

Musical Genres in *Glory to God*

This is one in a series of articles introducing Glory to God, the new Presbyterian hymnal.

Introduction

What do “Glory Be to the Father” (#581), “Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me” (#582), and “Glory to God (*Gloria a Dios*)” (#585) have in common? They are adaptations of the traditional “Gloria Patri” text set in three different musical styles: a traditional four-part hymn setting, a rousing gospel song, and a rhythmic global setting. *Glory to God* is a resource replete with texts and tunes from varied traditions that give our worship voice. In a recent article, “Liturgy in *Glory to God*,” David Gambrell described the worship resources in our new hymnal as “simultaneously traditional, contemporary, ecumenical, and Reformed—or to put it another way: ‘old, new, borrowed, and blue.’”¹ The same description applies to the musical resources in *Glory to God*, a collection of hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs drawn from sources spanning two thousand years of Christian worship. This essay will survey seven

distinct musical styles used throughout *Glory to God* and suggest practical applications in singing liturgical responses from the “Service Music” section.

Streams of Song

The Presbyterian Committee on Congregational Song (PCOCS) carried forward 60 percent of the content from the *Presbyterian Hymnal* (1990) to *Glory to God*, leaving space for a generous number of additional hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs chosen from among twenty thousand selections reviewed for inclusion. Some songs are old favorites borrowed from other hymnals; some are contemporary praise music; some are new texts set as traditional hymns; others are songs from

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ecumenical and global communities; and some are psalms from our Reformed heritage. Whether old, new, borrowed, or blue, there is a wide spectrum of musical styles represented.

In order to understand and manage this astounding number of available selections, the committee used a model developed by Michael Hawn called “Streams of Song,” a useful, overarching organizational metaphor for current congregational song. Rather than describing a tune or text as traditional or contemporary, with all the connotations those terms can carry, Hawn suggests that the vast repertoire of congregational song available today can be understood as coming from different streams of the church. Hawn writes:

Streams have a source, and each of the proposed seven streams of song comes from particular sources of faith—a particular expression of piety. Streams come in various widths and depths. Not all streams are the same. Some of the song streams are rushing and seem to be overflowing their banks because of the musical outpouring generated from their particular piety source. Others are steady in their flow, and yet others may be either drying up or merging with other streams. Streams meander; they do not flow in straight lines like canals. They occasionally crisscross each other. . . . Some songs fit comfortably in two or more streams.

This fluid model stands in contrast to a pigeonhole approach where everything is organized neatly. The fluidity of this model reflects how these songs usually appear in hymnals—songs from one tradition organized around a particular season of the Christian year or theological theme are placed in juxtaposition to other streams. Hymns demonstrate flexibility in their liturgical possibilities. . . .

Finally, streams are vibrant parts of creation, carrying us along with them, offering constant changes in depth, rate of flow and character.²

These seven streams, accounting for most of the congregational song in *Glory to God*, are:

1. Roman Catholic Liturgical Renewal
2. Classic Contemporary Protestant Hymnody
3. The African American Stream
4. Gospel and Revival Songs
5. Folk Hymnody
6. Pentecostal Song
7. Ecumenical and Global Stream³

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Navigating the Streams: An Overview

This model is useful for viewing historical hymns of our faith juxtaposed with newer expressions and implies something about musical style. Below is a brief description of each stream and its origin, with illustrative examples found in *Glory to God*.

Stream One: Roman Catholic Liturgical Renewal reflects reform set forth by Vatican II involving music for sacraments, responsorial psalms, lectionary, Christian year, and rituals. Since the mid-1960s, Protestant collections have borrowed heavily from this stream of song.

The headwaters forming this stream include some of the church’s oldest sung texts that Presbyterians continue to sing: “Creator of the Stars of Night” (#84), “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (#88), and “Of the Father’s Love Begotten” (#108).⁴ They are set to plainsong (chant) and sung in unison. Recent hymns from the Roman Catholic Liturgical Renewal, such as “You Who Dwell in the Shelter of the Lord” (#43), “I, the Lord of Sea and Sky” (#69), “One Bread, One Body” (#530), and “Seed, Scattered and Sown” (#531) typically feature stanzas sung by a cantor or leader with a unison refrain sung by the congregation. In practice, a small ensemble or choir can sing the stanzas, with the congregation joining on the

refrain. Using a cantor or ensemble on the stanzas is especially helpful when teaching the congregation one of these new songs. Organ, piano, or guitar provide satisfactory accompaniment.

Stream Two: Classic Contemporary Protestant Hymnody surges from the “hymnic explosion” that began in Great Britain in the 1960s and spread to other English-speaking countries. This large, steady stream features strophic texts, new metrical psalm settings, Scripture paraphrases, and prophetic hymns on justice themes.⁵ Hymn writers such as Mel Bringle, Ruth Duck, Fred Pratt Green, Shirley Erena Murray, Thomas Troeger, and Brian Wren are a few of the many contributors to this stream.

Early texts in this stream include hymns by various Reformers, Isaac Watts, and the Wesleys.

Encouraging congregations to sing from multiple streams requires thoughtful planning, good teaching, and strong musical leadership.

Standards such as “Holy, Holy, Holy! Lord God Almighty!” (#1), “Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah” (#65), “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” (#223), “All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name!” (#263), and “O for a Thousand Tongues to Sing” (#610) are sung in traditional four-part arrangements with organ or piano accompaniment.

New Classic Contemporary Protestant Hymnody texts are frequently paired with a familiar tune, making the hymn quickly accessible for a congregation. For example, “Go to the World!” (#295) is set to the tune *SINE SOMINE* (“For All the Saints”) and “God Is Calling through the Whisper” (#410) is sung to *W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY* (“Infant Lowly, Infant Holy”). Other hymn texts are

paired with fresh, new tunes that can accommodate strophic texts. While many of the new melodies still appear in traditional four-voice settings, some are intended for unison singing, such as the ballad-style “God the Sculptor of the Mountains” (#5), “Ten Lepers Facing Constant Scorn” (#179), “When at This Table” (#537), or “God, Be the Love to Search and Keep Me” (#543). In addition to organ or piano accompaniment, guitar can be effective with many of these melodies.

Stream Three: The African American Stream is found in virtually all Christian traditions with spirituals and gospel hymns that relate biblical stories in a context of faith and hope amid adversity. Its precursors include anonymous spirituals and slave songs.⁶ The spirituals frequently employ a call and response text, that is, the first and second

lines are the same and are followed by a refrain, as in “Were You There” (#228) and “We Shall Overcome” (#379). Over time, the African American community supplemented spirituals with gospel hymns that featured rich harmonies unfolding expansively, as

in “Hark! The Herald Angels Sing” (#127) and “Soon and Very Soon” (#384). Whether accompanied by keyboard instruments, guitar, or band, these hymns require a relaxed tempo so that all may savor the experience.

Stream Four: Gospel and Revival Songs includes songs and hymns of salvation and personal religious experience. These songs, products of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century revivals and Sunday School era, were penned by writers such as Fanny Crosby and tunesmiths such as William Bradbury. Although these songs continued to flourish in the twentieth century, Hawn observes that this stream appears to be merging with streams three and six, which have texts that also focus on salvation and personal experience.⁷

Songs brought forward from *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (1990) include gospel and Sunday-school era songs such as “Jesus Loves Me” (#188) and “To God Be the Glory” (#634). Gospel and Revival Songs new to *Glory to God* include “Shall We Gather at the River” (#375), “Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling” (#418), “I Love to Tell the Story” (#462), and “Why Should I Feel Discouraged?” (#661). Some gospel tunes are rousing and rhythmic while others feature tender, sentimental melodies. Most are in four-part harmony and are traditionally accompanied by piano and organ. The judicious addition of other instruments can enrich the singing.

Stream Five: Folk Hymnody has generally been an accepted part of the church’s song and enjoyed resurgence in the 1960s with music from folk masses. *Glory to God* contains some early contributions, such as hymns from the singing school tradition, choruses, folk tunes, and rounds or canons.⁸ Familiar early examples include “What Wondrous Love Is This” (#215) and the canon (round) “When Jesus Wept” (#194). Recent examples include “What Does the Lord Require of You?” (#70), “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness” (#291), and “We Are One in the Spirit” (#300). Acoustic guitar accompaniment is a natural choice with much folk hymnody. Rounds/canons such as “What Does the Lord Require of You?” and “When Jesus Wept” are profoundly moving when sung unaccompanied (a cappella).

Stream Six: Pentecostal Song is a surging stream birthed in the early twentieth-century American Pentecostal movement. Within this stream there are various styles of texts and songs identified as praise choruses, Scripture songs, worship choruses, modern hymns, and adaptations of contemporary Christian music for congregations.⁹ This stream, underrepresented in *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (1990), has been expanded in *Glory to God*. “Lord, the Light of Your Love Is Shining” (#192), “Men of Faith, Rise Up and Sing” (#319), “Open the Eyes of My Heart” (#452), and “Give Thanks”

(#647) are several of the new additions from this stream. Many of these songs are composed in popular song form using a verse/refrain/bridge format. Piano and instrumental praise bands usually accompany these songs, although a capable organist can add support and color on the refrains.

Stream Seven: Ecumenical and Global Stream reflects texts and tunes contributed by Christians from around the world and includes songs from the ecumenical communities of Iona and Taizé. These songs offer wisdom from the larger church and enable us to join in song with Christians from every corner of the world. “If You Only Had Faith” (#176), “Filled with Excitement (*Mantos y palmas*)” (#199), “Christ Has Arisen, Alleluia” (#251), “Holy Lamb of God (*Ya hamalallah*)” (#602), “Sing Out, My Soul” (#646), and “We Are Marching in the Light of God (*Siyahamba*)” (#853) all emerge from this rich stream. Numerous global and ecumenical songs are short in length, making them useful for various places in the service as responses.¹⁰ Musical styles are as varied as the cultures that birthed the songs. While much of this music is traditionally sung without instrumental accompaniment, indigenous instruments add new dimensions in sound.

Each stream is represented in *Glory to God* as this breakdown shows:

- 10% Roman Catholic Liturgical Renewal Song
- 58% Classic Contemporary Protestant Hymnody
- 4% The African American Stream
- 4% Gospel and Revival Songs
- 2% Folk Hymnody
- 5% Pentecostal Song
- 17% Ecumenical and Global Stream

Swimming the Streams: Service Music

The gamut of musical style encompassed in *Glory to God* will engage the assembly in song regardless of their “native” musical language. The Service Music section of *Glory to God* (#551–#609)

offers similar versatility in singing liturgical song. Expanded from the forty pages in the 1990 hymnal to fifty-eight pages, this section contains seven partial settings of Eucharist responses and thirty-five single responses.

The seven partial settings of the liturgy may include a Kyrie (“Lord, Have Mercy”), Sanctus (“Holy, Holy, Holy”), Memorial Acclamation (“Christ Has Died; Christ Is Risen”), and Amen. Most of these settings are based on a single tune, making them accessible and memorable for congregations. For example, the five responses in

the setting by Richard Proulx (#551–#555) are based on the familiar American folk tune *LAND OF REST*, a tune also used for hymns #545, #691, and #796. Both Per Harling’s set (#559–#561) and Proulx’s adaptation of Franz Schubert’s *Deutsche Messe* (#562–#564) offer four-part settings for a congregation or choir.

The following table shows the distribution of the service music in *Glory to God* by location in the stream of song model, title, and composer, illustrating that the responses for the liturgy are not limited to chants or staid settings.

<i>Stream</i>	<i>Setting</i>	<i>Composer/Arranger/Source</i>
African American (Stream 3)	556-558 (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen)	Leon Roberts
	600 Amen	Nelsie T. Johnson
Classic Contemporary Protestant Hymnody (Stream 2)	559-561 (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen)	Thomas Pavlechko
	562-564 (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen)	Per Harling
	572-574 (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen)	Richard Proulx
	581 Gloria Patri	Henry W. Greatorex
	599 Amen	Johann G. Naumann
	601 Amen	Anonymous Danish
	608 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow	Hal H. Hopson
	609 Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow	<i>Geistliche Kirchengesäng</i>
Ecumenical and Global Stream (Stream 7)	576 Lord, Have Mercy	Swee Hong Lim / Asian
	578 O Lord, Have Mercy	harm. Carlton R. Young / Guarani
	579 Lord, Have Mercy	Russian Orthodox chant
	580 Glory Be to the Father	Scottish chant
	583 Glory to God	Jacques Berthier / Taizé
	584 Glory, Glory, Glory	Pablo Sosa / Argentine
	585 Glory to God	Anonymous / Peruvian melody

<i>Stream (continued)</i>	<i>Setting (continued)</i>	<i>Composer/Arranger/ Source (continued)</i>
Ecumenical and Global Stream (Stream 7) (continued)	586 Alleluia	Jacques Berthier / Taizé
	587 Alleluia!	Fintan O'Carroll; harm. Christopher Walker / Scottish
	589 Alleluia	Honduran melody
	590 Hallelujah	Abraham Maraire; arr. Patrick Matsikenyiri / Zimbabwean
	591 Halle, Halle, Hallelujah!	arr. John L. Bell / Caribbean melody / Iona Community
	594 Holy, Holy, Holy, Holy	Guillermo Cuéllar; arr. Raquel Mora Martínez / El Salvadoran
	595 Holy, Holy, Holy	Traditional / Argentine
	596 You Are Holy	Per Harling
	597 Holy, Most Holy Lord	arr. Greg Scheer / South African
	598 Amen, We Praise Your Name	S. C. Molefe; transcr. David Dargie / South African
	602 Holy Lamb of God	Yusuf Khill / Arab
	605 Praise to God the Father	arr. Alfred V. Fedak / Ghanaian melody
Folk Hymnody (Stream 5)	551-555 (Kyrie, Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen, Agnus Dei)	Richard Proulx / American folk melody
	577 Lord, Have Mercy	Dinah Reindorf
Gospel and Revival Songs (Stream 4)	582 Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me	Paul M. Vasile
	592 Holy, Holy, Holy	Paul M. Vasile
	593 Holy, Holy	David E. Poole
	603 Lamb of God	Paul M. Vasile
Roman Catholic Liturgical Renewal (Stream 1)	565-568 (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation 1 and 2, Amen)	Curt Oliver
	569-571 (Sanctus, Memorial Acclamation, Amen)	Howard Hughes
	588 Alleluia	Robert Buckley Farlee
	604 Lamb of God	Marty Haugen

The outline for “The Service for the Lord’s Day” on pages 1–13 of *Glory to God* suggests places where service music can be used in the four-part worship structure of Gathering, Word, Eucharist, and Sending. While some congregations are accustomed to singing liturgical songs/responses throughout the service, other congregations are novices with this practice. The variety of musical styles in *Glory to God* is useful in either context.

Many Presbyterian congregations sing a “Gloria Patri,” often following the Assurance of Pardon. This is an excellent place to substitute a congregation’s accustomed response with the gospel-style “Glory to God, Whose Goodness Shines on Me” (#582) or a response from the global church, such as “Glory to God (*Gloria a Dios*)” (#585).¹¹ New tunes, new rhythms, and new instruments lend a fresh voice to the assembly’s praise.

For a congregation experienced in singing responses during the Eucharist, the four-part settings by Harling and Proulx may satisfy or perhaps challenge their musical sensibilities. For congregations who are novices in this practice, learning a single response would serve as an excellent point of entry into this practice. For example, these words from the liturgy invite us to sing:

Therefore we praise you,
joining our voices with choirs of angels,
with prophets, apostles, and martyrs,
and with all the faithful of every time and
place,
who forever sing to the glory of your name.¹¹

The assembly’s Sanctus may be an exuberant explosion (#592), an intimate and awe-filled prayer (#593), or a robust gospel-style declaration (#556).

Encouraging congregations to sing from multiple streams requires thoughtful planning, good teaching, and strong musical leadership. The accompanist edition of *Glory to God* is an excellent resource for musicians, as it provides stylistically appropriate accompaniments and performance suggestions.

Every section in *Glory to God* offers us opportunities to sing from varied streams of faith and wade in different musical styles. Whether these streams are familiar and comfortable or disquieting and challenging, we need to sing the “old, new, borrowed, and blue” to keep us rooted in our Reformed tradition and to prod us into new ventures in faith.

Endnotes

1. David Gambrell, “Liturgy in *Glory to God*,” thepresbyterianleader.com, October 9, 2013.
2. C. Michael Hawn, “Streams of Song: An Overview of Congregational Song in the Twenty-first Century,” *The Hymn: A Journal of Congregational Song* 61:1 (Winter 2010), 20.
3. *Ibid.*, 20–21.
4. C. Michael Hawn, ed., *New Songs of Celebration Render* (Chicago: GIA, 2013), xxxi.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, xxxii.
7. *Ibid.*
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, xxxiii.
10. *Ibid.*
11. *Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993), 70.

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