



A Guide to Hymn

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A Guide to Hymn Pla

Produced in cooperation with Bob Jones

Rebecca Bonam M
Duane Ream

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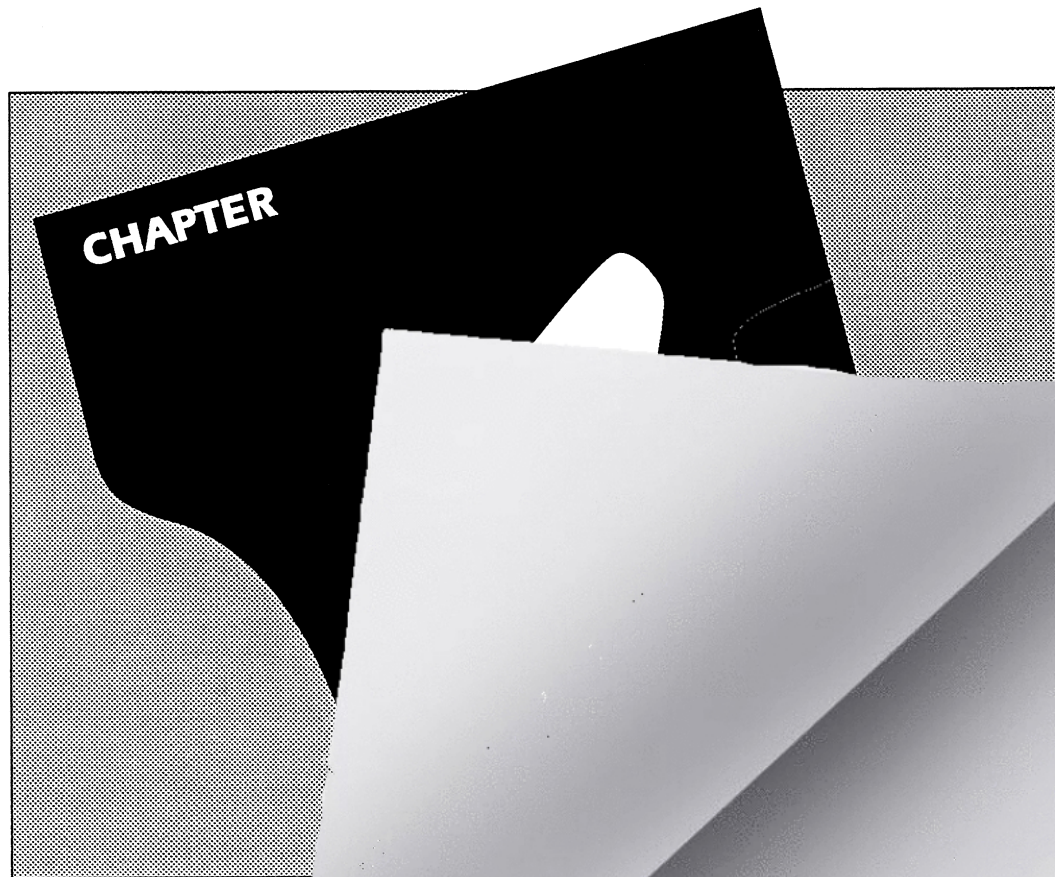
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INTRODUCTION TO HYMN PLAYING



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Opportunities abound for Christian service as a pianist in the local church. It is impossible to imagine an evangelistic church service without a prelude, offertory, and postlude—often all pianistic. The piano is often the primary instrument used to accompany congregational singing, choral numbers, and solo/ensemble specials. Indeed, so great is the responsibility resting upon the shoulders of a church pianist, it is imperative that there be a systematic transmission of information to future generations of hymn players. This syllabus attempts to fill that need.

This formal training, however, so necessary to ensure high quality musicianship, is simply a part of the overall scope of church music education. Christians today have at their command a vast quantity of fine sacred music. The bulk of this legacy is found in the form of hymns. Dr. John Julian, in preparing his *Dictionary of Hymnology* (1891), lists and examines over 400,000 hymns. In addition, there is a great deal of worthy choral music as well as sacred masterpieces by major composers that contribute to the great body of religious music of the past 500 years. Christian musicians are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold this musical heritage and to propagate quality sacred music to the next generation. This syllabus is designed to offer not only materials and methods of hymn playing but also goals and standards for the continued development of a Biblical philosophy of church music.

I. A Brief History of Pianistic Hymn Playing

The invention of the piano is attributed to Bartolomeo Cristofori in 1709. Evolving from the harpsichord, the piano replaced the psaltery. Refinements and improvements in its present form with ornate cases, wool, and various woods

The piano was not popular until the twentieth century. Considered conservative and incomplete. In several instances were accepted as accompaniment in churches that could not afford a similar to that used by the church. Centuries witnessed the piano played an important role in the lives of Moody, Ira Sankey, and others. Changes in the concert hall led Alexander, songleader, to discover that the piano was the lively gospel song accompaniment in the meetings with these camps. The piano was accepted into the

Pianists face a variety of challenges. The four-part setting of hymns for improvisation in church service. Many pianists are taught to play hymns in a certain way. ers. Some pianists



recordings over the last twenty years, is generally of a far lower quality than should be expected from those seeking to edify their Christian listeners. Some of these methods were published and sold to train others. In a quest for recognition and distinction, arrangers have assimilated contemporary folk and pop styles into the sacred music of the church, which weakens the message and cheapens the meaning of the text.

II. The Pianist Himself

The pianist must realize that his music is not an end in itself. The techniques discussed here are part of a much larger picture—that of the total ministry of the local church. As with all other aspects of the gospel, the position of accompanist exists solely for the furthering of the message of the revelation of Jesus Christ and for the ever increasing effectiveness of His Church in proclaiming the revelation.

Recognizing the role they fill in the overall picture of church music, pianists should have no tolerance for vain showmanship. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above” (James 1:17). What talents a pianist may possess are given by God for His purposes and for His glory. Of course, the responsibility of training, perfecting, and utilizing those talents lies with the individual musician. As stewards, all will give an account of what they have done with their gifts (Luke 12:42-44; I Cor. 4

A discussion of the musician individual – that he has been corporate worship service, he be neat and well groomed. with those in authority over qualities should characteri:

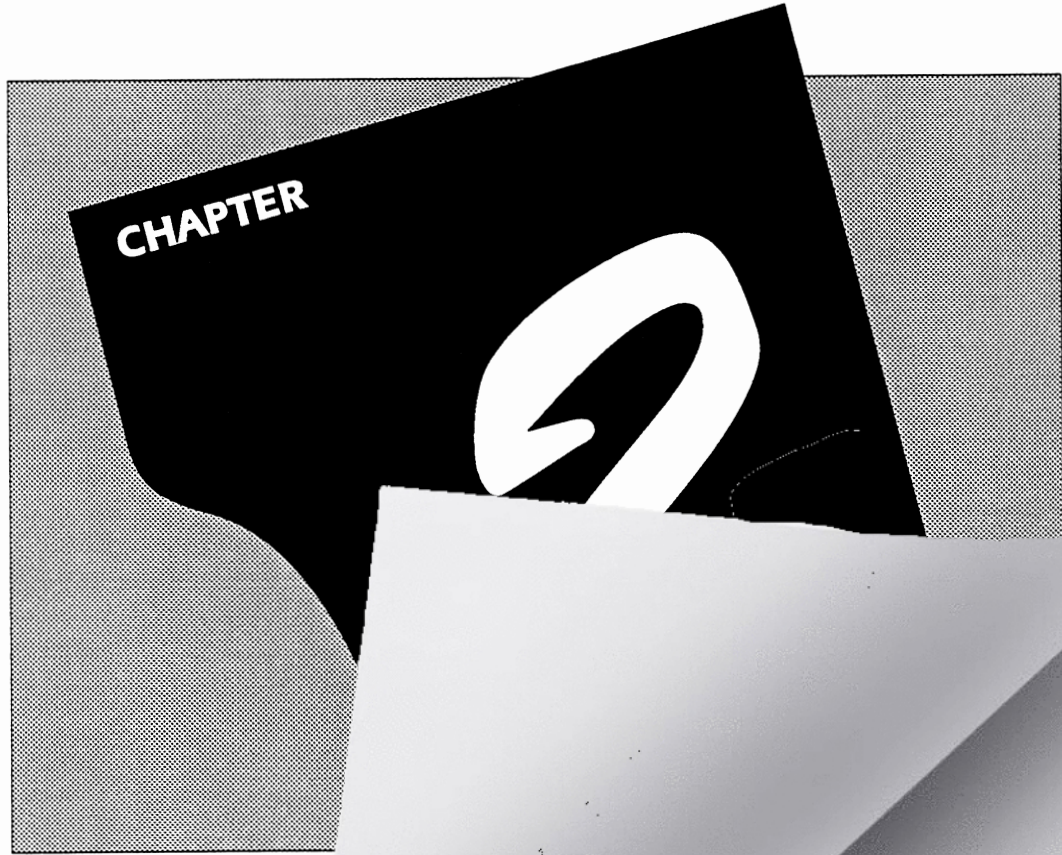
dependability
punctuality
ingenuity

Continual improvement important areas of music current ideas and trends ment the best of his fi necessary to a well-rou of theory, hymnology

Of primary importar ment. As in any fiel The Christian piar quality of music. a degenerate nat porary secular style, the Bib sixty-six bo specific re “study t

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Congregational Playing



- I. Rhyth
- II. System
 - A. G
 - B. C
 - C. J
 - D.
 - E.
- III.
- IV.

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Example 2:1

My Je - sus, I love— Thee, I know Thou art mine;

Beats one, four, seven, and ten are important pulses in 12/8. The pianist may feel this meter in 4/4.

Example 2:2

Sing, - oh, Sing— of my— Re- deem- er with— His blood— He pur- chased

In 3/4, the main pulse genera- falls on beat one. However, the downbeat of the next m

Example 2:3

Come, Thou fo

3/2 is treated in a sin

Example 2:4

In both 6/8 and 6/4, the pianist should feel the pulse on beats one and four, acknowledging a push toward these pulses on beats three and six.

Example 2:5

There shall be show-ers of bless-ing, This is the pro-mise of God.

In 9/8 and 9/4, the main pulse occurs on beat one, a secondary pulse on beat four, and a pulse on beat seven, leading into the downbeat. The pianist may feel these meters in 3/4.

Example 2:6

Bless-ed as - sur - a

Example 2:7

One day when

II. Systematic Techniq

The four-part hymn improvisation. G harmony, and rhy (1) no other instr consistently sing

A. Graded Ap

1. Early

Th

Example 2:8

Nothing But the Blood

Robert Lowry

I I I v₅ I etc.

Students may then proceed to melodies of a greater range, carefully noting good phrasing and principles of correct fingering. An added alto or tenor note, as it appears in the four parts, will enhance the overall sound.

Example 2:9

Th

I

Eventually the s
hymn, giving a
thereby gaining

2. Intermedi

If the fi
notes

Example 2:48

Holy, Holy, Holy

John B. Dykes
Arranged by Rebecca Bonam McDaniel

The first system of musical notation for 'Holy, Holy, Holy' is presented in a grand staff with two staves. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 4/4. The right-hand staff features a series of chords and some melodic lines, while the left-hand staff provides a steady accompaniment. A dashed line labeled '8va' is positioned below the left-hand staff, indicating an octave transposition.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. It features similar chordal textures in the right hand and a more active bass line in the left hand. A dashed line labeled '8va' is present below the left-hand staff. The system concludes with a triplet of eighth notes in the right hand, marked with a '3' above the notes.

The third system of musical notation shows the continuation of the harmonic and rhythmic patterns. The right hand plays chords, and the left hand has a melodic line. A dashed line labeled '8va' is located below the left-hand staff.

The fourth system of musical notation is the final system shown on the page. It maintains the established musical style with chords in the right hand and a supporting bass line in the left hand. A dashed line labeled '8va' is positioned below the left-hand staff.

Example 2:49

Blessed Assurance

Phoebe Knapp

Arranged by Rebecca Bonam McDaniel

The first system of musical notation for 'Blessed Assurance' is presented in grand staff format. The right hand (treble clef) features a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, while the left hand (bass clef) provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving bass lines. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 8/8. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes in both hands.

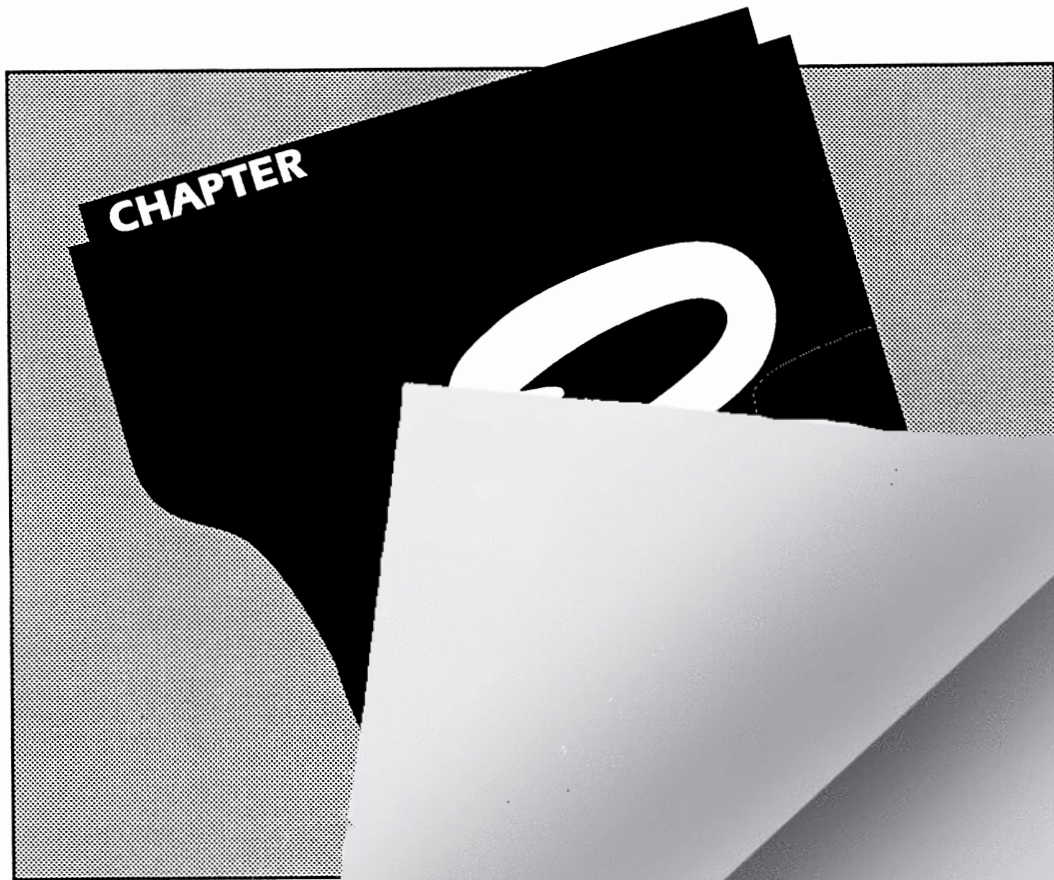
The second system of musical notation continues the piece. The right hand maintains the melodic flow with various rhythmic patterns, and the left hand supports it with a steady accompaniment. The system ends with a fermata over the final notes.

The third system of musical notation shows the continuation of the melody and accompaniment. The right hand has a more active melodic line, and the left hand provides a consistent harmonic foundation. The system concludes with a fermata over the final notes.

The fourth system of musical notation continues the composition. The right hand features a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand provides a steady accompaniment. The system ends with a fermata over the final notes.

The fifth and final system of musical notation for this example. The right hand has a melodic line with some rests, and the left hand provides a steady accompaniment. The system ends with a fermata over the final notes.

HYMN TRANSCRIPTION



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The church pianist will often use a transcription of a hymn or gospel song as an offertory or solo during a service. The arranger, having some knowledge of compositional techniques and classical literature, may spend many hours preparing this selection. Its structure may in turn be simple or complex according to the choice of ideas and ensuing development. Although the personality and expertise of the performer are evident in the solo, the ultimate goal is a tastefully written musical piece that will edify the listener. The following outline is a guide to writing an effective hymn transcription.

I. Choosing a hymn.

A. Select a universally familiar hymn or gospel song.

1. Begin with the shorter devotional hymns.
2. Avoid a piece familiar to only a select group of people.

B. Examine the quality of the text.

1. Look for a strong message, not merely religious words.
2. Choose a text meaningful to a particular occasion.

C. Consider its capacity for

1. Select a hymn with
2. Use a chorale hymn

D. Look for strong melo

1. Use melodies com
a definite climax
2. Avoid uninteresti
3. Utilize melodies

II. Applying compositio

A. Scan classical lite

1. Select pieces v
 - a. Depict sta
a middl

Example 3:1

A Mighty Fortress

Martin Luther
Arranged by Rebecca Bonam McDaniel

(first stanza)

f *tr*

This musical score is for the first stanza of 'A Mighty Fortress'. It is written for piano in G major and 4/4 time. The piece begins with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The right hand features a melody of quarter and eighth notes, while the left hand plays a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes. A trill (*tr*) is indicated on a note in the left hand towards the end of the first measure.

etc.

This block shows the continuation of the musical score from the previous block. It includes the right-hand melody and the left-hand accompaniment. The piece concludes with the word 'etc.' written at the end of the first line.

Example 3:2

(third stanza idea from Gian Carl)

This musical score is for the third stanza idea from Gian Carl. It is written for piano in B-flat major and 4/4 time. The right hand has a melody of quarter notes, and the left hand has a simple accompaniment of quarter notes.

This block shows the continuation of the musical score from the previous block, featuring the right-hand melody and left-hand accompaniment.

SOLO ACCOMPANYING



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Often it is possible to assign the arpeggiated figure to the left hand while the right hand develops another idea.

Example 4:2

Take Time to Be Holy

William Longstaff

George Stebbins
Arranged by Faye Lòpez

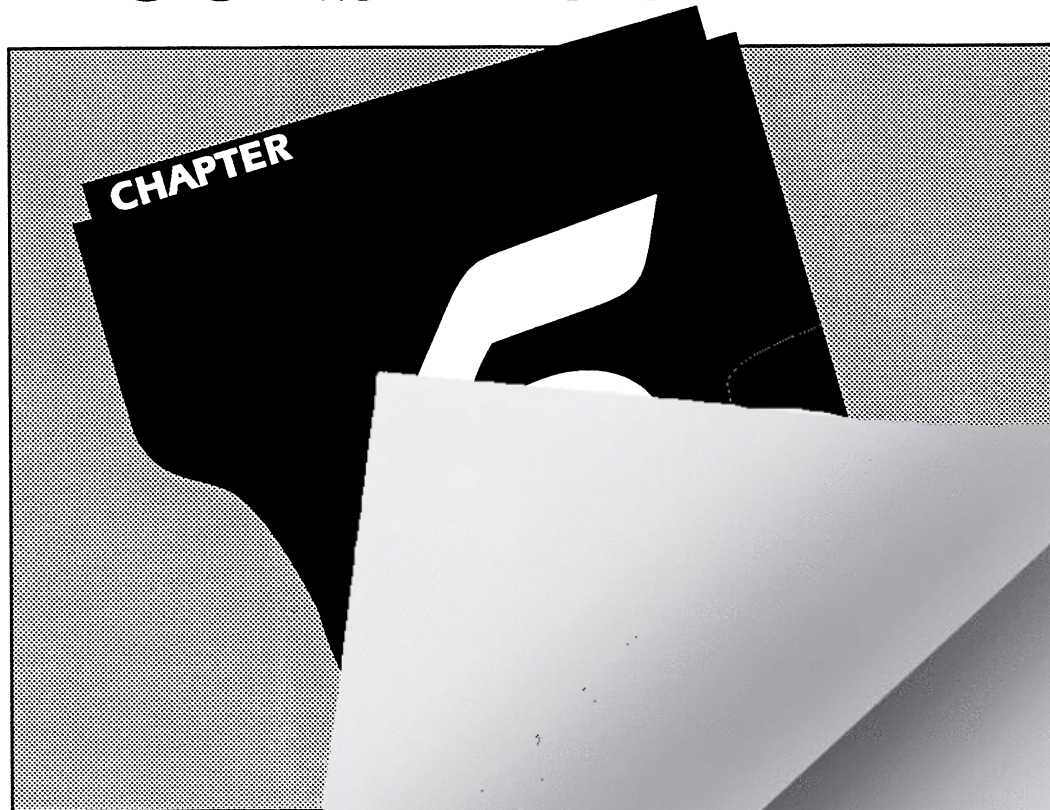
Musical score for 'Take Time to Be Holy' in 6/8 time, featuring a piano accompaniment. The score is written in two systems. The first system shows the right hand playing chords and the left hand playing an arpeggiated figure. Pedal markings are present: 'Ped.' with an asterisk, and 'ped. simile'. The second system continues the piece with similar textures.

B. Horn fifths are closely famous french horn line enjoys great popularity tonic and dominant harmonic (P5, P4) intervals.

Example 4:3

Musical score for Example 4:3, showing a single measure in 4/4 time. The right hand plays a chord with a '5' above it, and the left hand plays a chord with a '3' below it.

PRELUDE AND POSTLUDE CONSTRUCTION



PRELUDE

- I. Org
- II. Co
- III. C

POSTLUDE

I

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Example 5:1

He Hideth My Soul

William Kirkpatrick

etc.

Example 5:2

'Tis S

etc.

3. Develop compositional ideas.
 - a. Bass octave movement
 - b. "Double duty" between hands
 - c. Treble four-octave melody (See Example 5:5.)
 - d. Harmonic changes
 - e. Meter changes

Example 5:3

My Jesus, I Love Thee

A. J. Gordon

f. Rhythmic c

Example 5:4

Wh