QuickSheets
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PRESBYTERIAN ASSOCIATION OF MUSICIANS
Office of Christian Formation

Exploring *Glory to God: The Presbyterian Hymnal*

"This we hope: We hope the cover imprint fades from greasy fingers. We hope the pages become wrinkled and torn from constant use. We hope our children will sing from this hymnal - we hope our grandchildren will, too."

The Basics

- Compiled by a fifteen-person committee (the Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song) for use in 2012 as an act of the General Assembly of the PC(USA). The committee included musicians, pastors, scholars, and theologians.
- Developed as a collaboration between the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation, the PC(USA) Office of Theology and Worship, and the Presbyterian Association of Musicians.
- Includes 853 hymns, songs, and spiritual songs; orders for worship; and two appendixes.
- Each hymn entry includes information on the text writer, composer, arranger (where applicable), meter, tune name, copyright information, and a short blurb with information about the hymn.
- The hymnal is organized thematically, moving through the story of God's salvation history.

Exploring the Indexes

Glory to God includes a number of indexes that assist worship leaders and worshipers in exploring various aspects of the hymnal. They include the following:

- Topical index: offers categories for hymns (e.g. funeral, hope, harvest, the sovereignty of God)
- Scripture index (with a separate Psalm index): offers hymns that reference or correspond to Scripture passages. Each Psalm is represented at least once.
  - Lectionary index: separate list of hymn suggestions for each Sunday in the Revised Common Lectionary cycle
- Index of authors, composers, and sources: includes the names of writers and composers, as well as the names of sources where those names are not otherwise available (e.g. Brazilian folk melody, African American spiritual)
- Indexes of tunes: two indexes, one organized metrically and the other alphabetically
- Indexes: of first names and common titles

Theological Commitments

The hymnal committee offers a "Theological Vision Statement" in an appendix at the end of the hymnal. Several of these theological commitments include the following:

- God is at the center. God is present, moving among us with grace, and we respond with our gratitude and praise.
  - These expressions of gratitude take the form of hymns with broad corporate language as well as more personal, devotional language.
- Scripture appears throughout the hymnal, and the committee took special care to include a broad diversity of genres, imagery, and narratives from Scripture.
- The liturgical year is placed within the overall framework of the hymnal, which situates each season as part of the story of salvation.
- The hymnal committee sought to include a diverse array of sources, including from global traditions, contemporary hymn writers, and the best of historic hymnody and congregational song.

Language for God and God's People

The hymnal committee was intentional to include diverse images for God and the people of God, inviting an expansive view of both God and humanity, rooted in Scripture.

- Scripture offers models and examples for these diverse images.
- Pronouns for God are varied. See, for example, the difference in language between hymn 7 (*Mothering God, You Gave Me Birth)* and hymn 8 (*Eternal Father, Strong to Save).*
- The committee chose to update the language of some hymns that had antiquated language, but they have retained the antiquated language of others. This offers an array of language from different times and places.
- See Appendix 2 for a statement on the use of language.

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2026 Worship and Music Conference Interest Session Leader
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