body] is to live the resurrected life.”

Like so much contemporary preaching, we find meaning read into Scripture instead of meaning being faithfully extracted out. Most disconcerting in this way is Station Three, when Jesus supposedly falls—probably because Jesus did not fall which Hoffman admits, making the connection to Psalm 118:13 entirely imaginary. Nonetheless the author focuses on this image and construes it as a *misstep*: “Where once humanity fell, now God falls.” God neither stumbles nor falls.

Similarly, in Station Four Hoffman ponders how his study-abroad experience as a youth in a strange land “must be the sort of thing that happened to Simon of Cyrene when one day in Jerusalem he found his world completely transformed when he went from passer-by to cross-bearer.” It is hard to fathom the comparison because Hoffman’s experience was chosen while Simon’s was compelled. And for Station Five, in Jesus’ stark words to the women of Jerusalem (“do not weep for me but weep for yourselves and your children”), Hoffman hears Jesus admonishing the women for not having their priorities in order.

The power of art is to lead us into new ways of experiencing the divine. As Evelyn Underhill noted a century ago, art is the link between experience and reality. She wrote: “The earthly artist, because perception brings with it the primitive longing for expression, tries to give us in colour, sound or words a hint of his ecstasy, his glimpse of truth” (*Mysticism* [London: Methuen, 1911; Stilwell, KS: Digireads.com, 2005 edition, p. 56). One wishes Hoffman and his publisher had concentrated on elegant full-color depictions of the artworks in question, or that Hoffman had sought a publisher that could represent these images with the beauty they warrant. In that way we might have found ourselves more warmly invited to enter into the mystery of Christ’s passion and to discover the unique way in which our own journey intersects with that of the suffering God, which is surely what every penitent sinner desires to encounter along the Via Dolorosa.

*Nancy Raabe
Milton, Wisconsin*

The 24th Moravian Music Festival



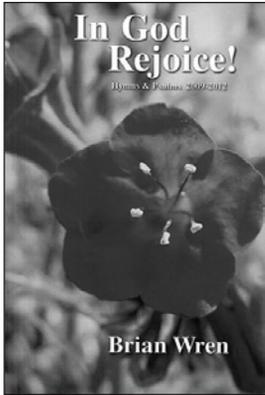
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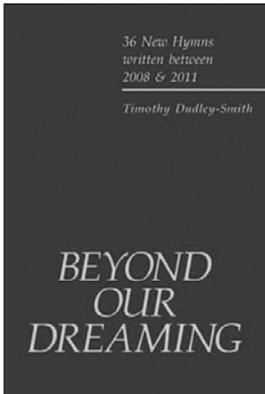
For registration and program information, visit
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Come to sing, play, learn & listen!



Brian Wren.
In God Rejoice! Hymns & Psalms, 2009-2112.
 Carol Stream, IL: Hope, 2012.

128 pp.
 ISBN-13: 978-0-8524-9934-4.
 \$9.95, paperback.



Timothy Dudley-Smith.
Beyond Our Dreaming: 36 New Hymns Written between 2008 & 2011.

Carol Stream, IL: Hope, 2012.
 xix, 110 pp.
 ISBN-13: 978-0-1933-8001-1.
 \$9.95, paperback.

ENGLAND’S TIMOTHY DUDLEY-SMITH (B. 1926) AND THE USA’S BRIAN WREN (B. 1936, IN ENGLAND) have been writing hymns for the enrichment of English-speaking Christians for more years than most of us can remember. Both men are highly respected among their hymn-writing peers, and both have been publicly honored for their work by the members of the Hymn Society of America. Both are now living in retirement: Dudley-Smith in Salisbury, England, and Wren in upstate New York. The hymns of both men are to be found in the hymnals of many Christian denominations, including *Christian Worship*, *Lutheran Service Book*, and *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. Both writers are highly skilled in their craft; both are clergy, personally committed to Christ and his church.

Yet each of these two literary artists approaches and carries out his ongoing creative task quite differently from the other. Dudley-Smith uses mostly the familiar traditional language of the church; Wren prefers non-church language that is more adventurous, occasionally startles, and may even shock.

Dudley-Smith is content to let the gender language of the Scriptures remain “what it is” when referring to the divine, whereas Wren is committed to the use of inclusive language.

With regard to the content of their hymns, Dudley-Smith is, for the most part, predictable and more pastoral than prophetic, whereas Wren can be unpredictable both prophetic as well as pastoral. Brian Wren divides the 36 texts of *In God Rejoice* into five sections: From Cradle to Cross (3); Easter Hymns (4); Church and Mission (7); Praise (4); and Metrical Psalms (18). Here is a sample of his work at its best, with stanza 1 of an Easter hymn:

If Christ is risen from the dead
 the Power that had him crucified
 is over-trumped, as Life rebounds
 to speak the first and final word.
 Then let us live
 with Easter hope
 and trust that we, who go to dust,
 will rise, as Christ is risen!

And, from a hymn to the Holy Spirit, here is a sample of his tendency to “startle”:

As more religions crowd the scene
let us not flinch, but simply say
“We follow Jesus, and we mean
not half an inch, but all the way.”
Stir us, amid compulsive forms, [waiting to
hear from AU on these 2]
of counting heads and filling forms,
to focus faith on Christ, who leads
through sunny days and sudden storms.

And here, with “startling” lines from stanzas 1 and 4 from a hymn written to be sung at a Christian funeral:

Accompany with singing
each mortal life’s remains,
processing to the graveside
or to the cleansing flames.

In hope of resurrection
(to Christ our hearts belong)
we’ll consecrate life’s ending
with Scripture, prayer, and song.

Of the metrical psalms in this booklet, Psalms 8, 15, 32, 46, 96, 112, and 130, especially, demonstrate literary power and directness. Concerning Psalm 8, Wren includes this special personal note: “The words and suggested tune [PROMISES, by Kelso Carter, 1886] call for a rousing ‘Town Band’ treatment, with, e.g. piano, trumpet, drums, fiddles and other instruments. Have fun!”

Dudley-Smith’s *Beyond Our Dreaming* is both interesting and informative because of the author’s detailed notes regarding the biblical, linguistic, and historical sources for each of his texts. These notes reveal the thoughtfulness and thoroughness of his creative efforts through the years, wanting always to give to God’s redeemed people his very best work. They also underline how saturated his texts are with biblical, Christ-centered themes. In addition, the author’s foreword tells why he, and other writers, too, continue to write new hymn texts.

To give the reader a sample of Dudley-Smith’s poetic style, here is stanza 1 of an Easter hymn:

When Christ was raised from death
by God’s almighty power,
restored to life and thought and breath
in that decisive hour,
our glorious risen Lord
abolished death and grave,
in vindication of his word,
his promised power to save.

Here, too, is another sample of his style, stanzas 3 and 4 from his “prayer for the church”:

May such a house of calm and peace
the Spirit strive to build;
where kindness and faith increase,
the storms of life are stilled.
Teach us our house of life to share,
that all who will may come,
the lost be doubly welcome there,
the wanderer find a home.

And finally, here are stanzas 1 and 2 from his hymn “on the Bible”:

Word of wisdom, truth bestowing,
depths beyond our mortal knowing,
bread to nourish, seed for sowing;
open now the Scriptures, Lord.
Word of life for our salvation,
freed from guilt and condemnation,
move our hearts to adoration;
open now the Scriptures, Lord.

Neither volume includes tunes, but several are suggested for each of the texts, some of them old, others new.

To sum up, both Wren and Dudley-Smith are among God’s good gifts to his people in our time. As with sermons, none of their hymns will “speak” to all of God’s people all of the time; but they can, and will, “speak” to and enrich and strengthen at least some of his people some of the time. And for that we can all shout a genuine “Deo gratias!”

The Rev. Louis Nuechterlein
Pastor emeritus, Cheshire Lutheran Church
Cheshire, CT

Graduate *Music Courses*

Session One (June 3–14)

MUS 571 - Musical Heritage of the Church
8:30–12:00 • James Freese

MUS 642 - Form and Analysis
1:30–5:00 • Lynn Little

Session Two (June 17–28)

MUS 541 - Graduate Theory Review
8:30–12:00 • Louis Menchaca

MUS 551 - Advanced Choral Conducting
8:30–12:00 • Alexa Doebele

MUS 522 - Organ Literature
1:30–5:00 • Craig Hirschmann

Bell Week (July 1–5)

MUS 546 - Composing for Handbells
8:30–5 (M, T, W, T) & 8:30–12 (F) • John Behnke

Sessions One and Two (June 3–28)

MUS 511 - Applied Voice
Lessons by Appointment • Valerie Errante

MUS 521 - Applied Organ
Lessons by Appointment • John Behnke/James Freese

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Summer Music Courses 2013

TRINITY LUTHERAN SEMINARY

WEEK ONE JUNE 3-7

Vocal Solutions for Choral Directors, 1:00-3:15 p.m. *Sharon Stobrer, Voice Instructor, Capital University and Trinity Lutheran Seminary.*

Class Guitar, 1:00-3:15 p.m. *Brett Burleson, Adjunct Instructor at Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Ohio Wesleyan University, Capital University, and Lecturer at The Ohio State University*

Music and Worship in the African-American Tradition, 3:30-7:00 p.m. *Raymond Wise, Affiliated Professor of Church Music, Trinity Lutheran Seminary*

Graduate credit or audit / Courses apply toward MACM / On-campus housing

WEEK TWO JUNE 10-14

Leading the Church's Song, 1:00-4:30 p.m. *May Schwarz, Professor of Church Music and director, Master of Arts in Church Music Program, Trinity Lutheran Seminary; and guest presenters.*

Perspectives in Choral Conducting, 4:45-7:00 p.m. *James Gallagher, Church Musician; Emeritus, The Ohio State University, Columbus.*

Handbells, 4:45-7:00 p.m. *Jane McFadden, Director of Handbells, Christ Lutheran Church, Bexley, Ohio; composer and arranger.*

JUNE 3-21

Liturgical Choir, 10:20-11:45 a.m., *May Schwarz, Director M.A. in Church Music Program, Professor of Church Music; Trinity Lutheran Seminary, Columbus, Ohio.*

WEEK THREE JUNE 17-21

Organ Masterclass – Hymn-based Organ Literature, 1:00-3:15 p.m. *Paul Thornock, Cathedral Director of Music, St. Joseph Cathedral, Columbus, Ohio.*

Music Technology for Church Musicians, 1:00-3:15 p.m. *Justin Riley, Adjunct Instructor, Trinity Lutheran Seminary.*

Advanced Handbell Skills, 3:45-6:00 p.m. *Jane McFadden, Director of Handbells, Christ Lutheran Church, Bexley, Ohio; composer, arranger.*

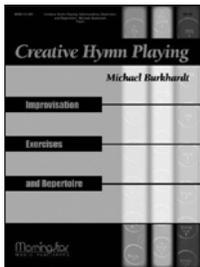


For further information contact:

Prof. May Schwarz / Director, M.A. in Church Music / Trinity Lutheran Seminary / 2199 East Main Street / Columbus, Ohio 43209-2334
614-384-4622 / music@TLSohio.edu / www.TLSohio.edu



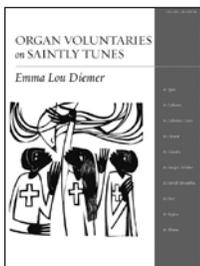
INSTRUMENTAL | ORGAN



Michael Burkhardt.
Creative Hymn Playing: Improvisation, Exercises, and Repertoire.

Organ.
MorningStar Music (MSM 10-380), \$29.95.

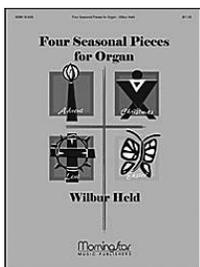
This excellent, spiral-bound book provides many of the resources necessary for organists to improve their skills in creative hymn-playing and improvisation based on hymns. Following a brief introduction on leading congregational song, the remainder of the book provides helpful suggestions for hymn-based improvisation, beginning with a section on how to vary the material on the written page. This brief section develops flexibility in reinterpreting the written notation so that a variety of textures are explored. The approach to learning improvisation is based on the principle of combining the “building blocks” of melody, harmony, rhythm, counterpoint, and musical form in imaginative ways. What sets this book apart is the carefully planned pacing of instruction and the use of notated examples to illustrate various techniques. Furthermore, specific practice instructions are regularly included, as well as a model composition for improvisation—*Theme and Variations on O FILII ET FILIAE*. Topics covered in part 3 include melodic ornamentation, melodic-rhythmic motives, changing the meter, parallel harmonic movement, harmonizing cadences, creating interesting bass lines, and various formal structures (simple vs. extended hymn prelude; ABA, ritornello, and ostinato forms; fughetta; canon; and fantasia). A helpful summary of improvisatory options is given on page 41. The concluding admonition in this section could be applied to the whole book: “Develop one facet of improvisation at a time. Create a plan of attack, experiment, and modify” (p. 41). Part 4 of the book gives 31 written-out hymn-based improvisations by Michael Burkhardt. These brief but complete compositions are clearly models for the practice of improvisation, but they also include one other exemplary feature. Each includes a list of individual techniques



and their locations in the score as employed in the composition. This unique approach is a telling reminder that, for Burkhardt, improvisation and analysis (theory) support each other. This book is highly recommended for those organists who wish to begin instruction in improvisation (or improve their skills in it), and desire a pedagogical approach that includes numerous “self-help” features. *JB*

Emma Lou Diemer.
Organ Voluntaries on Sainly Tunes.
Organ.
Augsburg Fortress (ED018847), \$17.50.

This collection of 10 easily learned voluntaries are based on hymn tunes named after saints: ST. AGNES; ST. CATHERINE; ST. CATHERINE’S COURT; ST. CLEMENT; ST. COLUMBA; ST. GEORGE’S, WINDSOR; ST. PATRICK’S BREASTPLATE; ST. PETER; ST. STEPHEN; and ST. THOMAS. These well-written settings include a variety of difficulty levels, with the music reflecting the nature of the text. The setting of ST. GEORGE’S, WINDSOR, is a very rhythmic setting with a great deal of syncopation and some very colorful harmony. In contrast, the setting of ST. CATHERINE is arranged in a more simplistic, contemplative style with a sustained pedal point and a suggested registration of strings. This is an excellent resource that contains voluntaries on some less-often arranged hymn tunes. *MS*



Wilbur Held.
Four Seasonal Pieces for Organ.
Organ.
MorningStar Music (MSM 10-628), \$11.00.

This collection includes four hymn-based preludes, one each for Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter. The selections are easily learned and of a medium difficulty level. The tunes represented are AWAY IN A MANGER (MUELLER), CHRIST AROSE, STUTTGART, and WERE YOU THERE. The music is very reflective of the nature of the hymn lyrics. WERE YOU THERE begins with a solo flute stop and strings and a simple pedal line. It gradually builds

throughout and increases in tempo, but then ends with a soft reflective mood. In a similar fashion, the setting of CHRIST ROSE reflects the body of Christ in the grave by opening with a sustained, soft setting. There is then a sudden switch in rhythm and volume, producing a fanfare that announces the resurrection, and then ends with full organ. *MS*

Francis Hopkinson.

The Keyboard Manuscript of Francis Hopkinson, vol. 2.

Ed. H. Joseph Butler.

Organ.

Wayne Leupold Editions (WL 600270), \$37.50.

Francis Hopkinson (1737–91) was a member of the Constitutional Convention and a signer of the Declaration of Independence, as well as a lawyer, diplomat, politician, poet, musician, artist, and author. An avid amateur musician, Hopkinson compiled four substantial manuscript copybooks. The 178-page copybook titled *Lessons* is one of the largest and most significant sources for keyboard music from colonial America. A wide variety of musical styles are represented in this book, ranging from middle Baroque to early classical. Music by Italian, German, French, English, and American composers are found in this collection. Most of the works in vol. 2 of this collection are written in two-voice (soprano/bass) texture, which is typical of much English keyboard music of the 18th century. Generally the pieces in vol. 2 are easy to play. Transcriptions from opera and orchestral music, popular airs and dances, and idiomatic keyboard works are found in this collection. Music of well-known composers of the day, such as Handel, Stanley, Pasquali, and Corelli are represented in this collection. A popular American composer, William Felton, has nine pieces in the collection. James Bremner was organist at Christ and St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia; he gave organ lessons to Hopkinson, who later succeeded Bremner as church organist. Both a *March* (#79) and *Trumpet Air* (#81) by Bremner specify the organ for performance. Noteworthy works in this volume include *Minuet with Variations*

(#37) by William Felton, *Trumpet Air* from *Water Musick* (#54) by Handel, and *Fifth Concerto* (#61) [op. 2, no. 5] by John Stanley. This five-movement work includes a vigorous imitative *Allegro* containing several examples of *stretto*, and it switches to the parallel major key for the final two movements (*Allegro* and *Allegro moderato*). It is striking that these same two movements, while each written in two-voice texture, include figured bass numbers, perhaps given to clarify the implied harmonic background. *JB*

Kristina Langlois.

Ride On in Majesty: Organ Inspirations.
Organ.

Augsburg Fortress (ED02288), \$15.00.

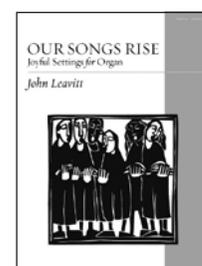
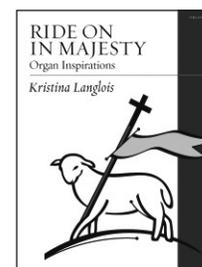
Langlois has composed a diverse collection of eight organ inspirations on familiar hymn tunes. There is a setting of SOUTHWELL that is baroque in style, with the cantus firmus found in the pedal line. The suggested registration creates a meditative mood to the text of "Lord Jesus, Think on Me." By contrast, there is a very fully registered and rhythmically active setting of THE KING'S MAJESTY. The setting contains an active pedal part and would work well as service music in a variety of ways. Other tunes found in this collection are BAYLOR; GETHSEMANE; JULION; O LAMM GOTTES, UNSCHULDIG; SHADES MOUNTAIN; and THOMAS. This is an excellent addition to the organ library for the church organist who is looking for variety in s chorale-based repertoire. *MS*

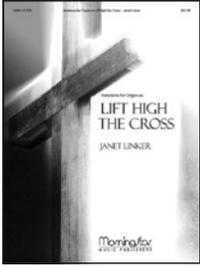
John Leavitt.

Our Songs Rise: Joyful Settings for Organ.
Organ.

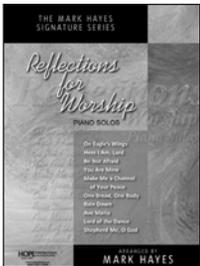
Augsburg Fortress (ED022286), \$16.00.

This versatile collection of traditional hymn treatments traverses a spectrum of emotions: playful, excited, joyful, winsome and vibrant. A few of Leavitt's techniques include cantus firmus in the pedal; parallel, open-fifth harmonies; ostinato; and triplet rhythms in unexpected places. All of these add up to a stimulating audio-sensory experience for





both player and listener. Treated hymn tunes include EARTH AND ALL STARS, GAUDEAMUS PARITER, GELOBT SEI GOTT, IN DIR IST FREUDE, TERRA PATRIS, and NICAEA. Nearly all settings are “one-verse” treatments of 25 measures or less. However, Leavitt has included two lengthier, upbeat original compositions in this volume. The collection is labeled at a medium level of difficulty. *CP*



Janet Linker.

Variations for Organ on Lift High the Cross.

Organ.

MorningStar Music (MSM 10-333), \$12.00.

This interesting and useful set of variations begins with a fanfare and hymn, which could serve well as a hymn introduction or a simple organ setting. It concludes with a trumpet tune postlude as well as a brief *Exaltation* in both C and D major that could also serve as a postlude or hymn introduction. In between are five short variations in various styles and moods—*Allegretto*, *Meditation*, *Scherzo*, *Reflection*, and *Finale*—any of which could stand on its own. Several of the movements begin in C and modulate through the movement to end in D major, serving well as a *zwischenpiel*. The quieter settings might be especially useful for funerals or other more solemn occasions, while the more boisterous movements are simply fun to play. Enjoy! *DR*

PIANO

Mark Hayes.

Reflections for Worship.

Piano solo.

Hope (8556), \$16.95.

Hayes has put a decidedly traditional spin on a late 20th-century body of church music stemming from the Roman Catholic tradition. Lush harmonies, sixteenth-note and septuplet runs figure prominently into these settings, which are rich in dynamic and tempi variation, appropriately suited to the text. The collection

includes *On Eagle’s Wings; Here I Am, Lord; Rain Down; One Bread, One Body; and Make Me a Channel of Your Peace*. Lyrics to all songs are included in the back of the book. These beautiful arrangements are best suited for keyboardists of an upper intermediate or early advanced skill level and feasibly could enhance the worship experience of congregants in traditional, contemporary, or blended services. *CP*

KEYBOARD

Johann Pachelbel.

Complete Works for Keyboard Instruments, vol. 7, Chorale Partitas.

Ed. Michael Belotti.

Wayne Leupold Editions (WL 600105), \$31.00.

A careful comparison between this new edition of Johann Pachelbel’s *Chorale Partitas* and the earlier edition by Karl Matthaei (Bärenreiter, 1936) reveals no significant differences in musical content. Both editions include four chorale partitas from Pachelbel’s *Musicalische Sterbens-Gedancken* (CHRISTUS, DER IST MEIN LEBEN; ALLE MENSCHEN MÜSSEN STERBEN; HERZLICH TUT MICH VERLANGEN; and WAS GOTT TUT) and three chorale partitas from manuscript sources (ACH, WAS SOLL ICH SÜNDER MACHEN; FREU DICH SEHR; and WERDE MUNTER). So, why should one consider purchasing this new edition if one already owns the older edition? The answer lies in the many resources available in this Leupold edition, which provide historical context and musicological background for this significant repertoire. An essay by editor Michael Belotti on Pachelbel’s variation sets outlines the history of previous editions and gives a detailed discussion of the sources consulted for this edition. Belotti also discusses the place of Pachelbel’s variation sets in 17th-century Germany and describes the work of other composers contributing to this tradition. A critical commentary and three facsimiles are also included in this edition. New to this edition are variant readings by Johann Heinrich Kittel for two chorale partitas from manuscript sources. Furthermore, the

anonymous chorale partita GLEICH WIE EIN HIRSCH BEGEHRET is included in this edition because Michael Belotti believes “that Pachelbel would seem to be the most likely author of this beautiful partita.” (p. ix). *JB*

KEYBOARD AND INSTRUMENTS

10 Pieces for Clarinet and Keyboard.

MorningStar Music (MSM 20-868), \$20.00.

In most collections one expects to find some weaker music. Not so with *10 Pieces!* The collection includes *Be Thou My Vision* (arr. by Daniel S. Pinkston); *Joy to the World* (by Robert J. Powell); *Praise to the Lord* (Charles Callahan); *The Lone, Wild Bird* (Powell); *Adagio (The Seasons)* (Antonio Vivaldi); *Ayre* (G.P. Telemann); *Shall We Gather at the River* (Callahan); *The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came* (Powell); *All Creatures of Our God and King* (Powell); and *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* (Duane Funderburk). The hymn arranging is consistently fresh and creative with no awkward moments, with one exception. Powell gave us a charming arrangement of *Joy to the World* in another piece (*Four Christmas Carols* [MorningStar, MSM 20-062] for flute in D major), but the clarinet version in B-flat here does not have the same sparkle, although it is still usable. The transcriptions of the earlier music are attractive and practical. A clarinet player of moderate ability can easily learn the instrumental part. The congregation will enjoy the familiar tunes. *KO*

Jeremy J. Bankson.

Trumpet Tune in G.

Organ, brass quintet, and percussion.
MorningStar Music (MSM 20-612), \$30.00.

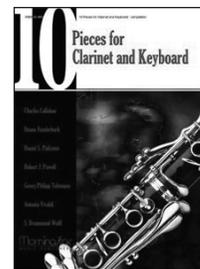
This bright, stately composition will fill the bill for those in need of new wedding, ceremonial, or processional music. The 57-measure piece is in ABA form with straightforward rhythms, harmony, tempo, and dynamics. The music should be sightreadable for competent musicians. Included are the

full score and reproducible parts for organ, two trumpets, horn in F, two trombones (or trombone and tuba), and percussion (timpani and snare drum; and suspended cymbal and crash cymbal). The music is newly composed and copyrighted in 2012. *CP*

Three English Voluntaries.

Ed. Susan Marchant
Organ and oboe, violin, or clarinet.
MorningStar Music (MSM 20-645), \$16.00.

From the series *Organ with Instruments*, the three pieces in this collection are arrangements of organ/keyboard works by composers of the English Baroque era: George Berg, a native German who settled in England; Charles Wesley, an organist and harpsichordist from the well-known Wesley family; and Matthew Camidge, an organist from York. The Berg piece is a cornet voluntary in G minor and is the most demanding of the three for the instrumentalist, although it is well within the abilities of a good amateur. The other two movements are a lovely pastorale in G major by Wesley and a gavotte in G minor by Camidge. Marchant has given the original organ solo lines to the instrument and rearranged the remaining parts as needed for manuals. While oboe is the preferred instrument, the solos may also be played by a violin or B-flat clarinet; separate reproducible instrumental parts are included in the printed edition. Each movement is also available as a download through MorningStar’s website at a cost of \$7. This set would be nice to have on hand when you have a good instrumentalist available or wish to add a warm color to the service music. *DR*

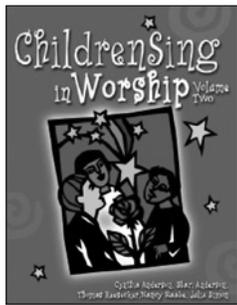




VOCAL | SOLO

Stuart K. Hine.
Then Sings My Soul (How Great Thou Art).
Arr. by Mary McDonald.
Medium voice and piano.
Hope (8552), \$5.95.

McDonald has provided a refreshing setting for this familiar hymn text. The accompaniment is for piano and is of medium difficulty. The melody reflects well on the text by using dynamic contrast and modulation. The range of the melody is an octave plus a fourth. The selection modulates up a half-step for the final stanza to add joy and meaning to the text. There are inflections in the melodic line to bring out the excitement of text of the final stanza. The setting is also available in SATB, SAB, and TTBB arrangements, along with an accompaniment CD and full orchestration. *MS*



CHILDREN'S CHOIR

Cynthia Anderson *et al.*
ChildrenSing in Worship, vol. 2.
Unison, two-part choir, and piano.
Augsburg Fortress (ED018839), \$29.95.

This collection of children's anthems spans the church year and includes both original compositions and arrangements of traditional hymnody. It is written for singers aged eight to twelve years and includes a reproducible melody-line version for the singer, as well as a complete score with keyboard accompaniment. It is noted on the volume that this body of songs is intended to facilitate the process of learning to read and make music; however, many of the melodies are not particularly "kid-friendly" in that they are neither easy to sing nor readily memorable in terms of both tune and text. As such, this collection would be more suitable for choirs that do intensive rehearsal and performance work. There are several options for the incorporation of flute, organ, percussion, and other treble instruments in C; these instrumental parts must be purchased separately. *CP*



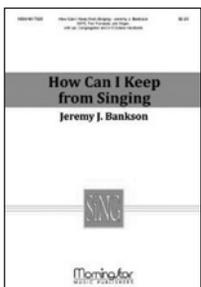
ADULT CHOIR

J.S. Bach.
Choral Settings from the Christmas Oratorio, part 1–3, BWV 248.
Arr. Holger Gehring.
SATB and organ.
Bärenreiter (BA 7525), \$16.95.

Organist Holger Gehring of Dresden has arranged the "most well-known" choral movements from the first three sections of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* as part of Bärenreiter's Choir and Organ series. This edition is meant for choirs who desire to perform the major choruses of Bach's work but lack the instrumentalists to perform the work as originally orchestrated. The organ part does not include advice on registration, and the choir part also does not include editorial performance markings, leaving to the organist and choir director to work out such decisions to fit the individual situation. This is not surprising, as the score is based on the *Neue Bach Ausgabe*, Bärenreiter's critical edition of Bach's complete works. As the preface notes, Gehring's goal was not to imitate the orchestral sound in the organ part, but to create an independent version. While most choirs will likely want to sing in the original German, others may find the performing English translation set below the German text to be a useful alternative. It would have been helpful if a literal translation of the text were also included in the preface. This volume includes five choruses (nos. 1, 9, 21, 23, and 24), including the thrilling opening chorus, "*Jauchzet, frohlocket, auf, preiset die Tage.*" Bärenreiter plans to publish selected choruses from sections IV to VI of the oratorio in a separate volume. *AE*

Jeremy J. Bankson.
How Can I Keep from Singing.
SATB, two trumpets, and organ, with optional 3–5 octave handbells and congregation.
MorningStar Music (MSM 60-7025), \$2.25.

An optional introduction opens this new setting of *How Can I Keep from Singing*, beginning with a choral section and followed



by an optional handbell section. Bankson changes the feel of each stanza to reflect the text. Stanza 3, for example, “What though my joys and comforts die,” is a change from the more rhythmically simple setting of stanza 2 to a slower, more legato setting. The optional handbells provide more color to the interludes and the final stanza. The congregation may join in the first and last stanzas. The part writing, mostly in a full SATB texture throughout, is fairly straightforward, making this work accessible to many church choirs. This anthem would be a welcome addition for funeral services or services where the focus is on trust and guidance. Instrumental parts and full score available separately. *AE*

Robert A. Benson.

The Lord Is My Shepherd.

SATB and organ.

Augsburg Fortress (ED022278), \$1.75.

Based on the beloved 23rd psalm, this gem of choral composition features aptly placed dynamics and key changes that help to highlight the text. The text is further dramatized by the use of imitation moving into homophony; and by second, fourth and ninth harmonies that culminate in an unaccompanied, consonant ending, “and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” The flowing eighth-note accompaniment supports a mainly homophonic choral part without doubling it, offering an allusion to the constancy of the Lord, as does the steady, simple eighth-note rhythm of the choral part. The harmonies, along with some unexpected melodic intervals, will be brought out best by a confident, full, balanced choir. A director skilled in dynamic interpretation, vocal blend, and phrasing will help do justice to this musical work of art. *CP*

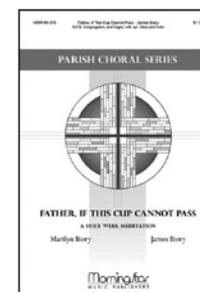
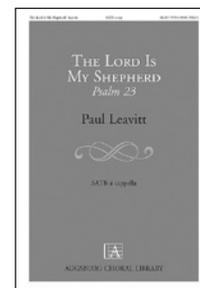
James and Marilyn Biery.

Father, If This Cup Cannot Pass: A Holy Week Meditation.

Congregation, SATB, and organ, with optional oboe (or flute or violin) and cello.

MorningStar Music (MSM 80-315), \$1.70.

The congregational refrain is adapted from Matthew 26:42, bringing to mind the Garden of Gethsemane events following the Last Supper. This refrain is also included in J. Biery’s *Communion Antiphons for the Lenten Season* (MSM 80-835). James and Marilyn Biery creatively contrast this congregational simple refrain with the the familiar text of “If You But Trust in God to Guide You,” set in a chant-like style for the choir or cantor/soloist. This piece is adaptable, depending on the musical resources at hand. The vocal ranges are not wide, but the piece offers opportunity for vocal growth with singers of all ages. Oboe and cello parts are in the choral score. *JG*



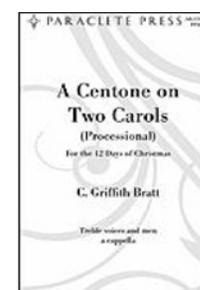
C. Griffith Bratt.

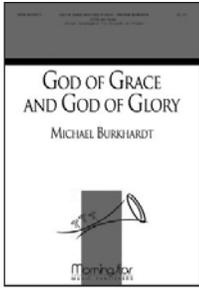
A Centone on Two Carols (Processional) for the 12 Days of Christmas.

Treble voices and men, with optional instrumental drone.

Paraclete (PPMO1229), \$1.70.

The term *centone* in the title of this two-part anthem indicates the use of a mixture of musical or literary pieces. In this case, it refers to the combination of two tunes, PICARDY and VENI, EMMANUEL. VENI, EMMANUEL appears in the treble voices, with the traditional text “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,” while PICARDY appears in the men’s voices with a Christmas text. Bratt needed to make only a few changes to the melody of VENI, EMMANUEL, resulting in a surprising yet natural combination of the two tunes and texts, with a somewhat medieval quality. Written to be sung unaccompanied or with an instrumental drone, this anthem would make a good choice for the opening of an Advent or Christmas service. Medium-easy. *AE*





Michael Burkhardt.
God of Grace and God of Glory.
 SATB and organ, with optional congregation,
 two trumpets, and timpani.
 MorningStar Music (MSM 60-8015), \$2.25.

Commissioned in honor of an organist, this concertato setting features a solo trumpet stop in a creative arrangement that can be enhanced with real trumpets and timpani. The first and last stanzas are appropriately festive in the accompaniment, with unison choir and optional congregation. For the choral second stanza, Burkhardt moves to G minor with pedal tones in the men's parts to depict "evil hosts," while the women sing the full text. After an organ interlude, the third stanza modulates to E-flat major with somewhat antiphonal choral parts. The organ leads us back to G major and to a stirring conclusion. The choral parts are not difficult, and a reproducible congregational page is included. The full score and instrumental parts are available separately and may be downloaded from the publisher. *DR*



René Clausen.
It Is Well with My Soul (When Peace Like a River).
 SATB divisi and organ.
 MorningStar Music (MSM 50-5211), \$2.25.

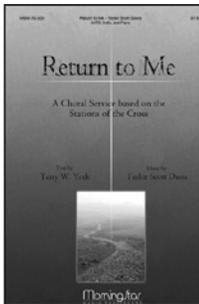
Clausen's beautiful setting of "It Is Well with My Soul" (using the traditional tune by Philip P. Bliss, VILLE DU HAVRE) takes advantage of the various textures available to an SSAATTBB choir. The first stanza is set for four-part men's chorus, followed by a four-part women's chorus for the second stanza, which blossoms at the refrain to a full eight-part choir. The piece builds more momentum by moving from D-flat major through D major to E-flat major on the final stanza. The anthem is written in a style accessible to many volunteer choirs (at least those with enough voices to cover eight fairly equal parts). It also shows Clausen's sensitivity to the text, even when faced with such a well-known tune, exemplified in his setting of the phrase "and the trumpet shall sound," where the tune in

the soprano and alto parts is accompanied in the lower voices and organ by a brief trumpetlike fanfare. Of medium difficulty, this piece is appropriate for any service focusing on trust and guidance. *AE*

Taylor Scott Davis.
Return to Me: A Choral Service Based on the Stations of the Cross.

SATB, with alto, tenor, and baritone solos,
 cello, and piano.
 MorningStar Music (MSM 70-300), \$7.95.

This nine-movement work sets original texts by Terry York based on the traditional Stations of the Cross. The cello effectively expresses the mournful nature of the texts. After playing a major role in the first seven movements, it is notably absent after the death of Christ. Davis varies the texture throughout, incorporating unison chant-like melodies, two-part mixed harmony, SATB choir accompanied by cello alone, and other combinations. The fourth movement, "Black-Skinned Simon," is especially successful in painting a picture of the scene through the "laboring" ostinato of the cello, the percussive consonants in the choir, and the low tessitura without soprano voices. The ninth movement, "No Crying He Makes," draws parallels between the death of Jesus and baby Jesus sleeping in the manger. Unexpected melodic turns, some dissonance, key changes, and meter changes add difficulty, but there are many unison phrases, the vocal ranges are comfortable, and divisi are rare (only a few notes for soprano and alto). The alto solo lasts for an entire movement, but the tenor and baritone solos are brief. Additional resources on the MorningStar website include recordings of all nine movements, prayers and visual artwork suggestions to accompany the service, the cello part (\$15), and a Lenten daily devotion guide (print and digital) for the congregation. *LW*



Gerre Hancock.

An Easter Introit.

SATB, brass quartet, organ, and timpani.
ECS (7495), \$1.95.

This joyful work for Easter written by the late Gerre Hancock opens with a quiet Alleluia section for organ and chorus that quickly builds to a *fortissimo* as the brass quartet takes over to announce the psalm verse, Psalm 118:24. The Alleluia section uses a six-note motive taken from the opening of CHRIST IST ERSTANDEN. Hancock plays with half steps to give the work a jazzlike feel in parts. Although this may provide a challenge for some choirs, the use of ST/AB pairing throughout much of the work, as well as the repetition of rhythmic and melodic motives to build the piece, will put this piece within the reach of many church choirs. The play between the choir and brass quartet and the back-and-forth between the brass and organ add to the work's joyfulness. This festive piece is of medium difficulty, and is highly recommended for Easter morning for those churches that are blessed with a large choir and with instrumental resources. Instrumental parts and full score are available separately. *AE*

Howard Helvey.

O sacrum convivium!

SATB a cappella.
MorningStar Music (MSM 50-3470), \$1.70.

Originally written for TTBB a cappella choir (MSM 50-3485, \$1.70), this anthem sets an ancient communion text by St. Thomas Aquinas. Without any accidentals or key changes, Helvey creates harmonies that push beyond the confines of traditional chord progressions. Gentle dissonances color the piece, which maintains a slow and peaceful mood. The tempo speeds up slightly for the final Alleluia section before slowing and getting softer for the final chords. The piece is moderately difficult due to the sustained Latin phrases, a cappella texture, and dissonances. The tessitura is relatively low for all voices, adding to the sense of calm. *LW*

Zebulon M. Highben.

Christ, Mighty Savior.

SATB, oboe or clarinet, handbells or handchimes, and organ, with optional congregation.
MorningStar Music (MSM 50-5915), \$1.85.

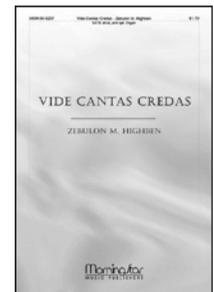
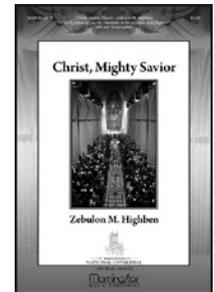
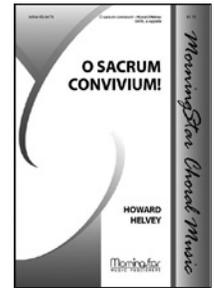
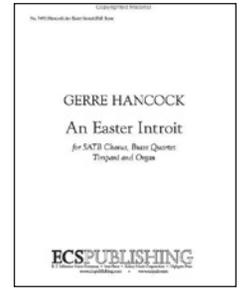
Setting this evening text to INNISFREE FARM, Highben creates an atmosphere of peaceful adoration. Random ringing from the handbells begins the setting, joined by a quiet organ accompaniment and an unadorned woodwind melody. After a unison stanza with organ, the women sing stanza 2 in unison with the woodwind, crowned by gentle bell tones and supported by organ. Highben incorporates the congregation into the choir on stanza 3, where all men sing in unison below a two-part descant sung by the choir women. All sing in unison again on stanza 4, with a woodwind descant, before the choir sings stanza 5, in four-part a cappella harmony. To conclude, the random ringing returns, and bells and voices fade to nothing at the end of the piece ("now and forever"). This piece is moderately easy for the choir and accessible for a congregation, even one that is not familiar with this hymn. A reproducible congregational page is included, and handbells or handchimes play from the choral score. The part for oboe or clarinet is available separately (MSM 50-5915A, \$10). *LW*

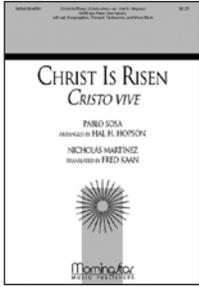
Zebulon M. Highben.

Vide Cantas Credas.

SATB divisi a cappella, with optional organ.
MorningStar Music (MSM 50-5207), \$1.70.

The title phrase of this anthem, "See. Sing. Believe," repeats almost constantly throughout, often followed by "comprobes" ("confirm"). Highben weaves a chant-like melody into the gentle ostinato texture of this setting of a 4th-century blessing for musicians. In the central section of the piece, the voices repeat a four-measure phrase while prayers, scripture, or other text is spoken over the music. This section concludes with two independent descants added above the ostinato, leading to a climactic *fortissimo* phrase that tapers down



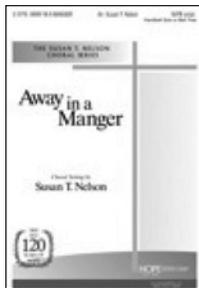


to two final piano chords on “Cantas” (“Sing”). Written for the Chapel Choir of Lutheran Summer Music, this piece will be challenging because of the divisi in every part, some dissonances, the Latin text, and some three-against-two rhythm patterns. Those challenges aside, the ranges are mostly comfortable, and many phrases repeat. The overall effect of the piece will be very meaningful for the choir and the congregation, and it will be worth any extra effort required. Also available for SSAA, with solos and descants (MSM 50-5208, \$1.70). *LW*



Hal H. Hopson.
Christ Is Risen (Cristo vive).
SATB and piano (four hands), with optional congregation, trumpet, tambourine, and wood block.
MorningStar Music (MSM 50-4061), \$2.25.

This lively setting of Pablo Sosa’s tune CENTRAL/ARGENTINA would be effective with or without congregational participation on the final stanza. An instrumental interlude precedes each stanza, setting the tempo and the tone for the music. Stanza 1 builds from unison women to SATB harmony. Stanza 2 utilizes an ostinato for the altos, tenors, and basses under the soprano melody, keeping the rhythmic excitement going through this brief a cappella section. Stanza 3 gives a descant to the sopranos (optional tenors) and the trumpet, with everyone else singing in unison. The choir adds a final “Christ is risen. Alleluia, alleluia,” to conclude the piece. This last part is somewhat high for all voices, but its two-part harmony keeps it from being too difficult. This piece may be sung in English or Spanish. A reproducible congregational page is included in the octavo. The trumpet part is available separately (MSM 50-4061A, \$7); Hopson instructs the percussionists to improvise their parts. *LW*



Gerald Near.

Love.

SATB and organ.

MorningStar Music (MSM 50-5004), \$1.70.

Near sets a 19th-century Pentecost text by Christopher Wordsworth in four brief stanzas. Stanzas 1, 2, and 4 use a similar melody, with chant-like elements. Stanza 3, the loudest stanza, is set with a contrasting melody that is more rhythmic. Each stanza ends with the word “love,” the greatest of the gifts given at Pentecost. Although the key signature does not change, altered notes introduce borrowed chords and add interest to the melody. The organ accompanies the voices except for two measures of a cappella singing; it usually supports the harmonies and sometimes doubles the voice parts. Medium in difficulty level, this anthem would add a reflective moment to any worship service celebrating love or the gifts of the Spirit. *LW*

Susan T. Nelson.

Away in a Manger.

SATB, with optional handbell solo or bell tree.
Hope (C 5770), \$2.50.

Every choir library has an abundance of music for Christmas, and often there are found multiple settings of beloved carols. Three tunes have been associated with *Away in a Manger*; but this is something unique and refreshing. Nelson has taken an English folk song, “The Bold Grenadier,” added a flowing piano accompaniment with many arpeggios, and added a charming handbell part that can be played either four-in-hand or on a bell tree. While the bells are optional, they add a lovely, distinctive touch. It uses A5/F6 and B-flat5/G6; the part is both in the choral score, and on a separate page. Solo or unison voices sing the first stanza; two parts (SA/TB) take the second, and the last stanza is simple homophonic SATB arrangement, which builds to a *forte* level before the delicate *pianissimo* conclusion. Your choir, your pianist, and your congregation will enjoy this refreshing setting of a beloved text. *JG*

Nancy Raabe.

Awake, My Soul, and with the Sun.

SAB and organ, with optional congregation.
Augsburg Fortress (ED022266), \$1.75.

This creative setting of the hymn text by Thomas Ken is set to TALLIS' CANON. Stanza 1 begins with by unison voices in 6/8 meter; stanza 2, written in 2/2 meter, is set in canon between treble and lower voices; stanza 3 is arranged for an SAB choir, with the opening phrase unaccompanied and the organ entering later, accentuating the text. There is a 12-measure interlude that prepares the way for the final stanza for congregation and choir, set in 6/8 meter. The soaring descant provides rhythmic interest and a contrasting duple rhythm. The congregation part is included on the octavo for duplication. *MS*

Joel Raney (music) and Fred Pratt Green (text).

God Is Here!

SATB, with optional unison choir (or soloist), brass, percussion, and 3–5 octaves handbells.
Hope (C 5791), \$2.05

Everyone enjoys an occasional “barn burner” that involves every singer, ringer, brass player, and percussionist. Green’s powerful text is given a new tune, and the work goes through seven key changes over 11 pages! While optional instrumental parts are available (brass, C 5791B, \$24.95; handbells, C 5791HB, \$4.50), the work would also be effective with the well-written piano part. The choir may need to be alerted to the C-flat and F-flat surprises, but with sensitive pedagogy in mind, this piece may well become a choral favorite. *JG*

Joel Raney.

Let the Whole World Sing.

SATB musical.
Hope (8541), \$8.95.

Raney skillfully interweaves traditional carols with his own compositions in this joyous Christmas musical. The 30-minute work contains seven movements followed by a closing reprise. Optional narration features

prose taking off from Scripture. The prose is not theologically substantial, but does have global unity and peace at its core. Raney notes that he has utilized African and Celtic rhythms and Middle Eastern motives to underscore the universality of the gospel message. Added string, woodwind, brass, percussive, and electronic instrumentation may be used in any combination. Raney also offers a number of performance suggestions, including possibilities for solos and congregational singing. Choral parts are not difficult, but singers will need to be able to make paradigm adjustments, as rhythms of traditional carols have been recast. The upbeat, harmonious work feasibly could be a prime opportunity for adult-choir participation by upper elementary and middle school youth. This work could easily lend itself to a community-wide ecumenical presentation where an upbeat atmosphere is desired.

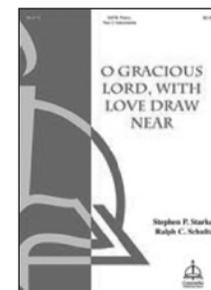
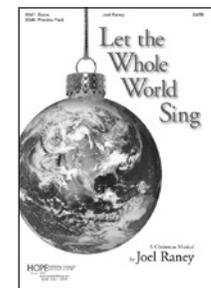
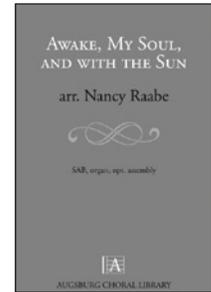
It is highly accessible to lay choirs and directors, but skillful handling of rhythms and integration of instrumentation, as well as creativity in assigning narration and vocal solos, will elevate this to an exciting, jubilant piece of music. Also available for purchase are the score, listening and accompaniment CDs, instrumental parts (conductor, flute, oboe, French horn and cello), and a preview pack (book and listening CD). *CP*

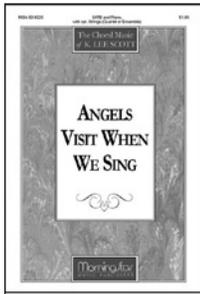
Ralph C. Schultz.

O Gracious Lord, with Love Draw Near.

SATB, piano, and two C instruments.
Concordia (98-4115), \$2.25.

Based on the hymn tune DUNEDIN, this medium-easy anthem sets a six-stanza confirmation text by Stephen P. Starke. The entire anthem repeats, using the same music for stanzas 4–6 as for stanzas 1–3. The choir builds from unison on the first stanza to a two-part texture in the second stanza and finally to a simple SATB setting in the final stanza. The piano accompaniment supports the choir throughout. The C instruments also build in intensity, first only playing interludes, then doubling the two-part choir, then soaring above the voices with two descants on the



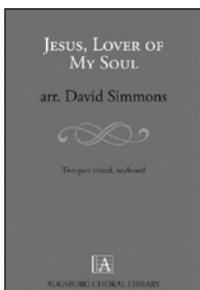


final stanza. A brief coda repeats the closing text of stanza 6, “Shall, crowned in light, be glorified.” In the last four chords, the soprano part divides and ascends to a high A; otherwise the ranges are conservative. Although the vocal parts are relatively easy, the C instruments and the lovely melody combine to create an appropriate, memorable piece for a confirmation or other similar occasion. *LW*



K. Lee Scott.
Angels Visit When We Sing.
 SATB and piano, with optional strings (quartet or ensemble).
 MorningStar Music (MSM 50-9220), \$1.85.

K. Lee Scott has done it again! *Angels Visit When We Sing* is in a stanza-refrain form, the refrain being one of Scott’s broad, majestic tunes à la *Joy to the Heart* and *The Tree of Life*. While a multitude of Alleluias tags the piece as being for Easter, there is also a Christmas stanza, nicely tying together the birth, death, and resurrection of Our Lord. The parts are of moderate difficulty, although the soprano I section will need to have a high range. Fortunately, there is a soprano II part for the mezzo-sopranos. *Angels Visit* draws to a festive conclusion, especially appropriate for Easter Sunday. *KO*



level instrumentalist of average ability. Shaw’s *How Can I Keep From Singing?* offers quality with minimal time commitment. *KO*

David Simmons.
Jesus, Lover of My Soul.
 Two-part mixed choir and keyboard.
 Augsburg Fortress (ED022273), \$1.75.

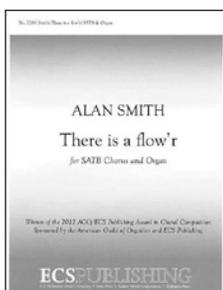
Charles Wesley penned the words to this well-known hymn, and David Simmons has set the well-known tune MARTYN in an arrangement that will likely appeal to smaller church choirs or high school choirs learning to sing with sustained breath control. The piece is versatile, with the text being appropriate for any time of the liturgical year. The musical setting is effective with limited musical resources, and could be used as a vocal duet, summer choir piece, or on those occasions when limited rehearsal time is available. *JG*

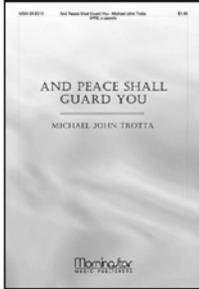
Alan Smith.
There Is a Flow’r.
 SATB and organ.
 ECS (7780), \$2.25.

This setting of a 15th-century text won the 2012 Award in Choral Composition sponsored by the American Guild of Organists and ECS Publishing. It begins “Misterioso,” with quiet organ and a soprano solo, then builds in volume and intensity to a brief *forte* section before ending like it began, this time setting the opening text for full choir. Smith’s haunting melodies add to the mysterious, other-worldly feel. Changing meters, independent choral and organ parts, and accidentals throughout the anthem will make it difficult for many choirs, but the parts do not divide and voice parts stay mostly within comfortable ranges. This piece would be especially appropriate for Advent or Christmas. *LW*

Robert Lowry.
How Can I Keep From Singing?
 Arr. Timothy Shaw.
 Unison or two-part voices and piano, with optional C instrument.
 Hope (C 5799), \$1.95.

How Can I Keep from Singing? is a handy piece to have on file for when there is limited rehearsal time. Most church choirs would likely have this learned with just a few minutes of rehearsal. The tune and words, attributed to Robert Lowry, are arranged in an exuberant Southern folk hymn setting. The two-part harmony would work with any combination of adult or children’s voices. The C-instrument part could be learned easily by a high-school-





Michael John Trotta.
And Peace Shall Guard You.
 SATB a cappella.
 MorningStar Music (MSM 50-9213), \$1.85.

Trotta's setting of his own text inspired by Philippians 4:6 has just the right balance

of repetition and variety to produce a mood of reverent peace. While the phrase "Peace shall guard you" reappears frequently, slight variations in the melody or in the lower parts keep it from ever getting stale. Other textual and melodic ideas enter gradually and then reappear in combination with the original text and melody. The brief dissonances in the phrase "For nothing be anxious" grab the listeners' attention, calling to mind the many anxieties of our lives. The piece has a medium difficulty level because of a few divisi in soprano and bass, some dissonances in the harmony, and the sustained a cappella texture. *LW*

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David Bielenberg

AS I WRITE THIS, we have just transitioned from standard time to daylight savings time. I look forward to the annual change: the sun sets an hour later in the evening, and it signals the coming of spring. More and more daylight each day awakens nature from its winter sleep. Flowers and trees begin to bloom, temperatures rise, and we are likely to spend more time outdoors.

Reading this issue of *CrossAccent*, I began to think about how often the word “light” is used as a metaphor for Jesus in our musical and biblical texts. On the Feast of the Presentation, Simeon recognizes Jesus in the Temple and sings the *Nunc dimittis*: “My own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a *light* to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel” (English Language Liturgical Consultation, *Praying Together*, englishtexts.org/praying.pdf [accessed March 15, 2013]; emphasis added).

Then there are the words from the *Phos hilaron*, often used in the service of Evening Prayer: “O gracious Light, pure brightness of the ever-living Father in heaven, O Jesus Christ, holy and blessed!” (ELW 231; emphasis added).

Even Jesus used the word to describe himself, “I am the *light* of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life” (John 8:12; emphasis added).

Reading Timothy Wengert’s article brought to mind my favorite of the three Gospel readings appointed for Christmas Eve or Christmas Day: John 1:1-14. St. John uses the word “light” as he unfolds the great mystery of the incarnation: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the

beginning with God. . . . In him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. . . . The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.”

Then, while reading Deborah Geweke’s article, I was reminded of words from the first letter of John: “This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is *light* and in him there is no darkness at all. . . . If we walk in the *light* as he is himself in the *light*, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:5, 7; emphasis added).

By the time we, as an organization, are together in fellowship at our upcoming biennial conference in June, we will be approaching the longest hours of daylight for the year. Gathered together for four days, we will sing and explore our vocation as musicians in the church and how we participate in and point to this ever-shining light of Christ.

If you haven’t already, I encourage you to register and make plans to attend. As you can read in the Take Note section of this issue, the worship planning committee has put together a wonderful variety of worship services for us over the four days of the conference. And the lectures, performances, workshops, and reading sessions are sure to inspire you, spark new ideas in you, and provide practical tools for you to take back home with you afterward. I look forward to meeting many of you for the first time there.

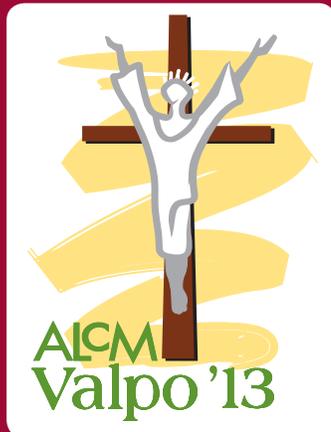
“The light of Christ. Thanks be to God” (ELW p. 267).

Easter joy to all!



CROSSACCENT

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2013 BIENNIAL CONFERENCE | VALPARAISO, INDIANA

God Is Here: Worship in a Wireless World

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WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF WORSHIP when increasing numbers struggle with organized religion, seek individual spiritual practices apart from community, and spend hours in front of screens? Recent studies show that more and more people identify as “**none**” when asked to name their religious affiliation. Yet we who gather in worship each Sunday proclaim that God is present in word, water, bread, wine, and most particularly, in the gathered community. How will our worshipping assemblies be renewed and revitalized in an age of change and doubt? What are some of the challenges and opportunities before us in light of graying congregations, and young adults finding community and identity through Facebook, Twitter, and countless online sites? In considering these questions, and sharing in open and honest conversation, we hope this conference will deepen commitment to the future of worship in real time and sacred space.