

FREE ACCOMPANIMENTS ON LDS HYMNS

A free accompaniment (reharmonization) is usually played on the last verse of an *occasional* congregational hymn as the congregation sings in unison. It can also be used as part of the accompaniment for a choir presentation. In order to contribute to the spirit of the meeting, the organist must be very well prepared, as well as the conductor and the congregation or choir.

1. Choose a hymn that is very familiar to the congregation.
2. Find its tune name (use "Titles, Tunes, and Meters" index, p. 392).
3. Find the tune name in the table of contents of a collection, or
 - find tune name in a resource guide, find the collection, and then locate the free accompaniment.
 - for an excellent resource, web search "Resources for LDS Organists" (<http://www.ldsorganists.info>)
4. Match the nature of the free accompaniment with
 - the text (are the LDS text and tune, and the free accompaniment of the same mood?).
 - the music (are the LDS hymn and the free accompaniment in the same key?).
 - the occasion (some free accompaniments call too much attention to themselves, are too busy, etc.).
5. Prepare *very well*.
 - Will there be an interlude? You might end the interlude in octaves to signal unison singing.
 - Registration
 - Tempo change (sometimes a slightly slower tempo can be effective)
 - Layout of the music on the music rack
 - Notes—must be learned *very well!*
 - Plan an "escape route" in case congregation gets lost (play octaves, revert to the hymn, etc.).
6. Execute
 - Prepare the congregation. ("Please sing the last verse in unison; that is, melody only.")
 - Play confidently—humbly, but with no apology.
 - Listen—assume leadership, and adapt where needed.
 - Don't stop!
7. Follow up
 - What went particularly well? Did it contribute positively? Make notes and repeat it!
 - What could have been done to improve? Did it distract from the spirit? Make notes and improve it!
 - Don't give up. Do it again in a few weeks.

Some possible free accompaniments on LDS hymns:

Willcocks, David and John Rutter. *100 Carols for Choirs*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1987.

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful (hymn no. 202), two different harmonizations.

The First Noel (hymn no. 213).

Rutter, John. *O Holy Night*. Chapel Hill, NC: Hinshaw, 1981.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing (hymn no. 209).

Wood, Dale. *New Settings of Twenty Well-Known Hymn Tunes*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1968.

Silent Night (hymn no. 204), p. 32.

Rawsthorne, Noel. *200 Last Verses*. (2 volumes). Suffolk, UK: Kevin Mayhew, 1993.

Goode, Jack C., arr. *Thirty-Four Changes on Hymn Tunes*. Miami, FL: Belwin-Mills, 1978.

It Came upon the Midnight Clear (hymn no. 207), p. 5.

Glory to God on High (hymn no. 67), p. 13.

God of Our Fathers, Whose Almighty Hand (hymn no. 78), p. 21.

Bush, Douglas and Gerald Dick. *Hymn Harmonizations*. Salt Lake City, UT: Sonos, n.d. (Now Jackman Music, Orem, out of print).

I Need Thee Every Hour (hymn no. 98), p. 9.

He Is Risen (hymn no. 199), p. 13.

There Is Beauty All Around (hymn no. 294), p. 14.

Abide With Me; 'Tis Eventide (hymn no. 165), p. 16.

Noble, T. Tertius. *Free Organ Accompaniments to One Hundred Well-Known Hymn Tunes*. Miami, FL: Belwin-Mills, 1946.

America the Beautiful (hymn no. 338), p. 85.