



“How much has music helped shape the lectionary?”

by Pastor Bruce Benson, host

Very early in its history, the Christian Church began using a series of Bible readings — that is, a lectionary — rather than reading every verse of every book each and every year, or letting the preacher return to the same handful of favorite stories and passages every year. Was the practice borrowed and adapted from Judaism? Probably. Was the schedule of readings exactly the same from church to church throughout the Roman Empire? Definitely not. Over the centuries, church communities and leaders have recommended some substitutions here and there in that collection of readings, and they have experimented with one-year cycles and three-year cycles. But the Gospel episodes that comprise the story of Jesus have, quite understandably, kept an honored place in the sequence throughout Christian history.

There has, of course, been a downside to using this “Bible within a Bible” on Sunday mornings. It has left many people surprised to discover some stories and verses in the Bible they never knew existed because they never heard them read in church. But overall, the church has found a lectionary to be a good thing. It has provided a broad exposure to the biblical writings without insisting that all passages have equal importance for the life of faith.

The collection of church music that is available today has been significantly influenced by a lectionary. We have music for each Sunday of the church year because musicians have written it specifically for readings from the lectionary. J.S. Bach is probably the most well-known of these musicians to compose music based on the readings his congregation would hear on a particular Sunday, but plenty of others have done the same.

I wonder, however, how much influence has been exerted in the other direction. That is, how much has music helped shape the lectionary? We can readily admit that the lectionary has had a significant effect on all the arts. Paintings, sculptures, poems, anthems, cantatas, hymns and more have been created to express the message of biblical texts heard in lectionary readings on Sunday mornings. But might not the arts have influenced the lectionary in return? It is evident that many works of art endure across generations, and do so by the force of what we might call their genius. When such works of art are based on biblical texts, it would be no surprise if the force of the art encourages church communities to return again and again to the texts that inspire such art.

We lean in to hear the Bible passages that call to mind the great art around us. Perhaps the clearest example of how this works is George Frideric Handel’s *Messiah*. By setting so many biblical texts to so many great melodies, Handel has given those texts a prominence that they might otherwise not have had. Without Handel, we would still know all those texts, I think, but it is not likely we would love them quite so much or know them quite so well or be quite so pleased to hear them when they come up in the lectionary.

So sing on, artists of the church, we welcome your influence.

Peace be with you,



OCTOBER 5, 2014

TIME AFTER PENTECOST – LECTIONARY 27 (YEAR A)

- (1R) Isaiah 5:1–7
(PS) Psalm 80:7–15
(2R) Philippians 3:4b–14
(G) Matthew 21:33–46

The Church's One Foundation (AURELIA) – Samuel Sebastian Wesley / Samuel J. Stone, lyricist / John Ferguson, arranger (G)
The St. Olaf Choir: Northfield, MN / John Ferguson, accompanist / Anton Armstrong
(CD) *Great Hymns of Faith: Volume II* / ST. OLAF RECORDS / E-2651
© 2004 St. Olaf Records stolafrecords.com

Saints Bound for Heaven – African American Spiritual / E.J. King, lyricist / Alice Parker, arranger / Robert Shaw, arranger (2R)
Robert Shaw Festival Singers / Robert Shaw
(CD) *Amazing Grace: American Hymns & Spirituals* / TELARC / CD-80325
© 1993 Telarc, Concord Music Group telarc.com

I am Bound for de Kingdom – African American Spiritual / Florence B. Price, arranger (2R)
Marian Anderson, contralto / Franz Rupp, piano
(CD) *He's Got the Whole World In His Hands* / RCA VICTOR / 09026-61960-2
© 1994 RCA Victor

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross (HAMBURG) – Lowell Mason / Issac Watts, lyricist / John Ferguson, arranger (2R)
The St. Olaf Cantorei: Northfield, MN / John Ferguson, accompanist / Paul Peltier
(CD) *Hidden In Humbleness* / GIA PUBLICATIONS / GIA CD-594
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When I Survey the Wondrous Cross (ROCKINGHAM) – Edward Miller / Issac Watts, lyricist / John Rutter, arranger (2R)
The Choir of King's College / Benjamin Bayl, accompanist / Stephen Cleobury
(CD) *Best Loved Hymns* / EMI (ANGEL, EMI CLASSICS, EMI RECORDS, LTD) / 7243 5 57026 2 3
© 2001 EMI (Angel, EMI Classics, EMI Records, Ltd) emiclassics.com

God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending (RUSTINGTON) – C. Hubert H. Parry / Robert L. Edwards, lyricist / John Ferguson, arranger (G)
John Ferguson, accompanist / John Ferguson
(CD) *Home, Harvest, & Healing: A Sing For Joy Hymn Festival* / ST. OLAF RECORDS / E-2648
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OCTOBER 12, 2014

TIME AFTER PENTECOST – LECTIONARY 28 (YEAR A)

- (1R) Isaiah 25:1–9
(PS) Psalm 23
(2R) Philippians 4:1–9
(G) Matthew 22:1–14

At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing (SALZBURG) – Jakob Hintze / Johann Sebastian Bach, arranger / Robert Campbell, translator (G)
The Choir of All Saints' Episcopal Church: Beverly Hills, CA / Craig Phillips, organ / Thomas Foster
(CD) *Easter Hymns, Carols, & Anthems* / GOTHIC / G 49097
© 1997 Gothic, Gothic Records, Inc. gothicrecords.com

This is the Feast of Victory – Ronald A. Nelson / John Ferguson, arranger / John W. Arthur, translator (1R, G)
St. Olaf Conference on Worship, Theology and The Arts / John Ferguson, organ
(CD) *Sing For Joy Archives* / ST. OLAF COLLEGE / Not For Resale
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Rejoice in the Lord Alway, "Bell Anthem" – Henry Purcell (2R)
The Choir of Salisbury Cathedral: Salisbury, United Kingdom / Richard Seal
(CD) *Anthems from Salisbury* / MERIDIAN / CDE84025
© 1986 Meridian meridian-records.co.uk

Rejoice in the Lord Alway – Anonymous (2R)
The Cathedral Singers: Chicago, IL / Richard Proulx
(CD) *Rejoice in the Lord: Ars Antiqua Choralis Volume I* / GIA PUBLICATIONS / GIA CD-290
© 1993 GIA Publications giamusic.com

Chichester Psalms: Movement II – Leonard Bernstein (PS)
Atlanta Symphony Chorus: Atlanta, GA / Atlanta Symphony Orchestra / Robert Shaw
(CD) *Walton: Belshazzar's Feast; Bernstein: Chichester Psalms* / TELARC / CD-80181
© 1989 Telarc, Concord Music Group telarc.com

"Part of music's grace is that it can say and do at the same time: It can say we need help, and at the same time help us; it can sing about comfort, while comforting us; and when it calls us to hope, it also gives hope."

-Pastor Bruce Benson

OCTOBER 19, 2014

TIME AFTER PENTECOST – LECTIONARY 29 (YEAR A)

- (1R) Isaiah 45:1–7
(PS) Psalm 96:1–9, (10–13)
(2R) 1 Thessalonians 1:1–10
(G) Matthew 22:15–22

Psalm 96 – George Thalben-Ball (PS)
St. Thomas Choir of Men and Boys: New York, NY / Gerre Hancock
(CD) *O God, My Heart is Ready* / KOCH (KOCH INTERNATIONAL CLASSICS) / 3-7176-2 H1
© 1992 Koch (Koch International Classics)

Singt dem Herrn (Sing a New Song) – Jacques Berthier (PS)
The Community at Taizé
(CD) *Jubilate* / GIA PUBLICATIONS / GIA CD-284
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Sing to the Lord a New Song – Douglas Major (PS)
Washington National Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys:
Washington, DC / Eric Wm. Suter, organ / Douglas Major
(CD) *A Choral Feast* / GOTHIC / G 49126
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Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow (No. 606)
(DEDICATION ANTHEM) – Samuel Stanley /
Thomas Ken, lyricist (1R, G)
Goshen College Chamber Choir: Goshen, IN / Doyle Preheim
(CD) *Hallelujah! Amen!* / GOSHEN / DCA 4237
© 1999 Goshen goshen.edu

Ascribe Unto the Lord (Excerpt) – Samuel Sebastian Wesley (PS)
The Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral: London, United Kingdom /
John Scott
(CD) *Epiphany at St. Paul's* / HYPERION / CDA67269
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hyperion-records.co.uk

O Worship the Lord in the Beauty of Holiness!
(WAS LEBET, WAS SCHWEBET) – John S. B. Monsell /
John S. B. Monsell, lyricist (PS)
The Choir of Norwich Cathedral: Norwich, United Kingdom /
David Dunnett
(CD) *The Complete New English Hymnal: Volume 5* /
PRIORY RECORDS, LTD. / PRCD 713
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Psalm 1 – Bruce Neswick (PS)
The Choir of St. Paul's Episcopal Church: Indianapolis, IN /
Dwight Thomas, accompanist / Frank W. Boles
(CD) *O Come Let Us Sing Unto the Lord* /
ST. PAUL'S – INDIANAPOLIS / STP004
© 1997 St. Paul's – Indianapolis stpaulsindy.org

Sanctus in D Major, BWV 238 – Johann Sebastian Bach (1R)
Gabieli Consort and Players: London, United Kingdom /
Paul McCreech
(CD) *J.S. Bach Epiphany Mass* / ARCHIV / 457 631-2
© 1996 Archiv, Universal Music Group universalclassics.com

God Be in My Head – John Rutter / English Traditional,
lyricist (2R, G)
The Choir of St. Paul's Cathedral: London, United Kingdom /
John Scott
(CD) *The English Anthem – Volume 7* / HYPERION / CDA67087
© 1999 Hyperion, Hyperion Records Limited
hyperion-records.co.uk

When In Our Music God is Glorified (FREDERICKTOWN) –
Charles R. Anders / Fred Pratt Green, lyricist /
John Ferguson, arranger (1R)
The St. Olaf Cantorei: Northfield, MN / John Ferguson
(CD) *Celebration! Boe Memorial Chapel* / ST. OLAF RECORDS /
E-2939/70
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*“Great ideas, great messages, and great truths often
find poetry and music to be their most trusted
messengers. Every week, Sing For Joy brings you
great messages and truths, told by the wonderful
messengers of great poetry and music.”*

-Pastor Bruce Benson

OCTOBER 26, 2014

TIME AFTER PENTECOST – LECTIONARY 30 (YEAR A)

(1R) Leviticus 19:1–2, 15–8
(PS) Psalm 1
(2R) 1 Thessalonians 2:1–8
(G) Matthew 22:34–46
(R) Reformation Sunday

A Mighty Fortress is Our God (EIN FESTE BURG) – Martin Luther /
Martin Luther, lyricist / John Ferguson, arranger /
Lutheran Book of Worship, translator (R)
The St. Olaf Choir: Northfield, MN / John Ferguson, accompanist
/ Anton Armstrong
(CD) *Great Hymns of Faith: Volume 1* / ST. OLAF RECORDS /
E-2294
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O For a Closer Walk with God (CAITHNESS) – Scottish Psalter /
William Cowper, lyricist / Charles Villiers Stanford, arranger (1R)
Saint Clement's Choir: Philadelphia, PA /
Matthew Glandorf, accompanist / Peter Richard Conte
(CD) *Hymns of Heaven and Earth* / SONO LUMUS
(FORMERLY DORIAN RECORDS) / DOR-90259

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OCTOBER 2014 / YEAR A



Sing For Joy staff:
W. Bruce Benson
Host
John Ferguson
Music Adviser
Jeffrey O'Donnell
Producer and Music Director
Joshua Wyatt
Associate Producer
Carolyn Pierson
Communications Coordinator

Website: singforjoy.org
Email: singforjoy@stolaf.edu
Phone: 507-786-8596



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