# The Writers Their Stories by HAL H. HOPSON

# Available:

Choral Score (SATB)	GBM0001
Orchestration (Conductor's Score and Parts)G	BM0001A
Handbell ScoreGB	M0001HB
Congregational Part (50 bulletins)GI	BM0001CP
Listening CDGB	M0001CD

# PERFORMANCE NOTES

A FESTIVAL OF HYMNS: The Writers Tell Their Stories is a unique festival service that features significant hymn writers through the ages, from the fourth century through the twentieth century, telling their own stories in the first person. This is a publication born of the church and written for the church, and is intended to enhance the understanding of hymns by all generations, including children.

A FESTIVAL OF HYMNS possesses several notable characteristics:

- 1. Congregational participation is at the heart of the work; all hymns but one involve the congregation A congregational part (GBM0001CP) is available separately, which includes the spoken responses and those hymns sung by the congregation.
- 2. The majority of the hymns have organ accompaniment; two (Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine! and When We Are Living) are accompanied by piano. All other instruments are optional.
- 3. Separate publications are available for:

Handbells (GBM0001HB)

Bells Used: 15

Full Instrumental Pak (GBM0001A)

includes Conductor's Score

Trumpet I

Trumpet II

Horn in F (in lieu of Trombone 1)

Trombone I

Trombone II

Tuba (optional)

Timpani

- 4. Two of the hymns (O God, Our Help in Ages Past and O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing) have specific options for children's choirs. Children's voices may also be added to some of the other hymn settings by having them sing the soprano part on SATB stanzas.
- 5. Other choirs (youth choirs or small ensembles) may join the SATB choir or occasionally sing some stanzas by themselves.
- 6. There is a specifically assigned solo for low voice in Lord of the Dance. Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine! requires a high-voice solo. There are other opportunities in some of the hymn settings for a soloist, small ensemble, or unison choir.
- 7. Be creative in casting the hymnwriters. Their demeanor and manner of speaking should express the character and nationality they are representing—for example, the British hymnwriters could speak with the appropriate accent; fanny Crosby, the blind hymnwriter, might wear sunglasses, walk with a white cane, and be assisted to the lettern. When possible, the writers could also dress in costume appropriate to their period.
- 8. A brief congregational rehearsal before the hymn festival service would be helpful, particularly in explaining the singing of Of the Father's Love Begotten and Clap Your Hands!
- 9. A FESTI AL OF HYMNS may be performed as a service in its entirety, or portions may be extracted in order to adapt the service to various worship situations. The full service itself is approximately an hour in length. Following are some suggestions for omission, should time be a factor: Shall We Gather at the River and When We Are Living.
- 10. The score indicates when the congregation should stand to sing the hymn. The director may choose to have the congregation stand more often, as circumstances and abilities allow.

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# 1. HYMN PRELUDE

(including Of the Father's Love Begotten and O God, Our Help in Ages Past) for organ, with optional handbells, brass quartet (quintet), and timpani

Setting by HAL. H. HOPSON (ASCAP)



<sup>\*</sup> When solo horn or trombone is used, the organist should eliminate the solo passages indicated on manual II in measures 1-7 and again in measures 10-15.



<sup>\*</sup> In the absence of brass, organ should play cued notes.  $\ensuremath{\mathsf{GBM0001A}}$ 









# OPENING PRAYERS (Congregation standing)

O God, let the Amen sound from your people again.

Gladly we praise you forever.

May the words we sing with our lips be the thoughts of our hearts. Through your Holy Spirit renew our own spirits by the songs we sing. Come, O God, and give us fresh insights into our love in Christ Jesus. We sing your praise, O God.

May our songs remind us that you are a God of mercy, and that no sin or misconduct is beyond your forgiveness. We sing your praise, O God.

May our songs remind us that you are a God of beauty and holiness. We give you thanks for poets, composers, singers, and instrumentalists, who join their creativity to bring to life your goodness through word and music. We sing your praise, O God.

May our songs remind us that you are the God of all those with special needs. We remember those in whose lives praise is difficult because of injustice, bigotry, poverty, illness, or sorrow.

We sing your praise, O God.

May our songs remind us that you are God of all the saints.

We remember especially the faithful, who, having made music on earth now sing your praises in heaven.

We sing your praise, O God.

May our songs remind us that you are a God who is worthy of all our praise. Help us to leave this place of worship with a new resolve to honor whatever things are honorable, excellent, and worthy of celebration, whatever things are levely, and gracious, and of good report.

We sing your praise, O God.

Hear us now O God, as we gather up our prayers and praise in the words which our Lord himself taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses, (and forgive us our debts,)
as we forgive those who trespass against us; (as we forgive our debtors;)

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

(Congregation sits)

### THE TRAVELING PILGRIM

I am a traveler through time, a pilgrim of sorts. Many things I have seen, many things I have heard in my journeys across the earth.

Long ago, before the dawn of written history, humans knew that there was a power in the universe outside themselves, far greater than they. They longed to understand this power, and created songs and poems about the being or beings, which were passed down through the ages from parent to child.

The people called the Hebrews knew that this mysterious power was the one God, and they created songs of praise, thanks, joy, despair, even anger, to the Holy One. When they spoke to the Lord, they expected an answer. As writing was developed, these songs were written down as the Book of Psalms.

In biblical days, the followers of Jesus created songs to express their memories of their Lord and their understandings about God. Some of these are found in their collaboration, that canon of books called the New Testament. I remember one which ends like this:

At the name of Jesus, every knee shall bend in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Christians have always been a singing people. They've needed to express in song their faith, their belief, their love of God, and, sometimes, their anguish, doubt, and fear as well.

There have been countless hymnwriters through the centuries. Tonight (*This morning*) you will meet some of them and hear a little about their times—about what they needed to sing.

I must be on my way. I think I see our first visitor now.



### **BISHOP AMBROSE**

I am Ambrose, Bishop of Milan.

I was born in the year 340 in the French city of Treves. Trained as a civil servant, I served for some years as governor of Milan until I was elected bishop.

From the very beginning of the church—it is certainly true of my time in the fourth century of our Lord—we were constantly faced by a hostile, pagan culture. Sadly, controversies arose within the church concerning the true nature of our Lord, dividing the church into two opposing factions. A group in the East, the Gnostics, believed that our Lord was purely divine, not at all human. In the West the followers of Arias, a militant, dogmatic group, flatly denied the divinity of Christ.

Not too many years ago our hymns served us well as the militant western group tried to attack the cathedral in Milan where I was bishop. As they approached the cathedral I gathered the faithful inside. We sang our hymns with such frightening fervor and volume (some would say we were even raucous) that the Arians retreated.

I have written many hymns myself, but today I want to tell you about one of my fellow hymn-writers, the Spanish poet, Aurelius Clemens Prudentius. His hymns are typical of those we are writing and singing in the fourth century. They are based on the writings we have from the earliest Christians. They are rhymed and have lines of consistent length so that they may easily be sung by the entire congregation. The final stanza is invariably a doxology to the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN is just one of hundreds of hymns written by Prudentius.

Of course, our beautiful churches, with their reverberant acoustics, provide a fitting ambience for the singing of our hymns

What restrained beauty! One single line sung to a plainsong melody, unaccompanied, except perhaps with handbells. What a fitting expression of praise to the God who is Alpha and Omega, the Source of all that is and will ever be Alleluia!



# 2. OF THE FATHER'S LOVE BEGOTTEN

for Congregation, divided into two antiphonal groups (I and II) † with optional handbells



### MARTIN LUTHER

I am Martin Luther.

When I was 34 years old I nailed my Ninety-five Theses to the door of Wittenberg Castle. Some give credit to this action as touching off the Protestant Reformation. Accompanying this movement within the church was a whole new hymnody—words in the language of the people and tunes that could easily be sung by the entire congregation.

As a Roman Catholic priest, I enjoyed the singing of the hymns by the monastic choir; however, I became concerned that the congregation was singing very little, if at all, in the parish churches. In fact, women had not been allowed to sing in church since the sixth century. Hymnsinging had been taken over almost exclusively by trained choirs of monks singing in Latin, a language the people neither spoke nor understood.

As one of the Reformers, I felt it was crucial that hymns be created that could be sung by both choir and congregation. This proved to be a challenge to poets and musicians alike. Hymntunes were drawn from several sources. Traditional liturgical chants were adapted from the Roman Catholic Church into metered hymntunes. New sacred texts in the language of the people were written to be sung to tunes that the people were already singing and whistling in the streets. I encouraged composers to write new, singable tunes. I was even bold enough to write some texts and tunes myself. From these varied sources we created the German chorale.

My most popular and probably the best known of all German chorales is EIN FESTE BURG IST UNSER GOTT—"A Mighty Fortress is Our God." In the third stanza I portray the devil as an insidious, conniving force that tries to undo us, but to no avail. With God as our never-failing bulwark, our defense, we stand firm against the forces of evil. God's truth is always with us; it abides with us forever.



(Congregation stands)

# 3. A MIGHTY FORTRESS IS OUR GOD

for unison choir, congregation, and organ, with optional brass quartet (quintet) and timpani

Text by MARTIN LUTHER (ca. 1529) Trans. by FREDERICK HENRY HEDGE (1853)

EIN FESTE BURG Music by MARTIN LUTHER (ca. 1529) Setting by HAL H. HOPSON (ASCAP)



<sup>\*</sup> When performed with brass, the organ should omit bracketed passages.





















<sup>\*</sup> Cued notes should be sung by one or two sopranos.

(Congregation sits)

### JOHN CALVIN

I am John Calvin, or Jean Cauvin (Zhahn Koh-van), as I am called in the French language.

I was educated to become a lawyer. After graduating from law school, I, like my German counterpart Martin Luther, sought to bring some understanding to a church in turmoil. I wrote my theological views in a rather lengthy treatise called the Institutes of the Christian Religion—eighty chapters in all.

My views of congregational song are rather strict. In my opinion, we sing for one purpose only: to praise the absolute sovereignty of God as given to us in Holy Scripture. I believe that the only texts to be sung in public worship are those drawn from the Holy Word of God, especially the words found in the Book of Psalms. To this end, I have enlisted the best poets to write metered paraphrases of the Psalms in the language of the people and the finest composers to set them to singable tunes. These new metrical psalms, as they are called, are gladly sung by all the people—in sharp contrast to the old unmetered plainsong chants, which were sung only by choics of monks or nuns.

Some of the metrical psalm tunes are very lively and joyful—so much so that the English Queen, Elizabeth I, sarcastically referred to them as "those ghastly Genevan jogs."

To help the people learn these new psalms, we directed that a precentor, or song leader, should first sing a line of the psalm, with the people repeating the line, until the entire psalm had been sung. This system, which is called "lining out," has been adopted by many countries.

The importance of singing the psalms in this fashion is evidenced by a decree from the British Parliament, which reads:

We decree that the whole congregation may join herein, every one that can read is to have a psalmbook, and all others, not disabled by age or otherwise, are to be exhorted to learn to read. But for the present, where many in the congregation cannot read, it is convenient that the minister, or some fit person appointed by him and the other ruling officers, do line out the psalm, line by line, before the singing of the congregation thereof. End of decree!

Oh what joy it is to go about from country to country and hear the Christians singing the psalms! A taste of heaven on earth!

# 4. CLAP YOUR HANDS!

for Cantor and Congregation, a cappella



# ISAAC WATTS

I am Isaac Watts.

I am a seventeenth-century minister of the Independent Church in England.

I began to write hymns because as a child I found the psalms we sang—we sang only psalms a that time—stale and boring. When I was sixteen, I complained to my father about the psalms we sang, and he replied: "Young man, if you think they're not good enough, write something better." So, I took him at his word and wrote:

Behold the glories of the Lamb around his Father's throne; Prepare new honors for his name. and songs before unknown.

From that point on, hymns flowed from my pen. They were all in simple meters that could easily be sung and focused primarily on the basic tenets of Christian faith. Because my hymns broke loose from the Calvinistic grip of the psalms, some have dubbed me the Diberator of English Hymnody."

You might be interested in what some of the High-Not everyone, however, sings my songs gladly. church critics and poets of my day are saying about my hymns:

- Watts' hymns are too simplistic. Even the meters in which he writes are entirely too common.
- Watts' hymns are too "sensuous"; they appeal too much to the senses and not enough to the intellect.
- Watts' hymns are charged with too many commonplace figures of speech: read sarcastically)
  - "His name like sweet perfume shall rise"
    - "The prisoner leaps to loose his chains"
    - ime, like an ever-rolling stream," and

  - Thorns infest the ground"

Much too vivid a language, they say.

Actually, I take their criticism as welcome compliments. It is never possible to please all the people, but if God shall find my songs of praise pleasing, I am more than content.

One of ny hymns I hear most often in the churches in the British Isles these days is O GOD, OUR HELPINAGES PAST. I based the text to this hymn on Psalm 90. It is a statement of my own faith in Got the God who is a strength to both individuals and nations through the changing, passing base, the God who will one day be our Eternal Home.

# 5. O GOD, OUR HELP IN AGES PAST

for SATB Choir, Congregation, Unison Voices (Soloist, Ensemble, or Children's Choir) and organ, with optional handbells, brass quartet (quintet), and timpani

ST. ANNE Stanzas 1-5: ISAAC WATTS (1719) Attributed to WILLIAM CROFT (1708) Psalm interludes based on Psalm 90 (H.H.H.)

With majestic vigor, in a moderate tempo

Sk INTRODUCTION

Sk INTRODUCTION Setting by HAL H. HOPSON (ASCAP) **HANDBELLS BRASS TIMPANI ORGAN** Ped. Bells **Brass** (+Tuba) Timp. Org. \* In the absence of bells, the introduction should begin at beat 4 of the first measure.

\*\* In the absence of brass, organ should play cued notes.



















## CHARLES WESLEY

I am Charles Wesley.

I am the eighteenth child born to Susanna and Samuel Wesley in the early part of this, the eighteenth century. My preacher brother, John, was born four years before me.

John and I are both ordained priests in the Anglican Church. Through John's preaching and my hymnwriting, we have created quite a stir in the church. We have actually touched off an Evangelical Revival. This became the foundation of the Methodist Church

I am always ready at a moment's notice to "improve an occasion" by writing a hymn to drive a lesson home. I write hymns everywhere I go—on horseback, on ships, during mealtime, and before going to sleep at night. I have written well over 6,000 hymns in my lifetime.

Through my texts I attempt to express the rapture of the soul in its response to the wonder and love of God as proclaimed in the gospel. The "good news" for me demands that I address important social issues such as slavery, the horror of war, inhumane prisons, unjust laws, and the abuse of privilege, power, and wealth.

Undoubtedly, my most popular hymn is O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING. My original version had eighteen stanzas; to my dismay some of those Calvinsts reduced it to a mere four. O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING has been called the theme song of the Methodist Church. It was inspired by a comment made to me by a devout Christian friend: "You know, Charles, if I had a thousand tongues, I would praise God with them all."



# 6. O FOR A THOUSAND TONGUES TO SING

for SATB Choir, Congregation and organ



42 STANZA 2: Choir only SOPRANO & ALTO in unison (May be sung by children's choir, ensemble, or soloist) 2. My gra-cious Mas - ter and my God, as pro - claim, sist to to me 17 Man. 21 hon - ors spread through all the earth ' of thy name. σ T INTERLUDE

Ped.

GBM0001A

 $\overline{\mathbf{o}}$ 



<sup>\*</sup> Fuguing tune (NORTHFIELD) by JEREMIAH INGALLS (1805) GBM0001A





## CATHERINE WINKWORTH

I am Catherine Winkworth.

I am an Englishwoman of this, the nineteenth, century and have devoted my life to studies in the German language and in music. I have also worked to promote higher education for women.

During this century, hymnody has finally been accepted in the public worship of the established church. In the last century hymnsinging was associated more with dissenting religious groups, prayer meetings of the Anglican Evangelicals, and the Methodist Society prayer meetings.

The church is experiencing a renewal of our Catholic tradition, which has given new life both to the church and to hymnsinging. Two of us in particular, John Mason Neale and I, have been searching the vast treasury of Greek, Latin, and German hymnody from earlier centuries, translating them into English so that all may sing these gems of the church.

I translated NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD from a German hymn written by the early seventeenth-century hymnwriter Martin Rinkart. The lines in this hymn, "and keep us in God's grace, and guide us when perplexed," have particularly poignant meaning when one knows that Martin Rinkart was the sole pastor in Eilenburg, Saxony, during a great plague in which he presided over 4,000 funeral services, including that of his own wife.

NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD, in both its text and music, expresses a deep faith in God—"the God who was, and is, and shall be every nore."



In celebration of the marriage of Sally A. Johnston and Wayne H. Bishop

# 7. NOW THANK WE ALL OUR GOD

for SATB Choir, Congregation and organ, with optional handbells, brass quartet (quintet), and timpani

Text by MARTIN RINKART (ca. 1636) Translated by CATHERINE WINKWORTH (1858) NUN DANKET
Tune by JOHANN CRÜGER (1648)
Harmonization based on one by FELIX MENDELSSOHN (1840)
Setting by HAL H. HOPSON (ASCAP)













GBM0001A













## ROBERT LOWRY

I am Robert Lowry.

I was born in Philadelphia in 1826. For many years I served as a Baptist minister in Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey.

I have loved two things above all in my work—preaching God's word and singing songs of the faith. Often while preparing a sermon, I have found a new hymn taking form in my mind—a song on the very scripture of the sermon! I write both words and music, and sometimes even write tunes for other poets' words.

One of my most popular hymns being sung in churches now is SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER. Let me tell you how I came to write this hymn.

On a very hot summer day in 1864 I sat in my study in Brooklyn, New York, thinking of parishioners who had recently died. It was a time when an epidemic was sweeping through the city. All around friends and acquaintances were dying. The question began to rise in my heart with unusual emphasis: "Will we meet again? We are parting at the river of death; shall we meet at the river of life?"

My mind went to the book of Revelation, Chapter 22, where John describes the saints and angels gathered at the river of life. Being a somewhat amateur organist, I went into the church and sat at the organ. For a moment I simply gave vent to the pent-up emotions of my heart, and by that inexplainable Spirit both words and music began to flow.

The refrain of my hymn reinforces what I know to be true:

(spoken emphatically)
Yes, we'll gather at the river,
the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river
that flows by the throne of God.



# 8. SHALL WE GATHER AT THE RIVER

for SATB Choir\*, a cappella



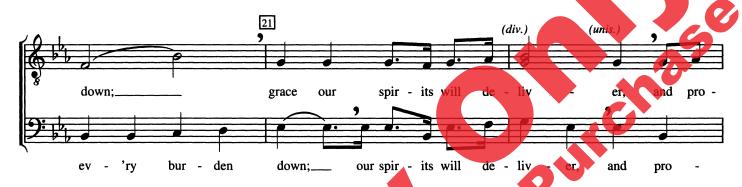
- \* Available separately for SSATTBB voices (GCMRM0002).
- \*\* The solo may be sung by a smaller treble ensemble.
- † No breath

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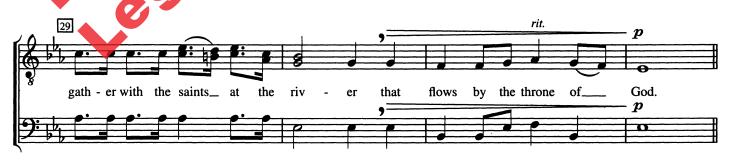
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## FANNY CROSBY

I am Fanny Crosby.

I was born in New York state in 1820.

Blind from infancy, I have been able, through the goodness of God, to do many things in my life—teach school, perform as a singer and harpist, preach the Gospel, and work with the poor and homeless, even in the Bowery. You can understand why my faith is so essential to me and why I love my Lord Jesus so deeply.

You may wonder how I am able to "write" anything at all without sight. As a child I developed a great love of music and an excellent memory for the spoken word. At the age of eight I began composing poetry, memorizing the lines as I went and dictating them to a family member when the poem was complete.

During the latter part of this, the nineteenth century, a great revival movement arose, and people began to clamor for songs about Jesus and his love for us. I began to publish some of the songs I had written for my own devotional life and found that people and editors loved them and kept begging for more. Through these gospel hymns of mine, I came to know Dwight L. Moody, Ira Sankey, and many other great revival preachers and singers.

I have written, I am told, more than 8,000 songs. (looking up) "Charles Wesley, I'm ahead of you by several thousand!" (looking forward again). Perhaps you know some of them:

- Blessed Assurance, Jesus Is Mine!
- I Am Thine, Olord
- Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross, and
- To God Be the Glory

One day my good friend, Phoebe Palmer Knapp, dropped by my house for a visit. She told me that she had just written a tune but had no text for it. She began humming:



Then she asked me, "Fanny, what does the tune say to you? Do any words come to mind?" I immediately replied, "Your melody says to me: 'Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine.'" At that very moment, a new gospel song was born.

And, you know, ven though I see nothing with these eyes, through my mind's eye I can see marvelous visions that seem at times to "burst on my sight"—all telling of God's mercy and love. Yes, truly . .

Diessed assurance, Jesus is mine! This is my story, Yes, this is my song, praising my Savior all the day long.

Amen!

# 9. BLESSED ASSURANCE, JESUS IS MINE!

for Choir, Congregation, and Soloist (Soprano or Tenor), with piano







GBM0001A

68 STANZA 2: Solo (Soprano or Tenor) Very slow, freely ( $\frac{1}{2}$  = ca. 46) 2. Per - fect sub - mis per - fect de - light, vi - sions of sion, sight; an-ge bring from a rap ture now burst on my , pp rit. cy, whis-pers of This is my bove love. **p** a tempo Sav ior all the day sto this is my song, prais-ing my







## JOHN WESLEY WORK

I am John Wesley Work II.

I was born in 1871 in Nashville, Tennessee, where I was educated, worked, and died. It was my privilege to be one of the leading figures in the preservation, performance, and study of African-American spirituals. Descended from an ex-slave myself, I can identify very closely with the heartfelt message inherent in these songs of our people.

The slaves transported from Africa brought with them a love of music and rhythm that was deeply embedded in their souls and culture. To this heritage was added the influence of gospel and camp meeting songs as well as folk music from the British Isles. From this blend, from the very trials of slavery, was born the African-American spiritual.

African-American spirituality reflects a unique understanding of God from an oppressed people. We have always struggled to come to grips with injustice and yet feel God's presence and meaning in our lives. We express our faith most completely in our songs, which originated in fields, quarries, slave cabins, secret meeting places—wherever we are together. The shouts and moans in our songs come from the crucible of persecution and suffering.

Our music was first in the hearts and voices of our people and for many years was passed down solely by oral tradition. As conductor of the Fisk University Jubilee Singers in Nashville, I introduced American and European audiences to the rich heritage of our spirituals. Along with others, I also gathered the music of our people and published cohections of spirituals. One spiritual to come out of this effort was GUIDE MY FEET, which implores God's presence through the difficult race of life.

I especially enjoy hearing our spirituals sung by a spirited group, on their feet, moving with it, singing with great intensity and feeling, and yes—with soul!



# 10. GUIDE MY FEET

for SATB Choir, Solo (Soprano or Tenor), and Congregation, a cappella









<sup>\*</sup> The congregation may be invited to join in clapping with the choir. GBM0001A











## ROBERTO ESCAMILLA

I am Roberto Escamilla.

I was born in 1931 in a small town south of the Texas border near Monterrey, Mexico.

I learned the one original stanza of *Pues Si Vivimos* (translated: *When We Are Living*) when I was a very young boy. An anonymous writer wrote the Spanish words, based on the beautiful text found in Romans 14:8: "If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord, so then," whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's."

I thought that this was a profound theological statement about the meaning of life being determined by our belonging to God, the Giver of life and death. When we truly belong to God, nothing else in life really matters.

In my early fifties I went through a rather difficult time in my life. It was during this period that I was inspired to write the second, third, and fourth stanzas of this hymn. I had some crucial decisions to make regarding my career, and the future was very uncertain. It was then I truly realized the idea of giving and receiving, of sorrow and joy, and through these contrasting forces was inspired to finish writing the hymn. Whether we suffer or rejoice, ultimately we are to be Christ-like, concerned about the hurts of others. It is because we belong to God that we can transcend all circumstances and rejoice in serving others in God's name.

I am pleased that many congregations across the land have found this simple hymn meaningful and have learned it both in English and Spanish. Sing it! And always remember you belong to the Creator—nothing else really matters!



## 11. WHEN WE ARE LIVING

(Pues Si Vivimos)

for SAB Choir, Congregation, and piano or organ, with optional trumpets (2) and tambourine



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## SYDNEY CARTER

I am Sydney Carter.

I was born in London in 1915. At the beginning of World War II, I resigned my teaching position to become an ambulance driver to help the wounded and dying caught in the tragedy of war.

When I came back from the war, it seemed as if the staid, rather stuffy old hymns I'd grown up with didn't fit the post-war world, with all its fear and hope. I thought hymns should relate to the world as it is now, not look back to the "stained-glass world" of my greatgrandfather.

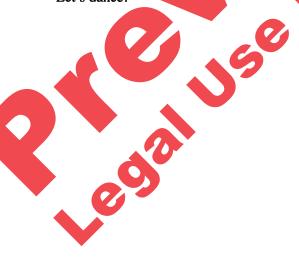
Some people say I shook up the church during the 1960s with my lyrics that question "the way we've always done it" and with my pop-style tunes. I say, "What's wrong with a jaunty, spirited song in church, even if it sounds like some of those American pop songs?" My friend Erik Routley called me the patron saint of new music—and what a compliment that was! (looking up) "Thanks, Erik!"

I don't claim to be a trained musician. I compose only melodies and then prevail upon my friends to harmonize them for me. And, by the way, I despise that bel canto, "beautiful singing" style of singing in church. I much prefer the hoarse, earthy tones of pop and folk singers.

I'm known primarily for my text LORD OF THE DANCE, which I appropriately matched with the tune *Simple Gifts* from the Shaker tradition. My rebel nature is exposed here with my audacity to portray Jesus as a dancer, even the Lord of the Dance. In this song I want to say:

Look, people, Jesus was real. He lived, he preached, he died for you! He rose to bring us joy forever! Come on, you Christians, join the dance with Jesus! He'll dance with you dance with him.

Let's dance!



(Congregation stands)

Commissioned by Grace Church, United Methodist, Wilmington, Delaware Andrew Cottle and Rebecca Taylor, Co-directors of Music

## 12. LORD OF THE DANCE

for SATB Choir and Congregation with keyboard, optional handbells (5), brass quartet (quintet) and timpani

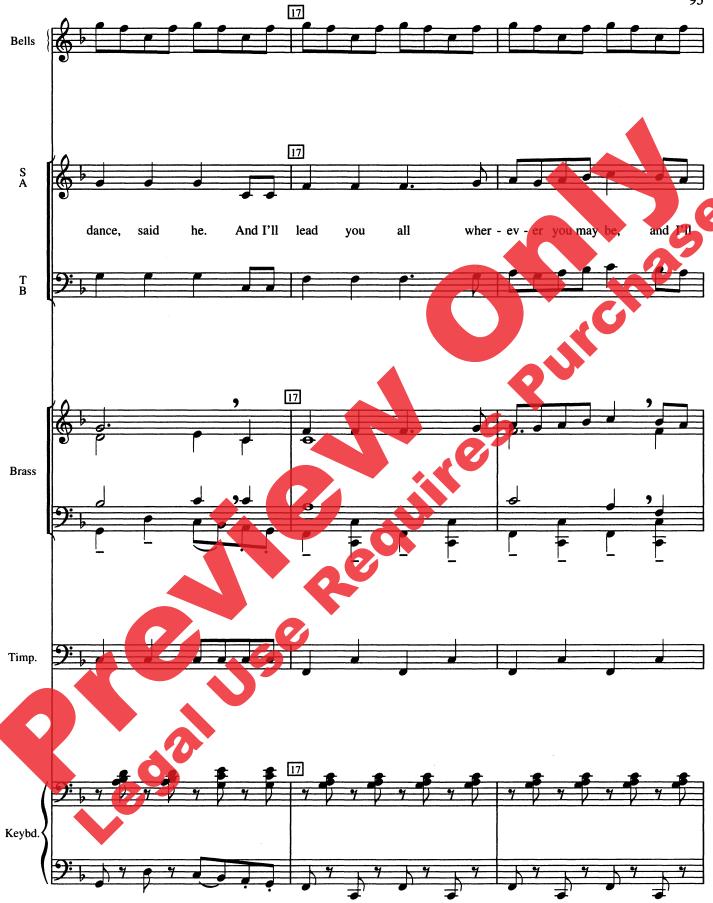
WORDS: Sydney Carter (1963) MUSIC: 19th cent Shaker tu Sydney Carter (1963)

L. H. HOPSON (ASCA adapt. Setting With a joyful bounce, in 2 ( = ca. 63)SOPRANO ALTO TENOR BASS **BRASS KEYBOARD** 



















Keybd.

GBM0001A

















### THE TRAVELING PILGRIM

Yes, I'm back to remind you that our journey, our dance, has not ended. Each hymnwriter has contributed to the unfolding story. Each has signaled in their own time a revitalization in hymnody, a change in style or direction from the depths of his or her own spiritual pilgrimage.

And still the song goes on—the faithful continue to sing.

Robert Lowry put it best when he said:

My life flows on in endless song: above earth's lamentation,
I hear the sweet, though far-off hymn that hails a new creation.
Through all the tumult and the strife,
I hear the music ringing;
It finds an echo in my soul—
how can I keep from singing?

Yes, the echo of the soul continues.

We all journey forth, and the song goes on

## BLESSING and BENEDICTION

We thank you, God, for hymnwriters who make their lives songs to God through the sharing of their varied gifts and talents. As we sing hymns, both old and new, help us to let the words remind us of the commitment of our lives to you. Let the melody and harmony we create call us to renew our lives in service to you.

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

#### Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

# 13. POSTLUDE

for organ, with optional brass quartet (quintet) and timpani



<sup>\*</sup> When performed with brass, the organ should omit bracketed passages.





\* In the absence of brass, organist should hold the first chord of measure 18 for three beats, then proceed to the pick-up to measure 45. GBM0001A











## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

I am indebted to many friends and professional associates who have contributed their unique talents to the completion of A FESTIVAL OF HYMNS. To name but a few:

- The countless poets and musicians through the ages who have expressed their faith in their writing of hymntunes and texts.
- The churches I have served, whose love for hymn singing inspired much of the material in this collection.
- My wife, Martha, whose constant support, interest, and insights have been an integral part of every page of this festival service.
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Credits:

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