

April 14 Worship

Announcements/Joys-

Time Of Quiet Meditation- *“Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving; let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!”* Psalm 95:2

Opening Scripture- Psalm 92:1-5(page 517)

Opening Chorus- 343- Bind Us Together

Responsive Call To Worship-

Leader: Come, let us sing to Yahweh;

People: Let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

Leader: Let us come into the Divine presence with thanksgiving;

People: Let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise!

Leader: It is good to give you thanks, O Yahweh;

People: **To sing praises to your name, O Most High;**

Leader: To declare your steadfast love in the morning,

People; And your faithfulness by night,

Leader: To the music of the lute and harp,

Leader: To the melody of the lyre.

Leader: For you, O God, have made us glad by your work;

People: At the works of your hands we sing for joy.

Hymn- 46- O For A Thousand Tongues To Sing

Unison Prayer- Holy, Creating, Creative God, We sing from the depths of our sorrow. We sing from the abundance of our joy. We sing in voices separate and unique. We sing with one voice as your body. May the words of our mouths, whether in speech or song, and the meditations of our hearts, whether in prose or poetry, be pleasing in your sight. Let us pray together as Jesus taught, saying...*Lord's Prayer...*

Gloria Patri- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be,

World without end. Amen, Amen.

Old Testament Scripture- Psalm 4(page 466)

Special Music-

Gospel Scripture- Luke 24:36-48(page 920-921)

Children's Time/Echo Prayer/Passing of the Peace

Hymn- 315- Wonderful Words Of Life

New Testament Scripture- 1 John 3:1-7(page 1066)

Message

“God's Gift Of Music”

Today's sermon will not be just a message. We will take a look at several well loved hymns and see what it was that inspired people to write them and then we will sing them. First, let me ask a question; What is a Hymn? There are those who say that a hymn must be a song in a hymnal that was written between the 19th and 20th century. Anything newer than that has to be a religious song. Others say that if it is not in “our” church hymnal it is not a hymn. It is probably easier to say what a hymn is not. A hymn is not a style of music. A hymn is not instrumental music. Hymns are meant to be easy to sing. I will admit that there are some that are a struggle. Hymns must be appropriate for worship. There are some songs that may seem OK for church, are not really hymns. These songs do not adore and worship God, They do not address Him in prayer, And they do not declare doctrinal or scriptural truth. Lets take a look at some old favorites and where they come from.

"How Great Thou Art"- This song was written in 1885 by Carl Gustav Boberg, a 26-year-old pastor from Sweden. Boberg was said to have been caught in a thunderstorm after church one Sunday afternoon. From his place in the mountains, Boberg could see the storm rolling in and noticed the immense power and force it had. Once the storm passed, Boberg observed a beautiful big rainbow cover the valley, over the meadows and grain fields. It took his breath away. He wrote the song "O Store Gud," which was then translated into German, Russian, and English. A stanza in the song was picked up in 1949 by an English missionary named Stuart K. Hine and changed to what we know today. Millions now sing the song of Christians in dozens of languages across the world. Turn to hymn #111 and let's sing verse 1,2.

"What a Friend We Have in Jesus"- Joseph Scriven, a young Irishman, completed his college education in 1844. He returned home to marry his sweetheart. He came home to find his bride-to-be tragically lying dead after falling off her horse. Later on, Scriven moved to Canada and fell in love again. Unfortunately, for the second time, his bride-to-be hit a horrible fate. She became ill and died weeks before their marriage. Scriven wrote a poem to his mother in Ireland to describe the tragedy he had faced. He spoke of how his deep friendship with Jesus, which he had cultivated through prayer, helped him get through the loss of his two loved ones. Instead of believing God was punishing him, Scriven thought God was his rock. The poem was published anonymously under the title "Pray Without Ceasing". Later in 1868, attorney Charles Converse set the text to music and changed the name to what we know it as today. Turn to hymn #197 and sing all 3 verses.

“Day By Day”- This hymn was written by Lina Sandell in 1865. Lina and her dad were on their way to Gothenburg and her father fell overboard the ship and drowned. Lina was eyewitness to the tragic death of her father. Lina composed a few hymns out of the depths of her broken heart, and “Day by Day” is one of them. In this hymn, she takes to her Heavenly Father who is sufficient to meet all her needs and care for her. This hymn depicts the cruel realities of this temporal life and the pains and agonies that come along with it. Yet, it points to the

promising help of a divine Father amidst these trials and learn to trust and rest in His promises. Turn to hymn # 424 and sing verses 1,3.

“It Is Well With My Soul”- Horatio G. Spafford was a lawyer in Chicago as well as a friend and supporter of D. L. Moody. In November 1873, he made plans to visit Europe with his wife and four daughters. At the last minute, he was caught up in some work and sent his wife and daughters first, on the ship “Ville du Harve,” planning to join them later. Halfway across the Atlantic, the ship collided with another vessel and sank rapidly. All four of his daughters drowned. Mrs. Spafford survived the accident. Later, while Spafford was traveling to join his grieving wife, he penned the words to this hymn as his ship passed over the spot where his daughters drowned. Often times, it is very hard, amidst trials and hardships to sing this hymn and actually mean the words “It is well with my soul.” But it’s only by God’s help we can utter those words. He is our help, our strength, and our refuge. Turn to hymn 524 and sing verses 1,3.

Thomas A. Dorsey’s song “Take My Hand, Precious Lord” is one of the most beloved gospel songs of all time. The song’s power comes from profound personal tragedy. In August 1932, Dorsey, a Black band leader and accompanist, was on top of the world. He had recently been hired as director of the gospel chorus at Pilgrim Baptist Church in Chicago, and he was about to become a father for the first time. Dorsey was nervous about traveling to a gospel music convention so close to his wife’s due date, but she gave her blessing. While he was in St. Louis, Dorsey received word that there had been complications with Nettie’s childbirth. He raced back to Chicago, but both mother and child died. The double funeral took place at Pilgrim Baptist Church. Dorsey later said, “I looked down that long aisle which led to the altar where my wife and baby lay in the same casket. My legs got weak, my knees would not work right, my eyes became blind with a flood of tears.” Dorsey fell into a deep depression. He questioned his faith and thought of giving up gospel music. Dorsey’s friend and fellow chorus director Theodore Frye persuaded him to accept a dinner invitation. After dinner, Dorsey meandered over to the grand piano and began to play the hymn “Must Jesus Bear the Cross Alone,” with its lyric “There’s a cross for everyone, and there’s a cross for me.” Dorsey began to play variations on the hymn’s melody, adding new lyrics. He called Frye over and began to sing, “Blessed Lord, take my hand.” Frye stopped him: “No man, no. Call him ‘precious Lord.’” Dorsey tried it again, replacing blessed with precious. “That does sound better!” he told Frye. “That’s it!” Dorsey returned home and finished the song “in the next day or two.” Dorsey debuted “Take My Hand, Precious Lord” for the Pilgrim congregation at a Sunday worship service. The lyrics filled the sanctuary that morning. Dorsey was shocked to find congregants out of their seats and in the aisles, crying out in prayer. His song of deliverance from unbearable pain touched the heart of a congregation of Black Americans with testimonies of their own—of illness, death, poverty, or the daily indignities of discrimination. Turn to hymn #425 And let us sing together.

There are so many stories what inspired people to put their feeling into songs of worship. If you have a favorite hymn, go to your computer and research the reasons for you hymns. It will make them so much more meaningful the next time you sing them. Praise Be to God. Amen

Prayers of People/Prayer- Lord of Dawn and Darkness, how grateful we are for your loving mercies. You saw our fear and doubt, our suspicion, our mistrust, and you banished them from our lives, replacing them with hope, peace, love, and joy. You called us to be your witnesses, to all the world, unafraid of what others might think or say about us. We have been invited out of

our darkened hideaways, into the light of your world as emissaries of hope and justice, peace and compassion. Be with us, as we participate in ministries of healing and hope through this church, in our community, region, nation, and world. Give us courage and strength to be your disciples in all the circumstances of our lives; for we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Closing Hymn- 698- When We All Get To Heaven(Verses 1,4)

Benediction- God of music, whom saints and angels delight to worship in heaven: Be with your servants who make art and music for your people, that with joy we on earth may glimpse your beauty; and bring us to the fulfilment of that hope of perfection which will be ours as we stand before your unveiled glory. Go now in peace, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.