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Introduction

Singing is good for you. It’s proven to have physical and mental health benefits. Singing hymns is good, too. Hymns allow individual and collective contribution to worship, and the oft-quoted phrase of St Augustine that ‘he who sings prays twice’ is no less relevant today than when he penned it some 1600 years ago.

So, the *Big Hymn Sing* is an invitation to raise your own voice amidst many. The contents have been voted for; and even if they do not reflect your own preferences for favourite hymns, you can join in knowing that for many, these are favourite expressions of faith and praise.

This is an opportunity to invite people to come and join in, and to be able to leave feeling better than when they arrived; and perhaps open to further encounters with music and the worshipping live of the church.

Do send us your stories and pictures of your *Big Hymn Sing* – by email, or tag us (RSCMCentre) on social media. As always, we look forward to hearing from you.

Hugh Morris

Director, RSCM

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quoting the ‘RSCM Music Sunday Big Hymn Sing’.

This doesn’t cost you, your church or school anything, but it does ensure that

composers and authors get due financial recognition for their work.

It also enables the RSCM to train the church musicians of tomorrow.

1 Sing to the Lord, a new song of creation

Join in a melody of thanks and praise.

Come, sing for joy all people of this nation,

To worship God, on this the best of days.

2 Faith, hope and love, inspire our love of singing,

Hearts, minds and voices make a glorious sound!

Praise God above, and Christ who dwells among us,

Spirit of God whose grace is all around.

3 Christ you are here, your spirit dwells within us,

Sing through our melodies which rise and fall,

Word of God, you light the way we walk in,

Illuminate the music made by all.

4 You Father God have made us in your image,

Filled all your children with a soulful voice:

Made for your praise, we bring our song before you,

Accept our tune with which we all rejoice.

5 God, three in one, your chords of love unite us,

Bind us together in rich harmony.

Ground bass of life, from whom springs all our being;

We sing your praise the great God, one in three.

Gordon Giles (*b.*1966)

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1 O praise ye the Lord! Praise him in the height;

rejoice in his word, ye angels of light;

ye heavens adore him by whom ye were made,

and worship before him in brightness arrayed.

2 O praise ye the Lord! praise him upon earth,

in tuneful accord, ye sons of new birth;

praise him who hath brought you his grace from above,

praise him who hath taught you to sing of his love.

3 O praise ye the Lord, all things that give sound;

each jubilant chord re-echo around;

loud organs, his glory forth tell in deep tone,

and, sweet harp, the story of what he hath done.

4 O praise ye the Lord! thanksgiving and song

to him be outpoured all ages along;

for love in creation, for heaven restored,

for grace of salvation, O praise ye the Lord!

(Amen, amen.)

Henry Williams Baker (1821–1877)

1 In Christ alone my hope is found,

he is my light, my strength, my song;

This Cornerstone, this solid Ground,

firm through the fiercest drought and storm.

What heights of love, what depths of peace,

when fears are stilled, when strivings cease!

My comforter, my All in All,

here in the love of Christ I stand.

2 In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,

fullness of God in helpless babe!

This gift of love and righteousness,

scorned by the ones He came to save:

Till on that cross as Jesus died,

the wrath of God was satisfied -

for every sin on Him was laid;

here in the death of Christ I live.

3 There in the ground His body lay,

light of the world by darkness slain:

Then bursting forth in glorious Day

up from the grave He rose again!

And as He stands in victory,

sin’s curse has lost its grip on me,

for I am His and He is mine -

bought with the precious blood of Christ.

4 No guilt in life, no fear in death,

this is the power of Christ in me;

from life’s first cry to final breath,

Jesus commands my destiny.

No power of hell, no scheme of man,

can ever pluck me from His hand;

till He returns or calls me home,

here in the power of Christ I’ll stand!

Stuart Townend (*b.* 1963) and Keith Getty (*b.* 1974)

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1 I heard the voice of Jesus say:

‘Come unto me and rest;

Lay down, thou weary one, lay down

Thy head upon my breast.’

I came to Jesus as I was,

Weary and worn and sad,

I found in him a resting-place,

And he has made me glad.

2 I heard the voice of Jesus say:

‘Behold, I freely give

The living water; thirsty one,

Stoop down and drink and live.’

I came to Jesus, and I drank

Of that life-giving stream;

My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,

And now I live in him.

3 I heard the voice of Jesus say:

‘I am this dark world’s Light;

Look unto me, thy morn shall rise,

And all thy day be bright.’

I looked to Jesus, and I found

In him my star, my sun;

And in that light of life I’ll walk,

Till travelling days are done.

Horatius Bonar (1808–1889)

1 There’s a wideness in God’s mercy

like the wideness of the sea;

there’s a kindness in his justice

which is more than liberty.

There is no place where earth’s sorrows

are more felt than up in heaven;

there is no place where earth’s failings

have such kindly judgement given.

2 For the love of God is broader

than the measure of our mind,

and the heart of the eternal

is most wonderfully kind.

But we make his love too narrow

by false limits of our own;

and we magnify his strictness

with a zeal he would not own.

3 There is plentiful redemption

through the blood that has been shed;

there is joy for all the members

in the sorrows of the head.

There is grace enough for thousands

of new worlds as great as this;

there is room for fresh creations

in that upper home of bliss.

*Second half of tune*

4 If our love were but more simple

we should take him at his word;

and our lives would be all gladness

in the joy of Christ our Lord.

Frederick William Faber (1814–1863)

1 The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended,

The darkness falls at thy behest;

To thee our morning hymns ascended,

Thy praise shall sanctify our rest.

2 We thank thee that thy church unsleeping,

While earth rolls onward into light,

Through all the world her watch is keeping,

And rests not now by day or night.

3 As o’er each continent and island

The dawn leads on another day,

The voice of prayer is never silent,

Nor dies the strain of praise away.

4 The sun that bids us rest is waking

Our brethren ‘neath the western sky,

And hour by hour fresh lips are making

Thy wondrous doings heard on high.

5 So be it, Lord; thy throne shall never,

Like earth’s proud empires, pass away;

Thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,

Till all thy creatures own thy sway.

John Ellerton (1826–1893)

1 Love divine, all loves excelling,

joy of heaven, to earth come down,

fix in us thy humble dwelling,

all thy faithful mercies crown.

Jesu, thou art all compassion,

pure unbounded love thou art;

visit us with thy salvation,

enter every trembling heart.

2 Come, almighty to deliver,

let us all thy grace receive;

suddenly return, and never,

never more thy temples leave.

Thee we would be always blessing,

serve thee as thy hosts above;

pray, and praise thee, without ceasing,

glory in thy perfect love.

3 Finish then thy new creation:

pure and spotless let us be;

let us see thy great salvation

perfectly restored in thee;

Changed from glory into glory

till in heaven we take our place,

till we cast our crowns before thee,

lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Charles Wesley (1707–1788)

1 Angel-voices ever singing

round thy throne of light,

angel-harps for ever ringing,

rest not day nor night;

thousands only live to bless thee

and confess thee

Lord of might.

2 Thou who art beyond the farthest

mortal eye can scan,

can it be that thou regardest

songs of sinful man?

Can we know that thou art near us,

and wilt hear us?

Yea, we can.

3 Yea, we know that thou rejoicest

o’er each work of thine;

thou didst ears and hands and voices

for thy praise design;

craftsman’s art and music’s measure

for thy pleasure

all combine.

4 In thy house, great God, we offer

of thine own to thee;

and for thine acceptance proffer

all unworthily

hearts and minds and hands and voices

in our choicest

psalmody.

5 Honour, glory, might, and merit

thine shall ever be,

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,

blessèd Trinity.

Of the best that thou hast given

earth and heaven

render thee.

Francis Pott (1832–1909)

1 Dear Lord and Father of mankind,

forgive our foolish ways;

re-clothe us in our rightful mind,

in purer lives thy service find,

in deeper reverence praise.

2 In simple trust like theirs who heard,

beside the Syrian sea,

the gracious calling of the Lord,

let us, like them, without a word

rise up and follow thee.

\* 3 O Sabbath rest by Galilee!

O calm of hills above,

where Jesus knelt to share with thee

the silence of eternity,

interpreted by love!

4 Drop thy still dews of quietness,

till all our strivings cease;

take from our souls the strain and stress,

and let our ordered lives confess

the beauty of thy peace.

5 Breathe through the heats of our desire

thy coolness and thy balm;

let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;

speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,

O still small voice of calm.

John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–1892)

1 Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,

pilgrim through this barren land;

I am weak, but thou art mighty;

hold me with thy powerful hand:

Bread of heaven,

feed me now and evermore.

2 Open now the crystal fountain

whence the healing stream doth Xow;

let the fiery cloudy pillar

lead me all my journey through:

strong deliverer,

be thou still my strength and shield.

3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,

bid my anxious fears subside;

death of death, and hell’s destruction,

land me safe on Canaan’s side:

songs and praises

I will ever give to thee.

*Arglwydd, arwain trwy’r anialwch*

William Williams (1717–1791)

*translated by* Peter Williams (1727–1796)

*The last two lines of each verse are individually sung twice.*

1 How shall I sing that majesty

which angels do admire?

Let dust in dust and silence lie;

sing, sing, ye heavenly choir.

Thousands of thousands stand around

thy throne, O God most high;

ten thousand times ten thousand sound

thy praise; but who am I?

2 Thy brightness unto them appears,

whilst I thy footsteps trace;

a sound of God comes to my ears,

but they behold thy face.

They sing, because thou art their Sun;

Lord, send a beam on me;

for where heaven is but once begun

there alleluias be.

\* 3 Enlighten with faith’s light my heart,

inflame it with love’s fire;

then shall I sing and bear a part

with that celestial choir.

I shall, I fear, be dark and cold,

with all my fire and light;

yet when thou dost accept their gold,

Lord, treasure up my mite.

4 How great a being, Lord, is thine,

which doth all beings keep!

Thy knowledge is the only line

to sound so vast a deep.

Thou art a sea without a shore,

a sun without a sphere;

thy time is now and evermore,

thy place is everywhere.

John Mason (c.1645–1694)\*