

From the Director

Sneak Peaks

Highlighting selections from the developing College Church hymnal, we are continuing in the section of praise to Jesus Christ: His Name and His Glory.

Some remarkable people, working independently and alone, created a massive body of hymn literature in the Victorian era. New English hymns were written (many of which are still widely sung), and many hymns were translated into English for the first time: primarily from Latin, Greek, German. Hymns of the ancient church finally left the monastery and became familiar to congregations in our tongue. Hymns from the Continent sailed across the Channel and introduced Lutheran pietism to Anglican and Nonconformist liturgies.

This was a movement in which women figured prominently. Primary among them was Catherine Winkworth, whose work with German hymns was chiefly responsible for such now-standard hymns as: All Glory Be to God on High, Praise to the Lord the Almighty, If Thou but Suffer God to Guide Thee, and Now Thank We All Our God. (To name just those in *Hymns for the Living Church* which we sing here.) Such was the quality of her work that these German hymns are sung, in English, to the same tunes as they are in German, and yet they feel very naturally English. Extraordinary translations.

However ... Don't you cringe when you see a qualifier like that? Especially about something beloved?

These translations are indeed well loved, and serve the church still. But they can be overlooked or underused now because of the archaic English usage. For the most part, because they are so widely sung (archaisms and all) and so rightly loved, these are kept intact as we know them. But the question is a valid one: is it time for these great hymns to be translated afresh, by 21st century poet-translators, with faithfulness to the German (or Greek, or Latin)? And what about those 19th century translations that are not so well known, but which ought to be sung? In the absence of a fresh translation, might we not prudently introduce them with newer forms of personal pronouns and verbs? I hope so, because that is

what we have done with some hymns, such as today's.

This is a German hymn of unknown authorship, translated by the ubiquitous Miss Winkworth. The only changes made (note the designation, "alt." below) are from Thee/Thy to you/your. With one exception - part of one line had to be changed to accommodate the newer pronoun. I wonder if it is obvious as you read?

Lord Jesus Christ, Be Present Now L.M.

Lord Jesus Christ, be present now,
our hearts in true devotion bow,
your Spirit send with grace divine,
and let your truth within us shine.

Unseal our lips to sing your praise,
our souls to you in worship raise,
make strong our faith, increase our light
that we may know your name aright:

Then shall we join the hosts that cry,
"O holy, holy, Lord most high!"
and in the light of that blest place
we then shall see you face to face.

Glory to God the Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To you, O blessed Trinity,
be praise throughout eternity!

Author unknown, 1651

Translated by Catherine Winkworth, 1863, alt.

Having reached such conclusions, however, I still mourn what our language has lost in its inexorable drive to the democratic, egalitarian, informal personal pronoun. I think there are specific and valid benefits to the old forms: the distinction between subject and object (Thou and Thee), between singular and plural (You and Ye), between formal and casual address. Modern hymns should use modern language, but let's relish the lessons of our ancestors as they teach us how to sing - even in the intimate hymns, such as today's.

Sing on!

Chuck

Calendar Corner:

March 22—Morning services:Pippa Downs, cello; Chancel Choir

March 29—Concert Series:3pm with reception following-Fox Valley organist guild in a Festival of Hymns for Lent and Easter

April 5—Palm Sunday: Bells, Brass, Chancel Choir

THE PRAYER COLUMN
Praying our Anchor memory verses

Be exalted, O LORD, in your strength! We will sing and praise your power. (Psalm 21:13)

Here is a psalm that is pretty specific to one man—the king of Israel! (See verse 1, and read the entire psalm.) But from it we learn language for our praise and prayer:

* what do we rejoice over? * what do we ask for? * what gives God glory? * what about our “enemies” - who or what are they, and how do we pray about them?

As we learn to pray through Psalm 21, our Anchor verse takes on added vigor and confidence, and our musical expressions of worship are more firmly fixed in God’s self-revelation. And we sing and pray not in our strength, but in his power.

To include your new prayer requests, contact Chuck King (668-0878 x122; cdking@college-church.org)

Chancel Choir Rehearsal Music:

Voice Building

ORDER TO BE ANNOUNCED

Music for Winter Services:

O how happy are they	March 22
Jesus the Christ Says	March 29

Passion Week and Easter:

Christ Goes Before	Palm Sunday
Just As I Am (Chilcott)	Good Friday
Thy Will Be Done	Good Friday
My Song Is Love Unknown	Good Friday
Lamb of God	Good Friday
Hallelujah (<i>Messiah</i>)	Easter
Since by man came death (<i>Messiah</i>)	

Jubilation Bells Rehearsal

Wednesday 6:45 PM in the Choir Room

Sunday, April 5, morning services

Brass Ensemble Rehearsal

Ad hoc

**Concert Series
 College Church Sanctuary**

***March 29, 3:00 pm
 American Guild of Organists
 Fox Valley Chapter
 Hymn Festival: Hymns for Lent and
 Easter***

The AGO returns for a program of organ compositions based on hymn tunes, with the audience also singing those hymns. 9 area church and school organists lead, with Dr. Jane Holstein providing fascinating introduction and commentary. Visiting brass, choir and a pianist also participate this year.