

# The Hymnody of the Church



Function and Form

# The Biblical Mandate



☞ Psalm 149:1

“Sing to the Lord a new song in the *assembly* of the  
godly.”

☞ Psalms 9:11, 18:49, 21:13, 57:9, 95:1

# The Biblical Mandate



☞ Ephesians 5:18-21

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

# The Biblical Mandate



∞ Colossians 3:16

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.”

# The Biblical Mandate



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# The Purpose of Hymnody



- ❧ Christian worship is an expression of our affections that are evoked when we encounter the True and Living God.
- ❧ John 4:24  
“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.”

# The Anatomy of a Hymn



- ❧ “A hymn is not an amorphous bit of spiritual protoplasm designed for the enjoyment of the man in the pew and for the creation of a pious feeling or a ‘religious mood.’ Like the human body, a hymn has a skeleton (which can be called the metrical design) and characteristics determined by the choice of poetic ‘foot.’ It is a complete body, made up of several parts (stanzas), each with its definite function. Its visage or physiognomy is determined by the poetic devices the poet chooses. Underlying all the physical features, however, is the soul of the hymn—man's response to God.”

# Form



H<sup>2</sup>O

# Form Shapes Content



COOL

*cool*

**COOL**

# Form Shapes Content



GOD

God

GOD

GOD

God

# Word/Phrase Choice



❧ ancient

❧ elderly

❧ frail

❧ rickety

❧ seasoned

❧ old

# Word/Phrase Choice



A mighty fortress is our God,  
A bulwark never failing;  
Our helper He, amid the flood  
Of mortal ills prevailing:  
For still our ancient foe  
Doth seek to work us woe;  
His craft and power are great  
And, armed with cruel hate,  
On earth is not his equal.

Martin Luther, 1529

# Word/Phrase Choice



How strong and sweet my Father's care,  
That round about me, like the air,  
Is with me always, everywhere!  
He cares for me!

Anonymous, ca. 1929

# Word/Phrase Choice



So, when I'm lying in my bed,  
and the furniture starts creeping,  
I'll just laugh and say,  
"Hey, cut that out!"  
And get back to my sleeping.  
'Cause I know that God's the biggest,  
and He's watching all the while.  
So, when I get scared I'll think of Him,  
and close my eyes and smile.

God is bigger than the boogie man.  
He's bigger than Godzilla,  
or the monsters on TV.  
Oh, God is bigger than the boogie man.  
And He's watching out for you and me.

# Word/Phrase Choice



Draw me close to you  
Never let me go  
I lay it all down again  
To hear you say that I'm your friend

You are my desire  
No one else will do  
'Cause nothing else could take your place  
To feel the warmth of your embrace  
Help me find the way, bring me back to you

You're all I want  
You're all I've ever needed  
You're all I want  
Help me know you are near.

Kelly Carpenter, 1994

# Poetic Meter



A – **MAZ** - ing **GRACE!** How **SWEET** the **SOUND**  
That **SAVED** a **WRETCH** like **ME!**  
I **ONCE** was **LOST**, but **NOW** am **FOUND**;  
Was **BLIND**, but **NOW** I **SEE**.

John Newton, 1779

*“iambic poetic feet”*

# Poetic Meter



- ∞ *iambic* = weak-**STRONG**
- ∞ *trochaic* = **STRONG**-weak
- ∞ *dactylic* = **STRONG**-weak-weak
- ∞ *anapaestic* = weak-weak-**STRONG**

# Anapaestic Poetic Feet



'Twas the **NIGHT** before **CHRIST** - mas and **ALL** through the **HOUSE**  
Not a **CREA** - ture was **STIR** - ring, not **E** - ven a **MOUSE**.

# Poetic Meter



*anapaestic:*

'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse.

*iambic:*

'Twas Christmas eve, the house was still,  
And not a creature stirred.

# Musical Form



“Music is Heightened Speech. After all, what causes such a heightening? Intensified emotion. Hunger. Impatience. Certainly the deepest universals we all share are emotions, or affects; we all have the same capacity for passion, fear, anticipation, aggression. We all display the same physiological manifestations of affect; our eyebrows go up with anticipation; our hearts pound with passion; and fear affects us universally with goose flesh. And in the sense that music may express those affective goings-on, then it must indeed be a universal language.”

Leonard Bernstein, *The Unanswered Question: Six Talks at Harvard* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1976), p. 15.

# Musical Form



∞ Melody

∞ Rhythm/Meter

∞ Harmony

# Consonance



A musical staff in treble clef showing four notes: C (middle C), E (two lines up), G (one line up), and a C Major chord (three notes stacked vertically: C, E, G). The notes are labeled with their letter names below the staff.

C E G C Major chord

C# DO#	D# RE#	F# FA#	G# SOL#	A# LA#		
Db Reb	Eb Mib	Gb SOLb	Ab Lab	Bb Sib		
C DO	D RE	E MI	F FA	G SOL	A LA	B SI

# Dissonance



C                      D flat                      Disonance

A musical staff in treble clef showing three notes. The first note is C (middle C). The second note is D flat (one line below middle C). The third note is a dissonance, represented by two notes: C and D flat, both on the same stem.

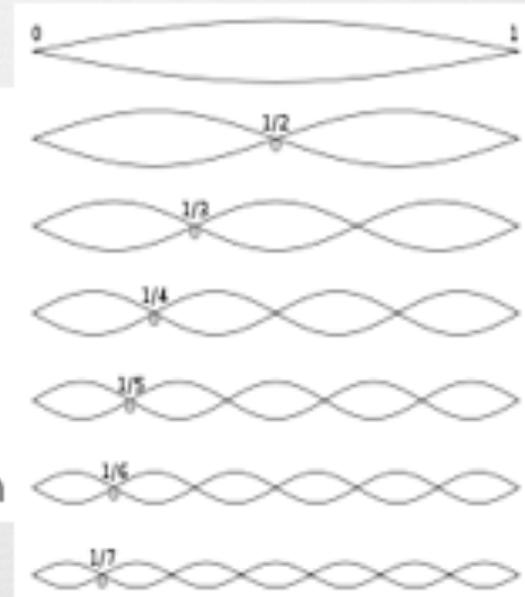
C# DO#	D# RE#	F# FA#	G# SOL#	A# LA#		
Db Reb	Eb Mib	Gb SOLb	Ab Lab	Bb Sib		
C DO	D RE	E MI	F FA	G SOL	A LA	B SI

A diagram of a piano keyboard showing the relationship between natural notes and their sharped and flatted counterparts. The top row shows sharped notes (C#, D#, F#, G#, A#) and their solfège equivalents (DO#, RE#, FA#, SOL#, LA#). The middle row shows flatted notes (Db, Eb, Gb, Ab, Bb) and their solfège equivalents (Reb, Mib, SOLb, Lab, Sib). The bottom row shows natural notes (C, D, E, F, G, A, B) and their solfège equivalents (DO, RE, MI, FA, SOL, LA, SI). The C and Db keys are circled in red.

# Harmonic Series



0-1	Fundamental:	the tone
1/2	First harmonic:	the octave
1/3	Second harmonic:	octave and a fifth
1/4	Third harmonic:	two octaves
1/5	Fourth harmonic:	two octaves and a third
1/6	Fifth harmonic:	two octaves and a fifth
1/7	Sixth harmonic:	two octaves and a seventh



# Performance



- ❧ *Tempo* – the speed at which the hymn is performed. Like rhythm, various tempos correspond to our physical movements.
- ❧ *Dynamics* – the loudness or softness (or changes thereof) of the performance. Similar to melody, dynamics relate to vocal intonation.
- ❧ *Density* – the amount of voices or instruments played at once. Whether a hymn is sung just with voices, with a piano, or with a full orchestra shapes the content.
- ❧ *Timbre* (rhymes with “Amber”) – the tone color of various voices or instrument. The unique sounds of different instrument contribute to shape content. Some instruments sound pure, others mellow, some powerful, and others harsh.

# Performance



“‘Happy Birthday, Mr. President’ was a song sung by actress/singer Marilyn Monroe on Saturday, May 19, 1962, for then-President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, at a celebration for his forty-fifth birthday, ten days before the actual day of his 45th birthday, Tuesday, May 29. Sung in a **sultry voice**, Monroe sang the traditional ‘Happy Birthday to You’ lyrics, with ‘Mr. President’ inserted as Kennedy’s name. . . . Afterwards, President Kennedy came on stage and joked about the song, saying, ‘I can now retire from politics after having had Happy Birthday sung to me in such a sweet, wholesome way,’ alluding to **Monroe’s delivery**, her racy dress, and her general image as a sex symbol.

“Happy Birthday, Mr. President,” *Wikipedia*.

Word Choice

Poetic Meter

Harmony

Dynamics

Timbre

Singing Style

1. Praise to the Lord, the Al-might - y, the King of cre - a - tion!  
 2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so won-drous - ly reign - eth,  
 3. Praise to the Lord, who doth pros - per thy work and de - fend thee;  
 4. Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me a - dore Him!

O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and sal - va - tion!  
 Shel - ters thee un - der His wings, yea, so gen - tly sus - tain - eth!  
 Sure - ly His good - ness and mer - cy here dai - ly at - tend thee.  
 All that hath life and breath, come now with prais - es be - fore Him.

All ye who hear, Now to His tem - ple draw near;  
 Hast thou not seen How thy de - sires e'er have been  
 Pon - der a - new What the Al - might - y can do,  
 Let the A - men Sound from His peo - ple a - gain,

Praise Him in glad ad - o - ra - tion.  
 Grant - ed in what He or - dain - eth?  
 If with His love He be - friend thee.  
 Glad - ly for aye we a - dore Him.

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# FORM

Melody

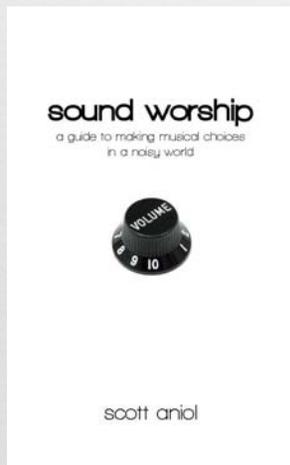
Rhythm

Tempo

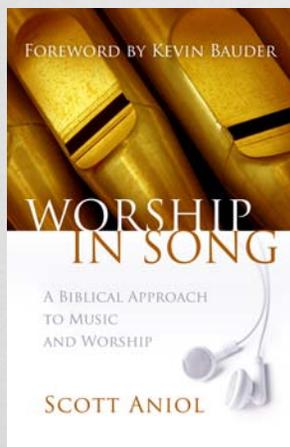
Density

Instrumentation

# Recommended Reading

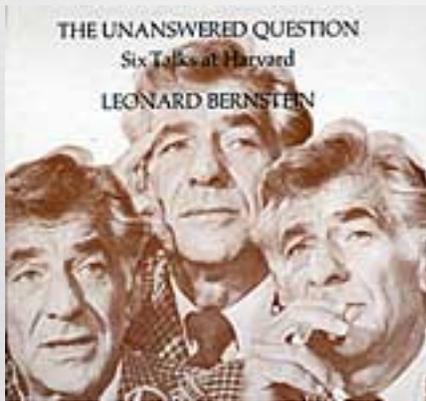


- ☞ Aniol, Scott. *Sound Worship: A Guide to Making Musical Choices in a Noisy World*. Simpsonville, SC: Religious Affections Ministries, 2010.

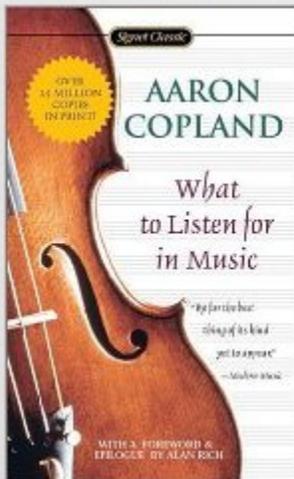


- ☞ Aniol, Scott. *Worship in Song: A Biblical Approach to Music and Worship*. Winona Lake, IN: BMH, 2009.

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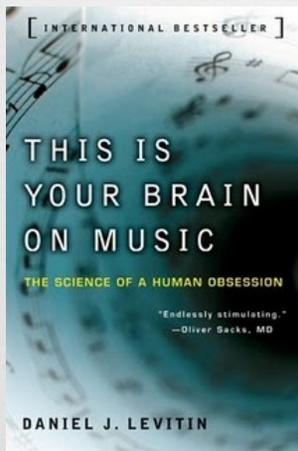


∞ Bernstein, Leonard. *The Unanswered Question: Six Harvard Talks*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard, 1976.

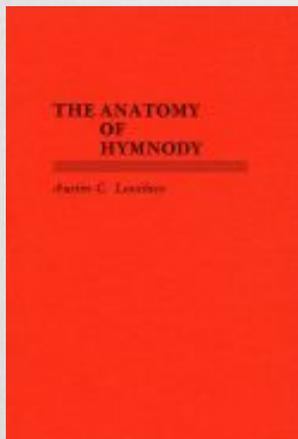


∞ Copland, Aaron. *What to Listen For in Music*. NY: Penguin, 2002.

# Recommended Reading



☞ Levitin, Daniel J. *This is Your Brain on Music: The Science of a Human Obsession*. NY: Penguin, 2007.



☞ Lovelace, Austin C. *The Anatomy of Hymnody*. Chicago: G.I.A., 1965.

# Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed?



Alas! and did my Savior bleed?  
And did my Sov'reign die?  
Would He devote that sacred head  
For such a worm as I?

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

**Tune:** MARTYRDOM (Hymn #234)

Hugh Wilson, 1764-1824

# Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed?



Alas! and did my Savior bleed?  
And did my Sov'reign die?  
Would He devote that sacred head  
For such a worm as I?

Isaac Watts, 1674-1748

At the cross, at the cross where I first saw the light,  
And the burden of my heart rolled away—  
It was there by faith I received my sight,  
And now I am happy all the day!

**Tune:** AT THE CROSS (Hymn #237)

Ralph Hudson, 1843-1901

# The Hymnody of the Church



Function and Form