C2: Singing Psalms: An Outpouring of Contemporary Song for Congregational Use

Alison Adam, Alfredo Colman, Wendell Kimbrough, Isaac Wardell, moderated by Greg Scheer

Remarkably, even since the publication of Psalms for All Seasons just a few years ago, over 30 new Psalm-based songwriting and recording projects have emerged from a variety of contemporary worship leaders across North America and beyond. While some of these settings are designed for solo voices, many are well-suited to congregational use, and are worthy heirs to the legacy of congregation-based Psalms re-established by Luther and Calvin. Come to explore a variety of examples of this music, as well as the stories behind the songs. In addition, to consider new songs you might use in your context, come ready to explore how you can shape a worship culture in your context that is eager to embrace and explore the rich texts of the Biblical Psalms.

Introduction:

Rejoice In All Your Works (Psalm 104)
O God, You've Searched Me and You Know Me (Psalm 139)
Although We Are Weeping (Psalm 126)
Te exaltaré, mi Dios, mi Rey (Salmo 145:1)

Why the Psalms?

Issues to Explore:

Wendell – Singability and congregational participation
We Long to See You (Psalm 24, Wendell Kimbrough)

Alfredo – The music of the Psalms: folk rhythms
Alabad a Jehová/Praise the Lord (Psalm 107:1, José Daniel Verstraeten)

Alison – Psalms of suffering and justice
Oh Great God and Lord of the Earth (Psalm 94, John Bell/El Salvador)
I Cry to God (Psalm 77, John Bell)

Isaac - Psalms of lament and darkness
O God of My Salvation/Can the Dead Rise Up to Praise? (Psalm 88, Chris Juby)

Songs to Sing:

Psalm 113 (From the Rising of the Sun, Sandra McCracken)
Te Alabaré, Señor (Psalm 9)
Oh Give Thanks (Psalm 107)

More Songs to Check out Later:

6 My eyes are dim with weeping (Alison Adam)
9 The Hope of the Poor (Wendell Kimbrough)
9 Te alabaré, Señor
9 Oré mboriahú
12 Lying lips that falsely flatter (Adam Tice, in PFAS)
13 How Long O Lord? (John L. Bell and Graham Maule)
19 Aleluya (del Salmo 19)
19 Sean gratos los dichos de mi boca
23 Shepherd me, O God (Marty Haugen)
27 Jehová es mi luz y salvación
37 Do not be vexed (John L. Bell)
19 Aleluya (del Salmo 19)
42 Como el ciervo
43 Send Our Your Light (Sandra McCracken)
46 Dios es nuestro amparo (traditional)
43:3 Send out your light (John L. Bell)
51 Create within me a clean heart (Alison Adam)
62 I'll Not Be Shaken (Wendell Kimbrough)
62 On God alone I wait silently (John L. Bell)
63 O God you are my God alone (John L. Bell)
97 Our Song in the Night (Michael Van Patter)
116 I love the Lord (John L. Bell)
122 I was glad when they said to me (John L. Bell)
133 Mirad cuán bueno y cuán delicioso es
133 Miren qué bueno
136 Alabad al Señor (C. Guevera)
136 Alabad al Señor porque él es bueno
146 Sing Praise to God (Marty Haugen, with strong echoes of the Magnificat)
150 Alabad a nuestro Dios en su santuario
REJOICE IN ALL YOUR WORKS
(PSALM 104)

WENDELL KIMBROUGH

1. Every mouth that cries for food, every lung that yearns for
2. Every tree that thirsts for rain, every bird that seeks its
3. May the ponderings of my heart and the song upon my

breath, every eye that searches through the dark for light,

nest, every heart that waits in hope to be made glad,

lips with the chorus of creation join in praise

all creation looks to You for its breath and for its

all creation looks to You for its breath and for its

to the God who made all things, to the Spirit who sus-

food; from the goodness of Your hand we're satisfied.

tains, to the Son who over all creation reigns.

REFRAIN

Oh rejoice in all Your works, King of heaven, King of earth! Every creature You have

made declares Your praise. We rejoice in all You've made, God of

all sustaining grace; with the mountain, sky, and sea we sing Your praise.

O God, You Search Me
(Psalm 139)

1 O God, you search me and you know me. All my
2 You know my resting and my rising. You dis-
3 Before a word is on my tongue, Lord, you have
4 Al-though your Spirit is upon me, still I
5 For you created me and shaped me, gave me

thoughts lie open to your gaze. When I
cern my purpose from afar, and with
known its meaning through and through. You are
search for shelter from your light. There is
life within my mother's womb. For the

walk or lie down you are before me: ever the
love ever-lasting you besiege me: in every
with me beyond my understanding: God of my
nowhere on earth I can escape you: even the
wonder of who I am, I praise you: safe in your

maker and keeper of my days.
moment of life or death, you are.
present, my past, and future, too.
darkness is radiant in your sight.
hands, all creation is made new.

Psalm 139 is one of the most introspective and most intimate of all the psalms, showing an acute mindfulness of God's presence in all aspects of one's life. Sometimes resisted, this omnipresence ultimately becomes a ground of hope, a promise that we never stray beyond God's care.

TEXT and MUSIC: Bernadette Farrell, 1992

© 1992 Bernadette Farrell (Published by OCP)
Psalm 126

Bifrost Arts

1. Our mouths, they were filled, filled with laughter;
   Our tongues, they were loosed, loosed with joy.

2. The nations will say "He has done great things!"
   Re-store us, O Lord!
   Though we are weeping, Lord, help us keep sowing the seeds of Your Kingdom for the day You will reap them!
   Those who sew weeping will go out with songs of joy!

3. Re-store us, O Lord!
   Re-store us, O Lord!
   All those who sew weeping will go out with songs of joy!

4. The nations will sing songs of joy.
   Re-store us, O Lord!
   All those who sew weeping will go out with songs of joy!
Te exaltaré/I Will Exalt

PSALM 145:1-5

Dm  Gm  Dm  Gm

Spanish
1 Te exaltaré, mi Dios, mi Rey; y bendeciré tu nombre eternamente.
2 Geneación a geneación celebraré tus obras y anunciare tus nombres.

English
1 I will exalt my God, my King; I will praise your name, for ever; every day I’ll praise your holy name.
2 Each generation to the next will proclaim your name, for ever; every day I’ll praise your holy name.

Refrain

Words: Casiodoro Cárdenas, 1979; tr. composite; st. 2 tr. Mary Louise Bringle, 2011
Music (ECUADOR irregular): Casiodoro Cárdenas, 1979; arr. Raquel Mora Martínez, 1979, © Raquel Mora Martínez

For other settings of Ps. 145 see 561, 562
You are great and worthy of the highest praise and honor, for your greatness is far beyond us; every day I’ll praise your holy name.

Optional ending with descant

I’ll praise your holy name.
We Long to See You (Psalm 24, Wendell Kimbrough)

Almighty God we long to see You.

Open our hearts and make them pure. Spirit we wash our hands in mercy; come teach our souls to love Your truth.

The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein, for he has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the rivers.

Who shall ascend the hill of the LORD? And who shall stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not lift up his soul to what is false and does not swear deceitfully. He will receive blessing from the LORD and righteousness from the God of his salvation. Such is the generation of those who seek him, who seek the face of the God of Jacob.

Lift up your heads, O gates! And be lifted up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the LORD, mighty in battle! Lift up your heads, O gates! And lift them up, O ancient doors, that the King of glory may come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, he is the King of glory!

refrain © 2015 Wendell Kimbrough
Alabad a Jehová/Praise the Lord (Psalm 107:1, José Daniel Verstraeten)

Letra, Salmo 107:1. Música PUNTA INDIO, José Daniel Verstraeten. ©Copyright 1978 Casa Bautista de Publicaciones. Todos los derechos reservados. Amparado por los derechos de copyright internacional.
O Great God and Lord of the Earth

PSALM 94

1. O great God and Lord of the earth, rouse your self and demonstrate justice; give the arrogant God a bove takes no notice; they proclaim that God the Lord will not stay away nor for -

2. Those who crush your people delight, claim -ing sake his well -be -loved peo -ple; heav en's jus tice courts play host to corrup -tion; should the inno -cent what they de -serve, si-lence all ma -le -vo -lent heav en is blind, that the God of Ja -cob is soon will ap -pear, and the pure in heart will em -

3. God the Lord will not stay away nor for -

4. Should the wrong change places with right and the fear for their lives while the guilty smile at their boast -ing. See how some you love are bro -ken, si-lent. Stupi-d fools, when will you lis -ten? brace it. Yes, the ones whom God in-structed,


for they know the weight of oppression; even
Now take heed, you ignorant people. God who
who revere and study God's Word, will be
be your strength and courage and tower. Though your

widows and orphans are murdered, and poor strangers are
gave us sight and hearing has observed and
saved from all that harms them while a pit is
foot should verge on slipping, God will cherish,

innocent victims.
noticed what happened.
dug for the wicked.
keep, and protect you.

Optional prayer of lament
God of justice and mercy,
in our pain and sorrow,
help us to hold on to your sure promise
that you will never leave or forsake us.
Give us courage to forsake revenge,
to testify to the beauty of your justice,
and to place our hope in you. Amen.

Optional prayer of confession
God of justice and mercy,
we confess that we, too often,
are arrogant and indifferent.
We are the guilty.
We have sinned by what we have done
and what we have left undone.
Clothe us in Christ's righteousness
and teach us to act justly, to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with you. Amen.
I CRY TO GOD (WGIR)
par. of ps. 77 by John L. Bell, © 1996, WGRG, Iona Community

I cry to God and he hears me;
in my time of trouble I seek him.
By night my hands plead in prayer,
but I find nothing for my comfort.

I think of God and I moan;
I meditate and feel useless.
God keeps the sleep from my eyes,
and my speech is lost in confusion.

I thought of days gone by,
and remembered times now vanished.
I spent the night in deep distress
while my spirit murmured within me.

Will God reject us forever?
Will God refuse us his mercy?
Has endless love reached an end?
Are God’s promises now invalid?

Has God forgotten to be gracious?
Has anger doused his compassion?
Has God’s mighty arm lost its grip?
Does it hang powerless beside him?

Let me now remember God’s work
and recall his wonderful greatness.
Let me meditate on his power
and remember all God has done.
O God of My Salvation/Can the Dead Rise Up to Praise? (Psalm 88, Chris Juby)

1. O God of my salvation. Do You not hear? My soul is full of trouble and death is near.
2. I cry in prayer before You. You hide Your face. I can't escape.

Your wrath has overwhelmed me.
You sunk me to the bottom among the dead.
Your terrors have destroyed me, they flood the day.
Your wrath is heavy on me, I have no friend.
All those who ever loved me are far away.

Can the dead rise up to praise? Sing of mercy from the grave? Is Your faithfulness proclaimed even in the darkest place?

2014 Chris Juby
www.chrisjuby.com
Psalm 113 (From the Rising of the Sun, Sandra McCracken)

Am G C Am G C

Hallelujah, give praise you servants. Praise the name of the Lord.

Am G C Am G C

Let the name of the Lord be blessed for now and forevermore.

REFRAIN

Am F C G Am F C

From the rising of the sun to its going down.

Am F C G Am F C

Let the name of the Lord be praised from the rising of the sun.

Am G/B C Am G/B C

The Lord is high above all nations and His glory above the heavens

F F F G Am

Who is like the Lord our God who sits enthroned on high?

F F F G Am D Am Am/F D Am Am/F

Who is like the Lord our God? stoops to behold the heavens and the earth.

Sandra McCracken 2014. Drink Your Tea Music. used by permission.
Te alabaré, Señor/I Will Exalt You, LORD

Unknown

Tune: ECUADOR - Celebremos ©1992 Libros Alianza
I will exalt You, Lord, with my whole heart and my voice, with
my whole heart and my voice, I will exalt You, Lord. I will tell of all Your mighty wonders,
of all Your mighty wonders, I will exalt You, Lord. I will be glad and rejoice in You, and rejoice in You, I will exalt You, Lord.
I will praise Your name O, Most High and Glorious God, O, Most High and Glorious God, I
will exalt You, Lord. I will exalt You, Lord. I will exalt You, Lord.
OH GIVE THANKS! (PSALM 107)

1. We were wandering in the desert with our souls so starved and weak;
2. We were locked out of the garden and our backs bend down with pain;
3. We were fools in our rebellion with our chasing dreams;
4. We were far out on the ocean making wealth and our backs.

so starved and weak; we were hungry for a homeland we did not know how to seek,
we were staggered by pride; we were sick and growing closer to the death
and chasing dreams but the waves of great destruction brought us tremendous

know how to seek, but we lifted up our voices to sin and blaze. Then we cried out in our laure
we should have died. Then he heard of our condition and we cried like drunken sailors

cess to the only One who hears and the God of mercy came and brought us near. Oh give thanks to the Lord of mercy wiped away our tears.

bore to the only One who hears and the God of glory took away our shame.

tion and He-called us by our names and the God of comfort took away our fears.

Oh for His love endures forever! We were wandering and lost and our Father brought us home to a safe dwelling place, to a feast of joy and laughter. Oh give thanks to the Lord for He is good.

© 2016 Wendell Kimbrough. wendellk.com. CCLI Song #7064726.