

# Hymns as Part of the Piano Lesson and Repertoire

Coila Robinson, [coila.robinson@outlook.com](mailto:coila.robinson@outlook.com)

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“We are in a position, as musicians, to touch the souls of those who listen.”

– Pres. Spencer W. Kimball, *Teachings of Spencer W. Kimball*, 1982, p. 520

(More Music Quotes at [www.lds.org/music/resources/music-quotes](http://www.lds.org/music/resources/music-quotes) )

Hymnody - singing of hymns; collection of hymns for a particular denomination or period of hymns

Hymnal or hymn book - collection of hymns

Hymnist or Hymnodist - writer of hymns

Hymn Tune - music to which a hymn may be sung; common practice from the late sixteenth century in England and Scotland, to sing a new text to a hymn tune the singers already knew, which had a suitable meter and character; common in early/mid 1800's to vary text/tune combinations.

Naming of hymn tunes - often the tunes are named for something/someone with whom the composer has a connection. – *The organ-sized heart of Alexander Schreiner* – Jerry Johnston, *Deseret News*, March 30, 2016

By contrast, in Germany and Scandinavia, tune names were not typically used even when a hymn tune was used for more than one text. German tunes were often renamed when introduced in England during the 18th century, giving them English-style tune names.

Common practice today is for the composer of that tune to name it.

[www.hymntune.library.uiuc.edu](http://www.hymntune.library.uiuc.edu) hymn tune index, of hymns printed anywhere in the world. with English language texts up to 1820.

*Sacred Harp* – sacred choral music of the American South, a unique sound and harmony;

Shape-note music – old American form of worship music;

Hymn Meters - number of syllables for the lines in each stanza

L.M. = Long meter - 88.88, with 4 lines each eight syllables long

S.M. = Short meter - 66.86 with 3 lines each 6 syllables, with the other line 4 syllables

C.M. = Common meter - 86.86

D.L.M. - Double Long Meter - 8 lines in a verse

D.S.M. = Double Short Meter - “

D.C.M. = Double common meter - “

Irregular = number of syllables varies from one verse to another

Tune meters index, LDS Hymns, p. 401: look for hymns that share the same hymn meter designations, i.e. #20 & #21 you can sing the text of one to the tune of the other.

Styles of hymns - Joyce Brown's article in *Ensign*, October 1980 – styles of hymns

True hymns – prayers addressed to God Praise

Encouragement and instruction Psalms, chorales, and Gospel songs

Coila also includes: Marches “comfort” hymns – the old favorites, easy to play.

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William Billings, first American to collect hymns of exclusively America-composed;  
Early American hymn, of the Revolutionary War period, Tune in version of 1778:  
Note that parts labeled correspond to the modern SATB; the melody is in the tenor part.

# Chester

William Billings

TREBLE  
Let ty-rantssshake their i - ron rod, And Slav'-ry clank her

COUNTER  
Let ty-rants shake their i - ron rod, And Slav'-ry clank her

TENOR  
Let ty-rants shake their i - ron rod, And Slav'-ry clank her

BASS  
Let ty-rantssshake their i - ron rod, And Slav'-ry clank her

7  
gal - ling chains, We fear them not, we trust in

gal - ling chains, We fear them not, we trust in

gal - ling chains, We fear them not, we trust in

gal - ling chains, We fear them not, we trust in

12  
God, New eng-land's God for ev - er reigns.

God, New eng-land's God for ev - er reigns.

God, New eng-land's God for ev - er reigns.

God, New eng-land's God for ev - er reigns.

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### Form in Hymns:

Strophic – verses, different text to the same music over and over

Binary – 2 parts in each verse; hymns can be strophic and binary; i.e. *Onward Christian Soldiers*

Through Composed – no repetition

Introduction – length, “Suggested” in LDS Hymnal - depends on the hymn, size of congregation, and familiarity with the hymn;

### Basic problems in hymns: (hymns referenced are in LDS 1985 Hymns)

#### Technique

Hymns can be played with good fingering and technique, just as any other piano music, to sound musical. Phrasing is also part of this.

#### Rhythms

rests: *Wooburn Green*/#76 - rests enhance the notes around them –

Mozart: “Notes are Silver, Rests are Gold”

Triplets: *Joyful Sound*/#11, *Refuge*/#102, *Pilot*/#104\*\*, *My Prayer*/#131, *Remembrance*/#183, *My Redeemer*/#292

practice triplets – always include the beat before and after triplets!

sixteenth notes: the difference between treating dotted 8<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> notes as triplets vs. true sixteenth rhythm – the clean, crisp, dignity that it gives to such hymns as *Fowler*/#19 (*We Thank Thee O God For A Prophet*) - 1/12<sup>th</sup> of beat difference! examples: *Assembly*/#2 (*The Spirit of God*), *Lion of Judah*/#3 (*Now Let Us Rejoice*)

DRILL THESE with your students!

6/8: *East Liverpool*/#223 – just remember to keep the 6/8 pulse, think in 6 or 2? It depends on the character/tempo of hymn

fermatas: *Alex*/#37; *Ein’ feste Burg*/#68; *Nun danket*/#95; *Precious*/#103; *He lives*/#136; *Courage*/#243 (discussion on 3 styles of fermata for conductors; rit?)

*Mormon*/#195; *Laudis Corona*/#210; *I would follow Thee*/#220; *Ann*/#254\*;

*Parowan*/#255; *America*/#339-*National Anthem UK*/#341.

**Note Reading** - reading intervals incorrectly – create flashcards especially 6ths, 7ths, 8ths - drill those to differentiate; i.e. 6ths - *Ure*/#146; 7ths - *Gabriel*/#193

*Gwenthlyn*/#226 – m.6 differs from m.14 – phrases look alike, but end differently

Accidentals – *Azalia*/#25; *Esther*/#120; *Saul*/#173; *Caroline*/#179; *Margaret*/#187;

*Parowan*/#255\*\* - m 5, m 21, m 23; *Child of God*/#301 - carry accidentals thru the measure (Either mark the hymn, or make copy to mark up.)

Large reach between Bass and Tenor - use L sign to indicate RH plays tenor note

I tell my students that anyone who can sing Tenor can probably find their note without help, but will appreciate the pianist who plays it.

Optional notes – *Cannon*/#21; *National Hymn*/#78; *Mormon*/#195; *Christmas*/#202;

*Laudis Corona*/#210; *I would follow Thee*/#220; *Ann*/#254\*; *Parowan*/#255\*;  
*America*/#339-*National Anthem UK*/#341 – discuss how to play.

**Key Changes** *Welcome*/#280 – middle section changes key

**Repeats:** *Uniontown*/#230

**Meter Change** - 6/8-4/4 - *Cumorah*/#13; *All is Well*/#30; *Lily Dale*/#34; *Kindly Word*/# 233.

unusual meters: 2/4 - *Gwenthlyn*/#226;

2/2 – *St. Anne*/#31; *Ruth*/#50; *Ebernezer*/#77; *Praise*/#79; *Duke Street*/#90;

*Schoritz-Rugin*/#106; *Alma*/#154; *Royal Army*/#251; *Missionary Hymn*/#268;

3/4-9/8 – *Manchester*/#52; 3/2 – *Mit Freuden zart*/#70; *Lux Benigna*/#97;

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6/4 – Sarah/#158; Stille Nacht/#204; Shepherd/#221;

### **Voicing** - how to play moving parts in middle of texture

remember to hold the melody long notes while moving other parts – good technique exercise

*Reliance*/#122 – hold dotted half note melody while other voices move

*He Lives*/#136 – melody sustains while other parts move

Voice parts: Soprano - top Treble clef notes; Alto, lower Treble notes; Tenor, upper Bass

Clef notes; Bass, lower Bass Clef notes

### **Accompaniment** - - look for the piano brace! Ann/#254; Dennis/#314.

Unison: *Maryanne*/#291; *Conmel*/#256; *Parowan*/#255.

Duets: *Deseret*/#5; *Solemn Melody*/#12; *City Dale*/#34; *Sine Nomine*/#82; *Refuge*/#102;  
*Shepherd*/#221; *Bicester*/#232.

Solo: *Parowan*/#255; *Conmel*/#256; *Norma*/#300.

Melody in one hand: *Hudson*/#1; *Sanford*/#59\*\*; *National Hymn*/#78\*; *Slagelse*/#144;

*Sarah*/#158; *Bethlehem (Careless)*/#186; *Railway to Heaven*/#273;

Left Hand: *God be with You*/#152; *Bavaria*/#157; Right Hand: *Seminary*/#219 – triads.

### **Introductions**: Alma/#154; National Hymn/#78 – fanfare intro; Norma/#300 introduction and ending

### **Endings**: *Easter Morn*/#198, *Called to Serve*/#249 – how long to hold a fermata? Norma/#300;

### **Verses – Varied**: *Sine Nomine*/#82, *Easter Morn*/#198 - need to practice the changes from verse to verse

Extra verses *Cumorah*/#13, *Cache*/#14, *Duane Street*/#29

### **Moveable clef**: think as transposition – where is middle C? Men’s arrangements #319-337 Hymn arrangements for women #309-336

### **Hymn arrangements for women and men -**

For LDS hymns: [churchofjesuschrist.org/hymns](http://churchofjesuschrist.org/hymns) print out a hymn in a different key!!

Excellent source for LDS hymns if you aren’t familiar with them, or purchase a copy of the hymnbook at Deseret Book or at any Distribution Center (great store in Family Center, Midvale)

### **Students not interested in playing hymns:**

for philosophical reasons, or other reasons;

use classical literature - see list of possibilities below;

Bach chorales for upper level students;

every American student should be able to play patriotic songs!

*America/My Country tis of Thee*: [hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org) - search for My country tis of thee > pdf

*America the Beautiful*:

[https://songsandhymns.org/pdf/sheet\\_music/america-the-beautiful.pdf](https://songsandhymns.org/pdf/sheet_music/america-the-beautiful.pdf)

*Battle Hymn of the Republic*: [hymnary.org](http://hymnary.org) - Battle Hymn of the Republic > pdf

*The Star Spangled Banner*: <http://imslp.info> or

<http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imgnks/usimg/3/31/IMSLP101848-PMLP208661->

[The Star Spangled Banner Stults - 001G Vocals Only.pdf](#)

### **Hymn-like classical music** – for students who would benefit from learning hymn-like music

– many of these pieces would also make suitable prelude music:

J. S. Bach *Chorale* *Reverent and Beautiful* Book 1, ed. D. Wolford (Jackman Music)

C. P. E. Bach *Pastorale*

Ludwig von Beethoven *Andante in F*

F. Burgmuller *Hymn*

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	<u>Eighteen Characteristic Pieces:</u>	<i>Les bohemiens</i> (The Gypsies)
		<i>Le Cloche de Matines</i> (Matin Bells)
	<u>Twenty Five Easy and Progressive Studies, op. 100:</u>	<i>Le Separation</i> (Parting)
	<i>L'Arabesque</i>	<i>La Candeur</i> (Frankness)
	<i>Ave Maria</i>	<i>La Chasse</i> (The Chase)
	<i>Pastorale</i>	<i>Harmony of the Angels</i>
	<i>La Tarentelle</i> (Tarentella)	
Frederick Chopin	<i>Prelude in A Major</i>	
Christoph von Gluck	<i>O Savior, Hear Me</i>	
Arcangelo Corelli	<i>Adagio</i>	
J. B. Duvernoy	<u>Primary School 25 Elementary Studies, op. 176:</u> XI, XX, XXIV	
Edward Grieg	<i>The Watchman's Song</i>	
Alexandre Guilimant	<i>Prelude in F</i>	
Cornelius Gurlitt	<u>Albumleaves for the Young, op. 101:</u> 2. <i>Morning Prayer</i> ; 18. <i>Sunday</i>	
George F. Handel	<i>Lord, at Departing</i> (postlude)	
Franz Joseph Haydn	<i>Arietta</i> (theme and variation)	
	<i>O Thou That Girdeth Me With Strength</i>	
Stephen Heller	<i>Melodious Studies, op. 45:</i> <i>L'Avalanche</i>	
Felix Mendlessohn	<i>The Parting Hour</i>	<i>Spring</i>
W. A. Mozart	<i>Prelude in F</i>	
Robert Schumann	<u>Album for the Young:</u> <i>A Chorale</i>	<i>Melody</i> <i>Norse Song</i>
	<i>An Important Event</i> (more than 4 part, but chordal)	<i>Soldier's March</i>
Peter I. Tchaikovsky	<u>Album for the Young:</u> <i>Morning Prayer</i>	<i>Evening Song</i>

## Schumann

Mason & Webb's Cantica Laudis, Boston, 1850



### Other activities with hymns:

Analyze the cadences and other chords – consider the possibilities of playing by ear when hymnbooks aren't available

Sightreading tool:

Dr. Robin Hancock, of BYU piano faculty, asks his students to sightread 50 hymns a week - that would take less than 8 weeks to complete the LDS Hymnal!

Improvising on the hymns:

Kevin Olson encourages his students to improvise for prelude and postlude. It doesn't need to be complicated, just something a little more soothing and less blocky. EXCELLENT conference session at 2018 UMTA Conference!

Hymnathon - great idea from Barbara Elison, Orem Chapter - Coila's Music Studio featured one every spring, with a different theme/emphasis each year.

