

Why We Must Sing the Psalms Terry Johnson

I. Background of the Trinity Psalter

Back when I was a mere child, a freshman in college, the minister leading our Bible study asked us to turn to Psalm 92, which he then began to lead us in singing to the tune “If I were a rich man”:

*It is good to give thanks,
And sing praises to the name of the Lord O' Most high;
To declare Thy lovingkindness,
In the morning and by night
(repeat)
And with the ten-stringed lute and with the harp;
With resounding music on the lyre.
For Thou, O Lord, hast made me glad by what Thou hast done,
I will sing for joy at the works of Thy hands.
How great are thy works O Lord!
Thy thoughts are very deep.
(repeat first 4 lines)*

Get it? In my California Christian way, I thought that it was “neat.” The Psalms were meant to be sung, and we were singing them -- or, at least one of them. What could make more sense? What a great way to memorize Scripture, I thought.

That for me was the beginning of a fascination with the Psalms that has continued to the present. Nearly five years passed before I received any more encouragement though. In March of 1978, I rode British Rail up to Edinburgh to begin a one month long internship at the St. David's Broomhouse Church. The first Sunday there I found out that more Psalms than just the 92nd had been put to music. The hymnal of the Church of Scotland had nothing but Psalms in the first 190 pages - all 150 rhymed and metered for singing. I was amazed. Where had these been hiding all my life? Why didn't American churches use them? It seemed odd to me. Why would Bible believing Christians in America not care about singing the Psalms? I need to take these home with me, I thought.

The next summer I was back in Scotland for month to sit at the feet of William Still, minister of the Gilcomston South Church in Aberdeen. There I bought my first Psalters -- two of them; the *Scottish Psalter*, 1650, and the *Irish Psalter*, 1880. They were like treasures to me. But not being able to read music made their use a problem. Still I was determined that some day I'd be able encourage their use back in the USA.

The opportunities to do so began right after graduation from seminary while an intern at the Granada Presbyterian Church in Coral Gables. Its hymnal, like most Evangelical hymnals, had a pathetically

meager two metrical Psalms (the obligatory 23rd and 100th, “All People that on Earth do Dwell”). This former Baptist and Presbyterian convert was astonished. Presbyterians sang nothing but Psalms for 250 years. Now they sang nothing but hymns. Why? I began to use these two all I could, and point out that they were Psalms. I also found out that there were Psalm-singing American Christians. The Reformed Presbyterian Church, North America (sometimes called the “Covenanters”), all 4000 of them, still sing the Psalms exclusively, and have a Psalter of their own, which I purchased. *The Book of Psalms for Singing*, published in 1973, had the added advantage of having recordings of a number of their Psalms. So I began to use some of them in Sunday School, and for special services, such as Reformation Sunday.

At the Independent Presbyterian Church, where I became Senior Minister in 1987, I had the privilege for the first time of using a Psalm-based hymnal, *The Hymnbook*, 1955. While it is a frustrating hymnal because of the amount editing that has been done to great hymns (e.g. words are altered, as when “such a worm as I” becomes “sinners such as I;” strong stanzas are often dropped completely), I believe that it is a better hymnal than any that the Evangelical publishers have ever produced (eg. Hope Publishing's *Hymns for the Living Church*, Gaither's *Hymns for the Family of God*, Peterson's hymnals, or any others). Very soon after I arrived, we began using one of the 65 or so Psalm-settings from *The Hymnbook* every Sunday, designating it as such in the bulletin. After several years of singing all those that I deemed singable, I was hungry for more, and so undertook a major study to find tunes that could replace those in the hymnal, making unused settings more singable. All the time, I've continued to collect tunes for future use, and make mental notes.

My interest has ebbed and flowed over the years. During one of many lulls in interest, I went to Westminster Seminary in California to speak at their week-long Spiritual Emphasis services. There Drs. Godfrey and Pipa revived my zeal. I returned home determined to stop talking and start doing something to promote Psalm singing.

General Assembly Overture

I wrote up a personal overture to the Central Georgia Presbytery, asking it to overture the General Assembly to form a committee to study how to promote Psalm-singing in the PCA and other Reformed denominations. The final form of the overture looked like this:

Whereas, metrical Psalm singing has been a vital part of the Reformed tradition from the earliest years of the Reformation,

Whereas, Psalm singing prevailed in the Presbyterian Churches for over 300 years, but has been nearly supplanted by hymn singing in the last 100 years, and

Whereas, Psalm singing played a crucial role in the development in the distinctive piety of the Reformed tradition, and

Whereas, Psalm singing will richly enhance the spirituality of contemporary Presbyterianism,

Now Therefore be it resolved, that the 20th General Assembly hereby appoints a sub-committee of the Christian Education and Publications Committee to formulate ways in which

Psalm singing can be encouraged in the congregations of the Presbyterian Church in America and other Reformed Churches and to make report regarding this at next General Assembly...

The overture flew through the Presbytery and 1992 General Assembly, and I was named convener of the committee. My hope was that we would be able to produce a hymnal-companion Psalter. A thin, relatively inexpensive, words only version would probably be our best hope for a wide-spread revival of Psalm-singing in the USA.

Committee Work

Our committee was made up of diverse group of Psalm singing enthusiasts with a variety of opinions as to how to proceed. For some, the *Scottish Psalter* of 1650 was the only Psalm book worth using, having for them the status of Shakespeare or the King James Version of the Bible. No alteration. Others who contacted the committee wished only to revive the Anglo-Genevan Psalter. Still others wanted a long-term project of producing a completely new, modern Psalter. What we settled on was the compromise the I sought: an adapted version of *The Book of Psalms for Singing*, (itself a collection of compromises). The core of this work is based on the old common meter *Scottish Psalter*, to which considerable metrical variety has been added. Half of its words are modernized English, half retain the “thees” and “thous.” The musical types range from the old Genevan and Scottish tunes to Victorian gospel songs to 20th Century compositions. There is, therefore, something for everybody. Plus a book derived from it could be produced quickly, and become the basis for revisions in the future. The important thing, as I saw it, was to get a Psalm book into the hands of the people immediately, rather than waiting five to ten years to produce the perfect work. We also made a number of other recommendations, listed below.

General Assembly Report

My step father-in-law warned me, Columbia is the hottest place in the world, and it was. The 21st General Assembly of the PCA was held at the Koger Center in downtown Columbia, South Carolina. As we walked out of the main building each afternoon, I felt as though I might be lifted right off of the ground by the heat radiating off of the concrete steps. I never knew that air could be so still.

For the first time I had a major role to play in the Assembly. Someone once told me to wait until five years after ordination before saying anything at G.A. I waited ten. But as chairman of the Psalm-singing committee I had a major report to deliver.

I had given considerable thought to tactics in presenting the report. I was concerned that there might be a possibility that a significant number of commissioners would tune out before we ever said a word. There is a tendency among some to view Psalm-singing as radical. It's mainly a matter of guilt by association. Many of the eager proponents of the Psalms are theonomic or “TR,” that is “thoroughly Reformed.” Many also advocate exclusive Psalmody (having the view that only the Psalms should be sung in public worship). Several of the men on my committee held this position. Those who are more main-stream in conservative Presbyterianism tend to become frightened by this. So we had a major public relations job to perform at the outset. How do we keep open the ears of those who will tend to be skeptical and prone to be dismissive?

Our answer? Begin the report with singing, not arguments and proposals. We prepared 3000 copies of what we called the *Trinity Psalter*, enclosing nine “sampler” Psalms within a red cover that matched the revised Trinity Hymnal. I walked to the microphone, asked the commissioners to take out their mocked-up *Trinity Psalters*, and we proceeded to sing all of Psalms 91 and 128, and parts of Psalms 1, 23, and 100. The result? It was absolutely thrilling to hear nearly 1000 men singing David's inspired words. The whole assembly was visibly moved by the effect. My job was easy from there.

The report itself began with a presentation with which our congregation is familiar, asking and answering the question, “Why the Psalms?”, from the perspectives of Scripture, tradition, and practical concerns. Then came the recommendations as follows:

1. that the General Assembly reaffirm that Psalm-singing in the worship of God is a Gospel ordinance, is commended by the Westminster Confession, and is an historic practice of Reformed Churches.
2. that congregations be encouraged to sing at least one Psalm at each of their services.
3. that congregations be encouraged to identify Psalm-settings as Psalms, when they are sung.
4. that hymnal-using congregations be encouraged to use the Psalm-rich *Trinity Hymnal* (since it averages 10 times the number of Psalms as the comparable Evangelical hymnals).
5. that a program of re-education be undertaken by the CE&P Committee, including:
 - a. Articles in the *Messenger* that explore such things as the history and value of Psalm-singing.
 - b. Providing instruction in its educational material on the Scriptural mandate and historic precedent for Psalm-singing in the worship of God, and the many ways in which the person, sufferings, resurrection, and ongoing Messianic work of Christ are set forth in the Psalms.
 - c. Producing worship bulletin inserts which feature two Psalm settings as found in the *Trinity Hymnal*, thereby promoting both the hymnal and Psalm-singing.
6. that an *ad hoc* committee of the CE&P be formed to complete the discussion with RPCNA to the end that a simplified edition of *The Book of Psalms for Singing* might be produced with this format:
 - a complete Psalter
 - words only (normally one tune and version per Psalm)
 - a slender, inexpensive hymnal supplement
7. the funding of the above committee be private, details to be worked out by the CE&P Committee in discussions with the RPCNA's Crown & Covenant Publications.
8. that Christian Education and Publication contact other Reformed denominations informing them of the above recommendations and of the availability in the near future of the adapted

edition of *The Book of Psalms for Singing* with a view to encouraging the use of this metrical version of the Psalms in those Presbyterian and Reformed Churches in America which do not currently use a denominational Psalter.

To these eight recommendations was added a ninth from the floor: that efforts to write contemporary settings for Psalms be encouraged.

Debate ensued. Several questions were informational. The mandatory inane comment was made (all reports have at least one). During the give and take of the discussion of the motions we repeatedly clarified that we were not advocating exclusive Psalmody. We were not, we said, against hymns, gospel songs, scripture songs, or choruses. We were not against anything, just for Psalms.

At several junctures I feared that the proposal for the Psalm book (# 6), my main objective, might get bottled up in committee and delayed for a year. But once I was able to explain (in answer to a much needed question asked by Scott Reiber at that point) that we had already almost completed the project and final review was all that was needed, the Assembly voted overwhelmingly in favor of all the proposals. I was surprised to find out that I had been fielding questions for nearly an hour.

I, of course, was thrilled. The *Trinity Psalter* could be printed and available by the meeting of the next Assembly, barring any major obstacles. For the first time in a long, long time, the Psalms for singing would be accessible to churches and individuals in a relatively inexpensive format. Look for revival to follow, I thought.

As it turned out, the final work was not printed until late May and arrived from the printer after the Assembly had already begun.

Tuesday morning we found in our seats beautiful newly purchased copies of the *Trinity Psalter*. Over the course of the next four days, we sang from it Psalms 5, 7, 25, 46, 91, 92, 122, and 146 (we also sang Psalms 1, 13, 23, 32, 133, and 139 from other sources). The response was very positive. Some who had been quite skeptical, including a pastor of one of our larger churches, indicated that they would be purchasing them.

By Thursday morning all 1,000 copies of the *Psalter* at the PCA Bookstore display had sold out. Dozens of interested commissioners had to be turned away. The level of interest, even enthusiasm, was very high.

I put forward a personal resolution calling for our Christian Education and Publication Committee to “investigate avenues of participation” in the RPCNA's current revisionary work, and “if the way be open, to assign qualified individuals to do so.” That resolution was then amended on the floor to say, “that Terry Johnson be assigned to do so.” In other words, the PCA wants as much involvement in the project to revise *The Book of Psalms for Singing* as the RPCNA is comfortable with, and wants me to spearhead that involvement for us. An invitation to do so was extended by their Assembly in June. The *Trinity Psalter*, we trust, is only the beginning.

Since publication in 1994, the *Trinity Psalter* and *Trinity Psalter Music Edition* have sold over 37,000 copies, and are currently in use in hundreds of churches.

II.

Review of *Trinity Psalter* - Its Composition & Characteristics

- I. *Purpose of format*: produce a relatively inexpensive slender hymnal companion for hymnal using congregations.
 1. We searched for a product currently published to fill our needs but found none.
 - i) *Scottish* (1650) and *Irish* (1880) Psalters are produced overseas, metrically limited, expensive, and the language is unnecessarily archaic;
 - ii) *The Psalter* (1912) is not a complete Psalter, omitting or altering verses at times and leans too much on Victorian gospel music;
 - iii) The East Australian (*The Complete Book of Psalms for Singing*, 1991) came close to the ideal, but phrasing is awkward to American ears;
 - iv) *Anglo-Genevan Psalter* -- while appreciating the genius of the old Genevan tunes, found them too remote for most congregations, and the words too paraphrastic.
 - iv) The *Covenanter* (*The Book of Psalms for Singing*, 1973) is the best option with its metrical variety and with nearly half of its settings using modernized English, but it is bulky (nearly 500 pages), and with 430 tunes, difficult. It suits and exclusively Psalm-singing denomination well. But it did not seem realistic to expect hymnal using congregations to use it given its size and cost. However it could be *adapted* for congregations with hymnals.
 2. We endeavored then to adapt *The Book of Psalms for Singing*, using its words and tunes as much as possible, only departing from it when necessary for the sake of familiar tunes. We believed that it was critical that *most* of the tunes in a PCA Psalter be familiar or easily learned. The combination of unfamiliar words with unfamiliar tunes would have been deadly. The following principles generally guided our work:
 - i) use one version of each Psalm (eliminating most multiple versions);
 - ii) use one tune per Psalm;
(Regarding these later two principles, we'd like for a body of beloved Psalmody to develop with words associated with a given tune.)
 - iii) use tunes familiar to well-informed PCA congregations;
 - iv) use words only with names of recommended tunes;
(Regarding these last two principles, we'd prefer music score and one line of words for each Psalm, but words-only was the best that we could negotiate.)
 3. Results -- a slender, inexpensive, highly attractive and easy to use Psalm book including all verses of 150 Psalms, edifying for public, domestic, and private worship.

II. Characteristics

- i) Approximately 50% of the Psalms were left untouched (78 of 150). Words and tunes were left exactly as set in *The Book of Psalms for Singing*.
- ii) Another 57 use the words of *The Book of Psalms for Singing*, but shift around the tunes "left over" from the above process, or introduce tunes not used in *The Book of Psalms for Singing*. Thus 134 of 150 Psalm words are from *The Book of Psalms for Singing*, at least 69 of which are modernized English, and another 10 virtually such.
- iii) The remaining 16 use words from other sources, 8 from the *Book of Psalms* (1871), 5 from the *Irish Psalter*, 2 from *The Complete Book of Psalms for Singing*, and 1 from *The Psalter* (1912). This was done *only for the sake of* alternate versions to the CM, allowing "left over" and familiar LM, 8787, and 7676 tunes to be used:

<u>Psalter</u>	<u>Psalm</u>	<u>Tune</u>
1871	13	Passion Chorale 7676D
1871	16	Leominster SMD
1871	84	Llangloffan 7676D
1871	114	Quebec LM
1871	141	Canonbury LM
1871	147	Lancashire 7676D
1871	149	Laudate Dominium 10.10.11.11.
Irish	28	Tallis Canon LM
Irish	57	Germany LM
Irish	85	St. Bees 7777 and St. George's Windsor 7777D
Irish	132	Federal Street LM
Irish	117	Laast un erfreuen LM with alleluia
CBOPFS	48	Wareham LM
CBOPFS	89	Ode to Joy 8787D
<i>The Psalter</i> 1912	86	Llef LM
1871 and <i>The Psalter</i> 1912	142	Rockingham Old LM

- iv) 13 settings were slightly altered to allow use of more familiar tunes (Psalms 6, 16, 56, 71, 74, 79, 102, 105, 106, 119, 134, 147, and 150 - see below).
- v) Summation: The *Trinity Psalter* is:
 - i) 85% *The Book of Psalms for Singing* (134/150 words, 140/171 tunes);
 - ii) 72% of tunes may be found in the new *Trinity Hymnal* (123 of 171 tunes);
 - iii) Of the 48 tunes not found in the new *Trinity Hymnal*, 16 are found in the old *Trinity Hymnal*;

- iv) About 125 pages in length;
- v) Almost entirely highly singable, using tunes familiar to well-informed PCA congregations.

III. Review of the Psalms of the *Trinity Psalter*.

1. Many commonly known tunes -

+x1 - Arlington	+x91 - Hyfrydol
3 - New Britain	92 - Darwalls 148th
+5 - Aberystwyth	94 - Austrian Hymn
9 - Joanna	96 - Coronation
+15 - Lowry	97 - St. Anne
+25 - Trentham	99 - Leoni
35 - Hamburg	101 - Aurelia
39 - Eventide	102 - Park Street
+x42&43 - St. Agnes	+x103 - Beecher
45 - Diademata	104 - Lyons
46 - Ein Feste Burg	107 - Fountain
50 - St. Thomas	108 - Festal Song
54 - Ebenezer	+110 - All Saints New
57 - Germany	112 - Morecombe
+65 - Webb	122 - Cwm Rhondda
+67 - Missionary Hymn	+133 - Azmon
+x78 - Ellacombe	+x139 - Maryton
+90 - St. Catherine	143 - St. Elizabeth

2. Several commonly know Psalm settings (mostly from the *Trinity Hymnal* or *The Hymnbook*).

+x16 - Leominster	+117 - Laast Uns Erfreuen
+23 - Crimond	+119 - Duane Street
46 - Materna	+x121 - Dundee
+x51 - Redhead	+x124 - Old 124th
+66 - Miles Lane	135 - Kirkpatrick
+x84- Llangloffan	+142 - Rockingham Old
+86 - Llef	+x146 - Ripley
+95 - Irish	+149 - Laudate Dominum
+100 - Old Hundredth	

3. Some creative new combinations:

6 - Trewen	+22 - Horsley
7 - Toulon	31 - St. Theodolph
11 - Terra Beata	+x37 - Forest Green
13 - Passion Chorale	+x38 - Merton
18 - Sweet Hour	40 - I Need Thee
+19 - Columbia	41 - Salzburg (tape)

44 - Dominus Regis Me
48 - Wareham
+60 - Bangor
+x63 - St. Columba
71 - St. Christopher
74 - Rest
79 - St. Leonard
81 - Brother James Air
85 - St. George's Windsor or St. Bees
+87 - Richmond
89 - Ode to Joy

+113 - Monkland
115 - Dix
+118 - St. Asaph
119 - Stockholm
119 - He Leadeth Me
126 - Olivette
+127 - Glasgow
+128 - Nettleton
x130 - Martyrdom
134 - All Saints Old
+138 - Hursley
141 - Canonbury
145 - Duke Street
+147 - Lancashire
+x150 - Creation

4. Some dynamic unknown's (or lesser knowns) from *The Book of Psalms for Singing*:

2 - Hintze
+8 - Amsterdam
+24 - Greyfriars
+34 - Yorkshire
+47 - Petersham
+68 - Weymouth
+76 - Neander
80 - Bryn Calfaria

83- Salvum Fac
+98 - Desert
105 - Noel
+106 - Leveque
+116 - Pilgrims
+129 - Old 110th
+136 - Constance
+148 - St. Catherines

5. Some creative changes in suggested tunes:

35 - RUF "When I Survey"
31 - Passion Choral
+46 - Bethlehem
71 - RUF "Beneath the Cross"
+72 - Puer Nobis

Key

x - we will attempt to sing

+ - recorded on *Trinity Psalter CD*, Vol 1 or 2

III.

Implementation: Psalm-Singing in a Hymn-Singing Church

On January 3, 1993 the Independent Presbyterian Church of Savannah sang Psalm 1 in its morning worship service, and Psalm 2 in the evening. On January 10, Psalms 3 and 4 were sung in the morning and evening respectively. On January 17, Psalms 5 and 6 were sung. What was this? A paragraph in the bulletin announced the intention of singing straight through the Psalter, in the fashion of Calvin and the Huguenots. Over a three year period every verse of every Psalm would be sung in the public worship services of this hymnal using congregation. On November 26, 1995, Psalm 150 was sung in the morning service, completing the commitment. The bulletin stated, “what we have done is unique...we know of no other congregation that has done so in this country, in this century, or the last, or perhaps ever.” This may have been hyperbole, but it was a noteworthy achievement.

What was the impetus behind this project? First, there was undoubtedly a touch of Reformed romanticism. If singing through the Psalms in order was good enough for Calvin and the French Reformed church of the 16th and 17th centuries, why not an American church in the late 20th century? The way some people speak one would think that modern people were a different species than their predecessors of hundreds of years ago. If they could do it, so could we. If they could profit, so would we. Second, the pastoral leadership of the IPC of Savannah was intimately involved in the effort to produce the *Trinity Psalter* for the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA). Consequently IPC served as a “guinea pig” for that project, testing the suitability of tunes and words gleaned mainly from *The Book of Psalms for Singing* for hymnal using congregations.

What was the result? Though Psalm selections from *The Hymnbook* (that fine old Presbyterian hymnal has sixty some Psalm selection, most of them from the 1912 *Psalter*) had been used in nearly every worship service since 1987 (the previous six years), nevertheless the congregation initially found the going tough. Having no musical score was the most noticeable barrier to overcome. But also twice every Sunday they were confronting words they had never before sung. In addition, they were often grappling with strange tunes as well. For some this proved stressful and the inevitable grumbling began. But this was never more than a minority response. A large number were enthusiastic from the start and their ranks quickly began to swell. One Sunday night in particular was important in clinching the commitment of the church to singing the Psalms. The Biblical, theological, and historical arguments for what we called “inclusive” psalm-singing (i.e. including them along with hymns as a normative part of public worship) was repeatedly made. But on Sanctity of Human Life Sunday, after preaching against abortion in the morning, the congregation joined together in singing Psalm 139 in the evening:

*My inward parts were formed by Thee;
Within the womb, Thou fashioned me;
And I Thy praises will proclaim,
For strange and wondrous is my frame.*

The experience of singing these words in this form was dynamic. As one man said afterward, “Because the words were in paragraph form I felt like I was really singing the word of God, and they had a power and authority that I have never before sensed in anything that I have sung.” For many this settled the arguments and their commitment to Psalm-singing.

Interestingly, among the most enthusiastic Psalm-singers in the church were those who were new converts or didn’t have a strong church background. In one sense, they didn’t know any better. Psalm-singing came naturally for them in a way that it never did for those reared on gospel songs and choruses. Psalm-singing was encouraged in family worship by featuring a “Psalm-of-the-Month” throughout this period. One of the newer members said to the pastor, “every month I learn a new Psalm and it becomes my favorite.”

One noticeable though unanticipated effect of this three year immersion in the Psalter was a dramatically increased knowledge of the Psalms on the part of everyone from the Pastor to the children. Not only do they know where many of the beloved phrases from the Psalms can be found, but they can sing them! This is a benefit of singing straight through the Psalter. Because there are large sections which one might never get to if one’s method of selection were less systematic, mature congregations should consider making the effort periodically, say once or twice in a generation.

It was also discovered that singing straight through the Psalter, for all the good that can come from it, is not a wise tactic for those who are trying to introduce metrical Psalms to exclusively hymn-singing congregations. It is far better, and wiser, to begin slowly, using only those tunes that are familiar and relatively easy to sing. Nevertheless because this congregation did so, the *Trinity Psalter* is a better book than it would otherwise have been, and with sales of over 10,000 copies, that commitment to sing straight through is bearing fruit throughout the world.

Let me summarize my recommendations for implementation:

1. Begin with the hymnal
2. Sing Psalms at prayer meetings
3. Sing one Psalm a Sunday; work up to one per service
4. Feature a “Psalm of the Month” in newsletter, sing it in services
5. Promote *Psalms of the Trinity Psalter* CD’s, Volumes 1 & 2, and *Hymns Triumphant*, Volumes 1 & 2
6. Use as “Choral Call to Worship”

IV. Quotes on Psalm-singing

Various Quotations

“More than any other book, the Psalms have influenced human life and action, have inspired writers for their best work, have been the most familiar to the great men of all time, have most comforted humanity in times of trial, and have been most intimately associated with the momentous events of history. With the singing of the Psalms the Pilgrim Fathers set sail in the *Mayflower*; the Bay Psalm Book was the third (sic) book printed in America; till the end of the eighteenth century the Psalms were exclusively sung in the Churches; in 1787 Benjamin Franklin, quoting Psalm cxxvii., moved that the Convention that was framing the Constitution for the United States should offer prayer for divine aid in their difficult work. If you could have one book, many would say: The one book would be the Psalms, in which is included, as Heine says, ‘The whole drama of humanity.’” *The Psalms in Human Life*, by Rowland E. Prothero

“There is nothing in true religion – doctrinal, experimental, and practical – but will present itself to our attention whilst we meditate upon the Psalms. The Christian’s use of them in the closet, the minister’s in the pulpit, will generally increase the growing experience of the power of true religion in their own hearts.” – Thomas Scott

“The main subjects of these songs were the glorious things of the Gospel, as is evident by the interpretation that is often put upon them, and the use that is made of them, in the New Testament. For, there is no one Book of the Old Testament that is so often quoted in the New as the Book of Psalms. Here Christ is spoken of in a multitude of songs.” – Jonathan Edwards

“The Book of Psalms instructs us in the use of wings as well as words; it sets us both mounting and singing. Often have I ceased my commenting upon the text, that I might rise with the Psalm and gaze upon visions of God.” *The Treasury of David*, by C. H. Spurgeon

“(The Psalms) are like some marble staircase, trodden by myriads of feet, yet unworn and clear-cut still, up which we too may pass from the blessedness of the initial verse to the ringing hallelujahs that peal out their inspired anthems in the closing sentence of this Golden Book of the inner life.” – F. B. Meyer

Dr. W. G. Blaikie, of Scotland, after comparing the Psalms with hymns of other religions, and having shown, as he expresses it, their “towering preeminence,” concludes his discussion as follows, “The Psalms have proved real forces in human life, enlightening, guiding and comforting, strengthening and purifying character, teaching men’s hands to war and their fingers to fight, inspiring the faith that removes mountains, and the hope that even in the lowest depth of adversity waits patiently for the dawn The Psalms cannot be of mere human manufacture. Reason itself demands for them a higher origin. They are like the stars,

‘Forever singing as they shine:
The Hand that made us is divine.’”

“There are a great many hymns that tell us to praise God and that tell us about praising God; but how few hymns of uninspired writers contain the very thing itself and burst forth in high jubilation. How little literature there is that is suited to the purposes of praise, except David’s spiritual Psalms and Hymns, which not only pour out to God everything the soul can command, but summon the angels, the heavens, the earth, the elements, mountains and hills, trees, beasts, kings, prophets, priests, and all people, and the everlasting spheres to praise Him.” – Henry Ward Beecher

The Psalms are God’s songs for a Church militant as yet, in the very thick of the conflict “twixt truth and falsehood, and the good and evil side.” Consequently, here and there through them we discover the devotional and ethical giving way to the martial note, and the ear catches the call to arms, the tramp of marching armies, the noise of battle, the shout of the conqueror, and the despairing wall of the conquered. Quite fittingly, therefore, these Psalms have been treasured in the heart and written upon the banners and sounded upon the lips of God’s militant host, whose age-long cry has been, “Give me liberty, or give me death.” – *The Psalms in Worship*, p. 513

During the seventeenth century the followers of the False Prophet swept across the Hellespont, and with lust of blood and fiery sword were laying waste eastern Europe. “To the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty,” came Sobieski, afterward King John III. of Poland, met the fanatic host of Khotin, turned them back into the sea, lifted high the Cross above the Crescent, and thus forever put an end to the dream of Mohammedan conquest in Europe. When the victory was complete these soldiers of the Lord of Hosts gave tongue to their rejoicing in the words of the One Hundred and Fifteenth Psalm:

“Not unto us, Lord, not to us,
But do Thou glory take
To Thy own name, ev’n for Thy truth,
And for Thy mercy’s sake.”

With a burst of enthusiasm truly indescribable, the great army took up the final words:

“O wherefore should the heathen say,
Where is their God now gone?
But our God in the heaven is,
What pleased Him He hath done.”

– *The Psalms in Worship*, p. 513

In the religious wars of France the Psalms became the Huguenots “Marseillaise.” They sounded as the war-cry above all the battlefields of Coligny and Henry of Navarre. Before the battle of Courtras, falling upon their knees, the Huguenots chanted the One Hundred and Eighteenth Psalm:

“This day God make; with cheerful voice
In it we’ll triumph and rejoice.
Save now, O Lord, we plead with Thee;
Lord, send us now prosperity.

Pointing to the kneeling host, a certain young gallant said to the commander of the Catholic forces, “See, the cowards are afraid; they are confessing themselves.” To which a scarred veteran made answer, “Sire, when the Huguenots behave like that, they are getting ready to fight to the death.” And as if to make good the veteran’s declaration, leaping from their knees, with Henry at their head, they swept on to decisive victory. – *The Psalms in Worship*, p.513

The Fathers of the Early Church, like Origen, and Jerome, and Ambrose, and Augustine, loved them; through the Dark Ages the monk in his monastery cell as he gave himself unceasingly to their chanting was comforted by them; martyr after martyr as they went to the flames or the rack leaned upon them. They have been the home-songs of countless multitudes whose names history does not record; they have been the heart-songs of humanity. They have lived longer than any other songs; they have broken through the limitations of age and race and creed to a greater degree than any other songs; they have comforted more saints amid the fires of persecution than any other songs; they have interwoven themselves into more characters than any other songs; they have formed the dying utterances of more of God’s people than any other songs. As we join our voices in the singing of them to day we are indeed joining our voices with a great multitude such as no man can number – a multitude of the most godly and the most heroic souls this world has ever known. – *The Psalms in Worship*

If it were asked, “What have the Psalms done?” I would answer, for one thing they have made men – men heroic mold, of lofty faith, of fearless soul, who bowed the knee to none save God, and loved their liberty more than they loved their lives. Of them it might be said, as Lelievre, the Frenchman, writes of the Huguenots – for the character of Puritan and Huguenot was of the same fine moral fiber: “the effect of the Psalms on the character of the Huguenots was wonderful. They nourished the moral life of a race of men such as the world will perhaps never see again.” Yes, the world would be infinitely poorer without these Puritans – worshipers of God, haters of unrighteousness, singers of Psalms, great nation-builders. – *The Psalms in Worship*, p. 515-516

The Psalms in America are a part of the national heritage, since they were so closely identified with its early history, wrought so mightily into the lives of those who made it, and have entered so largely into the religious experience and practice of the people from the first day to this. In the hour when the Pilgrim Fathers were about to sail from Leyden, not in quest of the Golden Fleece, not in search of the fabled wealth, but to find a haven of liberty and lay the foundations of a mighty nation, kneeling on the sands of Deift Haven, after prayer by the minister commending them to the God of the winds and the waves, they all joined in singing Luther’s favorite Psalm, the Forty-Sixty,

“God will our strength and refuge prove,
In all distress a present aid;
Though waters roar and troubled be,
We will not fear or be dismayed,”

and then sailed away in the Speedwell. To the strains of a similar Psalm the Mayflower spread her sails for her perilous journey across the seas. Arriving at the shores of the New World on the Sabbath, a day holy to the Lord among these Puritans, they spent the day aboard the ship in the customary acts of religious worship, a part of which was the singing of the Psalms. Thus the first sacred song that ever went echoing along that “rock-bound coast,” or broke the stillness of slumbering forests, was one of the old Hebrew Psalms which David, twenty-five centuries before, was accustomed to waken the echoes amid the hills and valleys of Judea. On the morrow, as those men stood, axe in hand, confronting the savage growths of a new continent and the unknown dangers from still more savage men and beasts, to the singing of a Psalm there was laid the foundation-stone of the great Republic forever dedicated to “the service of civil liberty and the religion of the Protestant Church.” What men they were, those pioneers of American history! – *The Psalms in Worship*, p. 515

If the harp of David presided at the laying of the foundation-stone of the nation, not less were its notes distinctly heard when the “coping-stone of American independent” was securely placed. the Constitutional Convention, which met at Philadelphia in 1778, during its early sessions was rife with dissensions; mutual distrust and jealousy seriously retarded its work, and the obstructive tactics of those opposed to the union of the colonies became so great as to draw from Washington, its President, the declaration, “It is all too probable that no plan which we propose can be adopted.” At this juncture Benjamin Franklin arose and offered his historic notion that henceforth “prayers imploring the assistance of heaven and its blessings upon our deliberations be made every morning in this assembly before proceeding to business,” and concluded a most eloquent plea in its behalf by quoting these words from the One Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Psalm, “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.” And almost from that hour the Assembly went steadily forward with its task and ultimately produced a document forever immortal. Indeed, throughout colonial times and the early formative period of the nation the Psalms left their impress upon human thought, shaped ideals, molded public opinion, colored the literature, and even reflected themselves in the laws. – *The Psalms in Worship*, p. 516

The Psalms were ever on the lips of Cromwell and his invincible Ironsides in the Puritan struggle for liberty. They sang them as they marched; and as they marched, they conquered. During the night before the battle of Dunbar rain and sleet fell incessantly upon the unprotected Puritan host. Drenched with the rain, stiffened by the cold, faint from hunger, as the darkness melted into dawn, they crept through the cornfields where they had bivouacked, and when at last the rising sun burst over St. Abb’s head, with the shout upon their lips, “Let God arise, and let His enemies be scattered,” [Ps. 68] they leaped to the attack, and the enemy, taken by surprise, were thrown into confusion and a precipitate flight that became a complete rout. After a pursuit and punishment lasting eight hours, a halt was made, only long enough, however, to allow the Puritans to sing the shortest of all the Psalms, the One Hundred and Seventeenth, when the pursuit was resumed with fresh vigor. – *The Psalms in Worship*, p. 513, 514

“With additional light which has been under the Christian revelation, the Psalms have not been superseded. The Christian looks to the Psalms with an interest as intense as did the ancient

Jew . . . They will retain their value in all time to come, nor will there ever be in our world such advance in religious light, experience, and knowledge, that they will lose their relative place as connected with the exercise of practical piety. David is the Psalmist of eternity; a thousand eulogies have been uttered over these hymns of the heart, these soul songs of all God's children."

– Albert Barnes

"The Book of Psalms, standing midway between both covenants, and serving equally to the members of each as the handmaid of a living piety, is a witness of a living piety, is a witness of the essential identity of their primary and fundamental ideas. There the disciples of Moses and of Christ meet as on common ground, the one taking up as their most natural and fitting expressions of faith and hope the hallowed words which the other had been wont to use in their devotion ages before, and then bequeathed as a legacy to succeeding generations of believers." – Patrick Fairburn, *Typology of Scripture*

"All the wonders of Greek civilization heaped together are less wonderful than is the simple Book of Psalms – the history of the human soul in relation to its Maker." – Gladstone

"The voice of Christ and His Church is well-nigh the only voice to be heard in the Psalms." – Augustine

"The Psalter may be regarded as the heart-echo to the speech of God, the manifold music of its wind-swept strings as God's breath sweeps across them." – Alexander Maclaren

"Moreover, men, women, and children should be exhorted to exercise themselves in Psalms, that when the Kirk doth convene and sing they may be the more able together with common hearts and voices to praise God." – *The First Book of Discipline of the Kirk of Scotland*, 1560

"In these busy days it would be greatly to the spiritual profit of Christian men if they were more familiar with the Book of Psalms, in which they would find a complete armor for life's battles and a perfect supply for life's needs. Here we have both delight and usefulness, consolation and instruction. Of every condition there is a Psalm and suitable and elevating. The Book supplies the babe in Christ with penitent cries and the perfected saint with triumphant songs. Its breadth of experience stretches from the jaws of Hell to the gates of Heaven. He who is acquainted with the marches of the Psalm country knows that the land flows with milk and honey, and he delights to travel therein." – C. H. Spurgeon

I want a name for that man who should pretend that he could make better hymns than the Holy Ghost. His collection is large enough: it wants no addition, it is perfect, as its author, and not capable of any improvement. Why in such a case would any man in the world take it into his head to write hymns for the use of the Church? It is just the same as if he was to write a new Bible, not only better than the old, but so much better, that the old may be thrown aside. What a blasphemous attempt! And yet our hymn-mongers, inadvertently, I hope, have come very near to this blasphemy; for they shut out the Psalms, introduce their own verses into the Church, sing them with great delight, and as they fancy with great profit; although the whole practice be in direct opposition with

the blessing of God. – William Romaine, “An Essay on Psalmody,” *Works* (London: T. Chapman, 1796), Vol. VIII, p. 465.

If there is any one thing connected with the manner of conducting the religious services of the Sabbath by the Puritan forefathers of New England which we ought to imitate or restore, is that of singing – of singing the Psalms, of singing the Psalms by a choir consisting of the whole congregation, both young men and maidens, old men and children.” – Lowell Mason

Dr. Henry Van Dyke, in “the Story of the Psalms,” has very beautifully described their striking adaption to meet the needs of various classes and conditions. He says: “With the music of the Psalms the shepherd and plowmen cheered their toil in ancient Palestine; and to the same music the Gallic boatmen kept time as they rowed their barges against the swift current of the Rhone. A Psalm supplied the daily grace with which the early Christians blessed their food; and the same Psalm was repeated by the communicants as they went to the Lord’s Table. St. Chrysostom, fleeing into exile; Martin Luther, going to meet all possible devils at Worms; George Wishart, facing the plague at Dundee; Wycliff, on his sick bed, surrounded by his enemies; John Bunyan, in Bedford gaol; William Wilberforce, in a crisis when all his most strenuous efforts seemed in vain, and his noble plans were threatened with ruin – all stayed their hearts, and renewed their courage, with verses from the Psalms. The Huguenots at Dieppe marched to victory chanting the Sixty-Eighth Psalm; the same stately war-song sounded over the field of Dunbar. It was a Psalm that Alice Benden sung in the darkness of her Canterbury dungeon; and the lips of the Roman Paulla, faintly moving in death, breathed their last sigh in the words of a Psalm. The motto of England’s proudest university is a verse from the Psalms; and a sentence from the same Book is written above the loneliest grave on earth, among the snows of the Arctic Circle. It is with the fifth verse of the Thirty-First Psalm that our Lord Jesus Christ commended His soul into the hands of God; and with the same word St. Stephen, St. Polycarp, St. Basil, St. Bernard, St. Louis, Huss, Columbus, Luther, and Melancthon - yea, and many more saints, of whom no man knoweth, – have bid their farewell to earth and their welcome to heaven. And so it is that these Psalms come to us with a power and a sweetness which has grown through all the centuries, a life precious and manifold. But not this alone; for they breathe also the fragrance of all that is highest and best in the mortal.”

“We intend after the example of the prophets and primitive Fathers to turn the Psalms into the vulgar tongue for the common people, so that the Word of God may remain among the people even in singing.” – Luther

For Protestant England the history of missions to the heathen begins with John Eliot, the son of a Hertfordshire yeoman. By means of his metrical version of David’s Psalms in their own dialect he sang his way into the hearts of the red men of the New England forests. >From Eliot and Brainerd William Carey traced his spiritual lineage; from them Henry Martyn caught his inspiration and David Livingstone drank in long draughts of his spiritual enthusiasm. – *The Psalms in Worship*, p. 523

Dean Stanley, in his lectures on the “History of the Jewish Church,” says, “In the first centuries the Psalms were sung at the love-feast and formed the morning and evening hymns of the primitive

Churches. ... They were sung by the plowmen of Palestine in the time of Jerome; by the boatmen of Gaul in the time of Sidonius Apollinaris . . .”

Chrysostom also tells how the Psalms enlivened the life of believers in his day: “David is always in their mouths, not only in the cities and in the churches, but in the courts, in the mountains, in the deserts, in the wilderness.”

Council of Braga (350 A.D.) made the following enactment: “Except the Psalms and hymns of the Old and New Testaments, nothing of a poetical nature is to be sung in the church.”

“The Psalter is the first hymn-book of the Church, and it will outlive all other hymn-books. Its treasury of pious experience and spiritual comfort will never be exhausted.” – Dr. Philip Schaff

“A Psalms is the calm of souls, the arbiter of peace: it stills the stormy waves of thought. It softens the angry spirit and sobers the intemperate. A Psalm cements friendship; it unites those who are at variance; it reconciles those who are at enmity. For who can regard as an enemy the man with whom he has joined in lifting up one voice to God? Psalmody therefore provides the greatest of all good things, even love, for it has therefore invented concerted singing as a bond of unity, and fits the people together in the concord of one choir. A psalm puts demons to flight; it summons the angels to our aid; it is a weapon in the midst of alarms by night, a rest from the toils of day; it is a safeguard for babes, a decoration for adults, a comfort for the aged, a most fitting ornament for women. It makes deserts populous and market-places sane. It is an initiation to novices, growth to those who are advancing, a confirmation to those who are being perfected. It is the voice of the church; it gladdens festivals, it creates godly sorrow. For a Psalm calls forth tears from a stony heart. A Psalm is the employment of angels, heavenly converse, spiritual incense. What mayest thou not learn thence? The heroism of courage; the integrity of justice; the gravity of temperance; the perfection of prudence; the manner of repentance; the measure of patience; in a word every good thing thou canst mention. Therein is a complete theology; the prediction of the advent of Christ in the flesh, the threatening of judgment, the hope of resurrection, the fear of chastisement, promises of glory, revelations of mysteries; all, as in some great public storehouse, are treasured up in the Book of Psalms.” – St. Basil

“Above all this, the book contains divine and helpful doctrines and commandments of every kind. It should be precious and dear to us if only because it most clearly promises the death and resurrection of Christ, and describes His kingdom, and the nature and standing of all Christian people. It could well be called a ‘little Bible’ since it contains, set out in the briefest and most beautiful form, all that is to be found in the whole Bible, a book of good examples from among the whole of Christendom and from among the saints, in order that those who could not read the whole Bible through would have almost the whole of it in summary form, comprised in a sing booklet.” – Martin Luther, *Preface to the Psalms*, 1528

Calvin's Implementation of Metrical Psalm-Singing in Geneva

“Moreover, that which St. Augustine has said is true, that no one is able to sing things worthy of God except that which he has received from Him. Therefore, when we have looked thoroughly, and searched here and there, we shall not find better songs nor more fitting for the purpose, than the Psalms of David, which the Holy Spirit spoke and made through him. And moreover, when we sing them, we are certain that God puts in our mouths these, as if He Himself were singing in us to exalt His glory. Wherefore Chrysostom exhorts, as well as the men, the women and the little children to accustom themselves to singing them, in order that this may be a sort of meditation to associate themselves with the company of angels.” – John Calvin, *Preface to the Psalter*, 1543

The distinctive musical contribution of the Reformed Churches to Christendom has been the congregational singing of the Psalms. The Lutherans sang hymns. The late-medieval church choirs sang Latin renderings of the Psalms using Gregorian tunes. The early Swiss Reformers (Zwingli, Farel) did not sing at all. The movement to promote Psalmody in the Reformed churches was in this sense unprecedented. It also “had no element of spontaneity,” says hymnologist Louis Benson. “It was not even a popular movement, but the conception of one man’s mind and the enterprise of one man’s will.” That enterprising, innovative man was none other than John Calvin.

Calvin’s program of reform was disrupted by his banishment along with William Farel in April of 1538. He appealed to the Synod which met at Zurich, compromised on a number of points, but held fast on two. First, communion should be administered more frequently. Second, the singing of Psalms should be made a part of public worship. His return to Geneva was contingent on the acceptance of these two principles. “It excites a certain surprise,” says Louis Benson, “. . . that at such crisis in church affairs he should make the inauguration of Psalmody the *sine qua non* of his return to Geneva.” For Calvin, the singing of the Psalms was an essential element in the life and health of the church.

The congregational singing of Psalms was central to Calvin’s whole program of liturgical reform. Yet as Benson points out, “it was the element of the program for which he found least sympathy among his colleagues and least preparation among the people.” Strategically then, he proposed to begin with the children. In 1542, a “singing school” was established and a teacher hired to teach the children of Geneva “to sing the Psalms of David.” Beginning with the children the Reformed church learned to sing the newly rhymed and metered words, and newly composed music.

When Calvin returned from banishment in Geneva in 1541, he immediately obtained permission from the Town Council to introduce Psalm-singing into the public worship. The task of putting the Psalms in singable form, having already begun a few years before, was continued. Clement Marot, a court poet and leading lyricist of that day, provided renderings for the first 30 Psalms, Theodore Beza the remaining 120. Louis Bourgeois wrote 83 original melodies. An unknown hand contributed tunes for most of the remaining Psalms, and the goal was nearly achieved of providing one tune for every Psalm. The work progressed slowly. Not until 1562, some 24 years after its inception, was the *Genevan Psalter* finally complete.

One could argue that the *Genevan Psalter*, the prototype of all subsequent of Psalters, has been the most used “hymnbook” in the history of the church. As Calvinistic Reformation spread, so did the practice of congregational Psalm-singing. The Reformed churches in France, the Netherlands, and Germany, as well as the Presbyterian church in Scotland and later the Puritan churches in America, were all exclusively Psalm singing until the beginning of the 19th Century. In the French and Dutch churches, the old Genevan settings and tunes are still used extensively four hundred and fifty years later!

Psalms of the Resurrection

Psalm 2

(compare Acts 4:25-28; 13:33)

Based on the *Book of Psalms*, 1871 and
The Psalter, 1912

- 1 Why do hea-then na-tions rage?
Why do peo-ples fol-ly mind?
- 2 Kings of earth in plots en-gage,
Rul-ers are in league com-bined;
Then a-against Je-ho-vah high,
And a-against Mes-si-ah's sway,
- 3 "Let us break their bands," they cry,
"Let us cast their cords a-way."

- 4 But the Lord will scorn them all;
He will laugh Who sits on high,
- 5 Then His wrath will on them fall;
Sore dis-pleased He will re-ply:
- 6 "Yet ac-cord-ing to My will
I have set My King to reign,
And on Zi-on's ho-ly hill
My A-noint-ed I'll main-tain."

- 7 His de-cree I will make known:
Un-to Me the LORD did say,
"Thou art My be-lov-ed Son;
I've be-got-ten Thee this day.
- 8 Ask of Me, and Thee I'll make
Heir to earth and na-tions all;
- 9 Them with i-ron Thou shalt break,
Dash-ing them in piec-es small."

- 10 There-fore, kings, be wise, give ear;
Heark-en, judg-es of the earth;
- 11 Serve the Lord with god-ly fear;
Min-gle trem-bling with your mirth.
- 12 Kiss the Son, His wrath to turn,
Lest ye pe-rish in the way,
For His an-ger soon will burn.
Blessed are all that on Him stay.

TUNE: HINTZE 7777D (2) or
SPANISH HYMN (*The Hymnbook*, p. 253)
("How I Love Thy Law, O Lord")

Psalm 16

Verses 8-11

(compare Acts 2:25-28; 13:35)

- 8 I al-ways keep the LORD
Be-fore me, Him to see.
Be-cause He is at my right hand
I ne-ver moved shall be.
- 9 Thus glad-ness fills my soul;
My joy must be ex-pressed
With my whole be-ing, for my flesh
Se-cure-ly finds its rest.
- 10 My soul You will not leave
In death's dark pit to be.
Cor-rup-tion You will not per-mit
Your Ho-ly One to see.
- 11 The path of life You'll show;
Of joy You hold great store.
Be-fore Your face, at Your right hand,
Are plea-sures e-ver-more.

TUNE: *LEOMINSTER SMD* (25a)
("Not What My Hands Have Done")

Based on *Book of Psalms*, 1871, and
Psalm 16A, *The Book of Psalms for
Singing*, 1973; altered 1993

Psalm 110

(compare Acts 2:34-36; Hebrews 1:3)

- 1 Je-ho-vah to my Lord has said,
"Sit Thou at My right hand
Un-til I make Thy foes a stool

Where-on Thy feet may stand.”

2 Je-ho-vah shall from Zi-on send
The scep-ter of Thy power.
In bat-tle with Thine en-e-mies
Be Thou the con-quer-or.

3 A will-ing peo-ple in Thy day
Of power shall come to Thee.
Thy youth ar-rayed in ho-li-ness
Like morn-ing dew shall be.

4 Je-ho-vah swore, and from His oath
He nev-er will depart:
“Of th’or-der of Mel-chiz-ed-ek
A priest Thou ev-er art.”

5 The Lord at Thy right hand shall smite
Earth’s ru-lers in His wrath.

6 A-mong the na-tions He shall judge;
The slain shall fill His path.
In man-y lands He’ll o-ver-throw

Their kings with ru-in dread;

7 And, march-ing, He’ll drink from the brook
And so lift up His head.

TUNE: ALL SAINTS NEW CMD (110)
 (“The Son of God Goes Forth to War”)

Based on *Scottish Psalter*, 1650

Psalm 118

Verses 17-29

(compare Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:11;
1 Peter 2:7)

17 I shall not die, but live and tell
Je-ho-vah’s power to save;

18 The LORD has sore-ly chas-tened me,
But spared me from the grave.

19 O set ye o-pen unto me
The gates of right-eous-ness;
Then will I en-ter in-to them
And I the LORD will bless.

20 This is Je-ho-vah’s gate; by it
The just shall en-ter in.

21 I’ll praise Thee Who hast heard my prayer,
And hast my safe-ty been.

22 That stone is made head
cor-ner-stone

Which build-ers did de-spise.

23 This is the do-ing of the LORD,
And won-drous in our eyes.

24 This is the day the LORD has made;
Let us be glad and sing.

25 Ho-san-na, LORD! O give suc-cess!
O LORD, sal-va-tion bring!

26 O bles-sed be the one who comes,
Comes in Je-ho-vah’s name;

The bles-sing from Je-ho-vah’s house
Up-on you we pro-claim.

27 The LORD is God, and He to us
Has made the light a-rise;
O bind ye to the al-tar’s horns
With cords of sa-cri-fice.

28 Thou art my God; I’ll give Thee thanks.
My God, I’ll wor-ship Thee.

29 O thank the LORD, for He is good;
His grace will end-less be.

TUNE: *ST. ASAPH CMD* (122A)

Based on *Scottish Psalter*, 1650