Singing the Faith

LIVING THE LUTHERAN MUSICAL HERITAGE

A Study Guide

by

Daniel Zager

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Foreword

This study guide is intended primarily for parish pastors and musicians using the DVD *Singing the Faith: Living the Lutheran Musical Heritage* as a teaching resource in a parish educational setting. The intent of the guide is to provide supplemental background material that will complement the teaching and music contained on the DVD.

The DVD and study guide are both organized in four chronological segments:

1. Martin Luther
2. Late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Lutheran hymn writers: Martin Schalling, Philipp Nicolai, and Paul Gerhardt
3. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: J. S. Bach, Felix Mendelssohn, and the "Confessional Revival"
4. Lutheran hymns of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries

Hymn references are provided for the following hymnals:

Lutheran Service Book (2006)	LCMS
Evangelical Lutheran Worship (2006)	ELCA
Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary (1996)	ELS
Christian Worship (1993)	WELS
Lutheran Worship (1982)	LCMS
Lutheran Book of Worship (1978)	LCA, ALC, LCMS
The Lutheran Hymnal (1941)	Synodical Conference

Suggested topics "For Discussion" appear throughout the study guide; the pastor or church musician teaching and leading discussion may well supply other points for discussion. Each section provides selected "Resources for Further Study," which, in most cases, refer to books that remain readily available for purchase.

Reproducible handouts for each of the four segments are freely available for downloading and printing at the website of The Good Shepherd Institute of Concordia Theological Seminary [www.goodshepherdinstitute.org]. These handouts are intended to provide participants 1) ready access to names, terms, titles, and brief quotations that are mentioned or included in the study guide, and 2) a convenient way to take some brief notes either while watching the video or listening to supplemental teaching by the pastor or church musician.

May this DVD and study guide assist pastors and church musicians in their teaching of the rich treasure of Lutheran hymns and music, so that all of us may understand more fully what it means to live the Lutheran musical heritage—and to hear in that music the living voice of the Gospel.

Daniel Zager
Rochester, New York
25 November 2007
Last Sunday of the Church Year

Singing the Faith—Part I

Martin Luther's Love of Music

That Lutherans have for nearly five hundred years been engaged in *singing* the faith must not be taken for granted. The foundation of singing the faith is to be found in Martin Luther himself, who declared very clearly: "Music I have always loved."[1] Luther's love of music, and his welcoming attitude toward music in worship, made all the difference in laying a foundation that encouraged the composition and use of well-crafted musical repertories—congregational hymns, choral music, organ and other instrumental music—from the sixteenth century to the present day. Such hymns, choral, and instrumental music enable us, like our Lutheran forebears, to proclaim the Gospel through singing the faith.

Luther's love of music manifested itself not merely in his being an enthusiastic listener but rather in his active involvement in making music throughout his lifetime—from his student days of being instructed in music theory and singing, to his years as an Augustinian monk singing the daily round of the church's repertory of Latin chant, to his years as reformer and professor of theology at the University of Wittenberg when he defined a role for music in the church's worship. Thus, from his educational and vocational backgrounds it was altogether natural for Luther to embrace music, and thereby to provide the possibility of *singing* the faith.

Luther's Musical Discernment

As a well-educated musician, thoroughly schooled in the music theory of his day, Luther was *discerning* in his love of music, *discerning* in his choice of music for the church's liturgies. He knew the music of Josquin des Prez (ca. 1450/55–1521) and recognized Josquin as one of the finest composers of the day—just as we today regard Josquin as the most important composer of the early sixteenth century, and one of the most influential composers in the history of Western music. About Josquin, Luther said: "all of [his] compositions flow freely, gently, and cheerfully, [and] are not forced or cramped by rules like the song of the finch."[2] In October 1530 Luther wrote to Ludwig Senfl (ca. 1486–1542/43), a prominent composer who worked at the Catholic court in Bavaria, requesting a musical setting of a specific text:[3]

> Even though my name is detested, so much that I am forced to fear that this letter I am sending may not be safely received and read by you, excellent Louis, yet the love for music, with which I see you adorned and gifted by God has conquered this fear. . . . Because they encourage and honor music so much, I, at least, nevertheless very much praise and respect above all others your dukes of Bavaria, much as they are unfavorably inclined toward me. . . . I ask if you would have copied and sent to me, if you have it, a copy of that song: *In pace in idipsum* [Psalm 4:8]. For this . . . melody has delighted me from youth on, and does so even more now that I understand the words. I have never seen this antiphon arranged for more voices [Luther means composed for multiple voices as a choral piece]. I do not wish, however, to impose on you the work of arranging

> [composing]; rather I assume that you have available an arrangement from some other source. . . . I have already started to sing this antiphon and am eager to hear it arranged.[4]

Indeed Senfl did send to Luther a composition based on this Latin chant. Both in his love for Josquin's music and in his request to Senfl, Luther showed himself to be a discerning musician seeking the best music of his time for use in the church.

Luther and Popular Music: Myth and Fact

Myth: In creating a repertory of hymns, Luther took popular tunes that might have been sung in bars and coupled them with sacred texts.

Fact: On the contrary, there is evidence that Luther did not find popular tunes of his day suitable for German-language hymns (chorales). The case of the Christmas hymn "From Heaven Above to Earth I Come" is instructive. While Luther originally coupled his text with an existing secular tune associated with the text "Ich komm aus fremden Landen her" ("I come from a foreign country"), he apparently had second thoughts and wrote a new tune—the one we sing today—as the hymn came to be published and disseminated more widely. Perhaps he considered the secular tune to be adequate for use in the home, but it is clear that ultimately Luther wanted a different tune to be associated with this Christmas hymn text. Here Luther very consciously did *not* borrow from the popular culture of his time when he had the opportunity to do precisely that, had he found it desirable.[5]

Myth: Luther asked "why should the devil have all the good tunes?" implying that secular, worldly music should be used in the church.

Fact: There is no evidence in Luther's works for such a quotation. *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* attributes the quote to the Rev. Rowland Hill, who lived in England 1744–1833.[6] There is, in fact, no evidence that Luther found the popular music of his day appropriate for use in the church. In his preface to the 1524 collection of Johann Walter's polyphonic hymn settings (see further discussion below) Luther noted:

> And these songs were arranged in four [and five] parts to give the young—who should at any rate be trained in music and other fine arts—something to wean them away from love ballads and carnal songs and to teach them something of value in their place, thus combining the good with the pleasing, as is proper for youth.[7]

Not the words of one who would welcome any and all forms of popular music into the worship of the church!

Luther's Views on Music in Worship

Luther's love of music and his discerning recognition of the well-crafted music of his own day provided him the motivation and knowledge to accord music a prominent place in church and home, in worship and catechesis. His attitudes toward music—his

theology of worship and music—laid the foundation for the vast (and still emerging) Lutheran musical heritage.

In 1538 Luther wrote a preface to a collection of choral music in which he voiced some of his thoughts about music, about his theology of music. He began by observing that music is a gift of God:

> I would certainly like to praise music with all my heart as the excellent gift of God which it is and to commend it to everyone.[8]

A few paragraphs later he states that "next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise."[9]

After positioning music next to the Word of God, he went on to make a most important statement about music, and to assert a connection between praise and proclamation:

> After all, the gift of language combined with the gift of song was only given to man to let him know that he should praise God with both word and music, namely, by proclaiming [the Word of God] through music and by providing sweet melodies with words.[10]

Music, as a gift of God, was given to us so that we may "praise God with both word and music." But Luther doesn't stop with that observation; he goes on to make clear *how* it is that we praise God with both word and music: "by proclaiming [the Word of God] through music." Thus, according to Luther, we praise God not merely by ascribing praise to Him but by telling *why* He is worthy of praise: by proclaiming His gift of salvation in Jesus Christ. One year before his death in 1546 Luther again linked singing and proclamation in the clearest way:

> For God has cheered our hearts and minds through his dear Son, whom he gave for us to redeem us from sin, death, and the devil. He who believes this earnestly cannot be quiet about it. But he must gladly and willingly sing and speak about it so that others also may come and hear it.[11]

Thus, in Luther's view we praise God by proclaiming His saving acts. Though Luther did not cite this passage of Scripture in this context, he may have had in mind scriptural passages like Psalm 9:11: "Sing praises to the Lord, who sits enthroned in Zion! Tell among the peoples his deeds!" We praise God by proclaiming His deeds on behalf of His people.

As one who loved music, Luther had no interest in abandoning the church music repertories of his day, namely the great body of Latin chant that he had sung regularly as an Augustinian monk.

> Let the chants in the Sunday masses and Vespers be retained; they are quite good and are taken from Scripture. [1523][12]

But he also recognized that the people needed to be able to sing in their own German language, for that was an important means of education and catechesis. Proclaiming the faith by singing it was—and is—a means of taking doctrine in at a very deep level.

> I also wish that we had as many songs as possible in the vernacular which the people could sing during mass. . . . [1523][13]

By 1523, a mere six years after the posting of the Ninety-five Theses, Luther was moving toward the creation of German-language psalms and hymns.

Singing the News

Luther's narrative ballad "Ein neues Lied wir heben an" dates from 1523. In this text Luther provided news of a recent occurrence, the burning at the stake of two Augustinian monks for their profession of faith according to Luther's teachings. In so doing, he followed a well-established tradition in which a singer would relate the news of the day in a strophic [multiple stanzas] text sung to an easily perceptible tune that often took the form AAB, meaning that the first part of the melody [A] would be repeated with new text before moving on to the second part [B] of the melody. The first stanza of this narrative ballad states:

A new song here shall be begun,	A
The Lord God help our singing!	
Of what our God himself hath done,	A
Praise, honor to him bringing.	
At Brussels in the Netherlands	B
By two boys, martyrs youthful	
He showed the wonders of his hands,	
Whom he with favor truthful	
So richly hath adorned.[14]	

Singing the *Good* News

Having written the text of "Ein neues Lied" it would have become clear to Luther that he and his coworkers could write similar texts that declared not merely the news of the day but the good news of the Gospel—that God justifies sinful humans by grace through faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" [Rom 3:23–24].

In this same year, 1523, Luther was working on his order for the Latin Mass (his *Formula missae*). It was there that he expressed his desire for "as many songs as possible in the vernacular which the people could sing during mass." To accomplish this task he wrote letters to his colleagues seeking their assistance. One such letter, to Georg Spalatin, survives:

> Following the example of the prophets and fathers of the church, I intend to make German Psalms for the people, i.e., spiritual songs so that the Word of God even by means of song may live among the people. Everywhere we are looking for poets. Now since you are so skillful and eloquent in German, I would like to ask you to work with us in this and to turn a Psalm into a hymn as in the enclosed

sample of my own work [probably Luther's "Aus tiefer Not," ("From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee") his hymnic version of Psalm 130].[15]

There is no evidence that Spalatin ever produced a German-language psalm or hymn for Luther, but it is clear that during 1523 Luther was working very hard on creating a repertory of German-language psalms and hymns. The following year brought several important publications of such hymns for singing the faith.

Among the hymnals published in 1524 was a collection of eight hymns entitled *Etlich Cristlich lider Lobgesang und Psalm* (Some Christian songs, canticles, and psalms), sometimes referred to as the "Achtliederbuch" (literally, the eight-songbook). The very first hymn in this collection is Luther's "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice"—all ten stanzas sung to the tune most commonly used in our twentieth- and twenty-first-century Lutheran hymnals in America. Likewise, the second hymn is another that finds continued use in our singing today: "Salvation unto Us Has Come," by Luther's coworker Paul Speratus (1484–1551).

Another significant hymnal from 1524 was a collection of hymns for use by choirs singing in parts. Johann Walter (1496–1570), an important musical advisor to and collaborator with Luther, provided choral settings of many of these early hymns of the Lutheran Reformation. Walter's compositions are very much in the style of Josquin and Senfl, the composers who were held in such high regard by Luther.

By the year 1524 Luther and his colleagues were busily writing hymn texts and tunes, and even beginning to compose choral settings of hymns—a musical genre that has been used in Lutheran worship throughout the past five centuries. Thus, a short seven years after the posting of the Ninety-five Theses (1517), Luther and his coworkers had effectively laid the foundation for *singing the faith*, for the Lutheran heritage of church music in its congregational and choral manifestations.

Table 1.1 demonstrates that Lutheran hymnals published in America from the second half of the twentieth century and the early years of the twenty-first century continue to include this heritage of congregational song. All of the hymns (though not always the precise combination of text and tune) listed in Table 1.1 may be found in these 1524 hymnals (this table is *not* a complete list of the hymns found in these volumes).

For Discussion

1. How many of you have heard the myth that Luther used popular tunes that were sung in bars as the basis for some of his hymn melodies? As you learned more about Luther, were there other myths that were dispelled or new insights that you gained?

2. Sing stanzas 1 through 4 of Luther's hymn "Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice." Which of these stanzas are Law and which Gospel? Discuss how this hymn reflects Luther's proposition that we praise God by proclaiming the Word of God. What does this hymn text proclaim?

   [To the extent that Luther's parishioners sang these hymns—and there is evidence that they did not take to the proposition of congregational singing nearly as quickly or as well as Luther would have liked—they sang in unison or with the support of a choir. Hymn singing lead and supported by an organ became a reality only gradually

during the course of the subsequent two centuries. So in your study sessions with this video and study guide sound the starting pitch of a hymn on a keyboard instrument or on a pitch pipe and sing the hymn in unison.]

3. Using Table 1.1 look at the hymn texts that are included in the hymnal used by your congregation. Some of these hymns are based on psalms, some relate to particular seasons or days in the church year, some summarize the chief parts of the Small Catechism, some represent parts of the liturgy, while others are teaching sermons. Examine these early hymns in relation to these functional categories. How do these hymns set a standard for Lutheran teaching, preaching, and proclamation in our own day?

Table 1.1: Hymns from 1524 hymnals included in selected American Lutheran hymnals

Hymn Title	LSB 2006	ELW 2006	ELH 1996	CW 1993	LW 1982	LBW 1978	TLH 1941
Savior of the Nations, Come	332	263	90	2	13	28	95
We Praise You, Jesus, at Your Birth	382	—	136	33	35	48	80
The Only Son from Heaven	402	309	224	86	72	86	—
Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands	458	370	343	161	123	134	195
Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord	497	395	2	176	154	163	224
Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest	498	578	10	177	156	284	233
Triune God, Be Thou Our Stay	505	—	18	192	170	308	247
Salvation unto Us Has Come	555	590	227	390	355	297	377
Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice	556	594	378	377	353	299	387
All Mankind Fell in Adam's Fall	562	—	430/491	378	363	—	369
These Are the Holy Ten Commands	581	—	490	285	331	—	287
From Depths of Woe I Cry to Thee	607	600	452	305	230	295	329
O Lord, We Praise Thee	617	499	327	317	238	215	313
Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior	627	—	316/317	313	236/237	—	311
In the Very Midst of Life	755	—	527	534	265	350	590
To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray	768	743	33	190	155	317	231
May God Bestow on Us His Grace	823	—	591	574	288	335	500
In Peace and Joy I Now Depart	938	440	48	269	185	349	137
We All Believe in One True God	954	411	38	271	213	374	251

LSB = *Lutheran Service Book* (LCMS)
ELW = *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* (ELCA)
ELH = *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (ELS)
CW = *Christian Worship* (WELS)
LW = *Lutheran Worship* (LCMS)
LBW = *Lutheran Book of Worship*
TLH = *The Lutheran Hymnal*

Part I: Notes

1 Quoted in Robin A. Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007), 21, 349.
2 Leaver, 51, 368.
3 Leaver, 52, 368–69.
4 Martin Luther, *Letters II*, ed. Gottfried G. Krodel, Luther's Works, vol. 49 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1972), 427–29.
5 See Leaver, p. 17 for both tunes in musical notation.
6 See James Brauer, "The Devil's Tunes," *Concordia Journal* 23 (January 1997): 2–3.
7 Martin Luther, *Liturgy and Hymns*, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold, Luther's Works, vol. 53 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 316.
8 Luther, vol. 53, 321.
9 Luther, vol. 53, 323.
10 Luther, vol. 53, 323–24.
11 Luther, vol. 53, 333.
12 Luther, vol. 53, 13.
13 Luther, vol. 53, 36.
14 Luther, vol. 53, 214.
15 Luther, vol. 53, 221.

Part I: Resources for Further Study

Martin Luther, *Liturgy and Hymns*, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold, Luther's Works, vol. 53 (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965).

James Brauer, "The Devil's Tunes," *Concordia Journal* 23 (January 1997): 2–3.

Christopher Boyd Brown, *Singing the Gospel: Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005).

Walter E. Buszin, "Luther on Music," *Musical Quarterly* 32 (January 1946): 80–97 [reprinted 1958 by Lutheran Society for Worship, Music and the Arts as no. 3 in their Pamphlet Series].

Joseph Herl, *Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism: Choir, Congregation, and Three Centuries of Conflict* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Robin A. Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007).

Carl F. Schalk, *Luther on Music: Paradigms of Praise* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1988).

Singing the Faith—Part II

Martin Schalling (1532–1608)

Martin Schalling, who studied at the University of Wittenberg with Philipp Melanchthon, worked during a difficult time in sixteenth-century Germany. Doctrinal positions were still being defined and written down (the Formula of Concord dates from 1577, the Book of Concord from 1580). If a regional ruler mandated Calvinist doctrine in his area, a Lutheran pastor would be forced to leave and seek pastoral duties elsewhere. Schalling was affected deeply by these very uncertainties, but from 1585 was able to serve as pastor of St. Mary's Church in Nürnberg. We have received from him an extraordinary hymn text "Lord, You I Love with All My Heart" ("Herzlich lieb hab' ich dich, o Herr"), which was published in 1571. The tune was published shortly thereafter, in 1577.

"Lord, You I Love with All My Heart"

LSB	708
ELW	750
ELH	406
CW	434
LW	413
LBW	325
TLH	429

Schalling's first stanza may well reflect the difficulties he experienced—and the faith that sustained him:

And should my heart for sorrow break,
My trust in Thee can nothing shake.

Why is his faith unshaken? Because "Thy precious blood my soul has bought." In the midst of very difficult times, Schalling wrote that even when his heart breaks with sorrow he knows that he has been redeemed by the blood of Christ (compare Luther's explanation to the Second Article of the Apostles' Creed). And if his soul's salvation is assured, the sorrows and heartbreak of this world cannot destroy his faith in his Savior and his sure and certain hope of eternal life.

In his second stanza, Schalling acknowledges that everything he has comes from God's "rich bounty" (compare Luther's explanation to the First Article of the Apostles' Creed). He prays that God's "lavish grace" be glorified, that the neighbor be helped and served, that we be kept from false doctrine and Satan's temptations. Schalling asks God for "strength and patience" to bear the cross. With a poetic economy of words, this stanza is rich in thought, with themes of God's undeserved love, our love for the neighbor as we reflect God's love for us, and the prayer that we may bear our crosses and follow Jesus (Mt 16:24).

Schalling's third stanza has become very well known, perhaps in part because Bach would later incorporate it into his *St. John Passion*, as the very last element of that work in its 1724 version. But even more importantly, Schalling's third stanza provides us an incomparable way of thinking about our own death—and our own resurrection to eternal life.

For Discussion

1. Sing through the first two stanzas of Schalling's hymn. Explore the richness of their content, tracing the themes of these stanzas to their biblical roots [st. 1: I Jn 4:19, I Pt 1:18–19; st. 2: Ps 139:13, Eph 2:8, Mt 20:26–28, Mk 9:35, Mt 16:24], and in some cases to Luther's words of explanation in his Small Catechism. Does such a sixteenth-century hymn text establish a model for the kind of hymns we sing in our parishes today?

2. Sing through stanza three. Trace the scriptural references in Schalling's poetry [Lk 16:22, Job 19:25–27], and follow his outline—phrase by phrase—that teaches us about death and resurrection. Name some of the times when this hymn would be appropriately sung.

Philipp Nicolai (1556–1608)

Like Schalling, Philipp Nicolai was the son of a Lutheran pastor. Also like Schalling, he studied theology at Wittenberg. His years as a Lutheran pastor included difficulties first in a predominantly Roman Catholic area of Germany, and, in a later appointment, conflicts with Calvinists. In 1597 a devastating plague claimed the lives of over a thousand people in the town he was serving. Multiple burials each day became a stark reality of his ministry. In the midst of such a traumatic time, Nicolai's comfort resided in the promise of heavenly joy. His two great hymns "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright" ("Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern," sometimes referred to as the "queen" of chorales) and "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying" ("Wachet auf ruft uns die Stimme," sometimes referred to as the "king" of chorales) date from this difficult time in his life, and were published in 1599 in a devotional work by Nicolai, who wrote both text and tune for these hymns.

"O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright"

LSB	395
ELW	308
ELH	167
CW	79
LW	73
LBW	76
TLH	343

Nicolai's text "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright" is rich in thought. Sing through the entire hymn and then begin your exploration of each stanza. The following brief comments are merely introductory with respect to the theological content of this great hymn.

Nicolai takes the words "Morning Star" (in German, "Morgenstern") from Revelation 22:16:

> "I Jesus have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star."

Thus, when Nicolai addresses his hymn text to "Morning Star," he is addressing Jesus.

At the beginning of stanza two Nicolai employs yet another biblical allusion as an address for Jesus: "Come, heav'nly Bridegroom" (see Mt 25:1–13 as the source for this address). Note also that Nicolai's other great hymn "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying" is built around this account from the Gospel of Matthew, and similarly names Jesus "Bridegroom."

Nicolai certainly is reflecting on the difficulties of his own life and time at the end of stanza two:

Now, though daily
Earth's deep sadness
May perplex us
And distress us,
Yet with heav'nly joy You bless us.

While Nicolai may have been tempted to wonder why God permitted the sadness and distress of multiple burials day after day, he looked past those circumstances to declare God's ultimate reality of salvation through the death and resurrection of His Son: "Yet with heav'nly joy You bless us."

With economy of expression and theological clarity, Nicolai gives us words in stanza three to sing of the gifts God gives us:

Your Word and Spirit, flesh and blood
Refresh our souls with heav'nly food,
You are our dearest treasure!

Word, Spirit, body, blood—along with the water of Holy Baptism—these are God's gifts to us for our salvation, delivered in His Divine Service to us.

Receiving these gifts from our gracious God calls forth our sacrifice of praise. As Luther made clear, we "praise God with both word and music, namely by proclaiming [the Word of God] through music and by providing sweet melodies with words." In stanza four Nicolai gives us the opportunity to proclaim God's great love, thereby praising Him:

Almighty Father, in Your Son
You loved us when not yet begun
Was this old earth's foundation!
Your Son has ransomed us in love
To live in Him here and above:
This is Your great salvation.

Nicolai enables us to sing to the Father through the Son, and to *proclaim* to all in our twenty-first century assemblies the Good News:

Your Son has ransomed us in love
To live in Him here and above:
This is Your great salvation.

That is how we praise God—by proclaiming His great salvation!

Nicolai's last two stanzas are simply overwhelming—each in its own way. Again, Nicolai gives us strong words of comfort for life's sadness and distress (stanza five):

For Christ goes with us all the way—
Today, tomorrow, ev'ry day!
His love is never ending!

And in the penultimate line of stanza five, Nicolai reminds us to "Tell the story!" That proposition means not just singing about how much I love the act of telling the story, but actually telling the story—of the Word becoming incarnate, living the perfect life we could not live, dying in our place, rising, ascending, preparing a place for us.

Stanza six of "O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright" is surely one of the greatest hymn stanzas ever written. Sing it again and let Nicolai's words of eternal, heavenly joy be the reminder that nothing "in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:39). This stanza—indeed this entire hymn—exemplifies what it means to *sing the* faith—not to sing *about* the faith, but actually to sing the faith. This hymn is part of the living heritage of Lutheran church music. We sing it to proclaim the faith, to strengthen our own faith, to keep our focus on the heavenly joys to come. "Come, Lord Jesus! . . . We are yearning for the day of Your returning!"

Paul Gerhardt (1607–1676)

Both Schalling and Nicolai died in 1608. One year earlier Paul Gerhardt was born, a man whom we recognize as perhaps the finest poet among an abundance of gifted seventeenth-century Lutheran writers of hymn texts. Although he lived a couple of generations after Schalling and Nicolai, he experienced some of the same problems as his predecessors. Much of his life was spent during the period when the Thirty Years' War (1618–1648) exacted a terrible toll in areas of present-day Germany. Gerhardt once wrote: "The countryside is devastated, the churches destroyed by war and fire."[1] Plagues and epidemics occurred with all too great regularity.

Like Schalling and Nicolai, Gerhardt was also caught in the religious struggles characteristic of late sixteenth- and seventeenth-century German territories. In Gerhardt's case, the Elector of Brandenburg, Friedrich Wilhelm, had been raised in the Netherlands; while he identified with the Reformed church, the majority population of this area of Germany (including Berlin) was orthodox Lutheran. The Elector insisted on a mutual toleration in which Lutheran pastors were to agree "that the doctrinal differences between Reformed and Lutheran members did not concern the fundamental faith."[2] Gerhardt was unable to renounce his ordination vows in order to accede to the Elector's edict. Consequently, on February 13, 1666, Gerhardt was dismissed from his pastoral position at Berlin's Nikolaikirche. He had to wait until 1669 for another pastoral position.

During this difficult time when Gerhardt was deprived of a parish to serve, his wife died in 1668, four of their five children having preceded her in death. Yet in the midst of death, suffering, and religious persecution, Paul Gerhardt wrote hymn texts that proclaim a constant hope in God, hymn texts that *sing the faith*.

Gerhardt wrote some 134 hymns. Some may be categorized as 1) "cross and comfort" hymns; others relate to 2) seasons of the church year such as Advent, Christmas, or Easter; while still others have a 3) strong doctrinal or catechetical emphasis. One example of each type of hymn text follows here, with suggestions for discussion.

For Discussion

1. Sing through Gerhardt's hymn "Entrust Your Days and Burdens" ("Befiehl du deine Wege"). Originally in twelve stanzas, the hymn has been variously translated and is sometimes presented with only selected stanzas.

"Entrust Your Days and Burdens"

LSB	754 (six stanzas)
ELW	
ELH	208 (twelve stanzas)
CW	
LW	427 (six stanzas)
LBW	
TLH	520 (twelve stanzas)

In this hymn text Gerhardt reflects on the crosses and trials that he (and all Christians) must bear during days of earthly pilgrimage. What does Pastor Gerhardt write concerning comfort for the crosses that Christians must bear?

2. Sing stanzas 1 through 3 of Gerhardt's Lenten hymn "A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth" ("Ein Lämmlein geht und trägt die Schuld").

"A Lamb Goes Uncomplaining Forth"

LSB	438
ELW	340
ELH	331
CW	100/219
LW	111
LBW	105
TLH	142

Trace the story of salvation in this text, how Gerhardt proclaims the Gospel of Christ's substitutionary death for us and for our sins.

3. Gerhardt's baptismal hymn "All Christians Who Have Been Baptized" ("Du Volk, das du getaufet bist") is at this point available uniquely in *Lutheran Service Book* (596). Sing through the hymn and explore how Gerhardt teaches us about Baptism. Read Romans 6:3–5 and Galatians 3:27 and note how Gerhardt incorporates Pauline language on Baptism into his hymn.

Melodies for Gerhardt's Hymns

In 1642 Gerhardt moved from Wittenberg to Berlin in order to work as a private tutor. Here he met the cantor of Berlin's Nikolaikirche, Johann Crüger (1598–1662), who was the first to publish some of Gerhardt's hymns—in the 1647 edition of Crüger's hymn book *Praxis pietatis melica*. Crüger also provided melodies for some of Gerhardt's texts, among them the melodies for: "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You" ("Wie soll ich dich empfangen"), "All My Heart Again Rejoices" ("Fröhlich soll mein Herze springen"), and "Awake My Heart with Gladness" ("Auf, auf, mein Herz").

When Crüger died in 1662, Johann Georg Ebeling (1637–1676) succeeded him as cantor of the Nikolaikirche, where, like Crüger before him, he became Gerhardt's colleague, collaborator, and publisher. In 1666 Ebeling published a collected edition of Gerhardt's hymns—120 hymns in all, with Ebeling providing melodies for 112 of them. Among Ebeling's melodies are those for Gerhardt's hymns "Evening and Morning" ("Die güldne Sonne") and "Why Should Cross and Trial Grieve Me" ("Warum sollt ich mich den Grämen").

For Discussion

Discuss how Gerhardt's hymn texts could be used in the parish for hope and comfort.

Part II: Notes

1 Hans-Joachim Beeskow, *Paul Gerhardt (1607–1676): An Illustrated Biography* (Lübben: Heimat-Verlag, 2006), 31.
2 Beeskow, 49.

Part II: Resources for Further Study

Hans-Joachim Beeskow, *Paul Gerhardt (1607–1676): An Illustrated Biography* (Lübben: Heimat-Verlag, 2006).

Singing the Faith—Part III

Luther and Bach

Luther (1483–1546) received part of his early education in the town of Eisenach, at the parish school of St. George—a Latin school related to the church of St. George (the Georgenkirche). Luther came to this school in 1497 or 1498, staying until 1501 when he moved on to Erfurt for his university education.

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) was born in Eisenach and at age eight (1693) entered this same Latin school that Luther had attended almost precisely two hundred years earlier. Bach studied there from 1693 to 1695, leaving Eisenach after the death of his father in February 1695 (his mother had died in May 1694) and moving to Ohrdruf to live with his eldest brother Johann Christoph.

Apart from this common background at the Eisenach Latin school, there is another noteworthy proximity of geography for Luther and Bach. On May 25, 1539—Pentecost Sunday that year—Luther preached at the St. Thomas Church (the Thomaskirche) in Leipzig. Bach would serve there as cantor from 1723 until his death in 1750. Today at the St. Thomas Church Luther and Bach are depicted in adjacent stained glass windows.

There is, however, a deeper similarity involving Luther and Bach. Luther, the brilliant theologian—professor, writer, Bible-translator, was a well-informed musician. Bach, the brilliant composer and consummate Lutheran cantor, was, conversely, a well-informed theologian. He was steeped in orthodox Lutheran theology beginning with his childhood education at the Eisenach Latin school, where he would have studied Luther's Small Catechism. Bach's engagement with Lutheran theology extended throughout his lifetime as he assembled a select but impressive personal theological library, which he used to deepen his understanding of the teachings of the Lutheran faith. At present we know of only one title that has survived from Bach's theological library: a three-volume Bible with commentary that preserves Bach's own marginal comments and underlinings[1] (these volumes are held by the library of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis). Thus, Luther was primarily a theologian but also well-versed in music, while Bach was primarily a musician but also well-versed in theology. Bach drew on this theological background and understanding as he improvised and composed organ and choral music that proclaimed the Gospel within the Lutheran Divine Service.

Bach's Organ Preludes on Hymns

In his organ chorale [hymn] preludes, and in his sacred cantatas and passion settings, Bach the theological musician is a preacher who proclaims Christian theology by "combining language with song" (to quote Luther). In an organ chorale prelude, like Bach's setting of "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" ("Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist"), there are, of course, no words. But a clearly perceptible statement of a well-known hymn melody may prompt the listener (whether of Bach's time or our own day) mentally to associate a familiar hymn text with that melody, and thereby to link the theology of the hymn text with the (wordless) organ prelude.

Come, Holy Ghost, Creator blest,
And make our hearts Your place of rest;
Come with Your grace and heav'nly aid,
And fill the hearts which You have made.
(*LSB* 498, st. 1)

Sing this hymn (all stanzas) so that you are familiar with the melody. Then listen to Bach's organ setting on the DVD again while reading the text in your hymnal. Through that kind of focused listening we allow Bach's music to preach to us about the work of the Holy Spirit. The hymn "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" is readily available in numerous Lutheran hymnals:

"Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest"

LSB	498
ELW	578
ELH	10
CW	177
LW	156
LBW	284
TLH	233

For Discussion

What is the role of the prelude in the Lutheran Divine Service? When the organist in your own parish plays settings of the hymns to be sung in a worship service do you listen with hymnal in hand, reflecting on the hymn text? What is the advantage in so doing?

Bach's Cantatas

In an important handwritten document dated November 28, 1723, Bach summarized the Sunday morning Divine Service of his time in Leipzig:[2]

Order of the Divine Service in Leipzig
on the First Sunday in Advent: Morning

1. Organ preluding
2. Choral motet [Introit]
3. Kyrie
4. Intoning before the altar
5. Epistle
6. Litany
7. Preluding on [and singing of] the chorale
8. Gospel
9. Cantata

10. Creed [sung as Luther's hymn "We All Believe in One True God"]
11. Sermon
12. Words of Institution
13. Music during Communion distribution [could be the second part of the cantata sung earlier in the service, or a separate and complete second cantata]. After the cantata, preluding and singing of chorales until the end of the Communion.

The cantata follows the Gospel lesson, the cantata being a *musical* exposition of the Gospel. After the congregation confesses the creed in the words of Luther's hymn "We All Believe in One True God," the sermon then follows as a *spoken* exposition of the Gospel. Thus, the Gospel was proclaimed (usually *chanted*) by the pastor, interpreted by the musicians through the text and music of the cantata, and then preached upon by the pastor in a sermon that was normally about an hour in length. The richness of this parallel cantata/sermon (musical/homiletical) proclamation is a noteworthy characteristic of orthodox Lutheranism in Bach's time.

The Lutheran cantata during Bach's time was usually a multi-sectional composition that combined singers and instrumentalists, sung portions of the cantata sometimes involving a chorus of singers (particularly in the first and last sections of the cantata) while other sections were composed for solo singers. Cantata texts were often written by pastors and published in the form of cycles of texts for an entire church year. Composers would then set these texts to music, since the expectation, at least in larger churches, was that the communion service every Sunday would include one or two cantatas (with the frequent exception of the Sundays of Lent—considered a penitential time in the church year, when cantatas were normally omitted; in Leipzig the practice was to omit cantatas during the second, third, and fourth Sundays of Advent as well).

Many—but not all—of Bach's cantatas are based on German Lutheran chorales from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. One of his earliest cantatas (BWV 4), for example, is based throughout on Luther's great Easter hymn "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands."[3] During the church year 1724–1725, Bach's second year of employment as cantor in Leipzig, he wrote an extensive series of cantatas based on chorales, thus recalling the birth of the Lutheran chorale precisely two hundred years earlier with the hymnal publications of 1524. In addition to proclaiming the Gospel through these chorales in his cantatas, Bach helped to perpetuate and preserve for his own time that rich tradition of chorales from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the age of Lutheran orthodoxy.

Cantata BWV 80: *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* ("A Mighty Fortress Is Our God")

This cantata is intended for the October 31 celebration of the Reformation, recalling the day Luther posted his Ninety-five Theses in 1517. The cantata that we know as BWV 80 (*Ein feste Burg*) is actually the third version of a cantata (*Alles, was von Gott geboren*) that was composed by Bach ca. 1716 when he was working at the court chapel in Weimar. That cantata was composed for the Third Sunday in Lent. Given the rather demanding obligation in Leipzig to perform a cantata nearly every Sunday of the church year, Bach would sometimes borrow from himself by using cantatas composed earlier in his career. In Leipzig, however, there was no need for a cantata during any of the

Sundays in Lent. Because this earlier cantata from Weimar incorporated the melody of Luther's hymn "Ein feste Burg," Bach was able to "recycle" the music of the earlier cantata for use in Leipzig on the October 31 Reformation festival. An early Leipzig version of this Weimar cantata was performed in 1723, but that early version did not include the opening chorus of the cantata as we have come to know it. At some point (probably in the 1730s) Bach put together yet another version of this cantata, and that is the one we know and hear today as BWV 80. (To complicate matters further, one of Bach's sons, Wilhelm Friedemann, added three trumpets and timpani to the opening chorus when he used it for yet another purpose after his father's death!)

The opening chorus of cantata 80 is based throughout on Luther's hymn melody: the chorus parts use elaborated versions of each melodic phrase as the basis for their imitative counterpoint, while the oboes and basses play a more straightforward version of each phrase of the hymn melody in the form of a canon (or "round"). This wonderful opening chorus is absolutely saturated with Luther's tune as Bach's music proclaims Luther's text of strength and comfort: "Our vict'ry has been won; The Kingdom ours remaineth."

For Discussion

By incorporating well-known hymn melodies in his organ chorale preludes and cantatas, Bach is able to connect words and theology with music and thus function as a skilled preacher. What does the opening chorus of cantata 80 proclaim to us?

After Bach

The second half of the eighteenth century in Germany brought changing perspectives on matters of musical style generally and on the purpose of music in the church. The rich repertories of sacred organ and choral music composed by Bach and his seventeenth-century predecessors for use in the Lutheran Divine Service did not continue to find approval in a time when the aesthetic sensibilities of the Enlightenment favored less complex, supposedly more "natural" music (in practice this meant music characterized by a simpler texture of melody and accompaniment, rather than the more complex texture of several equally important and independent voices, as in the organ and choral music of Bach). Beyond questions of musical style, Enlightenment views on the *purpose* of church music stressed "edification," meaning that church music should produce *feelings of reverence*. Such *subjective* experiences came to be valued more highly than music that participated in the *objective* proclamation of theological substance. In fact, these changing views on musical style were taking place already during Bach's lifetime—from the 1730s on. Though Bach was recognized during his lifetime as a master of contrapuntal writing (the process of combining various independent lines or parts of music into a coherent whole), increasingly he came to be regarded as something of an old-fashioned musician, his sons, particularly Carl Philipp Emanuel (1714–1788) and Johann Christian (1735–1782), being the composers who received recognition and critical approval for composing in the newer, more "natural" styles of a single melody with subordinate accompaniment.

As composer and cantor in Leipzig, J. S. Bach continued to draw on the Lutheran chorale tradition of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thus perpetuating that rich tradition of *singing the faith* during his own time. Composers during the second half of the eighteenth century would draw on that older tradition far less, with a resulting decline in music that was fully invested in objective theological proclamation.

For Discussion

What are the differences between 1) music that produces feelings of reverence and 2) music that participates in the objective proclamation of theological substance? Are there any parallels between our own age and the age of the Enlightenment (second half of the eighteenth century) in defining the purpose of music in the church's worship?

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847)

While some writers refer to a "restoration" of Lutheran church music in the nineteenth century, it is probably best to understand that premise in the narrower sense of a renewed interest in the tradition of older Lutheran chorales, rather than a wholesale recovery, restoration, or return to the church music repertories dating from the first two centuries of Lutheran church music (1524–1724). Among those playing a role in the return to the older chorale tradition are two contemporaries: the composer Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (1809–1847) and the theologian, pastor, and hymnologist Friedrich Layriz (1808–1859).

Felix Mendelssohn was the grandson of Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), a prominent Jewish philosopher of the Enlightenment. Felix's father, Abraham, had his children baptized in 1816, the second surname "Bartholdy" being added at that time as a point of distinction. Felix's parents also converted to Christianity, being baptized in 1822. Raised as a Protestant in nineteenth-century Germany, Felix was confirmed in 1825. A mere four years later, in March 1829, the twenty-one-year-old composer and musical prodigy organized and conducted centennial concerts in Berlin of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, which had been performed in Leipzig one hundred years earlier on Good Friday 1729. (More recent Bach research suggests that the first performance of the *St. Matthew Passion* was actually 1727, the work then being repeated in 1729.)

In his musical education, and in his early acquaintance with the music of Bach, Mendelssohn encountered the chorale tradition of Lutheran church music, which would play an important role in his life as a composer. Mendelssohn's choral music (too little known and performed today) makes extensive use of Lutheran chorales, including a number of chorale cantatas on hymns such as "Christe, du Lamm Gottes" ("O Christ, Thou Lamb of God"), "Jesu, meine Freude" ("Jesus, Priceless Treasure"), "Mitten wir im Leben sind" ("In the Very Midst of Life"), "Vom Himmel hoch" ("From Heaven Above"), "Wir glauben all' an einen Gott" ("We All Believe in One True God"), and others. Further, he employed chorales in other musical genres as well, as, for example, in his Symphony No. 5, which uses Luther's hymn "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," and in his six organ sonatas, the last of which is built on Luther's catechism chorale for The Lord's Prayer, "Vater unser im Himmelreich" ("Our Father, Who from Heaven Above," *LSB* 766).

Friedrich Layriz (1808–1859)

Friedrich Layriz, working in Germany in the larger context of the "Confessional Revival" of the early nineteenth century, sought to recover the repertory of orthodox Lutheran chorales, particularly in their original *rhythmic* form. His collection of hymns *Kern des deutschen Kirchengesangs: zum Gebrauch Evangelisch-Lutherischer Gemeinden und Familien* (Core of German church songs for the use of Evangelical-Lutheran congregations and families) was published in four volumes over the period 1844–1855. His work had an impact not only in Germany (primarily in Bavaria) but also in the United States, for German immigrants brought with them volumes of hymns as compiled and edited by Layriz. In turn, these volumes exerted an influence on Lutheran hymnbooks published in this country from the 1860s on.[4]

Part III: Notes

1 For detailed information on Bach's copy of Calov's biblical commentary see Robin A. Leaver, *J. S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1985).

2 *The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents*, ed. Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, rev. Christoph Wolff (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998), 113.

3 BWV = *Bach-Werke-Verzeichnis*, the standard index to Bach's works, which assigns a number to each of his compositions. Thus, BWV 4 indicates the cantata "Christ lag in Todes Banden").

4 For a recent exposition in English of Layriz's work see Carl Schalk, "Friedrich Layriz: A Forgotten Influence on Congregational Singing in American Lutheranism," *Cross Accent: Journal of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians* 13/3 (2005): 29–36.

Part III: Resources for Further Study

Robin A. Leaver, *J. S. Bach and Scripture: Glosses from the Calov Bible Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1985).

The New Bach Reader: A Life of Johann Sebastian Bach in Letters and Documents, ed. Hans T. David and Arthur Mendel, rev. Christoph Wolff (New York: W. W. Norton, 1998).

Carl Schalk, "Friedrich Layriz: A Forgotten Influence on Congregational Singing in American Lutheranism," *Cross Accent: Journal of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians* 13/3 (2005): 29–36.

Singing the Faith—Part IV

Lutheran Hymns of the Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries

Hymns that sing the faith do not date only from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though that period in the history of Lutheran hymnody was very rich indeed and we have much to be thankful for from that part of our heritage. But it is equally important to emphasize that this heritage is *ongoing*, still being enlarged by poet/pastors of our own day, who look to Luther, Gerhardt, and others as model predecessors. Here we focus on the hymns of four Lutheran pastors: Martin H. Franzmann (1907–1976), Jaroslav J. Vajda (b. 1919), Herman G. Stuempfle Jr. (1923–2007), and Stephen P. Starke (b. 1955).

Before turning to these Lutheran hymn writers, however, it is important to point to a larger movement of hymn writing in the late twentieth century—a movement rather inelegantly dubbed the "hymn explosion." That title nevertheless summarizes a period (from about 1965 on) of astonishing and prolific creativity in writing new hymn texts and tunes (though the phenomenon is more about texts than tunes). This burst of creative energy in hymn writing had its origins in Great Britain with poets such as Fred Pratt Green (1903–2000), Timothy Dudley-Smith (b. 1926), Brian Wren (b. 1936), and Christopher Idle (b. 1938). Carl P. Daw (b. 1944), Thomas H. Troeger (b. 1945), and the four Lutheran hymn writers named above are among the American participants in this so-called "explosion" of hymn writing.

For Discussion

Using the hymnal in your parish, examine hymn texts by Fred Pratt Green, Timothy Dudley-Smith, Brian Wren, Christopher Idle, Carl Daw, and Thomas Troeger. What do you find in these texts in terms of their theological content? Are they biblically grounded and Christocentric? Do they bear the perspective of a "theology of the cross"?

Martin H. Franzmann (1907–1976)

Martin H. Franzmann, the son of a pastor in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, grew up in a bilingual (German/English) household. Educated at the Wisconsin Synod's Northwestern Preparatory School and Northwestern College (both in Watertown, Wisconsin), Franzmann continued his studies at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (Thiensville, Wisconsin [now Mequon]) and at the University of Chicago, where he undertook graduate work in classics. He graduated from the seminary in 1936 and returned to Northwestern College, where he would teach New Testament until 1946. In that year he accepted a call to Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, where he would teach New Testament with great distinction until 1969, when he moved to England to teach at Westfield House, Cambridge, the seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of England.

While serving as a pastoral assistant at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Shaker Heights, Ohio (1934–1935), Franzmann translated some German hymns into English and wrote his first original hymn "Though Wisdom All Her Skills Combine."

In 1954 Franzmann returned to hymn writing with his now well-known hymn "Thy Strong Word Did Cleave the Darkness" (the hymn assumed the six-stanza form familiar

to us only in 1959; originally the hymn consisted of stanzas 1–3 and 5). This hymn was written at the request of Walter E. Buszin (1899–1973), one of Franzmann's faculty colleagues at Concordia Seminary, specifically for use as a processional hymn. Buszin suggested the melody EBENEZER (or TON-Y-BOTEL), and Franzmann wrote his text with this tune in mind. The motto of Concordia Seminary—"Light from above"—provided the opportunity for reflections on the theme of light.

"Thy Strong Word Did Cleave the Darkness"

LSB	578
ELW	511
ELH	72
CW	280
LW	328
LBW	233

For Discussion

Sing through Franzmann's hymn "Thy Strong Word Did Cleave the Darkness." Trace the scriptural references incorporated by Franzmann (e.g., in stanza one Gen 1:3, in stanza two Is 9:2) and discuss all the ways the poet expands on his phrase from the refrain: "Praise to Thee who light dost send!" How does Franzmann characterize the three persons of the Holy Trinity in terms of "light" (see stanza 6)?

Jaroslav J. Vajda (b. 1919)

Like Martin Franzmann, Jaroslav J. Vajda is the son of a Lutheran pastor. He spent the first part of his ministry (1945–1963) serving bilingual (Slovak/English) parishes, the second part (1963–1986) as an editor at Concordia Publishing House, while continuing part-time service as a parish pastor in St. Louis. Vajda's literary gifts led him to produce translations of Slovak and Czech poetry (including hymn texts) as well as original hymns in English. Central to his hymn writing are his years of planning worship as a parish pastor, and his participation in the development of two hymnals: the 1969 *Worship Supplement* and the 1978 *Lutheran Book of Worship*.[1]

Vajda's hymn for the feast of Ascension, "Up through Endless Ranks of Angels," is one of his finest hymn texts, complemented by a sturdy melody composed by Henry V. Gerike (b. 1948), Director of Choirs at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

"Up through Endless Ranks of Angels"

LSB	491
ELW	
ELH	
CW	172
LW	152
LBW	159

For Discussion

Sing through Vajda's hymn "Up through Endless Ranks of Angels." What is our prayer in stanza two (cf. 1 Jn 2:1–2)? Note how Vajda structures the concluding doxological stanza with reference to each person of the Holy Trinity.

Herman G. Stuempfle Jr. (1923–2007)

Herman G. Stuempfle Jr. served as a Lutheran parish pastor in Pennsylvania and Maryland from 1947 to 1959, in that year joining the staff of the Board of Social Missions of the United Lutheran Church in America. In 1962 he became Professor of Preaching at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg (Pennsylvania). He served that seminary as dean from 1971 to 1976 and as president from 1976 to 1989, retiring in that year. Stuempfle came to hymn writing only in his 60s and noted that this activity was related to his preaching:

> Both as a parish pastor and a seminary teacher, preaching occupied a central place in my ministry. I see the writing of hymn texts as only another form—rhyming, rhythmic, more compact—of the proclamation of the Gospel. Hymns are the church's sung testimony to God's mighty acts of grace . . . attested in Scripture and attaining their fullest expression in Jesus Christ.[2]

Lutheran Service Book includes twelve of Stuempfle's original hymn texts (plus three of his translations); *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* includes eight of his hymns, two of which also appear in *LSB*.

For Discussion

Read through Stuempfle's hymn "For All the Faithful Women" (*LSB* 855/*ELW* 419). Note especially the individual stanzas for particular women of the Bible. In the first four lines of a stanza the poet will summarize—economically and beautifully—what Scripture tells us of that woman. Then the succeeding four lines make an application to us and our lives, and form a petition to our gracious God. The poetic skill in these stanzas is absolutely remarkable. Explore these stanzas as "miniature sermons."

Stephen P. Starke (b. 1955)

Stephen P. Starke is pastor of St. John-Amelith Lutheran Church in Bay City, Michigan, having previously served parishes in Chicago and in Middletown, Connecticut. He served as chairman of the Hymnody Committee that developed *Lutheran Service Book*. As was the case with Herman Stuempfle, Starke notes that his writing of hymn texts grows out of his preaching, more precisely out of his textual study and preparation for preaching. Ideas that do not find a place in his preaching may subsequently be incorporated in a hymn text.

For Discussion

1. By his own admission, one of Starke's favorite hymns is "The Tree of Life" (*LSB* 561). Sing through this hymn and then consider how the poet writes about the fall into sin (stanzas 1–2) and about our salvation (stanzas 3–4)—both involving a tree (cf. Gn 2:15–17; Acts 10:39–40; I Pt 2:24).

2. Starke's hymn "In the Shattered Bliss of Eden" (*LSB* 572) similarly juxtaposes the consequences of the fall with the appearance of "a second Adam" (stanza 3). Sing through this hymn and then note how skillfully the hymn writer takes us from the fall in the Garden of Eden, to Calvary where Christ offered His life for us, to the Lord's Supper where Christ feeds us with His body and blood, to the "bliss of heaven." This is a remarkable and theologically rich hymn text, one that truly sings of Christ! How does this hymn text written in 2002 continue the traditions of Luther and his sixteenth-century successors?

Hymn Tunes

While newly composed tunes are fewer in number than the abundance of new texts coming out of the years of the "hymn explosion," beautifully composed tunes and settings are much in evidence from the past several decades. Space permits naming only a few composers and the names of some of their noteworthy hymn tunes:

Richard W. Dirksen (1921–2003)
INNISFREE FARM

Amanda Husberg (b. 1940)
LOVE'S LIGHT
SARAH-ELIZABETH

Stephen R. Johnson (b. 1966)
PUTNAM
ST. PETER'S NORWALK
SUFFICIENTIA

William B. Roberts (b. 1947)
MISSISSIPPI

Carl F. Schalk (b. 1929)
FORTUNATUS NEW
MANGER SONG
NOW
THINE

Hymn Festivals

As new hymn texts and tunes proliferated from the 1960s on, it was perhaps only natural that hymn festivals would flourish as a means of singing hymns congregationally beyond the Divine Service. In Lutheran circles, Paul Manz (b. 1919) was particularly influential and well known in leading hymn festivals, not only in the parishes he served with great distinction (Mt. Olive Lutheran in Minneapolis, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of St. Luke in Chicago) but also in churches of many denominations throughout North America. In a way that has not been surpassed in the late twentieth and twenty-first centuries, Manz improvised hymn introductions and accompaniments that underscored the meaning of the hymn texts, thus enlivening the proclamation of the Gospel in hymn singing at both liturgical services and in hymn festivals. Manz published and recorded many such improvisations for the use of organists and for the listening pleasure of all who love hymns and organ music. Younger generations of Lutheran composers and organists who have been inspired by Manz include (to name only a few) Jeffrey Blersch (b. 1967), Michael Burkhardt (b. 1957), David Cherwien (b. 1957), John Ferguson (b. 1941), Kevin Hildebrand (b. 1973), and Robert Hobby (b. 1962).

Part IV: Notes

1 Jaroslav J. Vajda, *Now the Joyful Celebration: Hymns, Carols, and Songs* (St. Louis: Morning Star Music Publishers, 1987), 7–8.
2 Herman G. Stuempfle Jr., *The Word Goes Forth* (Chicago: GIA, 1993), 4–5.

Part IV: Resources for Further Study

Richard N. Brinkley, *Thy Strong Word: The Enduring Legacy of Martin Franzmann* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993)

Robin A. Leaver, *Come to the Feast: The Original and Translated Hymns of Martin H. Franzmann* (St. Louis: MorningStar Music Publishers, 1994)

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Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana
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Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, New York, New York
First Lutheran Church, Boston, Massachusetts
St. John-Amelith Lutheran Church, Bay City, Michigan

First Wayne Street United Methodist Church, Fort Wayne, Indiana
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