

Westminster Seminars
January 2020

The Enduring Influence of Hymns in Protestant America

Week 1 – The Congregation Singing: Memories, Responses, Legacies

LONG-LASTING PRESBYTERIAN HYMNS 1940s – 2010s

A record of hymns sung at Central Presbyterian Church, Anderson, South Carolina, in the 1940s mirrors many of the popular hymns now sung at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Westminster's began singing these hymns at its founding in 1940s. Hymn choices from similar churches in the South and the North show us over 70 years of Presbyterian tradition in song.

The Presbyterian Hymnal, Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern), 1927. During the years 1945-1948, one copy of the hymnal includes dated notations of when a hymn was sung in worship by Sara Cathcart Ruhle, choir director, Central Presbyterian Church, Anderson, South Carolina. The following list includes the notated hymns that we still sing and the year(s) and the number of times the hymn was sung. The hymnal was the official denominational hymnal of the time, *The Presbyterian Hymnal*, Presbyterian Church in the United States (Southern), 1927.

Hymn Title – Year(s) Sung – Times Sung

The Church's One Foundation – 1945-1948 – 14X

My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less – 1945-1948 – 9X

Holy, Holy, Holy – 1945-1948 – 8X (Hymn No. 1)

Spirit of God, Descent Upon My Heart – 1946-1948 – 7X

O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing – 1946-1948 – 7X

O Worship the King – 1945-1948 – 7X

Crown Him with Many Crowns – 1946-1948 – 6X

Come, Thou Almighty King – 1945-1948 – 6X

Beneath the Cross of Jesus – 1946-1948 – 6X

Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven – 1946-1948 – 6X

Christ the Lord Is Risen Today – 1946-1948 – 5X

Our God, Our Help in Ages Past – 1945-1947 – 5X

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee – 1945-1948 – 5X

When I Survey the Wondrous Cross – 1946-1948 – 5X

Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun – 1945-1948 – 5X

My Faith Looks Up to Thee – 1945-1948 – 5X

How Firm a Foundation – 1945-1947 – 5X

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind – 1946-1948 – 5X

O Jesus, I Have Promised – 1945-1948 – 5X

O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee – 1946-1948 – 5X

I Love Thy Kingdom, Lord – 1946-1948 – 5X

Fairest Lord Jesus – 1946-1948 – 4X

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing – 1946-1948 – 4X

Break Thou the Bread of Life – 1946-1947 – 4X

O for a Closer Walk with God – 1946-1948 – 4X

Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation – 1947-1948 – 3X

In Christ There Is No East or West – 1947-1948 – 3X

For the Beauty of the Earth – 1946-1947 – 3X

I Sing the Almighty Power of God – 1945-1948 – 3X

God Moves in a Mysterious Way – 1945-1946 – 3X [now “O God, in a Mysterious Way”]

Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak – 1946-1948 – 3X

Jesus Calls Us – 1947-1948 – 3X

Lead On, O King Eternal – 1946-1948 – 3X

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken – 1946-1947 – 3X

When Morning Guilds the Skies – 1945-1946 – 3X

Just as I Am – 1945 – 2X

Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah – 1947 – 2X

Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee – 1946-1947 – 2X

Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed – 1946-1948 – 2X

Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove – 1946-1947 – 2X

O Word of God Incarnate – 1947 – 2X

More Love, to Thee, O Christ – 1946 – 2X

Take My Life, and Let It Be – 1945-1947 – 2X

Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life – 1946-1947 – 2X

O Day of Rest and Gladness – 1946 – 2X

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come – 1946-1947 – 2X

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say – 1946 – 1X

O Love, That Wilt Not Let Me Go – 1947 – 1X

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates – 1945 – 1X

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded – 1946 – 1X

Jesus, Thou Boundless Love to Me – 1947 – 1X

God Is My Strong Salvation – 1947 – 1X

Jesus, Lover of My Soul – 1948 – 1X

A Mighty Fortress Is Our God – 1947 – 1X

I Love to Tell the Story – 1947 – 1X

Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us – 1947 – 1X

This Is My Father's World – 1945 – 1X

We Give Thee but Thine Own – 1946 – 1X

God of Our Fathers – 1947 – 1X [now “God of the Ages”]

What a Friend We Have in Jesus – 1947 – 1X

Eternal Father, Strong to Save – 1946 – 1X

This Is the Day the Lord Hath Made – 1946 – 1X

God Be with You Till We Meet Again – 1946 – 1X

Abide with Me – 1946 – 1X

Notes

- Many of the tunes are not the ones we sing now. **How Firm a Foundation** has two tunes; the dates marks apply to the first tune: ADESTE FIDELIS, which we sing to **O Come, All Ye Faithful**.
- **Amazing Grace** has no mark and it is set, not to our familiar tune, but to 1762 tune, ARLINGTON, contemporary with John Newton's text of 1772. The congregation of Central Church did sing **Amazing Grace** (perhaps during other years) to the very proper 18th-century melody. The pairing of Amazing Grace with the familiar 19th-century American tune came fairly late to Presbyterian hymnals, in 1955, when both tunes were included, ARLINGTON first. The fifth verse we know (anon. American, 1790) was not included.
- The Christmas hymns were not marked. We can assume that the familiar carols were sung each year.

Popular Hymns from the Central Presbyterian List Not in *Glory to God*

He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought 6X

All the Way My Savior Leads Me (Fanny Crosby) 5X

I Am Thine, O Lord, I Have Heard Thy Voice (Fanny Crosby) 6X

Tell Me the Old, Old Story 3X

Jesus, Keep Me Near the Cross (Fanny Crosby) 3X

Savior, Thy Dying Love 7X

Awake, My Soul, Stretch Every Nerve (Handel tune) 5X

Onward, Christian Soldiers 3X

Soldiers of Christ, Arise 3X

Hymns at Westminster Presbyterian Church

Date	Scripture Reading	Sermon Title	Hymns
9-29-1946	Judges 17 and 18	How Large a God	Holy, Holy, Holy Ye Servants of God, Your Master Proclaim Our God, Our Help in Ages Past
10-13-1946	Ephesians	A Christian Temper	Come, Thou Almighty King Lord Speak to Me O Jesus, I Have Promised
11-10-1946	Deuteronomy	Guarding Our Perimeter	O Worship the King O Zion, Haste, Thy Mission High Fulfilling Dear Lord and Father of Mankind
From November 1946 on, only sporadically did they list hymns by title – they did them by number only. Hymnal unidentified. They returned to titles by 1976. All hymns except one appear in <i>The Hymnbook</i> , 1955.			
2-1-1976	John 4	Ingesting Christ (Communion Message)	The Church's One Foundation 437 Jesus, Lover of My Soul 216 When I Survey the Wondrous Cross 198
6-20-1976	II Corinthians	A Magnificent Concern	Holy, Holy, Holy 11 My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less 368 Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life 507
4-11-1976	John 12	Patterns of Rejection – The Crowd (Communion Message)	Crown Him with Many Crowns 213 Amazing Grace 275 (2 tunes) All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name 132 (2 tunes)
5-9-1976	Isaiah 66:13	The Motherhood of God (Mother's Day Message)	Holy, Holy, Holy 11 O Light, Whose Beams Illumine All 145 Let There Be Light (not in 1955 hymnal; newer hymn)
8-1-1976	Ephesians 4	Today's Holy Wars	Holy, Holy, Holy 11 This Is My Father's World 101 God the Omnipotent! 487
10-3-1976	Exodus 12	The Sign Language of Our Faith (Communion Message)	O Worship the King 26 Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing 379 O Holy Saviour, Friend Unseen 214

Hymns at Westminster Presbyterian Church

Two Sundays, in 1956 and 1961, featured hymn sings themed “With a Voice of Singing.”

In 1956, had the church recently purchased the 1955 hymnal?

All of the hymns are in *The Hymnbook*, 1955.

July 15, 1956

- Of the Father’s Love Begotten 7
- Christian, Dost Thou See Them 360
- A Mighty Fortress Is Our God 91
- Away in a Manger 157
- Blessing and Honor and Glory and Power 137
- Jesus, Lover of My Soul 216
- Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah 339
- God of Our Life, Through All the Circling Years (text by Shadyside pastor Hugh Thomson Kerr, 1917) 108

June 4, 1961

- Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty 1
- All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name 132 (2 tunes)
- Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence 148
- Jesus Loves Me 465 (1 vs.)
- Were You There When They Crucified My Lord? 201
- Jesus Christ Is Risen Today 204
- Crown Him with Many Crowns 213
- Spirit of God, Descend Upon My Heart 236
- The Church’s One Foundation 437