

The Hymn Society Annual Conference

July 11-15, 2021

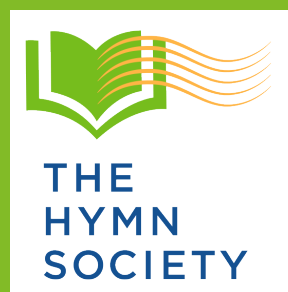
SINGING WELCOME?

Evening Hymn Event

TUESDAY, JULY 13

“All Are Welcome”

LARRY VISSER, EMILY BRINK, FHS,
& ROBERT BATASTINI, FHS



2021 Conference of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada

“All Are Welcome”

A hymn festival held at LaGrave Ave Christian Reformed Church
Grand Rapids Michigan, recorded May 13, 2021 for virtual release on
July 13, 2021

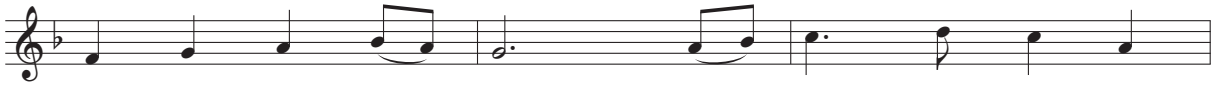
Program Notes begin on page 21

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All Are Welcome



1. Let us build a house where love can dwell And
2. Let us build a house where proph - ets speak, And
3. Let us build a house where love is found In
4. Let us build a house where hands will reach Be -
5. Let us build a house where all are named, Their



all can safe - ly live, A place where saints and
words are strong and true, Where all God's chil - dren
wa - ter, wine and wheat: A ban - quet hall on
yond the wood and stone To heal and strength - en,
songs and vi - sions heard And loved and treas - ured,



chil - dren tell How hearts learn to for - give. Built of
dare to seek To dream God's reign a - new. Here the
ho - ly ground, Where peace and jus - tice meet. Here the
serve and teach, And live the Word they've known. Here the
taught and claimed As words with - in the Word. Built of



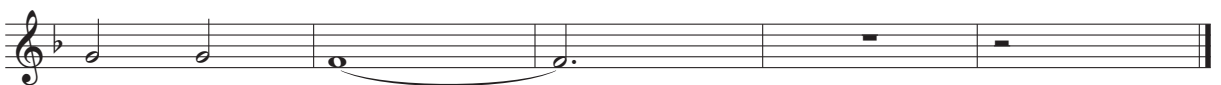
hopes and dreams and vi - sions, Rock of faith and vault of
cross shall stand as wit - ness And as sym - bol of God's
love of God, through Je - sus, Is re - vealed in time and
out - cast and the stran - ger Bear the im - age of God's
tears and cries and laugh - ter, Prayers of faith and songs of



grace; Here the love of Christ shall end di - vi - sions:
grace; Here as one we claim the faith of Je - sus:
space; As we share in Christ the feast that frees us:
face; Let us bring an end to fear and dan - ger:
grace, Let this house pro - claim from floor to raft - er:



All are wel - come, all are wel - come, all are wel - come



in this place.

A Place Called Home

1. A place called home with com - fort for the wea - ry:
 2. A place called home where ten - der - ness can flou - rish:
 3. A place called home, a prom - ise for to - mor - row:
 4. A place called home for ev - 'ry hu - man be - ing:

a place called home of nour - ish - ment and rest:
 a place called home, a ha - ven from all harm:
 a place called home, a vi - sion hand - ed down:
 a place called home where arms are o - pened wide:

a place called home that wel - comes in the stran - ger,
 a place called home where chil - dren sleep in safe - ty,
 a place called home for all God's sons and daugh - ters,
 a place called home, where all ex - tend the wel - come,

where one un - known be - comes a wel - come guest,
 where hurts are healed, a shel - ter from the storm,
 where love pre - vails and peace is ev - er found,
 where none are lost, a - lone or cast a - side,

Where love can find a hu - man hab - i - ta - tion:
 where peace can find a hu - man hab - i - ta - tion:
 where hope can find a hu - man hab - i - ta - tion:
 but mem - bers of a sin - gle hu - man fam - 'ly.

God grant us all this grace: a place called home.
 God grant us all this grace: a place called home.
 God grant us all this grace: a place called home.
 God grant us grace to build a place called home.

Text: Michael Joncas, b.1951; © 2016, GIA Publications, Inc.
 Music: FINLANDIA; Jean Sibelius, 1865–1957; descant by Larry Visser, 2021

Draw Us Together and Make Us One



1. Draw us to - geth - er and make us one—
2. Sis - ters and broth - ers in com - mon cause,
3. Fill us with breath of your Liv - ing Word,
4. Min - is - tries honed for a chang - ing world,



tap - es - tries wo - ven of vi - brant strands,
draw us to - geth - er and make us one—
form us in serv - ice to tend the earth.
stead - fast in work till your will is done,



robed in a patch - work of rain - bow hues,
fired by the Spir - it with var - ied gifts,
Draw us to - geth - er and make us one,
till all cre - a - tion a - bounds in love,



col - ors re - fract - ing the pri - sm's bands.
warmed by the Light of a sin - gle sun.
joined in af - firm - ing all crea - tures' worth.
draw us to - geth - er and make us one!



Grow - ing as Wis - dom and grace en - twine, we are the



branch - es of Christ the Vine.

Text: Mary Louise Bringle, © 2006 by GIA Publications, Inc.
Tune: GLEN HEWITT, Sally Ann Morris, © 2003 by GIA Publications, Inc.

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race



*1. 2. 3.
1. Di - verse in cul - ture, na - tion, race, We
2. God, let us be a bridge of care Con -
3. When cha - sms wid - en, storms a - rise, O
4. God, let us be a ta - ble spread With



4.
come to - geth - er by your grace. God, let us be a
nect - ing peo - ple ev - 'ry - where. Help us con - front all
Ho - ly Spir - it, make us wise. Let our re - solve, like
gifts of love and bro - ken bread, Where all find wel - come,



meet - ing ground Where hope and heal - ing love are found.
fear and hate And lust for pow'r that sep - a - rate.
steel, be strong To stand with those who suf - fer wrong.
grace at - tends, And en - e - mies a - rise as friends.

**May be sung as a two- or four-voice canon.*

Text: Ruth Duck, b.1947, © 1992, GIA Publications, Inc.
Tune: TALLIS' CANON, LM; Thomas Tallis, c.1505-1585

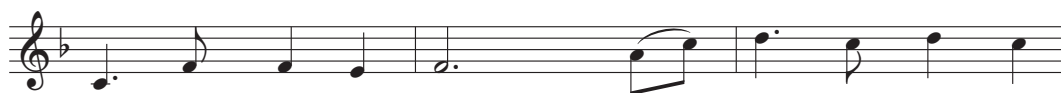
Beneath the Cross of Jesus



1. Be - neath the cross of Je - sus, I find a place to
2. Be - neath the cross of Je - sus, his fam - 'ly is my
3. Be - neath the cross of Je - sus, the path be - fore the



stand, and won - der at such mer - cy that
own: once stran - gers chas - ing self - ish dreams, now
crown, we fol - low in his foot - steps where



calls me as I am. For hands that should dis -
one through grace a - lone. How could I now dis -
prom - ised hope is found. How great the joy be -



card me, hold wounds which tell me, "Come." Be -
hon - or the ones that you have loved? Be -
fore us to be his per - fect bride. Be -



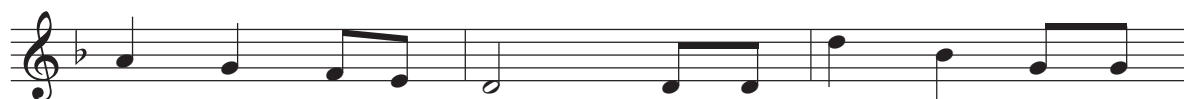
neath the cross of Je - sus, my un - wor - thy soul is won.
neath the cross of Je - sus, see the chil - dren called by God.
neath the cross of Je - sus, we will glad - ly live our lives.

Text: Keith Getty, b.1974, and Kristyn Getty, b.1980
Tune: Keith Getty, b.1974, and Kristyn Getty, b.1980
© 2006, Thankyou Music, admin. CapitolCMG Publishing.com

On the Cross, the World's Salvation



1. On the cross, the world's sal - va - tion: ev - 'ry
2. By the cross, Love's rev - e - la - tion: gift of
3. In the cross, our con - so - la - tion: Christ, now
4. With the cross, a new cre - a - tion, now trans -



na - tion, ev - 'ry race, all be - lov - ed sons and
self to fi - nal breath, draw - ing to - him - self all
ris - en, shared our pain. Weep - ing will be turned to
formed and glo - ri - ous. See, the cos - mos now trans -



daugh - ters, chil - dren fa - vored by God's grace.
peo - ple, lov - ing e - ven un - to death.
danc - ing; those we lose will live a - gain.
fig - ured by the splen - did, ho - ly cross!

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b.1939, 2018, © GIA Publications, Inc.
Tune: KAZ DZIEDAJA, Latvian melody; arr. by Robert J. Batastini, 1995

Kwake Yesu nasimama

Here on Jesus Christ I Will Stand

Swahili: Kwa - ke Ye - su na - si - ma - ma, ndi - ye
 Refrain: Here on Je - sus Christ I will stand. He's the
 1. There's no oth - er place I can hide Till the
 2. It is not the work of my hands That has
 3. When my days on this earth are done, And I

mwam - ba ni sa - la - ma. Ndi - ye mwam - ba ni sa - la -
 sol - id rock of my life. He's the sol - id rock of my
 storm that rag - es sub - sides. My voice cries to God from the
 washed a - way all my sins. I'm re - deemed, and all of my
 stand at God's ho - ly throne, My heart will not have an - y

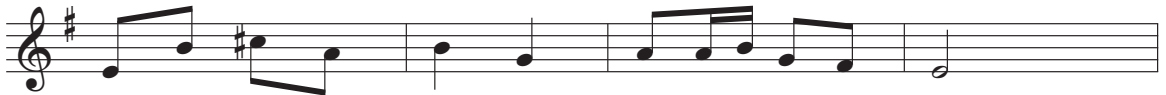
ma, ndi - ye mwam - ba ni sa - la - ma.
 life. He's the sol - id rock of my life.
 flood, And I'm saved be - cause of his blood.
 days, Je - sus Christ will be my heart's praise.
 fear; In Christ's right - eous - ness I am here.

Text: Kenyan traditional, © 2007, East Africa Annual Conference, admin. General Board of Global Ministries
 Tune: KWAKE YESU, LM; Kenyan traditional; adapt. and arr. by Greg Scheer, b.1966, © 2019

Build a Longer Table



1. Build a long - er ta - ble, not a high - er wall,
2. Build a saf - er ref - uge, not a larg - er jail;
3. Build a broad - er door - way, not a long - er fence.
4. When we lived as ex - iles, ref - u - gees a - broad,



feed - ing those who hun - ger, mak - ing room for all.
where the weak find shel - ter, mer - cy will not fail.
Love pro - tects all peo - ple, spar - ing no ex - pense.
Christ be - came our door - way to the reign of God.



Feast - ing to - geth - er, stran - ger turns to friend,
For an - y place where jus - tice is de - nied,
When we em - brace com - pas - sion more than fear,
So must our ta - bles wel - come those who roam.



Christ breaks walls to piec - es; false di - vi - sions end.
Christ will breach the jail wall, free - ing all in - side.
Christ tears down our fenc - es; all are wel - come here.
None can be ex - clud - ed; all must find a home.

Text: David Bjorlin, b.1984; © 2018, GIA Publications Inc.
Music: NOËL NOUVELET; French carol

Miren Qué Bueno / Oh, Look and Wonder

Estrillo / Refrain



Spanish: ¡Mi - ren qué bue - no, qué bue - no es!
Oh, look and won - der how good it is!

Estrofas / Verses



1. ¡Mi - ren qué bue - no es cuan - do los her -
 2. ¡Mi - ren qué bue - no es cuan - do las her -
 3. ¡Mi - ren qué bue - no es cuan - do nos reu -
 1. *How good it is when broth - ers dwell in*
 2. *How good it is when sis - ters dwell in*
 3. *How good it is when all earth's peo - ple*



ma - nos es - tán jun - tos! Es co - mo a - cei - te
 ma - nas es - tán jun - tas! Se pa - re - ce al ro -
 ni - mos to - dos jun - tos! Por - que el Se - ñor ahí
peace with one an - oth - er: it is like pre - cious
peace with one an - oth - er: fresh like the morn - ing
dwell in peace to - geth - er: that is where God will

D.C.



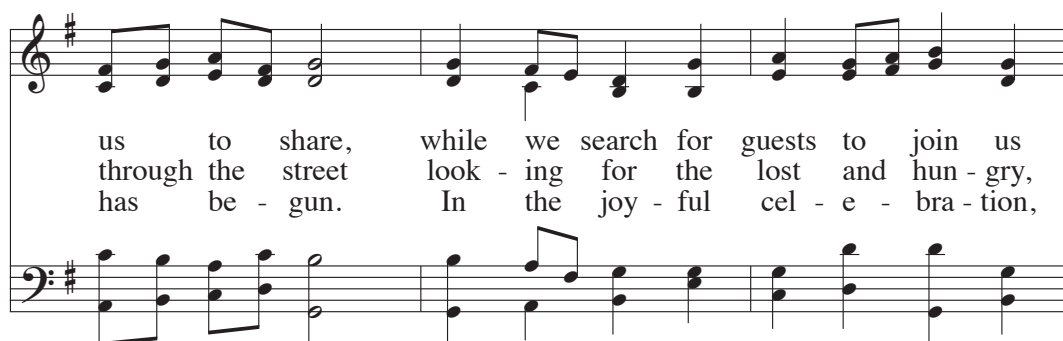
bue - no de - rra - ma - do so - bre Aa - rón.
 cí - o so - bre los mon - tes de Sión.
 man - da vi - da e - ter - na y ben - di - ción.
oil when run - ning fresh on Aa - ron's beard.
dew that falls on Zi - on's ho - ly hill.
pour the bless - ing, life for - ev - er - more.

Text: Psalm 133; Pablo D. Sosa, 1933–2020
 Tune: Pablo D. Sosa, 1933–2020
 © 1972, GIA Publications, Inc.

God Is Waiting at the Table



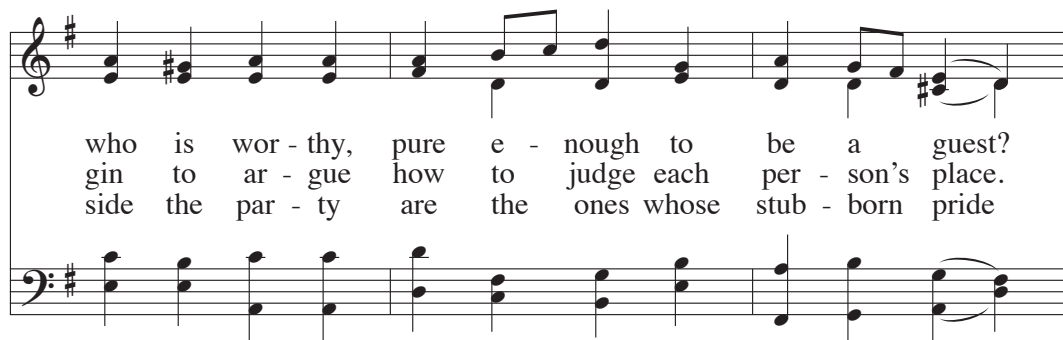
1. God is wait - ing at the ta - ble with a feast for
2. God is wait - ing at the ta - ble, as we wan - der
3. God is wait - ing at the ta - ble and the mu - sic



us to share, while we search for guests to join us
through the street, look - ing for the lost and hun - gry,
has be - gun. In the joy - ful cel - e - bra - tion,



as we gath - er and pre - pare. Do we won - der
call - ing them to come and eat. Some - times we be -
there is room for ev - 'ry - one. In the street out -



who is wor - thy, pure e - nough to be a guest?
gin to ar - gue how to judge each per - son's place.
side the par - ty are the ones whose stub - born pride

If per - fec - tion is the stan - dard,
 But if we would fol - low Je - sus,
 won't per - mit the risk of danc - ing

who could pass our le - gal test?
 then our meas - ure must be grace.
 with the "sin - ners" now in - side.

Text: Adam M. L. Tice, © 2015, GIA Publications, Inc.
 Tune: IN BABILONE, 8 7 8 7 D; *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlieties en Contredansen*, c.1710

O Great God and Lord of the Earth



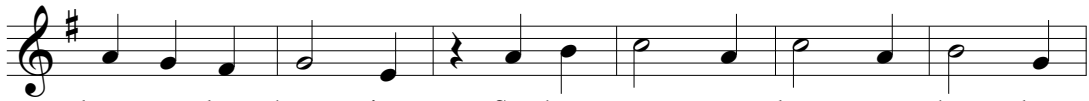
1. O great God and Lord of the earth
 2. Those who crush your people de - light,
 3. God the Lord will not stay a - way
 4. Should the wrong change plac - es with right



rouse your - self and de - mon - strate jus - tice; give the
 claim - ing God a - bove takes no no - tice; they pro -
 nor for - sake his well - be - loved peo - ple; heav - en's
 and the courts play host to cor - rup - tion; should the



ar - ro - gant what they de - serve, si - lence all ma -
 claim that heav - en is blind, that the God of
 jus - tice soon will ap - pear and the pure in
 in - no - cent fear for their lives while the guilt - y



le - vo - lent boast - ing. See how some you love are bro - ken,
 Ja - cob is si - lent. Stu - pid fools, when will you lis - ten?
 heart will em - brace it. Yes, the ones whom God in - struct - ed,
 smile at their schem - ing; still the Lord will be your ref - uge,



for they know the weight of op - pres - sion; e - ven
 Now take heed, you ig - no - rant peo - ple. God who
 who re - vere and stud - y God's word will be
 be your strength and cour - age and tow - er. Though your



wid - ows and or - phans are mur - dered, and poor
 gave us sight and hear - ing has ob -
 saved from all that harms them while a
 foot should verge on slip - ping, God will



strang - ers are in - no - cent vic - tims.
 served and not - ed what hap - pened.
 pit is dug for the wick - ed.
 cher - ish, keep and pro - tect you.

Remember, God, Your Promises

1. Re - mem - ber, God, your prom - is - es where peo - ple groan in pain
2. Re - mem - ber, God, your prom - is - es where chil - dren beg for bread,
3. Re - mem - ber, God, your prom - is - es where ref - u - gees still roam

be - neath op - pres - sion's heav - y load and death's de - struc-tive reign.
where food is scarce and life is cheap and fam - ine claims its dead.
and find no wel - come, on - ly walls, no coun - try to call home.

Re - mem - ber how you freed the slaves from Phar - aoh's bru - tal will,
Re - mem - ber how you fed the weak till all could eat their fill,
Re - mem - ber how you saved your child from Her - od's urge to kill,

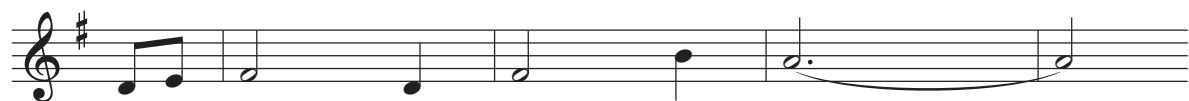
so come a - gain, our sav - ing help, and free your peo - ple still.
so come a - gain, our meal and host, and feed the hun - gry still.
so come a - gain, our mi - grant God, and save your ex - iles still.

Text: David Bjorlin, b.1984; © 2020 GIA Publications, Inc.
Music: THIRD MODE MELODY; Thomas Tallis, 1505–1585

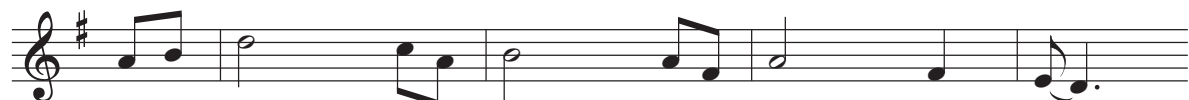
Has Jesus Stood in Front of Me



1. Has Je - sus stood in front of me,
 2. Has Je - sus met me in the street
 3. Has Je - sus knocked up - on my door
 4. Will Je - sus find us puffed with pride,



un - seen be - fore my eyes?
 in some - one I found strange—
 and sought a place to stay?
 or with the last and least?



He comes, a wea - ry ref - u - gee,
 in one who seeks a bite to eat,
 If I re - fuse to bless the poor,
 He calls all hun - gry souls in - side



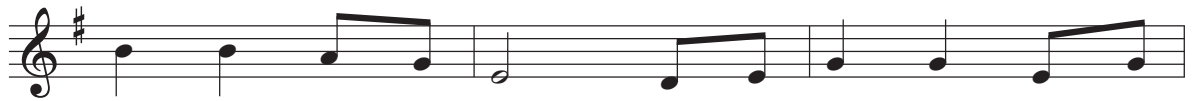
and calls through stran - gers' cries.
 or asks for ex - tra change?
 will God turn me a - way?
 to share in God's great feast.

Text: Adam M. L. Tice, © 2018, GIA Publications, Inc.
 Tune: Larry Visser, © 2021, The Leupold Foundation

Where the Joys and Hopes of Living



1. Where the joys and hopes of liv - ing loose the
2. Where the na - tions join to - geth - er, turn - ing
3. Where the world is sore and bro - ken, crushed by



shack - les of de - spair; where the home - less and af -
from their war - ring course; where the path of peace with
thirst for pow'r and greed; where the might - y seem in -



flict - ed find the warmth of love and care; here, O
jus - tice leads a - way from use of force; here, O
dif - f'rent to the weight of hu - man need; here, O



Christ, you move a - mong us; here your Church takes to the
Christ, you move a - mong us; here your Church is called to
Christ, you move a - mong us; here your Church will coun - ter



street, as we fol - low your ex - am - ple, bind - ing
dwell, as the heal - ing dawn of heav - en breaks in -
wrong, as we an - swer e - vil's dis - cord with the

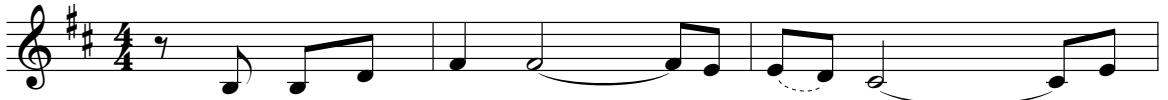


wounds and wash - ing feet.
to the depths of hell.
har - mo - ny of song.

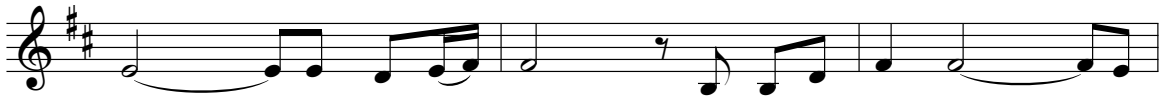
Text: Adam M. L. Tice
Tune: BROCKINGTON, Norah Duncan IV
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Anta Atheemon

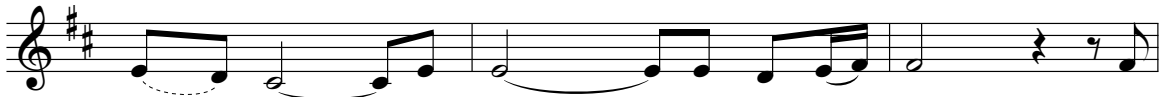
You Are a Great God



Arabic: An - ta a - thee - mon, a - thee - mon, a -
Spanish: E - res tan gran - de, Dios de po - der. Tan
English: You are a great God, a might-y God. How



thee - mon ya Al - lah. An - ta a - thee - mon, a -
 gran - de e - res tú. E - res tan gran - de, Dios
 great, how great you are. You are a great God, a



thee - mon, a - thee - mon ya Al - lah. A -
 de po - der. Tan gran - de e - res tú. Tan
 might - y God. How great, how great you are. A



thee - mon, fi ma - ha - ba - ti - ka, a - thee - mon, fi a -
 gran - de en tu a - mor con - ti - nuo. Tan gran - de en tu
 great God in un - fail - ing love, a great God in your



ma - na - ti - ka. A - thee - mon, fi ta - hri - ri - ka, a -
 di - de - li - dad. Tan gran - de e - res pa - ra sal - var. Tan
 faith - ful - ness, a great God in de - liv - er - ance, a



thee - mon, ay - dun fi, she - fa - i - ka.
 gran - de con po - der pa - ra sa - nar.
 great God in your might - y heal - ing pow'r.

Text: Ziad Samuel Srouji; English tr. by Emily Brink and Anne Zaki, Spanish tr. by Bethany Cok
 Tune: Ziad Samuel Srouji
 © 1990, 2021, Ziad Samuel Srouji

The Kingdom of God

1. The king - dom of God is jus - tice and joy;
 2. The king - dom of God is mer - cy and grace;
 3. The king - dom of God is chal - lenge and choice:
 4. God's king - dom is come, the gift and the goal;

For Je - sus re - stores what sin would de - stroy.
 The cap - tives are freed, the sin - ners find place,
 Be - lieve the good news, re - pent and re - joice!
 In Je - sus be - gun, in heav - en made whole.

God's pow - er and glo - ry in Je - sus we know;
 The out - cast are wel - comed God's ban - quet to share;
 God's love for us sin - ners brought Christ to his cross:
 The heirs of the king - dom shall an - swer his call;

And here and here - af - ter the king - dom shall grow.
 And hope is a - wak - ened in place of de - spair.
 Our cri - sis of judg - ment for gain or for loss.
 And all things cry "Glo - ry!" to God all in all.

Text: Bryn A. Rees, 1911–1983, © 1973, Alexander Scott
 Tune: LAUDATE DOMINUM, 10 10 11 11; Charles H. H. Parry, 1848–1918; descant by Larry Visser, 2021

FESTIVAL LEADERS & PARTICIPANTS

The Festival Choir was gathered from members of the Calvin Alumni Choir, Sean Ivory, director, and the Holland Ecumenical Choir, Bob Batastini, director.

Soprano

Cindy DeBoer
Martha Kuyten
Lynn McBroom
Jenn Ophoff
Marissa Ruehl
Jennifer Schroder

Alto

Cindy Bender
Jessica Cottrel
Kathy DeMey
Jane Hofstra
Kim Shae
Aline Snoeyink
Beth Vandebroek

Tenor

Milton Bos
JR DeGroot
John Kleinheksel
Carlos Lemagne
Aaron Polet

Bass

David Bardolph
Jack Bender
Kurt Frisch
Calvin Hoogstra
David Klanderma
Zach Kapla

Carlos Lemagne - vocal soloist from Cuba and a 2021 graduate from Calvin University,

Anne Zaki - vocal soloist from Egypt and former staff member of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship

Michael Pierce - guitarist www.michaelpeirceguitar.com

Robert J. Batastini maintains an unbroken history of 67 years as a pastoral musician, starting at age 13 when he became the organist of his Roman Catholic parish, and three years later the choir director. At the age of 19, he formed and taught a concert band in the parish grade school; Bob has been fascinated by all things musical throughout his life. Now in retirement as associate choir director at Saint Francis De Sales Parish, Holland, Michigan; he also directs the Holland Ecumenical Choir with singers from 20 area churches.

From 1967-2007, Bob simultaneously held the positions of Vice President and Senior Editor of GIA Publications, where he served as project director and editor for 22 hymnals, Catholic and Protestant and instituted GIA's commitment to publishing the work of modern hymn writers and continues in a limited role at GIA. Bob joined the Hymn Society in 1977, spent eight years on the executive committee, is a past president, and in 2006 was named a fellow. For fun, he performs somewhat regularly on the Mighty Wurlitzer theatre organ at the Grand Rapids Public Museum.

Larry Visser is Minister of Music and Organist at LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church

(<https://www.LaGrave.org>) where for the past 22 years he has directed the large music ministry at this downtown congregation in Grand Rapids, MI. Larry is a graduate of Calvin University, holds a DMA in Organ Performance from the University of Michigan, and was a finalist in the *Grand Prix de Chartres* international organ competition in Paris and Chartres. His organ, choral and hymn tune compositions are published by Leupold Editions, GIA Publications, Inc., and MorningStar Music Publishers. He was awarded the first prize for the Hymn Society's 1996 search for a new tune for William Reid Jr.'s *O God of Every Nation*, first prize winner of the 2019 Utech Hymn Tune Competition sponsored by the Eastman School of Music, and a

first-prize winner for the 2019 *A Hymn for Mercy* hymn tune competition sponsored by the St. Joseph's Mercy Secondary School in Navan, Ireland. In addition to his membership in The Hymn Society, Larry is also a member of the Grand Rapids Chapter of the American Guild of Organists.

Emily Brink often speaks of her life “before and after” joining the Hymn Society. Her first career was in teaching, with music degrees from Calvin University, the University of Michigan, and Northwestern University (Ph.D. in Music Theory); she taught in Montana, New York, and Illinois before moving to Grand Rapids MI in 1983, to become editor for the forthcoming *Psalter Hymnal* of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRC) and then joining the Hymn Society. For 20 years she was music and liturgy editor for the CRC, and then for almost 20 more years, joined the staff of the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship (CICW) at Calvin University, first as program director for the annual and increasingly international Symposium on Worship, and then continuing to develop psalm and hymn resources for worship. For the Hymn Society she served on the executive committee, became the first woman president, and was named a Fellow in 2004. She also held local and national roles in the American Guild of Organists and has long been a member of the Consultation on Common Texts, also serving as president one term. She retired from CICW early 2021.

Commentary on the Hymns

Welcome to this hymn festival at the LaGrave Ave Christian Reformed Church, in Grand Rapids, Michigan, part of the 2021 Conference of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada. Though we could not invite you to fill this space with song during the continuing COVID pandemic, we indeed welcome everyone to join us in singing wherever you are around the world. And since we couldn't imagine a hymn festival without singers, we're delighted to welcome from two area choirs, the Calvin University Alumni Choir and the Holland Ecumenical Choir. Our singers will be directed by Bob Batastini, from GIA Publications, and accompanied by Dr. Larry Visser, minister of music here at LaGrave. My name is Emily Brink, and I will be offering commentary on the hymns the three of us selected for this festival. We do hope you sing along with us, wherever you are, alone or with others.

Theme Hymn: "All Are Welcome"

Our first hymn is a resounding affirmation to the challenging question posed by the theme of the 2021 Conference of the Hymn Society in the United States and Canada: "Singing Welcome?" Marty Haugen composed "All Are Welcome" in 1994 for the dedication of a new church building. Every stanza begins "Let us build" Much more than bricks and mortar are required to "build" a place where all are welcome. The five stanzas (originally there were 13!) name many themes, moving from Gathering, to Word, Table, Sending, and finally to the vision of the Peaceable Kingdom where all are named, heard, loved, and treasured. We have structured this hymn sing based on themes from the five stanzas of this hymn.

Stanza 1: "Here the Love of Christ Shall End Divisions"

A Place Called Home

One of the most beloved English settings of Psalm 23 is by Isaac Watts "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need," which ends acknowledging the deep human need to be "no more a stranger or a guest, but like a child at home." The longing for "a place called home" is at the heart and center of this text; the phrase begins and repeats and ends every stanza—sixteen times

altogether. Author Michael Joncas, liturgical theologian and composer of contemporary Catholic music is best known for “On Eagles’ Wings.” This more recent text speaks powerfully during these days of mass migrations of refugees around the world, partly because of his matching the text to the tune FINLANDIA.

Composed by Jean Sibelius in 1899, FINLANDIA became a powerful expression of longing for his homeland, Finland, in its struggle against Russian oppression. As a tone poem, this melody became well-known in orchestral literature everywhere. But now for almost 100 years, FINLANDIA has become a beloved hymn tune.

Draw Us Together and Make Us One

Our next hymn also has musical roots in a struggle for home. In a hymn, usually the text comes first, and then the tune. But text writer Mel Bringle often finds inspiration first in a melody. Working together on a commission for Wake Forrest Divinity School, Sally Ann Morris suggested that she’d always wanted to compose a hymn tune based on the rhythm of the popular song from *West Side Story*: “I want to live in America.” Many of you will remember that classic immigrant struggle for a place to call home, then between rival gangs in New York City. That rhythmic connection provided the spark for Mel’s text and Sally Ann’s tune. How fitting, creatively exemplifying the drawing together of many who are very different from each other—in churches, in seminaries, and on city streets in our divided world.

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

I’m struck by the simple genius of the choice of TALLIS’ CANON, which so simply yet profoundly exemplifies unity in diversity. Ruth Duck’s text describes the present reality of the diverse people of God in this world, while the very form of the tune provides a glimpse of the world to come, the new Jerusalem, described in the very last chapter of the Bible, where all nations and peoples will bring their glory into it, and there will be no more night there. We sing this as a prayer filled with present reality and heartfelt hope.

Stanza Two: "Here as One We Claim the Faith of Jesus"

Beneath the Cross of Jesus

Our hope to build communities of welcome rests in Christ's welcome of us; the church is a place that takes "once strangers chasing selfish dreams, now one through grace alone." Keith Getty, song writer from Northern Ireland, now based also in the US, is best known for the hymn "In Christ Alone" that he wrote with English songwriter Stuart Townend, a song both widely loved but also controversial, on issues of inclusivity! He and his wife Kristyn wrote this new hymn, inspired by and borrowing a title of a song once much loved but that has faded from use. The Gettys are very gifted at songs that bridge popular song and traditional hymn structures.

On the Cross the World's Salvation

This year Delores Dufner celebrated her 60th anniversary (!) as a member of St. Benedict's Monastery in St. Joseph, MN, where her long fruitful vocation as a hymn writer continues to flourish. This hymn is the second of a pair that began with a commission to write a hymn for Evening Prayer on the Feast of the Holy Cross (September 14). But, she wrote, "I realized I had more ideas than I could include in one unified hymn." The first text, "Who Would Know the Mind of Jesus," centered on "our call to show God's compassion by acting on behalf of justice." This second text expresses "continued wonder and awe at the message of God's great love, which was revealed by the cross of Jesus.... All are beloved children of God. Jesus' gift of self even to death shows the depth of God's love; Jesus' suffering, death, and resurrection are consolation in our suffering and grief, because he also experienced these human emotions; Jesus' victory over sin and death initiated a new creation. We sing this hymn to the Latvian melody Bob Batastini chose and arranged for this text.

Kwake Yesu nasimama / Here on Jesus Christ I Will Stand

We're singing this hymn festival in the State of Michigan, part of the Great Lakes area of the United States; and we now expand our "singing welcome" beyond the Western hymn tradition, with a song in Swahili, a language spoken throughout the African Great Lakes area and other parts of East and Southern Africa. Swahili, with roots from Arabic traders with

Bantu peoples along African coasts, is spoken by millions of people with rich song traditions.

We owe this arrangement to Grand Rapids composer Greg Scheer, who was also a co-founder of Hymnary.org.

Stanza Three: “As We Share in Christ the Feast that Frees Us”

Build a Longer Table

Throughout its history our Hymn Society has sent out calls for new hymns to fill gaps and address contemporary concerns not well covered. In 2017, a call went out for hymns addressing immigration and welcome, and in 2018 an online collection was released; *Singing Welcome: Hymns and Songs of Hospitality to Refugees and Immigrants*. It's still available on our website. David Bjorlin, current member of our Executive Committee responded with this hymn, influenced, he said by a popular meme then on social media that said something like, “When you have more than you need, build a longer table, not a higher fence.” The very theme of our Conference this year confirms the continuing challenges of “Singing Welcome?” and the call to come to Christ’s table, because when “Christ breaks walls to pieces; false divisions end.” David chose this tune associated with the joy of telling good news at Christmas, but the message of welcome provides good news anytime, anywhere, to everyone.

God is Waiting at the Table

Adam Tice wrote this about his text: “Jesus’ opponents tried on several occasions to force him to choose between Levitical holiness and prophetic inclusiveness. These confrontations frequently occurred around meals. His choice was a consistent welcome for people who had previously been excluded by law and tradition.” In this text, we are asked: “Who is worthy?” Who is “pure enough” to come to Christ’s table in our assemblies? Adam Tice further suggested that different tunes could serve different liturgical use; whether sung in confession, for example, or in celebration. We chose IN BABILONE, a sturdy Dutch tune discovered by Ralph Vaughan Williams who introduced it in *The English Hymnal* of 1906, still well-known and included in most North American hymnals.

Miren Qué Bueno / Oh, Look and Wonder

The connections undergirding our next song lay to rest any thought of “originality,” coming as it does from combining a Hebrew psalm with a song from Portuguese settlers far from Portugal in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean that become popular in Argentina, all with influence of dance rhythms from Africa.

And yet, and yet, God gave the gifts to one remarkable pastor in Argentina, Pablo Sosa, who brought together Psalm 133 and this Portuguese song for joyful fellowship in his congregation in Buenos Aires. He even invited people to contribute to the song on the spot when they first sang it, adding to the joy. One child that day compared the joy of singing it to the first ice cream cone of summer! (Carl Daw told that story in his companion to the Presbyterian hymnal *Glory to God*.) The Spanish will be led by Carlos Lemagne, a Calvin University student from Cuba.

Stanza Four: “Let Us Bring an End to Fear and Danger”

O Great God and Lord of Earth

After the joy of Psalm 133, we next sing Psalm 94, a very contrasting psalm paraphrased and arranged by John Bell. Psalm 94 is not a pretty psalm; it’s not included in the *Revised Common Lectionary*. In fact, Psalm 94 is an angry psalm. John Witvliet commented in *Psalms for All Seasons*: “Psalm 94 is a lament offered out of despair at the injustice suffered by widows, migrants, and orphans,... a lament in which we may have to identify not only with the victims but also with the victimizers.” That makes comfortable people squirm. Can we live incarnate lives in this broken world, identifying not only with the victims but also with the victimizers?

Remember, God, Your Promises

David Bjorlin wrote about this recent text, written just last year: “While listening to an interview with the late Madeleine L’Engle, she recounted the story of her grandson praying, ‘O God, remember to be the Lord!’ The simple prayer echoes many prayers of the Hebrew people for God to remember God’s own character and act in accordance with it. Adapted from ‘the mouth of babes,’ this is my take on that tradition.”

The choice of THIRD MODE MELODY for his text brings to my mind another English song, “Remember Me, Remember Me,” Dido’s poignant lament from *Dido and Aeneas* by Henry Purcell. Indeed, when suffering people can’t see beyond present pain, sometimes all they can do is cry out for help. Like the psalm writers before us, believers still call on God to act, rooted in hope and trust, because, as the Apostle Peter said, “Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life.” (John 6:68).

Has Jesus Stood in Front of Me

Adam Tice wrote this text, he said, “in response to the previous administration’s mistreatment of refugees and asylum seekers. While recent months have seen some improvements, we still have a long way to go to recognize the humanity of immigrants--and indeed, to see Jesus himself in them.” Larry Visser was moved by this text to compose a new tune for it; sung in this festival for the very first time. He named the tune HEARTSIDE, after the neighborhood surrounding LaGrave Church and a ministry here to the homeless.

Stanza Five: “Let This House Proclaim from Floor to Rafter”

Where the Joys and Hopes of Living

This hymn also has roots in Michigan; it was commissioned for the 35th Annual Convention of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians held in Grand Rapids, July 2015. It’s our second text tonight by Adam Tice—who lives just over the Michigan border in Goshen IN, with the music composed by Detroit composer Norah Duncan IV. We’ll sing it with organ only tonight, though there are accompanying parts for SATB, congregation, organ, brass and timpani available from GIA Publications (G-9021).

Anta Atheemon / You Are A Great God

I first heard this Arabic song in 2019 in Lebanon, at a women’s conference attended by many Syrians who were glad to get away for a couple of days from the wrenching conflict still ongoing in their country—the civil war in Syria is 10 years now, with no end in sight. We heard wrenching stories from those who had lost husbands and sons, homes and property. But

when we gathered for worship, I was deeply moved by their powerful singing of “Anta Atheemon.” When I returned home I couldn’t get that song and their singing out of my head, and I wrote my Egyptian friend Anne Zaki, a former colleague at Calvin University now teaching in Cairo at the Evangelical Theological Seminary there. I asked if she knew it, and she responded that all Arabic Christians know and love this song! Tracking down the composer was a story in itself; it was written by a refugee who is now a pastor in California!

We’ll first hear it sung in Arabic by Anne Zaki, recorded from Egypt; then in Spanish, sung by Carlos Lemagne, and then by all in English.

The Kingdom of God

What more can we say about welcoming all, “since the Kingdom of God is justice and joy.” And so we end with the hope and joy of anticipating God’s kingdom to come in all its fulness, “the gift and the joy.” This text is the oldest one we sing tonight, almost fifty years old, by Bryn Rees, a Welsh Congregational pastor who worked in collaboration with a church musician. The descant and accompaniment to the final stanza are by Larry Visser.

We’re glad to have been able to present many newer texts as we seek first the Kingdom of God, committing together to “build a house where love can dwell and all can safely live.”

Organ & Music Notes

Organ Prelude: Variations sur MADRID (Come, Christians, Join to Sing)
Denis Bédard (b. 1950) [© 2013, Éditions Cheldar]

French-Canadian organist, composer, and professor Denis Bédard composes in several genres and his music has been performed around the globe. His organ partita on “Come, Christians, Join to Sing” invites people of all nations and ethnicities to offer their “Alleluia, Amen!” to “Christ our King . . . Guide and Friend.” The music, based on a Spanish folk melody, calls us to worship: “Let ALL with heart and voice before his throne rejoice.”

A Place Called Home

Music: FINALANDIA, Jean Sibelius (1865-1957); st. 4 arr. and descant by Larry Visser (b. 1962), © 2021, Larry Visser, All Rights Reserved, used with permission

Diverse in Culture, Nation, Race

Organ Introduction by Paul Manz (1919-2009) from *Ten Chorale Improvisations, Set 1* [© 1962, Concordia Publishing House]

Build a Longer Table, Not a Higher Wall

Organ Introduction by David Cherwien (b. 1957) from *Seasonal Interpretations (Lent-Easter)*, [© 1998 Summa Productions]

God Is Waiting at the Table

Organ Introduction by Paul Manz (1919-2009) from *Ten Choral Improvisations, Set 8* [© 1979, Concordia Publishing House]

Has Jesus Stood in Front of Me

Music: HEARTSIDE, Larry Visser (b. 1962), © 2021 Leupold Editions, Used with permission

The Kingdom of God

Music: organ interlude, arr. And descant by Larry Visser (b. 1962), © 2008 Larry Visser, All Rights Reserved, used with permission

Organ Postlude: Laudate Dominum, from *Three Hymn Tune Preludes*

Francis Jackson (b. 1917) [© 2005, Banks Music Publications]

British organist Francis Jackson, 103 years of age, was organist for 36 years at the Cathedral of York Minster. He continues to compose organ and choral music and hymns for the church.