

Synodical Hymn Festival 2013

Hosted by the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship,
The *Lift Up Your Hearts* Editorial Committee, and
Woodlawn Christian Reformed Church
Grand Rapids, Michigan
June 9, 2013 • 7:00 p.m.



Singing the Whole Story

Hymnifest

Singing the Whole Story

“How Wide, How Long, How Deep, How High...”

Prelude

Choral Introit: “Total Praise”

Please join the choir as directed.

Lift Up Your Hearts 420

Call to Worship (from *Lift Up Your Hearts* 524, based on Psalm 124:8, 118:24, 51:15)

Leader: Our help is in the name of the Lord,

People: who made heaven and earth.

Leader: This is the day that the Lord has made,

People: let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Leader: O Lord, open our lips,

People: and our mouths shall declare your praise.

Songs of Praise: “Praise the Lord, Sing Hallelujah”
“Ten Thousand Reasons”

Lift Up Your Hearts 6
Lift Up Your Hearts 559

Introduction and Prayer for Illumination

Hymn: “O God, We Kneel Before Your Throne”

Please join the choir as directed.

Lift Up Your Hearts 680

This anthem created for the 125th anniversary of Calvin College and Seminary. The text was written by Ruth van Baak Griffioen, a graduate of Calvin College who presently is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Musicology at The College of William and Mary; the tune was composed by another graduate of Calvin College, Roy Hopp who serves as the Director of Music at this church, Woodlawn CRC, as well as an adjunct professor of choral music at Calvin Theological Seminary.

How Long...

“He chose us, in Christ, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless before him in love.”
Ephesians 1:4

Song of Praise: “You Are Our God; We Are Your People”

Lift Up Your Hearts 35

Stanza 1: Solo; Stanzas 2-4: All

David Hoekema, Professor of Philosophy at Calvin College, wrote this text and tune in June 1978 for the baptism of his daughter Janna, for whom he named the tune. By rehearsing the story of God’s covenant promises with his people from Noah through to us in the new covenant in Christ, this song reminds us of the faithfulness of God through all generations.

Litany of Praise: Our Covenanting God

Lift Up Your Hearts 36

Response: “This Holy Covenant Was Made”

Lift Up Your Hearts 847

Reading: Ephesians 1:17-23

Lift Up Your Hearts 680

How Wide...

“For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace.” Ephesians 2:14-15

Song of Praise: “There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy”

Lift Up Your Hearts 689

This hymn is one example of several “reimagined hymns” that appear in Lift Up Your Hearts; hymns with old texts that are put to new or revised tunes. The text of “There’s A Wideness in God’s Mercy” was written in 1862 by Frederick William Faber also the author of “My God How Wonderful You Are.” The tune that appears in Lift Up Your Hearts was written by Gregg DeMey, teaching pastor at Elmhurst Christian Reformed Church; it beautifully conveys the gentleness with which we experience the mercy of God.

Sung Prayer: “For the Troubles”

Lift Up Your Hearts 663

1st time: Solo in Portuguese; 2nd time: All in English

A Prayer of Indigenous Peoples, Refugees, Immigrants, and Pilgrims

Lift Up Your Hearts 270

Mark Charles is a speaker, writer, and consultant from Fort Defiance, Ariz., located on the Navajo Reservation. He is a member of the Christian Reformed Church, serves on the Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church, is a Resource Development Specialist for Indigenous Worship at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, and is a project coordinator for CRC World Missions. Mark shares this prayer with the church in hopes that by praying it the church as the Bride of Christ will learn to walk more fully in beauty with our fellow humans and God.

Response: “Let Justice Flow”

Lift Up Your Hearts 295

Citizens for Public Justice, a Canadian justice organization with connections to the Christian Reformed Church, commissioned Doug Romanow a member of the Christian Reformed Church to write “Let Justice Flow” for their 30th anniversary in 1994. Romanow is a Toronto-based music producer. His production work has won numerous awards and nominations from the Junos, the Maple Blues Awards, the National Jazz Awards and the National Reggae Awards. Romanow also wrote the 50th Anniversary song for World Renew entitled, “We Sing Hallelu.”

How Deep...

“Christ Jesus, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death – even death on a cross.”
Philippians 2:6-8

Songs of Praise: “To My Precious Lord”

Stanza 1: Choir; Stanzas 2-3: All

Lift Up Your Hearts 136

“As the Deer Pants for the Water”

Stanza 1: Solo; Stanzas 2-3: All

Lift Up Your Hearts 332

Greg Scheer writes of this piece: “Psalm 42 and 43 are set to a haunting, melancholic melody that mirrors the poignancy of the original Psalm text.” Scheer is Minister of Worship at Church of the Servant in Grand Rapids, Music Associate at the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship and author of The Art of Worship: A Musician’s Guide to Leading Modern Worship (Baker Books, 2006).

Prayers of the People

Responses: “Nearer, Still Nearer”

Stanza 1: Choir; Stanzas 2-4: All

Lift Up Your Hearts 659

“Jesus, Draw Me Ever Nearer”

Lift Up Your Hearts 660

How High...

“God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places; far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the age to come.” Ephesians 1:20-21

Reading: Colossians 1:15-20

Lift Up Your Hearts 779B

Songs of Praise: “The First Place”

Lift Up Your Hearts 15

“Before the Throne of God Above”

Lift Up Your Hearts 682

Closing Prayer

Song of Response: “Jesus Christ Is the Way”

Lift Up Your Hearts 471

Please join the choir as directed.

Charge and Blessing: Ephesians 4:1b-6

Lift Up Your Hearts 937

Closing Song: “May the Peace of Christ Be with You”

Lift Up Your Hearts 949

Please join the choir as directed.

Postlude and Retiring Offering

An offering for Dégagé Ministries will be received as you leave the Chapel.

A Word about Tonight's Service

"I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:18-19). These beautiful words are written right at the end of Ephesians 3 as Paul draws to a close what has been three chapters of him rhapsodizing over what God has done in Christ Jesus. Paul is so excited in these three chapters, so breathless with joy, that we wonder: "Paul, are you sitting at your desk writing theology or are you standing in church singing a hymn?"

Maybe it's both.

Tonight we will sing with Paul. Paul prays that we might know the length, width, depth and height of Christ's love. Tonight, using our new hymnal as a tool, we will sing these four dimensions of Christ's love as Paul describes them in Ephesians.

We will sing the length of that love: a love that goes back to a plan God set in place before the foundation of the world.

We will sing the width of that love: a love that is breaking down the dividing wall between nations and drawing all people into God's family.

We will sing the depth of that love: a love that went all the way down into death for us and for our salvation.

We will sing the height of that love: a love that is now seated in glory at the right hand of the Father, above every power and authority.

A love like this surpasses knowledge. It is more than we can ask or imagine. Bare human words are not enough to express this love. A love this big needs to be sung. These hymns and songs won't be able to encompass the full measure of Christ's blessing, but we hope as we share our songs we might at least partly fulfill Paul's paradoxical prayer, to "know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge."

Service Participants

We would like to express our thanks to the following people for leading us in worship tonight:

The choir, made up from area churches and synodical delegates.

*Carol Bechtel, harp, liturgist
Joyce Borger, liturgist
Erinn De Young, violin
Diane Dykgraaf, piano
Peter Jonker, liturgist
Norma de Waal Malefyt, piano/organ*

*Greg Scheer, guitar, bass, percussion
Ron Rienstra, guitar, bass, percussion
Carla Joy VanDyke Strand, violin
Nathan Wiersma, sax/flute
Tracie Wiersma, vocalist
John D. Witvliet, choir director*

Historical Overview

A quick tour of where each song in this service first appeared in Christian Reformed Church worship resources with the date the text was written in brackets following:

Psalter Hymnal 1937

Nearer, Still Nearer (ca. 1900)

Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah/Praise the Lord, Sing Hallelujah (1927)

Psalter Hymnal 1987

You Are Our God, We Are Your People (1978)

Sing! A New Creation 2001

This Holy Covenant Was Made (1991)

Singing the New Testament 2008

O God We Kneel Before Your Throne (2002)

Contemporary Songs for Worship 2008

Before the Throne of God Above (1997)

The First Place (1999)

Global Songs for Worship 2010

For the Troubles (1998)

Psalms for All Seasons 2012

As the Deer Pants for the Water (2005)

Lift Up Your Hearts 2013

Total Praise (1996) – taken from the African American Heritage Hymnal

Ten Thousand Reasons (2011) – appearing in a hymnal for the first time

There's A Wideness in God's Mercy (1862/2008) – appearing for the first time in this form

Let Justice Flow (1994) – taken from Citizens for Public Justice; appearing in a hymnal for the first time

To My Precious Lord (2001) – taken from Glory to God, the new hymnal of the PCUSA